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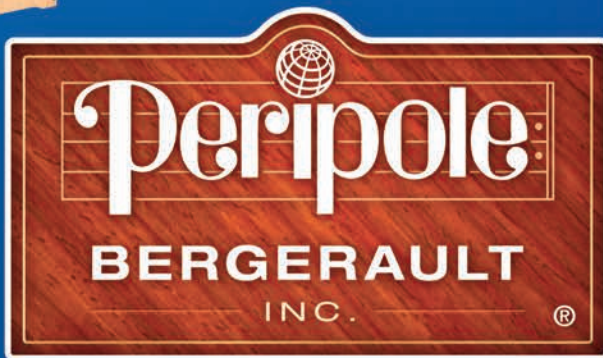
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ISSUE	COORDINATOR	TOPIC	CONTRIBUTOR'S DEADLINE
Summer 2008	Martha O'Hehir and David Thaxton	Orff media: The Word	Feb. 11, 2008
Fall 2008	Carlos Abril and Marjie Van Gunten	Orff media: Instruments	May 1, 2008
Winter 2009	Pam Hetrick and David Thaxton	Orff media: Movement	Aug. 1, 2008

We seek articles on these topics as they relate to Orff Schulwerk or to broader areas of teaching and learning. Editing and production is in process for some articles one year ahead of the publication date. If one of these topics appeals to you, please contact the appropriate Editorial Coordinator soon.

Also, articles on topics other than the above-listed may be considered at any time.

Before submitting manuscripts, please contact the editor for a copy of editorial guidelines. We cannot guarantee the publication of any submitted material.

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# A New Season, Another Chance to Bloom

By AOSA President Jo Ella Hug



Jo Ella Hug

**A**s we head into a growing season, I am reminded of my little white iris that bloomed at the wrong time last year on October 30 rather than June 30. That is dicey business in Montana as the first true cold snap with much below freezing temperatures traditionally arrives just in time for children to wear long johns while trick-or-treating.

Intellectually, I can explain why this lovely flower bloomed at the wrong time. It was transplanted late in the season—18 months previous—and somehow missed the first one-and-a-half parts of its bloom cycle. It graced us with a late season affirmation of strength and power. Emotionally, it tugged on my heart strings as the bloom stalk began developing at the end of September. Crazy and inspiring.

As an organization, AOSA attends the need of members to have the opportunity to grow. In fact, if all other programs were stripped from our mission, I believe the oversight of the summer Teacher Training Programs would be the last thing to go. As teachers of children, we know the absolute necessity of marching up the next hill. It is rather like hiking in the mountains. When you start the journey, you don't see the next ridge and the ridge after that as the next challenge is hidden from your immediate view. Such is the nature of mountains and it is sometimes a blessing. By achieving the first goal, you are empowered to hike through the valley and to the next higher ridge that has become visible. Sometimes the goal is a beautiful lake, a waterfall or the summit of a peak. The goal pulls you through the valley and to the next step in the journey toward success.



I encourage you to start or continue the journey that is Orff Schulwerk. I can attest to the spiral beyond what you see at any one point in time. My personal questing is far from finished and the need to know more haunts my available time. Within the Teacher Training Programs, students in Levels II and III have the opportunity to move through skills in two accepted ways. The catch is knowing how your Level II program is structured so your choice in a Level III program covers the remainder of the information established by the Guidelines for Teacher Training. If you are anticipating a Level III program that is not an extension of the course through which you took Level II, the course director can provide information that should assist you in making a good choice.

Is Level III the mountaintop or is it merely a ridge on the journey? My personal experience is a strong testament to Level III being another ridge with countless vistas to explore beyond. While AOSA does not oversee the content of post-Level III courses, your continued growth is of paramount importance and the Web site ([www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org)) will give you ideas for expanding your horizons beyond Level III.

The most important decision is to start the journey toward your own season of bloom. Many teachers and leaders have tilled the soil, fertilized the space and planted the seeds, bulbs, tubers and corms. The choice to grow is yours to make. In AOSA, there can never be a wrong time to bloom. The glory is in leaving the comfort zone, stepping into the risk, and embracing possibility. As the gardener, I watched and waited and rejoiced as my iris-gone-wrong graced my garden with perfect blooms through the last two weeks of October. I harbor a secret hope that it will continue to be mixed-up this summer and provide another crazy and inspiring finish to the growing season. Go ahead—find your own time to bloom. The sun is out, the earth is warm and the wild flower awaits you.



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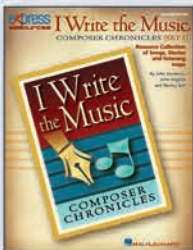
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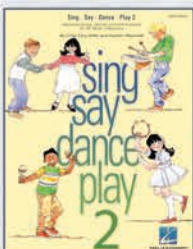
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# Exercising the Young Voice

## What I Know for Sure

By Angela Broeker

**W**ith apologies to Oprah, I attempt to share with AOSA “What I Know for Sure” about the young voice. Ironically, this phrase is contrary to a philosophy of life I espouse where knowledge and wisdom are ever-changing. Yet, the unique circumstances of my teaching career have allowed me to view the bookends of vocal development: children and young adults. At midlife, it’s become apparent to me that what we do as educators of young voices has a direct and lasting impact on vocal health through adolescence and young adulthood. This I know for sure.

Each September, I audition over one hundred eighteen-year-olds for the choral program at our university. We rejoice when we hear voices “with no bad habits,” knowing that these students will progress rapidly in the college choral setting. Of greater concern are students who have developed vocal habits that are not conducive to healthy adult singing. It is striking how many of these students fall into two major categories:

1. Students who carry a great deal of tension in the jaw and neck. This problem is usually the result of improper air flow, misaligned posture, and continued student attempts at producing pitches in the upper register without proper technique.

2. Female students who have huge register breaks around  $b^1$  (for identification of absolute pitch designations, see Example 1) resulting in forced production for lower pitches and breathy to nonexistent tone in the upper register. This problem is usually the result of having talented females with “good ears” sing only alto parts of choral arrangements from a very young age, never exercising the upper vocal register.

The best remedy to these vocal problems is to never let them develop,

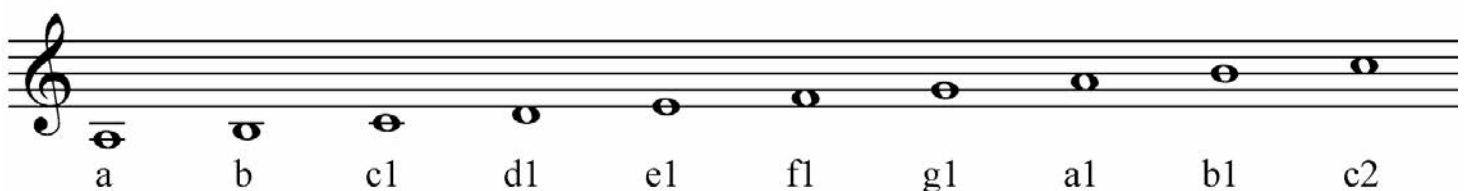
and this responsibility is directly on the shoulders of the elementary music teacher. What an awesome responsibility, and ultimately, what an awesome joy! The vocal development activities you practice with your students each week prepare them for a lifetime of singing.

The best way to ensure that this important part of a child’s music education is not overlooked is to set aside five minutes of each class period for a vocal warm-up. The remainder of this article gives suggestions for a warm-up sequence appropriate for treble



*Students practicing breathing inhalation.*

### Example 1



voices, grades three through eight and includes principles to assure that the problems listed above never develop. The sequence includes exercises for breath flow, register development, and relaxation. In the past five years, I've paired movement with every vocal exercise of every level choir I conduct. These kinesthetic reinforcements of vocal concepts ensure healthy technique and prepare the body and mind for singing. The greatest compliment we can receive as care-givers of the young voice is "your children sing with such a free, unobstructed tone." Movement activities paired with warm-ups are the quickest and most effective way to assure this desired outcome. I've also found that some of the kinesthetic reinforcers can be incorporated into my conducting gesture, thereby giving subtle reminders of healthy vocal technique to students during rehearsal and performance.

### Alignment

The spine and skull must be aligned to assure healthy vocal production. I use the word "alignment" with children having found that phrases such as "good posture" quickly evoke tension. Proper alignment reduces tension, allowing breath and production mechanisms to work without obstruction. To

assure proper alignment, vertebrae must be balanced, and the skull must balance on the spine without being artificially held there with tense shoulder, neck, and jaw muscles. Have choir members bend over and roll up one vertebra at a time bringing the skull into a balanced position. Have them roll shoulders up, back, and down, ending with relaxed-muscles. Demonstrate incorrect alignment for them by pushing the skull forward, the jaw out, and the shoulders rounded.

### Breathing: Inhalation

Attention to inhalation and exhalation is not only essential to healthy vocal production, it is the perfect way to focus mind and body energy on the day's lesson. I find that unless students are accomplished underwater swimmers, they come to us with little experience completely filling the lungs with air. It's up to us to teach this sensation, and then apply it to each phrase the children sing.

A way to ensure high soft pallet and complete lung expansion without tension is to add kinesthetic reinforcers. Before students inhale, have them place forearms in front of the body, palms facing the stomach. At the inhalation, arms float away from the body. After numerous repetitions and an automatic pairing of this movement

with deep breathing, I can incorporate this movement as my preparatory gesture for beginning a vocal phrase. The inhalation will happen as if by magic!

To raise the soft pallet, experiment with inhalation accompanied by a hand gesture that reflects the pallet's "up and back" stretch. Again, once students have kinesthetic memory of arm movement with the resulting soft pallet position, the teacher can incorporate this movement into the conducting gesture. If you use this technique, a musical phrase beginning with an "ah" vowel will be beautiful every time.

Regarding inhalation and tension, the two biggest errors when students are practicing inhalation are shoulders moving upward and tension in the mouth, produced automatically if a child loudly "sips in" the air. I've found that the instruction "Breathe in without my seeing you or hearing you" eliminates both problems.

### Breathing: Exhalation

Students need to practice exhalations so that (1) continuous air pressure is exerted and/or (2) air is pulsed using the diaphragm muscle. Many children's choir directors have children exhale with a continuous sizzle, working to increase the length of the exhalation throughout the school year. For students who carry tension in the jaw and lips during this exercise, have them exhale on "sh," a consonant combination that automatically rounds and relaxes the lips.

Pulsing the exhalation strengthens the diaphragm muscle and prepares students to sing staccato or with accents. To practice this sensation, have students

1. sizzle specific rhythms
2. sizzle when the teacher claps his or her hands
3. echo unpitched consonants (k, f, h, p, s, t, ch, sh) in specific rhythmic patterns
4. start and stop the air flow when they see a visual cue (such as a red and green lights).



*Students pair gesture with a warm up focusing on vowels*



*An example of vowel work.*

### Exercising the Upper Register

Most children can use the chest register (heavy mechanism, speaking voice) from a to a1. Based on vocal models they hear throughout popular culture, most of our students come to us having experienced only the chest register. It is this problem with vocal production that is the primary cause of singing “out of tune.” When the melody goes above a1, students either “transpose” the phrase downward so that they continue singing the song in the chest voice, or they resort to intoning the melody on a single pitch in the comfort of their chest voice range. In either case, the listener perceives that the child is an out-of-tune singer. In the vast majority of students, this is a vocal production problem and not an aural problem.

It is our job, then, to exercise the upper register or head voice. Head voice singing in children is best facilitated by the “ooh” vowel with glissandi. In other words, don’t expect an inexperienced young singer to pop out a single high d2 on an “ah” vowel. Instead, have students approach this high d2 through glissandi on an “ooh” vowel. I like to begin with a slide of a perfect 5<sup>th</sup> (easier to accomplish than an octave) beginning on f#. Accompany

the ascending and descending slide with a physical motion that reflects the movement of the vocal cords: tossing an imaginary Frisbee to and fro, mimicking the motion used to roll a bowling ball, or throwing a boomerang. These lateral motions facilitate the ascending/descending vocal slide. It is imperative to keep the motion relaxed and unobstructed, a “swish” of motion to accompany a “swish” of sound. Our goal during these exercises is that each student will produce relaxed, unobstructed sounds in the upper register.

### Extending the Range Downward

With the current diversity of song repertoire for children, it’s important that students produce healthy tones throughout the register, including pitches below c1. In extending the range downward, young singers must still hold as the ideal an unforced, tension-free tone. There is a tendency for low pitches to be pushed, sometimes evident by a head that tilts downward and a larynx, therefore, that’s pushed down and back. I find the most success using a long “e” vowel when descending. Preceding the vowel with an “n” or “v” further enhances a forward placement without a forced, throaty tone. Begin with a five note pattern (sol to do) in c# major and descend by half step. To kinesthetically reinforce this concept, begin with an upper arm extending forward, fingers touching the shoulder. As children sing the five-note descending scale, extend the forearm forward, ending with a straight arm parallel to the floor. Do not follow through with an arc toward the floor as this allows the head to tilt forward and the sound to fall back in the throat.

### Vowel Work

Ultimately, our goal is to help all students produce healthy singing technique no matter what the vowel color or vocal register. Although we begin with “oo” and “ee,” we soon progress to the open vowels “oh,” “ah,” and “eh” or “ay.” The aforementioned exercises, as well as all traditional vocalizes, can be adapted for vowel work. Apply new vowels to the perfect fifth glissandi or descending five-note pattern. Accompany the vowel with kinesthetic reinforcement of mouth shape: hands shaped like an “oh” around mouth, hands pulling apart vertically rather than horizontally for an “ah,” and one hand in front of the body as if carrying a platter for “eh” or “ay.” When students are successful with open vowels, combine several in the same exercise. (See Example 2 below) This simple arpeggiated exercise works best when students bounce an imaginary ball and bend their knees on the high note of each repetition. Since the natural tendency on high pitches is to stretch the neck upward, creating a high larynx and unwanted tension, the release of tension on the top note by bounding the ball counteracts this tendency. (See Example 3) Instead of bouncing a ball, have students use both hands in front of them to draw small circles from the diaphragm outward for this exercise. Add a knee bounce on the first “ha.”

