



International
Orff-Schulwerk Forum
Salzburg



Orff-Schulwerk *International*

Volume 3, Issue 2

ISSN 2791-4763 (Online)

Movement and Dance in Orff Schulwerk (Texts on Theory and Practice of Orff Schulwerk, Volume III)

Edited by Barbara Haselbach, Verena Maschat, and Carolee Stewart
Reviewed by Africa Morris



©2024 IOSFS



Published online: Nov 2024

Full terms and conditions of access and use can be found online at:



**International
Orff-Schulwerk Forum
Salzburg**

www.iosfsjournal.com

Book review***Movement and Dance in Orff Schulwerk (Texts on Theory and Practice of Orff Schulwerk, Volume III)*****Edited by Barbara Haselbach, Verena Maschat, and Carolee Stewart**

Pentatonic Press, 2024 (282 pages)

Reviewed by Africa Morris

This is the third volume in the series *Texts on Theory and Practice of Orff Schulwerk* edited by Barbara Haselbach. The first volume (2011), *Basic Texts from the years 1932-2010* has been translated into several languages. Volume II, *Orff Schulwerk in Diverse Cultures: An Idea That Went Round the World (2021)*, documents the dissemination and adaptation of Orff Schulwerk (OS) through theoretical and practical contributions from Orff-Schulwerk Associations (OSAs) from five continents.

Carl Orff 's statement "I am not exaggerating when I say that without Keetman's decisive contribution, Schulwerk could never have come into being" underlines the dedication of this volume to Gunild Keetman, co-author of the Orff-Schulwerk:

Dedicated with deep gratitude and affection to the memory of Gunild Keetman, whose gentle, creative nature and guidance blended music, movement/dance, and speech into a single artistic entity, and whose influence will be felt for generations.

Although movement and dance have always been present in the Orff-Schulwerk approach, there is an imbalance between the vast documentation on musical resources and the scarce publications and written documentation on movement and dance. This fact explains and justifies the work condensed in the present volume, which explains in detail the different aspects of the Orff-Schulwerk concept, specifically in relation to movement and dance, from its origins to the present. All of this is supported by testimonies of real experiences, which attest to the actuality of this didactic approach.

In the Introduction the editors explain why it was so important to compile this volume and why OS was and is mainly known as a way to teach music using the "Orff instruments". However, it started exactly 100 years ago with a collaboration between Carl Orff and Dorothee Günther, a musician and a dancer, exploring the intrinsic and creative connection between the two forms of artistic expression.

This collection of articles and contributions by 56 Orff scholars and practitioners from 18 countries in five continents shows the impressive development of movement and dance in Elemental Music and Dance Education since the 1960s – the foundation of the Orff Institute and the Orff-Schulwerk Forum in Salzburg, the teacher education courses offered by different institutions in many countries and the foundation of Orff-Schulwerk Associations in 50 countries all over the world.

All three editors, Barbara Haselbach, Verena Maschat and Carolee Stewart, have a profound knowledge and ample experience with the artistic-pedagogical work of Orff and Keetman – continued by many international teachers who are specialists in the area - and they have succeeded in compiling a highly valuable and varied collection of articles. This comprehensive volume gathers the essence of many hours of experiential, emotional and intellectual work with the aim of offering evidence and capturing what movement and dance contribute in the classroom or in educational, social or community contexts.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I presents the Historical and Theoretical Background with the following articles: The Munich Günther-Schule (1924–1944): Cradle of the Orff Schulwerk; Movement and Dance in the Teacher Training at the Orff Institute; Sound in Movement – Music in Dance; Building Blocks of the Orff Schulwerk Pedagogy; A Culture of Collaboration; Influences of Embodiment and Cognitive Neuroscience Research on Dance Pedagogy; Overview of Various Applications of Movement and Dance in the Orff Schulwerk; Teaching and Learning Strategies for Creative Dance in Orff Schulwerk: Learners' Agency, Artistry, and Feedback; Online Teaching and Learning: A Framework for Enhancing the Quality of Kinesthetic Experiences in Movement and Music.

Part II is dedicated to the main topics of educational and creative dance: Children's Games and Dances; Improvisation and Elemental Choreography; Traditional Dances: Folk, Historical, and Social Dances; Movement, Dance and Elemental Drama; Movement/Dance and the Fine Arts; Movement, Dance, and Speech.

Part III gives practical examples with different target groups: The Importance of Creative Music and Movement in the Early Stages of Life; Moving Forward. Looking into the Primary Classroom; Movement and Dance with Teenagers in Schools and Recreational Settings; Movement and Dance with Adults and Seniors; Dance in Music Schools; Movement and Dance with Inclusive / Mixed-Abled Groups in the Context of Orff Schulwerk; Movement/Dance Projects with Diverse Target Groups.

