

Update on the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg

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ABSTRACT

In ancient Rome, the “forum” was a place where ideas were shared and debated. In this article, the author notes that the IOSF is such a place for teachers, and details the activities and exchange of information and ideas that strengthen work in elemental music and movement education worldwide.

By Carolee Stewart

It has been some time since past-president Barbara Haselbach (2007, 2018) wrote about the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg (IOSFS) in previous issues of *The Orff Echo*. Several AOSA presidents (most recently, Hewitt, 2020; English, 2018, 2019; Stansbury, 2016; Judah-Lauder, 2014; and Benson, 2013) have included Forum reports in their Presidents’ Messages after attending Forum events. In addition, Sue Mueller and Jo Ella Hug (2006) and Linda Ahlstedt (2000) wrote extensive reports following their experiences attending an international symposium. This issue’s topic, Global Perspectives, and its timing offer a fitting opportunity to provide an update on current developments and activities.

Background and Purpose

In her 2018 article, “Orff Schulwerk Dissemination: Background and Commentary from the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg,” Haselbach gives detailed information about the origin and development of the Forum, which is also available on the video, *The Legacy and Vision of the IOSF* (n.d.). What follows here is a summary with up-to-date information.

In 1961 Carl Orff with Eberhard Preussner, director of the Mozarteum Academy (now the University Mozarteum), founded the Seminar and Information Center (Zentralstelle) for Orff-Schulwerk at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. The

Seminar is what we know as the Orff Institute. In 1983 the Information Center became an independent institution and was re-named the Orff-Schulwerk Center Salzburg by Hermann Regner. In 1984 it was registered as an independent non-profit association in Austria. When the Orff Centre in Munich was created in 1988, the name was changed to Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg, and in 2014 the name changed again to International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg. The Forum now includes a network of 53 national Orff Schulwerk Associations, 20 Associated Schools and Institutions, and a small number of individuals. The directors of the Forum have been Wilhelm Keller (1966–1982), Hermann Regner (1983–1994), Barbara Haselbach (1994–2018), and Shirley Salmon (2018–present). The work of the board of directors is shared among members from nine countries.

The Forum's purpose is the worldwide promotion and further development of Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman's elemental music and dance education. Its members share and exchange information and ideas about the Schulwerk in their respective countries. The mission includes collecting, documenting, and publishing international information about work with the Schulwerk; communicating and facilitating communication among institutions and individuals; advising about pedagogical questions; and initiating events or supporting them.

Until recently these functions were accomplished in collaboration with the Orff Institute in Salzburg, the Carl Orff Foundation (Stiftung) Diessen, Germany, and the Orff-Center Munich (Orff-Zentrum München), with financial support from the Carl Orff Foundation. In January 2020 the Foundation withdrew all financial backing; soon after, the Forum was asked to vacate its office in the Orff Institute. The IOSFS is now entirely self-supporting.

Some Forum Activities

Magazine

The Forum began publishing a magazine in 1964, and issues were produced semi-annually until the funding from the Foundation stopped after issue 100 (Summer 2019). *Orff-Schulwerk Informationen* (issues 1–89) and *Orff-Schulwerk Heute* (issues 90–100) are available on the IOSFS website. The magazine has covered a wide range of topics related to Orff Schulwerk. From its first issue, it included

reports on work with Orff Schulwerk from countries around the globe, including reports from the United States starting with issue 3 in March 1966.

Books

A series under the general title *Texts on Theory and Practice of Orff Schulwerk*, with Barbara Haselbach as editor, is currently in progress. *Volume I, Basic Texts from the Years 1932–2010* (published in 2011 by Schott Music, with funding from the Foundation), includes reprints of articles in German and English about the historical and theoretical foundations of Orff Schulwerk. To date, it has been translated into five additional languages by members of associations in Spain, Iran, China, Greece, and Russia, and a French translation will be published in 2022 through a collaboration between associations in France and Canada. *Volume II, Orff Schulwerk in Diverse Cultures: An Idea that Went Round the World* (Pentatonic Press, November 2021), contains 34 articles about the worldwide dissemination and adaptation of Orff Schulwerk across five continents (English language only). It includes a report on the development of Orff Schulwerk in the United States. Other volumes are in development. Information on earlier publications can be found on the website (see Table 1, p. 13).

Standing independently now, the Forum continues to be the point of contact for Orff Institute graduates who journeyed to study in Salzburg from countries throughout Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania.