### Flexibility

As students continue their vocal development, it’s important that the muscles next to the vocal folds learn to respond quickly, allowing for rapid pitch changes. After initial exercises employing quarter notes and eighth notes, it is desirable to move to exercises incorporating triplets or sixteenth notes. For young singers, rapid exercises are most easily achieved with consonant sounds before every pitch rather than a vowel melisma. Alternating percussive consonants produced at the front of the mouth (f, p, d, b, t) work best (Examples 4 and 5).

### Example 2

yo ho ha ha ha

### Example 3

yo \_\_ ho \_\_ ho \_\_ ha \_\_ ha \_\_ ha \_\_ ha

### Example 4

bead-y bead-y beep bead-y bead-y beep bead-y bead-y bead-y bead-y beep beep!

### Example 5

flip-pe - ty flop-pi - ty flip-pi - ty flop-pi - ty flip-pi - ty flop-pi - ty flea.

To kinesthetically reinforce the rapid changing of pitches, have students juggle with pretend balls, throwing them upward with alternating hands for every pitch. Another alternative is to accompany the rapid vocalise with body percussion, articulating a body percussion sound for every pitch sung.

### Specific Feedback

As with all learning, students need specific feedback whenever they engage in vocal skill development. It's extremely important to let students know how they're doing since students can't "see" their singing or hear it in the same way an outsider can. This calls for teachers to listen in a new way focusing not only on correct pitches and rhythms, but on timbre or tone color. Examples of sentences my students might hear during rehearsal:

1. Wow! I loved the color of that "ee" vowel when your lips were relaxed and rounded.
2. Our Frisbee "swish" was accurate but not too exciting. Can we try again and send Frisbees as far as the parking lot?

3. Fast warm-ups get tricky when we have tension in our mouth and jaw. Let's try it again with "blubber lips."
4. Most of us descended to that extra-low pitch by floating rather than pushing. Way to go! Let's try again and see if we can all float.
5. You were super sleuths today. You took huge breaths without me seeing them. Very sneaky and very correct!

### Carrying Healthy Vocal Technique into the Lesson

After a short vocal warm-up at the beginning of each class period, it makes sense to apply these same vocal principles to each day's lesson. To do so, be sure to include song material that includes pitches in all ranges of the child voice. If your students are singing two and three part music, do not assign a group of students to always sing alto or always sing soprano. Have students change parts on each piece! This will improve student's musicianship as well as their vocal health. Remember, also, to continue specific feed-

back regarding vocal technique throughout the lesson. The few sentences you impart during a short lesson will go a long way toward helping children learn healthy vocal habits that will stay with them through a lifetime of singing.



Angela Broeker is director of choral activities at the University of St. Thomas where she conducts the Chamber Singers and Women's

Choir and teaches undergraduate courses in choral conducting and choral methodology. She is active in the school's graduate programs in music education, teaching two choral conducting and two choral literature courses for students pursuing a master's degree in music education with a choral concentration. Dr. Broeker received her D.M.A. degree from the University of Oklahoma and her M.M. and B.M.E. degrees from Indiana University. E-mail: aebroeker@stthomas.edu.

# Help Your Students Sing in Tune!

By Christopher Roberts

*Virtually all children can learn to match pitch, if they put forth effort, and are given enough time and proper instruction.*

**T**wenty-five second graders burst into the room, full of the sweet enthusiasm that only children possess. They begin to sing, and it is as if the heavens have opened, with the angels blessing me with their music. But, wait, what's that sound? Could a dying moose be heading toward my pearly gates? Oh, that's right: this class has Maria, who always seems to sing a little too loud and more than a little off-key. I sigh, and gird myself to the good work of teaching music to elementary students.

How do you solve a problem like Maria? Hope she's sick on concert day? Recommend a voice transplant? The bad news is that there is no magic pill to cure this affliction. But don't despair! The good news is that there are many instructional strategies to help the uncertain singers sprinkled throughout our classes. Virtually all children can learn to match pitch, if they put forth effort, and are given enough time and proper instruction. There are many sources to consult for suggestions as to how to improve your students pitch accuracy (see sidebar on page 16) and

various activities and instructional strategies that can immensely help the Marias in your classroom.

It seems self-evident, but the more time the students spend singing, the more likely it is that their pitch accuracy will improve. For many students, our music class is the only time they are able to exercise their vocal mechanism in a musical way, so giving them ample opportunity in class to use those muscles can be incredibly helpful. Beginning a class with a repetitive singing game or play party is a great way to give students a chance to get in some good minutes of singing; I often find that by the end of the activity they're singing much more accurately than they were at the beginning. Plus, they're fun!

Choosing longer songs can also maximize the amount of time spent singing during class. The students sing straight through without stopping, and you don't have to stop to give time-consuming directions. For older students, story songs in verse-chorus form work well (e.g., "The Keeper," "Hill" and "Gully Rider").<sup>1</sup> For the younger set that can't yet



*Solo singing is one way that students can improve their pitch accuracy.*

read, cumulative songs (“This Old Man”) and songs with accompanying picture books (“Mary Wore Her Red Dress,” “This Little Light of Mine”) can be successful.

Of course, simply singing a great deal won’t leave all students sounding perfectly in-tune. Some students will still have a hard time getting up into their head register. Variations on the yawn-sigh can help students: singing vocal glissandi while throwing a ball or echoing a slide whistle, for example. The students can also imitate animal sounds (meow like a kitten; hoot like an owl), imitate a parent calling their child in for dinner (“Yoo-hoooo!”) or whoop like a cowboy (“Yee-ha!”).

In large groups, it is often hard for individual students to monitor their pitch. For many students, the opportunity to sing alone allows them to hear themselves, and self-correct pitch problems.<sup>2</sup> There are many ways to do this. For example, call & response songs (“Risseldy Rosseldy,” “Telephone Song”) and echo songs (“Oh, My”) lend themselves well to solo

singing. If individual students sing the call and the whole class sings the response, students get to sing by themselves but the whole class remains involved. Many children love opportunities to be creative, so songs that lend themselves to textual improvisation (“Little Tommy Tucker” and “Whistle Daughter Whistle”) can be fun for students, plus they have the opportunity to sing a short solo. Another way to incorporate solo singing in your class is to use a microphone to “Pass the Song.” For this activity, students stand in a circle and each sing one short phrase of a song into a pretend microphone, then pass the microphone to the next singer. If you repeat the song a number of times, and don’t stop between each student, you can get through a whole class in a very short time.

Most students aren’t anxious about singing by themselves, but invariably a few are. These students should be encouraged to give solos a go but never pressured; it will almost always backfire, and the students will be terri-

fied of music class. Singing games with built-in solo opportunities (“Charlie Over the Ocean” and “Gypsy in the Moonlight”) take the focus off the children and onto the game. Similarly, instead of asking students to sing a solo, teachers can give them the opportunity to “make the stuffed animal sing”; again, attention shifts from the student to the stuffed animal. An apprehensive student can also be encouraged to choose a friend or two to sing with them. Finally, you can find ways for students to do something else alone: show a dance or play an instrument. Eventually, this may lead to a higher comfort level, and a shy student may be willing to sing alone.

Older students are typically more self-conscious than their younger compatriots about singing by themselves. However, this tendency can be significantly mitigated by regularly incorporating solo singing experiences in our lessons from an early age. If fifth graders began singing solos frequently in first grade, they will be less likely to have problems



*Christopher Roberts takes turns letting his students sing solo to master their pitch.*

doing so as they move into the upper elementary years.

The more students are asked explicitly to listen to themselves and describe what they hear, the better they can identify on their own the improvements they need to make. Possible questions/reminders: "How did we sound?" "Listen to your neighbor." "Were their voices the same?" "Listen louder; sing softer." "Were we right in tune?" "If you can't hear your neighbor, you're singing too loudly."

Feedback and suggestions that are honest, constructive, and specific can go a long way towards improving students' pitch accuracy. Instead of saying, "Can you sing that again?" say, "Try it again: can you make your voice a little bit higher?" or "Like Kamira's voice?" or "Like this puppet?" When giving constructive criticism, remember to give some positive comments as well: "Good posture!" or "Look how widely he opens his mouth!" or, if you're really desperate, "Nice shirt!" However, if a student has been asked to make her voice sound like it is floating on a cloud, but she sounds like she is being crushed by a ton of bricks, it is important that we give honest but gentle feedback. If we don't, there are two potential ramifications: first, the student herself may then think that she's actually performed adequately, and may not try different ways to toss her voice up higher; second, the rest of the class, who are most likely listening closely, may assume that the sound the girl produced is indeed what you want. It is instinctive for teachers to praise children, and there are good reasons for this: we don't want to harm our students' self-esteem, which can negatively affect their effort and attitude towards music class. However, we need to balance this important goal with honest and accurate feedback.

When selecting repertoire for your classes, closely examine the musical and non-musical properties of the songs. Consider range: for in-tune singing, the smaller the range, the better. Consider the intervals in the song: for many students, so-mi and so-mi-la-so-mi are the easiest melodic patterns

to sing accurately. Consider a variety of pentatonic and diatonic songs: pentatonic songs don't have those pesky half steps, which are often difficult to sing accurately, and are much easier to accompany on barred instruments with simple Orff accompaniments. Diatonic songs are important, too. A research study found that students sang most accurately if their repertoire included both pentatonic and diatonic songs.<sup>3</sup> Finally, consider songs students like! It sounds like a no-brainer, but if the students don't enjoy the songs they are being asked to sing, they will be much less likely to work on making themselves sound good.

Peer modeling is a useful technique for improving students' in-tune singing skills. Sometimes, it can be helpful for students to hear an accurate rendition of a song or phrase and then try to reproduce it. It is tempting for music teachers to demonstrate for the class, but research suggests that students most accurately imitate another child.<sup>4</sup> Whenever possible, ask a child to show the class what a particularly tough phrase should sound like. Students enjoy listening to each other, and will be more likely to match each other's sound. Sometimes, it is more expedient for teachers to model. In such cases, keeping vibrato to a minimum can increase your students pitch accuracy.<sup>5</sup> Also, male teachers should consider using their falsetto; students have been found to more accurately match the pitch of a man singing in his falsetto voice than in his lower register.<sup>6</sup> There is a caveat for both of these suggestions: if you sing with a straight tone and your pitch is always flat, it is obviously not going to be a model you want students to emulate. Similarly, for men, if your falsetto sounds like a squawking chicken, using your changed male voice probably makes more sense. But as a general rule, falsetto singing for men and straighter tone singing by all will be more successful modeling strategies.

A capella singing aids intonation, for students can more easily hear themselves and self-correct. The piano (or guitar or teacher's singing) can become a crutch for the students.

Also, if we are singing along with the students, we can't hear them as well, which makes assessing them more difficult. Further, limiting teacher singing can help minimize the vocal problems that so many elementary music teachers seem to develop at some point in their careers. This is not to say that teachers should never sing or accompany the students; sometimes, the piano gives a fuller sound, resulting in a more musical experience for everyone. Like all of these suggestions, you don't want to overdo it!

Remind students to stand tall, breathe deeply and sing softly with tall vowels. I find that I underestimate how effective some of these simple reminders can be. Many of us tend to leave choral exercises for choir experiences, but it can be successful to incorporate them into the general music classroom as well.

Finally, maintain a safe classroom environment, and have fun! As music teachers, we should never forget that musical fun is the ultimate goal. As a brand new teacher twelve years ago, I recall telling my administrator, "It doesn't matter if they like music; it just matters that they learn." Ah, the folly of youth—I could not have been more wrong! If we are to teach our children to be joyful music-makers, they must enjoy the activities that we do in class. This applies not only to singing games and instrumental exploration, but also to activities and exercises in which we are targeting specific skills. While we want to improve our students' pitch accuracy, it should never be at the expense of an enjoyable class experience, for both the students and the teacher.

Back to Maria, my second grade droner. We begin class with a singing game, and I notice that her singing continues to wallow in the basement somewhere. Then we move into a pitch exploration activity, where I throw a beanbag up in the air, and the students follow the arc with their voices. We do this a few times as a class, then each student tries it alone. And what do you know: Maria actually pops up into her head voice!

I'm thrilled, point out to the class how well she did, then ask her to do it again. This time, for some reason, she stays down in her lower range. I'm disappointed, but know that we've made progress today. She's on her way! It may take time, but with a steady diet of these activities, I have confidence that Maria will develop into a confident, accurate singer.

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> These songs, and many of the others mentioned here can be found in a variety of sources. For example, look in one of the four volumes by Jill Trinka (such as *The Little Black Bull*), and books by John Feierabend (*The Book of Call and Response*, *The Book of Echo Songs*, *The Book of Pitch Exploration*, and *The Book of Children's Songtales*, among others).
- <sup>2</sup> For example, see Rutkowski, J. "The Effectiveness of Individual/Small-Group Singing Activities on Kindergarten's Use of Singing Voice and Developmental Music Aptitude." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 44.4 (1996): 353-368.
- <sup>3</sup> Jarjisian, C. S. "Pitch Pattern Instruction and the Singing Achievement of Young Children." *Psychology of Music* 11.1(1983): 19-25.

<sup>4</sup> Green, G. A. "The Effect of Vocal Modeling on Pitch Accuracy of Group and Individual Singing in Young Children." *Bulletin of the Council of Research in Music Education* 104(1990): 16-37.

<sup>5</sup> Yarbrough, C., Bowers, J., & Benson, W. "The Effect of Vibrato on the Pitch-matching Accuracy of Certain and Uncertain Singers." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 40.1(1992): 30-38.

<sup>6</sup> Hendley, J. A., & Persellin, D. C. (1996). "How the Lower Adult Male Voice and the Male Falsetto Voice Affect Children's Vocal Accuracy." *Update* 14.2 (1996): 9-13.



Christopher Roberts lives in Seattle, where he teaches K-5 music and is a doctoral student at the University of Washington.

He studied the Orff approach in Las Vegas and received Kodály training in Seattle and Calgary. In the summer, he teaches pedagogy and musicianship, along with demonstration classes, in the Kodály Certification Program at Seattle Pacific University. E-mail: [Cr Roberts777@aol.com](mailto:Cr Roberts777@aol.com).

