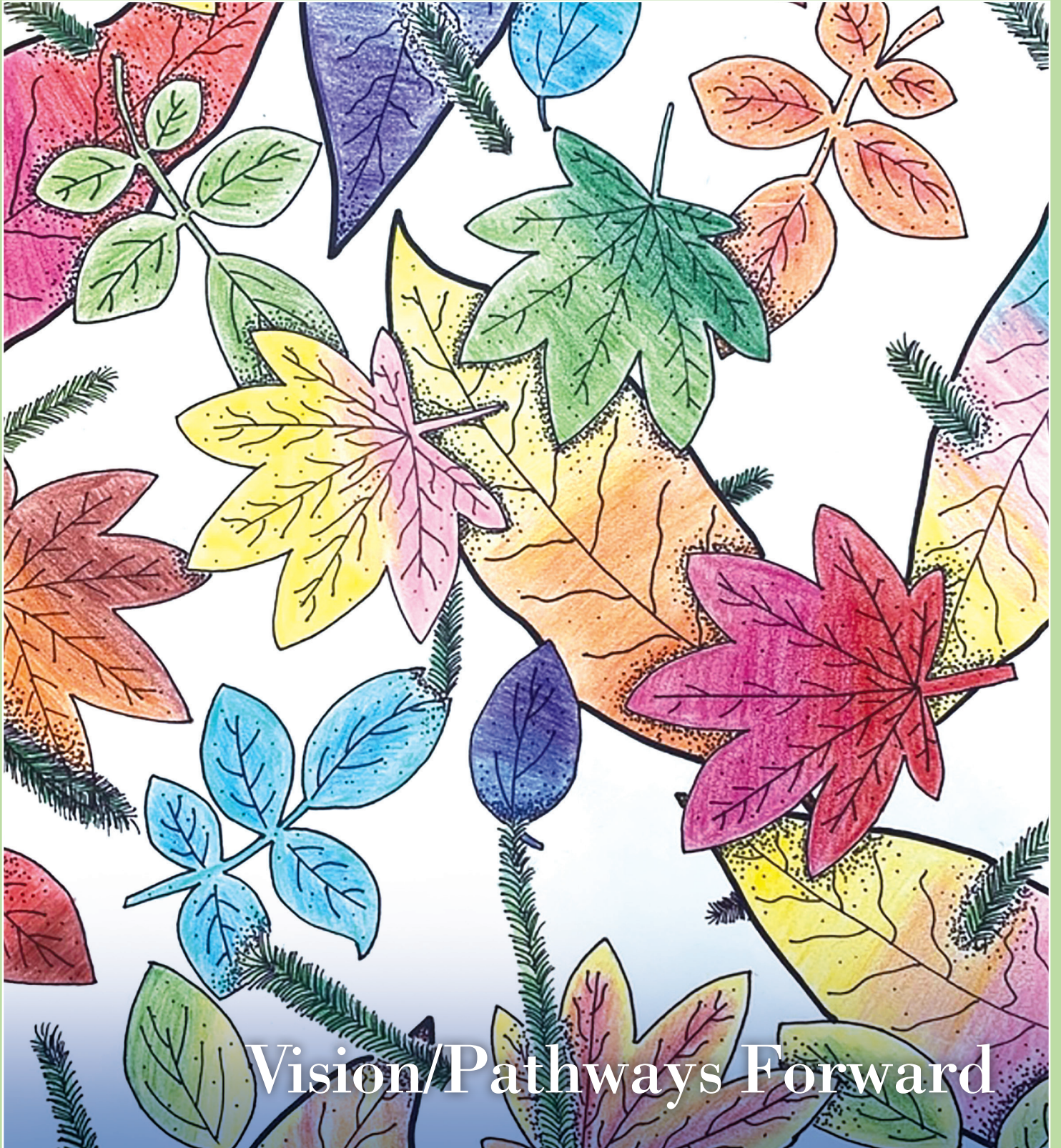


The Orff Echo

FALL 2022

VOLUME 55 NUMBER 1

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ORFF-SCHULWERK ASSOCIATION



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on the cover

"Autumn Leaves" by Noelle Nance,
a student at Saint Mary's High School,
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ethics statement

The American Orff-Schulwerk Association strongly encourages members to be positive and discreet when discussing our organization, specific courses and/or teachers, and the Orff approach. The very nature of the Orff Schulwerk philosophy embodies a broad spectrum of expressions, exploring different paths to arrive at artistic and educational goals. Members are encouraged to recognize and remain open to varied approaches and to celebrate both our differences and our similarities.

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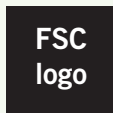
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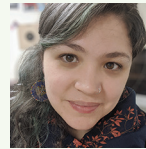
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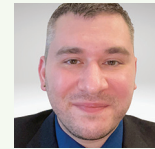
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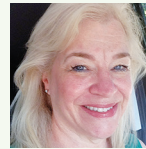
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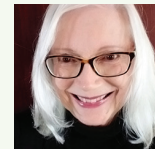
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mission statement

The American Orff-Schulwerk Association is a professional organization of educators dedicated to the creative music and movement approach developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman.

Our mission is:

- to demonstrate the value of Orff Schulwerk and promote its widespread use;
- to support the professional development of our members; and
- to inspire and advocate for the creative potential of all learners.

AOSA diversity statement

AOSA is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive membership, promoting an understanding of issues of diversity and inclusion, and providing teaching and learning resources that respect, affirm, and protect the dignity and worth of all.

our core values

As music and movement educators dedicated to the creative music and movement approach developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman, we believe that:

- Every learner deserves the opportunity to actively create, improvise, sing, play, move, speak, and listen.
- Every learner should experience music and dance from cultures represented in both our diverse American society and the larger global community.
- Every learner deserves a passionate, committed music educator who values the importance of active music making.
- Every Orff Schulwerk educator deserves high-quality opportunities to improve their pedagogy and musicianship through active, collaborative professional development.
- Every Orff Schulwerk educator should cultivate the creative potential in all learners.
- Every AOSA member deserves opportunities to engage in open and constructive dialogue regarding the future and well-being of their chapter and the national organization.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Michelle Fella Przybylowski

AOSA Conversations that Connect – Fall

The future, your future, the future of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association ... As summer ends, we anticipate the approaching school year, challenges of global unrest, and the remnants of the pandemic. Yet, our students are looking to us to provide a peaceful and positive learning experience. How do we serve the children well as we navigate the

changes around us? Two motivational speakers shared their thoughts on the subject: “One can change things by the manner in which one looks at them,” Tony Robbins; and from Wayne Dwyer, “If you *change* the way you look at *things*, the *things* you look at *change*.”

At times, negativity can overwhelm all of us. Do you see the glass half empty or half full? How do we gain the perspective of the glass half full? The answer, I believe, is through kindness and courage, which brings strength. Mackesy (2019) shared a message in his book, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, by encouraging “you” to live courageously with more kindness for yourself and for others.



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Consider as well the wisdom in the metaphor Parker J. Palmer (2017) used so beautifully in his book, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (2017, 20th ed., published by Jossey-Bass), to demonstrate the importance of the teaching process:

As good teachers weave the fabric that joins them with students and subjects, the heart is the loom on which the threads are tied, the tension is held, the shuttle flies, and the fabric is stretched tight. Small wonder, then, that teaching tugs at the heart, opens the heart, even breaks the heart—and the more one loves teaching, the more heartbreaking it can be. The courage to teach is the courage to keep one's heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able so that teacher and students and subject can be woven into the fabric of community (*kula*) that learning, and living, require. (p.183)

Yes, teaching tugs at the heart, opens the heart, and even breaks the heart. The courage to keep your heart open in those moments is the courage you need to become part of the fabric of community that learning and living require. This starts in your own little world, with *you!* Be kind to yourself and courageous in your thoughts and endeavors. These small efforts are contagious; when combined with those of others, they ultimately create a critical mass in a community and an organization. Note the kindness and courage facilitating changes in our own organization ...

The American Orff-Schulwerk Association was founded in 1968 and grew through the efforts of its leadership to nearly 5,000 members in 1995. As of July 2022, AOSA had 3,390 members. Approximately 600 members attended the 2021 conference in South Carolina last October. Prior to the pandemic, conference attendees typically numbered more than 1,000. With our continued cultivation of the cornerstones of kindness and courage, AOSA can once again reach—and even exceed—those numbers, starting with the 2022 Conference: Looking Forward Together, Kansas City, Missouri, November 2–5, 2022. Mark the dates on your calendar! Then enjoy reconnecting with a world of music to explore and fresh ideas to uncover while you weave the

fabric of community with old friends and new acquaintances.

The lessons learned from the extraordinary experiences of the last two years have taught us to be less fearful, more aware, sensitive, and compassionate. We can all make a difference by focusing on kindness and courage every day to strengthen our creative music and movement education efforts and to change the world around us. I invite each of you to think about ways you can support and sustain the path established by those members who preceded you. As AOSA leadership continues to advance our initiative to deepen the commitment to serving all members, a shared vision emerges. Ours is truly an organization where members shape the future, celebrate accomplishments, serve the music and movement educational communities, support the world with elemental music, and encourage music making throughout this everchanging world.

What will our combined strengths bring as we move through the 21st century? What will AOSA look like in one year? Five years? Our organization strives to be a force for good on behalf of our members. With kindness and courage we seek to provide the tools and resources we all need to make a difference in our lives and in our classrooms. Chapter workshops, conferences, professional learning networks, and more offer us opportunities to come together and continue to make changes for the better. Are you by any chance dreaming about summer 2023? You might consider researching and applying for one of the scholarships and grants AOSA offers. This past summer, one of my Level III students at Kent State University was a recipient of an AOSA Professional Development Scholarship from the Gunild Keetman Assistance Fund. The funding enabled this student to complete AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III. Make your 2023 dream a reality—applications are due January 15.

The future brings changes to our organization. With that said, we welcome our new executive director, Tiffany English. Tiffany is an innovative thinker who brings passion, dedication, and leadership, and she is committed to the future of AOSA. She served on the Advisory Board while president of her local chapter. She also served on the National Board of Trustees as vice-president and president, was a National Conference chair,

and has served on several committees. Judith Thomas Solomon shared with me how wonderful Tiffany will be as a good “tone setter” and one who already knows the ropes and the thorns.

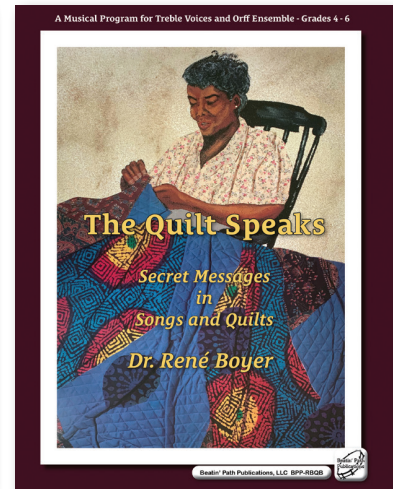
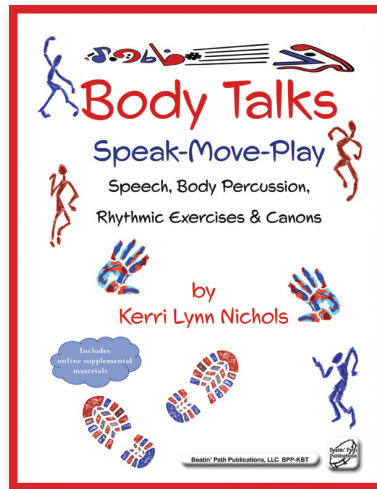
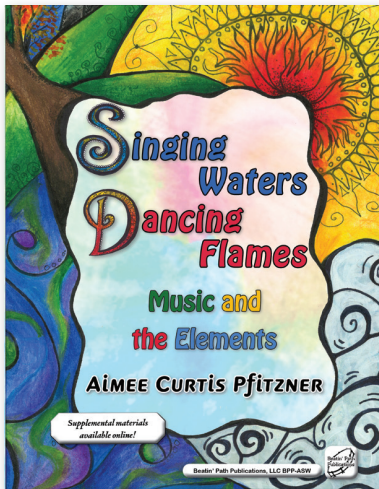
We also extend our gratitude to our past executive director, Carrie Barnette, for her leadership. With kindness and courage she carved a path that guided our beloved organization, and she made many friends along the way. Our members will continue to reap the benefits of Carrie’s innovative work. We extend our heartfelt thanks for all she has done through her tenure with AOSA.

Wishing you all a wonderful autumn. Through our music making, we can create a future for ourselves and for AOSA that brings us wholly together, provides our students peaceful and

positive learning experiences, and celebrates the goal of achieving good on behalf of all of us. It starts with YOU and the great things you do! ■

MICHELLE FELLA PRZYBYLOWSKI is senior professor at University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She holds a bachelor’s degree in music education from Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a master’s degree in music education from West Chester University. She is a National Board Certified teacher. Michelle has completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III and Master Classes. She is recently retired after 30 years of teaching kindergarten through Grade 4 music at Cheltenham School District, Cheltenham Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. She is an AOSA-certified teacher educator for Basic Levels I, II, III, and Movement Levels I and II. Michelle has served on the National Board of Trustees, *The Orff Echo* Editorial Board, the Executive Committee as vice president, and is currently serving as president.

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**TEACHERS WAITING
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By Linda Hines With Sandra Adorno, Juliana Cantarelli Vita, and Martina Vasil

Vision/Pathways Forward

collaboration and to center students as the experts in her classroom.

Our uncharted pathway welcomes sharing with colleagues more openly than ever before: *This is how I got here. This is who I am. This is my vision.* Each of us embodies our own story, as **Tiffany Unarce Barry's** interviews with nine AOSA teachers of color validate. Their words highlight the experiences that affected who they are and the unique perspectives they bring their students as a result.

We see another unique perspective when six members of **Adamak**, the Iranian Orff-Schulwerk Association, discuss the nature of pentatonic scales in the country's traditional music. They raise the question, is it time for music educators to create a volume of *Music for Children* written specifically for Iran?

The pathway forward begs the question, who do we want to become? **Crystal Briley** harnesses the momentum of recent events to honor student creativity and facilitate passage to a learning environment led by and centered around students.

This issue's research article first appeared in *The Orff Echo* in the Spring 2010 issue, in which author **Jade Pai** considered the still-relevant question, exactly how do two factors—environmental condition and genetic predisposition—influence our music making?

Featured children's books, reviewed by **Scott Roether** and **Micaela Schmitz**, engage students' imaginations, whether alone or in groups. Lastly, Orff Schulwerk foundational teacher Wolfgang Hartmann's new Supporting Our Learning book, reviewed by **Martha O'Hehir**, provides a concise, valuable resource for every Orff Schulwerk practitioner and those wishing to learn more about the approach.

We hope your colleagues' experiences encourage you to initiate new beginnings and try out fresh ideas and innovations as you explore your own vision on the pathway forward. ■

LINDA HINES is editor in chief of *The Orff Echo*. Coordinators **SANDRA ADORNO**, **JULIANA CANTARELLI VITA**, and **MARTINA VASIL** collaborated on this issue. They are active Orff Schulwerk practitioners and enthusiasts.

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by ... —Robert Frost (1874–1963)

Most of us are familiar with this line from Frost's 1915 poem, *The Road Not Taken*, in which a lone traveler, coming upon a place where two roads diverged, takes the road less traveled. Our world, our country, and we as individuals are also at a divergence. What lay before us is not a road less traveled, but a road not traveled in our lifetime. In this issue, Orff Schulwerk practitioners demonstrate their understanding of the principles and qualities that inspire educators to follow their own visions and discover new opportunities on the pathway forward.

Using available curricular resources, **Christa Jones** begins by detailing the use of culturally responsive teaching and cultural humility to connect students' needs and backgrounds to the creation of a school song collection.

