

Brent M. Holl

# Sounds Abound!

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**E-Book**

Volume 2

Timbre and Form in the  
Orff Instrumentarium



BPP-BSAT

On a hot dry July day in 1977, as a young, inexperienced music teacher, I climbed into my 1974 VW Dasher sedan and drove 14 hours to Memphis, Tennessee, for my first course in Orff Schulwerk. Encouraged by professors and colleagues to take a leap of faith, this life-changing course answered all of my questions about how best to teach music. I learned about Orff instruments and the didactics and pedagogy of Orff Schulwerk to share with my students back in Virginia.

In Memphis that year I first met Jos Wuytack, pedagogue and master teacher of Orff Schulwerk. Wuytack taught the Level 3 course but insisted on teaching daily sessions for Levels 1 and 2 as well. He alternated singing days with instrumental work. During one of the first instrument sessions, he presented a paraphrase of Ravel's *Bolero*. As Wuytack built the piece, slowly adding more and more instrumentation, I became amazed at the incredible combined instrument array recreating the breadth and depth of an entire symphony orchestra! Throughout the two-week course, moments like this happened over and over. I drove home after the two-week course filled with inspiration, energy, and determination ready to share the beauty and creativity of Orff Schulwerk with my students.

The timbre of the Orff instrumentarium is “extraordinary in its range of sounds. . . . they can delight, frighten, calm, or they can excite, exalt into regions of ecstasy and mystery . . . they have a magical character.”<sup>1</sup>

In that spirit, *Sounds Abound! Volume 2 - Timbre and Form* highlights the shimmering, almost magical sounds of the Orff instrumentarium, a little of their history, and lots about getting the most from a collection of Orff classroom instruments. This conversation about organizing sounds and creating musical pieces with and for children also must address the idea of Form. This book describes and demonstrates small (micro) to large (macro) elements of form to organize the orchestrations, arrangements, and compositions.

**Supplemental materials are included with both the print version and the E-Book. They include:**

**Copy-ready Full Scores**

**Audio tracks for selected pieces for demonstration only.**

**bonus materials for selected pieces.**




<sup>1</sup> Wuytack, Jos. *Master Class*, The Memphis Orff Institute. 1979.

# Contents

Form	6	The Classic Three-Clap Pattern	46
Timbre	9	A Positive Force - for Stepping	47
The Instrumentarium	10	The Voice in Song	48
Xylophones and Marimbas	12	Gentle Breezes	48
See Dees	13	Autumn Leaves	49
The Force	14	Good Company	49
Axatse	15	Hamba Nathi	50
Grand Texas	16	The Voice in the Instrumentarium	51
Bamboula	18	Hush Little Baby	52
Metallophones	19	Bend Down Low	52
Cradle Hymn	20	South Australia	54
Flower Song	21	Who Killed Cock Robin?	57
Glockenspiels	22	What Shall We Do	
The Dream	22	with a Drunken Sailor?	58
Sing the Bells Sweetly	23	Yenyere Guma	59
Recorders	24	Expansion of Form	61
Recorders and Drums	25	Rondo to Sonata	62
Carol's Tune	25	Rondo Vivo	62
Mes de mayo	26	Rondo Allegro	64
Hamburg	27	Sonatina de día soleado	66
Pastime with Good Company	28	Theme and Variations	72
Drums	29	Flop-Eared Mule - Theme	73
Breakfast Delight	30	Flop-Eared Mule - Variation 1	74
Heartbeat	31	On the Way Up - Variation 2	75
Small Hand Percussion	32	On a Clear Day - Variation 3	76
Beat It!	32	Sunrise - Variation 4	77
WoodsMetsRatsSkins	33	Husker's Blues - Variation 5	78
Some One	34	Hee Haw - Variation 6	80
Percussion Games	35	Chaconne	81
Speech and Rhythm	37	Rain on the Water	81
Einstein	38	Bolero	82
The Bulldog and the Skunk	38	Fly to China Today	84
Junk Food	39	Time Out for Street Song	88
Posture	40	Piano Transcription	91
The Fool's Advice		Champagne Rag	92
(from <i>King Lear</i> - Shakespeare)	41	Build an Orchestration	96
Body Percussion	42	Pitch Ranges of the	
Ostinatos for Body Percussion	42	Orff Instruments	97
Rondo for Body Percussion	43	Order of the Orff Instruments	
Clapping Canon <i>a la</i> Steve Reich	43	on the Score and Abbreviations	97
Meter Play Warm-up <i>a la</i> Keith Terry	43	Epilogue	98
Eighteens	44	Bibliography	99
Clapping Canon	44	Index	101
Speech and Body Percussion	44		
My Little Pony	44		
The Name Game	45		
Down by the Meadow	46		

# Timbre

## *Color Me Music*

Got a green thumb, did you tell a white lie?  
 Are you tickled pink, is your flight a red eye?  
 Are you feeling blue or green with envy?  
 Did you pass with flying colors this golden opportunity?  
 Look for the silver lining, once in a blue moon.  
 Roll out the red carpet, out of the blue.  
 It's black or white, there is no gray.  
 Show your true colors, that is what they say.<sup>1</sup>

The simple act of exploring the sound of an Orff instrument begins the process of imitation, exploration, improvisation, and composition. From the first moment mallet strikes bar or breath vibrates in the “resounding tube” of a flute, music follows. When mallets strike bars in succession, when breath and fingers combine on the recorder, melodies and rhythms appear. When students chant, sing, clap, patsch, stomp, or snap, the whole body becomes involved with music making. These simple acts of play activate the human spirit which, when cultivated by curiosity, culminates in creative music making. Combining these efforts into ensemble work enables essential life skills of listening and cooperation, working at each level of competence to become an essential part of the whole.

