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EMBODIMENT THROUGH ENGAGING THE SENSES

The IOSFS Convention June 25-27, 2024.

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The IOSFS Convention June 25-27, 2024.

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This year's convention was the first time in 40 years that the IOSFS annual convention took place not in Salzburg, Austria, but in Olomouc, a beautiful baroque city in the Czech Republic. The convention was held at the Palacký University Art Centre, an historic building dating from the 16th Century. The city, located about 500 kilometers northeast of Salzburg, is home to the second oldest university (1573) in the country. The Faculty of Education of the university, as well as the Czech Orff Society, were the IOSFS partners in hosting the 2024 convention.



Christa Coogan, Gabriela Coufalová and Shirley Salmon

The theme of our convention arose as a response to a general detachment from direct sensory experiences in people's daily lives. We aimed to offer impulses both to increase sensitivity and to explore aspects of Orff-Schulwerk through practice and theory with an emphasis on the body and multi-sensory approaches to teaching and learning. Keynotes, presentations, reports from Associated Schools and Institutions and short sessions that shared practical activities reflected this theme in various ways.

Our liaison with the Palacký University's Department of Music Education was through Dr Gabriela Coufalová who took complete responsibility for the organization of the rooms, the technical support, the catering and university staff for the convention. Members of the Czech Orff Society initiated the collaboration between the IOSFS and Palacký University, provided the necessary instruments for the convention, and were actively

engaged in the Opening, Closing, and IOSFS 40th anniversary sessions. Additionally, they coordinated the two-day workshop preceding the convention *Dialogue between the Body and the Sensory Soul* (June 22-23).

Online and in-person attendance

70 people registered and attended the convention in-person in Olomouc and 91 people registered to attend online. Several people registered after the convention in order to see the video recordings of the presentations and keynotes. These recordings as well as

handouts were available for all registered participants on the convention website until the end of October 2024.

For the participants in Olomouc, it was not only an opportunity to attend the keynotes, *Come Togethers* and presentations but also to mingle in the breaks and to meet and get to know Orff-Schulwerk practitioners from different countries. Making new contacts and meeting old friends and colleagues has always been an important part of the conventions.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Keynotes

This year's convention offered three keynotes, each illuminating an aspect of the theme, which can be found in this issue.

Marja-Leena Juntunen (Finland) spoke engagingly about how bodily experience is fundamental to our perception, knowing and relationships with the world and furthermore, how movement stimulates musical learning.

Robyn Staveley (Australia) focused on sensory, motor and emotional neurological systems that support cognitive processes. To demonstrate her ideas, she shared experiential activities that underscored flexible and creative thinking and memory retention.

Wolfgang Mastnak (Germany) offered a framework for understanding neurological data that references embodiment, aesthetic experience, and artistic creativity in educational and therapeutic domains.

Presenters

Contributions from some of the presenters can be found in this issue. Apart from these, the following people also presented at the convention: Hana Novotná (Czech Republic), Marcela López Colmenares (Colombia), Dafne Michellepis (Brazil), Ceren Emre Ateş (Turkey), Mika Inouye (USA), Andrea Sangiorgio (Italy/Germany), Werner Beidinger (Germany) and Anida Chan & Maggie Ho (Hong Kong).

Associated Schools and Institutions (ASIs)

The following members of the network of Associated Schools and Institutions (ASI) shared examples of their work: San Francisco School (USA), Jittammatt Kindergarten (Thailand), IMMEA (China), Carl-Orff-Schule Diessen (Germany), ACEMM and AAMM (USA), Notre Dame Kindergarten, Osan (South Korea), Alev School (Turkey).



Come Together

The IOSFS conventions also offer *Come Together*s. These are 25-minute practical activities that engage the participants physically, musically, and socially. As in the past few years, we have had both online and live *Come Together*s.

This year's live contributors came from the Czech Republic and neighboring countries: Czech Orff Society members Jiřina Jiříčková, Hana Novotná, Lenka Pobudová, Lenka Pospíšilová, and Patrice Windsor; Lidija Detic & Silvija Sarapa from Croatia; Luiza Pliszka (Poland/Singapore); Petra Juhart & Tadeja Mraz Novak from Slovenia; and Tomáš Boroš & Ivan Šiller from Slovakia.

Our online contributors were members of Orff-Schulwerk Associations (OSA) around the world: Tersia Harley (South Africa), Inés Tubert (Argentina), Cristian Gómez & Catherine Correa (Colombia), Arghavan Mohammadi (Iran), and Li Cao (China).

Meeting of OSA Presidents and Vice-presidents (in-person and online)

This meeting was attended by 21 presidents, vice-presidents or representatives of the association and was hosted by Shirley Salmon and Christa Coogan. Each participant introduced themselves and then topics were suggested for discussion groups. These included:

- o membership growth,
- o bringing in younger people,
- o handing over leadership roles,
- o research.

After the discussions, summaries were shared with the whole group and suggestions for the future were mentioned. The general agreement was that the meeting, planned for only one hour, was too short. The slot for the presidents' meeting at the next convention will be longer to allow more time for discussion, sharing thoughts and developing strategies.

Additionally, the Forum will offer at least two online meetings (at different times to include as many associations as possible) during the year to stay in touch with one another, and to strengthen the support the Forum provides.

Session of the Guidelines Committee

This committee is undertaking a revision of the IOSFS Teacher Education Recommendations and Guidelines first published in 2008 and last revised in 2017. In this session at the convention, Sarah Brooke and Christa Coogan introduced the rationale for these alterations:

- o developments in educational thinking (e.g., ethical questions, diversity, best practice),
- o global interest (the increased interest of countries to offer their own extended studies/levels courses and the recognition that such courses are becoming the most common way to study Orff-Schulwerk in depth),
- o support for structures that provide cohesion and serve as a signifier for a rigorous, deep engagement spent understanding and practicing Orff-Schulwerk, no matter where in the world.