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# The Place of the Voice in Orff Schulwerk

By Arvida Steen

When I am asked to describe Orff Schulwerk, I may respond that it is elemental music making through movement, speech, singing and playing instruments. I may continue by saying, when we experience music in these ways we learn what music is. This holistic way of learning in the Schulwerk depends upon the ability to use each of these activities interactively, one complementing another, as children combine elements of play to understand their world. This article will attempt to tease from this unity the place of the voice, especially singing, from the beginnings of the Schulwerk to the present.

Carl Orff's childhood included singing. We are told he had a beautiful voice and as a child, he frequently sang solo parts in his church choir. He and his mother sang duets, most often Mozart. Some of his earliest compositions were song settings. He also enjoyed creating puppet shows in his own theater.<sup>1</sup> The voice, whether speaking or singing, was one of the primary means used by Carl Orff to make music.

After the World War I Dorothee Günther, a fine musician and well-trained movement teacher, introduced Orff to new forms of dance that called for new forms of music to accompany and interrelate with it. In his autobiography, *Das Schulwerk, Vol. III*, Carl Orff describes his early experiences in combining movement or dance with music. From discussions with Günther, Curt Sachs and

Oskar Lang in Munich in 1923, he wrote that "music teaching should go hand in hand with movement teaching."<sup>2</sup> As he writes about the experiments with drums and non-pitched

Keetman called this time one of reorientation—a search for new forms in music and dance that called for new ways of educating others.<sup>3</sup> While combined movement and percussive rhythms were new, the breath as speaking and singing was a continuation of Orff's previous work.

In the early stages of developing elemental music at the Güntherschule, vocal music was an outgrowth of improvised melody—sung speech—and was interactive with movement. Composed melodies included descants and two or more voices singing at intervals parallel to the melody, sung by the young women as they danced and played instruments.

By 1930, Orff's experiments with music and movement led to the formation of ideas for music education that he notated in models for rhythm and melody. A publisher, Willie Strecker, offered to print these as *Rhythmisch-melodische Übungen*. The beginning of the Extracts from the first edition of 1931 reads, "The examples can be varied: changes of dynamics, extensions of form, set vocally, instrumentally, for solo or chorus, texts can be invented to fit and in particular they can be used for movement."<sup>4</sup>

As Gunild Keetman reflected, these early publications were intended for classes of older children and adults. Maja Lex, a notable dancer and movement teacher, and her students required strong music of varied sounds to match the power of the dance. As they accompanied each other,



Doreen Hall, Toronto 1962

percussion instruments, he describes the rhythmic flow as being carried by the breath, as if they were words and sentences. The words of the soloist were extemporaneously spoken or sung to improvised accompaniment, and at times the dancers played instruments as they danced. Gunild

ORFF-ZENTRUM IN MÜNCHEN



Carl Orff with Arnold Walter in Toronto, 1962.

ORFF-ZENTRUM IN MÜNCHEN

being offered was something completely different. A music exclusively for children that could be played, sung and danced by them but that could also in a similar way be invented by them—a world of their own. The unity of music and movement, which young people in Germany have to be taught so laboriously, is quite natural to a child. It was also clear to me what Schulwerk had so far lacked: apart from a start, in the Güntherschule we had not allowed the word or the singing voice its fully rightful place. The natural starting point for work with children is the children's rhyme, the whole riches of the old appropriate children's songs. The recognition of this fact gave me the key for the new educational work."<sup>7</sup>

It is clear that Orff viewed the voice, both speech and singing, as key activities in the work with children that was to come.

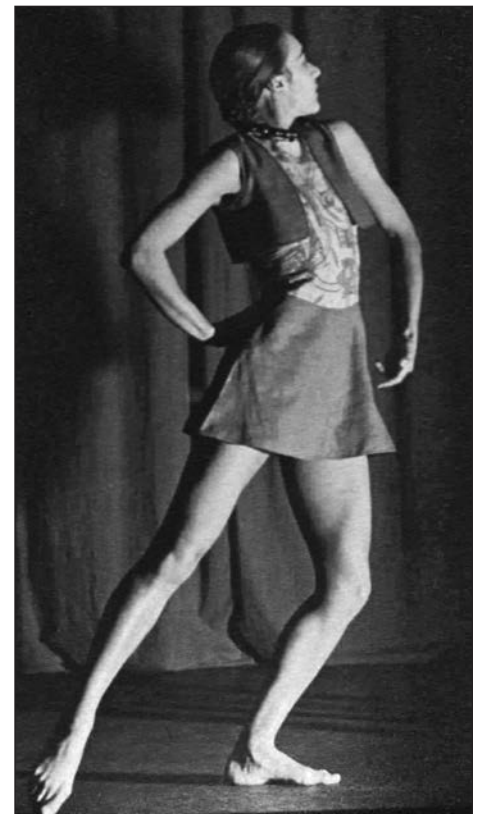
In the broadcasts children, ages eight to twelve, sang and played, using instruments recovered from the Güntherschule which had been nearly destroyed during the war. Gunild Keetman was asked to be in charge of Schulwerk's adaptation to children. An audience far beyond the targeted schools was reached. On a personal note, my brother-in-law, a principal in an American school in Darmstadt, remembers listening regularly to these broadcasts. The five volume set, *Music for Children*, 1950, contains music composed from these radio broadcasts. You may hear the children's voices in the CD that accompanies the book, *Gunild*

*Keetman, A Life Given to Music and Movement*.<sup>8</sup> It informs us as to the sound that Orff and Keetman heard in their heads as they prepared the children's music. Germany has a rich cultural tradition of group singing, of both folk and art music. Singing was a natural activity, in and out of school. Participation by the children, with tuneful voices, could be assumed.

Orff Schulwerk was first transplanted to North America through English-speaking Canada, where literature and folk music traditions were similar to England. Arnold Walter, an Austrian music educator who relocated in Canada and became director of the Royal Conservatory at the University of Toronto, was committed to training teachers in the Schulwerk. He sent Doreen Hall in May 1954, to Salzburg to study the Schulwerk with Keetman and Orff. She and Walter adapted and composed new material drawn from North American speech and vocal sources. This became the Canadian Edition of *Music for Children* (Vol. 1, 1955) the basis for teaching the early Schulwerk training courses which attracted many of America's early teacher/leaders.

instruments may have been more practical than vulnerable voices.<sup>5</sup> Yet Keetman related that the dancers improvised with one or more voices, sometimes in canon. Maja Lex frequently sang to inspire her young students to move.<sup>6</sup>

After World War II, throughout Europe and North America new educational theories and approaches abounded. In Bavaria, through a chance purchase of a recording of the 1936 Olympic performance, Orff was asked to prepare broadcasts of similar music that children could create and perform themselves. In his autobiography, Orff writes, "What I was now



Maja Lex, Bolero, 1930

ORFF-ZENTRUM IN MÜNCHEN

Volume One of this edition contains thirty-five songs and rhymes adapted from English and North American sources, with fifteen instrumental pieces from the German edition. The vocal development sequence in this edition follows the model of the German edition, beginning with singing two pitches, sol and mi, adding la, followed several pages later by singing melodies with the remaining pentatonic pitches. Published in England, the Margaret Murray edition (Vol. I, 1957) follows the German edition more closely and is the basis for the Angel recordings made of Music for Children.

Walter was instrumental in establishing the International Society of Music Educators and used its conferences as opportunities to introduce the Schulwerk.

At the 1956 MENC Convention, a collaboration with ISME, the Schulwerk was introduced in America for the first time. Walter's lecture and the children's demonstration led by Egon Kraus received mixed reviews.<sup>9</sup> Features that made an impression were the use of instruments and the emphasis on improvisation, mostly on instruments. Those who were positively impressed began the task of introducing the Schulwerk in workshops and projects throughout the United States.

Meanwhile, singing was the dominant activity in our elementary school music classrooms. American teachers were using more than five music series texts, including composed songs and folk songs from many cultures. In 1964 the Julliard Repertory Project and, a few years later, the Tanglewood Symposium, responded to the need for quality music literature for elementary and secondary school students. The result was a series of books of vocal and instrumental ensemble pieces. The Contemporary Music Project was begun with the goal of putting children in charge of their music making.

As a new teacher, I remember this as a highly charged, exciting but challenging time. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, public schools were considered the laboratory for music education students from the University of Michigan. We taught from one of three series texts in our classrooms, tested Julliard repertoire, explored the Orff instruments and materials, and introduced literacy skills with Mary Helen Richard's *Threshold to Music* charts, considered to be the Kodály Method to the less initiated. Classroom teachers in many other towns and cities probably felt less of these influences, relying largely on the series book materials. This was the climate that greeted the



ORFF-ZENTRUM IN MÜNCHEN

*Carl Orff, 1898*

introduction of the Schulwerk, a challenge to prevailing customs dominated by singing from textbooks and the introduction of other educational theories and approaches.

As the Schulwerk spread across America in the 1970s, teacher training courses were developed to interpret Orff's Schulwerk philosophy. AOSA conferences provided opportunities for teachers of these courses to discuss what concepts and skills should be presented. A small committee was appointed to write guidelines that would give direction to course planners, allowing course content to be similar from one place to another. The 1980 *Guidelines for Orff-Schulwerk Training Courses, Levels I, II, III* give reference to melody applied to singing or playing on barred instruments or recorder. Students trained to be teachers were expected to achieve the described level of performance in speech, movement, singing and playing instruments, but in the competencies expected under "Proficiencies for Evaluation," none are given for singing. It was simply assumed that anyone desiring to teach music would have a reasonably accurate and usable singing voice.



ORFF-ZENTRUM IN MÜNCHEN

*Dorothee Günther, 1940*

During the 1970s and 1980s, elementary Schulwerk teachers sought materials to provide models for day-to-day instruction. Books by Saliba, Frazee, Warner and Steen modeled curricula to be adapted. All expected singing to be an important part of the child's developing musicianship.

From 1993–96, a review of the first Guidelines was conducted to learn how they could be more clearly defined at each of the three levels. In 1997, AOSA adopted revised *Guidelines for Orff Schulwerk Teacher Training Courses, Levels I, II, III*. The most prominently expanded topics were movement, recorder and pedagogy. In this document, singing “is recognized as fundamental....an invaluable means of individual and group musical expression ... essential in the development of total

musicality. Through singing songs considered culturally representative, we develop firsthand familiarity with the musical vocabulary of the various components of our culture.” Under “Outcomes for Orff Schulwerk Teacher Training” the student is expected to perform at described levels of singing ability, clarifying expectations of the musicianship ability needed by the teachers who model for their students in the classroom.

Cultures in America have changed dramatically since the Schulwerk was introduced in Germany and later, in America. The Civil Rights Movement with integration changed our thinking about materials and approaches while the mobility of families and immigration from other countries changed learning environments. Children in many classrooms speak with various accents and most don't know familiar nursery rhymes and fairy tales once

considered standard. Children's vocal production is shaped by primary language backgrounds, and the media surrounds them with a myriad of styles of singing. Teachers have the opportunity and obligation to explore the literature and music of cultures different from their own. All these factors create classrooms very different from those

common only decades ago and make ever-changing demands on the music teacher. Yet a high comfort level of ability to sing, as well as to move and play percussion instruments and recorder, is required of the teacher in order to provide the model for children that frees them to be expressive musically. The rewards are many, and there is great joy when the teacher and

students share in singing and creating music that is both familiar and new.

The winter 2007 issue of *The Orff Echo* records the vast influence our philosophy has had across the globe, illustrating its adaptability to cultures worldwide and here in America. Clearly, the voice has always partnered with moving and playing. Singing has much to offer the Schulwerk; it is one of the four essential resources we draw upon as teachers in developing our students as “elemental musicians.” (As Orff himself indicated, developing any one of these areas offers a further possibility to be pursued beyond the realm of “elemental.”) When a song is sung the words may address a specific culture, the rhythmic flow and accents may introduce another language, and the melodies may add richness to students' musical vocabulary. Because the Schulwerk approach is not confined by hard or fast sequences, the

teacher can take advantage of the opportunities that arise in the classroom to make music. Singing may lead to exploration or improvisation of speech, movement or instrument playing. Capability in singing certainly leads to a more expressive and confident musical person. Surely, in the decades ahead, Schulwerk teachers will examine the role of singing, as well as the roles of moving, speaking and playing, and the skills and understandings students and teachers need to continue the growth of the Schulwerk for a new time.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>3</sup> Gunild Keetman, *Reminiscences of the Güntherschule*, (trans. Rosemarie Kelischek & Isabel Carley). AOSA Monograph, *Orff Echo* Supplement No. 13, Spring 1978, p. 7.
- <sup>4</sup> Orff, op. cit., p. 11
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- <sup>6</sup> Keetman, op. cit., p. 7
- <sup>7</sup> Orff, op. cit., 212–214.
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*Gunild Keetman with children at the Bavarian Radio 1948*



*Arvida Steen taught children at Blake School in Hopkins, Minnesota, and teachers at colleges and universities,*

*most recently, the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has served on the AOSA Board of Trustees and has received Honorary Membership and the Distinguished Service Award. E-mail: [asteen@blakeschool.org](mailto:asteen@blakeschool.org).*

# Respecting the Voice

## Four Music Teachers Discuss the Challenges of Teaching Children to Sing

By Douglas Beam



*Douglas Beam teaches singing.*

One of the most difficult tasks of the music educator is teaching the art of singing. The act of training young singers, children with unchanged voices, becomes even more complex when the teacher is a male with a changed voice. The bass-baritone or tenor voice of the teacher is of a different quality than the treble of a child's voice and the male music teacher has to make difficult pedagogical choices, which can impact his students' learning as well as his own vocal health. Specifically, the male music teacher must decide how he will use his own singing voice in the classroom setting: will he use a falsetto or headvoice (for the purposes of this article, the words falsetto and headvoice are used interchangeably and denote a register that matches the child's tessitura), rely only on his changed voice, or sing using either voice at a give time? These vocal issues further lead to questions of vocal health and fatigue that can result from improper technique or simply oversinging.