The accessibility of the Orff instrumentarium and their subsequent use in the music classroom fosters active participation and student learning through ensemble playing. Because Orff instruments enable immediate success, progression to advanced instrument techniques occurs as a natural extension. In Orff Schulwerk, the journey from pentatonic to hexatonic, to diatonic, and finally to chromaticism is a life journey for the students, fulfilling the goal of music education itself, enabling students and adults to achieve their human potential.

I quickly discovered the magical element of musical instruments as a first-year music teacher before my Orff training began. The first time I brought my Gibson J-55 sunburst guitar into the class, the kids sat up and peppered me with questions. “Play us something, Mr. Holl!” I soon added to my collection of classroom instruments. An Appalachian dulcimer appeared next. As an introduction, I simply moved among the students letting them put their hands on the bottom of the dulcimer. They felt the vibrations, leading to immediate expressions of glee and excitement. I brought in a bamboo flute, a ceramic flute, a Jew's harp, a pair of spoons . . . anything I thought kids would be excited about.

In 1973, my first year of teaching, Orff Schulwerk was still a recent, interesting new set of ideas in the music education world. Fortunately for me, Cliff Pritchett, my professor at Bridgewater College in Virginia, had read about this new “Orff and Kodaly” method and recommended the 1972 publication, *Orff and Kodaly Adapted for the Elementary School*.<sup>2</sup> The book was filled with rhymes, chants, games, and activities with lesson plans, but what really caught my attention were the descriptions and orchestrations that included small, child-sized barred percussion instruments! I quickly began work to get some instruments for my classroom use. I eventually persuaded my administration and parent organization to purchase a few magical child-centered instruments for my students at Stuarts Draft Elementary School.

Students were completely amazed when I finally showed them an alto metallophone. The rich resonant sound delighted my students and continued my journey of discovery in the world of sound color. The interest in playing instruments of all types and sizes supported my teaching in elementary and middle school, setting me up perfectly for my first Orff class in Memphis and learning the process of combining sounds to compose creative pieces with students.

1 Pfitzner, Aimee Curtis. *Color Me Music*, page 4.

2 Wheeler, Laurence, and Lois Raebeck. *Orff and Kodaly Adapted for the Elementary School*. 1972.



## The Instrumentarium

Also referred to as "barred percussion," the basic set of xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels commonly called Orff Instruments are organized by pitch range. From 1926-1930, Karl Maendler, a harpsichord builder, worked on this collection from his knowledge of orchestral xylophones and newly developed vibraphones. From the models, Maendler invented the grouping of diatonic xylophones that became the modern bass, alto, and soprano. Later, the grouping of metallophones were made to match the xylophones. Ideal for one player, these new instruments were small and of limited range. The glockenspiel grouping only includes the soprano and alto. The addition of chromatic instruments completed the instrument collection.

Each instrument most commonly travels one and a half octaves from C to A1. Some modern Orff xylophones have a two-octave pitch range. The original model from Maendler had only one octave plus one note and was in the key of D (D to E1).<sup>1</sup> All overlap in range in the same manner. In the images below, note how the high C's on each instrument line up with the low C's of the next higher-pitched instrument. This unique arrangement of the notes must be kept in mind as teachers and students improvise, compose, and arrange their music.

The diagram shows three Orff instruments: Bass, Alto, and Soprano. Each instrument is represented by a set of bars. Vertical lines indicate the pitch range of each instrument. The Soprano instrument is the highest, the Alto is in the middle, and the Bass is the lowest. The high C of one instrument aligns with the low C of the next higher-pitched instrument.

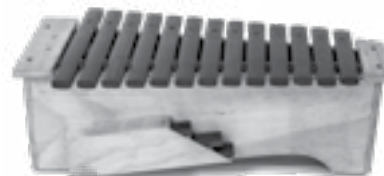
Pitch Ranges  
Barred Percussion

The musical notation shows the pitch ranges for the instruments on a grand staff. The Bass Xylophone & Metallophone range is shown in the lower register. The Alto Xylophone & Metallophone range is shown in the middle register. The Alto Glockenspiel, Soprano Xylophone & Metallophone, and Soprano Glockenspiel ranges are shown in the upper register, with an 8va (octave) marking indicating the high range.

1 Schneider, Hans. *Carl Orff The Schulwerk*, page 104.

## Xylophones and Marimbas

In 1926, Carl Orff received a gift of a *balafon*, an untuned wooden barred instrument, from two missionaries in Africa. Orff explored this instrument and improvised on it at length. Because it was unpitched, he was unsatisfied and set it aside. Another gift came from a student who had bought a primitive xylophone-like instrument from a sailor just in from Cameroon. With a box resonator and tone bars held in place with nails, this instrument was close in pitch to the piano. From this gift and with the help of his friend Karl Maendler, Orff obtained xylophones for his instrumentarium in the familiar one-person size commonly known as modern Orff instruments. The early instrumentarium included soprano, alto, and tenor xylophones. These were used at the Guntherschule from 1926 until the bass xylophone was added in 1932 and then until the outbreak of World War II in 1939-40.<sup>2</sup> The alto and bass xylophones have become the two most useful instruments in the ensemble, providing the harmonic and rhythmic foundations for the ensemble.



