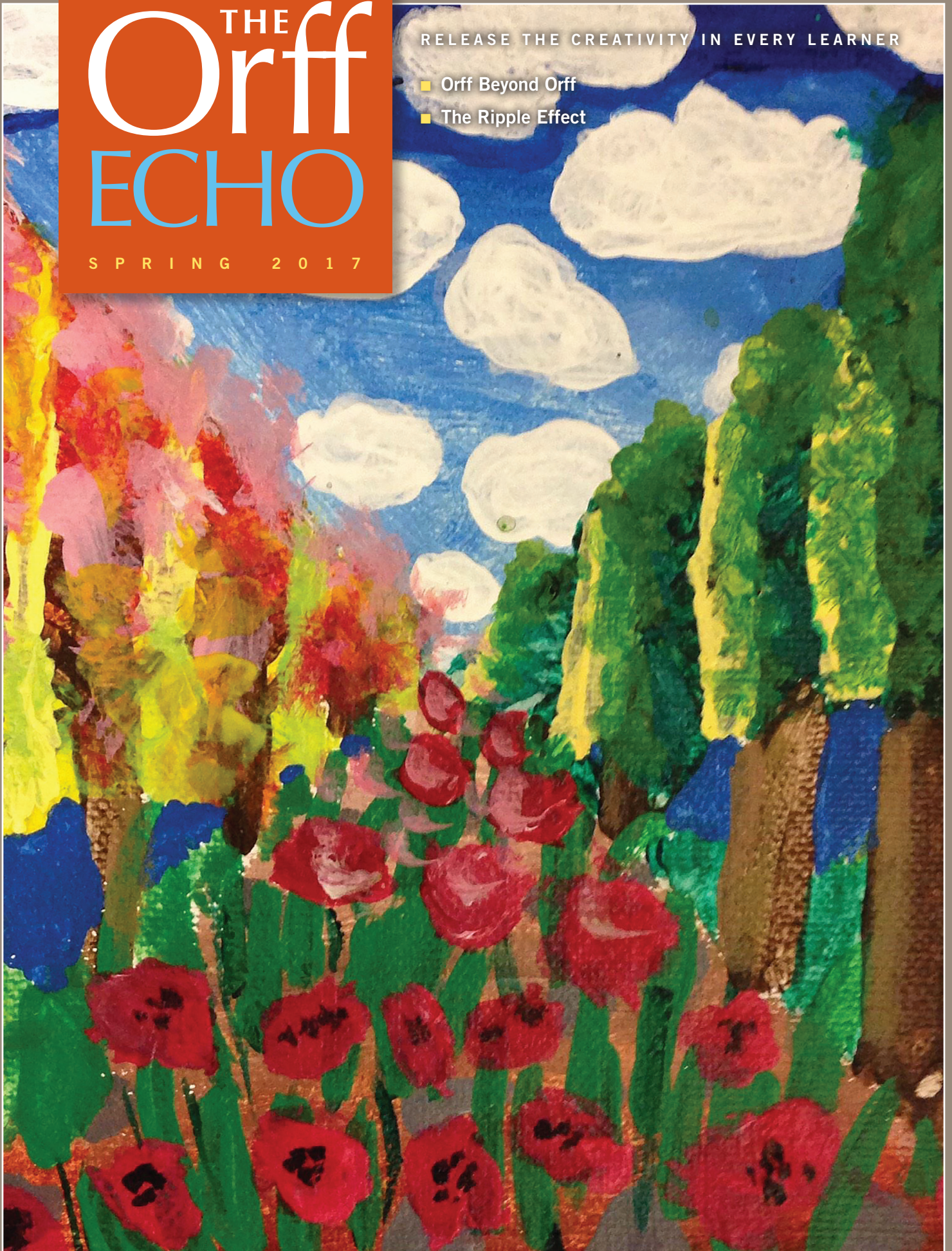


# THE Orff ECHO

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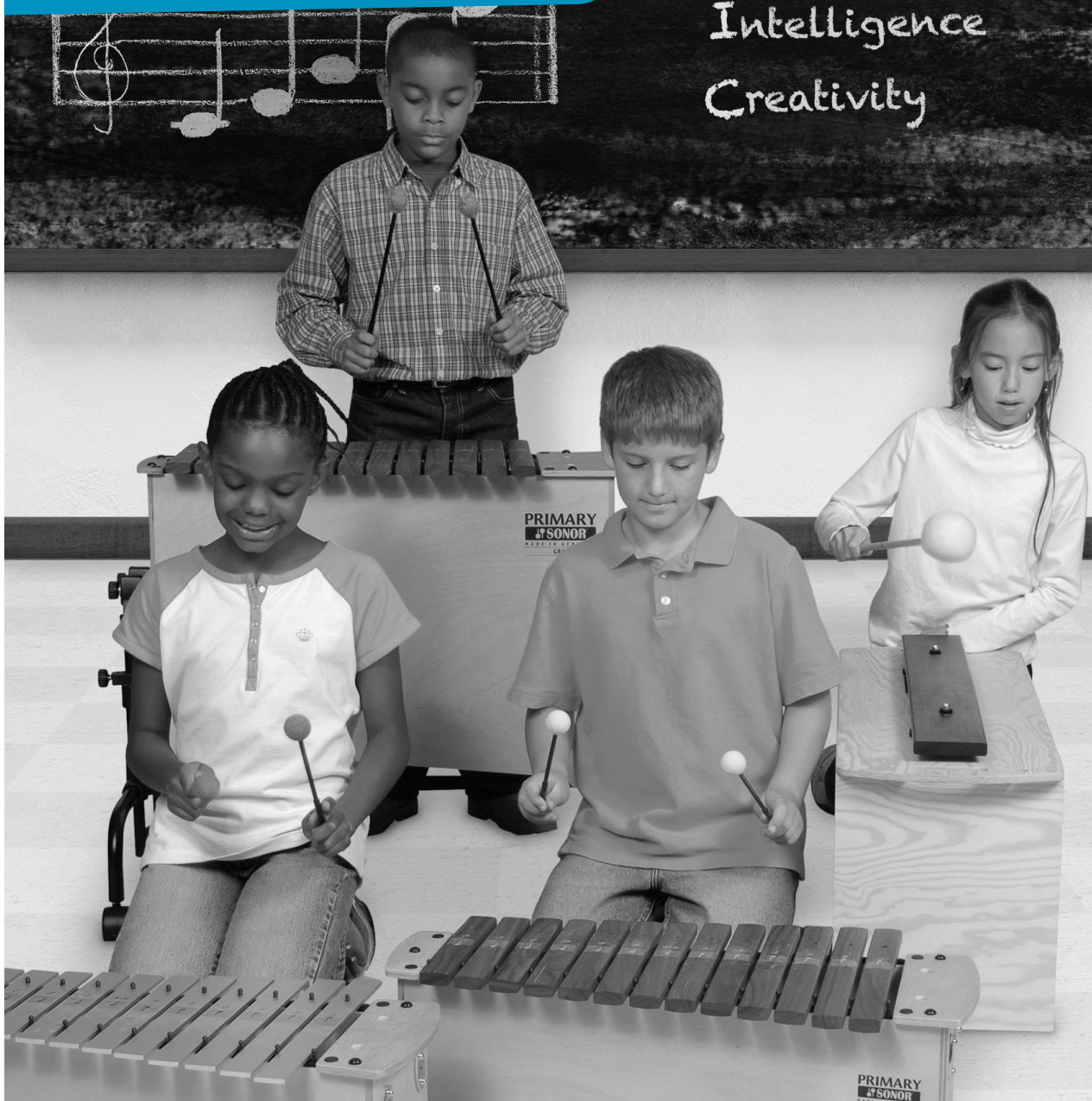
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- Orff Beyond Orff
- The Ripple Effect



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# THE Orff ECHO

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"The Road Not Taken" by Leslie Villa,  
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RELEASE THE CREATIVITY IN EVERY LEARNER

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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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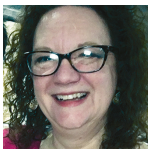
## mission statement

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:

- Demonstrate the value of Orff Schulwerk and promote its widespread use
- Support the professional development of our members
- Inspire and advocate for the creative potential of all learners

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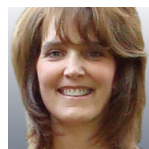
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Joan Stansbury

## The Ripple Effect

Carl Orff likened the Schulwerk to a wildflower that, given the right conditions, can take root and flourish almost anywhere, in the most likely and unlikely places. As perennials, they blossom year after year and spread across the landscape. But beyond their tenacity, beauty, and variety of shape and color, they create a beneficial

ripple effect in nature. Their roots loosen the soil and allow water to flow through it more easily. Their foliage supports insect eggs and larvae. Their color and scent attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies. After flowering, their seeds provide food for birds. The entire ecosystem is served.



Like wildflowers, the benefits of the Schulwerk transcend individual students and music classrooms. Teaching with the Schulwerk creates a timeless ripple effect that reaches beyond the individual and his or her immediate environment. What are some of these ripples?

We can feel the first ripple in our schools. Exciting things happen when Orff teachers open

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the music room door. In addition to demonstrating the advantages of the Schulwerk to administrators and parents, cross-curricular connections, collaboration with other teachers, and special projects become possible. One of my favorite projects was a schoolwide multicultural fair. Each teacher selected a country whose history, geography, language, arts, food, and culture they would explore in the classroom between January and May. Special area teachers (music, art, physical education) incorporated the art, crafts, games, dances, and music of these various cultures into their curricula. One day during the last week of school was earmarked for the culminating event, the multicultural fair, which included a parade of nations, food tastings, authentic dress, crafts, songs, and dances from the countries everyone had studied. Special guests—parents, grandparents, and community members—shared traditions and customs from their native countries and cultures. Teachers maintained the integrity of their curricula while working with the rest of the school and the community. It was an inclusive, successful arts and humanities event.

The Schulwerk also extends beyond individual schools and into our communities. An increasing number of Orff Schulwerk educators are applying the principles in nontraditional settings such as nursing homes, early childhood music programs, music therapy, piano studios, creative drama and dance, and much more. The qualities of self-expression, cooperative interaction with others, and joyful creativity are successful in many nontraditional settings, with diverse populations. Having an instrumentarium of barred instruments and unpitched percussion is desirable, but not always possible or necessary. Singing, body percussion, traditional instruments, and “found sounds” can provide satisfying options for musical expression.

Speaking of instruments, another ripple extends to our partners in the music industry. Orff teachers depend on barred instruments, non-pitched percussion, recorders, books, and manipulatives. Shopping in the Exhibit Hall is a highlight of every conference, but more importantly, the products we buy there support our teaching throughout the year. On page 66 of this issue of *The Orff Echo*, AOSA gives special recognition to our valued relationship with supporting industry members.

We may not say it often enough, but we appreciate every one of them.

The Schulwerk also reaches into institutions of higher learning, most notably in the more than 40 colleges and universities that host AOSA’s teacher education courses each summer. Many now offer undergraduate courses in Orff pedagogy, and several offer postgraduate degrees with an Orff emphasis. Student AOSA groups are springing up around the country, and AOSA chapters throughout the United States have developed supportive relationships with local colleges and universities, often holding workshops on their campuses.

Orff ripples are international in scope. Increasing numbers of dedicated AOSA members travel overseas to share the Schulwerk with students and teachers who might not otherwise experience it. Others go abroad to study and enrich their understanding, which is then shared with colleagues and students back home. Those of us who do not travel abroad to teach or study can still bring the world into our classrooms by learning about and incorporating world music into our curricula.

Perhaps the most important and long-lasting ripple is the one that becomes an intrinsic part of each child who has been immersed in the Orff process. Statistically speaking, most of our students will not become music teachers or professional musicians. They *will* become citizens, parents, neighbors, and co-workers in our society. Beyond musical knowledge and joyful creativity, the life skills of creative problem solving, collaboration, communication, reflection, and cooperation developed in an Orff Schulwerk classroom can have a lifelong effect on how each child learns to interact with the world. Whether it is wildflowers or Orff Schulwerk, their ripple effects make our world a better place. ■

**JOAN STANSBURY** enjoyed a 30-year music teaching career in Lexington, KY. Since retiring, she has taught music methods courses and supervised student teachers at the University of Kentucky and Eastern Kentucky University while also teaching Musikgarten classes for preschoolers. Joan held many offices in the Kentucky Orff Schulwerk Chapter before serving at the national level as AOSA’s 2002 national conference treasurer, Region VI representative, 2012 national conference co-chair, vice president, and current president.



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## IN THIS ISSUE

By Linda Hines with Kelly Jackson, Steve Taranto, and Lisa Lehmborg

### Orff Beyond Orff

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**O**rff Beyond Orff. What vision do these words call to mind? What does “beyond” mean to you? Is it a place—“the great beyond?” Is it a descriptor such as “going above and beyond?” Or is it an as-yet untested concept that beckons to loftier appreciation and achievement? The dynamics of Orff certainly can and do adapt to pedagogy beyond the music classroom. In this issue we look at the many ways Orff goes “beyond” Orff.

When defining “elementary,” Carl Orff stressed the focus on the individual and the importance of participating at one’s comfort level. In “Life Is Like a Box of Chocolates: Using Orff Schulwerk With Summer Fine Arts Camps,” Karen Stafford supports the premise that this focus on the individual is the reason the Orff approach works well when applied to community groups.

In “Instrumental Directors Can Use Orff, Too,” Matthew Lyons examines the obstacles young students face when learning to play an instrument. He proposes techniques using the Orff approach’s elements of imitation, exploration, and experience to facilitate learning in fun and engaging ways that motivate students to learn new musical concepts.

Where is a music teacher to turn for guidance in drama? In “Creative Drama in the Orff Schulwerk Classroom,” Darren Leander examines

the role of theater in that setting. He states that Orff intended drama to be part of the elemental approach, and offers music educators several resources and activities for developing creative drama lessons for students.

Mary Evans and John Visel, in their piece “The Piano Studio as Orff Schulwerk Makerspace,” demonstrate how the Orff approach can add another dimension to the piano studio. The authors share activities they have used successfully to nurture their students’ ability to express and create musically.

In “Elemental Movement for Gifted Dancers,” Ashley Woodside relays her experience with students at a seven-day summer camp. She describes how her Orff Schulwerk background helped her guide the gifted group to elemental dance vocabulary and exploration beyond their practiced movements and stretch their creative boundaries.

A possible outcome of music education is the nurturing of future symphony concert audiences. In our final feature article, “Project Orchestra: The Child Becomes the Music,” Marcelline Moody discusses her use of the Orff approach to involve children in symphonic music in a meaningful, hands-on way that guides them to becoming discriminating listeners.

The last installment of our special series, “Is the Eye the Enemy of the Ear? The Unsettled Issue of Literacy in the Orff Approach,” features the responses of Orff experts Leonard Davis, Mary Shamrock, and Doug Goodkin to questions posed by Jane Frazee. Each shares the experience and insight that led to their unique determination of music literacy relative to Orff Schulwerk. We welcome you to express your views on this topic in the ongoing discussion on the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Facebook page.

The two children’s books in our Resources section will stimulate the imagination of teachers and students alike. *Everybody Gets the Blues*, reviewed by Vivian Caputo, relays in a child-friendly, lighthearted manner what makes children blue and what makes them feel better.

