

President's Letter, Fall 2023

By Pam Hetrick

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

- Carl Orff, "Gedanken über Musik mit Kindern und Laien" Schuster, Bernhard (Hsg./Ed.) Die Musik, Jg. 24, Berlin 1932, S.668-673 translated by M. Murray.



Written in 1936, Orff's words resonate today; the advice to begin with one's own breath and stillness to be "ready for music" can apply to anything we do. As music teachers we have a million different things on our plate that we are expected to juggle with humour, skill, and aplomb. As you read this, you may be thinking of all the other things on your plate right now. The beginning of the new school year already seems like a long time ago. Can you still recall those moments of excitement and anticipation? Getting to know your new classes, reuniting with colleagues, attending the first fall workshop? Or celebrating back-to-school traditions, Rosh Hashanah, the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival? There is our ongoing journey to learn and commemorate the truth of our Canadian history not only during Truth and Reconciliation Week but throughout the year. As October days go quickly by and we head full steam into the winter season, it is worth taking a moment to pause, breathe, and remember what we have experienced in the past month as well as those lovely summer days. And then, look ahead again.

"Moving Forward, Looking Back", the theme of this issue, reflects the way we are commemorating our upcoming 50th Anniversary. It is a time to honour the past, celebrate the present and envision our future.

Looking Back

Did you know that the first edition of the Orff Volumes outside of Germany was in Canada? As we remember the beginning days of Orff Schulwerk in Canada, we can be proud of being the conduit for Orff Schulwerk into North America. In the 1950s Dr. Arnold Walter, the Director of

the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto went to an international conference for college directors in Salzburg and was introduced to Keetman and Orff and their work. He was so impressed with this new way of approaching music education that he invited a student from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Doreen Hall to go to Salzburg where she would be able to study with Keetman and Orff. The rest of course is history. After spending over a year in Germany and Austria, Doreen Hall returned to Toronto to teach and create the new English edition of the Schulwerk, published in 1956. It begins with a Preface by Orff and an Introduction written by Dr. Walter. Walter writes how Orff Schulwerk can bring the joy of the “play-sphere” back into the music room and can help “counteract the trends of a technological civilization.” He recognized that this first volume outside of Germany, although based on the ideas of Keetman’s and Orff’s first volume, could not just be a translation of their material, but must be adapted for use in its home country, Canada. The Doreen Hall edition set the tone for other adaptations that swiftly followed between 1956 and 1968.

Looking back to summer 2023, we celebrate the ongoing return to “normalcy” with endorsed Orff Certification Programs offered in Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia. Dedicated Teacher Educators and Administrators worked hard to make these courses successful. Congratulations to all those lucky students attending these courses, and to Gunild Keetman Scholarship winners Christina Custer and Tarryn-Lee Raju.

An international week-long Orff Schulwerk course and convention in Salzburg this summer inspired and connected educators from around the world, bringing representatives from Canada. COC Vice President Heather Nail attended the International Summer Course at the Orff Institute. Supported by COC, I attended the International Orff Schulwerk Forum Convention, *Diverse Voices: Addressing and Exploring Diversity and Inclusion in Orff Schulwerk*. This was an invaluable opportunity to connect with Orff educators around the world through hands-on group warm-ups, workshops, reports from “associated schools” and thought-provoking key notes with organized discussions afterwards. Read more about the summer week-long program and the IOSFS, International Orff Schulwerk Forum Salzburg in this issue with articles by Heather Nail, Joy Reeve and Carolee Stewart. All members of COC are invited to be members of the IOSFS where you can connect and learn from Orff educators worldwide: <https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/>



What is our dream for the future of Carl Orff Canada?

What are our future aspirations, our long-term goal, the direction we want to head?

Moving Forward

As we prepare for Constellation2024 and the celebration of our 50th Anniversary, we would like to invite you to share your dreams for the future of Carl Orff Canada. Over the past few years, the National Board has devoted time to planning the creation of a new Mission Statement and Vision Statement. In 2021, after a productive collaborative process, the National Board created our new Mission Statement:

To inspire, connect, and support educators in music and movement, fostering active engagement of all learners through the creative and collaborative Orff Schulwerk approach.

The next step, the COC Vision Statement, should come from you, the members of Carl Orff Canada. A vision statement's purpose is to describe our future aspirations, what the world will look like when our mission is fulfilled. It should be our shared belief about the future COC can create if we achieve all our long-term goals. It should not be tied to future funding, availability of resources, or obstacles of any kind. Consider this question to inspire your thinking:

What would an ideal headline about Carl Orff Canada 20 years from now look like?

We will be collecting your ideas through Chapter surveys, emails to president@orffcanada.ca, and in person, at Constellation 2024. Please contact us with your thoughts; we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Looking ahead to November, mark the 18th at 2pm PST on your calendar for the free COC workshop "Ways of Talking the Talk", offered by the COC Advocacy Committee. This event will

offer expert guidance on how to advocate for your music program. Guest speakers include both Angela Elster, President and CEO of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the VSO School of Music and Dr. Anita Collins, award winning educator and researcher on music learning. We hope to see you there!

The joy of music that you bring to your students and the wonderful moments you create for them is a lifelong gift. May you enjoy the winter days ahead. Don't forget to breathe.



I write to you from the unceded and ancestral territory of the hə́nq̓əmiḥə́m and Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh speaking peoples, the xʷməθkʷə́yəm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́lilwətə́ł (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, land that has been stewarded by them since time immemorial.