What are we seeking on the pathway forward? **Abigail Van Klompenberg** recognizes the lasting effects of the pandemic on students and teachers and provides insight for healing and recovery through trauma-informed practices and the Schulwerk.

As the post-pandemic world causes us to consider how we have changed, **Macy L. Bell** uses response uses the principles of the Schulwerk and Project-Based Learning to build a culture of

The Orff Echo Editorial Board Is Seeking New Members

Are you an active or retired Orff Schulwerk practitioner looking for an opportunity to serve AOSA? Do you have a passion for the Schulwerk and for writing and editing? *The Orff Echo* editorial board invites you to consider applying to join our team. Engage with us in vibrant visionary and philosophical conversations at semi-annual board meetings and share your skills by helping colleagues from around the world craft their insights, research, and expertise into articles that contribute to the permanent body of knowledge at the philosophical heart of AOSA.

Applications are being accepted now through February 3, 2023. For more information or a link to the online application, talk to any of the current board members or email: echoeditor@aosa.org



“We Sang This Song Together”: Linking Home Culture and Class Curriculum through Song Collection

10



CHRISTA JONES has taught kindergarten through Grade 4 general music at Concord West Side Elementary School in Elkhart, Indiana, for 10 years. She holds a master’s degree in music education from VanderCook College of Music. Christa serves on the boards of the Indiana Music Educators Association (MEA) and Indiana Orff Schulwerk Association and is co-editor of *INform Magazine*, Indiana MEA’s professional publication.

ABSTRACT

Culturally responsive music teachers can create a link between students’ home and school cultures, making music classroom activities more relevant to students’ lives. In this article, the author explores culturally responsive teaching and cultural humility in the context of a school song collection.

Christa Jones

Music educators have the opportunity to teach thousands of students over the course of their careers. Students enter the classroom with their own identities, cultures, and musical experiences; while school populations in the United States become more diverse, teachers will, most likely, not share the same ethnic, racial, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds as each of their unique students (Banks, 2009; Schaeffer, 2021). This is evident at the school where I teach, Concord West Side Elementary in Elkhart, Indiana. The student body has become increasingly diverse over the past few decades, with a current student population identified as 69.9% Hispanic, 16.2% White, 10.6% African American, 2.7% Multiracial, 0.4% Asian, and 0.2% Pacific Islander (IDOE, n.d.). English Language Learners make up 69.4%. The demographics of the teachers, not the staff and paraprofessionals, seem to have remained largely White, though official percentages are not available.

In my first year of teaching, I witnessed a gap between the needs and backgrounds of my students and the curricular resources at my disposal. Some song choices were worthy of passing along to students, and they still hold a place within my classroom. A few songs had derogatory and harmful histories, including songs from minstrel shows. Many others were simply not a culturally responsive reflection of the student population. Geneva Gay (2000) defined *culturally responsive teaching* as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters

more relevant to and effective for them” (p. 29). After incorporating songs students knew from outside the school setting, I saw a considerable increase in their engagement. In contrast, several students disengaged from lessons where they did not consider the song choices to be meaningful to their lives. It became increasingly apparent, with the passing of each school year, that learning about my students’ home musical cultures would open the door to more meaningful classroom experiences.

It is important for teachers to consider the individuals in their classrooms when making curricular choices because the result can either welcome or alienate students. For example, the effects of a lack of cultural responsiveness in the classroom were documented in Kelly-McHale’s (2013) research in a general music classroom. The study highlighted a suburban, midwestern elementary school where the majority of students were identified as English Language Learners. These students participated in school concerts and met the teacher-directed goals in Western-based notational literacy; however, there was a disconnect between students and the teacher. From the students’ perspectives, their experiences in music class became an island with no relevance to their identity as musicians or their home musical lives (Kelly-McHale, 2013).

School demographics will continue to change. How will Orff Schulwerk practitioners meet the needs of each group of students, year after year? How do we adapt our approach and curriculum to welcome, celebrate, and connect with the diversity in our schools? We must first seek to understand who we are teaching (Abril, 2003).

Connecting Home and School Musical Experiences

Seeking creative ways to bridge the gap between home and school musical experiences is a cornerstone of culturally responsive teaching (Abril, 2013; Gay, 2000; Lind & McKoy, 2016). Facilitators of the Schulwerk are also encouraged to draw from the native sounds and musical experiences children are surrounded by outside the music classroom (Sarrazin, 2016). Children’s social and personal identities can be heavily influenced by their families’ music and the ethnic and religious communities in which they live (Campbell, 2010). Music educators should highlight these rich musical backgrounds, rather than ignore them (Campbell, 2010; Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Where does the Orff Schulwerk practitioner begin? The journey starts from a position of cultural humility, the three pillars of which are “(a) commitment to lifelong, critical self-reflection; (b) recognition and mitigation of power imbalances; and (c) accountability to individuals and institutions” (Yoo, 2021, p. 37). This reciprocal learning between teacher and student is an important feature of both the cultural humility framework as well as the Orff Schulwerk approach. Practitioners of the Schulwerk embrace collaboration rather than the hierarchy of teacher-as-authority, and many teachers view themselves as lifelong learners alongside their students. By embracing a posture of cultural humility, “teachers can work collaboratively with their students and their students’ families to develop culturally informed resources or pedagogy that contain relevant historical, cultural, and contextual information” (Yoo, 2021, p. 40).

Teachers should use students’ societal knowledge as a springboard to connect what a student already knows to new concepts and information (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Shaw (2012) suggested that “we begin the repertoire selection process by considering our students rather than by perusing a publisher’s catalog or reading through a stack of octavos” (p. 76). Additionally, as students learn the music of cultures different from theirs, they are introduced to non-musical facets of each community, thus gaining a deeper understanding of others’ lifestyles and traditional values (Reyes, 2018).

The Concord West Side Song Collection

A school song collection can be a powerful resource for creating a connection between students’ home and school experiences. This kind of project needs to be conducted with a posture of cultural humility, in which educators “acknowledge their inability to become fully knowledgeable in intercultural interaction” (Yoo, 2021, p. 40).

In the 2018–2019 academic year, my students and their families participated in our first song collection (see Figure 1, p. 12). Although similar projects have been done in school settings, I developed my own process to ensure family participation played a large role in our collection. My primary goals were to:

1. Open communication and continue to build positive relationships between students/families and me, the teacher.
2. Acknowledge and celebrate the diverse families and cultures at school.

3. Work to connect students' home and school musical cultures by using culturally relevant material in the classroom.

The results were overwhelmingly positive. My students and I discussed the significance of our home musical experiences and how some of those experiences might be connected to the skills and concepts we learned in the classroom. I began by sharing my musical memories of how my mother and grandmother taught me songs and fingerplays we performed together at home. Many of my Spanish-speaking students shared a tradition in which their families participated at fiestas, where people lined up to hit a piñata while singing a traditional song called *Dale, Dale, Dale (Hit it, Hit it, Hit it)*. I then invited students and families to share other songs or games meaningful to them. Throughout the next few months, I had the privilege of learning from many school community members. Some students shared songs they learned from their families, while others shared songs and hand clapping games they learned from their peers—another important and valid musical experience. We then connected the songs they knew to classroom objectives and musical skills. For example, we discovered that some of the songs could be used as accompaniments to traditional folk dances we had learned in class. We used some songs students knew from home to explore form or rhythmic dictation and performance.

Students and families submitted a total of 173 songs, including songs in six languages, representing

Figure 1. Concord West Side Music Logo.



17 countries (see Figures 2 and 3). Several songs were submitted multiple times, including *Elevator One Says Stop*, *Los Pollitos*, *Pin Pon*, and *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*. I researched the history of each song to ensure those with harmful histories were not included. The songbook would be shared publicly, which required confirming the copyright status of each song and including only those within the public domain. Songs of value to families but under copyright were included in other ways, such as adding an extension after learning a folk dance or using purchased, legal arrangements of songs for public performance.

The final collection included 74 songs and chants, including lullabies, movement games, hand clapping games, and fingerplays (see Figure 4, p. 13). English translations were included as needed, as well as game instructions and special memories from many families (see Figures 5, 6, and 7, p. 13). The collection could

Figure 2. Languages Chart.

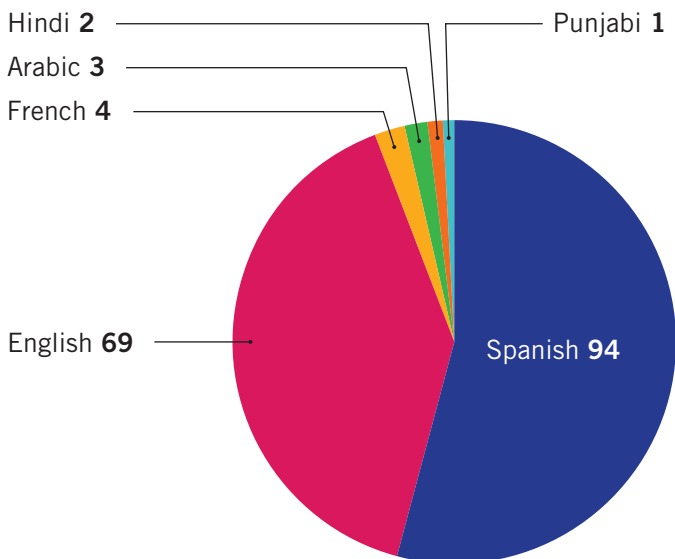


Figure 3. Countries Chart.

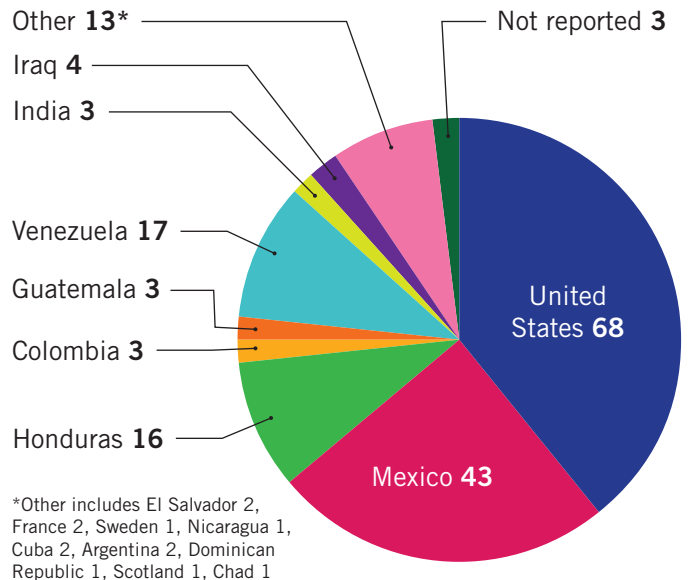


Figure 4. Songbook Cover.



not have been completed without the care and labor of the school translators who worked to ensure that translations were both authentic and artistic. That year and in following years, a digital copy of the collection was provided to school families. The table of contents sample (see Figure 8) and full page example (see Figure 9, p. 14) display some of what the full book offers (Jones, n.d.).

This experience highlighted the wide variance in the depth and breadth of access students have to the resources needed for full participation in a collection like this—exposure to music at home, availability and interest of immediate family members, knowledge of their family’s history, and more. It is essential to offer alternative opportunities for students, regardless of background and musical access. Many of my students shared songs they learned from peers or community members. A few even shared songs they learned from me in music class, because those songs have become an important part of their home musical cultures.

Many of the cultures represented within the song collection are currently underrepresented or missing altogether from the music education curricular marketplace. While overseeing this song collection project, I asked each family for permission to teach these songs in my classroom and to share them with

Figure 5. Quote from Parent 1.

“
Every time I sing it to my kids it brings a smile to my face because I remember my mother singing it to me. And I hope that my kids will remember me the same way and that they can pass it to their kids.
 -Mother of Concord West Side (CWS) student



Figure 6. Quote from Parent 2.

“
I learned this song when I was a child, playing on the playground at school.
 - Parent of CWS Student



Figure 7. Quote from Student.

“
They sing this at every birthday in Mexico City. I learned it from my mom, and we sing it when my family is all together.
 - Third Grade Student



Figure 8. Sample Table of Contents.

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Figure 9. Full Page Example, *Los Pollitos*.

VERSION 1

LOS POLLITOS THE LITTLE CHICKS

Children's Song from Latin America
Submitted by: -----

3 Los pol - li - tos di - cen, "Pi - o, pi - o, pi - o,"
cuan - do tien - en ham - bre, cuan - do tien - en frí - o.

VERSE 2
La gallina busca,
El maíz y el trigo,
Les da la comida,
Y les presta abrigo.

VERSE 3
Bajo sus do alas,
Se están quietecitos,
Y hasta el otro día,
Duermen los pollitos.

TRANSLATION
Verse 1: The chicks say "pio, pio, pio" when they are hungry/ and when they are cold.
Verse 2: The hen looks for/ the corn and wheat/ she feeds them/ and finds them shelter.
Verse 3: Underneath both of its wings/ the chicks are still/ until the next day/ the chicks sleep.

NOTE
There are many different versions of this song throughout Latin America.

“

I learned this song at my school in Venezuela.

- First Grade Student

SCENES & STORIES

musical experiences, the anecdotal results have been overwhelmingly positive. Students have shown genuine interest and respect for cultures that differ from theirs. Caregivers and community members provided positive input into the students' music education, and many first-generation immigrant students proudly shared songs and stories from their countries of origin. Incorporating their music helped connect previously known information to new musical contexts, and continued consideration and updating aligns with Orff and Keetman's desire to welcome the musical experiences of children into the Schulwerk. With that in mind, my goal is to assure students feel welcomed, acknowledged, and respected in my classroom.

Considerations and Limitations

Educators who wish to embark on a collection like this should carefully consider their intentions and methods. This first requires reflection—knowing their own cultural history and the limitations in experience and knowledge beyond it. A posture of cultural humility allows educators to recognize that the goal is not simply to acquire new material to use in the classroom. They will need to immerse themselves in their school communities, establish relationships, and be willing to share their own musical cultures and stories (Yoo, 2021).

Mutual respect among teachers, students, and families is the foundation where a collection like this begins. Without respect, understanding, and cultural humility, music educators can quickly veer into the realm of *cultural appropriation* (Cho, 2015), or as Howard (2020) stated:

Taking intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone else's culture without permission.... [this is] harmful when the source community is a minority group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways or when the object of appropriation is particularly sensitive. (p. 69)

Music educators must also take care to not make assumptions about a student's cultural identity. For example, my school has over 300 students whose families have identified Spanish as the primary language spoken at home. These students represent many different countries of origin, and they all have unique cultural identities and experiences. It would be a major error to assume that a Spanish speaking student might find any random Spanish-language song relevant.

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other music educators. The *Concord West Side Family Songbook* is available for music teachers to use, and I have documented my process to guide other school communities in curating successful song collections (Jones, n.d., 2020, 2021a, 2021b).

Continued Conversation and Curricular Updates

Four years have passed since the initial school-wide song collection. I now do this annually with my third-grade students. This gives them the opportunity to share and learn about the folk and popular music they know and enjoy from their homes and their social musical experiences. The songs and stories they and their families teach me hold a special place in my continually updated music curriculum.

Though I have not conducted formal research to track student engagement and study the effects of these efforts to connect students' home and school

Though a song collection has the potential to create meaningful connections between school and community, students and families should never be *expected* to educate teachers about their cultural and musical experiences. A posture of expectation can place a burden of labor upon the bearer of a particular culture or tradition (Decolonizing the Music Room, n.d.). Also, students might not know their cultural history, and some families might not wish to discuss their histories with a teacher. Although we as educators can expect participation in certain classroom activities, we cannot require our students

and their families to represent or share their home culture without their consent and interest.