Alto Xylophone

Jon Madin presented a series of workshops using homemade marimbas in 1997 at the American Orff Schulwerk National Conference in Seattle. Arriving several weeks before the conference, he helped students, teachers, and parents at a local elementary school make several of these instruments. He visited several local hardware and lumber stores in the Seattle area and purchased the materials needed to make the marimbas. In his presentation, he described the process of making them and getting the materials to make them for ourselves.

At the same conference, a percussionist/music teacher from the Seattle area brought his fifth grade marimba ensemble and performed one of the several lunchtime concerts. Walt Hampton and his student musicians gave an astonishing performance! The precise playing, the incredible rhythmic structure, and the dynamic drive of the marimba set in motion a brand-new movement in Orff Schulwerk. Hampton's several publications of Zimbabwean-style marimba music are now essential repertoire in music education.

In 1998, I led a two-week summer session for gifted students, and we made six of these incredible Madin-style marimbas, two for each of the three middle schools in our district. We spent the first week finishing the marimbas and the second week learning marimba songs from Hampton's first book, *Hot Marimba*, and Madin's *Marimba Music Volume 1*. The students who attended that summer session shared their experiences when they got back to school that fall. From 1998 until I retired in 2006, homemade marimbas coupled with the music models of Hampton and Madin inspired student improvisation and composition. The following pieces were results of this inspiration and our collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> Schneider, Hans. *Carl Orff The Schulwerk*, pages 89-109.

The musical score is for the piece 'Bamboula' by Louis Moreau Gottschalk, arranged for Xylophone and Maracas. It is in 2/4 time and consists of six staves: SX (Soprano Xylophone), AX (Alto Xylophone), BX (Bass Xylophone), Cbsa (Cymbals), Congas, and CBX (Cymbal Bass). The score is divided into two systems, each with a first and second ending. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The CBX part includes chord markings: V, I, V, I, I.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk, piano prodigy and New Orleans' great classical composer, concertized throughout the world. His parents owned a Rampart Street home in the Treme neighborhood on the edge of the French Quarter. Gottschalk would walk onto his balcony on Sunday mornings and listen to enslaved people who were allowed to meet and who played music across the street in Congo Square, a patch of land in Treme.

In Congo Square, Gottschalk experienced African dance and music, but he was also introduced to new instruments such as bamboulas and banzas. *Bamboula* names drums made from bamboo as well as an African dance accompanied by that drum. Intrigued by the rhythms and tunes he heard in Congo Square, Gottschalk composed several pieces of music reflecting his experience.

## Metallophones

Generally speaking, a metallophone consists of tuned metal bars struck to make sound, usually with a hand-held beater. Metallophones have been used in music for hundreds of years. Several different types are used in Balinese and Javanese gamelan ensembles, including the *slenthem* and *saron*. These instruments have a single row of bars and are often tuned to a 5- or 7-tone scale named *Pelog* or *Slendro*. The Javanese pentatonic scales were not based on the tempered scales of western music but on uniquely tuned pitches for each instrument in a single ensemble.

Carl Orff was so interested in this that he went to a museum in Munich and studied all the instruments they had from the Far East. He got close to a large gong and quietly played it. Much later he recalled how thrilled he was with the sound. He felt like there was a whole exciting world of music in those instruments which nobody in Germany was using at that time.<sup>1</sup>

In 1932, at Orff's suggestion, Karl Maendler adapted a set of metallophones including bass, alto, and soprano based on his visit to the museum in Munich and the relatively new jazz and orchestra instrument fast becoming widely used, the vibraphone. At the same time, Maendler finished the xylophone set by adding a bass at the same equal-tempered pitch range as the new bass metallophone. This

<sup>1</sup> Gray, Esther, contributor. *Orff Schulwerk: Where Did It Come From?* <https://aosa.org/experts-blog/echoes-from-the-past/>

Cradle Hymn<sup>2</sup>

American Hymn Tune

Arr. Brent Holl

V

Hush my babe, lie still and slum-ber, Ho - ly an - gels guard thy bed.  
 How much bet - ter art thou tend-ed than the Son of God could be  
 Soft and eas - y is thy cra-dle, Coarse and hard the Sav - iour lay.

SM

AM

TB

BM

8 Aeolian on F:

V

5 Heav'n - ly bless-ings with - out num-ber, Gen - tly steal - ing on thy head.  
 When from heav - en He de - scend-ed And be - came a child like thee?  
 When His birth-place was a sta - ble And His soft - est bed was hay.

SM

AM

WC

BM

3rd time to Coda

V

9 Hush my babe, Hush my babe, Hush my ba - by boy.

V2

Hush my babe, Hush my babe, Hush my ba - by boy.

V3

AM

BM

"In simplicity is beauty" was often quoted in my classes, especially when creating accompaniments for choir. Use of the metallophones with their sustained notes perfectly supports quiet expressive singing in the choir. The simple bordun and tone color allows the choir to sing in a good tessitura for young voices.