Recently, I sat down and discussed these challenges with three of my male colleagues at the Indianapolis Children's Choir: Henry Leck, Joshua Pedde, and Andrew Himelick. These three talented teachers and conductors bring a wealth of experience in the realm of teaching children to sing.

**Henry Leck:** People always ask me, "What voice should I use in demonstrating for children?" I always answer that you should use your best modeling voice. Because a strained, tight, unmusical falsetto voice in a male is a poor model for the child's singing voice.

**Andrew Himelick:** The best example for a child's voice is another child. I've always felt comfortable singing in my falsetto. My understanding is that men with a bass or baritone range typically have an easier time singing in the falsetto range than tenors do. When I first started teaching (and in my student teaching), I almost exclusively used my falsetto. I used that voice all the time to give examples, and I did that pretty much for the first 10 years. It seemed to work. It wasn't the best because of my tone color, but at least I had the correct pitches that were exactly matching the students' registers. At the same time, though, I was always singing with the children in the class situation. I experienced vocal fatigue because I was singing all the time.

**Josh Pedde:** The first thing you have to think about is your own voice and your own vocal health. We sing a lot in our headvoices and that puts a huge strain on our vocal cords. Depending on how many sections you

teach, for example teaching six sections of first grade—that is a lot of singing. So, the first challenge is monitoring your own vocal health. As a teacher, we always put the students first, and we're always singing with them and playing with them. When they're not getting it, we start to think, "I need to sing more." Instead of backing out, we tend to oversing. I think that the first huge challenge of teaching unchanged voices with my changed voice is the vocal fatigue that we face.

**HL:** The male upper voice tires more easily. To some degree, I think, the typical adult male has a more limited range than a child with an unchanged voice. Depending on how much training the children have had, they will be able to sing comfortable up to high F# and G and down to low A and Ab. However, a male adult voice singing in headvoice will not be able to sing those lower pitches because it is right in his break and will not be able to sing those higher pitches either. So, we're faced with a dilemma. How do we model? Most good modeling will take place in the middle of the treble clef staff. If the teacher's voice tires more easily and if the poor male teacher is on his seventh class for the day on a Thursday, he has to find really wonderful ways to conserve the voice. I'll never forget when I had a

student who was a high tenor and he was getting ready to go out and student teach. I remember the school and the cooperating teacher. He was a baritone teacher who had trained all of his children to sing an octave above him. Then when this student teacher came out and he was singing their exact pitch, they started singing an octave above. For a while, they were very confused. Third, fourth, and fifth graders can learn to displace the octave easily.

**JP:** One of the big hurdles at the beginning of the year is making sure that the students all match pitch. With first grade, I primarily use my headvoice. Sometimes, I find myself slipping into a lower voice, but it is always a light quality and never the full voice that I would use if I were performing. With first grade I've made the decision to use my headvoice, and then by the end of first grade I start to transition into my changed voice. From second through fourth grade, I use a mixture of high and low voices depending on what the students need. If I am modeling a song, normally I am in my low voice. If we're echoing, I will use my headvoice. I think it's to use the changed male voice after students have established their own voice and when they understand that they will be singing in a different way than the teacher. They have to establish their own voices first and then let them know that you have a different voice in the transition and help them through that transition. When they come into first grade, they haven't established their voices. They've heard mom sing, they've heard dad sing and they've heard sister and brother sing—and they're all singing differently.

**Douglas Beam:** The vast majority of the teaching I do is in my changed voice. I use a light tone and sing with no vibrato. I find that even my first grade students are largely successful at singing in tune. There are some who are thrown off by the difference between their voice and mine, but after an initial period of adjustment, they start to find where their voices

are most comfortable. In the mean time, we do a lot of vocal exploration to get them into a high voice. And then the vocal exploration has to continue as we work to develop good tone and placement.

**JP:** There has to be a lot of vocal exploration—a lot of finding where the high voice is. Children need to have a place where they can explore and explore and explore more with positive reinforcement. The environment in which it is done is key; it has to be a safe environment with everyone supporting that child. Going through games and exploring with sirens and slide whistles and sighs. “Can you use a high voice? Can you use a low voice? Can you use a middle voice? And can you understand the difference between the different voices?” Hearing the difference between the voices is crucial. We have to just go back to the basic first steps. Teaching the vocabulary of singing is important. Students have to be able to feel and understand the difference between the voices they use. A lot of times, it isn't that a student can't match pitch—it's that they don't know how to match pitch.

**HL:** All of the research and primarily the research of Mary Goetze, shows that children learn to match pitch better when they hear a human voice versus a piano or something like that. Also, they will sing in tune and match pitch better is they are singing alone. We tend to put children who are having trouble matching pitch next to loud singers then often they'll drop into a lower voice so that they can hear their own voices. Then, Nancy Cooper furthered that research and determined that children match pitch better if they are matching with someone who is singing the exact pitch they should be singing rather than down an octave. As a result, if a man is singing an octave lower than the children, it is going to be more difficult especially for the early elementary children in kindergarten and first grade, but it can be done.

**AH:** The idea of singing for the children and not with the children is very help-

ful. I can tell more easily if they are having problems singing a certain part because I can hear them better. I am not hearing myself singing over them. Also, it gives them ownership of the song. I have found that my students sing better now because I don't sing with them.

**HL:** One of the vocal issues that I have found is that if you teach all of the basic elements—good posture, good breath and lots of support—actually what will happen is that there will be too much breath and the pressure build below the larynx causes a stridency of sound. I actually hit this head on in about 1988. My choir was really developing this big sound and they were doing all of the right things vocally, but it was not musical and it was almost harsh because there was so much air pressure below the vocal folds. That's when I started developing movement to go along with the singing. There were times when I would have kids moving and people would say, “doesn't that interrupt the singing?” I would say, “No, it actually enhances it.” The worst enemy to good singing is tension and the way to get rid of tension is through movement, and the way to create expressivity is through movement. So, I added motion, physical motion, to every vocalize I knew. Every vocalize that they would sing without motion, when you added motion, had a distinctly better tone quality, better intonation, better energy, better placement, and a more musical sound. When I can get a choir to move just a little bit, their tone changes immediately.

**AH:** Often the most difficult thing with teaching singers is that there is no visual mechanical sensation of what is really going on. Some physical gesture paired with the head voice can help solidify the placement of the voice. Kinesthetic sensation can help them understand what they are experiencing on the inside. Then, when they are singing a piece of choral music, for example, even though they may not be moving, they are still hopefully thinking of the gesture that we practiced with the singing.

**DB:** When it comes to teaching children how to sing, and more importantly, to love singing there is no one right answer. For both male and female teachers this aspect of teaching music is difficult and requires creativity on the part of the teacher. Orff Schulwerk music teachers are well positioned to teach both singing and a love of singing to children because of the playful, creative process that embodies what we do.

*Josh Pedde is an assistant conductor for the Indianapolis Children's Choir. He teaches general music at Stonegate Elementary School in Zionsville, Indiana. He completed his Orff Schulwerk Level I training at Anderson University (IN).*

*Andy Himelick is an assistant conductor for the Indianapolis Children's Choir. He teaches general music at Towne Meadow Elementary School in Carmel, Indiana. He received his training in Orff Schulwerk from the University of St. Thomas (Levels I and II) and Anderson University (Level III). He is also a certified Kodály teacher.*

*Henry Leck is the founder and artistic director of the Indianapolis Children's Choir. Mr. Leck received his training from the University of Wisconsin, the University of Colorado and Indiana University where he received a master's degree in choral conducting. Each year he teaches his conductor's workshop entitled Creating Artistry at venues across the country.*



*Douglas Beam is an assistant conductor for the Indianapolis Children's Choir. He teaches general music at John Strange Elementary*

*School in Indianapolis, Indiana. He received his training in Orff Schulwerk from Anderson University and is currently pursuing a master's degree in music education with an emphasis in Kodály and Orff from the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. E-mail: [djbeam@gmail.com](mailto:djbeam@gmail.com).*

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# Benefits of Folk Songs in the Elementary Music Classroom

By Casey Gerber

Traditional songs for children have been used in the elementary music classroom for several decades. With roots in the oral tradition, these songs can be found in song collections, basal series textbooks, and in the childhood memories of the music teacher. Emphasis was placed on their classroom use after folklorists began collecting such songs in the early 1900s and with the implementation of the Orff and Kodály methods in the 1960s.

These timeless tunes are often thought of as “living” entities, constantly evolving and changing. Folk songs are not contrived or written for commercial purposes and can serve as a link to cultures of the past. When children can connect with a traditional song in their “mother tongue,” they have opportunity to learn of their own background and emotions. The merits of folk music are often the very reasons that students grow to love

singing them. Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály felt so strongly about traditional music that he claimed, “... a good folk song is a perfect masterpiece in itself.”<sup>1</sup> Along with these benefits, folk songs are an essential element used in classroom singing. Children’s folk songs may be used as pedagogical tools, contain “singable,” memorable melodies and can ultimately be sung for pure enjoyment.

The search for appropriate repertoire can be challenging when using folk songs as instructional tools related to melodic concepts. Carefully selected songs provide a foundation for the study of various intervals by training the inner ear and ultimately affecting intonation. When these tunes are sung and memorized, they become useable tools associated with the targeted melodic pattern they contain. Targeted melodic patterns, such as sol-mi or mi-re-do, are common in folk melodies and form the basis for future music

reading. Once they are studied within the context of a song, children can sing them with greater accuracy and recognize them when reading a melody. The target patterns should be easily identifiable and isolatable and should preferably be found in the first or last phrase of the song. Songs with only the pitches sol and mi such as “The Counting Song”<sup>2</sup> are ideal for teaching the descending minor third, the first such melodic pattern that is often taught. (See Figure 1 below.)

Three of the four phrases in “Hop Old Squirrel”<sup>3</sup> contain the descending whole step pattern (mi-re-do), often taught in second grade. (See Figure 2 below.)

The descending minor third followed by descending whole step pattern (do-la<sub>1</sub>-so<sub>1</sub>) can be taught with songs like “Turn the Glasses Over”<sup>4</sup> and used further to read, write or compose with the pattern the teacher is targeting. (See Figure 3 on page 26.)

Figure 1

**“The Counting Song”**

s      m      s      s      m      s      m      s      s      m

One, two, tie my shoe; Three, four, shut the door;

Figure 2

**“Hop Old Squirrel”**

m   m   m      m   m   m   r   r   d      m   m   m      r   r   r   d

Hop old squirrel, ei-dle-dum ei-dle-dum, Hop old squirrel, ei-dle-dum dee!

Figure 3

## “Turn The Glasses Over”

Game Song

The musical notation for "Turn The Glasses Over" is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. Above the staff, the syllables "d d d l, s, d d d l, s," are placed over the notes. Below the staff, the lyrics "I've been to Haar - lem, I've been to Do - ver" are written. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes, with a descending chromatic passage in the second half.

Folk tunes using pentatonic, diatonic and even altered tones such as a flat seventh scale degree provide opportunities for students to improve intonation as they progress through their training. An organized collection of songs offers opportunity for vocal development and can become a valuable teaching resource in the future.

Folk songs are also useful in the elementary music classroom because they are “singable” and vocally accessible. Because these songs have survived through the memories and voices of untrained singers, countless children’s songs are sung within a limited range. Children are able to focus on intonation, tone quality and expressive qualities when singing within a comfortable range. Orff educator Arvida Steen describes the importance of selecting vocally accessible songs by stating, “We select folk melodies because they are artfully simple and easy to sing while offering infinite varieties of expression.”<sup>5</sup>

The repertoire that is commercially available to music teachers should be

used with caution. Many of the songs written in mass and marketed to elementary music teachers contain difficult, un-tuneful melodies which often lead to inaccurate singing and undesirable tone quality. These songs can present students with unreasonable vocal challenges such as descending chromatic passages or melodies with wide ranges that can frustrate students and put unnecessary strain on young voices. There are numerous song choices appropriate for children’s voices at any developmental level. Folk song collections, which are often organized by melodic pattern, are ideal places to search for suitable melodies. There are numerous pentatonic folk songs that can successfully be sung to simple Orff accompaniments. Songs such as “Great Big House in New Orleans”<sup>6</sup> provide a simple, yet attractive melody that works well with Orff instruments. (See Figure 4 below.)

While the focus of the performance is the song itself, Orff accompaniment enhances the beauty of the song while giving harmonic support throughout.

A model for using a pentatonic song with Orff instrument accompaniment is also shown in songs like “Unk, unk, unk,” which are found in Orff and Keetman’s *Music for Children: Book 1 Pentatonic*.<sup>7</sup>

Songs that are most easily used with elemental instrumental patterns should include pitches of the tonic triad occurring on strong beats. These are often recognized by the use of repetitive patterns on the pitches do, mi or sol, which in turn provides for easily identifiable and complimentary instrumental parts. Pentatonic songs can also be used when incorporating improvisation into a performance. The five pitches found in the song form the melodic options for improvisation on Orff instruments or recorders. When performed successfully, these songs provide meaningful musical experiences to children even within the confines of a hurried, thirty-minute lesson.

Elementary children who have been exposed to folk music grow to embrace the tunes and the stories. The beautiful, yet simple melodies seem to enter

Figure 4

## “Great Big House in New Orleans”

The musical notation for "Great Big House in New Orleans" is written on two staves in 2/4 time. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is simple and consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The lyrics are "Great big house in New Or - leans, For - ty sto - ries high - Ev - 'ry room that I been in, Filled with pump - kin pie." The melody is pentatonic, using only the notes G, A, B, C, and D.

their consciousness and resurface at any random moment. Folk songs become part of a child's everyday life, almost without their awareness. Parents and children can be found singing while getting dressed for the day or while driving to school or work. Young students frequently break into song during play, whether alone or with friends. When these unforgettable songs are shared in the classroom or on the playground, students become actively involved with music based in the oral tradition. Memorable melodies are one of the reasons for the staying power of children's folk music.

