

Australian Kodály Journal

2009



The Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia Inc

AUSTRALIAN KODÁLY JOURNAL

© 2009

A publication of The Kodály Music Education
Institute of Australia Inc
Affiliated National Institutional Member
of the International Kodály Society
ISSN 1836-9286



KMEIA NATIONAL COUNCIL

Founder

Dr Deanna Hoermann

President

Gail Godfrey

Vice Presidents

Darren Wicks

Tess Laird

Secretary

Julie Grace

Treasurer

Jill Meneely

Committee

Dr David Banney

Ann Clifton

Anne Davidson

Jill Green

Mathew Irving

Aleta King

Julie Logan

Ruth Robinson

Ann Carroll (co-opted)

National Membership Secretary

Ethne Brennan

EDITORIAL TEAM

Editorial Panel

Dr Doreen Bridges

Dr James Cuskelly

Dr Kay Hartwig

Dr Deanna Hoermann

Judith Johnson

Tess Laird

Dr Robin Stevens

Design and Layout

Kevin Kelley

aMuse (Vic)

Editor

Ann Carroll

FROM THE EDITOR

This is the first year of the Australian Kodály Journal, the new name of the Australian Kodály Bulletin. The Journal is fully refereed with all papers sent out to members of the Editorial Panel for anonymous editorial review. The Journal will continue its role of engaging KMEIA members with the education research and practice of our colleagues, and building our sense of being part of the Australian and international Kodály music education community.

I am very grateful to the group of distinguished music educators, researchers and practitioners who comprise the 2009 Editorial Panel and who have been extremely supportive of the editor and generous with their time, expertise and advice.

Thank you to all those who submitted material for this issue. Guidelines for submissions for future issues are on the KMEIA website www.Kodaly.org.au

The Australian Kodály Journal is a fully-refereed journal.

KMEIA

PO Box 8299

Toowoomba Mail Centre, QLD 4352

www.kodaly.org.au

info@kodaly.org.au

DISCLAIMER

This publication has been prepared for the members and professional associates of The Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia. The opinions expressed in the publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the association or the editors. While reasonable checks have been made to ensure the accuracy of statements and advice, no responsibility can be accepted for errors and omissions, however caused. No responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting on or refraining from action as a result of material in this publication is accepted by the authors, the association, or the editors.

CONTENTS

- 4 INTRODUCTION**
4 A message from the president
Gail Godfrey
- 6 2008 National Conference Opening Address**
*His Excellency, Mr Gábor Csaba,
Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary*
- 7 LINKING UP INTERNATIONALLY**
7 Integrating inquiry-based (constructivist) music education with Kodály-inspired learning
Sheila Scott
- 15 2008 KEYNOTE PAPERS**
15 Gardening 101: Advice from a tree and other musicians
Jerry-Louis Jacard
- 21 Bloom with Music**
Judy Johnson
- 25 Music education, rigour and higher order thinking: Unique contributions from the Kodály approach**
James Cuskelly
- 31 OTHER REFEREED PAPERS**
31 Songs she sang to me: The centrality of music to the lives of mothers and their children
Elizabeth Mackinlay
- 41 Choral music in community settings for children with unchanged voices: A Melbourne case study**
Coral Rafferty
- 47 Choir and strings: A magical music experience in early childhood**
David Banney and Julie Logan
- 56 SHARING PRACTICE**
56 From solfa to the stage: Developing basic music literacy skills for older beginners at the tertiary level
Anne Comisky

- 61 PROFESSIONAL READING**
61 The Brain that Changes Itself
- 61 KODÁLY NEWS**
61 KMEIA National Council News
do-re-mi News
IKS News
Report on 2009 UQ Summer School
Summer School Background
Notes from America
State Reports: www.kodaly.org.au
- 66 CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES**
- 67 NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS 2010**

ADVERTISING DIRECTORY

| | |
|--|----|
| Crescendo Music Education | 20 |
| IKS Bulletin Archives CD | 29 |
| KMEIA National Conference | 68 |
| KMEIA NSW 2010 Certificate Course | 14 |
| KMEIA Musical Beginnings DVD Package | 6 |
| KMEIA Purely Pentatonic | 39 |
| Kookaburra Music | 30 |
| Music Lyons (Gail Godfrey) | 24 |
| Sound Thinking Australia Summer School | 40 |
| Take Note Music | 46 |

On the cover: A thoughtful child, Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Photo courtesy of Ruth Robinson

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Gail Godfrey

How can we keep our connection with the philosophy and spirit of Kodály? In the preface to his collected writings titled *Retrospection* Kodály said,

Looking back on the road I've passed, either in the mountains or in life, was never to my liking. I always looked ahead. (<http://www.Kodály-inst.hu/museum/museum.htm>).

In the series *The World's Greatest Composers* published by Magus (1999), I learned that Kodály enjoyed a life-long passion for the mountains (p.13), something he once mentioned in a broadcast interview when he said,

In my whole life I often stayed in high mountains. I spent nights there and noticed that the mountains have sounds, wonderful sounds. (An Ode for Music, 2002, p. 91)

So those of you who enjoy the beauty of mountains have something in common with Kodály! We hear that his love of nature also influenced his healthy lifestyle. He skated when he was young and regularly swam, exercised and walked well into his latter years. He collected many of his folk tunes while wandering on foot through village after village in the mountains of Hungary. One pupil

Bence Szabolcsi wrote,

A close and secret bond linked him to the highlands. I feel that through the mountains I shall one day come to understand him... Some of us aptly named him the mountain sorcerer. (Kodály, p.13).

In the oral history book *The Legacy of Zoltán Kodály* (1992, p.153), another student Sándor Szokolay wrote,

Often when we went walking in the woods together, we walked so much and so fast that I could hardly keep up with him. When I would phone him, Kodály would ask, "Do you want to talk with me for a short time or for a long time? If short, come to me; if long, we will go together to the forest."

Perhaps those of us moved by the Kodály philosophy could have 'mountain experiences' in order to better understand the mind of Kodály.