In her review of *The Museum*, Lauren A. Baker illuminates the joyful ways the story can bring the works of renowned artists to life for your students.

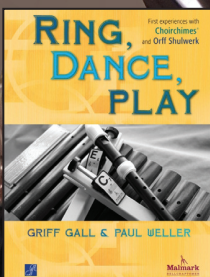
We wrap up with Corrie Box Mitchell's review of *Kodály Today: A Cognitive Approach to Elementary Music Education*. Corrie notes the authors' emphasis on music making and fostering creativity in the classroom and calls out a number of the tools available in this practical and comprehensive resource.

Perhaps the "beyond" is not a destination, but a journey during which ideas take shape much the

way performers acquire the skills to transform one-dimensional sheet music into a symphony replete with drama and movement. We trust within the concepts presented here you will find your own pathway to enriching your artistry and that of your students as you venture together through the promise and potential of Orff Beyond Orff. ■

**LINDA HINES** is editor-in-chief of *The Orff Echo*. Issue coordinators **KELLY JACKSON**, **STEVE TARANTO**, and **LISA LEHMBERG** collaborated on this piece. They are all active Orff teachers and enthusiasts, and members of *The Orff Echo* editorial board.

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# Life Is Like a Box of Chocolates: Using Orff Schulwerk With Summer Fine Arts Camps

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**KAREN STAFFORD** is an elementary music specialist and adjunct professor from Union, Missouri. She completed her PhD through the University of Kansas, and has successfully completed Orff Schulwerk teacher education through post-Level III, and Kodály Level 1. Her professional affiliations include NAFME, the American Orff-Schulwerk Association, the Organization for American Kodály Educators, the American Recorder Society, and the National Education Association. Karen's first book is currently in production through Plank Road Publishing.

## ABSTRACT

*A summer camp experience provided the opportunity to use the Orff approach to teach music and movement in a situation with unique challenges. The author cites personal anecdotes from her sessions with young participants to support the statements of accomplished Orff teachers and researchers, and examines the success of the Orff approach and its appropriateness for similar application.*

## By Karen Stafford

**F**orrest Gump's frequent comment, "My mama always said, 'Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna [sic] get'" (Starkey, Tisch, Finerman, & Zemeckis, 1994), has become one of my favorite movie quotes. When working with community groups, this statement can be particularly true. Volunteers or staff may facilitate instruction for unfamiliar participants who range in age, ability, perseverance, and commitment. The diverse instrumentation, movement ideas, and vocal improvisation of the Orff approach make it ideal for use outside the school setting. Participants often surprise themselves because it is not necessary they follow printed music, which I discovered while working two summers with the *Explore* Fine Arts Camp at the church my daughter attends in Springfield, Missouri.

## Benefits of the Schulwerk in Community Activities

In developing the Schulwerk, Carl Orff (1977) noted the natural fusion of movement and music that occurs in children, soon followed by the inclusion of natural speech and the child's voice. In defining the style used in this new approach to teaching music, Orff stated:

What is elementary? The word in its Latin form *elementarius* means: Pertaining to the elements, primeval, rudimentary, treating of first principles. What then is elementary music? Elementary music is never alone, but forms a unity with movement, dance, and speech. It is music that one makes oneself, in which one takes part not as a listener but as a participant. It is unsophisticated....” (p. 6)

This definition, which stresses the focus on the individual and the importance of participating at one’s comfort level, is the crux of why the Orff approach works so well when applied to community groups.

Cecelia Wang (2013) noted that Orff-trained teachers rely on insight to guide students in unstructured activities and depend on sample sources to provide a framework. Influenced by Jaques-Dalcroze, Carl Orff strove to focus on mind, body, and spirit working together to produce expressive music reflecting the heart of the participant. This aesthetic, less structured approach in guiding music creativity requires the teacher or leader to be aware of participants’ abilities and opportunities and note the slightest “teachable moment” (Wang, 2013, p. 4). This flexibility makes the Orff approach beneficial for those teaching at summer camps or for other short-term learning where instructors may not be familiar with the participants. Orff training provides the opportunity to grasp nuances of creativity quickly, utilize minimal resources, and adapt music as needed to facilitate success.

The Orff approach also adapts well to community activities because of its emphasis on many participants with varying expertise, rather than on a few skilled performers. Participants do not necessarily need to be able to read music; they need only listen and blend through experimentation and improvisation, as they develop the skills to “think music” (Carley, 2011, p. 4). With this listening, they get involved with the ensemble and begin to concentrate and play from their own spirit and soul. Community activity facilitators may note that students who were at first hesitant, reluctant, or even obstinate overcome these potentially negative attitudes and truly become part of the group.

Finally, the Orff approach, as presented in the *Music for Children* volumes and other collaborations by Orff and Keetman, provides community groups

a ready-made foundation from which to build. As Keetman (1970) remarked, these publications “grew out of work with children” (p. 190). They afford a basis of study for teachers on writing in elemental style. Furthermore, the Volumes are unique in that they were not written to be played verbatim; instead, they are to be a springboard for the teacher to develop his or her own works and adapt as needed (Keetman, 1970). A facilitator in a community group can draw from various aspects of the Volumes based on need, then merge what fits, substitute instrumentation, and modify parts to ensure participant success.

As a certified Orff teacher, I was excited and a little nervous to apply these skills when working with small groups of students in the *Explore* sessions. As the following summary of my experiences reveals, we had some tough moments, but the dynamic of the Schulwerk attracted a few reluctant students, winning them over and instilling a sense of pride and excitement.

### Orff Schulwerk and the *Explore* Experience

In 2015, my daughter and her pastor, along with a small group of parishioners, organized a fine arts camp as a community outreach in Springfield, Missouri. My daughter, the designated camp coordinator, teaches secondary level music and asked my husband, a retired art teacher, and me to work with the younger children. The music department of one of the local universities lent us barred instruments that, when added to those from the school where I teach, gave us a good assortment to use.

Orff training provides the opportunity to grasp nuances of creativity quickly, utilize minimal resources, and adapt music as needed to facilitate success.

We started with two small groups, pre-K-Grade 2 and Grades 3-6. With no designated theme, we decided to base our sound exploration on literature, and assigned specific instrumentation to our inexperienced primary students. Together we made beautiful music to *The Little Old Lady Who Wasn’t Afraid of Anything* (Williams, 2002). Each child’s instrument represented a particular word, which allowed them all to feel successful. We also incorporated movement whenever possible.

**Figure 1.** Participants Strategizing for Their Performance.



PHOTOGRAPHER: LIZ PACE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

## 12

The older group orchestrated the book *Commotion in the Ocean* (Andreae, 2002). Some had a music background and were able to choose the instrumentation to be used. This was a moment when, as an Orff teacher, I could truly let go. The group immediately took ownership of the project, using a dry erase board to brainstorm ideas to accompany each sea creature. They improvised motifs, sound effects, and vocalization to accompany their performance (see Figure 1). At the end of the week, success was reflected in their excitement during their musical performance and in the wild applause of the audience.

The following year, the organizers had added a movement segment to the music sessions to accommodate my Orff background. The theme, “The Natural Elements,” set the tone for developing appropriate activities for Grades 1-3 (plus a preschooler) and Grades 4-6 (two dance students taught choreographed dance).

In the music segment, the older group focused specifically on creating their own composition based on number 6 in Volume IV of *Music for Children* (Orff & Keetman, 1976, p. 47). The experience was different from the prior year in that some participants had a music background, whereas a few did not. Adding to the mix was a student with a ukulele. Processing worked for the most part, though there were some exceptions. With only

a total of two to two and a half hours (four days at 30-35 minutes each), developing a worthwhile project these students could be proud of would be a challenge. My recently completed Orff Schulwerk Master Class with Chris Judah-Lauder, focusing strictly on the Volumes, stimulated improvisational ideas perfectly suited to this distinct situation.

The next day another student and a high school volunteer brought ukuleles. Still another student brought her guitar. They were all assigned the task of using a pizzicato technique to play the ostinato pattern written for the alto xylophone. Two other participants felt comfortable performing the soprano xylophone part. One student wanted to play piano, but with no keyboard, he accepted a hand drum accompaniment instead and improvised a coda to the work. Yet another student, a beginning recorder player, improvised a B section using just A, G, and E, giving us ternary form with a coda provided by our drums.

Another student, who struggled academically, developed hand drum accompaniments and sound effects that fit with the other patterns. The flexible approach with the arrangement of this piece allowed him to take ownership of the parts and perform on an instrument he was comfortable with, thus avoiding frustration and potential behavior management issues. The student’s mother remarked later that he often felt teachers did not listen to him, but here he had choices and a voice.

Our original plan for a few participants to sing their own lyrics to the melody was changed to their writing creative adjectives for elements I put together in a song, or writing their own stanzas. When we put everything together, I sang. In the end, those of us who worked with these children were amazed at how well they had progressed, especially the few who initially presented some behavior challenges.

The music experience was a little more varied for the younger children. We started with the element of fire, which worked well with my husband’s fireflies art project, and used a glow stick activity based on the book, *The Lonely Firefly* (Carle, 2012), from a workshop presented by Artie Almeida. The book *Water Dance* (Locker, 2014) provided the opportunity not only to introduce the water cycle to the younger group, but also to experiment with sound to highlight the various types of water sounds suggested in the story.

The movement segment for each group revealed some outstanding creative ideas. The older children developed my favorite movement activity in their fire representations. For inspiration, they watched a YouTube fire atmosphere video to note the colors and the application of various action words that occur within flames. Working in pairs, they used scarves to develop their own “flames,” and then each pair joined another to form groups of four to complete the performance accompanied by the recording *Bolero of Fire* (Kondo, 2013) from the game, *The Legend of Zelda*.

The younger children demonstrated their creativity based on the element of wind. They listened to *Let's Go Fly a Kite* (Sherman & Sherman, 1963) from the film *Mary Poppins*. They imagined a kite on the ground, and then decided how the kite would move as it was going through the air. They bounced on their abdomens, and then moved like a kite flying in the air and bobbing in the wind.

When camp came to an end, the volunteers met to summarize the success of the sessions, which included art, music, drama, acting improvisation, movement, and dance. The pastor touched all of our hearts when she shared a compliment from the mother of one of our challenging students who said her son had a great time at camp because the volunteers listened and encouraged him. This is when we knew we had succeeded, and for my part,

Orff Schulwerk had succeeded. This boy, one of the sound effect percussionists in our composition, had gone from reluctant participator and distractor to a responsible performer, noting just the right instruments needed for the right timbre for each element.

## Conclusion

These camp experiences have solidified my faith in the Orff approach. Although it was challenging to develop enriching music opportunities that engaged small groups, when the children and volunteers left, all felt a sense of accomplishment. Their efforts and those of the pastor and the congregation of St. John's Chapel United Church of Christ, the volunteers, and the music department of Missouri State University had been rewarded. Although none of us knew what we were going to get in our box of chocolates, our individual pieces all proved to be perfect in their own special ways. ■

### EXPLORE FINE ARTS CAMP, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

Additional information and videos of the camp mentioned in this article are available at [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org) under Publications>The Orff Echo>Echo Extensions.

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# Instrumental Directors Can Use Orff, Too

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**MATTHEW LYONS** has taught elementary school music, including recorders, Grade 4-5 band and orchestra, and pre-K through Grade 3 general music, for over 12 years in San Diego. He has a bachelor's degree in music education from San Diego State University and a master's degree from the University of San Diego. He has successfully completed Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Level I and is a member of San Diego AOSA. Matthew is the music director at Oak Park Elementary Music Conservatory and adjunct professor of music at Point Loma Nazarene University.

## ABSTRACT

*How can instrumental students benefit from the inclusion of the Orff approach in their music classes? In this article, the author discusses the specific learning processes students navigate when acquiring new musical skills and examines the factors that can either hinder or support that process. Based on his findings, he offers specific ways Orff Schulwerk can foster musical understanding in an instrumental class.*

## By Matthew Lyons

**W**ouldn't it be great if you had a system for teaching your students to understand, express, and internalize musical concepts without the encumbrance of holding a technically demanding band or orchestra instrument? Every director of a beginning instrumental group—whether band, orchestra, guitar, or percussion—knows when you put instruments into students' hands they have a hard time focusing on anything other than the holding, fingering, bowing, and playing it. The mechanics of playing an instrument take most of their concentration, leaving little for musicianship.

The Orff approach can help band and orchestra directors move students toward musical literacy in an engaging way. We can teach deep musical concepts without students getting bogged down with how to blow, finger, or pluck an instrument by allowing them to put the instruments down and experience the concept and practice without hindrance. This is where the Orff approach to teaching musical concepts can be incredibly helpful and effective. In *Teaching Music in the Twenty-First Century*, Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, Woods, and York (2001) explain: "It was important from the very start that the students physically experience beat, meter, tempo, and rhythm,

that they express these elements in dance and through instruments, doing rather than learning about” (p. 104).

### Skill Acquisition Theory

The Four Stages of Learning, a skill acquisition theory, illustrates how the Orff approach can improve students’ learning experience. This model, also known as the Conscious Competence Matrix, was developed by Noel Burch at Gordon Training International (Adams, n.d.) and notes four distinct stages our students go through when learning a new skill (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Four Stages of Learning Model/ Conscious Competence Matrix.

	Unconscious	Conscious
Unskilled	1	2
Skilled	4	3

SOURCE: CREATED BY MATTHEW LYONS.

#### Stage 1: Unconsciously unskilled.

In this stage, learners are unaware of what they do not know. For example, most beginning band students do not realize how loud they are playing and are not aware of the concept of varying their dynamics. Most beginning instrumental students play one dynamic consistently throughout a song without even being aware of it.

#### Stage 2: Consciously unskilled.

In Stage 2, learners are aware of how poorly they can perform the skill. Using dynamics as an example, beginning band students quickly realize that playing *piano* is much more difficult than playing *forte*. They become aware of their inability to create a beautiful tone at a soft dynamic level.

#### Stage 3: Consciously skilled.

In this stage, students know about the skill and can perform it with concentration and hard work. They are now able to perform a *piano* dynamic successfully, but must focus on embouchure, air speed, air volume, or bow pressure and speed in order to do it.

#### Stage 4: Unconsciously skilled.

This is the stage where learners perform the skills easily and naturally (Adams, n.d.). They are able to carry out a range of dynamics while focusing more on the expressive qualities of the music and phrasing, and less on the techniques of producing different dynamic levels on their instrument. At this point, they are executing musically as opposed to simply playing notes on a page.

Although there is no way to skip any of the four stages when teaching students new skills, we can either hinder or speed their learning depending on our process. We will first look at actions that can slow the learning process, and then examine ways the Orff approach can facilitate it.

### Elements that Can Hinder the Learning Process

In 12 years of teaching beginning band, I have realized the main hindrance to students learning a new musical concept is the instrument itself. Using an instrument to teach a new skill slows their process of moving through the four stages of learning because it requires them to use skills they have not yet mastered.