Each article has its own list of references and resources and the Appendix offers an extensive Bibliography which includes numerous sources about OS in general. There is also information about each contributor; the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg; OSAs around the World; Associated Schools and Institutions; Volume I and II of the Texts on Theory and Practice of Orff Schulwerk, and the Orff Institute at the Mozarteum University Salzburg.

The first part, which deals with the historical context and theoretical foundations, clearly explains how the Orff-Schulwerk came into being. It presents the figure of its creator Carl

Orff (1895-1982) and his closest collaborators, Gunild Keetman and Dorothee Günther, who was a clear precursor at the Munich *Günther-Schule*. This section deals with the need to materialise a form of aesthetic education through music, movement/dance and speech, accessible for everyone. It explains what has become the way of thinking, feeling and acting in the spirit and the philosophy of Orff-Schulwerk.

The second section of the book deals with all the themes and content groups that are part of and are the focus of interest in the approach and development of this pedagogy, especially in relation to movement and dance.

The third and last section, rich in experiences, presents many specific cases of real projects aimed at different areas and groups, each one with a detailed explanation of the pedagogical justification: target group, objectives, contents, materials, methodology and reflection. It describes one-off or longer-lasting experiences that bring groups together for: creation, collaboration and expression of their ideas and emotions, either in a final form or in exchange and communication sessions through music, movement/dance and speech. These experiences represent an immaterial gift, with a great deal of specific weight for the people who, by participating, become beneficiaries of it. This gift is the "well-being" that participation provokes communication and self-affirmation as a creative being, which is the heritage of all people.

It is difficult to express in words what the phenomenon of the "transmission" of knowledge is and how it occurs, even more so when this comes from physical experience; explaining a dynamic, an exercise with words, will never be the same as embodying this proposal with our body. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why documentary collections are a relatively recent asset. The number of physical-mental-emotional connections that take place when pedagogical proposals come from the body are a reality studied by advanced psychology, embodiment and cognitive neuroscience research.

This volume contributes, throughout its contents, much in this sense, entering fully into the field of artistic pedagogy: relating, connecting, giving meaning, expressing with and through the body. All of them are necessary experiences for the cognitive, sensitive and affective development of each person. It is clearly reflected through defined methodologies, that movement and dance are ideal means to create the situations in which all this can take place.

Elemental Music and Dance Education is primarily a humanistic pedagogy, which seeks individual development through experiential knowledge and practice of music, movement/dance and speech, but takes place in a group with the variety of developmental opportunities that this provides.

It is, in turn, an artistic pedagogy, which on every occasion values and takes advantage of the interrelation with other artistic languages; a fact that leads us to an aesthetic education, where the meaning of the work always raises questions, thus opening a space for reflection in each session.

With regard to this artistic-pedagogical concept, we can say that it is a pedagogy open to the changes necessary to update and incorporate knowledge in the light of new theories of learning and cognitive development, such as neuroscience, technological advances, and new possibilities such as online teaching.

It is also an international pedagogy, which has been able to take advantage of the cultural heritage of each country, its songs, dances, legends, etc., as significant material within the content of the sessions. In the OS pedagogy, traditional music and dances are used in many ways for their educational qualities, a valuable resource, but no less than the creative aspect of exploration, improvisation and composition.

It is therefore a totally up-to-date and necessary approach which should be implemented in educational, social and community spheres, wherever possible in the world.

As a main conclusion, it is worth highlighting that this work shows us once again the very important and fundamental trajectory of Orff-Schulwerk in the field of education through the arts and its current dissemination all over the world; at the same time, it constitutes a documentary base rich in resources in the field of movement and dance. This book is a sufficiently complete guide for any professional working in Educational/Creative Dance. They will find their work reflected in the teaching experiences documented and described here, and will use the book as a valuable resource for the programming of educational centres as well as social and community projects.

After reading this book, even readers with little experience in Orff-Schulwerk will understand the essence of this artistic-pedagogical concept of the unity of music, movement/dance, and speech which, in Orff's words, is always changing with and through time, thus adapting itself to the multiple challenges of working in different cultures in our ever-changing times.

I have discovered a treasure trove that will surely inspire many teachers to face the challenge of incorporating more and meaningful movement activities in their classes. Congratulations to the editors, the authors and the publisher.

Africa Morris studied ballet at the *Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático y Danza* de Madrid. She attended the Trainee Program at the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance in New York, USA. Thanks to a Fullbright scholarship for further artistic studies she was able to work with the company Jennifer Muller and The Works of Contemporary Dance Company. She currently teaches Contemporary Dance and Educational/Creative Dance at the *Escuela Municipal de Música y Danza* de Alcobendas, Madrid and in the Master programme in Education through Dance at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.