Another man who also had a love of nature and plants, mountains and walking in the countryside was our dear KMEIA Past President and colleague Ian Harrison. Like Kodály, Ian was 'forward looking'. In 1989 Ian wrote in his President's Report,

It is essential that opportunities are made for the upgrading and professional development of our teachers through in-services, seminars and conferences. Of course all music educators, be they class room teachers or private instrumental teachers require regular stimulation and enrichment. It is all too easy to reduce our teaching to the same routine which is repeated year after year. The majority of teachers colleges, universities and conservatoriums do not fully address the situation of the training of Music Teachers throughout Australia. There is still a serious lack of specialist training for them today and little has changed over the past thirty years.

Ian's message echoes a familiar tune today. The recent Federal Government announcement that the arts will be included in the National Curriculum gives us some hope.

I am so grateful to be a member of KMEIA where I am enriched, and where we continue to encourage one another to learn more about the extraordinary gift of Kodály's spirit and philosophy.

2008 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OPENING ADDRESS



The Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary, His Excellency Mr Gábor Csaba at the Official Opening of the National Conference

I was honoured to receive the invitation to address this audience on the occasion of your biennial conference on music education, which has after three decades returned to ACT to assess the experience and the results of the Kodály method in Australia.

For us Hungarians, Zoltán Kodály is much more than a famous person of Hungarian origin. Deeply rooted in Hungarian folk music, his oeuvre earned worldwide attention and appreciation. A profoundly Hungarian man on a strictly Hungarian cultural basis became famous all around the world thanks to his hard work and innovative character. No wonder that all Hungarians are proud of him. His life has served as an outstanding example for generations of young Hungarians of how to study and evaluate our national heritage and how to bring Hungarian values closer to the rest of the world.

Zoltán Kodály lived a substantial and full life: he was a student of folklore, a composer and a music teacher, passionately pursuing and uniting these three professions into an exciting and successful career. For these three pillars, these three closely related professions constituted the foundation of his fame. He discovered and understood the

problems of his times in their complexity and tried his utmost to solve them. In the 1920s he complained that Hungarian musical culture was built from the top down. Hungary has a good Opera House – he wrote – and has outstanding performing artists, yet there are not enough good music teachers in the schools and little attention is paid to the musical education of people in the countryside. Kodály spared no time and energy seeking remedies to the weaknesses of Hungary’s musical life.

He started research on genuine Hungarian folk music in the late 1890s under the influence of Béla Vikár, who had extensively toured the country to collect folk songs. Between 1905 and 1914 Kodály visited Upper Hungary and Transylvania in search of folk songs, which had a decisive influence on his musical creed and outlook. He made it his mission to collect as many Hungarian folk songs as possible, subject them to scholarly research, and then incorporate them into the general cultural awareness via school education.

As a composer, Kodály drew upon the late romantic tradition and Hungarian folk songs. After 1920 most of his works were vocal. He wrote numerous choral pieces and two oratorios (Psalmus Hungaricus and Te Deum of the Castle of Buda), two full-size musical works for the stage (János Hány and The Spinning Room) and several songs for solo singers.

In addition to his compositions, his international fame was due to his “Kodály method” of teaching music. He made it clear in several essays that music – folk music that conveys national traditions, and quality composed music – played a key role in the efforts to educate people in a balanced value system and erudition. That is why he devoted so much energy to the musical education of young generations, including the writing of musical works that had a didactic purpose as well.

The KMEIA Conference proves that Kodály’s efforts were not in vain and his ideas and his teaching have become universal. Kodály always attached great importance to problems of everyday life and practical approaches to them. In this spirit let me wish you fruitful discussions and workshops, but also a useful and pleasant stay in the marvellous environment of the Floriade. It gives me great pleasure to open this conference.



MUSICAL BEGINNINGS

KMEIA Queensland DVD Package

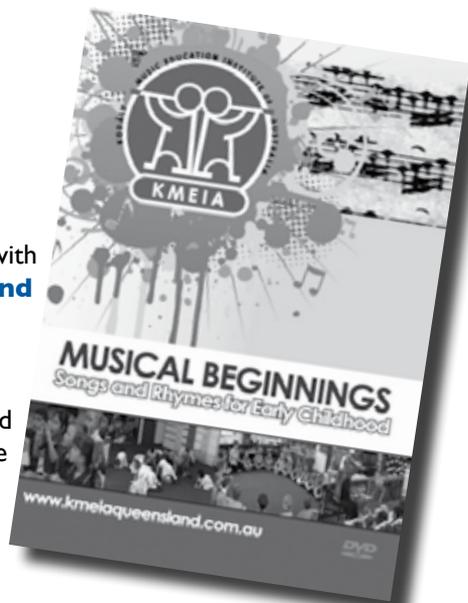
50 songs and rhymes developmentally-appropriate for Early Childhood settings

DVD INCLUDES

- 50 tracks of footage showing **real teachers** with their classes, **demonstrating the songs and rhymes** with accompanying games and activities.

CD ROM INCLUDES

- A4 Blackline masters which include words and pictures for each song/rhyme (useful for take home activity sheets and/or classroom display).
- Teacher resource sheets, including sheet music for each song and accompanying information about the song/rhyme with ideas for classroom use.
- Teacher information on such topics as “how to teach a new song”, “tips for helping children to find a partner” and general information on the value of music education in the Early Years.



PRICING

| | |
|--|------|
| DVD Package (includes DVD and CD Rom) | \$50 |
| DVD Package - with KMEIA membership discount | \$40 |
| Total postage for one copy | \$3 |
| Total postage for two or three copies | \$5 |
| Bulk discount available for 10 or more copies. | |

For in-service opportunities and all orders contact:

Deb Brydon

brydon@dovenetq.net.au



INTEGRATING INQUIRY-BASED (CONSTRUCTIVIST) MUSIC EDUCATION WITH KODÁLY-INSPIRED LEARNING

by **Sheila Scott**

Associate Professor of Music Education
Brandon University, Manitoba, Canada



Sheila Scott

In recent years, many music education professionals have called for reconceptualizing how teachers view learning and teaching (Abrahams, 2005; Barrett, 2005; Broomhead, 2005; Hanley & Montgomery, 2002, 2005; Paul & Ballantine, 2002; Webster, 2002). Changes in society and reforms in general education have spurred much of this call for shifts in how music teachers plan and deliver curricula.