This is similar to the process of English language learners using English for the first time. Before they are fluent in English, they must translate everything in their head from their native language to the new language. This extra step of translating slows the speaking and writing processes considerably. Similarly, requiring music students to bow, pluck, blow, and finger to learn the concept of dynamics or phrasing will cause them to struggle doing either. Often, this is unavoidable; however, the creative teacher can usually find ways to impart musical concepts without the instrument. For example, students can clap new rhythms instead of playing them, or practice articulations using syllables such as *la* and *dah*. Choksy et al. (2001) asserted:

The most important instrument in Orff practice is the body, and the second most important is the *voice*, since it is contained in the body. Any part of the body can be used to express both a fundamental beat and phrase awareness. (p. 109)

Clapping, patting, and stomping are great tools for practicing a new rhythm or phrase. Students

Figure 2. Clapping Rhythms.



PHOTOGRAPHER: MATTHEW LYONS. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Figure 3. Transferring to Instruments.



PHOTOGRAPHER: MATTHEW LYONS. USED WITH PERMISSION.

are so familiar with these types of actions that they can direct most of their focus to the rhythm at hand instead of to the notes and fingerings of the instruments. After students become familiar with the rhythm through body percussion, it can be successfully transferred to their instrument (see Figures 2 and 3).

Another factor that hinders student success in the music classroom is low-ability beliefs, also known as self-efficacy beliefs. If students do not believe they are able to learn or complete new tasks, their performance on the actual tasks suffers. We can easily identify these low self-efficacy beliefs, as struggling students will often say, “I’m just not talented at music.” Or they will make statements such as, “I’m not good at flute,” and “Jamie is way better at music than I am.” These students are expressing disbelief in their ability to be successful in the music classroom.

In a study performed in South Korea to uncover the factors that influence academic achievement, researchers discovered self-efficacy had a direct effect on academic success and on life satisfaction. These results on self-efficacy, gathered from Bandura’s social cognitive theory, are also consistent with those found in Europe and the United States (Pajares & Urdan, 2006). Students’ beliefs, both positive and negative, play a large role in how they view tasks beforehand, how long they persevere during, and their level of achievement afterwards.

A third factor that hinders students’ movement through the four stages of learning is performance anxiety. Linguist and educator Stephen Krashen hypothesized that negative emotional and motivational factors, including high anxiety, low self-confidence, and low motivation, can create a mental wall, called the affective filter, between the student and the learning (Krashen, 1982). This mental wall can hinder a student’s acquisition and use of new knowledge.

My instrumental students struggle with performance anxiety much more than my general music students. Beginning instrumental students who are not yet comfortable with the mechanics of making beautiful sounds on their instruments tend to be more fearful than their general music peers when learning and practicing new musical concepts such as dynamics or phrasing. This extra dose of anxiety is another factor that can hinder their learning process.

### How the Orff Approach Aids the Learning Process

The Orff approach offers creative and fun ways to counter these hindrances, support students throughout the learning process, and improve their potential success on an instrument.

First, the Orff approach asks students to use skills in which they are fluent and comfortable, to understand musical concepts. In her book, *Music in Childhood*, Patricia Campbell (2006) states “The

natural behaviors of childhood—singing, saying, dancing, playing, along with improvisation and creative movement—form the basis of the Orff Schulwerk approach” (p. 56). Our students come to us with many years of experience in speaking and moving, and we can use their mastery over these skills to enhance their learning of musical concepts in the instrumental classroom (see Figure 4).

A simple way to incorporate speaking into the instrumental class is by superimposing words over difficult rhythms. For example, have students speak the word “chocolate” whenever they see a triplet rhythm, “Snickers” when they see two eighth notes, and “bar” when they see a quarter note. Speaking a difficult rhythm—“Snickers-Snickers-chocolate-bar”—can help our musicians move between eighth notes and triplets (a duplet and a triplet feel) within the same measure, which can be a challenge for beginning students. Then have them clap or step to the rhythm while speaking

Asking students to speak or step instead of immediately playing new rhythms not only uses skills they have already mastered, but also can help improve their self-efficacy beliefs.

the words. This will help them correctly speak the rhythm of a difficult passage of music and hear how it should sound before ever playing it on their instruments.

Asking students to speak or step instead of immediately playing new rhythms not only uses skills they have already mastered, but also can help improve their self-efficacy beliefs. Success in the music class builds more success. When they master a new rhythm quickly—such as walking to the beat—they tend to believe they will be successful with the next activity. The Orff approach accelerates this success, which excites and motivates them to learn the next concept. After these small achievements,

Figure 4. Incorporating Creative Movement During Rehearsal.



PHOTOGRAPHER: MATTHEW LYONS. USED WITH PERMISSION.



PHOTOGRAPHER: BREE NELSON. USED WITH PERMISSION.

they are less apprehensive to try the new concepts on their instruments.

Another way the Orff approach aids this learning is through the elements of imitation, exploration, and experience. Oftentimes in the instrumental classroom, students are expected to do the same thing in the same way, which can cause anxiety and raise the affective filter for those who are struggling. For example, a director will often take a difficult passage of the music and have the students play it over and over together until it improves. This approach is not always effective when you are working with beginning and less proficient students. The pressure to perform correctly the very first time can be intimidating, and some may need more help or more individual practice before they are able to perform the section with others.

Imitation is a great way for students to learn a passage of music or musical concepts such as dynamics and phrasing without getting bogged down

by note reading. After they hear the passage or skill several times, give them an opportunity to play their instrument and experience it on their own. Choksy et al. (2001) stated that “The word process is paramount in Orff-Schulwerk, and the keys to the Orff process are exploration and experience” (p. 107).

Along these lines, it is important to add individual practice time to instrumental classes. Our students need time to practice new concepts or skills at their own pace and in their own way. Allowing them to explore through individual practice for as little as 30 to 60 seconds goes a long way in reducing anxiety and increasing success.

### Conclusion

The Orff approach offers many creative and engaging ways to teach musical concepts while fostering a safe learning environment, improving self-efficacy beliefs, and building on the foundation of skills students already use in their daily lives. Research

shows students with high self-efficacy beliefs “work harder, persist longer, persevere in the face of adversity, have greater optimism and lower anxiety, and achieve more” (Pajares & Urdan, 2006, p. 343). When planning ways of teaching new musical

concepts in the instrumental classroom, encourage your students to put their instruments down. Then incorporate Orff Schulwerk techniques—allow them to clap, sing, dance, and play their way to new understanding and appreciation. ■

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# Creative Drama in the Orff Schulwerk Classroom

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## ABSTRACT

*From its origins at the Güntherschule to contemporary practice in the classroom, theater has played a role in the Schulwerk. In this article, the author proposes creative drama as an appropriate means for incorporating theater in a music classroom. He explores the parallels between creative drama and Orff Schulwerk, and describes typical activities to use in a creative drama lesson.*

## By Darren Leander

**W**alk into an Orff classroom on any given day and you will see students engaged with poetry, movement, science, history, art, or any other subject. One strength of music education in general, and particularly the Orff approach, is the ability to teach meaningfully across disciplines. An especially common outside subject taught in music classes is drama. After all, music teachers are often responsible not just for choral and instrumental concerts, but also for musicals, grade-level plays, celebrations, and assemblies. Many, if not most of us, have had little or no formal training in theater or theater education. Where should we start?

## Orff and the Theater

Theater was included in the Schulwerk from the beginning and influenced Orff's musical works and compositional output. Parallels can be drawn between creative drama and Orff Schulwerk; thus, creative drama integrates well into an Orff Schulwerk curriculum.

In his biography of Carl Orff, Andreas Liess (1966) said of the composer, "The whole of Orff's work is, in the widest sense of the term, theatrical." He continued:

It is in the theatre that Orff the musician and Orff the poet is united.... Only *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Antigone*, and *Oedipus der Tyrann* use established texts; for all his other works, Orff arranged the text himself. To this double talent is added the vision of a true man of the theater. The conception and execution of his works spring from his imaginative insight into scene and movement, and an essential realization of the theatrical and musical potentialities. (p. 63)

Liess (1966) further quoted German literary and theater critic Karlheinz Ruppel: "His [Orff's] imagination is as much a visual as oral, which is rare in creative musicians. He thinks in terms of gesture and scene as much as notes and sounds" (p. 63).

Orff's work in the theater ranged widely. In 1931, early in his career, he had great success with a theatrical staging of Bach's *St. Luke Passion*. Multiple performances followed over the next two years (Liess, 1966, p. 24). Similar stagings ensued, including Heinrich Schütz's *Die Historie von der fröhlichen und siegreichen Auferstehung unseres Herrn Jesu Christi*. His best known works are the operas *Der Mond* and *Kie Kluge*, *Oedipus*, incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (written to replace the banned music by Mendelssohn), and, of course, the highly theatrical *Carmina Burana*. Just as movement and music were integrated in his education work, music and theater were united in his compositions.

### Theater in the Schulwerk

Despite Orff's focus on integrating theater and music in his compositional life, many important Orff Schulwerk texts are strictly musical in their approach. Jane Frazee's *Orff Schulwerk Today* (2006) and *Discovering Orff* (1987), both essential texts, make no mention of drama or theater. Levels training, though deeply enriching, sometimes provides minimal instruction in preparing children for dramatic work. Although drama may not be discussed at length, AOSA's *NBT Curriculum Standards Basic Level I* (2015, pp. 8-31) include examples of drama—such as *Heat*, a layered speech composition by Jim Solomon—that can be explored. The final instruction in the teaching process reads, "Each group devises movement/dramatization for their part."

AOSA's *NBT Curriculum Standards Recorder Level III* (2015, pp. 18-36) present a little more detail on the topic and discuss ways to use music to dramatize stories: "Demonstrate ability to use literature/poetry, song and visual stimuli as inspiration for student recorder improvisation." The Level III recorder standards include an extended lesson, *The Empty Pot* by Demi, with suggestions for staging and encouraging the use of props and costumes. They conclude by suggesting that teachers "bring various groups together for a performance: drama, dance, instruments, and singing—a true Orff Schulwerk experience."

Finally, Doug Goodkin addresses theater in *Play, Sing, & Dance* (2013). He devotes chapters to "Drama in Music Education" and "Celebrations Orff Schulwerk Style" (a closely related topic). He also includes a chapter of program notes he wrote for theatrical productions at The San Francisco School.

Although some of the more recent Orff Schulwerk texts do not include an emphasis on drama, Orff (1978) himself clearly intended for it to be an important part of the elemental approach. He described Schloss Frohnburg, which currently serves as a dormitory and concert venue for the Mozarteum:

The open-air theater by the "Trompeterturm" (trumpeter's tower) was prepared as a studio theatre for the opera school of the Mozarteum. Placed so near the buildings of the Orff Institute it offered us the attractive possibility of studying drama and including it in our studies, which had always been part of my plan.... Elemental music impels towards scenic presentation, towards theater. (p. 261)

This theater provided the setting for a production of Orff's Bavarian comedy *Astutuli*, a collaboration with the centers for drama and stage scenery at the Mozarteum, which "showed positive educational results" (p. 263). Orff (1976) also mentioned the applications of the Schulwerk in theatrical education when discussing his later published works, stating that his *Stücke für Sprechchor* and *Stücke für Sprecher, Sprechchor und Schlagwerk* "widen the horizon of the educational work and can be understood as a signpost to free artistic work.... For work with young people and adults, and also in drama schools they can offer new material" (p. 252).

### Theater in the Orff Classroom

Despite a scarcity of formal discussion of the topic, theater thrives in Orff classrooms (see Figure 1). Every year brings a selection of new publications of folktales arranged for use in the music classroom, complete with orchestrations for mallet instruments and recorders, movement instructions, and ideas for staging. Recent AOSA Professional Development Conferences have included sessions on shadow puppetry (Peggy McCreary in 2016), creating dance from literature (Sarah Richardson in 2014), drama with music and movement (Donna Fleetwood in 2012), and Balinese shadow theater (Sarah Willner and Pam Hetrick in 2016). Orff teachers are working with this material and are responsible for theatrical performances. Whenever I have a pedagogical question regarding the teaching of elemental music or movement, I can turn to fellow Orff teachers, online discussion boards, or the many wonderful thinkers and writers working within the Schulwerk.

Where is a music teacher to turn for guidance in drama? I've been lucky enough during my time as an elementary school music teacher to work

**Figure 1.** Grade 6 Student Portraying an Elephant.



PHOTOGRAPHER: DARREN LEANDER. USED WITH PERMISSION.

with several talented theater educators, and to have seen a variety of educational styles in the classroom. Although many different approaches are available to drama educators, the methodology that dovetails best with the Schulwerk is creative drama. The Children's Theatre Association of America defines creative drama as "an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process-centered form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experiences" (McCaslin, 2000, p.8). Creative drama encourages creativity, discovery for its own sake, and a focus on the learning process. It involves improvisation based on stories, artwork, history, or anything else of interest to students.

### Typical Creative Drama Activities

Creative drama lessons are similar to Orff Schulwerk lessons in that no two are quite alike. These sample activities clarify what creative drama looks like:

#### ***Movement activity: Trash can***

Students huddle together in groups of four or five, pretending to be a trash can. A gust of wind blows and topples the can, sending debris around the room. Students decide what they are: plastic bags, banana peels, old shoes, and so on. You might also encourage them to be the wind and swirl around the room as a group.

#### ***Levels exploration***

When working with students on levels, use acting cues to "speak their language." Encourage them at a high level to "fly like an airplane or float like a balloon." For movement at a low level, they may "wiggle like a worm or a snake."

#### ***Sound and motion stories***

As a teacher (or student) reads a story aloud, the group pantomimes the action and adds sound using instruments. Fairy tales work especially well for this.

#### ***Creating an original play based on source material***

Students write original words based on existing literature, myths or folk tales, holidays, class projects, personal experiences, material studied in their other courses such as history or science—the possibilities are limitless. Every play has opportunities to incorporate music.

**Games**

Many theater games fit in well in a music classroom. “Donkey” is a favorite with my students. Everyone stands in a circle with a leader in the middle. When the leader points at someone and gives a direction, the student chosen, along with two neighbors, creates a figure. If the instruction is “elephant,” for example, the outer students turn to the middle student and use their arms to make the elephant’s two ears, while the middle student creates the trunk. Detailed instructions for this game, as well as many other theater games, are available online.

**Improvisations based on a situation**

In groups of two or three, students create a scene based on a given prompt. Examples include, “Two old friends meet at a bus stop,” and “A child sneaks into a neighbor’s yard to retrieve a lost ball” (see Figure 2).

Although a performance may result from material studied in creative drama, it is not the focus. The emphasis on improvisation, creativity, and process over product should be familiar to any teacher trained in the Orff approach.

**Parallels Between Creative Drama and Orff Schulwerk**

Creative drama and Orff Schulwerk have many parallels (see Figure 3). Following are the most essential.

**Figure 2.** Example of Improvisation Based on a Situation.



PHOTOGRAPHER: DARREN LEANDER. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**A belief that play is the work of children**

The starting point for creative drama is dramatic play, “the free play of very young children, in which they explore their universe, imitating the actions and character traits of those around them” (McCaslin, 2000, p. 7). Similarly, in attempting to answer the question, “What is Orff Schulwerk?” AOSA holds that, “In Orff Schulwerk classrooms, children begin with what they do instinctively: play!” (2016).