While folk songs can be vocally accessible and aurally pleasing, children also enjoy singing them because they contain meaningful text. Traditional children's music often deals with topics of love, joy, sorrow, frustration and even death. If moving a child's emotions is a goal in music education, these topics need to be explored. Arvida Steen endorses suitable text by saying, "The lyrics should also be selected for the musical ideas they inspire, their expressiveness, and what they can teach us about ourselves, another culture or another time in history."<sup>8</sup> Children can enjoy singing text they may not fully understand, especially nonsense songs. Appropriate text enhances a child's singing experience while providing insight into people, places and experiences otherwise not available to a child.

Perhaps the ultimate reason for singing folk songs in the classroom is for pure enjoyment. The value of a song to a child should not be taken lightly. These songs have the ability to brighten a child's day or touch a child's heart which can benefit a child long after he or she leaves the music classroom. Folklorist and folk song collector Ruth Crawford Seeger emphasized the significance in singing these songs for fun by stating, "Almost a first requisite in singing with small children is the natural and wholehearted pleasure which the singer finds in the song. It is the song which is important, to both singer and listener.... So allow

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yourself pleasure in the song, and sing it for its own sake. This is music which anyone can sing and feel he has the right to be comfortable with."<sup>9</sup> Though folk songs are simple and easy to sing compared to popular music today, children still find joy and satisfaction in singing them.

Since singing is such a fundamental aspect of elementary music education, appropriate repertoire should be of utmost importance. Children's folk songs can help in accomplishing musical objectives through the performance of their simple, yet memorable melodies and are also fun to sing. These traditional songs represent the best that our singing heritage has to offer our children today.

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Ildikó Herbolty Kocsár, comp., *Zoltán Kodály: Music Should Belong to Everyone* (Budapest, Executive Office of the IKS, 2002), 23.
- <sup>2</sup> Lois Choksy, *The Kodály Method I: Comprehensive Music Education* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 190.
- <sup>3</sup> Peter Erdei, ed., and Katalin Komlos, comp., *150 American Folk Songs to Sing, Read and Play* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1980), 2.
- <sup>4</sup> Erdei and Komlos, *150 American Folk Songs*, 53.
- <sup>5</sup> Arvida Steen, *Exploring Orff: A Teacher's Guide* (New York: Schott, 1992), 30.
- <sup>6</sup> Eleanor G. Locke, *Sail Away: 155 American Folk Songs to Sing, Read and Play* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1987), 17.
- <sup>7</sup> Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman,

*Music for Children: I Pentatonic* (London: Schott & Co., Ltd.), 12-13.

<sup>8</sup> Steen, *Exploring Orff*, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Ruth Crawford Seeger, *American Folk Songs for Children* (New York: Oak Publications, 2002), 25.



Casey Gerber is a doctoral student majoring in music education at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. He received his bachelor's and master's degree in music education from Southwestern Oklahoma State University where he also received Orff training. He has eight years of experience teaching music in Oklahoma public schools. While at Hillcrest Elementary in El Reno, Oklahoma, he taught pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade general music. He implemented successful Orff and Kodály programs at the school, conducted City-Wide Honor Choir concerts, and led the Hillcrest Honor Choir to superior ratings at the Tri-State Music Festival. E-mail: [clgerber@olemiss.edu](mailto:clgerber@olemiss.edu).



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# Singing in the Schulwerk

## What Are Its Roles and Importance?

By Julie Scott

*Do Orff Schulwerk teachers place as much emphasis on the teaching of singing as they place on the teaching of movement and playing instruments?*

**A**s an Orff Schulwerk teacher who often spent time in circles of those who were skeptical of the Orff approach, I was used to being on the defensive. “Orff teachers don’t teach singing well” was one of the frequent accusations. I took this criticism personally because singing was so important to me. I argued that “singing” was one of the integral components of the Schulwerk: “You know, the Orff ‘media’ are ‘singing, saying, moving, and playing?’” I explained that we sing all the time—playing singing games and accompanying ourselves on instruments as we sing songs. About early experiences in accompanying “call” (*So-Mi*) and “chant” (*So-Mi-La*) melodies, Keetman wrote, “Pay attention to the soft playing of accompaniments so that the singing can come through more strongly,” (pp. 63–64); and Warner (1991) wrote, “It is important that singing always precede playing,” (p. 81). My colleagues replied, “Great. But in practice, that isn’t always what happens.” The issue of teaching singing well, they said, did not appear to be a priority in Orff Schulwerk.

Therefore, I made it part of my mission to demonstrate to my friends that the teaching of singing was important in Orff Schulwerk. When my children’s Orff ensembles performed at conferences, I was careful to include pieces that demonstrated their ability to sing beautifully. Pure vowels, clear diction, in-tune parts, and expression would show my colleagues that children educated in Orff Schulwerk *do* sing well.

The year this debate about singing in Orff Schulwerk was at its height, I attended a national conference of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association,<sup>1</sup> in which I heard three children’s Orff ensembles perform. The groups demonstrated movement that was

creative, artistic, and beautifully illustrative of the melodic contours and the forms of the pieces. The playing of the Orff and unpitched percussion instruments was musical and precise. Not only did you *hear* the musicality; you *saw* it in the children’s bodies as they played. But the singing; well, it was merely *good*. When I compared the singing to the high-quality movement and playing of the Orff instruments, there was a definite contrast, at least from my perspective as a choral director. Of course, I didn’t expect the singers in the Orff ensembles to match the sound of the select children’s choirs I heard at national and state conferences. The European children’s choir sound might not even be appropriate for the Orff Schulwerk setting. However, the contrast between the playing and the singing was noticeable. For the first time, I questioned whether there might be some credence to my colleagues’ criticism. Do Orff Schulwerk teachers place as much emphasis on the teaching of singing as they place on the teaching of movement and playing instruments?

### **Pilot Study**

My questions led me to design a pilot study, the purpose of which was to examine the roles and importance of singing in Orff Schulwerk, according to expert Orff teacher trainers in the United States. The study was performed using narrative inquiry (Charmaz, 2006; Rubin and Rubin, 2005), consisting of semi-structured interviews with six expert Orff Schulwerk instructors—four men and two women. All six of the interviewees are instructors for teacher training courses in Orff Schulwerk, and all of them lead workshops for AOSA chapters throughout the country. The interviews began with the question, “What are the roles of singing in Orff Schulwerk?”

Some of the follow-up questions inquired about how singing in Orff Schulwerk is unique, or how singing is used differently in Orff than in other approaches. Other succeeding questions asked about the importance of singing in Orff Schulwerk.

## Interviews

The interviews were transcribed, and analysis of the data was conducted using line-by-line open coding. From the key words and phrases that were identified in the transcripts, categories of words were compiled, and the following themes about singing in Orff Schulwerk began to emerge from the data. Here are the themes, along with some of the quotes that led me to identify them:<sup>2</sup>

1. *The voice is one of our body instruments.* Most of the participants in the study began their responses by defining singing in terms of its instrument—the voice.

**Ben:** I think that our body is our first instrument, and the voice being one of the primary sound-making pieces of that first instrument, so I think it's important.

**Fred:** It's...the most natural way for someone to make music because we're born with it.

**Molly:** It's *the* most elemental musical instrument. It is *the* most personal instrument, and it's vitally important in all the aspects, other aspects of Orff Schulwerk.

2. *Singing is one of the Orff Schulwerk media.* Singing was described by some of the participants as equal to speech, movement, and playing instruments in Orff Schulwerk. It is one of the ways children can make music.

**Robert:** I believe the beauty of Orff is that it allows people to get to the music through many different routes. . . . If the student couldn't or wouldn't sing well, they had some other means to express themselves: recorder, barred instruments, or percussion.

**Ben:** I treat the voice much like I treat all of the other instruments in the Orff instrumentarium. [T]he

voice is *one* of the instruments in the instrumentarium.

**Fred:** My thoughts of singing are it's one of the major media that we work with, in addition to the movement, the instrumental playing, and speech.

3. *Singing and the voice are experienced in more diverse ways in Orff Schulwerk than in other approaches.* Several of the interviewees described roles that the voice assumes in Orff Schulwerk, which may be used less often in other approaches to teaching music.

**Ben:** Ostinati, question and answer [Orff teachers] would do. Improvising, using the voice in ways that, like sound-carpety kind of voice things and non-traditional, more aleatoric uses of the voice.

**Emma:** When I use singing in my classroom, it's really fun because we'll be playing a mallet piece, and the kids will all start humming along or singing along, and I will have them write words, so that they're writing their own songs.

**Fred:** I think we tend to use [singing] more as part of the process, and not necessarily as an outcome. We're using it as a tool.

**Ben:** [I]n my classroom, singing is something we do in all different kinds of ways. We move and sing, we play and sing, we, improvise and sing.

4. *The Kodály method has influenced Orff Schulwerk in some ways.* There was a sense among the participants that Orff teachers may get some of the beginning song ideas, such as limited-range songs, play-parties, and some sequencing ideas from the Kodály tradition. All of those who mentioned Kodály spoke of its influence only in the early years, and only with regard to singing.

**Robert:** The Kodály influence on Orff Schulwerk is very strong and very connected, and, at some points, you can't tell them apart, especially in the early singing stages where the sequence is very clear.

**Jack:** When I do stuff, a lot of the stuff I do now is Kodály based: play-parties, *mi-re-do* patterns, *do-la-so-la* patterns, tone sets.

**Robert:** I do love the Kodály work, believe it or not, in the sense that at the start of my teaching career, it gave me some very clear structure...I didn't even know what a three-tone song was in the beginning! I think the Kodály work is important. It gives you that basis to start with song. It taught me how to teach singing. As an instrumentalist, Kodály gave me the literature, gave me a sense of quality material and the pedagogical sequence of limited range songs, and I think that's good.

5. *But, this is how Orff Schulwerk is different.* Usually as a follow-up to their comments about similarities between Orff and Kodály, the interviewees clarified what they believed to be unique about Orff Schulwerk.

**Jack:** [I]n Kodály land, the literacy is from the notation, but in Orff land, the literacy is from the material that you are going to manipulate.... A lot of Orff training, in my opinion, is covering the settings and the instrumentarium and the media, but they're not getting to the meat and potatoes, which is the *improvisation*, and *that's* the literacy element.

**Emma:** The songs that we use and the poetry that we use is, for the most part, student generated, and it's not a structure or folk song that's been imposed on them from the outside. Now, in some cases, well, those things have value too, as models for kids, but I prefer to have them write their own.

**Jack:** I think that the big thing is that, instead of just having the children reproduce materials like from when I was a band director. In band director land, when I'm doing that, we're just recreating songs. As a band director, I never would have thought about kids scat singing or having kids make up their own songs.

6. *"I am an instrumentalist."* The interviewees who claimed an instrument other than the voice as their "first instrument" provided an interesting insight into their perceptions

about their singing voices. In some cases, their responses were poignant.

**Ben:** I feel like I want to say is that it feels a little uncomfortable for me to talk like, about singing like I know something about it because all my background is in instrumental music. So I want to clarify that this is an instrumentally trained person.

**Robert:** I came to Orff Schulwerk as an instrumentalist with little or no singing background. . . . that was one of the things that attracted me to Orff. I'm sure it's what attracts many instrumentalists—the idea of playing these instruments. Personally, to play the xylophone was just as rewarding as to sing a beautiful song. . . . Now there are always students, and there still are students who just don't enjoy singing. I do believe that there's a time in some young people's lives when singing is not what they do. . . . I always allowed that by the end of 6th grade, there were kids who just didn't want to sing. When they reached that point, I just quietly let them take more of a passive role, and not push it with them.

## Summary

According to these expert Orff teachers, it seems that the voice, as our first instrument, is of equal importance to the other Orff media. Singing is used in more diverse ways in Orff Schulwerk than in other approaches, according to the teachers in this study: in combination with the other media, for improvisation and composition, and sometimes as a tool to learn parts, which ultimately will be played on the instruments. The participants stated that Orff Schulwerk is similar to and has been influenced by Kodály in some ways. This similarity is particularly evident in the early years, when Orff instructors teach singing games and begin with melodic and rhythmic sequences identical to those of many Kodály teachers. However, the interviewees wanted to be clear that Orff Schulwerk is unique in its use of much student-generated music, rather than only reproduced songs and pieces.

Finally, three of the six participants in this study spoke of their identities as instrumentalists, rather than as vocalists. Maybe it is the instruments that attract so many of us to the Schulwerk, and maybe some of us, who consider ourselves “instrumentalists,” shy away from singing and allow students who shy away from singing to “take a back position.”

It is clear that singing is important in Orff Schulwerk, and some of the roles of singing in the Schulwerk have been identified during this inquiry. The interviews that I conducted in the pilot study, however, have led me to new questions, such as the following:

- What percentage of expert Orff teachers concentrated on an instrument other than voice as their major instrument in college?
- What is the self-image of expert Orff teachers with regard to their singing voices?
- How does this self-image affect their teaching of singing in the classroom (e.g., frequency, quality, expectations of students)?
- What draws one music teacher to Orff Schulwerk, another to the Kodály approach, and still another to both?

These are questions that remain to be examined. In the meantime, keep singing, keep teaching singing, and keep in mind these words of Herman Regner, former director of the Orff Institute:

Singing is good. Both for mind and body. Singing is self-realization. Inner spaces are discovered and made resonant.... The most important goal of vocal training is to find pleasure in one's own voice. This provides the motivation to engage and develop it independently. Or to deal with it creatively, to make use of it as a sound-vehicle, as an instrument of our emotional and spiritual motivations. (1983, p. 93)

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The hyphen in “Orff-Schulwerk” is used only in certain instances: in the name of AOSA, in book titles published by Schott Music Company, and

in some American publications prior to 1988. Since that time, Schott publishing company has held a copyright on the hyphenated version of “Orff Schulwerk” (Shamrock, Foreword, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> The names of the interviewees have been changed to protect their anonymity.

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Julie Scott is coordinator of elementary music for Richardson, Texas ISD and director of the Lewisville ISD Fifth Grade Honor Choir. She serves

as vice president of AOSA and is pursuing a Ph.D. at Eastman School of Music. Julie has taught elementary music in Texas for seventeen years and elementary music methods courses at Eastman and at Southern Methodist University. She has taught Orff Levels Training Courses to adults at five universities, and has presented workshops for MENC, AOSA, OAKE and to numerous state MEAs, school districts and Orff chapters throughout the United States. Julie has presented sessions internationally at conferences in Thailand and in Australia. E-mail: scottj@mail.smu.edu.

