



University Mozarteum Salzburg

Carl-Orff-Institute for Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy

*A concept for using the insight and experiences gained at  
the Orff-Institute in my future pedagogical work*

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## Introduction

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I attended my first Summer Course at the Orff Institut in 2005 and this is where the Special Course was promoted. I immediately could see it was an opportunity to totally immerse myself in Orff Schulwerk and learn from Orff pedagogues. I finally realised my eight year dream in October, 2014.

I was introduced to the Orff Schulwerk approach, at WAOSA's inaugural conference in 1994 where I first met Christoph Maubach. In 1996, Jane Frazee was invited by the Victorian Orff Schulwerk Association to present Level 1 and 2. I attended and completed Level 2 and feel privileged that I was able to complete this with her, considering her depth of knowledge and experience in Orff Schulwerk. I was very excited to return to Perth and share all that I had learnt. I told Jane that I was keen to do this and her comment was something like: "It is a wonderful thing to share, but make sure you have someone who has a good understanding of the Schulwerk so the group isn't led by ignorance." This comment has made me respectful of good quality Orff training and I promoted that when I was President of the West Australian Orff Schulwerk Association and also applied it to myself. I attended Level 3 in Sydney with Arvida Steen. Richard Gill, Carol Richards and Christoph Maubach were our presenters for Level 4 in Sydney, 2004. In 2005, after attending the Summer Course I travelled to St Thomas University, St Paul, Minnesota where I completed Level 3. So coming to the Special Course, was the next logical step.

## My Aims

During the Special course my aims were to

- Gain a deeper understanding of the pedagogy and history.
- Begin to learn to apply Orff Schulwerk in Special Education.
- Work intensively on music concept skills
- Experience and understand the importance of movement and dance in the approach.

## Chapter 1 – The Special Course-*highlights and insights.*

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### Pedagogy

In pedagogy we should consider who we are teaching and how we acquire, construct and participate using the knowledge.

How do people learn? This thought-provoking question was given to us by Andrea Sangiorgio during our sessions with him. It is important question if we want to deliver purposeful material to our students. Andrea introduced to us the “Acquisition Metaphor” to acquire knowledge, “Construction Metaphor” to use the knowledge and “Participation Metaphor” to use the knowledge with others, in a community or a teaching situation.

#### **Acquisition Metaphor**

If the learner is able to acquire knowledge, does the environment and situation need to be conducive? In many teaching situations this is not considered and I believe it is important to have a conducive environment in order to achieve a positive outcome. Another consideration is the learning style of the child. In institutional learning the student gains knowledge from the teacher through a variety of methods. The knowledge gained can satisfy the learner or frustrate them, depending on his or her learning style. Each student has the desire to understand and to feel comfortable as an independent learner. In the arts especially, we must consider the learner as a whole person. Imitation and then exploration of new knowledge should make the acquisition of this a fluid and natural process.

Herman Regner <sup>1</sup>

*“From the beginning Orff did not think of music education only as a school of reproduction and interpretation.*

*Turning towards music will be favourably influenced when the encounter with music does not merely result from a methodical analysis of the work of art, but rather when the child succeeds in taking part in shaping of a melody, the making up of an accompaniment or in the creation of a simple, musical dialogue. By this means discovering music and understanding music become not only cognitive task, but lead to an attitude that determines the entire personality.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Herman Regner 1975 p 188 Carl Orff's Educational Ideas. Texts on Theory and Orff Schulwerk Practice.

Our teaching process takes on a deeper dimension, when we can share our knowledge, acquired from our experiences in our lives and or in this context our experience using the Orff Schulwerk approach. The importance of the depth of knowledge and understanding is important when imparting knowledge to the learner.

An example of this I experienced in a lesson about 5/4 metre with Ari Glage:

*Ari began the Acquisition process when he transferred the information from his head to ours. With no talking he demonstrated a movement pattern and used a word to focus the stresses of the 5 beat pattern. He didn't say anything else, just the word and continued to move and we followed him. He started to create different words patterns that focussed on off-beats. He gestured us to imitate the patterns whilst continuing to move from side to side. When he began this new activity, he simply encouraged us to stay with the initial word of the 5 beat pattern and movement if we needed to keep internalising it. We could join in with the off-beat patterns when we felt confident. The information was learnt through clear demonstration whilst observing and with this success we acquired the knowledge. As learners we demonstrated an understanding of this information by copying. The acquisition of the information was different for each learner depending on their previous experience and emotional state. We were able to work independently to acquire the knowledge when we felt comfortable with the initial information.*