**A focus on improvisation**

Improvisation and creative drama are nearly synonymous: “The term creative drama is used to

**Figure 3.** Parallels Between Creative Drama and Orff Schulwerk.

Creative Drama	Orff Schulwerk
Focus on movement as related to drama	Focus on movement as related to music
Voice and body are main instruments	Voice, body, and recorder are main instruments
Teamwork and collaboration are essential to creating strong ensembles	
Process-oriented in a field focused on performance	
Emphasis on improvisation	
Links with poetry and literature	
Child-focused learning	
Development of student creativity	
Rich possibilities for integration across the curriculum	

describe the improvised drama of children age five or six and older” (McCaslin, 2000, p. 8). Likewise, Orff (1976) wrote that “Improvisation is the starting point for elemental music-making” (p. 22).

### ***An emphasis on process***

Judith Kase-Polisini (1989) wrote that “During dramatic play, it is the process that is important, not the product, which is the play” (p. 48). Similarly, Doug Goodkin (2004) warns of the consequences when performance is prioritized over process: “The show becomes the chopping block on which understanding, exploration, creativity and the child’s contribution to the learning process are sacrificed” (p. 130).

### ***The fostering of collaboration***

Creative drama is “a group, not an individual art, and therefore requires cooperation between actors or players, who create together to offer a single dramatic statement” (Kase-Polisini, p. 8). For educators in the Schulwerk, student collaboration is an essential part of our practice. For example,

in *Making Music Cooperatively*, Carol Huffman (2012) details how to foster collaboration in an Orff setting. She shows how educators can teach students the fundamental skills they need to succeed in a collaborative learning environment.

### **Conclusion**

Although drama is not included in the formal framework of Orff Schulwerk with the same level of attention as movement, nursery rhymes, and poetry, it is clearly part of current practice and was likely intended to be so from the early days of the Güntherschule. Because it incorporates movement, music, improvisation, and collaboration, creative drama is a natural fit in an elemental classroom. Creative drama, like music, offers a wide variety of benefits to its students. As Goodkin (2013) notes, “If we had to teach a school curriculum with only one subject, it would certainly be drama, for in order for it to succeed, we would have to study all the rest” (p. 111). ■

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# The Piano Studio as Orff Schulwerk Makerspace

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**JOHN VISEL**, featured on NPR for his work with elementary music students, has taught for 10 years in public and private schools and in an Orff-inspired piano studio. He holds music degrees from Indiana University and Tennessee Technological University and has successfully completed levels training in Orff, Kodály, and Dalcroze.

## ABSTRACT

*Private piano lessons often focus solely on developing music reading skills. The Orff approach can bring the dimension of creativity and exploration into the piano studio. This article explores the history of the piano in Orff Schulwerk and discusses activities that piano teachers trained in the Schulwerk might use to bring the magic of the approach to their students.*

## By Mary Evans and John Visel

**O**rff Schulwerk was originally developed for group classes, which is how it is most often used. Many basic Schulwerk principles and techniques, however, also work beautifully in private piano lessons for students of varying ability. Additionally, Orff-inspired pedagogy can positively affect learners who aren't normally reachable by the traditional play-out-of-the-book piano lessons.

### History

Piano was a compulsory subject for the college-level rhythm and dance students at the Güntherschule in Munich, Germany, where Carl Orff first experimented with his teaching approach. Before the Orff xylophones were invented, the piano was used in a way similar to the procedures teachers use in developing xylophone skills with their students today, and it was on the piano that these methods were originally created. Orff describes these lessons in *The Schulwerk* (1978):

We began with tone and touch exercises; with drone fifths in low and high registers, played loud and soft, given a rhythmic pattern, smooth or staccato, doubled, broken like an arpeggio and repeated. To these fundamental sounds

that were soon filled out into larger ostinati I improvised melodies on a second piano that served as models for the students' improvisations that followed.

The next step was to have two students at one instrument, one playing the melody, the other the drone, the leading role being taken alternately by melody and drone. Finally, one player could take over both roles simultaneously.

It was an initial style, understood by everybody and easy to copy. If the advanced student was able continually to find new possibilities, so the beginner could always be learning while she played her simple drone.... It depended on finding, inventing and discovering. The players had to "grow ears on the ends of their fingers"; how to give a meaningful shape to a melody, and how to bring it to an end...all of these exercises were continually transposed into all modes. (p. 28)

Orff goes on to explain that, although these activities and more were done in the context of group classes, every student had individual piano lessons, too. In these lessons, they were taught "... the whole 'ballast' of music theory that could not have been handled in the group, such as keyboard harmony, cadential and figured bass, knowledge of which was essential for the improvisation of simple Malaguenas and Passacaglias" (p. 30).

The aim, then, of Orff's piano lessons was to teach students to improvise using a process that follows their skill level while continuously challenging them to expand their creative abilities. How can we apply this to our piano lessons? Without a group class, we must fill in as the missing "other students" to motivate, and perhaps find varied and interesting sources of inspiration such as those used in Orff Schulwerk classrooms to help our students release their creativity.

From Orff's explanation of the Güntherschule lessons, we can devise a scope and sequence of skills to work on with each student, step by step, as part of every lesson. From the very beginning, the first skill needed is to find a steady beat drone, perhaps marked with removable stickers for the youngest students, over which we, as teachers, can improvise. Technique lessons are built in as "touch and tone" is varied and explored with this simple drone. The drone can move to different tonalities as the lessons progress, and as Orff explains, can vary in dynamics, articulation, rhythm patterns, meters, different

octaves on the piano, broken (arpeggiated), or other ideas the student might discover. Orff mentions the drones are next "filled out into larger ostinati" (1978), which is somewhat challenging in the private lesson because there are only two participants. Several possibilities here would include the student playing a held bass note in the left hand as well as a melodic ostinato in the right hand (depending on the student's skill level and experience), or the teacher playing a melodic ostinato in the left hand/middle of the piano as well as an improvised melody in the right hand. Technology such as GarageBand or another program is useful for recording and playing a loop of one or more parts as the teacher and student play more layers.

Orff xylophones have a distinct advantage over piano with pentatonic scales—fingerings and technique are more difficult on the piano. Using the black keys can provide a pentatonic that can be played with two hands in the very beginning, and extended to only one hand as students proceed in their technical ability. Schott publishes a small book, *Klavier-Übung* (1962), featuring models for piano written by Orff in similar style to the five volumes of *Music for Children* and the early little supplemental books. Although the pieces are not necessarily ideal for small hands, the book gives teachers examples of jumping-off points in elemental style for piano.

In the musical examples Orff gives in *Das Schulwerk*, as well as those in *Klavier-Übung*, the melodies can range from simple five-finger to extended positions, diatonic rather than pentatonic, and the accompaniments might consist of chords, static or moving—often between major and minor tonalities. The structure is classically Orff Schulwerk, and it is easy to see that these very early models laid the foundation for *Music for Children*.

### Application

Applying the historical knowledge we have about piano lessons in an Orff context, we can include Orff-style creative activities within the private piano lesson alongside more traditional instruction in note-reading and theory. Using the Orff approach in lessons with children may include various starting points to inspire improvisation.

"Would you like to start with your book pieces or a creative activity?" At the beginning of each piano lesson, I ask my student this question. Nine out of ten times, the answer is, "A creative activity!"

Many of us know adults who quit their piano lessons after a few years when they were young. Although their reasons vary, one might be that the lessons were—to put it simply—boring. This does not have to be. In his workshops, Jim Solomon states that each Orff lesson needs ritual, novelty, and challenge, including age-appropriate improvisation activities in piano lessons that address each of these in a musically meaningful and engaging way.

As improvisation coaches, we should not discourage any creative choices a student makes and should also avoid language that judges the results. If for some reason a student is stuck or is new to improvising, feel free to demonstrate several possibilities on the piano, making sure the task is appropriate for the student's skill level and experience. Take things step by step to ensure the student feels comfortable. Playing a drone in unison with you on the steady beat is a good starting place. Guide the student to create variations after he or she has internalized the pulse. In our experience, skipping a step in the teaching process or giving the student too much freedom too soon results in a lack of success with improvisation lessons. Sometimes it is important to restrict choices by setting up the activity with parameters such as pitch set, range, meter, and modes, using child-friendly language such as:

- “What is another way you could... (fly) on the piano?”
- “What if...(instead of blackbirds, they were dinosaurs)?”
- “If you could add something to your music, what would you add?”

### Rhythmic Improvisations

In an article titled “Thoughts about Music with Children and Non-professionals,” Orff is quoted as stating:

Music begins inside human beings, and so must any instruction. Not at the instrument, not with the first finger, nor with the first position, nor with this or that chord. The starting point is one's own stillness, listening to oneself, the “being ready for music,” listening to one's own heartbeat and breathing. (Kugler & Murray, p. 149)

Students as young as age 3 can create “pulse improvisations.” Rhymes and finger-plays borrowed from the Orff classroom are a point of departure:

“Two little blackbirds, sittin’ on a hill, one named Jack and the other named Jill. Fly away, Jack! Fly away, Jill! Come back, Jack! Come back, Jill!”

This rhyme is done first by patting the beat, then mimicking the birds flying away—hands go behind the back one at a time when birds fly and can easily be transferred to an instrument. Orff teachers will notice a similarity to teaching xylophone improvisation—students will naturally play the same few keys repetitively. This should be encouraged because it is an improvised ostinato and is developmentally appropriate for the very young. When ready, the student may explore keeping the pulse in a combination of high, middle, and low registers. The “Fly away” section of the rhyme could take a break from the pulse in the form of an improvisation with the birds “flying” on the piano. As the teacher, play a chord, broken, or crossover ostinato while the student is playing. This is especially helpful for students of any age who may not have a steady internal pulse.

As in the general music classroom, use children's literature for inspiration in the piano studio. The food names in a book such as Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (1987) serve as Keetman's rhythmic building blocks, drones, or—when strung together—rhythmic phrases to form melodies. Invite the student to explore caterpillar and butterfly movements accompanied by your piano improvisations, which may inspire pathway drawings to “read” at the keyboard (see Figure 1). Create a larger form by chanting, for example, “Hungry, hungry, what can I eat? Hungry, hungry, looking for a treat!” as an A section the student sings while

Figure 1. Pitch Improvisations.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JOHN VISEL. USED WITH PERMISSION.

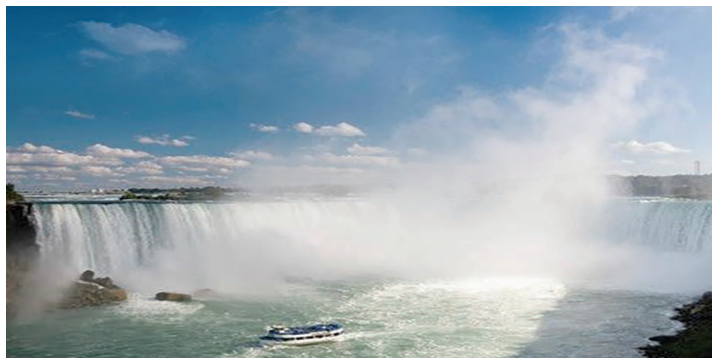
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self-accompanying on a drone and improvising on the various food rhythms when introduced in the book as other sections in an extended rondo form.

One of the first improvisation activities I do with my students is exploring a musical contour. A solid start to this might include John Feierabend's contour cards (2005), or having the student make "mountains" and "valleys" with a string on the floor. Large pipe cleaners are also useful. The student can then sing the contour as a "siren" before playing it on the piano (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Student Playing Contour on Piano.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JOHN VISEL. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 3.** Student Composing Music Using Line, Shape, and Color.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JOHN VISEL. USED WITH PERMISSION.

### Expressive Musicianship

Pairing music and movement concepts is an excellent way to introduce students to various expressive qualities of music. As a lesson warmup, use quick reaction exercises: Improvise loud and soft music and ask the student to use big movements for the loud phrases and small movements for the soft ones. Correlate sharp and smooth movements with staccato and legato phrases.

Poetry is an especially appropriate tool when working on expressive qualities of music like dynamics, tone quality, articulation, and so on. The poem, *Weather Is Full of the Nicest Sounds*, works well to inspire creativity. Encourage the student to use vocal exploration and movement on different levels to dramatize different types of weather—sun, wind, a thunderstorm (see Figures 4 and 5, page 31).

The Orff approach offers piano teachers opportunities to create music based on art and vice versa, and then translate these experiences by improvising into a rich creative outlet.

When the student is ready, present a grand staff on paper or a small dry-erase music notation board. Discuss the high register (treble clef) and low register (bass clef) before the student creates contours that include both. In these activities, have the student copy your example first and soon after make his or her own contours. Try "composing" for each other, and then play each other's contour compositions.

For these improvisations, technique takes a back seat to spontaneity. Some very young students may even use their whole hand on the keyboard. Contour improvisations should be largely aleatoric, with no set scale or mode. In these pieces, allow students to use single keys or tone clusters and explore the entire piano keyboard. Black keys offer a convenient pentatonic, but the dissonances of the white keys are also an important musical experience.

The Orff approach offers piano teachers opportunities to create music based on art and vice versa, and then translate these experiences by improvising into a rich creative outlet. When working on using varied piano registers with those just starting to read notation, encourage the creation of artwork with lines in different parts of the page. Translate the lines into improvisations that follow line contours—in the appropriate register of the piano. Allow younger students to choose which line (high/middle/low) to play first. Challenge older students to play two or three lines at once. Encourage them to explore what colors in their artwork might indicate—dynamics, timbre, or other musical elements (see Figure 3).

**Figure 4.** The Sun!



PHOTOGRAPHER: SAI LENG. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 5.** Lightning.



PHOTOGRAPHER: SAI LENG. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 7:** Thunder!



PHOTOGRAPHER: SAI LENG. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 6:** Sprinkling Sounds.



PHOTOGRAPHER: SAI LENG. USED WITH PERMISSION.

To develop a unique sound for each type of weather, have the student percussively explore various surfaces in the room by “sprinkling” with fingers and pounding with fists, to name a few (see Figures 6 and 7).

Move to the piano and create together, with one playing an ostinato or drone and the other improvising in different registers with different expressive qualities. In a further exploration, invite the student to draw pictures of various weather patterns on a grand staff or blank paper and play

**Figure 8.** Creating Music to Fit the Mood.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JOHN VISEL. USED WITH PERMISSION.

them in order, and then take turns playing weather patterns on the piano and dramatizing them.

Music layering is a centerpiece of the Schulwerk's elemental style, and GarageBand or other recording software facilitates the exploration and composition of layered pieces. To help young students develop the ability to play different music in each hand, read (you or the student) a short story or poem, such as those by Jack Prelutsky and Shel Silverstein, into one track. On a second track, using black or white keys, have the student improvise pentatonic or diatonic music that complements the poem. Very young students may play tone clusters, which is developmentally appropriate. For the third track, allow the student to decide on an ostinato or drone that complements the improvisation and fits the mood of the poem (see Figure 8).

Artwork is also an effective means to exploring expressive qualities. The bright and dark colors on the introductory page of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* are an excellent prompt for improvisations of what each color might sound like. A set of paintings, for example, "The Old Guitarist," "Sara Holding a Cat," "The Scream," and "The Dance and the Circus," offers an engaging way to explore moods

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**Figure 9.** Use Paintings to Explore Moods and Emotions.