# The Music Teacher's Voice

By Debra Spurgeon

*Music teachers are even more prone to experience voice problems because of the amount of speaking and singing required in the teaching day and the less than ideal conditions under which many teach.*

Teachers of all disciplines experience voice-related problems because in teaching one is almost constantly speaking. Music teachers are even more prone to experience voice problems because of the amount of speaking and singing required in the teaching day and the less than ideal conditions under which many teach. When a music teacher begins to experience any of the following conditions, he or she should see a physician, who first will determine whether a disease, allergies, or another physical ailment could be the cause.

## **Symptoms of Vocal Distress**

The following conditions are warning signs and should not be ignored: a change in vocal quality over time; hoarseness, breathiness, or loss of tonal beauty; lowering of the speaking or singing range; vocal fatigue (your voice feels tired after only a brief period of singing or speaking); tension in the throat, neck, or jaw with an increasing amount of effort necessary to produce a clear speaking and/or singing tone; or a chronic sore throat.

A physician may recommend consultation with a laryngologist, who will make a more in-depth diagnosis, perhaps by viewing the vocal folds through a flexible fiber-optic laryngoscope. Conditions such as nodules, polyps, or vocal-fold hemorrhaging can be detected with the laryngoscope, as well as habitual patterns of speaking and singing, which could be at the root of the problem. After the examination, the specialist will recommend one of several possible therapies: speech therapy, singing therapy, vocal rest, or in rare cases, surgery. If acid reflux is determined to be a factor, drug therapy may be recommended.

There are strategies that music teachers can employ on a daily basis

to ensure that chronic vocal problems are avoided. The most important first step is to make vocal health a top priority. The voice is a valuable teaching tool and should be treated with great care. Chronic voice problems can change the way a music teacher uses his or her voice, and in some cases, could even cut their teaching career short. The following strategies should be considered by all professional voice-users to maintain vocal health and prevent future problems.

## **Warm up your voice every day before speaking or singing.**

Laryngologist Robert Sataloff states, "Much can be gained by vocal exercises first thing in the morning.... I have personally cared for people prepared to retire from teaching or conducting because of hoarseness and vocal fatigue who have found this change alone sufficient to restore them to good vocal performance."<sup>1</sup> Exercises could include humming, yawn-sighs, tongue trills, arpeggios, and stretching, along with deep breaths to activate the abdominal muscles and prepare the teacher for the rigors of speaking and singing. The idea is to get the voice going in the right direction at the start of the day.

## **Make your room a pleasant acoustical space.**

Evaluate the acoustical environment of your teaching area. Are there changes that would make it more conducive to speaking and singing with ease such as removing carpet to liven up the space or adding carpet in a room that is too reverberant? Could the room be rearranged to enhance the acoustic? A constant mechanical noise such as buzzing fluorescent lights or a heater blower can create white noise that the teacher must struggle to speak over.

The Lombard Effect, which is defined as the tendency to speak more loudly in the presence of background noise, can take a serious toll on the voice. If the noise can not be eliminated, perhaps the room could be rearranged into a different pattern or a body microphone used to amplify the teacher's voice.

### **Pay attention to how you speak.**

Many times the speaking voice is actually at the root of vocal difficulties. If music teachers would employ the same habits that they have developed for singing, vocal problems could sometimes be avoided. Bonnie Raphael states:

Many singers have undergone long range, intensive singing training, but have had virtually no formal training in speaking. As a result, there may be a dissociation of singing habits from speaking habits. Singers who have absolutely beautiful posture, breath support, mask resonance, and freedom when they

sing all too often slump over, breathe shallowly, allow the vocal tone to "sit in the throat" and use inappropriate pitch levels.... when they speak. These poor habits may do damage to the same vocal mechanism that they expect to perform wonderfully when they sing.<sup>2</sup>

When teaching, it is important to assume a singer's posture with the sternum comfortably high, shoulders relaxed, and weight balanced on both feet. Breathe low and release neck and throat tension as you allow the tone, spoken or sung, to flow on the breath. It is best to speak at a mezzo forte level. Speaking softly and "sparing the voice" is actually harmful because there will be a tendency to cut off the abdominal support and control air flow from the throat. Deep breathing is extremely important when projecting to a large class. It is important to speak slowly and allow time for replenishing breaths during pauses, which will also relax the speaker.

Many music teachers lead singing and other activities from positions that are less than desirable for good tone production, such as seated on the floor or leaning forward from a chair while playing Orff instruments and teaching from the piano. In these positions it is difficult to breathe correctly and use abdominal support. For that reason, perhaps the best advice is for the teacher to minimize their own speaking and singing from these positions and focus instead on the students' music making.

Another area of concern for teachers is the pitch level of the speaking voice. Speech therapists listen for the *habitual* pitch level, the limited range of pitches that a person uses for everyday speech, and compare it to the *optimal* pitch level, the range where their voice will operate most efficiently with the least amount of effort. It is not easy to change speech habits because they are deeply engrained from an early age, but every larynx has an optimal range of pitches based on its dimensions. Unfortunately, many people speak at a pitch level that is lower than they should, which makes the voice "over work" to project. To be heard all the way to the back of the room, one should open the mouth taller, engage the abdominal muscles, use more air, and raise the pitch of the speaking voice. Also, by adding greater mask resonance, the voice will carry more easily with less effort.

### **Don't sing with your students.**

Some teachers sing constantly with their students, unaware that their own voice may be covering up their students' voices or masking students' errors or vocal problems. It is no surprise that many music teachers feel their voice is tired and "used up" by the end of the day. If vocal modeling is the goal, the teacher should sing and the students should listen. When conducting choral groups it is especially important for the conductor to listen and not sing with the group. Not only does singing with the ensemble block one's ability to hear, but it also sets up the conductor for inefficient vocal habits. How can one's



*Janna Montgomery, a music teacher in Mississippi, demonstrates to students with the piano.*

own vocal technique be top priority while engaged in all the physical and mental tasks of a conductor?

### **Have your voice evaluated.**

Have you stopped modeling for your students? Do you worry that your tone quality is not what the students should emulate? If you feel that your voice has changed over time, you should make an appointment to consult a knowledgeable voice teacher. He or she can listen to you speak and sing, assess body alignment issues that may be causing difficulties, and possibly suggest ways to use your voice more efficiently. There may be habits that have crept into your singing or speaking technique that are causing problems. Awareness is the first step in making changes and asking the assistance of a voice teacher could head off future vocal problems.

### **Schedule speaking and relaxation breaks in the day.**

This may be a difficult strategy for teachers with a heavy teaching schedule, but it is helpful to take a break from speaking during preparation periods or between classes. Use every opportunity to be silent and let your voice recover. Undisciplined or very large classes can take a toll on the music teacher's voice, sometimes causing throat tension, pressed phonation, and vocal fatigue. When possible, if even for a few minutes, practice relaxation techniques during the teaching day: close your eyes, breathe deeply through your nose, and think peaceful, calm thoughts.

### **Sip water throughout the day.**

We should all drink around eight glasses of water every day. When our bodies are well hydrated, the mucosal lining of the vocal tract is slippery and this helps to minimize friction when we speak and sing and also reduces susceptibility to colds and sore throats. Sipping water throughout the day is a good way to soothe the throat and also helps to suppress coughing and throat-clearing, which irritate the voice.

*The Orff Echo - Spring 2008*



*Janna Montgomery demonstrates the xylophone.*

Music teachers are susceptible to voice problems due to the nature of their work, which involves speaking, singing, and sometimes managing large groups of students. If music teachers are to maintain a free and expressive singing and speaking voice, they must make vocal health a top priority, modify habits that are causing problems, and make necessary changes in their working environment. Only then will the music teacher's voice remain strong and expressive throughout their career.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Robert T. Sataloff, "Ten Good Ways to Abuse Your Voice: A Singer's Guide to a Short Career," *NATS Journal* 42 (September/October 1985): 24.

<sup>2</sup> Bonnie Raphael, "Improving the Singer's Speaking Voice," *NATS Journal* 46 (November/December 1989): 9



*Debra Spurgeon is associate professor of choral music education at the University of Mississippi where she conducts the Women's Glee and teaches methods classes. Her articles on singing have been published in the Journal of Singing, The Choral Journal, and The Journal of Music Teacher Education. E-mail: dspurg@olemiss.edu.*

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# **The Financial Assistance Committee of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Announces a One Time Scholarship**

## **JaSeSoi ry Scholarship to World Village, Finland**

JaSeSoi ry, Orff-Schulwerk Association of Finland, has generously provided a scholarship to its World Village 2008 conference for a member of AOSA. This award, valued at 290 Euros includes tuition and cultural activities. The recipient of the scholarship will assume responsibility for all other costs, including transportation. The conference, taught in English, will be held July 27 – August 1, 2008, in Valkeala, Finland.

The mission of the World Village is to unite music educators of different countries and cultures. Located in the Finnish countryside, music and human spirit are elements of this week. The common spirit of fun, laughter, mischief, understanding, hard work and ambition prevail. Instructional team for 2008 is Jouni Kettunen, Terhi Oksanen and Jukka Siukonen.

This one time scholarship will be awarded to an AOSA member who has not previously attended World Village. The applicant must be a current member of AOSA in good standing for one year prior to making application for the scholarship. The applicant must be a citizen of the United States of America OR must have resided in the United States of America for the past five years. Candidates must have completed Level II Orff Schulwerk training. Upon completion of this project, the recipient agrees to write an article for AOSA publications/Web site and provide documentation of project completion to AOSA.

Inquiries/requests for application forms should be directed to AOSA Executive Headquarters, [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org) or [service@aosa.org](mailto:service@aosa.org).

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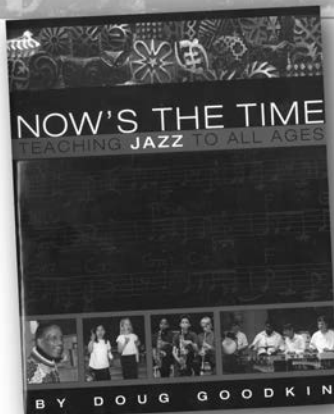
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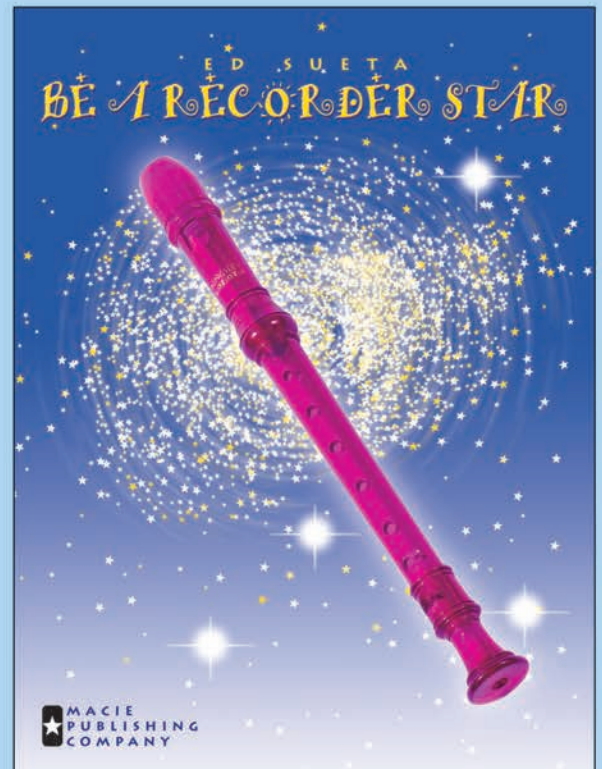
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Posters of accepted research reports will be displayed. The author(s) of each accepted paper must be present at the conference poster session to discuss the research project with interested participants. The author(s) must also furnish 25 copies of a report summary as well as 10 copies of the completed report.

The following guidelines will inform the paper selection process:

Please submit a research summary not exceeding 1000 words (in English) via e-mail attachment to **pstover@siu.edu** using Microsoft Word with a .doc extension or as a pdf file. If e-mail is not possible, please submit five paper copies of the summary to the address listed below. Authors must outline and report: (a) objectives or purposes; (b) perspectives or theoretical framework; (c) methods, techniques or modes of inquiry; (d) data sources or evidence; (e) results; (f) conclusions/point of view; and (g) implications for and applications to the profession.

The author's name, institutional affiliation and address (including e-mail) should appear only on a separate cover page. The summary should contain no clues to the author's identity.

Papers submitted for the conference must comply with the **Code of Ethics** published in the fall issue of the *Journal of Research in Music Education* (and also available on the Web at <http://www.menc.org>).

**Submissions should be sent to: Dr. Pamela Stover, Coordinator of Music Education  
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All submissions must be postmarked or e-mailed by **MAY 1, 2008**.

A panel of qualified reviewers will read all submissions. Authors will be notified by July of the panel's decisions. Summaries will not be returned.

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Papers should be double-spaced using type no smaller than 12 points and should not exceed 2,200 words. Submissions should be sent electronically as an MS Word or PDF document to Carlos Abril, at [c-abril@northwestern.edu](mailto:c-abril@northwestern.edu). If electronic submission is not possible, send four copies of the complete paper to: Carlos Abril, Echo Focus on Research, Northwestern University School of Music, 711 Elgin Road, Evanston, IL 60201. Manuscripts will then be sent to the AOSA research panel for anonymous editorial review.