One theory that has received attention in recent years is constructivism. Essentially, constructivists maintain that individuals interpret new information in relation to social interactions in their present environment and in relation to perceptions they bring to the learning situation (Paul & Ballantine, p. 571). Thus, learners do not receive information from their teachers passively. Rather, students gain musical understanding¹ and skills through active engagement with teachers and peers within

collaborative learning environments.

Constructivism is a theory for learning. Its principles are reflected in classroom environments in the pedagogy of inquiry. Inquiry is an approach in education that views classrooms as communities of learning. In this context, students become questioners and problem solvers; teachers act as guides, assisting students with their search for understanding:

Inquiry is a dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlement and coming to know and understand the world. As such, it is a stance that pervades all aspects of life and is essential to the way in which knowledge is created. Inquiry is based on the belief that understanding is constructed in the process of people working and conversing together as they pose and solve the problems, make discoveries and rigorously test the discoveries that arise in the course of shared activity. (galileo.org/tips/inquiry-what.html)

The skills and understanding gained in an inquiry-based learning environment transfer to other situations within school and are applicable in children's lives outside school.² This does not imply that music education founded on the principles of inquiry is intended to prepare children for lives as professional musicians. Instead, students are guided towards meaningful engagement with music in their lives.

Veblen (2005) asks the question, "Can we [Kodály-inspired teachers] affect a renaissance in music teaching and learning in the 21st century?" (p. 14). It is prudent to consider how this might be done. To this end, I have examined Kodály-inspired instruction in relation to inquiry-based ideals for defining and redefining the roles of teachers and students within music education.

Background: The Kodály Method³

The pedagogy associated with the Kodály concept of music education emerges from the following

philosophy:

- All people capable of linguistic literacy are also capable of musical literacy.
 - Singing is the best foundation for teaching musicianship.
 - To be most effective, music education must begin with the very young child.
 - The folk songs of a child's own linguistic heritage constitute a musical "mother tongue" and should therefore be the vehicle for all early instruction.
 - Only music of the highest artistic value, both folk and composed, should be used in teaching.
 - Music should be at the heart of the curriculum, a core subject, used as a basis for education.
- (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, Woods, & York, 2001, p. 82)

Tools of the method include tonic solfa with accompanying hand signs and rhythm-duration syllables. Children learn about music through active involvement in a variety of skill areas, including singing, moving, playing instruments, listening, improvising, and composing. Kodály-inspired educators implement instructional sequences for the content domains of music: rhythm, melody, form, harmony, style, terminology, and symbols (Trinka, 2000b). Using folk song materials that reflect the cultural backgrounds of the students and composed art music, the structure of these sequences reflects the stages students pass through as they gain musical understanding and attain mastery in these skill areas. Students are carefully guided from the known to the unknown. In Trinka's (2000b) words:

When approaching an unknown musical concept or element with the children, the Kodály-inspired music teacher takes care to revisit, re-establish, and make secure in their ears, voices, and eyes previously learned information. Re-visitation of the knowns, through listening, singing, moving, analyzing, reading, and writing, for example, is continual and forms the basis for making comparisons leading to the naming of a new musical element. (p. 4)

Ultimately, children acquire musical literacy. Not solely the ability to read and write music, but the ability to understand the expressive meanings of music and the value of music in their lives.

Kodály-Inspired Instruction and Inquiry-Based Learning

DeVries (2001) observes that a teacher's emphasis on musical skill development (for example, developing students' proficiencies in reading and notating music or advancing students' expertise to sing in tune) may come at the expense of helping children become independent musicians able to perform, improvise, and compose with understanding and respond to the expressiveness of music. More generally, Regelski (2005) refers to the dangers of "methodolatry"—a technicism of teaching "such as recipes, formulae, and prescriptions that has ill-served music education over the years" (p. 15). From this perspective, teaching techniques or strategies are detrimental if the focus of a music program is on the method and the effectiveness of lessons is judged by how closely instruction matches the prescribed doctrine, not by how the musical experiences impact the lives of the participants (Regelski, 2005). While it is certainly appropriate to use the tools of the Kodály concept and make conscious lessons to lead students to musical understanding, it is not desirable for these aspects of the methodology to dominate the children's musical experiences at the expense of their appreciation of music.

The instructional sequences and materials associated with Kodály methodology are valuable guides for instruction. However, strict adherence to these "rules" is not the road to excellence. With thoughtfulness and flexibility, planned lessons become frameworks for learning experiences that unfold within educational environments responsive to the immediate needs of students. Inquiry-based learning provides reminders and insights into how this is nurtured within Kodály-inspired music education. Three aspects of inquiry are explored here: (1) inquiry as a community of learners, (2) students as questioners, (3) students as problem solvers.

Community of Learners

Inquiry-based learning emerges from a stance of collaboration, where students and teachers are all members of educational communities engaged in inquiries of personal interest (Otis-Wilborn, 1995). Within communities of inquirers, "the roles of teachers and learners are interchangeable, for all are learning, and, at the same time, all are helping others to learn" (Otis-Wilborn, p. 28). Wiggins

(2001) notes that this social constructivist view depends on a shared understanding among the participants, “including shared understanding of the problem to be solved, of possible solutions, and of how they will know they have succeeded” (p. 16). Within this context, students do not receive information passively. They construct their own understanding by interpreting what they already know in light of what they acquire in their present environment (Paul & Ballantine, 2002).

This concurs with Kodály-inspired music education. Music teachers guide students’ learning by providing strong musical models. Beginning with a rote-to-note method, students are taught to read the signs and symbols of traditional music notation, thereby providing an avenue to independent musicianship. Teachers facilitate students’ musicianship by providing opportunities to develop performance skills (for example, by singing and playing instruments). Within their classroom communities, students are involved in authentic music-making processes and practices that are employed by children and adults outside of school.