SOURCE: "THE OLD GUITARIST," PABLO PICASSO (1903); "SARA HOLDING A CAT," MARY CASSATT (1908); "THE SCREAM," EDVARD MUNCH (1893); "THE DANCE AND THE CIRCUS," MARC CHAGALL (1950).

and emotions, perhaps with a different pitch set or mode for each (see Figure 9).

## Conclusion

Orff Schulwerk teaching techniques nurture the development of basic musicianship skills and lead to a deeper understanding of the language of music, thus paving the way for piano students to play repertoire at all levels. In contrast to traditional lessons that often solely emphasize learning to read notes and reproduce accurately what is on the page, Orff-Schulwerk-based lessons nurture each student's expressive and creative musicianship through improvisation, dramatization, and composition activities that stem from exploratory experiences. Watch your students' artistry flourish when you bring a bit of the Orff Schulwerk magic into your piano studio! ■

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# Elemental Movement for Gifted Dancers

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**ASHLEY BROWN WOODSIDE**

is dedicated to exploring the intersection of dance and music. She has successfully completed three levels and several master classes of Orff Schulwerk teacher education and is on the AOSA roster of approved movement teacher educators. Ashley taught the Orff Schulwerk teacher education course in movement at The Hartt School in Connecticut. She presents workshops to schools and chapters nationally, and enjoys working with instrumental students at The Key School in Annapolis, Maryland and teaching pre-K through Grade 5 music and movement at The Tidewater School.

**ABSTRACT**

*The Schulwerk is an approach rooted in movement and dance. In this article, the author discusses her experience at a summer camp for the arts where she led 13 young dancers through a structured collaborative process that enhanced their elemental movement vocabulary and nurtured personal growth in creativity and artistic expression, culminating in an original performance.*

**By Ashley Brown Woodside**

**T**wo things puzzled me as a formally trained dancer taking Level 1 Movement from Christa Coogan 12 years ago: How did “non-dancers” create such breathtakingly beautiful movements, and why did I continue to feel stumped?

My movement vocabulary overflowed with sophisticated terms for turns, jumps, and stretches, but despite the ability to learn challenging techniques and choreograph beautiful works for my students, the elemental movement explorations felt limiting and the improvisation activities were terrifying. Meanwhile, the carefully structured movement exercises inspired my classmates, giving them a clear problem to solve using their minds, hearts, and bodies.

We were acquiring a new vocabulary—both in words and ways of moving—but full range of motion and expression using familiar movements eluded me. The elemental terminology seemed, at first, like layman’s words—generalizations or simplifications of the language I had studied for years—but it soon became apparent they were springboards for creativity when combined in new and interesting ways. Clear and intentional use of everyday movement could be refined to the point where it became avant-garde without needing to be virtuosic or athletic.

Our collaborative work also stretched me beyond my dance background. The inherent richness of sharing various approaches to answering the same

question and finding ways to layer while partnering with classmates less experienced in dance technique soon became obvious.

This experience changed my approach to choreography and pedagogy, and each subsequent Orff Schulwerk Levels and Master Class increased the desire to give my students ownership of the fundamental components of dance while allowing them to express themselves creatively. The results have been rewarding.

### Upper Chesapeake Summer Camp for the Arts Experience

As the dance teacher for 13 gifted and talented young artists ages 11-17 at the Washington College summer camp in Chestertown, Maryland, my first priority was to specify the most valuable contribution to their seven-day training. The primary objective was introducing elemental dance vocabulary and exploring dance outside of their practiced movements while also working to improve technique.

#### “Little Sally Walker”

Our opening session was created to capture a baseline reading of each dancer’s ability to move freely with only structural directions as they practiced a twist on the traditional American game of “Little Sally Walker” (Walking Down the Street). With general music students, or with those who do not consider themselves dancers, a few rounds of echoing movements and answering questions prepares them to create a movement to perform in circle play, an activity in which they take turns expressing themselves. Initial inhibitions tend to dissipate, but this group was reserved throughout the activity. Despite the abundance of positive feedback, encouragement, and playfulness, they were reluctant to take a turn walking around the circle of new friends and sharing a unique movement for a partner to answer. Only the youngest were able to bring themselves to chant the words at all.

This time-tested process has yielded positive results as an ice-breaker in many different settings with a variety of ages. This group’s hesitance, it seemed, was due to their high self-expectations and their wealth of experience in imitative dancing as opposed to improvisatory movement. No small factor, too, was the spirit of competition and comparison that had fueled their technical development for years. Their bewilderment and

**Figure 1.** A Dancer Gracefully Lifts Her Leg *À La Seconde* While Artists Sketch.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

discomfort in creating movements was obvious, a poignant reminder of my own experiences as a beginning Orff student.

#### The Name Game

Once the group’s anxiety was acknowledged, we began with the baby steps Level 1 movement and upper elementary students use initially. We started with a name game where, after a minute of individual exploration, each student was encouraged to create unique and personal new movements that represented her current mood or thoughts. With levels students, detailed questions help clarify the recreation of their movement. They often express surprise at how specifically we mimic their ideas and how the questions force them to notice their passive body parts, and they refine the movement to be clearer and more intentional. These dancers already did that, and almost immediately they could accurately imitate one another as they accumulated more movements in a long phrase. In most studios, dancers spend nearly every minute of class refining imitated movements, paying close attention to both active and passive body parts. Performance dance styles necessitate both clarity to create unity among the dancers, and energy or intention to draw in the viewer—demands this group was accustomed to meeting in technique classes.

Yet another difference was that each dancer had ideas to share. They were able to pull from a vast repertoire of movements to inspire their exploration and creation. Levels students and general music students contribute more pedestrian movements, and often one or two will shrug at their turn, which we then refine and offer as an option to represent their mood. In contrast, this group initiated movement from either the core or limbs, changed level/focus/facing, and showed a host of moods, from playful to bellyache. There were no shrugged shoulders here, except for intentionally lifted ones (see Figure 1, page 35).

The next step was to help the group recognize they now had a wealth of movements with which to develop a collaborative creation. They brainstormed ideas and listed possibilities for using the shared vocabulary: canonic movement, unison phrase work, repetition, taking turns, and breaking into smaller groups. They chose the latter then started guessing

the emotion or thoughts behind each other's movements, after which they formed groups by intention. They used their collaborative movements to structure canons, making decisions based on form, timing, and orientation, with splendid results. They also considered details that other students might overlook—contrasts in levels/facing/size/speed and shape of the movements—assigning specific counts and identifying moments to use contact. One group used retrograde form to lengthen and add more contrast to their piece.

### Long, Hot Summer Days

The next task was to develop the first piece of choreography for the upcoming outdoor public performance. Each person's movement from the name game was manipulated to develop phrases with form, and fit the music's mood and style. They improvised using three name movements to *Long, Hot Summer Days* by Sara Watkins (2009), a slow,

Figure 2. Elements of Dance.

Ask:	WHO?	DOES WHAT?	WHERE?	WHEN?	HOW?
Answer:	A dancer	moves	through space	and time	with energy
<b>B.A.S.T.E.</b>	<b>BODY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>SPACE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>ENERGY</b>
<b>Concepts</b> (in bold font) with some suggestions for word lists and descriptors under each concept.	<b>Parts of the Body</b> Head, eyes, torso, shoulders, fingers, legs, feet, etc.	<b>Axial</b> <i>(in place)</i> Open ----- Close Rise ----- Sink or Fall Stretch ----- Bend Twist ----- Turn	<b>Place</b> In Place ----- Traveling	<b>Duration</b> Brief ----- Long	<b>Attack</b> Sharp ----- Smooth Sudden ----- Sustained
	<b>Whole Body</b> Design and use of the entire body	<b>Laban Effort Actions</b> Press      Flick Wring      Dab Slash      Glide Punch      Float	<b>Size</b> Small ----- Large	<b>Speed</b> Fast ----- Slow	<b>Tension</b> Tight ----- Loose
	<b>Initiation</b> Core Distal Mid-limb Body Parts	<b>Traveling</b> <i>(locomotor)</i> Crawl, creep, roll, scoot, walk, run, leap, jump, gallop, slide, hop, skip, do-si-do, chaîné turns ... and many more!  <i>This is just a starting list of movements. Many techniques have specific names for similar actions. "Sauté" is a ballet term for "jump."</i>	<b>Level</b> High ----- Low	<b>Beat</b> Steady ----- Uneven	<b>Force</b> Strong ----- Gentle
	<b>Patterns</b> Upper/lower body, homologous, contralateral, midline, etc.		<b>Direction</b> Forward ----- Backward Upward ----- Downward Sideward ----- Diagonally Liner ----- Rotating	<b>Tempo</b> Quick ----- Slow	<b>Weight</b> Heavy ----- Light <b>Strength:</b> push, horizontal, impacted <b>Lightness:</b> resist the down, initiate up <b>Resiliency:</b> rebound, even up and down
	<b>Body Shapes</b> Symmetrical/Asymmetrical Rounded Twisted Angular Arabesque	<b>Pathway</b> Traveling, traced in air curved, straight, angular, zig-zag, etc.	<b>Plane</b> Sagittal (Wheel) Vertical (Door) Horizontal (Table)	<b>Accent</b> Single ----- Multiple On Beat ----- Syncopated Predictable ----- Unpredictable	<b>Flow</b> Bound (Controlled) ----- Free
	<b>Body Systems</b> Muscles Bones Organs Breath Balance Reflexes	<b>Focus</b> Inward ----- Outward Direct ----- Indirect	<b>Rhythmic Pattern</b> Metric      Breath, 2/4, 6/8, etc      waves, Polyrhythms      word cues, Cross-rhythm      event cues, Tāla      felt time	<b>Timing Relationships</b> Before After Unison Sooner Than Faster Than	<b>Energy Qualities</b> Vigorous, languid, furious, melting, droopy, wild, lightly, jerkily, sneakily, timidly, proudly, sharp, smooth, sudden, sustained etc.
<b>Inner Self</b> Senses Perceptions Emotions Thoughts Intention Imagination	<b>Relationships</b> In Front --- Behind/Beside Over ----- Under Alone ----- Connected Near ----- Far Individual & group proximity to object				

SOURCE: AOSA NBT CURRICULUM STANDARDS. ©2012 AMERICAN ORFF-SCHULWERK ASSOCIATION.

**Figure 3.** Two Dancers Explore the Negative Space Created by One Another's Movements.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

wearily rockabilly song with drawling fiddles and lazy lyrics. The group identified, then adapted, movement elements to the music in the improvisation, and began a list on the board organized according to the B.A.S.T.E. (Body/Action/Space/Timing/Energy) Organizer (see Figure 2, page 36).

Under the Body heading, they listed parts involved in the movements and suggested ways to do them using different ones. They repeated the reflective practice for every heading until several new ways of performing the three movements from the name game evolved.

The group brainstormed an opening unison phrase, using slow/fast motions, repetition, and fragmentation, then divided it into parts that different groups would perform while others held still body shapes derived from the movements. This process was repeated for the next sections of the dance as I gradually reduced my involvement and allowed them to make more of the creative decisions. Then the canonic dances they had created the day before in small groups were interwoven. The heart of each movement was present in the choreography they developed, but the execution of each movement

transcended the boundaries of their normal dance vocabulary (see Figure 3).

Together the group created a dance with movements each of them could perform with ownership and integrity that equitably showcased their creativity. Each contribution was noted, but the result exceeded the sum of its parts and functioned as a gateway to the language and understanding of elemental dance.

### A Breath of Fresh Air

Orff Schulwerk has empowered me to use new impulses as points of departure in choreography and improvisation. Dancers are able to serve the music when music inspires choreography. If the dance comes first, the relationship between music and movement can be altered. The group explored this using touch and breath as impulses for movement.

They studied the anatomy of breath during ballet and modern warmups early on, and continued to bring attention to the physiology of the breath during technique classes. They brainstormed ways people use their breath, such as blowing on hot soup, hissing, puffing out birthday candles, then explored the example by first breathing expressively and envisioning a movement, adding the movement, and then settling on a way to perform each breath through movement (see Figure 4). Finally, they chose their favorite two or three breath movements and

**Figure 4.** Dancers Perform a Duet Developed from Individual Exploration of the Breath.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 5.** Musicians Improvise Accompaniments While Dancers Develop Elemental Phrases Based on Breath Exploration.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

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created an elemental phrase. After sharing their phrases, they formed pairs to create a short duet where the breath was used as a transfer of energy between their bodies. Some pairs adapted their movements to include contact, such as one partner releasing a long, slow breath in a backbend while another caught her using her elevated toes.

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After organizing the duets into a larger form using flocking—an activity in which dancers move in simultaneous imitation while shadowing one another—it was time to add the music, “Fruits of Labor” from Glen Velez’ CD, *Rhythms of the Chakras* (2004). After working in silence, the group was hungry for accompaniment, but I wanted something to connect directly to the breath impulse at the heart of the piece. A saxophonist and flutist from the camp’s orchestral program joined our creative process, and we settled on a blues scale as the basis for improvisation. The musicians watched the dancers, and then responded to each duet by using articulation and dynamic changes (see Figure 5). They developed themes and connected them to the choreography—a beautiful fit that created an intense effect. The dancers were gratified to see the musicians studying their movements and creating music just for them.

### Animation

Collaborating with students and teachers in other disciplines is one of the greatest rewards of teaching at a camp for young artists. We invited the visual art students to sketch the dancers during their pointe work at the ballet barre. The studio’s floor-to-ceiling frosted window cast a gentle glow on the girls’ silhouettes. The reverence for the female form captured in the sketches beautifully memorialized the dance in charcoal and pencil (see Figures 6 and 7, page 39).

We reversed roles and invited the art students to take eight counts to draw an abstract design with their finger on a dancer’s back (see Figure 8, page 39). For four counts the dancers envisioned the design coming to life. They took the next eight counts to improvise a dance based on the design, and ended in stillness while the artists sketched the body design. The effect was instantaneous and brought tears to the eyes of the visual art teacher.

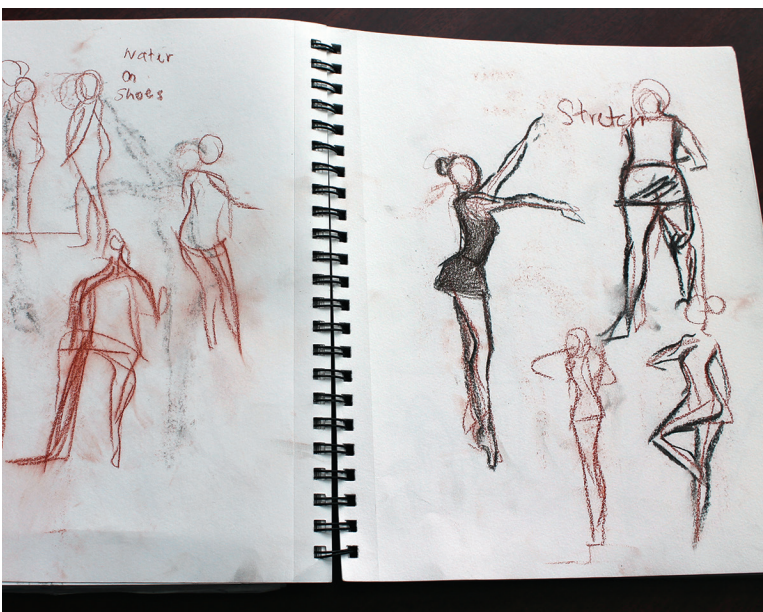
We refined the process several times then invited dancers and artists to share their work. One dancer remarked while jumping up and down, “This is my favorite thing ever! I want to do this all the time!” The movements were so authentic and the process so captivating we decided to turn the activity into a piece to include at the end-of-camp performance for parents. To the echoes and answers of Vivaldi’s *Andante* from *Concerto in D Minor for Two Mandolins*, recorded by Yo-Yo Ma and Bobby

**Figure 6.** Finding Stillness While Basking in the Light of the Studio Window.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 7.** A Young Artist's Sketches of the Dancers in Action.