<sup>2</sup> Walker, William. *Restoration. Southern Harmony*. 1835.



## Flower Song

Wuytack also suggested more uses for metallophones in the Orff instrumentarium, especially when sustained notes were desired. Lullabies, love songs, programmatic music, and gentle-tempoed music were all enhanced by the timbre of metallophones. Some great examples in *Sounds Abound Volume 1*, include *El Dia Lluvioso (The Rainy Day)*, page 22, and *Wind Through the Barren Trees*, page 23.

Metallophones are effective for sustained drones and doubling xylophone parts. When a xylophone is paired with a metallophone, the attack (chiff) played on the xylophone clearly sounds while the metallophone sustains the note, a great option for the music mentioned above. *Good News*, page 43, in *Sounds Abound Volume 1* uses both techniques to great advantage.

## Glockenspiels

Glockenspiel timbre is pure, fresh, sparkling, twinkling, shining, and childlike.

Originating as an unpitched wind chime like the instrument in the Mozart opera, *The Magic Flute*, the glockenspiel can also be traced to clock chimes. The original glockenspiels in Orff Schulwerk were glasses of water tuned to the pitches of the scale. In 1936, at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Berlin, the first note of the ceremony was struck on a water glass sounding over what was then a brand new piece of technology, the Public Address (PA) system. Imagine the wonder of the world audience as that bright, sparkling tone resounded through the vast Olympic stadium! Of course, for practical classroom uses Keetman and Orff needed a more durable instrument, so the modern glockenspiel was developed.

## Recorders

As the instrumentarium grew, Curt Sachs recommended the use of recorders to Carl Orff.<sup>3</sup> Orff needed to be convinced that recorders could be incorporated into his new Elemental Music. Sachs convinced Orff the recorder was an excellent addition to the instrumentarium. Orff's objections included his aversion to the use of a baroque instrument and his displeasure with his colleague Fritz Jode's early introduction of the recorder in the 20's to the youth movement in Germany. When Sachs finally told Orff of the existence of bone flutes from the Stone Age, Orff realized that recorders could fit in his developing Elemental Music. When Gunild Keetman, one of his new students, became delighted with the new instrument and was willing to experiment and work out melodies and techniques that fit the elemental style, the four-part recorder consort including soprano, alto, tenor, and bass became part of the Orff instrumentarium.

Give me a recorder and I will find out how it works - in a month the lessons will begin! - Gunild Keetman<sup>4</sup>

## Recorders and Drums

Brent Holl

The musical score is for a piece titled "Recorders and Drums" by Brent Holl. It is written in 2/4 time and G major. The score consists of four staves. The top two staves are for recorders (SR), and the bottom two are for hand drums. The melody is played by the recorders, starting with a G4 quarter note, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The hand drums provide a rhythmic accompaniment, with the right hand playing eighth notes and the left hand playing quarter notes. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

3 Schneider, Hans. *Carl Orff The Schulwerk*, page 96-97.

4 Ibid., page 109.

## Drums

In the beginning was the Drum - Carl Orff<sup>5</sup>

The drum inspires movement. The core element of Carl Orff's Elemental Music is the close relationship between music and movement. The first instruments used in Elemental Music were rattles worn by dancers and frame drums of various sizes that inspired movement. Drumming is elemental, social, universal, and essential to the human experience.

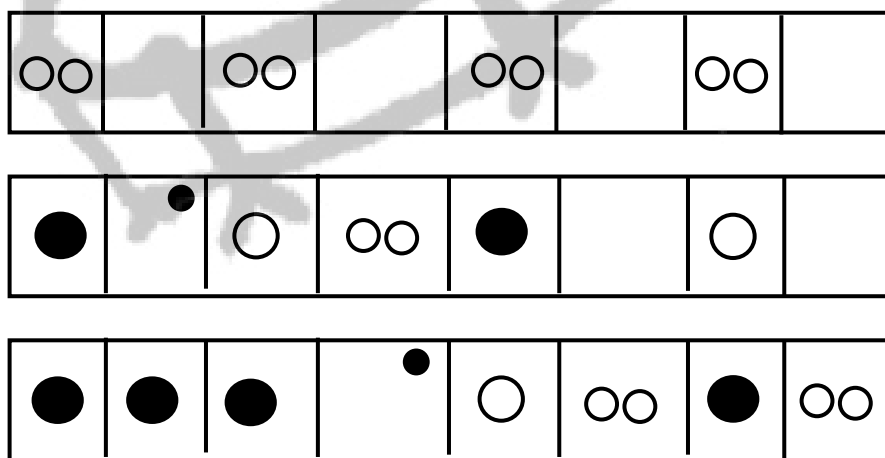
Drums provide and reinforce endless opportunities for rhythm, improvisation, meter, form and timbre. Powerful, driving, and expressive, hand drums encourage movement, yet provide a safety net where movement becomes less embarrassing, inhibitions are reduced, and music comes alive in both sound and movement.<sup>6</sup>

Early experiences with the frame drum we now call a "hand drum" were largely experimental and primarily used to accompany melodies sung or played on recorder (see **Recorders and Drums**, page 22). The Orff Schulwerk *Jugendmusik* books included recorder and drum duets based on the early experimental activities of the Guntherschule. Made of natural skin and tunable by tightening and loosening wing nuts around the frame, these hand drums were difficult to maintain in a typical classroom setting. Hand drums in music classrooms became more popular when the Remo™ company adapted their synthetic drum head to the Orff-style hand drum for schools. These drums keep their tuning, come in various sizes and pitches, and are ideally suited for classrooms.

