

years, it becomes all the more important to make music in the elementary school so alive and meaningful to the children in our classes that they will keep coming back to it all their lives. Then perhaps they will remember years later not one isolated day, but day after shining day of discovery and achievement with a growing sense of their own creative power and a growing ability to think and to make music with others.

ON BEING SIMPLE-MINDED

Isabel Carley

There is no virtue in complexity, and one great contribution of the Orff approach to education (not just to music education) is its emphasis on the vitality and beauty of simple material treated in a simple way. We keep coming back to the words "basic," "natural," "elemental" when we try to explain our new approach to music education combining speech and song and movement and instrumental play. Particularly when our class periods are so short we need to choose material simple enough to be learned easily and then developed a little at a time. Then we can keep adding, keep changing, keep trying new ways of doing our old favorites when we come back to them.

There is always a danger of being carried away by our own inventiveness into going too fast and over-complicating the texture and the interpretation of the material we choose to teach. I have seen it happen again and again in classrooms, in demonstrations, in workshops, in published material. It is so easy to drive something into the ground and make it difficult and joyless by insisting on our own plan, even if it isn't working. When our plans are too complex, too perfect, we leave nothing for the class to discover and contribute. Can't we plan alternatives and at least give them some real choices to make?

Of course our pupils must learn some basic vocabulary of song and movement, some basic instrumental technique, gained from repertoire we have taught them. But the performance of repertoire is *not* the goal, only the means to musical participation and understanding and creativity. The songs and pieces in the Schulwerk are models for us and our classes to emulate, to play, to change, to use. The printed score is no longer sacrosanct, but a stimulus to our own interpretation and, so to speak, translation into our own context to fit our own situation and our own needs.

Trained musicians are notoriously impatient to reach some distant goal, and many music teachers make the same mistake, always under pressure to get "THERE," wherever that may be, living in the future, getting ready for some future performance, working toward some future level of achievement. This inevitably means skimping the basic training in rhythm, in singing, in instrumental technique, in ear-training, in notation. Instead of hurrying, we need to learn to enjoy working within very strict limitations, making, for instance, interesting and musical two and three note tunes before we move to the full pentatonic scale; exploring pentatonic repertoire and improvisation in depth before jumping into the familiar major and minor tonalities; exploring and enjoying the flavor of each mode in turn. In movement we need to allow time for free unstructured individual exploration before we impose pattern and form. Similarly, when we make our own arrangements, we need to be reminded that the object is not to use all the instruments at once, but to use them expressively, musically, no more than necessary to point up the essential quality of the song or dance we're setting.

We keep saying that process is more important than performance, but do we teach that way? Do we leave room for ideas to be contributed as we go along? Or do we stifle the very creativity we pretend to foster by sticking strictly to our own preconceived plans and our own preconceived goals? Do

we dare give demonstrations where something new is allowed to grow? Where the process is truly demonstrated? Where our students do something they've never done before? Or do we play it safe and do the old things in the old way, performing what's in print without stopping to consider what *isn't* in print that only we and our particular class can do?

The whole point of the Orff approach is to enjoy the process every slow step of the way, exploring as we go, learning from our own mistakes, and taking the time to encourage our students to share their discoveries and inventions. Neither joy nor understanding can be force-fed, and growth takes time.

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF MUSIC IN EDUCATION

Isabel Carley

The role of the arts becomes more important every day in a world of rapid change where facts recede into obsolescence within a few years. The person who depends on facts finds himself in the unhappy position of the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, running as hard as he can to stay in the same place, always under pressure to keep up, never able to relax at all if he is to stay in touch with new developments in his field. The old style of education in which the teacher's role is seen as filling empty vessels with facts on which they can depend for the rest of their lives is no longer valid, but the old techniques of teaching linger on, with the teacher still in the role of the all-knowing authority imparting knowledge to inferior beings whose goal in life is to be like him, and who must, in the process, ape his adult behavior as far as possible.

Most teachers nowadays accept rationally the need for change in the style of education, but many of them find it impossible to leave the old patterns behind. They are afraid of the children they teach, afraid of losing control, afraid of doing things differently and perhaps failing in the attempt.

Music teachers are particularly tense about their roles, tied up as they are with the old pattern of exploiting children for the glory of the school by scheduling performance after performance whether or not it serves a real need of the children's to share what they've been learning, to pull together and finish some material they've been working on.

Is it any wonder that many music teachers are content simply to depend on the series and the supplementary records, treating music primarily as recreation for the children and entertainment for their parents, missing completely the central role the arts, and especially music, can play in the education of the future?

I say especially music, because as children have always known, and as Orff has rediscovered for us, music is an inclusive art, bringing together speech, movement, song, and instrumental play, and because, as Plato says, "rhythm and harmony penetrate very deeply to the inward places of the soul, and affect it most powerfully, imparting grace."

How can we teach music so that it will "penetrate very deeply to the inward places of the soul"? It seems to me that there are three considerations: the climate of the classroom, the repertoire we choose to teach, and the use of improvisation.

First, the climate of the classroom, your classroom. Does it nourish growth? Are you comfortable with the children and are they comfortable with you? Do you go too fast? Why? To satisfy your own musical ambition, your own needs, to impress others? The impulse toward growth is in every human being. We need not try to force growth, for forced growth soon withers and dies, being unnatural, though for a short time it may bloom abundantly, under hothouse conditions. Do you allow your students to help each other? Do you allow the kind of repetition children need to build on, and encourage new ways of doing old things? Do you trust your students enough to let them learn by their own mistakes? Do you let them work by themselves sometimes, on clearly defined projects at which they are well prepared to succeed?