Collaborative educational communities take on a variety of forms. Kodály-inspired educators act as leaders when they use whole-group instruction to teach new musical elements or concepts. While plans for instruction are highly organized around these issues, they are not rigid and technical. Teachers remain open to the insights of students and acknowledge unexpected problems from students during learning. Full-group interactions are also used for musical performances. Inquiry-based learning recommends that students act as questioners and problem solvers within this context, with teachers guiding students as they analyze their work. For example, students sing the song “A La Claire Fontaine” (Choksy, 1999a) with two different expressive styles—legato and staccato. They then use their musical knowledge to evaluate the musical effectiveness of each version rather than relying on their instructor to make the decision for them.

If students are provided appropriate musical models (for example, their own performances, their teachers’ performances, and recorded performances) there is an expectation they will choose the option that most accurately portrays the given style. If this does not occur, the teacher

will intercede by providing additional examples and guiding students’ musical choices.

Trinka (2001) sees full-group instruction as a foundation for the work accomplished in smaller groups and by individual students and as a precursor to independent musicianship. “Progressing from large group to individual focus also provides an experiential safety net for the individual, increasing the likelihood of the student’s success” (p. 3). Small group interactions provide further opportunities for teachers to facilitate their students’ learning. Within these contexts, students are empowered to apply their musical understanding as they interpret instructions, ask questions, make suggestions, and encourage each other (Wiggins, 2001). Within a collaborative atmosphere, students become peer coaches. Wiggins reminds us:

Students bring into the classroom varying levels of expertise in whatever the group may be discussing, analyzing, performing, or creating. The teacher is not the only one with musical expertise in the classroom and, at many points during the session, the “more knowledgeable other” might very well be someone other than the teacher. (p. 38)

Her comments illustrate the foundation of collaborative inquiry: Teachers are learners and students are teachers, as all members of the community search for deeper musical understanding. Kodály-inspired teachers nurture this environment by promoting students’ involvement in their learning as questioners and problem solvers. For example, students in grade 5 are preparing the song “Scarborough Fair” (Hackett, 1998) for a spring concert. Marcel, a student in the class, shares the song sung by Simon and Garfunkel and questions why this version is different than the one performed in class. Teacher and students engage in problem solving when they listen to this new version and analyze how the recorded performance differs from theirs. A discussion ensues around theme and variations, with students deciding to arrange their own variations of this piece. Working in small groups, students choose how to compose their variations. The teacher facilitates progress and provides assistance appropriate to the specific needs of each group. Students share their arrangements with their peers and revise their work based on the feedback they receive. The

revised arrangements are performed at the concert.

Students as Questioners

The majority of teachers' questions are related to factual information for which there is one correct response. These are the questions Kodály-inspired teachers ask during "make-conscious" lessons. For example, a teacher is making the new note re conscious. She asks her students: "Is the new note higher than do?" Similarly, teachers ask factual questions when reinforcing knowledge. A teacher plays on a woodblock and asks, "What instrument do you hear?" A teacher claps a rhythm and asks, "What song is this?" Asking factual questions is a valuable teaching strategy. It motivates students' involvement because they are thinking about music rather than passively receiving information about music. However, students' learning is limited when teachers only model this type of questioning behavior.

Question asking is a way for teachers to monitor students' progress and help them understand music at a deeper level. For example, after re is made conscious, students engage in experiences that reinforce this melodic element through questions such as:

How might we improvise eight beat melodies using do, re, mi, so and la with these rhythmic elements:



How might we compose melodies in which re appears above do?

How might we compose melodies where re is found below mi?

How might we compose melodies where re is a leap to or from so?

Students' responses to these questions provide the teacher with information about whether students have acquired the understanding necessary to integrate this element with what is already known and apply this knowledge when creating something new.

Within an inquiry-based stance for music education, students are encouraged to become questioners. When asking questions, students assess their own knowledge, recognize misunderstandings, and ask questions that help them clarify their thinking. To illustrate, students are writing 16-beat compositions using the

following rhythmic elements:



Kerry writes the following:

Phrase 1:



Phrase 2:



She becomes frustrated when she performs this composition on claves. She asks: "Why does the second phrase feel too long?" "Am I holding a beat too long?" She plays the composition and discovers that she isn't holding a beat too long; rather, she has written too many beats in the second phrase. Thus, her questions help her solve this musical problem.

Students' questions may motivate teachers to think about the subject matter or instruction in different ways, thus influencing the learning environment (Chin, Brown, & Bruce, 2002). For instance, students in Mrs. Adam's grade 3 class are improvising melodic answers to 8-beat question phrases around the do pentatonic scale. Intrigued with this process, Marnie asks the question: "Why do we improvise in music class?" Mrs. Adam hasn't considered this question beyond her most immediate concern that improvisation is an outcome of the curriculum. Reflecting on Marnie's question, the teacher guides class discussion around the ways that people improvise in their day-to-day lives. The students learn that improvisation is an important skill used by musicians and are treated to a presentation by a saxophonist active in the local jazz community.

Teachers who adopt an inquiry stance nurture the questioning process by creating spaces for students to ask thoughtful and open-ended questions (Dillon, 1988; Watts, Gould, & Alsop, 1997). For example, Mrs. Armstrong subscribes to Brummitt and Taylor's (1996) non-directed listening program and has successfully incorporated this curriculum into the school's timetable. Students listen to the same piece every day over a five-day period. A short script that provides students

with information about the composer and the composition accompanies each listening session. When Mrs. Armstrong's students listen to Fanfare for the Common Man by Aaron Copland, they ask many open-ended questions: "Why did Copland choose to have the trumpets play the opening theme?" "How might we celebrate all of the people in the world?" "If we were to compose a fanfare, what would we celebrate?" By asking such broad questions, students have opportunities to contemplate the listening experience in personal ways. This approach to music listening does not replace the guided listening approach in which students analyze the musical elements of a piece prior to listening (see Choksy, 1999b); rather, it is an additional means for students to respond to music.