### Heartbeat

Drum circles allowed me to share technique and create rhythm ensembles with students. We spent one drumming day a week, my usual practice, working on our skills. The first real drum song I taught my sixth graders was *Heartbeat*. After several sessions introducing the "sit down and play'ems" and learning the four basic drum strokes, students would be ready for a real rhythm.

Put that iconic notation on the board, teaching students what drum strokes match up with the symbols. Draw eight boxes and all count them in rhythm. Fill in *dum* strokes one box at a time while counting eight boxes ("Dum 2 3 4 5 6 7 8"). When all *dum* strokes are in, add the *tak-uh* strokes, then the *tak*, and finally the *pa*. Continue counting the eight boxes as you go. Use the same technique to fill in the second row as written, or create complementary rhythms<sup>7</sup> with students for both top rows.



For a more complete description of drum songs, box notation, drum circles, and drumming technique, refer to Bill Matthews's great book, *Conga Joy*.

5 Schneider, Hans. *Carl Orff The Schulwerk*, page 17.

6 Judah Lauder, Chris. *Hand Drums on the Move*, page iv.

7 Judah Lauder, Chris. *to drum*, page 34.

## Small Hand Percussion

Small Hand Percussion instruments, generally in four families (woods, metals, rattles, drums), provide initial experiences with timbre. Sometimes referred to as unpitched or untuned, these terms, though traditional and widely used, are a little misleading. All of these instruments have indefinite pitch, in most cases generally high, medium, or low. The size and shape of the resonating cavity and the substance of the instrument affect the pitch. Large instruments are lower, small ones higher. Examples include the various sizes of wood blocks (temple blocks), triangles, hanging cymbals, and hand or frame drums. Larger drums with variable pitches include the conga drum family, frame drums, tom toms, and roto toms.

Smaller hand percussion pitch can be changed by using a different size or weight. Of the whole grouping, these smallest child-friendly instruments can best be described as variably pitched or tuned; however, they all have a distinct color of sound or timbre. Creative combinations or use of each unique timbre enhances every musical activity, song, or piece.

Small hand percussion instruments don't always fit easily in a category, such as digeredoo, vibraslap, ratchet, gong, cuica (Latin friction drum), and tambourine. Exciting, mystical, and exotic, these sounds inspire creative expression in children.

Combine all of these instruments in captivating combinations both as accompaniment or beautiful sound carpets, metered and un-metered. Create interesting grooves, layered ostinati, and simple accompaniments for movement, singing, and barred instrument orchestrations.

### Beat It!

Brent Holl

The musical score for "Beat It!" is written in 6/8 time. It features five parts: Speech Tutti, High Drum, Low Drum, SP, and L Dr. The lyrics are: "On-ward and up-ward and o-ver and un-der and down and a-round and be-hind." and "Beat it! Beat it! There is no place you can hide!". The score includes a large watermark "Beat It! Path Publications" in the background.

*Beat It!* introduces all of the small hand percussion instruments typically used in the classroom. The couplet works as a refrain of a rondo with each family of unpitched instruments invited to do question/answer couplets in-between repetitions making a chain rondo (A B A C A D . . . etc.). The steady pulse drum beat can be adapted according to the skill level of the players and played on one medium and one large drum or just one large drum by varying its tone.

## Speech and Rhythm

The human voice, the most personal timbre and the primary musical instrument, communicates wants and needs beginning at birth. Cries for attention and communications of delight, fright, and joy first take flight in song as the need for expression grows developmentally along with the ability to formulate syllables and words to form phrases and sentences. From these elemental forms (chains of words, phrases and sentences), distinct pitch and rhythm are added to create melody. Vocalizing from song to speech fulfills an internal desire for expression of the human spirit.

First we sing, then we speak and chant. Imitating sounds around us, singing occurs before speech. As Jos Wuytack describes,

When a person is delighted, she expresses herself vocally. When this expression becomes insufficient, she then draws out syllables in the words. When long syllables are no longer sufficient, she adds exclamations and sighs. When more expression becomes necessary, she unconsciously begins to gesture, move her hands, and dance with her feet. True melody, as a means of expression, shares emotion, sentiment, and soul. With melody, specifically melodic intervals, we express our true inner beauty.<sup>1</sup>

### Einstein

“Anyone who’s never made a mistake, has never tried anything new.” Albert Einstein

An-y-one who's nev-er made a mis-take, has nev-er tried an-y-thing new!

Sayings, definitions, proverbs, and quotes like this have a natural rhythm, easy and fun to find. Speak them using varying pitch and dynamics or break up the rhythm in aleatoric style. Continuous variations in articulation, pitch, duration, and rhythm add to the artistry. Begin with one speaker and add others one at a time in canon after two measures, all speaking at various dynamic levels.

Add movement stepping the beat and travel through the space listening for others speaking the same part. When the four groups are established, crescendo until signaled by the teacher. All scatter while chatting amongst selves improvising a conversation about making mistakes and trying out new things.