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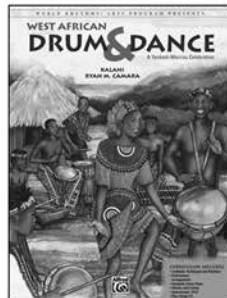
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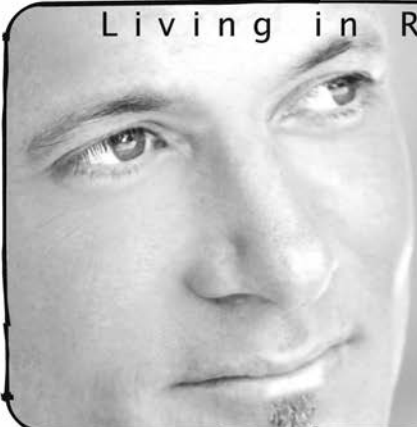
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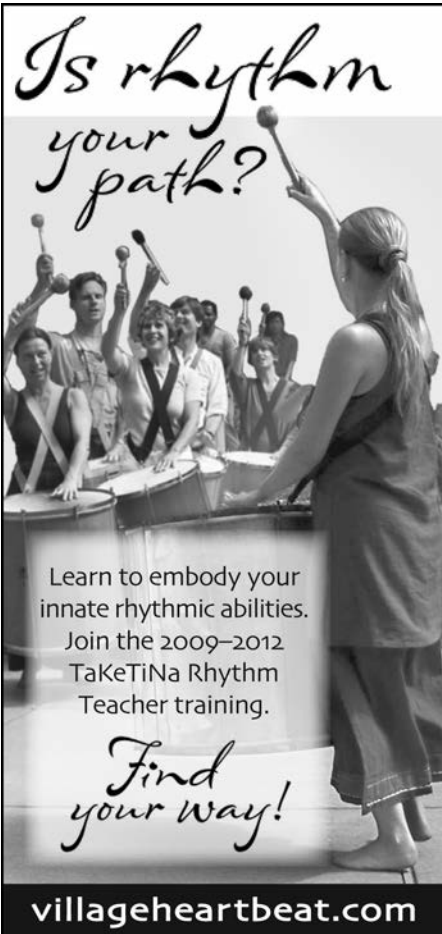
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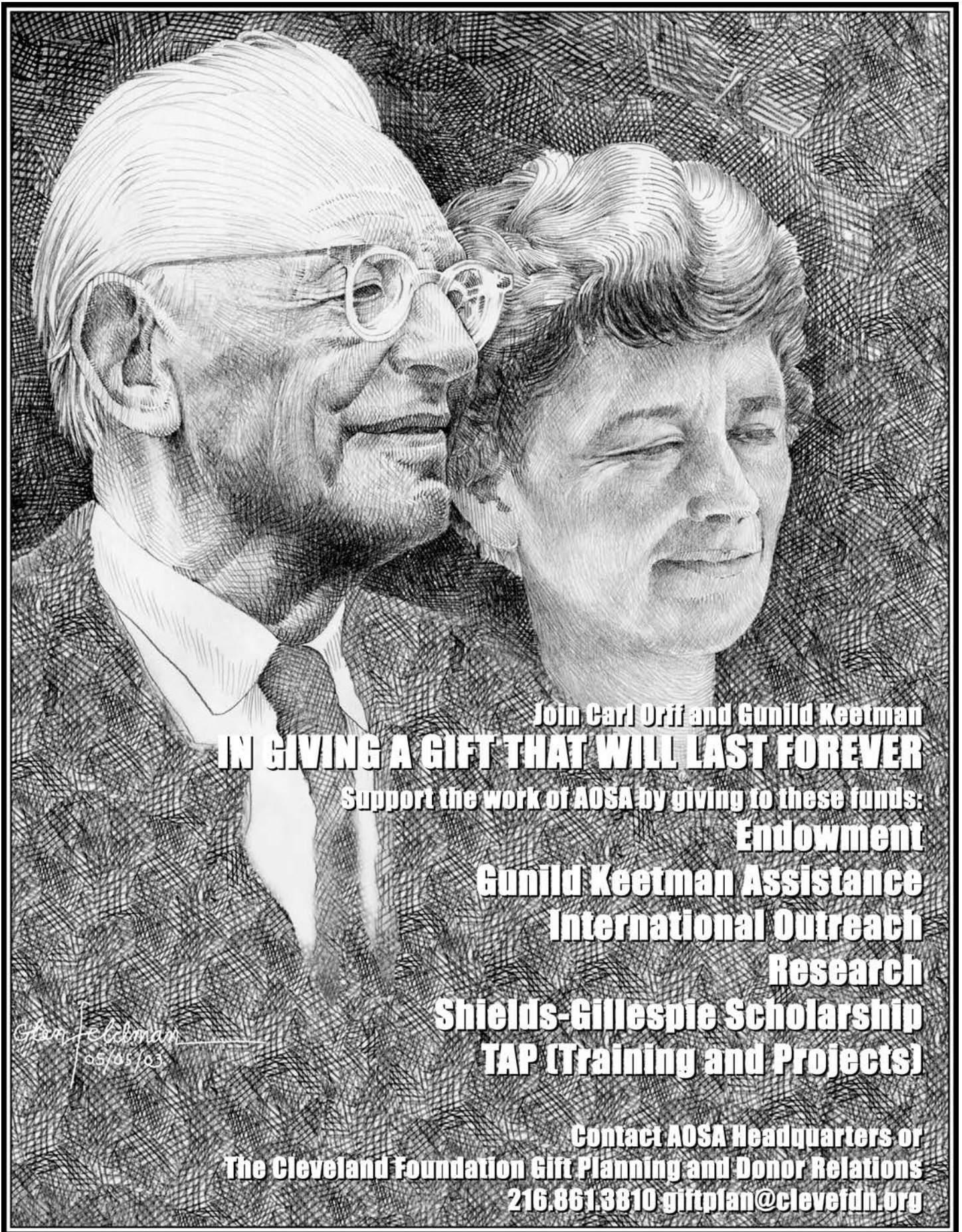


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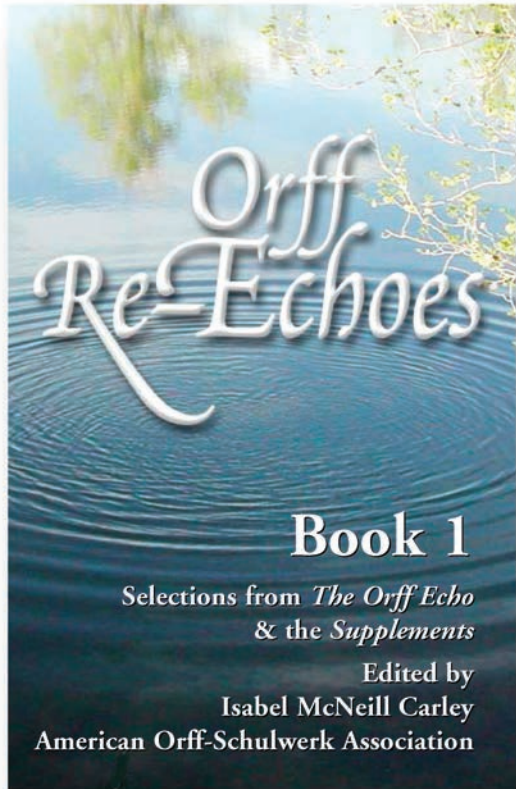
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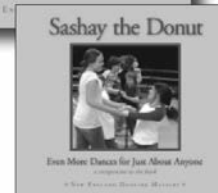
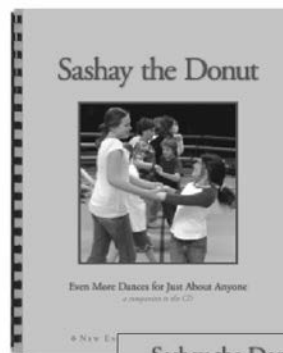
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# Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey

Written and directed by Steve McNicholas and Luke Cresswell • Well Go USA, Inc. 2006 (DVD)



Reviewed by  
Julie Schramke

When *Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey* came out on DVD last fall, I was excited. I had seen this movie on IMAX in the spring of 2005 and was impressed with the breadth of material explored by Luke Cresswell and Steve McNicholas, founders of the group Stomp. This forty minute film explores music on six continents, mostly focusing on current practices in dance—and the rhythm and music accompanying it—performed by indigenous peoples.

There is no dialogue in the film. As a framing device and to give continuity, Stomp performers are shown playing and dancing in various venues: the subways and rooftops of New York, bicycling across a desert, playing underwater in the English Channel. There are also scenes where Stomp performer Keith Middleton interacts with other performers, riding his bicycle into the water, and riding an elephant in India. His facial expressions inject humor into this wordless but sound-filled cinematic experience.

The film demonstrates how music is inseparable from dance in many cultures. There are parades from India and Brazil, American Indian music and dance from several North American tribes performed by the American Indian Dance Theater, flamenco from Spain, and dancing from South Africa, Botswana, and Gambia. There is a segment with the Bayeza Cultural Dancers of Johannesburg, South Africa. It shows gumboot dancing, a style of dance that evolved in the gold and diamond mines of South Africa during apartheid. At that time, black miners were forbidden to speak to each other, and developed a system of communication through slapping and stomping their gum (rubber) boots.

Through the eyes of directors McNicholas and Cresswell, we are taken

around the globe to experience music that focuses on rhythm. There is vocal percussion and singing from India. There are short segments demonstrating that “beat box” is not strictly an American, hip-hop phenomenon. We can see the bell ringers of Winchester Cathedral, who must use the weight of their bodies to ring the heavy bells in the belfry. We see and hear the Kodo drummers of Japan, who play *taiko* with skill, strength and grace. In a helicopter above the Brooklyn Bridge we see two drum and bugle corps, the Jackie Robinson Steppers and the Jersey Surf Drum and Bugle Corps march past each other, each playing a different style of drum corps cadences. We are even taken to Australia where Keith Middleton learns to play the bull-roarer.

Also included is a forty-one minute segment of bonus features, including three deleted songs, three alternative takes of pieces, interviews with some of the performers, and other behind the scenes footage.

The Web site, [www.pulsethe-movie.net](http://www.pulsethe-movie.net) has many resources for educators including a downloadable teacher’s guide with activities for making instruments, science experiments, and language arts extensions based on the film segments. There are external links to Web sites and articles about the performers and other features in the film. The IMAX trailer is a good way to preview the film.

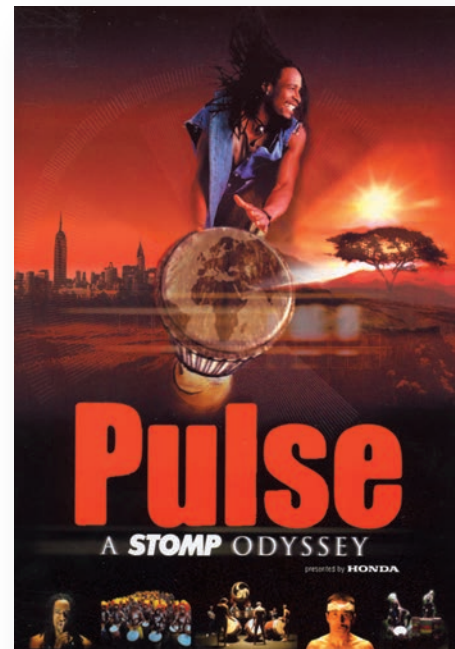
Shown in its entirety, this film would work well for teachers as a lesson in comparison and contrast of music and dance on six continents. At forty minutes, it easily fits into a single class period. Filmed entirely in visually stunning outdoor settings, students see other parts of the world. The performers, mostly adults and adolescents, wear traditional

costumes (some of which are more revealing than Americans are used to). Students will be exposed to different qualities of both singing and moving, perhaps opening the door to interesting discussions of vocal qualities that are prized in various cultures.

Shown in short segments, the film could be used to reinforce drumming styles of Africans, Indians of South Asia, South Americans, or American Indians. Using the sections with the Stomp troupe, a teacher could show different kinds of hip-hop dance including break dancing and popping, where body parts are moved in isolation and sequence.

This film is about more than music, rhythm and dance. In watching the end credits and reading the extensive liner notes, it is striking that many of the groups performing in this film have in their mission statement a desire for healing the community and furthering understanding between people through music and dance.

*Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey* has many qualities to recommend it to a music teacher. It is an ideal addition to a music teacher’s library.



# Understanding Jazz Forms: Blues

Presented by Doug Goodkin • AOSA AV Library: 152UB (DVD only)



Reviewed by  
Beth Iafigliola

“It is the pleasure, duty and challenge of every American music teacher to immerse one’s students in this vital and vibrant musical form,” states Doug Goodkin, master Orff Schulwerk teacher and presenter at the 2006 AOSA Conference, held in Omaha, Nebraska.

With a teasing nod, Goodkin plunges the participants into the world of jazz through a playful body warm-up. Goodkin invites the group to clap and sway, pantomime, and play. The participants mimic the movements of the presenter who expands the repertoire from simple gestures to complementary body percussion patterns performed by three groups of participants. With the addition of two groups, directional footsteps and an improvisatory piano accompaniment, the room starts to hop.

Goodkin carefully tests the experience of the audience through song examples, settling on the call-response form of the traditional song, “Hambone.” The group soon identifies the actions needed in the two-phrase form, clapping on the off-beat pulse during the vocal ‘call’

and answering with an improvised clapping pattern on the ‘response’ phrase. Through encouragement and inclusion, Goodkin challenges the participants to try to create even more elaborate movements within the boundaries of the phrase, using the modeled examples shown by those participants practiced in the art of ‘hambone.’

With sensitivity for learners on all levels, Goodkin breaks down the movements used in the Juba and Hambone patterns into distinct, recognizable parts. “Come as guests to a house when entering a new style,” advises Goodkin. A comparison of European and African postures follows with the European stance reaching upright like cathedrals and African styles emphasizing ‘getting down,’ feeling your footing from the earth, states Goodkin. Later in the presentation, the comparison goes deeper: beat versus off-beat; head tone versus chest tone, get up versus get down; interpret written scores versus improvise in an aural tradition; I – V chords versus I – IV chords; are head-based versus body-based understanding of style.

The session ends with a brief explanation of blues form and accompaniment examples for piano and other instruments, including the drum set.

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**142WP William and Rosephanye Powell** “Interpreting African-American Spirituals” (2005) DVD

# Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me

By Eric Carle • Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1991



Reviewed by  
Sharon Mazion

As I perused children's books at our local bookstore, my finger slid through the shelves, suddenly stopping in the Eric Carle section. The minute I picked up *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*, I knew this book had a place in my library. As I paged through the story, my eyes devoured the visual feast and my heart was charmed by a simple, but daunting, request from a child to his or her parent.