When teachers ask open-ended questions, they show students they are interested in and respect students' musical knowledge. Open-ended questions show students they can rely on their own thinking—that they don't need to depend on teachers to provide the correct answers. When several students provide their opinions to an open-ended question, each response may be different, thereby providing avenues for discussion about musical choices. Open-ended questions change the terrain of the musical environment. Rather than following pre-formed plans step-by-step, new avenues for learning open up from spontaneous interactions among members of learning communities.

Students ask open-ended questions when they explore their environment. These types of questions help them to expand their musical knowledge or test their musical ideas. Teachers model questioning behavior by demonstrating their own musical thinking. For example, a teacher is preparing her fifth-grade class to sing "Simple Gifts" (Choksy, 1999a) at a school assembly. Rather than show the students how to interpret the song, the teacher asks students to suggest various ways to perform the piece (for example, loud, soft, fast, slow). After singing the song in the style suggested, students and teacher discuss the effectiveness of the performance. Other suggestions are tried and a consensus is reached as to the performance that best expresses the music. While it is impractical to use this approach to all musical decisions, it is viable to incorporate this perspective into your teaching.

Through examples of this process, students learn how to use open-ended questions to explore and extend their musical knowledge. For example, in small-group formations, students design, practice, and present an arrangement of the song "Christmas Greetings (God Bless All)" (Choksy, 1999a). Individuals use open-ended questions to convey ideas to their peers: "How will our performance change if we change the tempo by singing it faster?" "What would it sound like if we played drums the first time and added bells for the repeat?" These open-ended questions provide impetus for analysis and evaluation of musical ideas after students try out the suggestions and discuss the musical effects.⁴

Whether in large-group or small-group formations, open-ended questions allow teachers to respond to teachable moments. Rather than viewing unexpected questions as interruptions to preplanned lessons, teachers should see them as opportunities for students to apply their musical knowledge and affective awareness when making musical decisions. Teachers become facilitators, promoting and encouraging students' reflections on music and musicing. For Kodály-inspired teachers, this does not require changes to their current curricula or pedagogy; nor does this imply that teachers discontinue the use of closed questions (those for which there is one right answer). Rather, inquiry-based learning provides a reminder to incorporate open-ended questions into the educational environments we create for our students.

Students as Problem Solvers

When solving problems, students are involved in the process of making musical judgements through reflection. They listen to their performances, analyze what they perform, evaluate their musical choices, and make further adjustments based on these deliberations. This requires that they think in sound:

The best problems for learning are those that reflect problems that occur in real life within a particular discipline—problems that require students to deal with the ideas and understandings intrinsic to that discipline. Solving real-life musical problems means solving problems using the same thought processes and procedures that real musicians use when they solve musical problems. (Wiggins, 2001, p. 50)

Musical problem solving involves students in a number of skill domains: for example, performance-based problems, listening-based problems, creating-based problems (Wiggins, 2001). From this perspective, students apply and extend understanding of the structures of music (rhythm, melody, form, harmony, style, terminology, and symbols) while engaging in genuine musical works (Wiggins). This corresponds to Kodály-inspired music education where music learning is based on the world's folk-song heritage and composed works, not on teacher-made exercises devised for particular educative purposes.

Music-based problems provide opportunities for students to explore their environment as active problem solvers. This process begins with small problems interspersed throughout the curriculum. For example, as part of the reinforcement of the rhythm pattern "syn-co-pa," students create improvisations using that element. This begins with full group demonstrations, after which students work in pairs with one student providing improvised questions and the other responding with improvised answers. Thus, we have musical problems with no correct answer, but variations on a theme.

As students extend their musical expertise, problems increase in complexity and involve longer periods of time. Problem solving can be viewed as large-scale projects that unfold across a number of class periods or several weeks of instruction. For example, in a Kodály-inspired program, students are involved with an inquiry around ABA form as reflected in Vaughn-Williams's "Fantasia on Greensleeves." They begin their work by learning the song "Greensleeves," also known as "What Child Is This" (Hackett, 1998). The teacher combines direct instruction and problem solving in this task. First, the teacher leads the students through stages of preparing, making conscious, and reinforcing as appropriate to the students' musical knowledge and backgrounds. Students are problem solvers when they explore expressive aspects of the piece and make performance decisions appropriate to this work using open-ended questions to guide the process. The teacher leads the students through a listening chart in which these problem solvers identify the three main sections (ABA), the introduction, interlude, and coda, and the instruments used by Vaughn Williams. Students respond to this piece using

open-ended questions such as "What do I hear?" "What do I see?" and "What do I feel?" (Szabo, 2005). When students share their ideas in class discussions, these observations may become the basis of further musical investigations. In this respect, all members of the community may choose to explore similar problems (for example, in small groups, all students apply these ideas in the development of musical compositions). In other situations, the groups might go in different directions (for example, some students write compositions; others listen and analyze other musical works that use folk songs as their basis).⁵ Students become fully involved in musical thinking, not only as problem solvers, but also as problem finders. To illustrate, students in Mrs. Kaye's grade 5/6 choir are learning the song "Tumbalalaika" (Eisen & Robertson, 1996). She presents the students with a problem: "How might we arrange this song using our voices, movement, and non-pitched percussion instruments?" Students are problem solvers as they present ideas that speak to this problem, incorporate these ideas into the performance, analyze the outcomes, and select those solutions that provide the most satisfactory performance. Students are problem finders when they form their own musical problems. Revisiting Mrs. Kaye's choir, Mitchell, a fifth-grade boy, initiates the discussion with a question: "What would 'Tumbalalaika' sound like if we added drums?" In this scenario, Mitchell is the problem-finder, identifying a problem for which he and his peers may experiment in finding viable responses. His query inspires other students to create their own problems. This occurs when other students add their voices to the idea first presented by Mitchell: Maxine asks, "What would happen if we added bells with the drums?" Melanie adds, "Could we add movement on the B section?" This environment of inquiry spreads to other situations as students gain experience in responding to musical problems presented by the teacher and in presenting their own musical problems to the class.