### **Construction Metaphor.**

The Teacher considers the learners and then allows them to explore and manipulate the information they have acquired to make it their own, which in turn gives them a holistic understanding. As Orff Schulwerk music educators we are able to easily assist the learner to be fulfilled and satisfied if we have carefully observed them during the acquisition phase through exploration and improvisation

*In a dance class, with Doris, we were asked to consider some part of our body, for example our core, then she asked us to focus on it and let it 'lead' us around the room. Firstly, we moved through space and then at a lower level and then a higher level. She had more ideas to make the movement more complex or specific, with specific terms of a quality or different space element. Using this knowledge or information we constructed a movement piece or choreography.*

## Participation Metaphor

Considering the learner and the variety of ways they learn, the participation would also be varied and very individual for each person. Different learning styles need different amounts of time to absorb the information and then make sense of it before feeling secure enough to participate with others. So perhaps the lifelong journey of gaining knowledge for each individual will move from learning alone and then with others through comparisons.

Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther<sup>2</sup> in his article about Learning Enthusiastically:

*Generally speaking, we think “learning” means cognitive, formal learning. We tend to associate “learning” with studying and memorising vocabulary, factual information of all kinds, mathematical formulae and so on……. Whatever the learning experience, if it is to be successful, there has to be emotional activation. The most enjoyable activation we know of is “enthusiasm”.*

### *Insights*

*Specific pedagogical instruction and theory given to us by Andrea S, Doug, Sofia, Soili, Barbara, Shirley has been outstanding and definitely the highlight of the course for me. It has been wonderful to observe different teaching styles and consider the point of view of the teacher, whether I agreed or not. Initially I was reminded about considering structure and clear outcome of objectives. I have been disappointed a few times when working with very experienced teachers to find that the process was lacking and the sessions were very teacher driven. In the last part of semester two I would have liked to have had less experience and a mixture of experience and theory, like Andrea S idea of theory and practice. After so many wonderful sessions about experience, more time to work on theory would have been beneficial to me.*

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gerald Hüther, Learning Enthusiastically.

## Special and Inclusive Education

“Elemental Music is “not just a hearing experience, but something more embracing, namely an integration of motor, visual and acoustic forms of experience, which still remain functional even after the loss of one component” <sup>3</sup>

The application of Elemental Music for people with special needs or in an inclusive setting can be very successful. It can cater for people with motor, visual and acoustic challenges and is a very important part of their education, especially music education. To motivate, encourage and inspire people and provide physical and emotional benefits with Elemental music will make their lives more fulfilling and meaningful and is naturally an inclusive approach.

Georg Feuser <sup>4</sup>describes ‘handicapped’ as:

*“The term “handicap” is used to describe the social and economic circumstances for individuals who differ from society’s expectations because of a physical or psychological impairment in terms of development, attainment or potential to contribute to the economy”*

The constant question in society is what is normal and what are special needs? My work in the Mental Health field has certainly shown me the judgement and pre-conceived ideas when society is confronted with someone with special needs. Especially when the special need is camouflaged with mental health illnesses like depression. The well trained and insightful Orff teacher is certainly equipped to be sensitive to the clients and their needs using the approach. The added responsibility is to attain more specific information about the disability and use this information to design programs to meet the needs of the client.

I observed Wolfgang Stange and how he demonstrated the way he considered the whole person. He worked with their abilities and sensitivities, leading them towards a positive outcome assuming that they were capable and had many abilities. He did not focus on the disabilities and guided them non-verbally. They seemed to have a safe and fruitful experience.

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<sup>3</sup> Shirley Salmon. Special Course Notes 2014.15

<sup>4</sup> Feuser Georg, 1997. Thesis: Inclusive Education

The previous metaphors of Acquisition, Construction and Participation happened in a short, succinct sequences with much success.

### *Insights*

*Shirley Salmon has given me a great deal of information about the history and application of Orff Schulwerk in this area, and also the leading pedagogues in this field around the world. I was aware of only one text about Orff Music Therapy written by Gertrude Orff. I was unaware of the work carried out by Willem Keller and especially that he was contemporary of Orff. I'm really interested in this area, and plan to research the work of other leaders in this field. Claus Bang (music and musical speech therapy with deaf children), Karin Schumacher (Therapy with children with autism and associated disorders), Prof.Dr.Georg Feuser (International authority/researcher in Inclusive Education), Karl Hofmarksrichter (Music with deaf children) and Victoria Sherbourne (Developmental movement), are some I can name.*