Conclusion

We have much to learn from our students. By embracing the concepts of cultural humility and culturally responsive teaching, we keep our focus on *who* is being taught, as well as *what* is being taught. One option is to ensure that curricular content reflects the individuals in our classrooms while also broadening their experiences and worldviews. A school song collection is one way for music teachers to discover and celebrate the existing musical cultures in their students' lives. As we look to the future of Orff Schulwerk, let us seek out culturally-relevant and meaningful music that amplifies the voices of our ever-diversifying student populations. ■

A downloadable version of the *Concord West Side Family Songbook* can be found at: <https://bit.ly/familysongbook>.

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Reinventing Orff Schulwerk Classrooms for a Post-Pandemic World

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic caused long-lasting negative effects on students, teachers, and education. In this article, the author discusses what role music plays in the aftermath of this difficult time and how, by embracing trauma-informed practices through new mindsets and actions, Orff Schulwerk practitioners' classrooms can become places of healing from trauma.

Abigail Van Klompenberg

As COVID-19 spread across the globe, music classrooms where students previously sang, danced, and played fell silent, replaced with music instruction through computer screens. Teachers and students felt the stress the “new normal” brought. Many struggled to adapt to ever-changing guidelines and to overcome barriers that hindered teaching and learning. Some experienced the loss of loved ones; others suffered a lack of resources and support systems outside of school (Gaynor & Wilson, 2020). When the pandemic began to wane and classrooms reopened, our collective trauma informed our belief that life did not feel the same.

Orff Schulwerk educators must acknowledge and examine how this event affected our students, our teaching, and our selves. What role can music play in our healing from this difficult time? How might the Schulwerk classroom be a part of the recovery from the resulting collective trauma?

Where We've Been

Remembering the Schulwerk

In Orff Schulwerk classrooms, educators nurture elemental music and expression. As Orff (1963) stated, “Elemental music is never music alone but forms a unity with movement, dance, and speech” (p. 72). These foundational artforms, integrated and used together, allow us to express ourselves fully through creativity and

performance. We embody an elemental framework that includes, among other aspects, our thoughts, emotions, and physiological responses to stimuli. Although it has always been essential to address the whole of elemental music and the whole person who makes it, in the aftermath of the pandemic we face new challenges in the classroom.

Experiencing Collective Trauma

The COVID-19 pandemic was a collective trauma, “a cataclysmic event that shatters the basic fabric of society” (Hirschberger, 2018, p. 1), that interrupted the school structures on which our communities rely. Schools are a fundamental component of society, encompassing space for students, teachers, and parents alike. Children depend on schools to grow their understanding and to develop social skills. Further, schools are a place for teachers to share knowledge with students through learning and community. Parents depend on schools to be a safe place for their children to learn and grow.

Uncertainty prevailed when schools were shut down in March 2020; teachers and students were unclear about the future of education, and their well-being and mental health declined during the pandemic (Kush et al., 2021; Meherali et al., 2021). Teachers and students were overcome with stress, anxiety, and emotional strife as they navigated online and in-person learning (Lambert et al., 2020). In fall 2020 when classrooms reopened, teachers felt the effects of COVID-19 restrictions and avoided or eliminated routine music activities, such as singing, dancing, and playing, for fear of spreading the virus. Classroom instruments sat unused while debates about the transferability of the virus on hard surfaces continued. In many schools, everyone wore masks. Although they provided a level of safety against virus transmission, they were a continual reminder that our health and safety were at risk.

Students who were present in the physical classrooms still felt emotionally isolated and disconnected; the uncertainty was overwhelming, obliterating any sense of safety. Numerous schools required students to remain socially distanced or observe rigid seating mandates. Dancing or working in groups felt unsafe due to the close contact required. Ever-changing directives on COVID-19 procedures raised questions about classroom choices, as teachers and students longed for pre-2020 daily routines. Though we were back together, things were not the same.

Where Do We Go from Here?

This post-pandemic state of education presented a perfect opportunity for schools, teachers, and students to reevaluate the value of education. Are schools meeting teachers’ and students’ educational, psychological, and emotional needs? As Orff Schulwerk educators, how might we adapt our classrooms to better meet these needs? One option is for Orff Schulwerk educators to embrace new mindsets and trauma-informed practices that aid recovery.

Trauma-informed practices emphasize three overarching themes: 1) building knowledge through an understanding of trauma; 2) shifting perspectives to create healthy school cultures; and 3) advocating for self-care for educators (Thomas et al., 2019). Trauma-informed teachers and school administrators understand the psychological, physical, and social effects of trauma and how to identify the presence of such effects in their communities, and then make informed adjustments to pedagogical practices. Within trauma-informed schools, teachers and administrators understand the influence of traumatic effects on student behavior and academic achievement. Compassion is the nucleus, validating the needs of teachers and students (Thomas et al., 2019) and furthering recognition of the effects on both. Trauma-informed school staff are trained to recognize and combat secondary traumatic stress that results from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person (Figley, 1995). These practices can also facilitate recovery from the pandemic.

Fostering a New Mindset

To move forward, we must first recognize and validate where we are. Society, particularly the education system, is not the same place it was prior to 2020. As a result, we must recognize the resulting emotional turmoil, respond to students’ academic and social needs, and acknowledge the role of educators in a post-pandemic world. This includes:

1. *Acknowledging current levels of student and teacher stress and allowing them to hold these difficult emotions.* Identifying our emotions and examining how they affect our minds and bodies holistically can be a first step in our recovery from trauma (van der Kolk, 2014). Once we feel these emotions, we can learn how to express them, making space for new thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations.

2. *Understanding the effects on student academic skills.* Students in primary grades have never experienced a COVID-free school year. Though the pandemic hindered academic development, the impact on elementary school students was particularly significant. They did not master the standard academic content for their grade levels due to disruptions in classroom instruction (Dusseault et al., 2021). This lack of growth was found across subject areas and academic disciplines (Dusseault et al., 2021). As a result, students could be behind grade-level expectations in music as well as other academic content areas. Their social skills suffered, because children lacked the interactions with peers and teachers that contributed to their ability to manage social behaviors and regulate emotions (Shelleby et al., 2012). School closures hindered opportunities to practice interpersonal skills, such as communicating, collaborating, and resolving conflict. Weakened social skills can obstruct classroom culture and management, a continuing struggle in this post-pandemic world that must be addressed.
3. *Recognizing the current state of all students and acknowledging their developmental levels.* It is critical to approach students from a point of compassion, to understand and adjust to their needs more readily. We must be mindful and accommodate adaptations to curriculum, instruction, and classroom practices to meet students where they are, not where we expect them to be.
4. *Recognizing and addressing—by administrators and school stakeholders—the unfair expectations currently placed on educators and responding to the effects on both students and teachers.* At the beginning of the pandemic, teachers were acclaimed as heroes, helping students survive in their time of need. We were portrayed as selfless individuals, working not for prestige, but for our students. This assertion holds true for numerous educators, especially music teachers. This hero mentality has placed unrealistic expectations on educators, fostering a toxic culture. Today's current educational climate has caused some teachers to acquiesce, enduring detrimental working conditions, low pay, and limited resources.

Applying Trauma-Informed Practices

As Orff Schulwerk educators, we can use the following suggestions for a trauma-informed classroom, which align with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA, 2014) framework for a trauma-informed approach: (1) Safety; (2) Trustworthiness and Transparency; (3) Peer Support; (4) Collaboration and Mutuality; (5) Empowerment, Voice, and Choice; and (6) Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues. The practices and approaches SAMHSA's principles inspire can guide us in healing ourselves and helping others (see Table 1, p. 19).

Cultivating Safe Spaces

We, as Orff Schulwerk educators, have the responsibility to provide comfortable and safe classroom environments in which students can learn, grow, and thrive and where they are valued and respected. Classroom management and discipline strategies should be restorative, building a positive space for students to grow. We can respond to the inconsistency the pandemic created by enacting classroom routines and procedures that promote structure in which students feel safe, secure, and welcome every day.

A meaningful safe space includes recognition and validation of emotions. Orff Schulwerk classrooms can be a space where all students are seen, heard, and understood. An option is to incorporate daily check-ins and time for students to connect with each other socially (Cavanaugh, 2016). We can also encourage students to create a safe environment through expectations and procedures (Cavanaugh, 2016) and through collaborating with our students to construct strategies for those struggling.

Rebuilding Relationships

Relationships founded on trust are key in restoring a sense of safety in a trauma-informed classroom, which can be a space to repair relationships and build new connections. Research has shown that collaborative environments can serve as helpful spaces for processing trauma (Dalton & Krout, 2005; Sciaraffa et al., 2018); thus teachers and students can find solace in discovering their experiences are similar to those of their peers.

Peer support is beneficial if we provide proper space for students to play together and connect socially. Through collaborative music making in the Schulwerk classroom, students can practice working together

Table 1. Trauma-Informed Principles.

Principle	Mindsets	Actions
Safety	<p>Approach students with a kind and open disposition.</p> <p>Monitor student behavior and ensure all students feel safe in the classroom.</p> <p>Apply inclusive practices and language, such as referring to students with student-identified gender pronouns.</p>	<p>Facilitate musical lessons with safety in mind, such as songwriting, to express feelings.</p> <p>Embrace restorative discipline practices, providing students opportunity to reflect on behavior and make amends.</p>
Trustworthiness and Transparency	<p>Assume best intentions with all interactions.</p> <p>Provide open communication with students, parents, and administrators about learning and emotional needs.</p>	<p>Provide agendas and calendars to create a clear and predictable space.</p> <p>Set high learning standards and expectations for all students.</p>
Peer Support	<p>Reflect on student and teachers' interactions.</p>	<p>Incorporate social-emotional learning lessons, teaching competencies such as social awareness.</p> <p>Perform music in a small and large group setting.</p>
Collaboration and Mutuality	<p>Promote a positive mindset among school stakeholders, and advocate trauma-informed practices.</p>	<p>Facilitate collaborative composition problem-solving activities with their peers.</p> <p>Integrate class meetings and discussion.</p>
Empowerment, Voice, and Choice	<p>Validate student emotions.</p> <p>Believe and affirm that all students are capable of success.</p>	<p>Promote student choice in musical repertoire and classroom activities.</p> <p>Provide student voice in classroom procedures, routines, and behavior management systems.</p>
Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues	<p>Examine personal bias to ensure students are treated equitably, regardless of background or circumstance.</p> <p>Reflect on the use of problematic musical repertoire.</p>	<p>Incorporate music from diverse cultures, genres, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Advocate for resources and academic support to aide marginalized students.</p>

SOURCE: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE ADMINISTRATION, 2014.

in music lessons with a social focus. Music lessons that embody social-emotional learning help students understand how to create music and collaboratively process their emotions (Raschdorf et al., 2021). The SAMHSA (2014) framework states that “healing happens in the relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision making” (p. 11). Orff Schulwerk classrooms are the perfect setting in which

to facilitate restorative relationships and healing through collaborative decision making.

Empowering Voice and Choice in Diverse Cultural Contexts

It is important for Orff Schulwerk educators to recognize the cultural implications of the pandemic and to enact practices in their classrooms to counteract

We can respond to the inconsistency the pandemic created by enacting classroom routines and procedures that promote structure in which students feel safe, secure, and welcome every day.

them. Music teachers can support students, regardless of their personal and cultural identities, by encouraging them to use their knowledge and experiences as resources in music class (Gay, 2010). Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) proposed a culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) that emphasizes student achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. When used concurrently, CRP and trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) can empower students of diverse cultural contexts (McEvoy & Salvador, 2020).

We as Orff Schulwerk educators can incorporate CRP and TIP through student choice in music creation, a natural aspect of Orff Schulwerk. Students need opportunities to share their ideas and preferences through the music present in their classrooms. This includes affirming musical choices and the direction

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of compositions, performances, and assessments, and focusing on their interests and the processes in which they learn best. We can expand our repertoire to include musical selections representative of students and their communities (Camozzi, 2021).

Repertoire should consist of music that speaks to students' interests and backgrounds. Genres more connected to them, such as pop, rock, and hip-hop, could be incorporated, reflecting their present thoughts and feelings (Evans, 2020; McEvoy & Salvador, 2020). Teachers might also wish to develop composition projects where students relate their pandemic experiences through lyrics and song.

We can support diverse cultural contexts beyond the walls of our classrooms and address topics such as bias and discrimination by working to implement curriculum that counters inequities in education. In addition, we need to advocate for students who were disproportionately affected by the pandemic and encourage our schools to provide resources, such as counseling to offer emotional support, or to waive extracurricular fees for students with financial hardships.

Embracing the Healing Power of Music

Music education scholar Deborah Bradley (2020) stated, "Music education may provide a natural space to help students deal with trauma, even when trauma is not the focus on the music classroom" (p. 17). Notably, Orff Schulwerk educators should not take on the role of therapist or social worker for their students. We can, however, open musical spaces where students can express and process their emotions.

Music is a naturally emotive and expressive art; the inherent creativity and structure of the Schulwerk lends itself to exploring emotions, behaviors, and social interactions (Achey et al., 2003). Music therapists have utilized Orff-based techniques to support children who are processing grief (Register & Hilliard, 2008) or navigating overwhelming life experiences (Achey et al., 2003). Students in Schulwerk classrooms can benefit from similar experiences by using improvisation and other creative musical experiences to express difficult emotions. Through these practices, the Orff Schulwerk approach can connect the elemental aspects of music to our human elemental aspects.

Conclusion

We cannot say for certain how long the collective trauma the pandemic caused will affect our classrooms.

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MUSIC IS ELEMENTARY

Out of this darkness, I wonder, how we can take what we have learned and use it for good. The Orff Schulwerk classroom is a place of joy where students learn through active music making. It is place of togetherness and community through music creation

and performance. It is a space for students to build connections and grow in their love of music. As we move forward, I encourage you to keep in mind what we have learned as, together, we heal from this trauma. ■

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Leave it to the Experts: Project-Based Learning and Student Creativity

22



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ABSTRACT

What started as a fiasco became a transformative season for an Orff Schulwerk educator. In this article, the author relates how her fifth-grade students collaborated in a Project-Based Learning (PBL) instructional unit to create a music video. The R2P2 Project, combined with the Schulwerk, provided a pedagogical foundation for future curriculum and instruction with unlimited pathways.

Macy L. Bell

“I mean, I see what you’re *trying* to do, Mrs. Bell. You want it to be, like, rap? But it’s actually ... cringy.”

Cringy—a capital offense, the ultimate fifth-grade condemnation. The lesson was not resonating, and with this statement there would be no recovery. In full disclosure, I had spent nearly six weeks preparing for a return to in-person instruction following the COVID-19 pandemic and a year of remote learning. I had painstakingly prepared a Project-Based Learning (PBL) instructional unit that would adhere to the new health and safety protocols, incorporate instructional technology, and engage students in high levels of musicianship through Orff Schulwerk, all while maintaining the portability of teaching music on a cart. As such, I rolled my cart into this fifth-grade classroom fully anticipating a warm, if not enthusiastic, reception to the PBL I had worked so diligently to develop. Rather than enthusiasm, though, an impenetrable wall of furrowed brows, sleepy frowns, and, worst of all, blank stares met me. After approximately 10 awkward minutes in which I passionately defended my position, it became obvious the battle was lost. Six weeks of planning flashed before my eyes as the word *cringy* hung in the air. I took a breath, glanced at the clock, and thought, *What on earth are we going to do now?*

As if from a distance, I heard myself saying it out loud, “OK, what are we going to do?” Silence. Then slowly, hesitantly, one hand went up, and another, and

Figure 1. Success Criteria Rubric for Skill Standards Cr1.1, 2.1a and b, 3.1, and 3.2.