Conclusion

DeVries (2001) comments on Kodály-inspired music education:

Anybody who has taught a Kodály-based music program will know just how successful it can be. From week to week, children's singing—particularly pitch—improves; rhythmic skills improve significantly

from year to year; music literacy develops; and children can perform music in increasingly complex parts. (pp. 1–2)

Children involved in these programs gain a high degree of musicianship. However, concern is expressed when an over-reliance on skill development leads to methodolatry—a teacher’s adherence to prescriptions for teaching that denies teachers and students the opportunities to apply their musical knowledge in innovative and unexpected ways.

Is this what master Kodály-inspired teachers intend? In the forward to *The Kodály Method I* (Choksy, 1999a) Szonyi writes:

The structure of this book is very clear, logical, and well organized, but it is not intended to replace any teacher’s own personal work. The recipes are here, but a good cook is always needed to prepare a delicious meal. The Kodály Method is not an “instant” method, however simple it may seem if one examines it only superficially. Good method, devoted teacher, and responsive children ... given the first two, can one doubt that the third component is easiest to get? (xi)

Kodály-inspired teaching is much more than the educational sequences through which teachers apply the process of prepare, make conscious, and reinforce. These are key components of the method; but they are not the be-all and end-all of Kodály-inspired learning. Through this work, students gain knowledge about the domains of music (rhythm, melody, form, harmony, style, terminology, and symbols) and gain facility in a number of skill areas such as singing, moving, playing instruments, listening, improvising, and composing. Thus, students become knowledgeable musicians.

How does the Kodály method resonate with recent calls for reconceptualizing music learning and teaching? In this article, I examined this question in relation to three tenets of inquiry-based learning: (1) inquiry as a community of learners, (2) students as questioners, (3) students as problem solvers. From this perspective, Kodály-based programs become learning communities responsive to the immediate needs of students. Kodály-inspired teachers nurture this environment by promoting student involvement in the learning process as questioners and problem solvers through creative

music-making activities. Students are immersed in musical thinking, formulating ideas of musical significance. Thus, Kodály music education responds to the needs of students and society in the twenty-first century.

Notes

1. Taking the lead from Elliott (1995), musical understanding is a “situated form of knowing—knowing anchored in the contexts and purposes of specific musical practices” (p. 68).
2. For an extensive examination of the transferability of school tasks to out-of-school activities see Scott 2005.
3. This is an abbreviated summary of the essence of the method. Readers are directed to Choksy (1999a, 1999b) and Trinka (2000a, 2000b, 2001) for detailed descriptions of the Kodály Method.
4. While questioning is an important way for students to demonstrate understanding, I add a caution. People reveal their understanding in various ways. Many students are comfortable expressing their ideas verbally; other students may not see the need for verbal expression. Do not assume that children have limited understanding if they do not express their ideas verbally.
5. This is not to say that problem solving needs to be thought of on such a large scale, with various groups of students involved in different inquiries. This provides ideas for possibilities. Individual music teachers structure these inquiries in ways that are appropriate to their particular educational settings.

References

- Abrahams, F. (2005). The application of critical pedagogy to music teaching and learning: A literature review. Update: Applications of Research in Music Education, 23(2), 12–22.
- Barrett, J. (2005). Planning for understanding: A reconceptualized view of the music curriculum. Music Educators Journal, 91(4), 21–25.
- Broomhead, P. (2005). Shaping expressive performance: A problem-solving approach. Music Educators Journal, 91(5), 63–67.
- Brummitt, D., & Taylor, K. (1996). The Brummitt-Taylor music listening program: A non-directed approach. Langley, BC: Tall Timbers.
- Chin, C., Brown, D. E., & Bruce, B. C. (2002). Student-generated questions: A meaningful aspect of learning in science. International Journal of Science Education, 24(5), 521–549.
- Choksy, L. (1999a). *The Kodály Method I: Comprehensive music education* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Choksy, L. (1999b). *The Kodály Method II: Folksong to*

- Masterwork. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Choksy, L., Abramson, R. M., Gillespie, A. E., Woods, D., & York, F. (2001). *Teaching music in the twenty-first century* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- DeVries, P. (2001). Reevaluating common Kodály practices. *Music Educators Journal*, 88(3), 24–27.
- Dillon, J. T. (1988). The remedial status of student questioning. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 20(3), 197–210.
- Eisen, A., & Robertson, L. (1996). *An American Methodology: An inclusive approach to musical literacy*. Lake Charles, LA: Sneaky Snake.
- Elliott, D. J. (1995). *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford.
- Hackett, P. (1998). *The melody book: 300 selections from the world of music for piano, guitar, autoharp, recorder, and voice* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hanley, B., & Montgomery, J. (2002). Contemporary curriculum practices and their theoretical bases. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*, pp. 113–143. New York: Oxford.
- Hanley, B., & Montgomery, J. (2005). Challenges to music education: Curriculum reconceptualized. *Music Educators Journal*, 91(4), 17–20.
- Otis-Wilborn, A. (1995). Conceptualizing and reconceptualizing curriculum. *The Volta Review*, 97(5), 19–31.
- Paul, S. J., & Ballantine, J. H. (2002). The sociology and connections to music education research. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*, pp. 566–583. New York: Oxford.
- Regelski, T. A. (2005). Music and music education: Theory and praxis for making a difference. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 37(1), 7–27.
- Scott, S. J. (2005). Authentic achievement: Problems and promise. In H. D. Armstrong (Ed.), *Examining the practice of school administration in Canada*, pp. 211–222. Calgary, AB: Detselig.
- Trinka, J. (2000a). The habits of effective Kodály-inspired music teachers: Demonstrating mastery, part I. *Kodály Envoy*, 26(4), 2–3, 16.
- Trinka, J. (2000b). The habits of effective Kodály-inspired music teachers: Demonstrating mastery, part II. *Kodály Envoy*, 27(1), 3–5, 8.
- Trinka, J. (2001). The habits of effective Kodály-inspired music teachers: Demonstrating mastery, part III. *Kodály Envoy*, 27(2), 3–5.
- Veblen, K. (2005). "Music should belong to everyone": Re-imagining Kodály's grand vision. *Alla Breve*, 29(2), 8–16.
- Watts, M., Gould, G., & Alsop, S. (1997). Questions of understanding: Categorising pupils' questions in science. *School Science Review*, 79, 57–63.
- Webster, P. R. (2002). Computer-based technology and music teaching and learning. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*, pp. 416–439. New York: Oxford.
- Wiggins, J. (2001). *Teaching for musical understanding*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

From The Kodály Envoy, Fall 2008, Vol 35, No 1 Copyright © OAKE The Organisation of American Educators. Used with permission.

Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia NSW Inc.

ANNUAL CERTIFICATE COURSES

Early Childhood - Levels 1, 2 & 3

leading to the award Australian Kodály Certificate in Early Childhood Music Education

Primary Music - Levels - 1, 2 & 3

leading to the award Australian Kodály Certificate in Music Education

Each course level is comprised of 10 days of study divided into two schools held at Barker College Music Centre, Hornsby

Autumn School: 6-10 April 2010

Spring School: 4-8 October 2010

Early bird registration closes Friday 5th February 2010
Standard Registration by Friday 5th March 2010

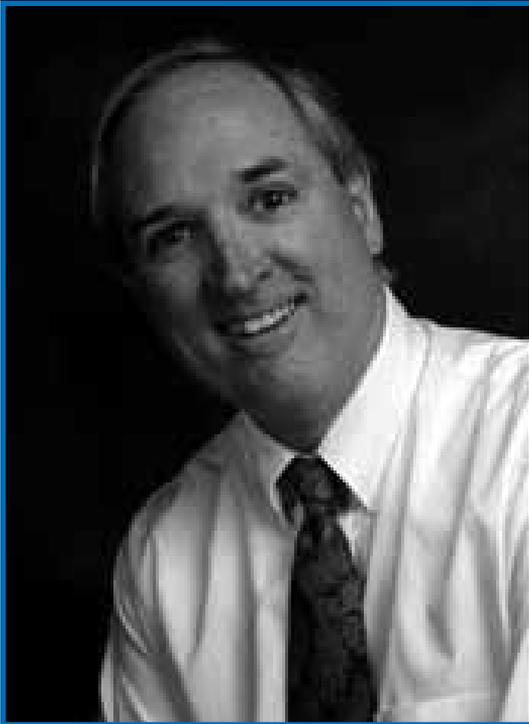
For full brochure and registration details see:
www.kodaly.org.au and click on events - NSW

GARDENING 101:

ADVICE FROM A TREE AND OTHER MUSICIANS

by Jerry-Louis Jaccard, EdD

Brigham Young University School of Music, Provo, Utah, USA



Jerry-Louis Jaccard

The *Bloom with Music* theme of this conference instantly spoke to me! My two brothers and sister and I were all born in Southern California, a region abundant with “eucalyptus,” or “gum” trees, first planted there by Australian settlers in the 1850’s. As children, we treasured their mysterious button-like seeds, long fragrant leaves, and loose bark. After we moved to Tucson, Arizona – a very hot, dry desert city near the Mexican border – the only things to remind us of lush, green, coastal Southern California were the gum trees growing all over our new city. As a teenager, I became the family gardener with a passion for flowers, and my first real summer job was to work in a commercial plant nursery. While working there I began to identify the many different varieties of Australian *bottlebrush* and *acacia* – or *wattle* – trees flowering all over Tucson. During this time, the miraculous cycle of plant life became

a daily reality for me, and that life cycle is why the *Bloom with Music* idea is such an important metaphor for what we are trying to accomplish in the name of Zoltán Kodály.

We music-teaching professionals by and large operate on our own initiative because we ourselves have been profoundly affected by music. It has caused something beautiful to take root and flourish deep within our inner core. Against all administrative, economic, and societal odds – often like pushing water uphill – we tenaciously cling to our belief that we are doing something essential for humanity. Root, flourish, water, tenacious, cling: these are *plantlike* words. Consider this experience of Vaughn Lovejoy, who was climbing a 4000 metre peak on the Utah-Nevada border to seek inspiration during a personal crisis in his life. He tells how he sat down beneath a pine tree to watch the sunrise when it illuminated a pinecone filled with seeds:

Underneath that pine came a simple vision of hope . . . Bristlecone [pines] dwell at the very uppermost reaches of the timberline, under the harshest of conditions, in relatively sterile soils, punishing blizzard winds, summers of drought. They somehow weave these almost insurmountable adversities into hauntingly beautiful living sculptures that live for thousands of years. You can feel their presence, their mystery, and you are left humbled . . . This hope dwells within the land and within all life forms . . . Then we remember our relationship to the land. In this remembering, there is the re-awakening of community, and with community comes the commitment to do the necessary work of restoring the sacred web of life.¹

The young people we teach and serve are such a vital part of that “sacred web of life,” so we place great hope in them and in their future, especially when we equate them with the small bristlecone pine seeds that grow into trees that are the oldest living single organisms on the earth, some living

as long as five thousand years. These remind us that in education as in horticulture, we use a surprisingly common vocabulary to refer to the essential nurture of growing things: seeds and soil, roots and branches, flowers and fruit. And, they also cause us to take the long view regarding our teaching and its multi-generational effects.

Of Seeds and Sowing

Even before planting begins, commercial growers pay strict attention to the quality of the seeds they use. Seeds hold within themselves a vision of what could be, the imprint of the possible, the hope of potential. We, too, must look at the seeds of our craft—music itself, the ways in which we teach it, our own relationships with music and our students—and select the ones with the greatest potential to bear the most artistic fruit over the longest span of time. Instead of asking how quickly our seeds will bear flowers, our questions should be: How long will these flowers last? Which ones will return again and again despite the inevitable adversities of life? How spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually nourishing will be their fruits? One French chef made a clear statement about such nutritional qualities when he posted a sign I saw on the door of a restaurant in Paris: *Légumes frais servis selon le rythme des saisons* (Fresh vegetables served according to the rhythm of the seasons).