*The experience with the Lebenshilfe has been very important for me too, as a participant and once as a teacher. I felt very comfortable being with this group of people and was able to see the benefit of the music and movement education and also how I imagined I could work with them. I have had a limited experience working with children with autism but now this experience encourages me to continue to find ways to learn more and do more.*

*Music therapy has always been an interest of mine, so I was excited to learn about the work that has been carried out with Orff Schulwerk Music and Movement in this area.*

*A question Shirley Salmon asked in a session was for us to list our disabilities. I could think of many, but it highlighted that we all have disabilities and in turn special needs. So to categorise people into normal or special needs because of an evident physical or intellectual handicap is very short sighted.*



## Elemental Music and Dance opportunities for people in advanced age

Just as I was surprised about the work carried out in the area of Special Needs and Inclusion in Orff Schulwerk, so I was with the work done with people in their advanced age.

All the principals of Elemental Music are, of course, available to all and its use with the aged is a perfect solution for many of their physical and emotional needs. The balance to use material with respect to the age of the participants is of paramount importance. The activities must have clear musical structure and purpose and not be too childish.

*“Very easily and without violence, music opens the doors to the soul”<sup>5</sup>* (Sophie Scholl) is a quote that reminds us that we are not to consider just the physical and emotional needs but also the deeper, possible spiritual aspect.

Viewing the DVD “I have become young again”<sup>6</sup> I learned more about the techniques and benefits of elemental music with people in their advanced age group.

A quote from participants about their experience after a session says a lot of the intrinsic benefits:

*“The circle is really wonderful, and everyone has their place, and if a seat is free, ah....someone is missing again. And when we are complete we are really delighted.”*

*“Here we get an impulse for movements and of course we try to imitate them in some way, happiness passes through our whole body, allows us to forget the daily life, and feel no pain and lingers on afterwards at home in our room and frees some time from the wonderful feeling, well no, it doesn’t free from the feeling, but it gives a wonderful feeling.”<sup>7</sup>*

Socialisation is important in all ages and all situations. At this stage of life where contact with the outside world, friends and family is often difficult it is important to provide an opportunity for this. Using welcome songs, dances or creative movement for the clients to communicate with gestures, partner work and imitation provides a non-threatening and unobtrusive way to offer socialisation. The quotes above demonstrate the individual’s pleasure and the effect on

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<sup>5</sup> Christine Schonherr, Special Course handout p1.2014

<sup>6</sup> Participants in DVD: I have become young again. Orff Institut

<sup>7</sup> Participants in DVD: I have become young again. Orff Institut

the group. The unique situation for these people also is that people die and they need to be emotionally supported. Another benefit of a lively and purposeful music and dance program.

*“Dance is a medium that supports the individual person, brightens the atmosphere, allows non- verbal communication to develop and intensifies musical experience”<sup>8</sup>.*

### *Insights*

*Christine Schöenherr gave us a wonderful experience of the work she has done with the aged during our sessions with her. Her attention to detail and dedication to good quality Elemental Music and Movement examples demonstrated how successful a program of this type can be.*

*I attended a session at the centre where she works and was impressed to see the responsiveness of the people and her enthusiasm to demonstrate, encourage and motivate the group.*

*I have cared for many aged family members so have some idea of their limitations and frustrations. Especially their frustration of losing their physical capabilities. The information and activities I have learnt from Christine will enable me to begin a similar program.*

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<sup>8</sup> Shirley Salmon. DVD: I have come young again Orff Insitut

## Movement and Dance

- Dorothee Gunther <sup>9</sup> asks us to consider:

*Movement in relation to physical world.*

*Movement in relation to play*

*Movement in relation to cultural customs*

*Movement in relation to sport*

*Movement in relation to dance and drama*

- Barbara Haselbach states: <sup>10</sup>

*Movement is a change of material in time and space through energy.*

- Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther<sup>11</sup> states in his article: *How Individuals learn*

*“The most important learning experiences come to us, essentially, by way of our bodies – which means that learning is always an experience of the whole body. At the same time, every learning experience involves emotions. We are only able to learn when the so-called emotional centres in the brain are activated.*

Ommo GRUPE<sup>12</sup>:

Distinguishes between 4 interdependent dimensions of movement in everyday life:

*The Instrumental Dimension*

*The Exploration Dimension*

*The Social Dimension*

*The Personal Dimension*

The statements above give a wide range of opinions about ways to consider of movement and dance. Do educators generally know or consider the above ? Are they neglecting an important

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<sup>9</sup> Dorothee Günther (1962):Der Tanz als Bewegungsphänomen

<sup>10</sup>B Haselbach Special Course notes 2014.2015 P 1

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Gerald Hüther, Learning Enthusiastically. Online article

<sup>12</sup> Ommo Gruppe Was ist und was bedeutet Bewegung? 1976

area of the arts? The Orff Schulwerk approach is sensitive to these statements and provides a platform for these combinations to be considered.