### The Bulldog and the Skunk

A bull-dog can whip a skunk, but some-times it's just not worth it!

Bark, sniff, chase him a-round. Bark, sniff, chase him a-round.

Nope! You can't come in!

Speak the text dramatically often to the point of nonsense, overdoing the dynamics, elongating the syllables, and beginning and ending *ad libitum*. If not used to perform the piece, this technique successfully warms up the students' voices or introduces the activity. This whimsical proverb, when

1 Wuytack, Jos. *Musica Activa Volume 2 - Melodic Expression*, page 6.

## Expansion of Form

In 1963 Carl Orff quoted: "Every phase of Schulwerk will always provide stimulation for new independent growth; therefore, it is never conclusive and settled, but always developing, always growing, always flowing."

In spite of this statement, Carl Orff consciously decided to keep Schulwerk clear of everything topical and of every fashionable trend.

I was more open-minded. Not only do I incorporate the "old gold" of the folk rhymes, the basic motifs of human existence, ballads, and fairy-tales, but also the humorous, naive versifying of action-songs, exploration of universal topics of concern, i.e., ecology, world peace, racial injustice and poetry, songs, drama of the world of today, i.e., Muppets®, Teen-aged Ninja Turtles®, computers.<sup>1</sup>

Wuytack's incredible interest in helping us make the connection from Elemental Music to music history and world culture is one of his greatest contributions to the *materia substantialis* of Orff Schulwerk. In his advanced classes, Wuytack built upon the elemental forms of the Schulwerk by including Classical Forms from the Renaissance to the modern era in his teaching. Master classes always included theme and variations, sonatina, chaconne (passacaglia) as well as Renaissance (pavane, galliard), Baroque (allemande, gigue, courante, sarabande, rondeau), and Classical (minuet) dance forms. In our recorder classes as well, all the Renaissance and Baroque dance forms provided material for practice and ensemble work. Because the recorder has its roots in the early Renaissance, learning to play the instrument almost required the inclusion of the dance forms in the repertoire.

### Rondo to Sonata

Expansion of simple rondo and song forms leads inevitably to the sonata form and its simpler, lighter version, the sonatina. Classical sonatina form, traditionally used for instruction, only resembles a rondo because the A Section comes back after an expanded B Section. Lacking the presence of a C Section makes it closer to a bar form, AABA. The expanded B Section, also referred to as the Fantasia or Development, allows the composer to explore the main themes in an improvisational style. The Fantasia and Recapitulation move through related keys, ending with a Coda.

### Rondo Vivo

ABACA Coda Arr. Brent Holl

The musical score is written for five parts: AG (Alto Recorder), SX (Soprano Recorder), AX (Alto Recorder), BX (Bass Recorder), and CBX (Cello/Bass). The music is in common time (C) and features a rondo form with sections A, B, A, C, A, and a Coda. The A sections are marked with circled 'A' and the B section is marked with 'a:'. The Coda section is marked with 'Coda'. The score includes fingerings (i, VII, i) for the CBX part.

1 Wuytack, Jos. *Updating Carl Orff's Educational Ideas*. Carl Orff Canada Journal, 1993.



*Orchestration per contrastem* is fully displayed in *Rondo Vivo*. The A Section features xylophones carrying the theme and primary accompaniment parts. The B Section modulates to the relative major (C) and showcases metallophones taking the accompaniment with the alto xylophone introducing a new thematic idea. The C Section theme combines the soprano metallophone and alto glockenspiel timbres. The short, sweet Coda uses a simple motif from the A Section theme with a perfect cadence.

The themes<sup>2</sup> in each section are short motifs taken from several pieces for barred instruments in Keetman's *Music for Children* following Wuytack's admonition to use these historical models to inspire new pieces for children. The themes were selected and orchestrated with the help of a seventh grade Orff Ensemble over several days of intense, yet fun collaboration.

## Rondo Allegro

### ABA Interlude CA

Arr. Brent Holl

*Fine*

The musical score is for a 2/4 time signature and features seven staves: GL (Glockenspiel), SX (Soprano Xylophone), AX (Alto Xylophone), Hanging Cymbal, Tamb. (Tambourine), BX (Bass Xylophone), and CBX (Contra Bass Bars). The score includes a circled 'A' at the beginning and a 'd:' marking at the bottom left. The music is in 2/4 time and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The same class helped select and orchestrate themes from Keetman's *Music for Children*. Similar to *Rondo Vivo* in style and in the use of *orchestration per contrastem*, *Rondo Allegro* doesn't have a Coda, but an energetic interlude featuring hand drums extends the rondo form to set up the C Section. The xylophones build on that energy with a new theme played in canon at the octave with even more energy from the Alberti bass pattern with the simple broken chord bordun on Contra Bass Bars.

## Sonatina

Sonatina literally means "little Sonata." While not a full sonata form, sonatina form contains similar elements including an Exposition with several themes repeated, a short Development, and transitions and modulations to related keys before returning to the main themes in a Recapitulation, finally ending with a Coda.