CREATING MUSIC EVALUATION RUBRIC

		EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	NOTES ON PERFORMANCE
	WHAT WE SAY:	"BRAVO!"	"GOOD JOB!"		"KEEP TRYING."	"NOT THERE YET."
	POINTS AWARDED:	5	4	3	2	1 0
IMAGINE	EXPLORATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC 5 points	I can imagine a variety of original musical ideas.	I can imagine several original musical ideas.		I can imagine an original musical idea, with considerable guidance. OR I can imitate existing musical ideas.	I cannot imagine an original musical idea. OR I do not participate appropriately.
	ELEMENTS OF MUSIC SELECTED 5 points	I can organize musical ideas in a logical sequence, independently and without guidance.	I can organize musical ideas in a logical sequence, with limited guidance.		I can organize musical ideas, with considerable guidance.	I cannot organize musical ideas. OR I do not participate appropriately.
	CONNECTING TO PURPOSE OR CONTEXT 5 points	I can describe how my ideas and plans connect to a specific purpose and context. AND I can explain how purpose and context informed my plans and ideas.	I can connect my ideas and plans to a specific purpose. AND I can explain how my ideas and plans connect to a specific context.		I can connect my ideas and plans to a purpose or context but my connections may be inaccurate.	I cannot connect my ideas to a purpose or context. OR I do not participate appropriately.
PLAN & MAKE	NOTATION AND DOCUMENTATION 5 points	I can use standard music notation to document my ideas. AND I can read standard music notation to interpret the musical ideas of others.	I can use standard music notation to document my ideas.		I can use iconic notation to transcribe my musical ideas.	I cannot use standard or iconic notation to document my ideas. OR I do not participate appropriately.
	RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK 5 points	I can respond positively to feedback from peers and the teacher. AND I evaluate and refine my own work using a variety of strategies.	I can respond positively to feedback from peers and the teacher.		I can respond positively to feedback from the teacher but I do not always respond positively to my peers.	I do not respond positively to feedback. OR I do not participate appropriately.
	REFINEMENT 5 points	I can use self-evaluations, peer-evaluations, and teacher-evaluations to improve my creation. AND I can provide insightful feedback to help others.	I can use self-evaluations and teacher-evaluations to improve my creation.		I can use teacher-provided feedback to improve my creation.	I cannot use teacher-provided feedback to improve my creation. OR I do not participate appropriately.
EVALUATE TO REFINE	REHEARSAL "R2-D2" 20 points	RESPECTFUL: Performers bring out the best in each other and always show RESPECT. RESPONSIBLE: Performers work together and independently on their parts outside of the classroom. PREPARED: Performers have an effective plan for rehearsals and <i>always</i> manage time wisely. PROBLEM SOLVER: *Performers use feedback to make changes that <i>significantly improve</i> the final performance. *Performers <i>seek out</i> feedback that will improve the quality of their performance.	RESPECTFUL: Performers usually work together as a team and show RESPECT most of the time. RESPONSIBLE: Performers have all materials and work independently on their parts. PREPARED: Performers have an effective plan for rehearsals and <i>usually</i> manage time wisely. PROBLEM SOLVER: Performers listen to feedback and use effective rehearsal strategies to improve the quality of the performance AND <i>show improvement over time.</i>		RESPECTFUL: Performers sometimes work together as a team and usually show RESPECT. RESPONSIBLE: Performers sometimes work independently on their parts but may require redirection from teammates or the teacher. PREPARED: Performers may have a rehearsal plan but it is not always effective and performers sometimes manage time wisely. PROBLEM SOLVER: Performers try to use feedback to improve the quality of the performance AND changes slightly improve the final performance.	RESPECTFUL: Performers do not work together as a team and do not show RESPECT. RESPONSIBLE: Performers do not work independently to improve their parts and require redirection from the teacher more than once. PREPARED: Performers do not have an effective rehearsal plan and do not manage time wisely. PROBLEM SOLVER: Performers do not use feedback to improve the performance OR performers were not interested in making a positive contribution to the performance.
	CRAFTSMANSHIP OF MUSICAL IDEAS 20 points	I can present a final version of personal created music to others that is polished and organized.	I can present a final version of personal created music to others with minimal errors.		I can present a final version of personal created music to others with several errors.	I cannot present a final version of personal created music to others. OR I do not participate appropriately.
BEHAVIOR	CONNECTION TO EXPRESSIVE CONTENT 20 points	I can perform with vibrant expression appropriate to the purpose and context.	I can perform with expression appropriate to the purpose and context.		I can perform with limited expression that is appropriate to the purpose and context.	I cannot perform with expression. OR I do not participate appropriately.
	PRESENT					

FINAL SCORE		/100	EVALUATOR'S NAME: _____	DATE: _____

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM NATIONAL COALITION FOR CORE ARTS STANDARDS 2014 MUSIC STRAND.

another. Over the next 35 minutes, the glimmer of a plan emerged in fits and starts, and the atmosphere in the room transformed from bored to boisterous, disinterested to impassioned, until students were all but jumping and shouting. In the cacophony, I wrote furiously on a stack of Post-it notes—trying to keep up with the swirl of ideas—and asked occasional clarifying questions. Students continued hurling ideas at my back as I rolled the music cart out the door and down the hallway.

The following day, I presented the jumble of ideas to the next fifth-grade class and opened the floor for further discussion. Similar conversations took place with each class. We committed to a “Yes, and ...” protocol, in which we would accept and expand on the ideas others put forth (McDowell, 2012). The brainstorming sessions progressed until the scope, sequence, and boundaries of a project became clearly defined, and a shared vision emerged.

The project was to be a collaborative grade-level music video in which students composed a song using music technology, designed album artwork, and choreographed a dance. My school’s Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Tier 1 expectations, the R2P2 (Respectful, Responsible, Prepared, Problem Solver) inspired the topic and purpose of the music video. A school-wide, evidence-based, proactive approach to behavior management, PBIS is based on a “three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes” (Center on PBIS, 2022, para. 1).

This project was big, almost too big, but unquestionably *not* cringy. The ideas were terrifyingly bold and miraculously cohesive. Even so, the thought of starting completely from scratch was daunting, to be sure. One thing was abundantly clear; I was not the expert here. Throughout the project I would be a valued team member, activity facilitator, and reality-checker, but never in charge. This project belonged to the students, and I committed to following wherever they led. We planned to premier The R2P2 Project at the fifth-grade Promotion Ceremony. We had just over eight weeks to complete.

Project Planning

Before students could begin engaging in the work, I had some work of my own to do. My task in designing and planning The R2P2 Project was to establish a solid pedagogical foundation and build the culture for collaborative creation. I used my knowledge of Orff

Schulwerk and PBL to align the project to the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) music strand (NCCAS, 2014). Project-Based Learning is a “teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge” (Buck Institute for Education, n.d., para. 3). Orff Schulwerk and PBL work in tandem as “natural partners” (English, 2021, p. 9). Both approaches emphasize authenticity, sustained inquiry, student-centered learning, student voice and choice, reflection, and exploration (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.; English, 2021; Orff, 1963).

The NCCAS (2014) Creating process includes Anchor Standards 1–3: (a) generate and conceptualize artistic work (Cr1.1 – imagine); (b) organize and develop artistic work (Cr2.1a&b – plan and make); and (c) refine and complete artistic work (Cr3.1 – evaluate and refine and Cr3.2 – present). The standards became a natural outline for the PBL. I divided the project into four phases: imagine, plan and make, evaluate and refine, and present. I then drafted an eight-week timeline and designed a rubric for assessment in which I restated the skill standards Cr1.1, Cr2.1a&b, Cr3.1, and Cr3.2 (NCCAS, 2014) in student-friendly language (see Figure 1, p. 23). I inserted all content for the project into a slide deck template (Freepik Company S.L., 2022) and shared it with students via Google Classroom, accessed through the QR code shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. QR Code Link to The R2P2 Project Slide Deck.



Imagine

The Imagine phase was important in defining the shared vision of the entire fifth grade. We allocated one week to Imagine, although we frequently revisited and refined our imagined ideas in later stages of the project. We engaged in a number of discussions and activities centered on product quality. We viewed and discussed exemplar music videos in a variety of genres and styles and used the Orff Schulwerk process of imitation in these early sessions to generate ideas. The students were inspired by the aesthetic of *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* (DJ Jazzy Jeff & Smith, 1998; Raqraqxox, 2013), the special effects in *High*

Figure 3. The R2P2 Project Original Lyrics.

C - R1 - C - R2 - C - P1 - C - P2 - C

RESPECTFUL
We detect respect--It's a cause-- and effect
(What comes next?)
Kindness, Helping others, we don't care it's
a major flex.

We be out here doing good (okay, okay)
Manners like we should (Yessir)
Respectful is the word **and we know it is
a verb!**

CHORUS
**R2P2, R2P2 It's what we're
all about
We're respectful, we're
responsible, (hey), so,
check it out.**

**R2P2, R2P2 That is what we
need
We're prepared, problem
solvers,
And we're ready to
succeed!**

RESPONSIBLE
Responsibility got no cap (no cap) if you
think before you act (okay)
Dependable, trustworthy, **always on task.**
We're responsible, **(ey!)** responsible, **(ey!)**

We don't want no stress, we just give our
very best (all day). **Our actions speak
loud and our brains do the rest!**

PREPARED
Prepared for the day and prepared for the
future, we're focused, hardworking,
(throughout the school year).

We ready to learn, we got brains full of
knowledge
Science, art, math, music, ready for
college.

PROBLEM SOLVER
Problem solving, problem solving, (yeah)
that's what we do. If you're good at solving
problems you'll be a better you (that's
facts)

I said: Homework, Conflicts, Electronics,
Challenges to face, **We be out here
solving problems, makin' the world a
better place! (ey!)**

INTERLUDE
"R2P2"

SOURCE: COVENTRY OAK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS.

Hopes (Panic! At The Disco, 2018), the plot of *Cups* (AnnaKendrickVevo, 2013), the choreography in *Whip my Hair* (WillowSmithOnlineUK, 2010), and the scene changes in *Jump* (KrisKrossVevo, 2010). With these models as inspiration, they began generating possibilities for their final product. I let their imaginations run wild at first before whittling down the “dream list” by asking practical questions, such as, “How do we create an exemplary performance with our existing resources?” Eventually we arrived at a workable list of must-haves that included an intro and outro, graffiti-style mural, featured soloists, use of the school campus and grounds, and small and large ensemble sections. Students continued to revisit and revise this list throughout the project.

Plan and Make

In the Plan and Make phase, we outlined a composition timeline, developed a master to-do list, and delegated tasks to production teams and individuals. Each class began the songwriting process by exploring possibilities for the backing track and lyrics, using the extensive Loop Library in Soundtrap for Education, a web-based digital audio workstation that allows users to create music or podcasts (Soundtrap, 2022). We allocated weeks two through four for this phase. I front-loaded this step by making use of the Favorites

In the Plan and Make phase, we outlined a composition timeline, developed a master to-do list, and delegated tasks to production teams and individuals.

feature in the Soundtrap Loop Library to narrow their options. Students explored the loop options and collaboratively composed the backing track. We recommitted to the previously established, “Yes, and ...” protocol (McDowell, 2012), while also agreeing that small changes or adjustments were acceptable if they significantly enhanced the quality of the work. The “Yes, and ...” protocol was essential to our emergent culture of collaborative creation. It guided group communication—settling several heated debates—and allowed consistent progress based on intentional decisions. It took two weeks to finalize the backing track in Soundtrap.

The “Yes, and ...” protocol continued as we began composing the song lyrics. The Orff Schulwerk approach provided the foundation for guiding my students in improvising and composing. First, they outlined the form, which was four verses and a refrain. We chose to write the refrain first. They improvised words over the backing track and we documented favorite ideas. Gradually, we arrived at this:

“R2P2, R2P2, it’s what we’re all about,
We’re respectful, we’re responsible (hey), so check
it out.
R2P2, R2P2, that is what we need,
We’re prepared, problem solvers, and we’re ready
to succeed!”

We engaged in a similar process of gradual composition through improvisation for each verse. All classes unanimously agreed the verses would be organized in the order of R2P2: Respectful, Responsible, Prepared, Problem Solver (see Figure 3, p. 25).

Each class composed, recorded, and edited one verse and refrain. Every fifth-grade student participated in performing the refrain. Individuals and small groups of students were selected to be featured on the verses. We spent one week rehearsing and refining the performance, discussing recording studio decorum, and practicing procedures, such as eliminating background noise before and after takes, performing with the use of recording equipment and software, timing the backing track, and analyzing takes. We recorded all audio files in Soundtrap, eliminated outtakes, and kept naturally occurring vocal improvisations that enhanced the overall quality of the recording.

Amidst an ongoing global pandemic, after 12 months of distance learning, standardized testing looming on the horizon, and adhering to the considerably restrictive in-person health and safety protocols, the 2021 fifth-grade students at my school surpassed all conceivable expectations.

Evaluate and Refine

After our recording sessions, students in each class joined one of four production teams—the Artistic, Performance, Audio/Visual, or the Choreography Team—to accomplish many tasks simultaneously from weeks five through eight. The Artistic Team first developed a collaborative grade-level art piece on white cardstock, digitized it using a high-definition camera, and uploaded the image to WeVideo for the music video title graphic. The Artistic Team also contributed to the stylistic elements of the video including fonts, camera angles, and scene transitions. The Performance and Audio/Visual Teams held further recording sessions, featuring the Performance Team’s

soloists and small ensembles. These teams worked together to select the best raw audio files from all recording sessions and aligned them to the backing track in Soundtrap. The Audio/Visual Team edited the raw audio files and saved the final version as an mp3 file. The Choreography Team created original choreography for the refrain. They practiced the choreography synchronously and asynchronously across the grade level via Google Classroom.

We filmed footage for the music video during weeks seven and eight. Each class participated in two large-ensemble filming sessions during their regular music lesson time. The Performance and Choreography Teams filmed solo and small ensemble footage at various times and locations. During this time frame, I was also filming whenever, wherever, and whomever I could; we used footage from these spontaneous and random moments to spotlight as many fifth-grade students in the music video as possible. The best raw video files were uploaded and stored in WeVideo. Members of the Audio/Visual Team refined the music video and published it in high definition. The Evaluate and Refine phase truly embodied the sentiment that Orff Schulwerk is “never music alone, but music connected” (Orff, 1963, p. 72) to dance, technology, visual art, drama, and more. The students finally saw how all of their tasks were interconnected in week eight as the music video went through the last stages of evaluation and refinement and the final version emerged.

Present

The music video premiered, on schedule, at the fifth-grade Promotion Ceremony for the entire school community. It also aired on the daily schoolwide Comets Correspondence News Show. It continues to be used in my school to teach the PBIS Tier 1 and can be accessed using the QR code in Figure 4.

Figure 4. QR Code Link to The R2P2 Project Music Video.



Conclusion

The R2P2 Project was simultaneously audacious, hectic, challenging, exciting, and remarkable. On multiple occasions, I questioned whether we would even finish it. Certainly, the odds were stacked against us. Amidst an ongoing global pandemic, after 12 months of distance

learning, standardized testing looming on the horizon, and adhering to the considerably restrictive in-person health and safety protocols, the 2021 fifth-grade students at my school surpassed all conceivable expectations. They managed to imagine, plan, make, evaluate, refine, and present a truly creative and exemplary product that our school community will celebrate and treasure for years to come.

Without a doubt, The R2P2 Project was a pivotal point in my career. It transformed my expectations of what is possible in the post-pandemic Orff Schulwerk

classroom through PBL. The Schulwerk and PBL anchor our pedagogical underpinnings in such a way that we are free to follow where our students lead (English, 2021). Orff's 1963 sentiment, "never music alone, but music connected" (p. 72) is a challenge, a mission. As I look forward to my future curriculum and instruction, I find myself in my own personal Imagine phase. The R2P2 Project is a new starting point, with pathways branching off in every direction. I cannot wait to see where the visions of my students will take us next. ■

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AOSA's Teacher Educators of Color

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ABSTRACT

Teachers of color continue to be outnumbered and underrepresented in the United States. Of the 151 active AOSA teacher educators, the author interviewed nine who identify as teachers of color. In this article, they share their thoughts and experiences within and beyond the Schulwerk.