The story opens with a little girl named Monica, who is gazing out at the nighttime sky. She spies the moon and, wishing to play with it, asks her father to get it for her—a simple task, or so it seems to a child! Naturally the father embarks upon this challenging task. He gets out his very long ladder and treks to a high mountain where he sets it up. Fearlessly, he climbs right up to the moon, only to find out it is too big for him to manage. The moon consoles the perplexed father by encouraging him to wait as it wanes smaller. Sure enough, when the moon is the right size, the father plucks it from the heavens and returns home to present his daughter with the precious gift.

There is no mistaking Carle's symphonic use of color and collage style in this touching tale. He creates illustrations by hand-painting papers, which he then cuts and layers to fashion brightly colored scenes and images. In this book, Carle blends and creates intense, vibrant colors with thick layers of paint and dynamic brushstrokes. This masterful command of color deftly sets the cool quietude of evening. Carle's creative use of flaps and foldouts provide entertainment and anticipation for the reader while adding magnitude and motion to this tale of extremes. The pages expand, extend, and ascend as Papa brings out

his ladder, and climbs to the heavens on his precarious journey. I love listening to my students' squeals of delight as I open flaps to reveal Papa carrying a four-page-long ladder, or even better, the hushed awe that envelops the children as the moon expands before their very eyes!

The possibilities for extension in the classroom unfold as easily as the artist's illustrations. This book provides the perfect opportunity to explore higher and lower, as Papa takes his ascending and descending journey. (After all, what child wouldn't love to stand a xylophone on end and see that very high mountain appear in her very own hands!) Though the text is beautifully written, it begs for a

musical score. Exploration of hand percussion and classroom instrument sounds easily offer children the opportunity to create a sound palette as exquisite as the artist's images. Even the multitude of stars in the book liner, suggest singing one of the many simple but beautiful "star songs" in a child's repertoire. Don't ignore the movement opportunities either. Monica jumps and dances with the moon, almost imploring the children in your room to join her.

Papa gives Monica the chance to dance and play with the moon. Don't miss the opportunity to let the boys and girls in your classroom come out to play with this truly timeless and beautiful classic from Eric Carle.



# The Anatomy of Melody

## *Exploring the Single Line of Song*

By Alice Parker • **Gia Publications, 2007**



*Reviewed by  
Carol Erion*

**T**he introduction to Alice Parker's book, *The Anatomy of Melody: Exploring the Single Line of Song*, put me in mind of an interesting idea I had encountered in a graduate music

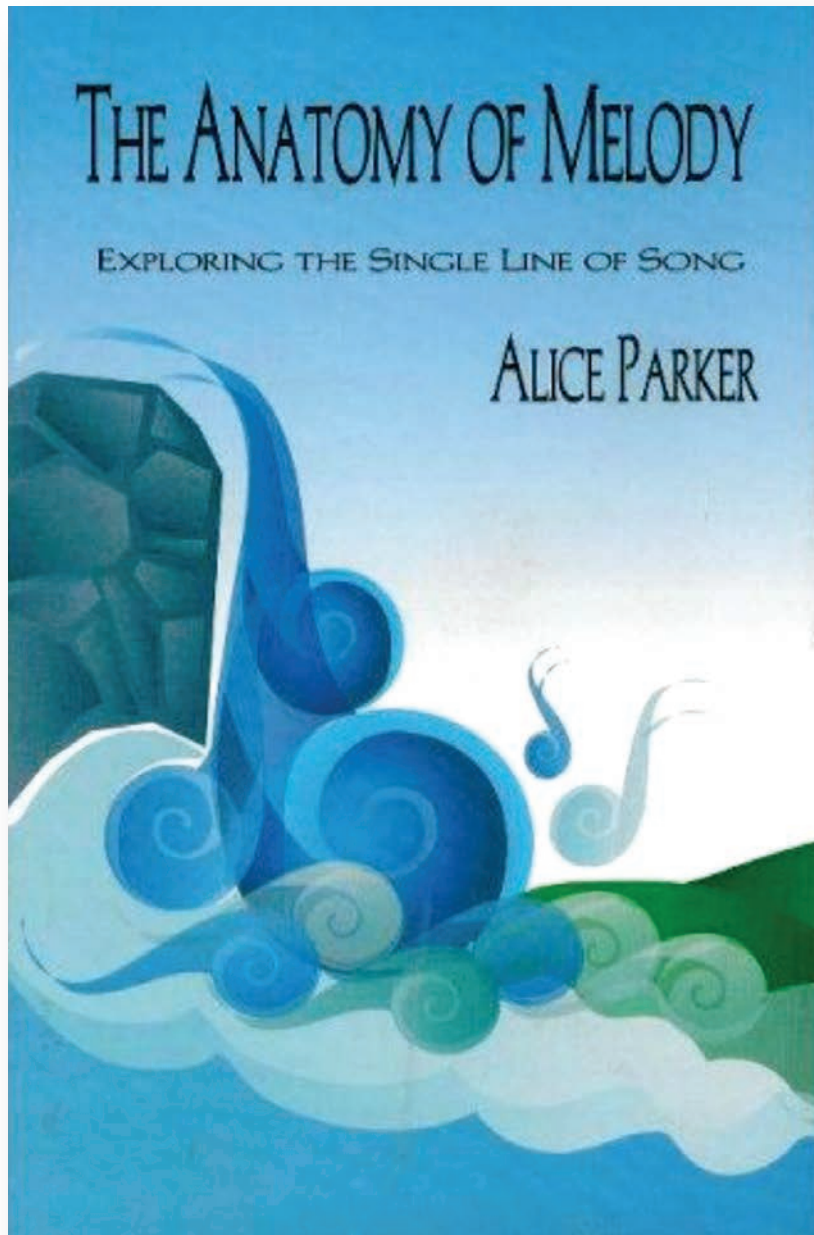
theory class taken decades ago: the tension in classical music culture between linearity and fragmentation. The theory professor suggested that our late twentieth century life in general, and its music in particular, was being built upon principles of fragmentation such that it was possible we had already moved beyond what the human being, who functioned for millennia as a linear being, could tolerate.

Linearity? Fragmentation? Here are a just few examples: the snap of the digital clock changing the minutes versus the linear sweep of the second hand and minute hand that gives a visual sense of the passage of time; Photoshop image manipulation versus the smell and tactile sense of the darkroom process that allows an image to emerge; the segmentation of television dramas into seven-minute bits divided by commercials versus the continuity of a novel, a film, or the telling of a story; twelve-tone or otherwise disjunct melodies versus the linear shaping of a Mozart melody, a Beatles tune, or a folk-song. As humans, we long for the single line—the line that reaches back to connect us with our ancestors through family stories, the single line of melody that also tells a story.

Alice Parker introduces her book on melody by saying, "We are living

in a culture that doesn't value melody, one that seems to have lost touch with this primal means of expression." Though Parker continues her indictment of today's musical

cultures by saying, "We are surrounded by sounds so insistent, so varied in intent and clangor, that we've forgotten how to listen to a single line." She writes her book



*As humans, we long for the single line—the line that reaches back to connect us with our ancestors through family stories, the single line of melody that also tells a story.*

with the sure knowledge that melody is the most important and longest lasting element of music (p. xiii).

Unlike my theory professor, Parker sees the root source of the devaluation of melody deriving from much longer ago than mid-twentieth century. She believes it started in the 1600s with the technology to print music and the development of harmonic interest that this technology allowed. When melodies could be printed, they no longer needed to be remembered. Here, Parker talks about melody in the same way Orff talked about elemental music, defining it as that which can be remembered without a score. She further believes that rhythm and melody are the most important musical elements, with harmony being a subset of melody. This is not unlike the importance we give those two elements in Orff Schulwerk, with simple drones and borduns used to support melody.

This marvelous, easy to read book contains twenty short chapters that cover text, pitch, rhythm, the use of silence, breath, phrase, styles (historic, geographic), and styles relating to function (issues of learning by ear and learning from the page), as well as improvisation. There are two chapters devoted to “great melodies” in which Parker analyzes the way musical elements combine to make a melody memorable, artful, and able to convey emotion.

Each chapter follows the same format. The chapter begins with Parker’s thoughts on an aspect of melody, and then she illuminates that analysis with melodic examples in notation. Each chapter ends with a reflection. These reflections contain questions or statements as prompts for further thinking about the subject, and often there are “assignments” to experiment with singing a melody in certain ways in order to make personal discoveries about it.

Oftentimes the reflections end with additional verses to the songs that were treated in the chapter, and occasionally, with a short literary reflection, or a graphic that organizes information in the chapter.

The strongest chapters are about those elements that are least objective and hardest to describe. Parker is at her best describing the effect of silence, the power of a melody to communicate, and the ways in which the breath structures phrase length. These are the chapters I’ve returned to often because the prompts actually work quite well. The reflection questions have staying power because the answers are different with each new melody and each old, much-loved melody that one considers.

*The Anatomy of Melody* was published in Alice Parker’s 81<sup>st</sup> year. Parker’s long experience in choral conducting, her collaborations with Robert Shaw, her training of generations of choral directors and other teaching experiences, her long interest in folk songs, hymns, and spirituals, and her many choral compositions make her eminently qualified to examine melody from the perspective of both performance and creation. She is, above all, a great teacher. The book is not a scholarly treatise, though it does challenge and engage the mind. It is a book for practitioners—for singers, composers, and teachers. It is a book from the heart that touches the heart.

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# Do Re Mi: If You Can Read Music, Thank Guido d'Arezzo

By Susan L. Roth in association with Angelo Mafucci • Houghton Mifflin, 2007



Reviewed by  
Kate Williamson

**H**ave you ever tried to explain to your students where the music staff came from or why we read music at all? How did it all begin? Who is the “Father of Music?”

This book takes this piece of music history and brings it alive for both children and adults through artful storytelling based upon historical facts and events. Susan L. Roth’s *Do Re Mi: If You Can Read Music Thank Guido d’Arezzo* tells the real life story of Guido d’Arezzo, the “Father of Music.” Her passion for this subject is evident in this book from the very start. In the forward, Roth describes written notation stating that by “...enabling music to live beyond the moment, Guido d’Arezzo immortalized it.”

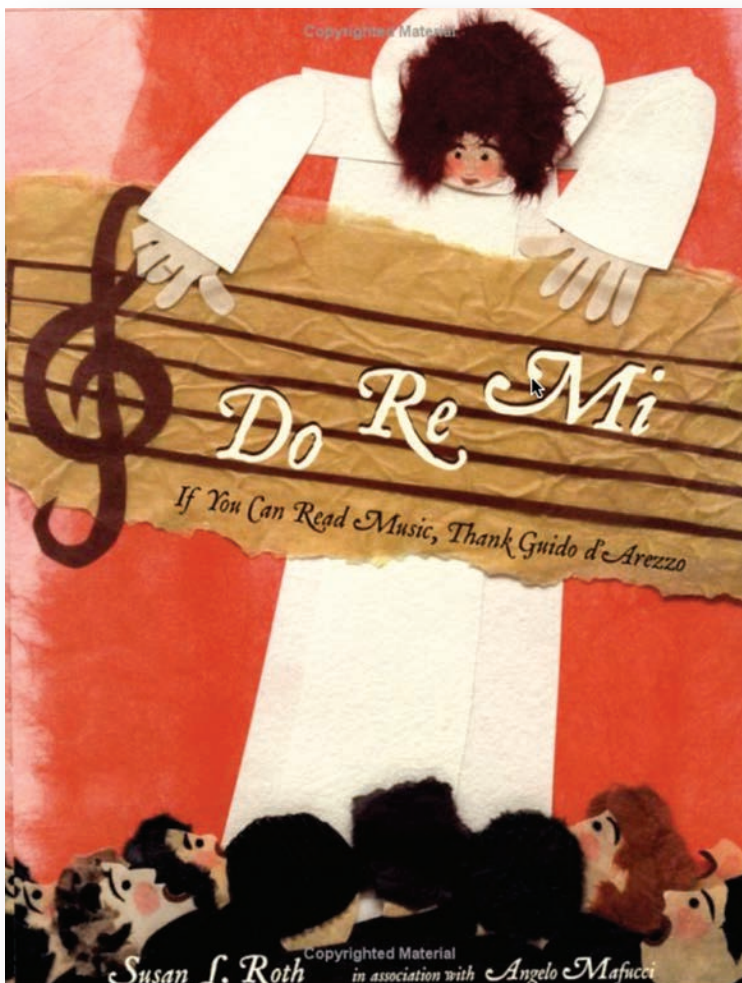
The artwork in this book helps tell the story as well. It is infused with torn-paper illustrations that incorporate sections of real music manuscript throughout the scenes. The varying layers of paper give a sense of texture and depth to the illustrations; collage images of monks appear three-dimensional. A creative addition is a music staff cleverly woven into each page.

The book traces the roots of written notation back a thousand years to a small town in Tuscany, home of Guido d’Arezzo. It begins with young Guido singing in a children’s choir learning to sing by rote and dreaming of writing down the sounds of a song. We learn that, although children were singing a thousand years ago, all music had to be memorized and learned by rote. Guido believed that there could be a better way to learn music.

As Guido grows into adulthood, he begins to act upon his idea and to experiment with various ideas to put music to paper. The reader is drawn into his passion and frustration of trying to transfer sounds to ink and parchment. Although he is tempted to give up, Guido tries and tries again. It is the simplest idea that finally gives Guido the breakthrough he needs. Utilizing his fingers as the five lines and the spaces between to create the staff, as we

know it today, Guido developed a written notation system of music. What a brilliant concept that is easy for children to see as they examine their own fingers and spaces of their hand.

By bringing the life of Guido d’Arezzo into the classroom, this book takes a very complex idea of written music and makes it easy for children to comprehend. After learning of his inspiration children learn that literally, music is in the palm of their hands.



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*“A bird  
doesn't sing  
because it has an  
answer, it sings  
because it  
has a song.”*

— Maya Angelou