ARTIST: AMY BUTKIEWICZ. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Collaborating with students and teachers in other disciplines is one of the greatest rewards of teaching at a camp for young artists.

**Figure 8.** An Artist Sketches on a Dancer's Back Providing Tactile Impulse for Movement Exploration.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 9.** A Ballet Warmup With Emphasis on Alignment and Connection to the Breath Begins Every Day's Work.

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PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

**Figure 10.** Students Perform a Site-Specific Improvisation Around the Fountain at the Heart of Chestertown.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ASHLEY WOODSIDE. USED WITH PERMISSION.

McFerrin (1992), the group interacted and shared their work through dance and charcoal drawing. The audience was spellbound by the magic of the creative process.

### “Little Sally Walker,” Revisited

A serious energy dip struck during a long afternoon session. The group had been dancing for over six hours each day, creating and polishing three dances to present at the following day’s community performance. Their bodies were tired and their creative juices were running dry. They groaned at my suggestion to play a round of “Little Sally Walker” to inject some energy into our day. As soon as they started moving, clapping, and chanting, however, a lightness emerged and they invited the head counselor to join in as well. One student

cried out, “Wow, remember how awkward this was a few days ago?!” They now trusted one another enough to be playful when they danced alone. Appreciation for each other’s artistry had replaced competitiveness.

### Conclusion

The Orff Schulwerk approach not only enhanced the dancers’ creativity, but also fostered community and respect for each other’s contributions as artists (see Figure 9, page 40, and Figure 10). It allowed instruction differentiation that permitted them to challenge themselves technically. They learned to express their interpretations of various impulses and to use a clear and descriptive dance vocabulary to expand their movement repertoire. I can’t wait to see what happens next year! ■

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# Project Orchestra: The Child Becomes the Music

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**MARCELLINE MOODY** received her diploma from the Special Course at the Orff Institute, Salzburg. She has taught Orff Schulwerk teacher education courses for many years at the University of Manitoba, and workshops and Orff summer courses internationally and across Canada. Marcelline has been education consultant with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra for 20 years and is now a consultant with the Victoria Symphony. Her published works include *Reach for a Star*, a recorder manual for teachers and students.

## ABSTRACT

*A teacher's concern about poor attention at concerts resulted in a project linking elementary students with their local symphony orchestra. In this article, the author describes how, using all the Orff media and the natural relationship between music and movement, she encouraged the children's discovery of the form, nuances, and mood of the music they heard, which culminated in an expressive live performance.*

## By Marcelline Moody

**E**leven-year-old Chris is on a concert hall stage, a full symphony orchestra behind him. One of eight, he crouches inside a dark bag, ready to emerge from under a blue river cloth as soon as he hears the beginning of the *Rapids* section of *The Moldau* by Smetana. Upon rolling out he will freeze as a river rock, to be leaped over and splashed against by children in shredded white garbage bags, depicting the white water of the rapids.

Elizabeth, a Grade 4 student, waits on all fours offstage for the majestic chords that begin *The Great Gate of Kiev* from *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky. At that moment she will be pushed out onto the stage by another child to build the wall of the Great Gate along with 50 other blocks of living stone.

Concentrating and listening intently, 12-year-old Samantha slowly draws her imaginary bow from its quiver as she performs her favorite Olympic sport, archery, in the slowest of motion, representing France at the Olympic Games, as *Satie's Gymnopédie* is played behind her.

Geoff relaxes his arm and wrist as he keeps his gymnastic ribbon constantly spinning. He is echoing the constant murmur of the violas behind him. Occasionally the spinning changes in height or breadth, representing the line of the music and the tense drama of the story of "Mélisande at the Spinning Wheel" from *Pelléas et Mélisande* by Sibelius.

**Figure 1.** Students Performing the Peasant Dance.



PHOTOGRAPHER: HUGO WONG, VICTORIA SYMPHONY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

These are just a few of the exciting moments experienced by students of public elementary schools over the last 20 years in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and more recently in Victoria, British Columbia, in a project involving live performance with a symphony orchestra. Through the Orff philosophy of child-centeredness and learning through doing, students experience the meaning of orchestral pieces through various Orff media, resulting in a profound and intimate knowledge of the music.

### **Background**

One of our functions as music teachers is to educate children to be intelligent and discriminating listeners, thereby developing their potential as the concert-goers and classical music listeners of the future. As well, we can enhance their listening skills and stimulate other intelligences. For some years I had been troubled by the poor behavior, lack of attention, and the minimal understanding shown at school symphony concerts and had also seen how better preparation for the concert experience

**Guided by solid principles provided by a qualified art specialist and sometimes a visiting artist, children draw or paint, inspired by one of the pieces.**

would develop those skills and intelligences and increase the appreciation of musical language. A monumental project was born after the conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Manitoba Music Educators' Association, and the Manitoba Orff Chapter all agreed with me about the need to prepare students in a meaningful way through the Orff approach, and extended their wholehearted interest and support.

The concerts feature choirs and movement groups in alternating years. The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra offers eight city concerts to a usually sold-out audience of 2,000 students per concert. Movement performances involve two or three different schools per concert amounting to 400 students overall. The choral concerts involve well over 1,000 students from many schools performing

**Figure 2.** “Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks” Rhythm Pattern With Speech and Instruments.

The figure displays three musical staves for the rhythm pattern. The first staff, labeled "[temple blocks]", is in 4/4 time and contains nine notes with the lyrics "Peck, peck, peck, peck peck, peck peck, peck, peck, peck". The second staff, labeled "[hand drum]", contains eight notes with the lyrics "kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing, kick - ing". The third staff, labeled "[guiro]", contains eight notes with the lyrics "Scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, puuuuush..." and a cymbal or triangle symbol at the end.

SOURCE: MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1874). ARRANGED BY MARCELLINE MOODY.

across eight concerts. In Victoria there are five city concerts. Each orchestra offers several more concerts in rural areas.

Choirs have sung pieces ranging from Beethoven, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, to Harry Belafonte and songs from Disney films. Movement groups have performed at least 40 pieces including Renaissance dances arranged by Peter Warlock, various works from *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the complete *Planets* suite by Holst, a tango by Piazzolla, Ravel’s *Bolero*, the complete *Moldau* by Smetana, and *When the Levee Breaks* by Led Zeppelin, to name a few (see Figure 1, page 43).

At each concert a different recorder group from one to four parts plays one of the programmed pieces with the orchestra. Each year also features an art component. Guided by solid principles provided by a qualified art specialist and sometimes a visiting artist, children draw or paint, inspired by one of the pieces. A selection of these artworks is screened during the performance of the piece with the artists and their schools identified by name.

Other components of the concerts involving student performers may include:

- String groups,
- percussion groups, and
- classroom compositions transcribed for, and played by, the orchestra—with some parts played by students.

### First Steps

Preparation for the year’s concerts begins with distributing my lesson plans for the proposed program to all the music teachers at a workshop

presented every October in both cities. The lesson plans involve every facet of the Orff approach including composition and artwork.

Within the plans I have created for the project, one of my favorite activities is for *The Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks* from *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky. It involves language, movement (both choreographed and improvised), literacy, form, and instrumental play. The students learn the rhythms of the A section through speech patterns (see Figure 2), with *graphic* notation first. They apply them to appropriate non-pitched percussion instruments, and then they express the rhythms and words in movement. They improvise their own unhatched chicken movements for the B section, which we call the chickens’ exercise session. For the performance, the students wear chicken heads and are encased in eggshell-colored lycra bags from which the heads pop out at the very end.

After the initial workshop, I visit the schools that have agreed to participate in the concerts and present a movement/listening workshop for the children. We discuss what the music is about, its mood, form and shape, and storyline (if there is one), and how we can express these aspects through movement. A great deal of original thought and problem solving is involved. With the guidelines established, the students and their teacher work on their own interpretation for a month or so, and then I return to see the progress. Unless the movement is a set dance (as in Peter Warlock’s *Capriol Suite* or *Shepherds’ Hey* by Percy Grainger) each group’s interpretation will be

slightly or sometimes hugely different as they play with the sounds of the music. One more visit closer to the performance for a bit of final tweaking, and the students, with an intimate knowledge of the music, are ready and excited for their unique performance.

### At the Concert Hall

Every group attends the one rehearsal on the morning of the first concert. Two schools per piece rehearse with the orchestra while those sitting in the auditorium visualize themselves on stage. Each group has the chance to rehearse their movement on the stage with a recording on the day of their performance.

Julian Pelicano, assistant conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, recently commented on the success of the project:

Each year I am amazed at what the students have achieved once they reach the stage of working with the orchestra. Each of our 10 concerts has a different group of schools participating, and it is this student involvement that is the lifeblood of the *Adventures in Music* program. It is the most difficult element to coordinate and yet the most important one in creating a meaningful artistic and musical experience for these students...both those on stage and those in the audience who are watching their peers perform. (Julian Pelicano, personal communication, July 2016)

Music is first and foremost an aural experience; because the goal is to have the children understand and embody the essence of the music, we use as few realistic props as possible, deciding *after* the music has been heard, what visual items would be meaningful. Hence, there are no weapons in Holst's *Mars, the Bringer of War* from *The Planets*—we have vigorous bodies in red and black illustrating the 5/4 meter, the mood, and the form. Nor are there gnome costumes in the first picture of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Four children dressed in abstract costumes emerge from a huge picture frame, each representing one of the four very different musical themes with appropriate movement. In fact, no one is quite sure what the original gnome looked like—the picture has been lost—but Mussorgsky, posthumously commemorating his artist friend Viktor Hartman's talent, has portrayed it as a sinister, twisted, limping homunculus that the children delight in portraying. And *The Great Gate of Kiev* is built with bodies, not props. In one thrilling performance, two sixth grade boys lifted a classmate by her shoulders and ankles above their heads for the final touch, the lintel of the gate. For *En Bateau* by Debussy, there are no boats. Instead, typical sights to be seen from a boat—waves, fish, clouds—surround it (see Figure 3).

### Another Experience: Composition

The Orff processes of imitation to exploration to improvisation are the steps that lead to students'

Figure 3. An Imagined View of the Sea from a Boat.



PHOTOGRAPHER: HUGO WONG, VICTORIA SYMPHONY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

understanding and creation of music. Realizing the worth of their creations and the need to have them written down leads us to composition and literacy.

One orchestral concert with the theme of “The Elements” featured an elements rondo composed by the students. One school composed the A section, which was played by the orchestra. Another school, responsible for water, created various amplified sounds including squeezing water from a sponge, submerging a gong in water, and blowing bubbles through a straw. A third school moved with flame-colored scarves to the accompaniment of paper being crinkled into the microphone, and added speech, using such words as “hissssss,” “burrrrrn,” and “crackle” for an arrhythmic sound carpet over which they created poetry. Air involved everything from primitive sources such as a conch shell, didgeridoo, and twirling bull-roarer, to vocal sounds and melodies on recorders. Representations of Earth involved rock-passing, drumming on skin and clay, and tapping sticks.

Another composition project, a year in the making, was a children’s opera based on the story of King Midas, King of Phrygia, accompanied by the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. Six schools were involved, and the story offered a perfect opportunity to explore the six medieval modes, with the final musical number in a major diatonic key.

From 738-695 B.C., King Midas ruled the part of the ancient world called *Phrygia*, (now Turkey), so anything to do with Midas was in the *Phrygian* mode. We named his daughter Dorian and wrote *Dorian* pieces for her. We brought Silenus from travels in Ionia and the god Dionysis from travels in Aeolia, thus covering the *Ionian* and the *Aeolian* modes. We were guilty of a little historical alteration in order to incorporate the *Lydian* mode: Croesus, the King of Lydia, ruled some 130 years *after* Midas was responsible for standardizing Greek coinage—therefore, anything to do with money was in the *Lydian* mode. When a clumsy servant tripped over and mixed up Midas’s money-counting, we incorporated the *MIXolydian* mode.

The project was also an opportunity to explore the history, customs, and costumes of the time, as

well as Greek dance in irregular meters. The final result was a thrilling experience the students will remember all their lives.

## Conclusion

For most of us of the Orff persuasion, the Schulwerk is not just a way of teaching music—it becomes a way of life. I am passionate about building bridges, connecting arts institutions with both education and the public, helping children be better human beings, and expanding their intelligence and skills in several areas through involvement in the arts. Hermann Regner (1963) said one of the areas of learning activities that should be part of a child’s music education “involves learning to perceive music with attention, discrimination and comparison, training the musical memory, and establishing and developing sensitivity and the ability to enjoy music” (p.178).

The Symphony Project fulfills much of this ideal. Standing offstage and watching a movement performance come together as a result of the students’ concentration, practice, creativity, and intimate knowledge of the music is a supreme thrill. Many times I have punched the air with a whispered “yes!” when a difficult or risky moment is executed perfectly. Similarly, my heart warms when a fully engaged, attentive audience meets my gaze as I peer from the wings. Judy Carruth, a brilliant music teacher and colleague, shared this comment:

The Symphony Project has created life-changing experiences for the children at my school. As educators, we know how enriching and confidence-building a performance can be for a child. My favorite quote was from a shy and standoffish boy who said, “Madame, when we started this I was so scared and didn’t want to do it, but I think today is the best day of my whole life.” (Judy Carruth, personal communication, July 2016)

My favorite comment? It came from a 12-year-old boy who told me, “It was awesome! ...I was the music!” ■

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# Is the Eye the Enemy of the Ear? The Unsettled Issue of Literacy in the Orff Approach: Part III

48

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**ABSTRACT**

*This is the final part in our special series featuring responses from Orff experts to Jane Frazee's question presented in The Orff Echo Fall 2016 issue: "Do you think that, in the long run, time spent on learning a symbol system is necessary at all?" The authors' considered responses shed light on the process through which their insights were formed relative to the specific role for notation within the framework of Orff Schulwerk.*

**By Leonard Davis, Mary Shamrock, and Doug Goodkin**

**Being Ready for Notation: Leonard Davis**

Music begins inside human beings, and so must any instruction. Not at the instrument, not with the first finger, nor with the first position, nor with this or that chord. The starting point is one's own stillness, listening to oneself, the "being ready for music," listening to one's own heart-beat and breathing. (Orff, 2013, p. 149)

Carl Orff's statement illustrates that music notation is a byproduct of active music making. We do not begin with printed symbols; rather, our starting point is the act of music making and creating through movement, words, rhythm, and melody.