*Dorothee Gunther<sup>13</sup> talks about the natural joy and exploration of movement in the small child and it is a rhythmic act. They are “driven” by movements “with no set purpose and where it can used whatever rhythm it pleases: hopping and jumping where there are no obstacles, running where there is no hurry, turning round and round until it becomes dizzy, taking unusual steps, walking with crossed or “twisted” feet, balancing on the big toes, and all the large and small, the high and low, the racing and shambling, the quiet and the loud steps this it does no “need “at all.”*

*“Yet is does all this as if it were being “driven” until the “good education” that tells it to behave, or in the uneventfulness of monotonously long days break it out of the habit or slowly cramp the movement. “.*

What foresight and wisdom Gunther shares here. There has been little change in the addition of dance in schools and its structured format in Australia. Thankfully, because of her work with Orff, the Schulwerk is alive and well in many countries around the world, so for those children where this a good music and dance program there is an opportunity to experience this elemental form. Education carried out in Australia for teachers to be trained in Orff Schulwerk can offer children access to elemental dance and movement.

If all educators could consider all of the above quotes and information, e.g. “How do we move in relation to the physical world for example?” the children could be instructed to explore spatial awareness and which may result in a respect for personal space. This is a very important area that I believe is ignored in music and movement education today. There is a lack of recognition of exploration of our bodies in space and peoples’ personal space is often invaded. So as educators, we have a responsibility to include movement activities in a music and movement program to enlighten and encourage. We must not forget the primitive, elemental forms of movement. This is one example of many I could have used.

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<sup>13</sup> D. Gunther Texts on Theory and Practice p 108 , 1962

## *Insights*

*I didn't learn to dance formally as a child and at the age of thirty was introduced to creative music and dance by Christoph Maubach. The skills I have gained from studying with both Robyn Staveley and David Spurgeon have enabled me to understand and benefit from the ideas being presented here. Coming to the Insitut where there is a major focus on Movement and Dance has been very beneficial. Andrea Östertag suggested we write a movement diary expressing how we felt after each session with her so we could see if we had progressed. It was a great suggestion as I have been able to look back and know that I definitely have. I have gained a lot of technique and understanding how to use my body when taking part in creative movement and dance sessions at Levels training, conferences and special dance courses so it has been fantastic to come here and have two classes per week in technique, choreography and composition. The extra classes with Christa Coogan have been a positive contrast to the regular classes as they added different elements, and different teaching styles that combined choreography and technique. The main benefits for me were being able to explore movement in more depth with partners in areas of trust, expression, creativity, non-verbal exploration; internalising metre, pulse and rhythmic motives. After experiencing these concepts through my body I had success whilst singing and playing. The flexibility, balance and the enjoyment of mastering movement sequences was also a positive experience. It demonstrated to me that the link between music making and movement is invaluable.*

*The practical sessions were very beneficial to me as were the sessions with Barbara Haselbach on Dance and Movement didactics. Her depth of knowledge in this area taught me a great deal and helped me to distinguish the range of movement possibilities and the range of musical skill that can be learnt with dance and movement.*

*Barbara Haselbach was able to share years of exploring, teaching dance and creative movement with Orff approach which has been invaluable. Thank you.*

## Chapter 2 – New ideas and their development

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My approach to development of new ideas and works after attending this course will be:

- Links between music and movement.
- The quality of the material used.
- Use of all modal tonalities for all ages.

## Chapter 3 – My future pedagogical work

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My work with Orff Schulwerk recently has been based around Institutionalized learning, in a flexible and self-directed setting. Previously to this, working in a community school where the philosophy was child centred gave me a freedom to easily use the Orff approach.

The experience of making music with these children allowed me to further develop a self-directed service to provide elemental music and dance to private clients.

My work here at the Institut has reminded me about my desire to work in the field of special needs and also given me new areas to focus on in music and movement for the elderly and a different emphasis with early childhood groups.

*“All early mother games-child games are elemental music, movement and language games that connect to pre-natal experiences. They are multi-sensory which has an effect on the child through the mother’s emotional participation”<sup>14</sup>*

I have previously run small studio classes for 3 – 5 year olds and 6-8 year olds which were very successful. I now plan to focus on 3-5, under 3 year olds and pregnant women.