The sonatina form as a tool for instruction works with advanced students thoroughly grounded in the simpler song forms and rondos. Students are ready for key changes, expanded themes, and more complex orchestrations. Sonatinas (and the two previous rondos) were always played in the style of a symphony orchestra. I used a real baton, just like Leonard Bernstein. For many students, being

<sup>2</sup> Keetman, Gunild, and Carl Orff. *Music for Children Volume 4*, pages 94-95.

"conducted" was a brand new experience.

This style demands all of a student's listening skill together with the complete focus of the entire ensemble. In orchestral style, each instrument voice carries its own unique melodic or harmonic function. Themes and accompaniments are shared as they bounce around and through the ensemble. Students must hear the surrounding voices and know how their own part fits into the orchestration. Paired instruments of the same timbre imitate the style of a classical orchestra.

At this stage of training, provide individual instrument parts for solo practice. Supervised solo practice time is important as these pieces were prepared for performance. As students practiced their parts, often with a partner paired on the same instrument voice, I pointed out the function of their part as either theme or accompaniment. Finally assembling all the parts and playing them together a section at a time were special moments for the class.

### Sonatina de día soleado<sup>3</sup>

Exposition - Theme 1 Jos Wuytack

GL

AX

AM

Tamb.

BX

CBX

C:

*Sonatina de día soleado* is one of many sonatinas for Orff instruments composed by Jos Wuytack and shared with his Master Classes at the Memphis Orff Institute. Sonatinas were always presented near the end of "Form Day" to illustrate the basic Sonata form.

With classic eight-measure phrase structure, the piece moves steadily through the Exposition. Theme 1 in the tonic is fully presented, followed by a four-measure transition to a four-measure Modulation. This piece builds on the phrase structures presented in the elemental Song Forms with its composite micro forms. The Exposition continues with the presentation of Theme 2, now in the key of G, the dominant of the initial key of C. Theme 2, a single musical period with a second ending, sets up the return to Theme 1 as the entire Exposition is repeated.

3 Translation - *Sonatina for a Sunny Day*

## Theme and Variations

Jos Wuytack often composed variations on a theme to demonstrate a multitude of orchestration possibilities with the Orff instrumentarium. He referred to these possibilities as “*orchestration per contrastem*.” He meant that contrasting orchestrations could be built on a theme by manipulating the elements of music (melody, rhythm, meter, timbre, and form) to create thematically similar pieces. He made a new Theme and Variations for us each year in Master Class. His fascinating theme choices included *Streets of Laredo*, *Happy Birthday*, *Au Claire de la Luna*, and *London Bridge*.

The three types of variations are Ornamental, Contrapuntal, and Character. Wuytack used Character and Ornamental variations for most of his examples because he viewed them as the most child- friendly. With Character Variations, subtle and not so subtle adjustments can be made to the theme in the basic elements. The following variations review orchestration practices in functional harmony and timbre possible with the Orff instrumentarium. Each piece is based on a melodic fragment, a stylistic rhythm, a new meter, an ornamented melody, an orchestration, or a new harmonization resulting in the original theme taking on character.

### Flop-Eared Mule - Theme

Perform AA BB, etc. Stop on last A.

Appalachian Folk Tune

Staff A: C C G7 C C  
 V SR  
 C: Flop-eared mule, flop-eared mule, flop-eared, flop-eared, flop-eared mule! mule!

Staff B: G G D7 G G  
 V SR  
 G: Mule, mule, mule, mule, flop - eared, flop - eared, flop - eared mule! mule!

Phyllis Gaskins, an old time musician and superb Galax-style mountain dulcimer player, calls this a "two-key tune." Mostly played as a fiddle tune without the vocal, lyrics are easy to add and often become part of the tune spontaneously. Most any combination of words with the "ti ti ta" rhythm (♪♪♪) can become a verse on its own! Some verses invented by my students at Stuarts Draft Middle School included Corn Beef Hash, Garden Hose, Old Guitar, and Old Hound Dog.

Accompany this song with your favorite folk instruments. Your students could play their ukuleles, but adding a fiddle, banjo, dulcimer, or guitar makes it an authentic performance.

This collection of arrangements was inspired by the children's book, *Husker the Mule* by Codi Valley-Mills and illustrated by Teri McTighe. The variations follow Husker's journey on a mountain trail camping trip to the top of a mountain, overcoming his fear of heights.

## Flop-Eared Mule - Variation 1

Appalachian Folk Tune  
Arr. Brent Holl

(A) Perform AA BB etc. Stop after final A

V  
Flop-eared mule, flop-eared mule, flop-eared, flop-eared, flop-eared mule!

SX

AG

AX

Spoons  
I I V I I

BX

C:

Variation 1 is a simple harmonization of the tune for the Orff Instrumentarium. The doubled melody by the soprano xylophone imitates the fiddle. The alto glockenspiel plays a form of paraphony known as a "skeleton melody." Only chord tones are played a third above the melody, leaving the rhythmic interest to the soprano xylophone. The alto and bass xylophones demonstrate a classic I-V harmonization. The most interesting instrument in the arrangement has to be the "stuff." Students choose a small hand percussion instrument or create an instrument or instruments of their own to create a humorous effect. It's great fun!

\*Instruments playing the melody always appear on the top line of the score.

## On the Way Up - Variation 2

Brent Holl

(A)

SR

Triangle  
(on repeat)

Claves  
I I V I I

BX

G:

An ornamented melody and a change of meter in measures 3 and 8 make this an interesting variation. Experiment with and play various combinations of instruments. Add the claves and triangle individually as the song repeats in the A Section. Switch to cymbal and/or bass drum in the B Section.