Over the years I have developed a curriculum for my students with a scope and sequence built on literacy in melody and rhythm, among other elements. This framework has resulted in success with developing students in their artistry, musicianship, creativity, and literacy skill building—reading and writing basic rhythms and melodies—that can then transfer to their next level of music learning in middle school and beyond. Part of this success lies in doing more with less and being intentional in every moment with my students. It is possible

to value artistry and creativity and still find time for more formal music understanding (e.g., notation) if we are deliberate about ensuring that every activity in music is connected to a specific purpose. When we are intentional in our time with our students, we are able to see their progress in both music and thinking skills. Perhaps then, notation can be thought of as a way of thinking in sound.

The keys to unlock a symbol system are gifts we can give to those we teach. As Orff educators, we carry the unwavering belief that everyone is musical and can grow in different areas of musicianship. It is our responsibility to pass along the learning of symbol systems to all of our students to enable them to become independent music creators and re-creators of the music of others. Developing fluency in notation occurs as a result of learning music through the body and ears. Teachers guide students with physical and aural music experiences that lead to conceptual understanding of an element of music.

It is also important to teach notation musically and not allow it to replace or overshadow the musicality of the patterns under study. Musical sounds, not printed music, drive our pedagogy. Students are ready for notation only after they understand how sounds are organized. The formal understanding of symbols and note values is not as important as helping students perceive both patterns in music and how these patterns can be visualized and remembered with notation, both traditional and nontraditional.

In *Music Matters* (2005), music education philosopher David Elliott supports learning a literacy/symbol system as part of a comprehensive music curriculum:

Part of the musicianship of many (but not all) musical practices worldwide is knowledge about notation and knowledge of how to decode and encode musical sound patterns in staff notations, graphic notations, hand signs, or rhythmic syllables. But “music literacy” or the ability to decode and encode a system of musical notation is not equivalent to musicianship. It is only part of the formal and procedural dimensions of musicianship. Moreover, literacy should be taught and learned parenthetically and contextually—as a coding problem to be gradually reduced within the larger process of music problem solving through active music making. (p. 61)

It is our responsibility to pass along the learning of symbol systems to all of our students to enable them to become independent music creators and re-creators of the music of others.

Learning a notation system and gaining fluency in reading and writing patterns can be part of a music curriculum that favors student-centered music making and creating. Through the use of notation, students may better understand the building blocks of music as well as how music is preserved for future generations. Our students are ready for notation when bodies and ears are filled with the rhythms and melodies from the rhymes, chants, and songs of cultures around the world. Our role is to help connect all their music skills. With the guidance of adept music educators, notation becomes a means for understanding and appreciating music.

### Teaching Music Notation – If, When, and Why: Mary Shamrock

First, a few basic questions and answers:

#### **1. When is the ability to read what we know as Western music notation a necessary skill?**

It is a necessary skill when a need or desire arises to make/perform music that is accessible in notated form—an item either new to the music maker or “known” but not committed to memory.

#### **2. Who will want or need a high degree of fluency in this ability?**

A high degree of fluency is required for those who want or need to expand their technical and interpretive abilities to perform a variety of repertoire available in this form of notation for their particular performing medium (vocal or instrumental).

#### **3. How did reading Western music notation become part of our school music expectation?**

From its beginnings, the American education system has included musical performance groups of West European origin. These groups need notation to perform old and new repertoire, and students need notation to learn how to play the instruments.

Orff Schulwerk originated and developed within a West European context in which learning to read music was a standard part of music training,

whether in schools, group participation, or private study. Making music meant reading music. Carl Orff and his colleague, Gunild Keetman, were very familiar with this model of music learning and were aware that the Schulwerk approach represented a distinct contrast, but not to the exclusion of using symbols. In 1950 Orff (1958) wrote the following:

In order to achieve freedom in performance the children must play from memory. The teacher should nevertheless instruct them in musical notation right from the beginning.... At first musical notation should primarily be used to write down original inventions of melody and rhythm. (p. ii)

Although notation clearly was not a priority for the Schulwerk pedagogical process, it is assumed music educators know how to teach it.

In southern Minnesota where I grew up, expectations were similar. The dominant ethnic background was German, and high school dances featured the band playing, for the most part, waltzes, polkas, and schottisches. Reading was considered the enabler of serious music making, either solo or with others. For me it started at the age of 4 with weekly piano lessons using *John Thompson's Modern Course for the Piano: First Grade Book* (Thompson, 1937). Reading skill evolved incrementally through ongoing lessons and participation in various groups, an experience many music educators likely share.

Although notation clearly was not a priority for the Schulwerk pedagogical process, it is assumed music educators know how to teach it.

In the 1950s when I started teaching music in elementary school, music textbooks included material specifically for teaching simple vocal reading. It worked fairly well, in spite of the quality of the song material. A decade later the Tanglewood Symposium of 1967 stimulated a significant expansion of perspective with a declaration that defined the role of contemporary American music education and provided recommendations for improving its effectiveness. As a result, the next generation of textbooks offered much more context, and the updated songs and listening material opened the doors to introducing music from all over the globe. Elements of Western notation were

introduced, with examples for implementation but no progressive skill building.

Fast-forward to the present. Multicultural classrooms now are commonplace in many, if not most, schools throughout the country. In Minnesota, descendants of European immigrants—especially those from Germany, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden—are still well represented. In addition, the state now hosts the largest populations of Somali and Hmong in the United States, and the fastest-growing ethnicity is Latino. At a recent ceremony for new citizens in the federal courthouse in downtown Minneapolis, 70 persons from 30 countries were sworn in. A ride on the rapid transit system confirms the reality of a considerable ethnic mix.

Students from these various cultures will be in touch to varying degrees with musical traditions of their own heritage. If a student happens to be learning a specific “classical” form from his or her heritage, it may involve a specified notation system. We know, however, by far the majority of global music transmission practices require no notation system, and recording technology has contributed greatly to the ease of aural transmission.

The common music experiences for students in today's classrooms are likely to be the latest media hit songs, but preferences vary. The development of musicality through the Orff Schulwerk approach in elementary school may well function as a common experience that enables students of all backgrounds to participate in making music. Though it uses basic Western elements, it belongs ethnically to no one—or better, to everyone. And as mentioned earlier, it accommodates introducing basic elements of notation.

Western music notation is useful for students of any ethnicity who choose to participate in school activities that utilize it—band and orchestra, as well as choral and smaller groups. The percentage of students involved varies greatly, and these activities are usually elective. Although teachers may be disappointed when students without a solid background in music reading enroll, these activities provide ideal situations for learning notation—that is, by repetitive practice of the elements. Students with a background of Schulwerk music making will be well prepared to expand their reading fluency.

I support including in the general music classroom basic reading experiences that develop a double awareness: (1) Western music is indeed “readable,”

and (2) reading fluency can be expanded when needed or desired, according to the situation. The core of the Orff Schulwerk approach should remain the “doing” of music—the development of ears, eyes, and muscles for successful participation that brings satisfaction and joy to the doer, at whatever level.

### Notation in the Schulwerk: Doug Goodkin

Leading an Orff workshop for 45 minutes without a word spoken, I have guided the students from the first clap and sounded vowel to a full-blown piece of music complete with playing, singing, and dancing. Led by sound, gesture, imitation, and improvisation, we have made music that has great vitality, dynamic energy, and spirit. It is at once simple, elemental, accessible and complex, polyrhythmic, polytonal, and challenging. We are connected with held hands, eye contact, and conversational musical exchange. Time for questions and out comes the standard, “But what about notation?” It is as if we have just eaten a sumptuous meal and at the end, someone demands to see the menu or the recipe. But isn’t the musical experience enough?

Because we in the West have so strongly associated music education with learning to read, write, and decipher notes to replicate the music of mostly deceased musicians, we have a strange distrust of an approach that awakens music without paper or screen. Orff’s gift was to release us from the written notes and directly awaken the music within. Yet notation cannot be wholly ignored. What is its role in the Orff Schulwerk? What does it do well and what does it fail to do? What is the proper order and ratio between ear and eye?

#### **1. Notation exists to help store, remember, and transmit improvised and composed music. There are many different forms of notation that can accomplish this.**

- a) The use of language, rhythm syllables, and solfège is often used in oral cultures (much sub-Saharan African music, classical music of India).
- b) Written symbols for rhythms and pitches (including numbers) is commonplace in Western literate cultures and often used in other traditions including Javanese gamelan music.
- c) Audio and video recordings have been a viable means of storing, remembering, and

transmitting material with the added bonus of capturing accompanying dances and kinesthetic techniques.

### Orff’s gift was to release us from the written notes and directly awaken the music within.

Though Carl Orff himself never suggested codified oral techniques beyond the use of rhymes, poems, and proverbs, many Orff teachers use solfège syllables, Curwen hand signs, and Kodály/Gordon or French time-name rhythmic syllables as a stepping-stone to classic Western notation and to teach rhythms and melodies. Orff suggested that after composing pieces, the child would now be interested in exploring some form of notation (including traditional) to remember and share it. I have followed this idea with my students with good success and also used solfège and French time-name syllables to give students the tools to learn, remember, and aurally and visually reinforce what they have learned by ear.

#### **2. The right tool for the right job.**

Written notation can be a window into releasing beautiful music, but it can also be an obstacle when connecting with the audience and fellow musicians. By relying on the eyes it can rob the ear of hearing, making music a noun (“I can’t play without my “music”) instead of a flowing verb, and confining the marvelous free feeling of improvised music. The use of xylophones as a central ensemble instrument confirms Orff’s tendency toward an oral/aural approach for playing and creating music.

Because our role as Orff teachers is not to create concert pianists and competition winners in the classical tradition but to release the musical impulses of all children, traditional notation does not make sense at the forefront of the approach. In fact, the whole freedom of the Orff Schulwerk is in discovering just how much music we can make without relying on the paper.

Note how kids copying a pop song on the radio not only sing the melody, but imitate the inflection, style, swoops, and turns of the singer’s interpretation—the expression is inextricably woven into the notes. In this aspect of the learning process, coming to the music directly through the oral approach is far superior to all the clumsy notational terms that attempt to communicate the nuances of expression.

### 3. *The right tool at the right age for the right amount of time.*

All music education is best begun young—3 years old is already a bit late. The young child is an oral learner, and Orff's brilliant use of echo, imitation, speech connected to rhythm, rhymes connected to song, exploration of instruments with simple techniques, and movement throughout meets the child exactly where he or she is developmentally. Preschool children consistently delight in the many ways they are invited to make and create music directly and orally. Start them with notation and watch their posture slump and their smiles fade. They are telling you something.

At ages 6 and 7, when children are cracking the literate reading code outside of class, they are genuinely intrigued by the idea that a syllable and a hand sign can represent a pitch, a cup or drawing or stick can teach a rhythm. The visual learners will be especially delighted to have something concrete at which to look. And 8-year-olds, trying out the recorder, will be thrilled to play a little two-note melody by sight—while still practicing direct improvisation with their two notes. The 10-year-olds in chorus will be intrigued by how the words, rhythms, and pitches are connected and how following the alto line helps them understand this relationship. And all ages will enjoy the challenge of creating their own notational system to remember

We look forward to furthering this discussion and invite you to post your comments on the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Facebook page. Let us know what you think about: Why should notation be taught? How should it be taught? Should it be taught at all?

and communicate the little piece they improvised by ear on the xylophone. How much notation, then, is necessary?

I do believe some measure of familiarity with various notation systems is within the scope of any general music program. Given the constraints of time, though, we need not feel apologetic that our students are not fluent readers if they feel music deeply, can hear a melody and transfer it to any instrument, and can connect with each other while playing and improvising. Considering that many of our children may never go on to play in a band or orchestra where reading skills are more needed and valued, we must decide what is important and make wise choices. Notation is a room in the house of music and you can enter through the back door of written notes, but you miss a lot if you do not come in through the front door of playing by ear. Learning to read is a limited, concrete skill—learning to listen and create is a lifetime task. ■

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Reviewed by Vivian Caputo

## Everybody Gets the Blues

Written by Leslie Staub/Illustrated by R. G. Roth  
New York, NY: HMH Books for Young Readers, 2012

What makes you feel blue? What makes you feel sad or mad? Is a personal challenge pulling you down? Did you have an argument with someone you really care about? Has violence occurred that frightens you? Have you been bullied, or is it just a grey day? Everybody gets the blues sometimes, even kids! The issues may be different, but we all have times when we feel alone and depressed. What can make us feel better?

*Everybody Gets the Blues* author Leslie Staub lived in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina. Experiencing both the trauma of the natural disaster and the solace of support from others inspired this book. Readers may already be familiar with Staub as the illustrator of *Whoever You Are*, by Mem Fox, and as author and illustrator of *Bless This House*.

R. G. Roth illustrated *Busing Brewster* by Richard Michelson, and *This Jazz Man* by Karen Erhardt. In *Everybody Gets the Blues*, he combines soft, color-washed backgrounds, line drawings, and collage, and portrays background characters with sensitivity and, at times, whimsy.

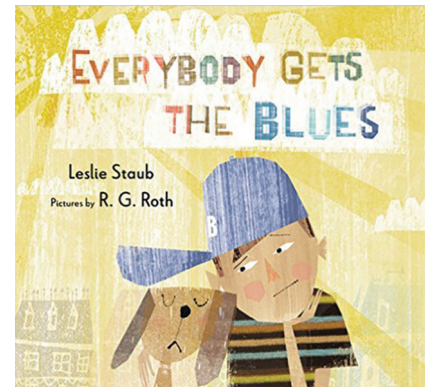
When the boy in this story cries because he feels sad, the Blues Guy, who with his trumpet might be a New Orleans musician, comes along and sits beside him. The Blues Guy listens to the boy and sometimes talks and lets him know he understands how he feels. He tells the boy this happens to everybody now and then. They begin to sing, and singing lifts their spirits. Soon they find others who are crying and let them know they are not alone. Then they all sing together, and soon the tears pass and everyone feels better. They say goodbye to the blues and to the Blues Guy, until they meet again.

Although some of the text is rhythmic, it is not consistent and the words do not fall into a classic blues pattern. Rather, it provides a springboard for discussing unhappy feelings. In the classroom, explore questions such as, "Why was the boy crying?" "What is 'the blues'?" With your help, younger students can then create a typical 12-bar blues song with a basic harmonic pattern of I I I I IV IV I I V IV I I. If you are comfortable playing either guitar or piano, you might improvise a blues song over those chord changes, using topics the children suggest, with an A A B form for the words.

Often blues songs feature topics inappropriate for children. If you need child-friendly blues examples, *Even Kids Get the Blues*, a CD by The Re-Bops, has some excellent blues songs written for and sung by children. The songs were inspired by situations children said made them feel sad or mad. They are well arranged and have a great groove, and the children's singing is fun and engaging.