Symposia

Every five years since 1975 the IOSFS has organized an international symposium in cooperation with the Orff Institute, except in 2000, when four separate international events took place, with two in Germany and one each in Finland and the United States (Rochester, New York). Presidents of AOSA along with many members have attended these symposia, and some have been on the program as presenters or lecturers. The Forum has produced reports that document the lectures and presentations for most of the symposia. *In Dialogue* and *50 Years Orff Institute* publications include DVDs. There is no separate documentation for the 2016 symposium

because funding from the Mozarteum was withheld, but there is a short report in *Orff-Schulwerk Heute 95* (Häberlein, 2016). Symposium years and topics are as follows:

- 1975 Orff-Schulwerk Today
- 1980 Proven Traditions and New Areas
- 1985 Orff-Schulwerk in the World of Tomorrow
- 1990 A Continuing Heritage
- 1995 The Inherent – The Foreign – In Common. Music and Dance Education as a Contribution to Intercultural Pedagogy
- 2000 Four Symposia:
 - 50 Years *Music for Children*, Traunwalchen, Germany
 - Expression in Music and Dance Education, Orivesi, Finland
 - The Role of Orff Schulwerk in Integrated and Community Education and Therapy, Munich, Germany
 - Orff Schulwerk in Lifelong Learning, Rochester, New York, United States (two days before the 2000 annual AOSA conference)
- 2006 In Dialogue. Elemental Music and Dance Education in Interdisciplinary Contexts
- 2011 50 Years Orff Institute
- 2016 Changes. Elemental Music and Dance Education in the Changing World of Media

Conventions

Prior to 2011, the annual general meeting for IOSFS members was usually a one-day event, often held during the winter. In 2011, the meeting was expanded to a three-day convention that occurred prior to the symposium in July. Since then, conventions have been held during July at the Orff Institute, attended by presidents and/or other representatives from Orff Schulwerk Associations, teachers and/or administrators from Associated Schools and Institutions, and individual members. The American Orff-Schulwerk Association regularly sends its president and one other representative. Beginning in 2012 each conference has featured a special topic, and documentation related to several of these topics was published in *Orff-Schulwerk Heute*:

- 2012 Orff Schulwerk between the Poles of Pragmatic Music and Dance Education and the Developing of the Whole Personality
- 2013 Orff Schulwerk in Schools
- 2014 The Training of Orff Schulwerk Teachers. International Convergence and/or Divergence?
- 2015 Interculturality in Elemental Music and Dance Education (*OS Heute 93* and *94*)
- 2016 Effective Forms of Evaluation and Assessment in Elemental Music and Dance Education (*OS Heute 95*)
- 2017 Encounters between Orff Schulwerk and Modern Arts (*OS Heute 97*)
- 2018 Orff-Schulwerk and Special Populations in Educational and Social Contexts (*OS Heute 99*)
- 2019 Formats and Contexts of Orff Schulwerk Education from Workshops to Courses to Higher Education
- 2020 Legacy and Vision (virtual – lectures are available online and include a tribute to Wilhelm Keller on the 100th anniversary of his birth)
- 2021 Play and Planning in Orff Schulwerk: Ways of developing creative learning processes (virtual)

Resonances

In 2020 the Forum offered the first Resonances, an online event free and open to anyone. It is hoped that Forum Resonances can be offered two or three times a year on different topics, with different formats, and organized by different Orff Schulwerk Associations. Two such events have occurred to date, and video presentations are online.

- 2020 Gunild Keetman (organized by members of the Forum Board)
- 2021 Discovering the Wildflower: How Orff-Schulwerk Uses Culturally Specific Ideas (organized by the Australian National Council of Orff Schulwerk)
- 2021 Fall – Music and Movement for Older Adults and Others
- 2022 Spring – Jazz, Improvisation, and the Schulwerk (organized by AOSA's International Connections Committee)

ASI Projects

Since 2016, annual projects of the Associated Schools and Institutions (ASI) invite discussions about different ways of creative processes with various target groups. The topics are chosen jointly, and after one year the results of the work are presented to all members at the next convention as a video or PowerPoint presentation. James Harding and Sofia López-Ibor frequently present the work of students at The San Francisco School. Presentations are available for members only on the website.