Tiffany Unarce Barry

Reasons abound as to why we musicians choose to work in the music teaching profession: love of the arts, enjoyment in the process of learning, and a desire to work and share knowledge with others. Some of us knew early on that music teaching was the path for which we were destined, whereas others fell into music teaching while putting ourselves through school, raising families, and attempting to make a sustainable living. Still others realized and chose the path later in life and made the bold choice to change careers. Whatever our reasons for becoming a music teacher, there is no doubt we put our whole selves into the work despite the many interpersonal, social, economic, and political challenges we face as educators.

As a second-generation Filipino-American educator, I often wonder about the effects of my past experiences as a student, in childhood and beyond. In grade school, I had only one Filipino teacher, who also happened to be my music teacher; the rest were White, with a few Latine, Black, and Asian-American teachers. The latter mostly fell into the background of my life, whereas the former had an esoteric effect; I was in silent awe to see someone “like me” in a position of musical authority at school. As an adult, my participation in AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses profoundly changed my life and career trajectory. I learned to experience and express speech, movement, and music in new ways. I connected deeply with educators near and far and was thoroughly inspired by the AOSA teacher educators (TEs), who shared their knowledge and expertise. I also noticed that only one of the TEs from my Orff courses was someone of a

minoritized background. Though we did not share the same ethnicity, this particular TE of Hispanic descent and her teaching style resonated with me. She was playful, adventurous, vulnerable, and relatable, all of which were masterfully encapsulated in her non-verbal teaching approach. She left the most lasting impression of all the TEs in my Orff Schulwerk courses, and I cannot deny that her identity and positionality played a role in that. Like me, she was a woman navigating the operations of a male-dominated world. Like my parents, she was a bilingual immigrant whose home culture did not match the American majority's predominantly White, Eurocentric households. Many of my personal experiences growing up as a second-generation Filipino American made me feel inadequate and like I was an outsider in this country. I knew these notable teachers from my childhood and adulthood understood the struggles of my experiences, too.

AOSA Teacher Educators

Becoming an AOSA TE is a long and complex process that involves intense study and training via apprenticeship. Although the requirements of becoming a TE in Basic Orff, Movement, or Recorder differ slightly between countries, only AOSA-approved TEs can teach courses that grant certification in the United States. As I reflected on the lack of teacher diversity I experienced in AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses, I became interested in learning more about the perspectives of underrepresented AOSA TEs, particularly teachers of color, immigrants, and those who identify as part of a marginalized group. The current published database of AOSA's approved TEs lists 151 that teach one or more areas of Orff Schulwerk Basic Levels I–III, Movement, and Recorder. The list does not reveal much about the TEs' backgrounds, identities, and experiences. With no demographic data, I set out to find and speak with TEs of minoritized backgrounds through a snowball effect; contacting one led me to another, and so on. As a result, I was able to interview nine AOSA TEs from various backgrounds to learn more about their Orff Schulwerk journey.

Impact and Challenges of the Schulwerk

When asked about the impact of Orff Schulwerk on their lives, all nine TEs expressed love and appreciation for the approach. Sofía López-Ibor, a Basic Levels and Recorder TE in California who was immersed in Orff Schulwerk as a child in Spain and immigrated as an adult to the United States, shared:

Orff Schulwerk has made me a better musician and dancer. Making music in a group and developing this sense of community opened my ears, eyes, and heart to others. I only learned to read music as a young adult and my feeling for melodic patterns, my sense of harmony and rhythm were well developed by then. One particular idea that resonated with me is the aspect of movement and integrating the arts. My particular interest in exploring the performing and visual arts as a unity has really informed my personal development.

Michael Vasquez, a Movement and Recorder TE in Texas, shared a similar appreciation:

The Schulwerk has made me more aware of how to break down concepts, materials, and language in a way that inspires risk-taking while allowing for vulnerability in lessons. We hear our ideas and learn to take criticism and adjust. After practicing the process with my students for many years, they are more aware of how we can extend lessons, which allows for groups to add movement, additional sections, and so much more to their work without being prompted.

Rich learning experiences and successes in education can also be fraught with challenges that have nothing to do with pedagogy. Research suggests that teachers of color frequently experience feelings of isolation and stress when there are no teaching colleagues, or students, that reflect their race, ethnicity, or culture (Darwich, 2021). Coming from a different place or even looking and being different can often lead to exclusion and a deep-seated feeling that one does not belong. Kimberly Collins, a Basic Levels TE in Arkansas, felt similarly when she applied for an apprenticeship to become a TE. Although she loved being a participant in the teacher education courses and was quite successful utilizing the Schulwerk with her students, Collins stated:

It was much lonelier than I expected as I worked to create my own material and courses. I did not have the comradery I felt in my Levels courses or at conferences. Some colleagues were very inviting, others were not so much. It felt like there were more barriers to my success than there was support. This led to a level of anxiety I had not experienced before when it was time to teach. I felt confident enough

with my understanding of the material, but I felt the gravity of presenting a high-quality course. It became a very stressful time in my life.

Manju Durairaj, a Basic Levels TE in Illinois, had a similar experience. An adult immigrant from India and United Kingdom, she fell in love with Orff Schulwerk during her student teaching. Durairaj explained:

Being new to the country and to the Orff world, I did not have many friends or mentors, but my independent research at that time seemed to suggest that taking Levels at various course locations would broaden my learning as well as my exposure to Orff Schulwerk around the United States. This is what I did, from all three Levels to various Master Classes in addition to auditing and shadowing. From my perspective, it seems like every course has a culture and the parent national organization has a culture. It has taken me a long time to feel acknowledged and included in the Orff community. While I am happy to be a culture bearer, it has been an uphill journey to find validation as an Orff educator beyond the community-ascribed label of culture bearer.

Research shows that teachers of color (TOCs) frequently experience racism through microaggressions, which are statements, actions, or incidents that often unconsciously or unintentionally express a prejudiced attitude towards members of marginalized groups, resulting in derogatory, harmful effects. Teachers of color are also subject to more indirect, subtle forms of discrimination, such as being on the receiving end of colorblindness, being ignored or “othered” by colleagues (Darwich, 2021; Kohli, 2018; Rodriguez-Mojica et al., 2020), being mistaken by name with someone of a similar ethnic background (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012), being presumptuously questioned about their background or pedagogy, being pushed into stereotypically defined roles and positions (Kohli, 2018; Darwich, 2021), and being subjected to racist nativism where the English language is used to subordinate and oppress immigrants and Latine who are perceived as non-native (Perez Huber, 2011). These behaviors significantly affect the well-being, growth, and retention of TOCs. Although a push to recruit more into the field is ongoing, mentorship and structural paradigm shifts in the system to support them are lacking (Kohli, 2018).

Mika Inouye, a Movement TE in Colorado, shared how difficult experiences affect the way she moves forward in the education world:

I live and work at a crossroads, the Four Corners where Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona intersect. My own identity as a Japanese/Chinese American—among Native American, Mexican American, and White populations—requires me to be more sensitive and diligent when I prepare and present material to my students. I make a point to consider, as my professor sister Mei Li Inouye often puts it, “Who is bleeding and who is benefiting?” I can then intentionally use music and movement to foster a culture for our students to listen and share. Every day I see the need for more work in diversity and inclusion in our classrooms. As a person of color, my sensitivities to being visibly different help me create moments for marginalized students to share and to shine. While every teacher would have a similar instinct to encourage a shy second-grader to sing a Navajo lullaby and recite her clan heritage, the combination of what I look like and where I am distinctly influences the way I encourage her as well as how she receives my encouragement.

These sensitivities were also experienced by Judy Thompson-Barthwell, a Basic Orff and Movement TE in Michigan. She stated:

I wanted to be the best teacher I could be, particularly for the students I chose to teach, the African American working class. One of the most prevalent concepts of Orff is that you must know your community, then be creative in adapting to the basic understandings of Orff to your situation. I went to the chapter meetings and conferences to be with people who had similar goals. I appreciated being with like-minded teachers, but at that time most of them did not know whom or what I was working with. I found myself rejecting much of the material I was taught—particularly the Volumes—in favor of the children’s own renditions of popular music and playground games to use as source material.

Natasha Thurmon, a Recorder TE in Texas, shared a similar belief when working with marginalized cultures and communities:

I have learned that it is paramount to constantly question my teaching practices, and how beneficial they are to my students. That exercise includes an examination of the Schulwerk, in particular its rules on Elemental Theory which can sometimes be rigid. Rigid enough that when trying to arrange a piece of music from another musical culture or background, authenticity can disappear and wash away the origins of the music. It's important to recognize that the Orff approach has its own limitations and won't always be the most appropriate approach for every lesson, student, or school.

The Gifts of Representation

Though over 50% of the student population in the United States consists of students of color, 79% of teachers are White (Schaeffer, 2021). When it comes to teaching populations of diverse ethnicities and backgrounds, teachers of color can be important culture brokers within a community, providing a necessary mirror or bridge in highlighting the cultural wealth and achievement of students of color (Darwich, 2021; Kohli, 2018). Ben Torres, a Recorder and Movement TE in Tennessee, stated, "I would love to see more teacher educators of color. We need to be as diverse as the children in our classrooms." Patrick Ware, a Basic Levels, Movement, and Recorder TE in Virginia, further expressed his wish for more diversity not just in teachers' identities, but in the Orff approach itself. Reflecting on Orff's (1963) ever-popular comparison of the Schulwerk to a wildflower blooming in nature, Ware stated:

In the implementation of the Orff approach, I would like to see more of the diversity of thought and action that is intended with the wildflower metaphor. The native flowers of the Northeast are not the same as those of the Southeast, Northwest or Central regions, or any other region of the nation. The seeds may be the same—creativity, joy, active music making—but the soil will bring forth something different for everyone.

Orff himself worried about the erosion of the wildflower's natural environment when the "balance of nature is lost by interference" through exploitation, over-cultivation, and drawing-board mentality (Orff, 1963, p. 154). The effort to qualify, quantify, even standardize "good" Orff teaching is problematic; it can diminish the very essence of what his wildflower

signified. Authors Shirley Salmon and Georgios Tsiris (2013) stated:

Keeping the whole person as the focus of the attention, the Orff approach is always adapted according not only to the cultural framework, but also to the needs and strengths of the people with whom practitioners are working each time. (p. 91)

These unique needs and strengths of people of any color or background are, in fact, gifts meant to challenge and improve the Schulwerk. With that said, I posed the question, "What gifts do you yourself bring as an Orff teacher of color?" Following, in alphabetical order, are their responses.

Kimberly Collins

As a teacher of color, I believe I offer a different perspective concerning organizational operations. While I have held offices on the local level, I have no idea what it is like to hold an office with AOSA on a national level. I can only imagine how



difficult it is to make choices for the body as a whole. In almost every aspect of society, centuries-old divisions persist. Each has developed its own cultural norms and thought processes, some of which hold value for all of us in decision making. Because we operate separately at times, misunderstandings arise, and ill-informed policies are often the result. As an African American who attended private, predominantly Caucasian schools from middle school through college, but also grew up in the African American culture, I am familiar with both and look for opportunities to bridge the gap between them. I believe we are better together if we learn to listen and value each other's thoughts, feelings, and cultures.

Manju Durairaj

As a teacher of color who had a lived experience of the inequities within AOSA, especially in the identification and mentoring of teachers from marginalized and under-represented groups, I bring an empathetic perspective to my teaching and organization. I hope to be able to use my positionality to speak up where needed, to bring



about a shift in mindset, and to intentionally help create a culture of belonging by leading by example.

Sofía López-Ibor

I grew up surrounded by rich musical traditions and rituals, and this has been a strong foundation to understand other cultures. As an immigrant I face the daily challenges of the language barrier, the cultural differences, and the fear of simply not belonging. You live a life of “the things that are like this here” and “the things that are the opposite there.” You wake up one morning feeling completely assimilated and the next hour you feel like you are the “other.” This is a powerful experience that many young people also live through in the world.



Mika Inouye

My gift to my students is that I represent color and difference. I grew up in central Utah where my grandparents relocated after being incarcerated and married in a Japanese-American internment camp during WWII. Today I live in a rural, mostly White, Colorado community that was once a temporary home to laborers of my shared Chinese ancestry. I have always been different, and being different makes you listen and observe in ways you can't if you are part of the majority. This allows me to naturally break down negative stereotypes and help people understand and confront racism by learning how to listen and determine who is benefiting and who is bleeding. To the extent that we are all different, we can work on our ability to listen without projecting our experience onto someone else's. New perspective will foster understanding, kindness, empathy, and ultimately peace.



Judy Thompson-Barthwell

First, I had dance lessons from age 5, so I bring a natural inclination of dance and movement to my teaching. Second, I bring an understanding of being somewhat in the middle,



navigating between Blacks and Whites most of my life. Meaning, I am Black but have been seen as privileged by many Blacks. Then often as the only Black in the room with Whites, I've been seen as the integrating factor representing Blacks. As a teacher, I hope this has allowed me to recognize many points of view and to understand my students' struggles in order to plan for their needs. Third, having lived around several Black men, I recognize the difficulty this group has in meeting society's expectations and their own expectations simultaneously. Fourth, having grown up Black in a city with a preacher grandfather, I have a natural feeling for improvisation and music/dance from the Black diaspora even though I didn't formally study it.

Natasha Thurmon

I try to bring my own unique perspective, without allowing myself to become a token. As an American Korean educator, I view life through the lens of being raised in America but also being Korean and having lived experiences that are a blend of the two. I want to help educators develop an understanding of their students and see things from their perspective. I want to help them be reflective of their own teaching practices, both within and outside of the Orff Schulwerk approach, to best serve their students. “Representation matters” seems like a phrase that gets used a lot, but that's because it's true. If I have a student of color in one of my courses, I hope they see my face and realize that becoming an Orff teacher educator is an option for them too. Ultimately, I want to do the best I can as an AOSA TE for teaching my students to be fantastic recorder players and pedagogues.



Ben Torres

I think just being actively engaged and present in the committees/subcommittees I serve in helps a lot. Our voices and opinions need to be heard, and we need to be part of the conversation and decision-making process. Being active can show others that they, too, can be part of this work.



Michael Vasquez

I provide something to my students and community that is desperately needed—representation. I bring proof that a Queer POC can not only build healthy supportive relationships with students and community members, but also inspire, defend, and fight for those who are not represented. I wish I would have had a POC or Queer music teacher who modeled that I could have been expressive, spoken up, allowed vulnerability, and accepted that mistakes are inevitable. In spite of the painful experiences I and the generations before me have had to endure from those who perpetuate systemic racism, I try to model courage, flexibility, and growth as much as I can.



Patrick Ware

I like to think that the gift I bring as an Orff Schulwerk teacher of color is the ability to be a mirror to students that come before me. Whether it be a kindergarten student in my building or an adult learner in my course, I would like to help that student discover their own love of music making and through me see the possibility that they could one



day stand before a group of learners and share that feeling while nurturing the next group of individuals.

Conclusion

There is no question that these TEs bring something special and unique to the Schulwerk. Given that teachers of color represent such a small percentage of the AOSA-approved TE population, it is critical to recognize and acknowledge their significant contributions to our field—not just for our fellow Orff teachers but for our young students as well. They bring a perspective and worldview rich in cultural and socio-economic experience that only people of color know firsthand.