The bass xylophone plays an interesting variation of the simple moving bordun, also known in the piano world as an Alberti bass, lending the accompaniment a feeling of motion or moving up. The B

## Chaconne

As a form, the chaconne or passacaglia is typically in a slow triple meter with melodic, rhythmic variations over a ground bass.

Musical historians continue to argue about the similarities and differences in these two early forms. For our (Orff Schulwerk) purposes, we assume they mean pretty much the same; a set of free variations that are created over a repeated bass pattern of several bars (which may generate a repeated harmonic progression). These variations tend to become more intricate as the bass pattern (usually in 3/4 time) repeats.<sup>4</sup>

In Wuytack's explanation and historically in Orff Schulwerk, both terms are synonymous but refer to almost any piece with layered melodic and rhythmic elements over an harmonic ostinato or ground bass in any meter. In performance, layer the individual parts, that is, each part enters in turn. The order of entry is usually bottom to top. An well-known example in classical literature is the famous *Canon in D* by Johann Pachelbel.

Generally, the various overlaid melodies occur with a solo instrument playing a soaring improvisation above. The element of improvisation can be extended to two or more instruments as desired. I've included several types of chaconne, all featuring a repeating layered harmonic progression that supports solo improvisations.

### Rain on the Water

Brent Holl

The musical score for "Rain on the Water" is presented in five staves. The top staff (AG) is the vocal line. The second staff (SX SM) is for xylophone and metallophone. The third staff (AX AM) is for another xylophone and metallophone. The fourth staff (BX BM) is for a third xylophone and metallophone. The bottom staff (CBX) is the bass line, which is a repeating ground bass pattern. The harmonic progression is indicated below the bass line: I, V, ii7, V, ii7, V, I. The score is divided into two systems by a double bar line. The first system has four measures, and the second system has three measures. The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Instrument doubling is the most notable element of this chaconne. In each of the middle three parts, a xylophone couples with a metallophone of the same range. The dry xylophone sound provides a clear attack on each note, a chuff effect. The ringing metallophone sustains each note, a particularly important effect in a slow moving chaconne.

<sup>4</sup> Calentropio, Steven. *Exploring the Developmental Forms* presented at the 2016 American Orff Schulwerk Association Conference in Atlantic City.



## Epilogue

Contributing editor and consultant for this book, Charles Tighe, had a professor who questioned why anyone would teach the "ersatz" music found in the *Schulwerk* – that is, the pre-intellectual music found in the original volumes of *Music for Children*. Building on what Orff says below is essential – it is what the teacher and students add to the music that gives it meaning – the creativity of movement, dance, speech, and improvisation that makes the Elemental relevant and appropriate for children. According to Orff's own description, Elemental pieces do not stand on their own as complete compositions.

I began to see things in the right perspective. "Elemental" was the password, applicable to music itself, to the instruments, to forms of speech and movement. What does it mean? The Latin word *elementarius*, from which it is derived means pertaining to the elements, primeval, basic." What then is Elemental Music? Never music alone, but music connected with movement, dance and speech - not to be listened to, meaningful only in active participation. Elemental Music is pre-intellectual, it lacks great form, it contents itself with simple sequential structures, ostinatos, and miniature rondos. It is earthy, natural, almost a physical activity. It can be learned and enjoyed by anyone. It is fitting for children.<sup>1</sup>

As students mature, how do we guide them to approach music beyond the Elemental? Expanding the "great forms" creates a bridge transitioning from Orff's Elemental into the key relationships and motific development of the Sonatina, the embrace of classical forms (fugue, symphony, concerto, and sonata) as well as the stylized forms of folk, jazz, blues, ragtime, that formed the building blocks of modern American musical culture. The pieces in the two volumes of *Sounds Abound* are founded in the Elemental, but expand the boundaries of Orff's original Elemental concepts building on the teachings of Jos Wuytack who wrote.

The timeless character of the *Schulwerk* lies in its quality of being elemental and pre-artistic. For Carl Orff the models in his five volumes make an inexhaustible arsenal of elementary musical and speech forms. But this timeless power does not exclude the possibility of a free and creative adaptation for the present day. Exactly the opposite is true. **The model character of the *Schulwerk* demands as a principle that the examples be constantly reworked in improvisation and in re-creation** (emphasis added).<sup>2</sup>

Above all, the spirit and energy of this book remains consistent with Orff's admonition, "Never music alone but always connected with movement, dance and speech."

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- 1 From a speech, given by Professor Dr. Carl Orff at the opening of the Orff Institute in Salzburg on the 25th October 1963, published by B. Schotts, Mainz in the Orff Institute Jahtbuch 1963. Republished in the Music Educators Journal, Volume 49, Issue 5, pages 69-74. 1963.
  - 2 Wuytack, Jos. *Updating Carl Orff's Educational Ideas*. Carl Orff Canada Journal, 1993.

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*The timbre of the instruments is “extraordinary in its range of sounds.” “. . . (T)hey can delight, frighten, calm, or they can excite, exalt into regions of ecstasy and mystery. . . they have a magical character.”*

*Jos Wuytack*