Themes of the projects:

- 2016 How to Work Creatively with Sources from the Orff Schulwerk Volumes
- 2017 Assessment/Evaluation in Action
- 2018 Encounters between Orff Schulwerk and Modern Arts
- 2019 Orff Schulwerk and Special Populations
- 2021 A Choice: “100 Years of Bauhaus” or “Global Goals for Sustainable Development (UNESCO)”

Ideas for Online and In-Person Teaching

As a result of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, many teachers found themselves unprepared for teaching music and dance online. To offer suggestions and support, the Forum website has a collection of contributions from colleagues representing 21 countries, in 10 languages, and for different target groups. Members and non-members are invited to contribute, and there are several contributions from AOSA members.

Guidelines for Teacher Education Courses

The IOSFS published *Recommendations for Level Courses* in 2008 and a revision, *Recommendations and Guidelines for Level Courses*, in 2017. A new revision was prepared in 2021 and will be available

for members. As guidelines for all national Orff Schulwerk Associations, they provide a general foundation that serves as orientation for each national curriculum, which should include the cultural characteristics of each country and take the specific social and educational conditions into consideration. The current AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum references the 2017 document.

The Forum: A Platform for Exchanging Information and Ideas

In keeping with the original concept of a “forum,” IOSFS remains a place where ideas and views about Orff Schulwerk are exchanged—in person and virtually—with like-minded colleagues around the world. After attending the summer 2017 meeting and convention, Tiffany English (2018) shared her experience, which highlights AOSA’s important connection with the Forum:

We communicated with ease because we shared the common goals of meeting new friends and colleagues and learning more about Orff Schulwerk. The joy and passion was contagious and solidified my belief that Orff Schulwerk teachers are connected in an extraordinary way ... It was enlightening to hear reports from other Orff Schulwerk Associations and Affiliated Schools around the world. As president of AOSA, I was interested in how these organizations and schools function. The reports from Greece, Taiwan, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Finland, the United States, and the Carl Orff Foundation were eye opening in many ways. I saw that, although our organizational structures differ, we all know we must work together to achieve our common goal of promoting Orff Schulwerk in a way that is organic to our own cultures and countries. (p. 6)

Table 1. International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg Online Resources.

| RESOURCE | LINK |
|--|---|
| Magazine | https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/magazine-osh |
| Books (earlier publications) | https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/other-publications |
| Conventions, Symposia, Resonances Virtual Lectures | https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/events |
| ASI Projects (members only) | https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/asi-projects |
| Ideas for Online and In-Person Teaching | https://www.orff-schulwerk-forum-salzburg.org/online-ideas |

Conclusion

The history of Orff Schulwerk might be viewed in three stages: (1) the pre-WWII period of the Güntherschule in Munich; (2) the post-WWII Bavarian radio broadcasts that led to the publication of *Musik für Kinder*; and (3) the establishment in 1961 of the Orff Institute and Center (now Forum) in Salzburg (followed later by the creation of the Foundation in 1984 and the Orff Center in Munich in 1988). It is the Orff Institute together with the Forum that have brought about the worldwide dissemination of Orff Schulwerk, which was subsidized by the Carl Orff Foundation until January 2020.

Standing independently now, the Forum continues to be the point of contact for Orff Institute graduates who journeyed to study in Salzburg from countries throughout Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. Following their studies, international students return home and work with the Schulwerk in schools and other settings, in professional development workshops and courses, and in the founding of national associations, schools, and other organizations. Orff Institute faculty have

In the recent election, AOSA past-president Tiffany English was elected to serve on the IOSFS Board of Directors.

historically played a major role in the worldwide dissemination of the Schulwerk as they were invited to teach in various parts of the world, and some Orff Institute faculty are continuing to do this. The Forum preserves the original function established by Carl Orff himself, as the

International Headquarters ... [that] maintains contact with those practicing or interested in Schulwerk at home and abroad ... distributes and collects reports, research findings, literature and recordings ... is responsible for the planning and organization of courses at home and abroad, and ... is responsible for the editing of *Orff-Schulwerk-Informationen*. (News from the Orff Institute, 1966, p. 51)

This article is a small window into the breadth and depth of all that has occurred during the 60 years since the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg was established. As the Forum moves ahead, it continues to build on a solid foundation, supported by the efforts and passion of its members in all parts of the world. These dedicated Orff Schulwerk practitioners sustain the legacy of Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman's elemental music and dance education and will carry on what remains to be done. ■

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