As an Orff teacher of color myself, knowing they have experienced similar hardships and struggles helps me feel seen and less alone. At a time when we desperately desire a sense of belonging in this world and to feel like we are enough just as we are, perhaps we can find a bit of ourselves in these nine TEs who lead and advocate for change in the future of Orff Schulwerk. ■

If you are an Orff teacher of color, a member of AOSA, and are interested in becoming an AOSA teacher educator, visit the apprenticeship page for AOSA-members-only at: <https://member.aosa.org/member/teacher-education-courses/for-course-instructors-and-apprentice-applicants>

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Join the Conversation ...


“Let the children be their own composers.” —Carl Orff

A core value in the Schulwerk is to honor the creative impulse for and the development of improvisation. This can take place in a variety of media; it might or might not lead to composition or performance beyond the walls of the classroom. Improvisation experiences can foster joy, laughter, self-esteem, community building, and human development. Improvisation requires a facilitative, supportive, safe, and inspirational pedagogical technique that encourages participants to risk vulnerability and transparency in real-time inventiveness.

We wonder:

- What themes, source materials, or resources inform and inspire improvisation in our music classrooms?
- How do we promote vocal improvisation for all ages and encourage instrumental improvisation on traditional, ethnic, found, and classroom instruments?
- How can we facilitate creative movement experiences through traditional and contemporary music genres?
- How might we inspire various forms of improvisation through drama, art, and imagery?
- How do we facilitate improvised musical interactions between students, build safe spaces for creating and sharing in our classrooms, and celebrate student ingenuity at all levels?
- How might we integrate and develop improvised ideas into larger compositions or student performances?
- How can improvisation in subject areas other than music improve learning and retention?

In *The Orff Echo* Fall 2023 issue, we will look at the theme of **Improvisation** in Schulwerk-inspired music and general education classrooms. What principles, resources, and success stories might you share with our community? Look for the official call for submissions in AOSA News, November 1, 2022.



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Pentatonic and Orff Schulwerk in Iran

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KAMRAN GHABRAI, NASTARAN KIMIAVI, MASTANEH HAKIMI, SHAHRZAD BEHESHTIAN, YASAMAN KIMIAVI, and MEHRNAZ LAKFARD, six members of Adamak, the Iranian Orff-Schulwerk Association, co-authored this article. Ghabrai, editor in chief of Adamak, and his fellows in the research department work on music education and related fields in Iran. This article is part of their work on adaptation and implementation of Iranian folk music in the classroom.

ABSTRACT

Orff stated, for children to understand something, it was best to let them find their own way. Improvisation on pentatonic scales is a good start, but what if no pentatonic pieces exist in the folklore repertoire of a people? In this article, the authors focus on the use of the pentatonic in the Schulwerk and discuss the challenges and adaptations of pentatonic music in the context of Iranian music education.

Adamak

Adamak: An Introduction

In 1967, the Asian Music Community, under the leadership of Yehudi Menuhin, held a series of workshops in Iran. During one of these workshops, Dr. Hermann Regner, from the Orff Institute, lectured about Orff Schulwerk and its roots. This was the moment Orff Schulwerk was introduced to Iranian musicians. A few years later, Kanoon, the governmental institute for the intellectual development of children and young adults, was the main center for the Orff instruments and the new approaches to music education in Iran. Then came the revolution, the Shah was overthrown, the revolutionary militia took over the cultural and educational centers, and most of the governmental music activities went into hiatus for some time. From then on, only educators in private sectors and places such as kindergartens and afterschool programs utilized the Orff Schulwerk approach and instruments.

In the summer of 2011, several Iranian graduates of the Orff Institute, Mozarteum University, Salzburg, went on to establish the very first Iranian Orff-Schulwerk Association. This organization is known by the name Adamak. The purpose of Adamak is to raise awareness of the Orff Schulwerk approach, adapt it to the local culture of Iran, and create a favorable environment for Orff Schulwerk teachers to improve their artistic and pedagogical skills, to exchange ideas, and discuss different pedagogical and artistic issues. Members of Adamak gather, produce,

and publish reading materials, provide technical consultations relevant to Orff Schulwerk, and run specialized workshops, seminars, and meetings in different cities.

Pentatonic in Orff Schulwerk

Orff studied several books about historic folk music and the music of German children in the 1920s. He paid special attention to Franz Magnus Böhme's *Deutsches Kinderlied und Kinderspiel* (1897), which was about children's play songs in Germany at that time. Many of the oldest pieces in this collection are based on minor thirds, three tone recitation, and pentatonic melodies. Orff and Keetman took many songs and rhymes for the volumes from this book. Orff also studied Fritz Brehmer's, *Melodie Auffassung und melodische Begabung des Kindes* (1925), which was about elemental singing and the vocal improvisations of children. Brehmer's work convinced Orff that pentatonic structures were typical for archaic melody structures in the singing of children (Personal communication, Kugler, 2018). Hence, the first volume of *Music for Children* (Orff, 1950) contains pentatonic pieces with no half steps that start with two-note melodies. In some other countries, Schulwerk experts have composed volumes in the same spirit. In most of them, we find newly composed or local pentatonic pieces, as well as anhemitonic. Orff and Keetman also composed pentatonic pieces for children, because there was not much pentatonic music available for children at the time.

Pentatonic in Iran

Iranian music is classified into two categories: folklore and Dastgâhi. The pentatonic is present in both.

Iranian Folklore Music

Folklore music includes most melodies and songs of the nation. Many prominent musicians kept these melodies alive and still sing and play them. The sound of these melodies is somehow similar to the sound of neighboring countries, but with its own flavor and graces. Indeed, we can find some instances of pentatonic melodies in the folklore music of Iran, but as we shall see, these melodies should be redefined to become, in actuality, pentatonic. The southeastern areas of Iran have borders with modern day Pakistan, which, up until the mid-19th century, was a part of India. The southwest of Iran neighbors Arab countries, and the African musical heritage has

been carried from these regions to Iran throughout the centuries. Northern neighbors have also had a great influence on Iran's local music, perhaps because of the proximity to India and Africa. We can find some melodies in southern parts of Iran that have a pentatonic structure, but these are not original to our homeland and are imported from other countries. Thus, passing and ornamental tones have to be omitted for the pentatonic structure to emerge. As Tran Van Khe (1977) explained,

When we examine closely the pentatonic scales used in the Asian countries, we notice that they are not formed or 'reconstituted' in the same way, and that they are not all anhemitonic, that is, they are not using semitones. The intervals and succession of intervals are not the same, but behind the apparent heptatonic music we can discover a pentatonic structure with two auxiliary degrees added to the five principal tones. And that the presence of six degrees in an octave does not signify a hexatonic scale but rather two pentatonic scales, one succeeding the other. (p. 76)

For example, the folk song *Maste Qalander* is from southeast Iran, which is close to India. During the Sassanid (the late antiquity) era, the Iranian empires decided to bring in some minstrels from India. These minstrels, called *kowlies*, brought instruments, such as the *qeichak*, *roubab*, and *benjou*, and played songs that had a pentatonic structure adorned with passing tones. The beginning of *Maste Qalander's* melody is pentatonic, with C and G serving as passing tones. Other examples are the *Lampâsu* song from the Godars of Mâzandarân (a northern region of Iran); the *Sekina* song from Manoudjân people of Kermân (an ancient city in southeast Iran); and the introduction of the *Allâh Mani*, from the Baluĉ people (see Figures 1–4, p. 38).

Dastgâhi Music

Dastgâhi music refers to melodies (metric and non-metric) and rhythmic patterns that are considered classical. During the Qajarid (Qajar dynasty, 1798–1925), *radif*, a musical structure, was created to keep and coordinate the Dastgâhi music (During, 1991). Melodies of *radif* with fixed rhythmic patterns are classified in 12 *mâyehs*, or modes. Each *mâyeh* is made up of two tetrachords, but due to the quarter/three-quarter tones, *mâyeh* cannot be compared to

Figure 1. *Maste Qalandar*, Folk Music from a Region in Southeast Iran, Baluĉestân.



Figure 2. *Lampâsu*, Folk Music from a Region in Northern Iran, Godars of Mâzandarân.



Figure 5. First Part of the Song, *Bârun Bârune*, Based on a Kurdish Song.

Bârun bârune
Based on a Folk Music from West of Iran (Kurdestân)

Lyr. Siroos Arianpoor
Arr. Nastaran Kimiavi

Mel. *f* bâ - run bâ - ru - ne za-mi-nâ tar mi - še gol - ne - sâ ju - nom kê - râ beh - tar mi - še

SG

AM

SX

AX

BX

Cb.B

Timp.

Mrcs.

SOURCE: ARRANGED BY NASTARAN KIMIABI. USED WITH PERMISSION.

played, and even rearranged to create opportunities for children to engage in music listening, performance, and creativity. Since Iranian Dastgâhi music lacks pentatonic scales, Orff Schulwerk educators can use its fixed rhythmic patterns as accompaniment to composed and improvised pentatonic melodies. With

Orff Schulwerk still in its infancy in Iranian music education, we must continue to adapt the approach without compromising the music of our country. Like other countries, perhaps it is time for music educators to create a newly written volume of *Music for Children* specifically for Iran. ■

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Momentum for the Future: Honoring Our Students

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ABSTRACT

Music teachers are examining their professional practices and habits as they seek new pathways forward. In this article, the author reflects on the importance of honoring student musical preferences and how this can provide a more student-centered and student-led learning environment.

Crystal Briley

*“Now, this is a story all about how
My life got flipped-turned upside down
And I’d like to take a minute
Just sit right there
I’ll tell you how I became the queen of the Zoom atmosphere!”*
—DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince, adaptation by Crystal Briley

The fast and furious exit from school buildings in March 2020 was unexpected and flipped our lives upside down. Our entry into the largely unknown world of online meetings through Zoom and its counterparts presented challenges we had yet to overcome. Making peace with this, teachers across the world began the brave task of singing, saying, dancing, and playing in innovative ways. Slowing down to make time for social interactions, meaningful exploration, and structured improvisation has enabled us to bring fresh ways to honor student musical preferences and new life into our classrooms.

Pandemic Slow-Down

The lockdowns had created the need to set aside time for students to engage in the learning process again and reconnect with others. Prior to the pandemic, most of my lessons were on a schedule and geared toward standard-based and process-based content learning. Students were experiencing isolation and needed time to talk and socialize with their classmates and me. During the planning

for lessons in this strange time, it was clear lesson pacing needed to slow down to make room for the socializing students needed. It was also important for me to take into account the various time constraints and equity concerns that resulted from virtual and hybrid learning. Students were in class virtually for less time than provided in a classroom, and many needed extended time to turn in their work due to internet unreliability or home interruptions, including the raging sickness in the community.

Meaningful Explorations

Although time for social engagement was a focus in our class, a need for meaningful exploration was emerging. When presented with a virtual classroom, I struggled with ways to engage students with no instruments at home and no way to sing, say, dance, and play collectively in an Orff Schulwerk-based way. This called for being creative and exploring new possibilities. With the resources available at my school and a school funding site grant, each student was provided with a “music kit” to take home and use as part of their learning—as many other music educators did. On a more primary level, our students used these materials to make music in a much different way than they had before. Rather than give them the materials and instructions on how to use them, I made time for them to explore as they came up with new ideas on their own. Their eyes lit up when, as a class, we used their ideas to springboard our learning. Slowing down the pacing made time for their processing.

Students’ excitement and the cacophony that followed unmuting their microphones to share ideas clearly indicated that improvisation was our next step in moving forward. Their creativity was encouraging to watch. We walked through activities on elemental form, question and answer, and ostinato, and it was not just the students improvising rhythms in their homes—siblings, parents, and even grandparents engaged to create their own music for our class. Those months of allowing time for students to engage with their families through music were crucial.

Flexibility

Flexibility was key during this period, and the open-ended possibilities the Schulwerk offers became a significant support. Due to the innate “what if” nature of the approach, my experiences were successful. *What if we used found-sounds for instruments? What*

if we shared new technology to help students compose music? What if we had virtual dance parties? What if we met our students right where they were? This flexibility provided the support to continue to explore, innovate, and hone my teaching skills. The slower pace the pandemic brought allowed me to embrace even further the Schulwerk’s suggested flexibility.

Student-Preferred Music

My second main realization was the importance of using student-preferred music. It was difficult to engage students over Zoom, but when using music they preferred, their motivation and attention increased. For example, I implemented a rap unit that integrated their song and artist preferences; songs were drawn from a student survey conducted during pre-pandemic months. In that survey, I discovered that most of my students preferred to listen to rap and hip-hop. Serendipitously, an online music curriculum offered a unit on those genres that I was eager to try out and use with them during hybrid learning.

Rap Hybrid Project




The hybrid-learning rap project took nine weeks to complete, with students doing some work with me and some at home. We spent time investigating the history of rap and structures of rap music, and devoted much time to analyzing lyrics and the musical forms. Students writing their own rap lyrics took longer than anticipated. We spent a considerable amount of time exploring various subjects and ways to express ourselves with creative vocabulary and rhythms. Using online resources, students designed loop tracks and simple ostinati to accompany their written lyrics (see Table 1, p. 42).

Connecting to the Schulwerk

The Schulwerk has always emphasized using music familiar to the learner. In explaining how the Schulwerk was translated from German to be used in other countries, Orff (1963) clarified that “it wasn’t simply a question of translation but rather of using a country’s folklore, its nursery rhymes and children’s songs” (p. 143). Today, children’s songs often include popular music. As Vasil (2020) stated,

Children today have the opportunity to hear a wider spectrum of music.... Outside of school, they can have broad listening experiences via streaming services ... and specific cultural and social listening

Table 1. Student-Written Rap Examples.

Arlie, UPCA, Grade 3	Alexa, UPCA, Grade 4	Jayla A, UPCA, Grade 5
 <p>Arlie speaking, got my paint leaking, cause we have creative hearts. We like to sing, we like dance, 'cause our trademark is arts! We like science, social studies, dancing and music too. We like to sing, we like to dance, it's fun for me and you!</p> <p>University Park, we got those arts, University Park, we got those arts, yeah!</p> <p>We got grades, K to 5, a lot of teachers, it's like a hive! Students learn to add and take away, we have fun every day. Yo! Encore? Wassup? We're making music, we turnin' up!</p> <p>Let's not forget there's other teachers too—we're University Park and we're here for you! University Park, we got those arts.</p>	 <p>My name is Alexa and I'm nine years old, I'm cool, I'm awesome, and I'm also bold. I have two brothers and a really cool mom; I have a cooking grandma and her food is bomb.</p> <p>Alexa, Alexa I am cool. Alexa, Alexa too cool for school. Alexa, Alexa I have super friends. I am cool all the way to the end.</p> <p>Other people don't like me and that's OK, I will wish them an awesome day. I have awesome teachers, isn't that great? I'm a great person and that's my fate</p> <p>Alexa, Alexa I am cool, Alexa, Alexa too cool for school. Alexa, Alexa I have super friends. I am cool all the way to the end.</p>	 <p>I'm tired of staying home, I wanna go back to school. I miss seeing my teachers, And I don't wanna break rules. I'm a cool kid, everybody calls me Miss Jayla; I miss notebooks, And writing my name at the top of the paper. All this virtual learning gets boring sometimes, So I decided to take a break and spin a few rhymes.</p>

SOURCE: UNIVERSITY PARK CREATIVE ARTS ELEMENTARY STUDENTS, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA. USED WITH PERMISSION.

experiences from their friends and family. Why not include music they know as a starting point in the classroom? (p. 26)

Honoring personal choice in music was particularly important during the height of the pandemic because it allowed students to find ways to identify with the deeper meaning of the songs and express the fears and feelings bubbling to the surface with the daily unknowns. Each choice was different, which validated their aesthetic and background. As posited by Warner (1991), “Teachers

who can learn to understand the child’s music language and to use it in their teaching hold the key to a meaningful and successful educational process” (p. 8).