These revisions are for both those associations wanting to begin their own levels training as well as for those who already conduct such courses and will use these guidelines as an opportunity to review and reflect upon their structures and practices.

The completion date is envisioned for the beginning of 2025.

Special events

Welcome Concert

An inspirational concert to round off the first day of the convention was given in the Corpus Christi Chapel in the main Baroque building of the Palacký University Art Centre. In the first half of the concert, students of the Department of Music Education performed compositions by Czech composers, including Smetana, Janáček, Dvořák, and Antonín Bohuslav Martinů.

The Campanella Choir, one of the leading children's choirs in the Czech Republic, sang after the intermission, moving the audience with their repertoire. The Campanella Choir was founded in 1967 and since then it has been a significant part of the cultural life of the city of Olomouc. Campanella is comprised of singers aged 10-18 who have completed several years of choral training for the preparatory singing department of the Campanella Music School of Olomouc. The choir had toured extensively in various countries in Europe, Asia, America and Africa, including successful representation at international choir festivals and competitions. The choir's repertoire is very wide and versatile and ranges from Gregorian chant, Renaissance polyphony and classicism to contemporary authors. A large part of the choir's repertoire consists of folk songs from around the world. Jana Synková has been the conductor of Campanella since 2017.

40 years IOSFS

Board member Tiffany English organized an evening presentation celebrating the 40th anniversary of the IOSFS.

The International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg (IOSFS) - the Forum - has undergone a development that could not have been foreseen when it was founded. What began as a small circle of friends, colleagues and graduates of the Orff Institute led to a worldwide organisation. Although the aims of the organisation have essentially remained the same, its tasks have expanded due to its international reach. New areas of interest and work have been added.

The presentation included contributions from Shirley Salmon, Barbara Haselbach, and Carolee Stewart as well as board members Verena Maschat, Carmen Domínguez, and Hana Novotná. The session summarised the development of the Forum, its tasks and objectives, and took a look to the future. It ended with a lively musical activity led by Lenka Pospíšilová and a glass of prosecco to toast the Forum.

Film presentation: Barbara Haselbach - A life in dialogue with the arts

Coloman Kallos has produced films on the European development of Orff-Schulwerk. These have included a film on the pioneering work of Margaret Murray from England and one

about Polyxene Mathéy from Greece. Other examples include his portraits of well-known protagonists such as Wilhelm Keller and Hermann Regner, who, together with Barbara Haselbach, shaped the studies of Elemental Music and Dance Education at the Orff Institute and the Orff-Schulwerk from the 1960s onwards.

The newest film in this series is entitled “Barbara Haselbach - A life in dialogue with the arts” (in German with English subtitles) and was shown on the 3rd day of the convention. This moving portrait gives insights into Barbara Haselbach’s artistic and pedagogical work at the Orff Institute and in numerous international contexts over 65 years. Included are interviews with Barbara and others; discussion between her and many of her collaborators; excerpts from her choreographic work as well as impressions of her house and surroundings in Gfals, Salzburg. The film can be found on the IOSFS website in the members’ area.

Conclusion

The convention committee has now had some time to process the experience of the convention: hearing and reading feedback statements from participants; enthusiastically remembering encounters with our colleagues from around the world over the course of the three days; analysing what worked well and what we can improve for the next convention. We are grateful to all who made the journey to Olomouc as well as to those who attended via digital pathways. We heartily thank the amazing team around Dr Coufalová and the Department of Music Education of Palacký University; the Czech Orff Society for undertaking such a time-consuming job; the members of the IOSFS convention committee for all their work, and the other IOSFS Board members who jumped in to attend to any detail at a moment’s notice.

Comments from participants support our assessment that organizing the convention every second year outside of Salzburg is an idea to pursue. But first we will see each other again next year - from July 14 - 17, 2025 – in the familiar environment of the Orff Institute, Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria or online.

Christa Coogan has 35 years of experience teaching and creating dance/music performances with young people in schools, youth centers, vocational schools, universities, and refugee shelters. She taught at the Orff Institute, University Mozarteum, for 10 years and later was a lecturer in elemental music education at the University of Music and Theater Munich until her retirement in September 2023. Christa is an internationally recognized teacher at universities and in professional development programs for movement and dance in the spirit of Orff-Schulwerk as well as in the field of creative-artistic dance. She serves as Vice president on the Board of the *International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg* (IOSFS), is co-director of the online *International Mentorship Programme in Orff-Schulwerk Pedagogy* and team member of the *San Francisco Levels Course*. B.F.A. degree/Dance, The Juilliard School, NYC; M.A./Musicology and Dance Studies, University of Salzburg.

Shirley Salmon has worked for over 40 years as a music and movement teacher with children, young people and adults with different talents and disabilities in extracurricular and school institutions and contexts. She was employed by the county of Styria, Austria from 1979 – 2000 using music and movement in homes for behaviourally disturbed children and teenagers and with deaf and hard-of-hearing children while also working freelance for kindergartens and schools. Shirley was a lecturer in ‘Music and Dance in Community Work and Inclusive Pedagogy’ at the Orff-Institute University Mozarteum Salzburg from 1984 – 2019. She teaches and lectures nationally and internationally, has published books, a DVD and numerous articles. She has been president of the *International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg* (IOSFS), since 2018. She has a BA Hons Music (York University, England), PGCE (London University) and MPhil in Educational Science (University of Innsbruck, Austria).