Doug Goodkin's *Just In Time* and *All Blues* also provide excellent artistic guidance. In addition, check out YouTube to view Conan O'Brien singing with first graders in Chicago, and B. B. King singing and playing *One Shoe Blues* by Sandra Boynton. These resources, along with the charming story and beautiful illustrations in *Everybody Gets the Blues*, provide tools you can use to banish the blues from the elementary classroom. ■

**VIVIAN MURRAY CAPUTO** has taught in public and private schools. She has presented workshops for NAFME, AOSA chapters and conferences, and is an Orff Schulwerk teacher education instructor. She served on the AOSA National Board of Trustees as Region V representative and as co-chair of the 2005 AOSA National Professional Development Conference. Vivian has been an instructor for IAJE Teacher Training Institutes, and performs with various jazz ensembles.



Reviewed by **Lauren A. Baker**

## The Museum

Written by Susan Verde/Illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds  
New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2015

hungry with Cezanne's "Still Life with Apples," and expresses joy as she pictures herself skipping through Monet's "Field of Poppies."



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“**W**hen I see a work of art, something happens in my heart.” This is the opening line of Susan Verde’s delightful book, *The Museum*. Each page is filled with whimsy, from Peter H. Reynolds’ illustrations to the rhyming words to the playful font. Together we accompany a little girl on her trip through an art museum, where Reynolds’ illustrated works represent those by renowned artists.

Our students will view famous works of art and be motivated to craft a new dance, improvisation, or instrumental composition, while having that sense of ownership the little girl shares at the end of the story.

The little girl first encounters and is moved to action by Kandinsky’s “Color Study.” She poses like Degas’ “Little Dancer,” and swirls around like the stars she sees while viewing Van Gogh’s “The Starry Night.” Next she creates her own living sculpture after viewing a Calder piece. She begins to feel tired and decides to rest while looking at Rodin’s “The Thinker.” Here the book shifts from reacting to the art through movement to examining the feelings and expressive qualities of the paintings. Our little girl feels sad while looking at works from Picasso’s Blue Period, feels

She screams along with Munch’s “The Scream,” makes faces at a Picasso, and giggles at three pieces by Joan Miró. As the story moves to its conclusion, the little girl is faced with a blank canvas. At first she is confused and unsure of what to do. Then she closes her eyes and a world of color and shapes bursts in front of her. When she opens her eyes, the canvas is no longer blank, but filled with her own imagination. As the museum closes for the night, the little girl reminisces about her day and realizes that “The museum lives inside of me.”

*The Museum* introduces children to a variety of well-known artworks and also provides an exercise in movement and improvisation. The little girl is not quietly viewing the art; she is reacting to it, allowing herself to be transformed by what she is seeing, actions that go hand in hand with Orff Schulwerk. Using dance, chant, and improvisation with a sense of child’s play to teach musical concepts is the heart of what we, as Orff educators, do. Let us be as uninhibited as this story’s little girl to create and try something new. *The Museum* begs to be brought to life. Our students will view famous works of art and be motivated to craft a new dance, improvisation, or instrumental composition, while having that sense of ownership the little girl shares at the end of the story.

This book also reminds us of visual and musical artists who inspired each other. Kandinsky is well known as the painter of music and for his ability to transfer that passion onto the canvas. The story of Mussorgsky and Viktor Hartmann is another example of this

creative effect. After Hartmann’s untimely death, Mussorgsky attended a gallery exhibition of his friend’s work. He was so inspired by what he saw, he composed *Pictures at an Exhibition*. My colleague and art teacher, Marlo Lee, links art to music with a collage project based on Romare Bearden and his ties to jazz. In the music classroom, teachers might allow students to listen to pieces by Schoenberg and paint what they hear. Viewing a visual masterpiece like “The Starry Night” may lead to composing music to accompany it. Perhaps these examples will inspire you and your art teacher to collaborate on an interdisciplinary project.

*The Museum* is a reminder that great painters, poets, and musicians inspire each other, and their masterpieces provide inspiration for teachers as well. *The Museum* will get your creative juices flowing and help you find your muse. ■

**LAUREN BAKER** is the music specialist and choral director at Clovercroft Elementary School in Franklin, Tennessee. She graduated from Belmont University and received her master’s degree in music education from the University of North Texas. She has successfully completed three levels of Orff Schulwerk teacher education and is past president of the Middle Tennessee AOSA Chapter. She was recently awarded Elementary Teacher of the Year for Williamson County.

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Reviewed by Corrie Box Mitchell

## Kodály Today: A Cognitive Approach to Elementary Music Education

Written by Micheál Houlahan & Philip Tacka  
New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015

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**K**odály Today is an all-in-one helpful resource for both novice and experienced educators who use any pedagogical approach to teach music to children in Grades K-5, with additional advice for older beginners in upper elementary or middle school. Throughout the book's 600-plus pages, authors Micheál Houlahan and Philip Tacka provide foundational information on the philosophy and practice of the Kodály approach, and present their unique adaptation of the Kodály philosophy to music teaching. The authors suggest strategies to teach a song, develop music listening skills, build movement skills, and foster creativity. Users will find the table of contents and chapter layout in the second edition much more user-friendly than the previous version, with helpful side tabs to locate information.

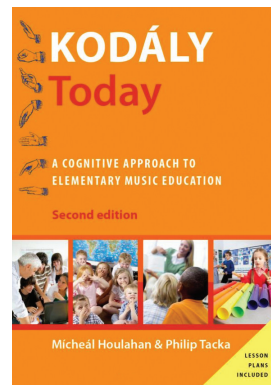
The authors suggest strategies to teach a song, develop music listening skills, build movement skills, and foster creativity.

Houlahan and Tacka outline step-by-step suggestions for everything from teaching tuneful singing to incorporating harmonic progressions in melodies. They supply multiple sample lessons as examples of the Hungarian approach to music

teaching. In addition to multiple lesson plan templates, the authors demonstrate how each template might be presented in various grade levels, providing a clear picture of how their particular approach might look in practice in the classroom and in choral rehearsal. Teachers can find detailed outlines for teaching more concepts in the *Kodály Today Handbook Series* published for kindergarten through Grade 5, which the authors developed to provide more materials and resources. Houlahan and Tacka stress that suggestions are not prescriptive. Instead, teachers are encouraged to adapt their instruction to the context of each classroom.

Houlahan and Tacka's approach differs slightly from other Kodály-inspired approaches. The authors utilize ideas from psychologists and educators (i.e., Pestalozzi, Mason, Bruner, Gordon, and so forth) to inform their adaptation of the Kodály concept. The core principles of Kodály philosophy remain intact, including use of folk music, art music, singing, sequential learning, and teaching tools—for example, solfège and rhythm syllables. In this new edition of *Kodály Today*, Houlahan and Tacka expanded content to address current challenges for the classroom teacher, such as outcome-based evaluation, increased inclusion of children with special needs, and effective use of emerging technologies. The authors include connections to core knowledge and national music standards, and an entire chapter on using technology in the classroom.

Houlahan and Tacka employ the multiple dimensions of music—a pedagogical framework developed for the first edition of *Kodály Today*—to shape all curriculum design, promoting a holistic foundation for young musicians. The multiple dimensions of music address the need to foster children's musical development as:



- stewards of their cultural heritage – folk songs and art music;
- performers – music skills of singing and playing instruments;
- critical thinkers – learning melodic and rhythmic concepts and music form;
- creative human beings – improvising and composing; and
- informed audience members – listening.

The book includes multiple tables, charts, and examples that streamline the process of curricular design and lesson planning for each aspect of the music classroom.

Teachers who want to nurture more creativity in their students will find strategies to stimulate typical creative expression such as part-work, ostinatos, creative movement, and question-and-answer patterns for the elementary music classroom. Houlahan and Tacka also provide practical advice on how children can effectively learn compositional devices like retrograde, tone clusters, tone row, and polytonality that modern composers use.

*Kodály Today* includes an entire chapter on evaluation of both the teacher and the student. When assessing music educators, fine arts directors and other administrators may find the authors' evaluation rubrics more helpful than evaluations designed for the general classroom

teacher. The authors also make helpful suggestions for student evaluation. More extensive rubrics for evaluation of student learning are available through the *Kodály Today Handbook Series*.

With each subsequent review of *Kodály Today*, I found more strategies and approaches and new ideas to use in the classroom. Marking pages with tabs or similar devices will expedite regular access to the book's comprehensive resources.

Although the authors articulated detailed procedures and processes, they emphasized a strong focus on music making: "The techniques of teaching can never be the focus of a lesson. Techniques that are skillfully employed by a well-trained music teacher will lead to artistry in the classroom. Otherwise, music techniques will lead to dull mechanical lessons" (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, pp. 3-4).

The information abundant in *Kodály Today* will guide you to creating more meaningful and musical learning experiences for your students. Viva la musica! ■

**CORRIE BOX MITCHELL** received her master's degree in music education from Texas State University, San Marcos. Corrie has presented on Kodály pedagogy, technology, and popular music in the United States. She is a doctoral student at Arizona State University and teaches in the Kodály Certification Program.

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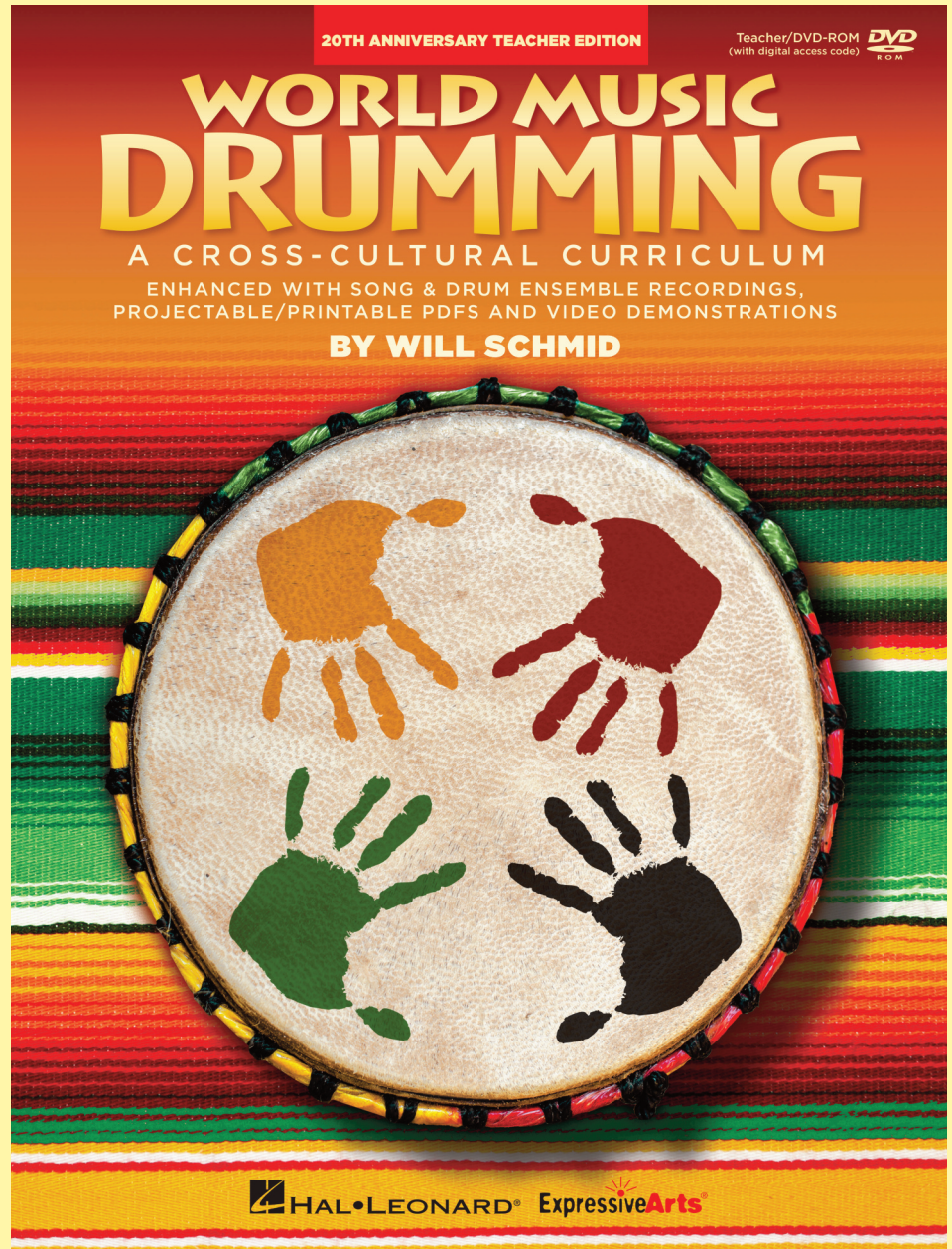
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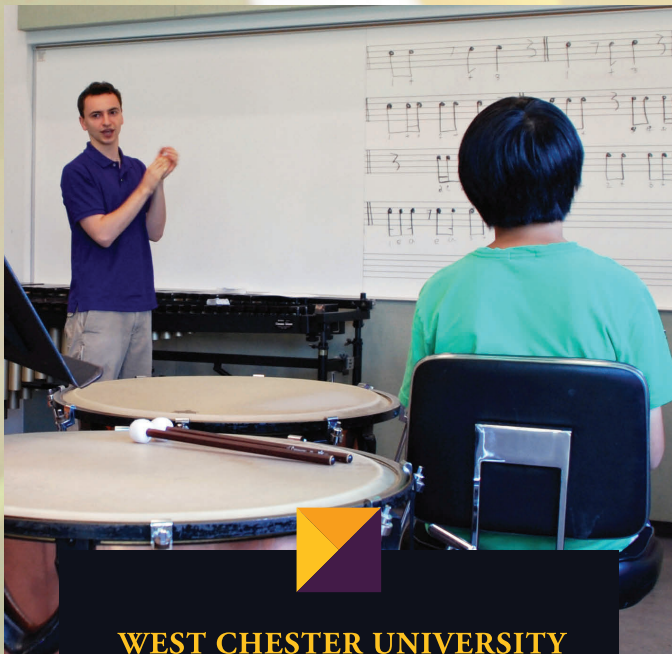
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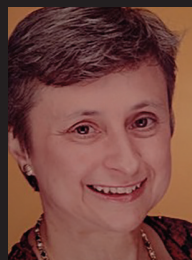
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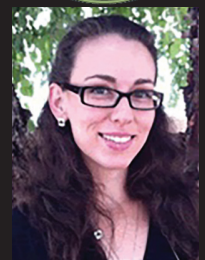
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# ORFF SCHULWERK LEVELS I, II AND III

## July 17-28, 2017

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POPPE,  
Recorder



AMY  
BEEGLE,  
Level I



JUDITH  
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Level II



ROB  
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Level III



LISSA  
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Movement



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*The Orff Echo* looks for and publishes articles about any subject in every issue. Feature topics summarize the focus of only a few articles in a specific issue.

Issue	Feature Topic	Coordinator(s)	Contributor's Deadline
Winter 2018	Orff Internacionále	Nicola Mason Kelly Jackson Lynn Huenemann	May 15, 2017
Spring 2018	50th Anniversary Issue	Richard Lawton Nicola Mason	August 15, 2017
Summer 2018	Open Submission	Chet-Yeng Loong TBD	November 15, 2017
Fall 2018	Contemporary Recorder Pedagogy	Richard Lawton Lisa Lehmsberg	February 15, 2018

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not hurry, yet  
everything is  
accomplished.”*

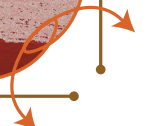
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