Each night during that time, I saw *Jimmy Fallon and The Roots* model this approach as they brought us popular music in an elemental way. Inspired by Fallon’s creations, I continued to embrace this innovative yet foundational approach. My AOSA teacher education allowed this model to flourish in the classroom and, in turn, inspire my students to create and improvise in their own genres.

Orff (1978) noted the importance of drawing on a child's own repertoire. Similarly, Orff Schulwerk teacher Franklin Willis (2021) posited:

The way your students learned material five years ago may not work with your students this year. This is where, as educators, we have to find different entry points to begin our instruction to ensure that our students are successful. (p. 9)

The approach reflected in these words led to significant results in my classroom. Students' compositions showed great thought, effort, and meaning and stimulated more ideas for future possibilities with this project and other popular music lessons. The vulnerability in their writing also gave me insight into who they are as human beings and ways to engage with them on a personal level.

Conclusion

Music teachers have always had to adapt. The silver lining in all the chaos is, as teachers, we can now leave behind processes that did not work and begin to gather practices that improve our lives and continue to enhance them beyond the hybrid-teaching years.

The lessons of the past few years have stayed with me. They brought opportunities to support students by honoring their musical choices. My classroom has taken on a more relaxed atmosphere relative to lessons and timelines, and my students have flourished musically in the time we have been back in the building. I look forward to cultivating these new seeds of the wildflower—in my students and me and remaining flexible in teaching and learning going forward.

As Orff Schulwerk educators, we can benefit from taking time to reflect on our experiences, especially those of the last few years. We need to examine everything. Can we allow more time in the classroom for social interactions, meaningful exploration, and structured improvisation? Can we honor our students' musical preferences? We might not yet see the whole pathway forward, but we can take the first steps in getting there. ■

To access the raps cited in this paper, please visit <https://bit.ly/BrileyEchoRapVideos>

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Songs that Children Sing: Clues about Innate Musicality and Cultural Influence

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SHIH-YU JADE PAI has researched music of children from various cultures. After completing this research project, she began teaching in primary schools in 2012. Teaching music has become the source of her creative energy.

Shih-Yu Jade Pai

This research article was originally printed in The Orff Echo Spring 2010 (Vol. 42, No. 3) issue.

Before I started my ethnomusicology study, I was an evolutionary biologist, counting fruit flies behind the microscope. I was trying to select for a higher cold resistance in fruit flies by exposing them to the cold for several hours each fly generation. After 10 generations of such manipulation, the cold-selected flies were able to produce more progenies than the non-selected flies after a short exposure to the cold. By manipulating the environment, I was able to change the genetic disposition of the population toward a more stress-tolerant one, and hence change the observable characteristics—what biologists call *phenotype* (Johannsen, 1911), or in this case, the fertility after the cold stress.

As an ethnomusicologist, the experiment got me to think about music in a very different way, not as the popular culture, traditions, or a label of identity, but as a biological phenomenon. Music, as the cold tolerance of the fruit flies, is a *phenotypic product*, the result of the ongoing interaction between environmental conditions and genetic predispositions. Environmental conditions include not only the natural environment, but also the human environment, which could be the soundscape or even culture. Without this external input, what people sing represents their innate musicality, the result of pure genetic predisposition. I began to wonder just exactly how these two factors—environmental condition and genetic predisposition—influence our music making. This article is a summary of my first attempt to answer this question.

Among the many types of music making, I decided to focus on singing because it is the earliest form of music making and requires no explicit learning, unlike playing an instrument. What interests me most is song *style*. The way a person sings is a combination of the soundscape and their own innate musicality. How does each of these two factors affect our vocal style?

The most direct way to answer this question would be to put individuals in isolation—to exclude the environmental factor so we could discover the innate musicality. Humans are not fruit flies, however. Having realized there is no direct approach, I chose an alternative method, which was to listen to what children sing. Although children are also situated in vibrant soundscapes, there is still a compelling possibility that part of what they sing would reflect innate musicality, considering that they have spent cumulatively less time on earth than adults.

Source and Methods

For my master’s thesis (Pai, 2009) I transcribed and analyzed 100 children’s songs (“children’s songs” as used here refers to any song *sung* by children) from various parts of the world: Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, South India, South America, Guinea-Senegal, Brazil, China, Bulgaria, Madagascar, Romani France, Mauritania, Cameroon, and Taiwan. This sample was selected from two compact disc series: *Le Chant des Enfants du Monde (Children’s Songs from Around the World)* and *台灣原住民之歌 (Music of Aborigines on Taiwan Island 1)*, produced by the ethnomusicologists Francis Corpataux (1993–2009) and Ron-Shuan Wu (1993), respectively. I selected mostly songs meant to be sung on playgrounds, such as game songs, or songs sung by very young children. Because of the possibility these songs were made up by children, they were less likely to be influenced by cultural style. The texts were omitted because the focus of the analysis was the musical elements.

The analyses focused on five areas: tonality; meter; melody; structure and grouping; and means of ending. Under each area, I analyzed specific properties, such as scale. Pooling the data from 100 songs, I drew out major tendencies and the relationship between these tendencies and the origin of the songs. The following summarize the findings.

Tonality

I designed two ways to analyze tonality. The first was to decide if a song was based on a “traditional” tonality, such as diatonic and anhemitonic pentatonic scales. A song could be classified as such even though one or two tones might be “missing,” as long as they still retained the characteristics of that tonality. This analysis revealed that regions with a music tradition of anhemitonic pentatonic scales, such as Southeast Asia and China, had significantly more children’s songs

Table 1. Use of Diatonic and Anhemitonic Pentatonic Scales in Different Regions.

	Diatonic	Anhemitonic Pentatonic	Others	Total
Southeast Asia	6	18	4	28
India	5	1	2	8
Africa	9	9	9	27
Europe	7	0	4	11
China	1	7	0	8
South America	7	2	9	18

(here and in the following paragraphs, “children’s songs” refers specifically to the sample 100 songs) sung in this scale than a diatonic scale. In regions with a tradition of diatonic scales such as Europe, all of the songs were sung in this scale exclusively. The results noted in Table 1 show that children’s use of scales is strongly influenced by their soundscape.

The other method of analyzing tonality is simply to count the number of tones. A third of the children’s songs use a five-tone scale, and only less than a quarter of the songs use a seven-tone scale. Fifty-six percent of the songs use five tones or less. This is a surprising discovery, because if children’s use of scales were strongly influenced by the environment as shown in Table 1, one would expect most of the songs to have either five or seven tones, since most music traditions use either an anhemitonic pentatonic or a diatonic scale.

All of the pitches used in a song do not seem to have equal importance. Usually one pitch, which I call the “home note” and can be thought of as the tonic in Western music, has a special structural importance—more than half of the songs return to the home note at the end of phrases.

Non-Random Use of the Tritonic Scale

Incidentally, four out of five songs using a tritonic scale have the same pitch relationship of do-re-la (see Figure 1, p. 46). I suspect that this is not simply a coincidence. One possible explanation is through “spreading.” Spreading is a term used by linguists to refer to a sound trait that moves from one population to another by means of contact. In other words, one would expect to find two neighboring populations share a number of sound traits because of frequent

Figure 1. Yoyo Yo.

Guinea-Senegal



contact. Referring back to the data, this was not the case, however. These songs came from Peru, Guinea-Senegal, Brazil, and Brittany, and there is no geographical connection between them.

The second possibility is contact through media, instead of physical contact. During the past century media has become a bridge between cultures, which makes sound exchange possible without physical contact.

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Table 2. Types and Distribution of Meters Used in 100 Children’s Songs.

Type of Meter	Specifics	Number of Songs	Total Number of Songs
Binary Meter	2/4	9	69
	4/4	60	
Meter with Ternary	12/8	10	11
Subdivision	18/8	1	
Ternary Meter	3/4	2	4
	6/4	2	
Others	5/4	3	5
	sectionalized	2	
Unclear Meter	N/A	11	11
			Total = 100

This is a highly possible scenario, *if* the songs were composed *after* the rise of media. If all of these songs were composed *before* the use of media, the creation of each was independent, without influence from the others. At this point, I suspect that since both CD series were meant to represent traditional songs, the compositions have a historical root deeper than the media.

The third possibility is that this pitch relationship is an innate, universal preference, so that it repeatedly and independently comes up in various cultures. It is a likely explanation but one needs a larger sample size, as well as date and origin of the compositions to prove this theory.

Meter

Most of the songs use a binary meter (see Table 2). Of the songs that use 12/8 meter, 90% are of African origin. As 12/8 meter is ubiquitous in African music, the importance of cultural influence is confirmed again.

Among the samples were two songs sung by a Thai girl that I could not stop myself from listening to. Both songs have a half-sung, half-spoken quality. *Poo Noi Meu* (see Figure 2) is a singing game and *Sier Punk* is a nursery rhyme about rain. They are good

Figure 2. Poo Noi Meu.

Thailand



examples of songs without a clear meter. It is not to say that they are not rhythmic, as the timing between syllables is clearly regular. Rather, the lengths of the musical phrases seem to be governed by the lengths of the text phrases.

Melody

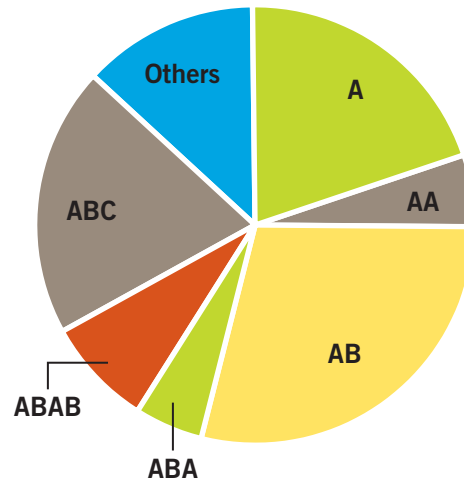
Three melodic elements—range, phrase length, and contour—were analyzed. Most of the songs were within one octave, with the average phrase length between four to five quarter notes. To make a comparison, all songs were arbitrarily converted to a quarter-note unit. For songs that used a ternary subdivision (12/8), all three eighth notes were converted to one-quarter note. The emphasis here was the number of *tactus*, not the mathematical values. Two characteristics, small range and short phrases, seemed to be present in the majority of children’s songs. The few exceptions I encountered resembled the “adults’ songs” of their respective societies. A song from India used extensive ornamentations, which are rarely found in any other children’s songs, but very common in classical Indian music.

I found no general tendency in the contour of the melodies. However, more “upward” movement is present at the beginning of the songs and more “downward” movement at the end.

Structure and Grouping

Most songs were composed of simple structures (see Figure 3). Songs composed of more than three distinctive sections (ABC) either go on to a new section or return to a previously occurred section.

Figure 3. Relative Proportion of Basic Structures Found in 100 Children’s Songs.



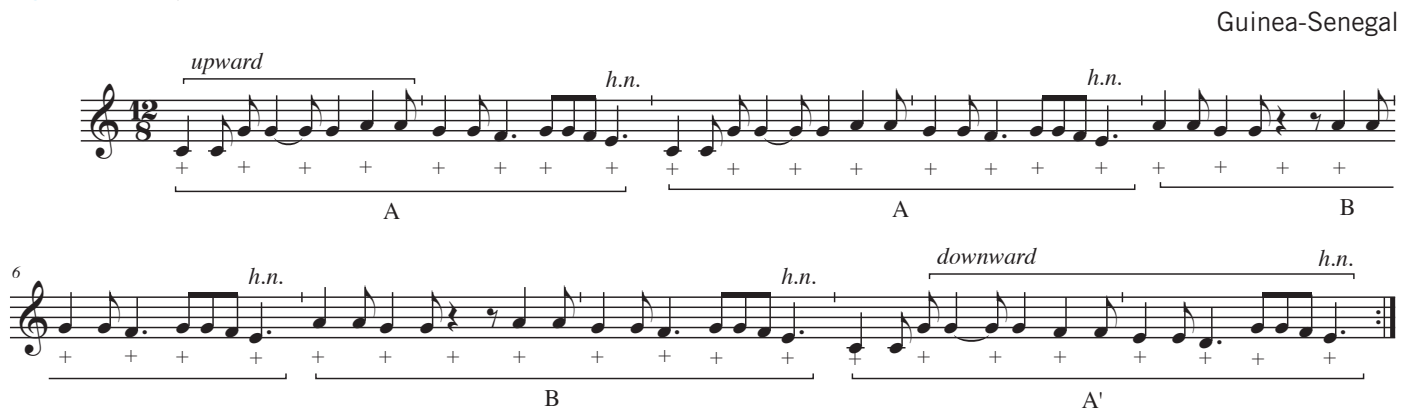
Means of Ending

As Coral Davies (1992) observed, songs children made up usually had a means of ending, as opposed to just stopping. They used several ways to achieve the feeling of an ending: returning to the “home note,” repeating or returning to a previously occurred section, slowing down the tempo, going down the contour, and having a section of spoken text. I found the last one particularly unique to children’s songs, especially the game songs.

Symmetry in Children’s Songs

From what I observed, many children’s songs could be described as “symmetrical” in a number of ways (see Figure 4). Melodically, some have an “umbrella-shaped” contour (up and then down). Structurally,

Figure 4. D’Anye Bara.



'+' represents clap
h.n. = home note

some have the same beginning and ending section (ABA, for example). Tonally, the “home note” appears at the beginning and at the end.

Conclusion

In summary, most children’s songs follow a specific pattern: a small number of pitches in which the home note frequently appears at the end of phrases, binary meter, small range, short phrases, contour that has an upward shape at the beginning and a downward shape at the end, simple structure, symmetry, and an ending achieved through cadence, ending section, or contour. Although these characteristics represent the majority of children’s songs, we still find a surprising amount of diversity. Each song is unique through its own use of musical materials. Such diversity in musical character was not something I expected to find at the beginning of my research.

Although there are a few clues about the source of children’s musical style—cultural influences or innate musicality—most of the things I discovered left me in deeper wonder. There are still too many unknown factors: Were the songs composed by children or for children? Do they represent a preference or originality? Is there a universal innate musicality? Are certain musical characteristics more easily influenced by culture than others? Why are children’s songs symmetrical? These are just the beginning of the list of questions.

In the hope of separating cultural from biological factors in music making, I found myself more deeply entangled in this web of currents driving and molding the musical styles we know today. This study raised more questions than it answered about music making. Yet, I hope it also encourages all who love and care about music to ask more questions in the search for answers. ■

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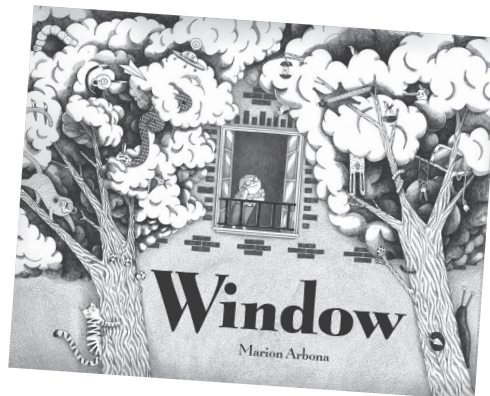
CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Scott Roether

Window

Written and Illustrated by Marion Arbona

Kids Can Press, 2020



Window by Marion Arbona begins before the story's title page with a young girl daydreaming while peering through a classroom window. She yearns to walk the streets of what appears to be a bustling, expansive city. This book is wordless, minus the title and a few descriptive lines on the back cover—"Have you ever wondered what's behind that window? There could be extraordinary things to see in your very own neighborhood. Open the window and look inside ...". These understated sentences invite the reader to experience the many possibilities within a book delightfully simple in concept but executed with complex and adept illustrations. It features playful vignettes hidden behind a number of flaps, each embellished with a window ranging from unadorned to ornate.