This comment by Orff is very motivating:

*“Musical instruction for a child does not begin in the music lesson. Playtime is the starting point. One should not come to music – it should arise of itself. What is important is that the child be allowed to play, undisturbed, expressing the internal externally. Word and sound must arise simultaneously from improvisatory, rhythmic play.”<sup>15</sup>*

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<sup>14</sup> Schumacher, Karin. 2014.15 Play songs and Inclusion. 2014.15 Special Course Notes

<sup>15</sup> C. Orff (1932) Texts on Theory and Practice, p 68.

Immediately when I return I will teach 3<sup>rd</sup> Education students at the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle. I, along with a colleague have been using an Orff based program there since 2007. I have written the text which gives a good overall understanding of the approach. It is difficult to cover everything in 13 sessions, followed by a written exam. I would like to further develop these sessions to include more of the pedagogical ideas. Movement is an area that is probably more accessible to these students than music alone. The session with these students are workshops, not lectures which is very beneficial.

Orff also has comment on this group:

*“Working out musical fundamentals with adult non-professional leads us into a quite different world. Here we encounter greater difficulties and the teaching is more complicated than with unsophisticated children; for we seldom encounter unsophisticated adults; they have already been spoilt for out purposes by the music they have heard, let alone what kind of music”(1932)<sup>16</sup>*

A very relevant comment still today. The music available to these students and the way the want to use it has probably not changed since Orff made this statement. The University was very excited to introduce our program and continues to support it, so with my new knowledge it can hopefully provide more specific knowledge to reach more children.

The West Australian Orff Association have asked me to run a workshop and share some of the things I have learnt here, especially as I am the first West Australian to have attended the course. In January, 2016 I will travel to Hobart to present at the ANCOS National Conference.

Long terms goals include starting a school for children from 3 – 5 where music and movement is an important part of their daily routine.

Develop a program for the Autism Association of Western Australia –Early Intervention Program.

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<sup>16</sup> Orff,C. Thoughts about Music with Children and Non-Professionals. P 72. Text on Theory and Practice of Orff- Schulwerk.



I hope that ideas from my work here will benefit the students in the different settings I have suggested. This will be the result of the experience here. I have learned from new colleagues and mentors from Europe and other parts of the world. My work at the university will be enhanced especially as I have been able to view teachers working in Austria. I would like to support the notion that every child in Australia should receive a music and dance education and make sure our work at Notre Dame University supports this philosophy.

## Chapter 4 – In summary

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### The Outcome of my aims

My aims in attending the special course were to:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the pedagogy and history.
- Begin to learn to apply Orff Schulwerk in Special Education.
- Work intensively on music concept skills
- Experience and understand the importance of movement and dance in the approach.

#### **Gain a deeper understanding of the pedagogy and history.**

My initial experience at the Special Course was a very positive as a teacher. I loved every minute of the course as I was always gaining new information. This was done by observing teaching styles or learning new techniques. I have continued to explore ways to teach and ways not to teach. Also the variety of special guests were invaluable as their pedagogical styles reflected the work from their own countries. The current research from Andrea Sangiorgio and Wolfgang Hartman was also invaluable and gave me much to ponder.

#### **Begin to learn to apply Orff Schulwerk in Special Education.**

As mentioned in my Insights in this area I have definitely successfully met this aim.

#### **Work intensively on music concept skills**

The education of music concepts has been wide and varied and crossed over into many subject areas. I strongly believe that as the Orff process is learnt through the body it stays there until it is called upon. Something that continues to amaze and excite me as it keeps us in touch with spontaneity and flexibility.



**Experience and understand the importance of movement and dance in the approach.**

I have highlighted a number areas in my Insights that have explained the benefits I have gained in this areas. I aim to continue with my understanding and application of movement in Orff Schulwerk as I consider myself still be in the learning phase of using my body and therefore I hope to continue with dance classes to become be efficient when sharing possibilities.

*“Music is a language without words, it is universal. It is the finest art we know and enables the body to vibrate. This happens inside. There, notes start to dance. Like a fire. The fire that get rhythmical, large, small, quicker, slower ..... Vibrations, emotions, colours in a magical rhythm.” 17 (Emannuelle Labroit , 1995, French actress born deaf.*

*What an inspirational quote, and may we all carry these thoughts with us as we take our journey with music and movement education.*

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<sup>17</sup> Salmon, S. Music and Dance for people with Special Needs. Special Course 2014.15

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