Arbona's black and white felt-tip drawings depict a series of scenes, serving almost as "windows" into fantasy and fiction, dreamscapes and nightmares, the true-to-life and the imaginary. If we look closely, we see hints of what might be hiding on the other side of the windowpane. The author's intricate illustrations could be an extension and modernization of Jean Marzollo and Walter Wick's popular *I Spy* children's books. The rich details invite us to journey through our own imaginations and those of the little girl and our students. Additionally,

the illustrations offer numerous opportunities to explore pattern, line, and texture and relate them to the corresponding terms within elemental music and movement. Though significantly disparate worlds hide behind each of the pages, a certain cohesion is notable in the author's drawings, throughout which she incorporates similar texture, style, and techniques.

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Students will find value in composing their own music, movement, and visual interpretations of Arbona's artwork, with many of the conceptual components catering to the upper elementary and middle school age levels.

Although some students might be stumped by the lack of explanation behind each of the windows, others will feel emboldened to create stories for each of the vignettes. This could easily be extended into writing activities either in the music room or with students' grade-level language arts teachers, perhaps with a poetic or fictional narrative focus. The author offers boundless other artistic opportunities: potential dramatic play, singing, movement or vocal exploration, and playing rhythmic or melodic ostinati. The series of illustrations are simply begging to be made into a whimsical program, with students portraying the fanciful scenes full of characters concealed behind each of the windows. I can already hear *Andante* from page 46 of *Music for Children* Volume IV as the class recreates a scene featuring monster-like creatures through creative movement and dramatic play.

Students will find value in composing their own music, movement, and visual interpretations of Arbona’s artwork, with many of the conceptual components catering to the upper elementary and middle school age levels. *Window’s* pages, though conceptually advanced, offer playful possibilities for young students as well, with careful facilitation.

The story ends with the explorer recounting the day in her bedroom, drawing her own illustrations, leading the reader to wonder whether she truly experienced the series of windows or if her journey was a figment of her imagination. Where will your students’ imaginations take them? ■

SCOTT ROETHER is the lower music school music specialist at University School in Shaker Heights, Ohio, where he facilitates music and movement classes for junior kindergarten through Grade 4. He holds a bachelor’s degree in music education from Ohio University and is completing his master’s degree in music education with a concentration in Orff Schulwerk at the University of St. Thomas. Scott has completed Kodály Pedagogy Level I, AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III, Master Classes, Curriculum Development, and the International Summer Course at the Orff Institute. He is a recipient of the American Center for Elemental Music and Movement’s Beacon Scholarship and is a member of their Collaborative Board.

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CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Micaela Schmitz

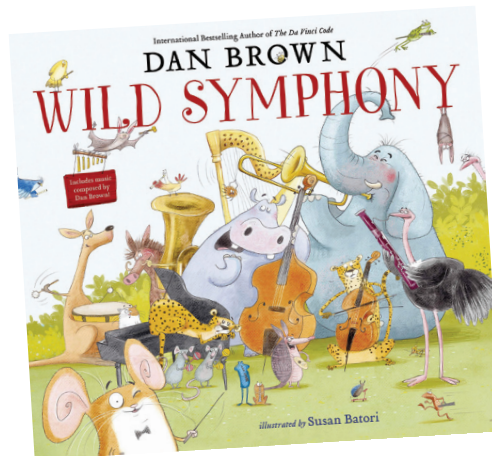
Wild Symphony

Written and Composed by Dan Brown

Illustrated by Susan Batori

Performed by Zagreb Festival Orchestra

Rodale Kids/Penguin Random House, LLC, 2021



Dan Brown's *Wild Symphony*, illustrated by Susan Batori, is a series of colorfully depicted poems, each about a different animal. It can be read alone, but is more useful with its accompanying soundtrack, available as an app or on streaming services such as Spotify. Brown, best known for his book *The Da Vinci Code*, also composed orchestral music for this book. Recorded by the Zagreb Festival Orchestra, each piece is a miniature, perhaps inspired by Saints-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*. The book is not a narrative as such, so the poems—except for the first and last—can be read in any order. Each poem is accompanied by a related aphorism such as, “Now and then, close your eyes and listen. You might ‘see’ something new.”

Batori's playful illustrations are appealing, and children enjoy spotting the animals and counting them. Animals playing instruments is not realistic, thus it is OK that the boar/warthog is chasing butterflies. In reality, boars destroy gardens, but we suspend our disbelief! There was good support for my friend the spider, whom I love for its ability to kill off mosquitoes, and each poem ends with some sort of learning point or moral. *Wild Symphony* also has some humor, as in the Kangaroo poem: “Bounce to run—Ka-Boing! Ka-Boing! Bounce for fun—Ka-Foing! Ka-Foing!” This could be a springboard (pun intended) for some movement.

Wild Symphony's accompanying app is interesting, but seems designed to be used with a child at home, where both adult and child can see and hear together. Readers point their phone at a page and the correct music plays. This is not always flawless. It also has an option to push the arrow button on your device for the next piece of music to play sequentially. Apparently the app includes a “secret video” of the author talking and playing the piano, which was not obvious to me when I first looked at it. To use the book in a classroom, teachers will want to consider streaming individual movements as an alternative to the app, adapting to available technology, type of class, and the concepts taught. I also found that the illustrations were not big enough for everyone in my classroom to see. An option would be to capture and project the illustrations for future use.

Batori's playful illustrations are appealing, and children enjoy spotting the animals and counting them.

If you wish to read the poems to your students with the music as underscore, plan to rehearse ahead. If you read them with the music, you will find certain sections need careful timing. The Cheetah poem surprised me by its pace. It starts with stillness and sneaking, but changes to running at top speed. If you do not read the slow part of the poem in time, you will be interrupted by music for the fast part. For this reason, I suggest playing the music first, having

students guess the animal, reading the poem, and perhaps playing the music again afterwards.

In my classroom, I read this book with many levels and have found, with 20 animals total, it is too long to read to kindergarteners in one stretch. This story probably works best with Grades 1 and 2 and would be most enjoyed in small segments at a time rather than in one read-through. Older students can discuss the orchestral instruments and families or Brown's use of contrasting articulation, tempo, meter, and register to reflect the character of the animals. It might also be useful to discuss the sound the animal or its environment, such as the ocean, makes in real life.

Wild Symphony can invite movement, both metered and non-metered. Each poem/musical piece inspires different types of movement. Some poems are short enough for children to memorize,

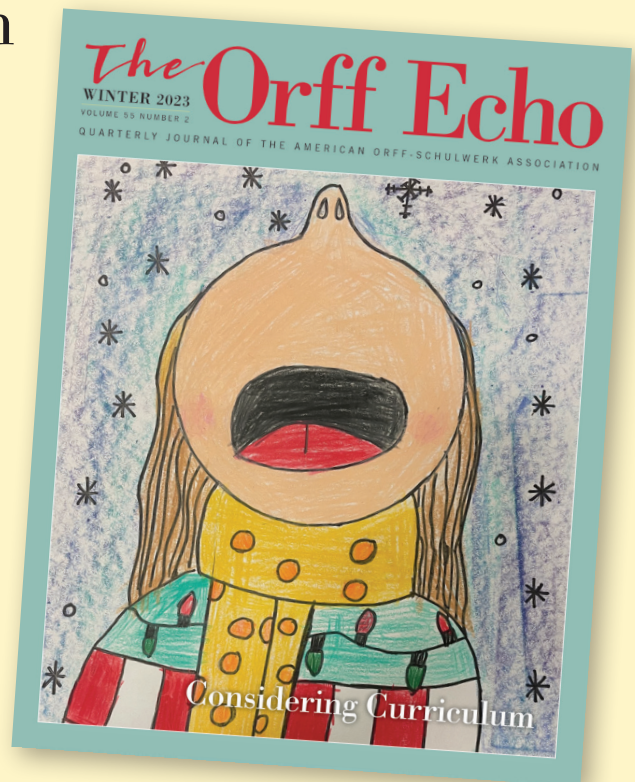
but teachers can also recite them. Most are rhyming couplets. There are definite patterns of meter in the poetry; these can physicalize compound duple or a straight forward duple. Orff Schulwerk educators may choose whether movement accompanies the poem in a metered fashion or portrays the music in a more free-form way. Available for just under \$10, *Wild Symphony*, with its text, illustrations, and music, brings good value to the Schulwerk classroom. ■

MICAELA SCHMITZ, after a decade of performance and leading freelance workshops, teaches kindergarten through Grade 8 classroom music at two Catholic schools in Kentucky, one of which has never had music taught before. She completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I and II with chapter support and is currently benefitting from the Orff Digital Mentorship Program.

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Considering Curriculum

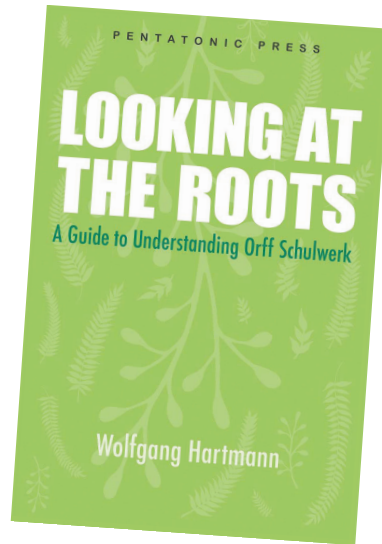
With our students, we sing, play, move, and create. We invite students into musical experiences that integrate their input and lead to creative outcomes. What structures help us design experiences that meet the developmental, situational, and personal needs of our students? How do we set the stage for experiences that deepen musical understandings over time? Look to the Winter 2023 issue, **Considering Curriculum**, to open a dialogue about our Orff Schulwerk practices through diverse curriculum-development lenses including peer teaching, constructivism, concept-based learning, and play.



Reviewed by **Martha O’Hehir**

Looking at the Roots: A Guide to Understanding Orff Schulwerk

Written by Wolfgang Hartmann
Pentatonic Press, 2021



Both new and masterful practitioners will find *Looking at the Roots: A Guide to Understanding Orff Schulwerk* by Wolfgang Hartmann, one of our foundational teachers, to be an extraordinary resource for the Orff Schulwerk community. It is also a current, definitive, and concise document to represent Orff Schulwerk to those looking at it from outside. Salient themes are introduced in each of the book’s 11 short chapters, two extensions, the chronology of Orff and Keetman, and the mini “Who’s Who.”

The Schulwerk’s emphasis on facilitating human artistry is supported throughout the book. The author includes stories of vision and resourcefulness in the biographical material on Orff, Keetman, and others, bringing to life their quests to find and bequeath a music pedagogy that nurtures the human spirit as a co-creator in this world. Inspirational entry points for future lessons and for personal growth in innovation and imagination abound.

Almost hidden in these pages are some long-lost but notable ideas to explore; these are strategies and concepts that arise in the text without fanfare, yet are ripe with possibility. For instance, in the chapter devoted to coaching instrumental teachers into the world of elementary general music teaching, Hartmann describes “pioneer level” and “play level” to explain the appropriate

function and use of didactic (convergent) and open-ended (divergent) teaching processes within the curriculum. A bygone art that formerly was a mainstay of the Schulwerk is “singing storytelling.” This form of improvised opera appears in the chapter on Orff’s youth (he created many of these as a child), in the chapter on Orff as a composer, conductor, and pedagogue, and again in Extension Two, along with several vivid examples of creative student compositions that model how easily this can be worked into our lessons. For those who struggle with developing compositional and improvisational prompts, many entry points and inspiring lesson ideas are embedded in the text, especially in the two extensions at the end of the book.

Whether you study this alone or with colleagues, you are likely to feel as if you have come into “the inner circle” of the world of Orff Schulwerk.

If you are interested in history and the biographies of Orff’s colleagues, “Bringing Schulwerk to Life” introduces readers to most of the important early contributors. Chapter 4 is a transparent view of the historical context in Germany in which the founders of the Schulwerk navigated. Chapter 5 is devoted entirely to Gunild Keetman, Orff’s primary co-composer and pedagogical colleague. Chapter 9 places the

Schulwerk in context with the work of Kodály, Dalcroze, Laban, Gordon, and others, which provides the reader with an introduction to the gifts and limitations of each approach and suggests how they can be blended together. Chapter 11, “Orff Schulwerk Today,” and Extension One, combined, provide a feast of written resources, authors, programs, institutes, and opportunities worldwide for meeting our Orff-extended family and continuing our professional development internationally. The chronology of Orff’s and Keetman’s lives also lists major landmarks in the development of modern music education.

I envision several applications of this book. Certainly, anyone writing a thesis or dissertation with an emphasis on the Schulwerk will find it an indispensable addition to their research of literature, providing a concise contextual overview of the Orff Schulwerk approach and its foundational materials, proponents, intent, and universal applications. It is an ideal guide for our teacher educators and directors, both for their own professional development and as a resource for those whose programs include question and answer sessions and/or conversations on history, philosophy, and roots of the Schulwerk. University professors responsible for introducing students to various approaches to music education will find this small book with its short chapters an ideal resource for probing not only the Schulwerk, but also the companion music education philosophies and how they support each other. It can help pre-service and in-service music teachers create a scaffold for

developing their philosophy of music education and a strategic plan for professional development.

This book could easily serve as a chapter’s book study, a PLN, as required reading between AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses, or as a supplement to some Master Classes. With this in mind, there is a companion review of this book, including a syllabus, in the August 9, 2022 issue of AOSA’s digital publication, *Reverberations*, which is available online in our Resource Library. The syllabus is organized as a table and includes eleven topics, proposed readings with page numbers, and some guiding discussion questions. Whether you study this alone or with colleagues, you are likely to feel as if you have come into “the inner circle” of the world of Orff Schulwerk.

We can immediately use the valuable tools and information the author has provided to create a strategic career plan that reflects promise and opportunity. *Looking at the Roots: A Guide to Understanding Orff Schulwerk* broadens our knowledge and invites us to go as deep into the Schulwerk as our hearts desire. ■

MARTHA M. O’HEHIR holds master’s degrees in music education from Shenandoah Conservatory and in educational leadership from Johns Hopkins University. She has completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III and Master Classes and has served on the editorial boards of *The Orff Echo* and *Reverberations*. Martha helped create the first PLN on *Elementaria* and adapted Schulwerk pedagogy for teaching adults to improvise in modes on their various instruments at the bedside. She currently serves on *The Orff Echo* editorial board.



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Region IV	Heather Klossner and Michele Sampson
Region V	Karin Puffer and Matthew Stensrud
Region VI	Deb Navin and Melissa Marotta
Industry Rep.	Michelle Brady

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2022 National Conference Chairs (Kansas City, MO)
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The Orff Echo is your resource for new or time-tested ideas, thought-provoking concepts, philosophical investigations, work that supports AOSA's diversity statement, and other discussions about the Orff Schulwerk approach. Check the editorial calendar on this page to learn about upcoming features. We also accept articles on any subject as well as children's and Supporting Our Learning book reviews, cover art, and coda content/photos for every issue. Contact an issue coordinator or the editor for more information.

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THE ORFF ECHO EDITORIAL CALENDAR

The Orff Echo seeks and publishes open submissions as well as feature topic articles that summarize the focus of the issue. If you would like to contribute, contact one of the issue coordinators or send your inquiry to echoeditor@aosa.org

Issue	Feature Topic	Coordinator(s)	Contributor's Deadline
Summer 2023	Who We Teach	Alan Spurgeon Martina Vasil Juliana Cantarelli Vita	November 15, 2022
Fall 2023	Improvisation	Sandra Adorno Diana Hawley Martha O'Hehir	February 15, 2023
Winter 2024	Joy	TBD	May 15, 2023
Spring 2024	Grow	TBD	August 15, 2023

*“The clearest way into
the universe is through
a forest wilderness.”*

John Muir

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“CONTEMPLATING PATHWAYS” BY ANDREA JENSEN HAYES, AJ HAYES PHOTOGRAPHY.

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