Zoltán Kodály directly related our topic to the formation of artistic taste and temperament in our schoolchildren: “The flowers of musical sense cannot spring to life if the seeds are not sown into the child’s soul. It is impossible to arouse interest in serious music in the later years of those adults who have grown up without it.”² His vision springs from his belief that village musical life connected to school music is the proper seedbed from which a national musical culture can grow if it becomes “rooted in the instinctive expressions of the people.” He went on to specify how “This is the only way to gradually create musicians. An understanding, inspired, and inspiring group must be formed around them from all layers of society and in this way the seeds of hope can be sown that the future generation will be susceptible to even higher quality music.”³

Then, too, seeds must be properly planted. It is the teacher’s task to distribute knowledge efficiently, not profusely. The father of modern

education, Czech-Hungarian Jan Amos Comenius (1592–1670), spoke clearly on this very matter four hundred years ago: “How many things can be explained in a few words? It is better to have a few gold pieces in one’s purse than a hundredweight of lead. Rightly does Seneca say of instruction: ‘Its administration should resemble the sowing of seed, in which stress is laid not on quantity, but on quality.’”⁴ Yet, our children are now growing up in a society overflowing with disconnected infobits that may very well constitute the “hundredweight of lead” of our day when what is really needed is continuity and connectedness. As an advocate of the transmission of complete oral tradition stories with their rich polyphonies of themes and plots, psychologist Clarissa Pinkola Estés wrote:

It is from innocent children that I learned what happens when a young soul is held away from the breadth and meaningful nuances of stories for too long. Little ones come to earth with a panoramic ability to hold in mind and heart literally thousands of ideas and images. The family and culture around them is supposed to place in those open channels the most beautiful, useful, deep and truthful, creative and spiritual ideas we know. But very many young ones nowadays are exposed almost exclusively to endless “crash and bash” cartoons and “smack ‘em down” computer games devoid of any other thematic components. These fragmentary subjects offer the child no extensive depth of storyline.⁵

The parallels between folk tale and folksong, and between storyline and melodic line are strong, and what is known about one usually holds true for the other. Accordingly, Estés also speaks to something that very much has to do with Kodály’s views on carefully choosing the seeds of children’s first musical experiences:

There is a “hearing capacity” in the psyche. It loves to listen to all manner of nourishing, startling, and challenging dramatic patterns – the very ones found in (folk) tales . . . There was a serious piece of advice given by the very old people in our family. It was that every child ought to know twelve complete stories before that child was twelve years olds. Those twelve tales were to be a group of heroic stories that covered a spectrum . . . from lifelong loves and loyalties, to descents, threats, and deaths, with rebirth ever affirmed. No matter how much “much” a person might otherwise possess, they were seen as poor – and worse, as imperiled – if they did not know

stories they could turn to for advice, throughout and till the very end of life.⁶

Of Roots and Soil

The first things to grow from a seed are its roots, and every gardener knows that optimizing the soil conditions for deep root growth is the key to successful flowering. Kodály knew this, too, when he spoke of the simultaneous musical nurture of the individual and the nation: "The crown of a tree grows as high as its deepest roots strike into the soil."⁷ About this, his former student László Dobszay explained how "we must accept the principle that pedagogy is above all about teaching children to acquire traditional values in the interest of the future. In possession of these values they will be capable of properly shaping their own world."⁸

Kodály spoke of being well-rooted as the connection between cultural identity and high art music:

Art is not possible without roots, and in my opinion as history teaches us, all fine art must be native to national roots. Then when this is developed to such perfection that it is understandable to other peoples despite its specifically national character, it does not mean that it managed to do so without roots. Music that is not rooted – or as they say, cosmopolitan music – can at most be used as superficial entertainment or dance music. Only that art which is deeply rooted in a motherland can make fundamental statements.⁹

And this brings us to a matter concerning us Americans and Australians – we, the twin freethinking outcasts of a formerly far-flung empire – something László Vikár, another of Kodály's students, once said to me:

Usually you say, "Oh, we don't have an oral tradition. We are a new country and we don't look back, we are just facing the future." It's very good on one side, but I don't think anybody in the world can miss their tradition and their past. So, you know the very beautiful example of Kodály's saying that: "A tree can only grow as high as its roots go deep." I feel that this will be something very interesting for the Americans to ask themselves: "Who are we?" Because this is probably one of the most burning problems: Who are the Americans?¹⁰

After 45 years of jump-starting the American Kodály initiative with a handful of "American" folksong collections, we are beginning to realize the importance of staying connected to the ancient folklore and folksong of the British Isles. Without in any way diminishing their original ethnic and regional characteristics, African-American, Western cowboy, Appalachian mountain, Caribbean, and Atlantic-Pacific fishery singing traditions – to name just a few – are all surprisingly informed by the Anglo-Celtic tune treasury. The point is that it is not artistically sound for us to ignore the very taproot from which our culturally unique yet linguistically related American, Australian and other English-language song branches have sprung. We have inherited a certain fundamental yet largely unspoken cultural patrimony of calendar customs, community rituals, interpersonal relationships, and a work ethic that are manifested in our folksong.

When Kodály spoke of roots, he meant *deep roots!* Early on, he and Bartók realized that almost every tiny Hungarian village had unique speech and folk life variables that generated equally distinctive bodies of text rhythms, dance meters, tonalities, and musical forms. They also discovered that the oral transmission of tunes occurs in layers, with the latest popular ditties floating on the surface with a tendency to obscure the more permanent layers. So they had to find out how to get down to the primordial bedrock tunes of their people. Digging down to these ancient footings became the basis for one of the most remarkable ongoing comparative initiatives found anywhere in the world. Now, members of the Hungarian Institute for Musicology are musically retracing their ancient migration routes back to their sources in faraway North-Central Asia. We can therefore expect that we will make equally astounding and enriching discoveries as we begin to gather into one place the tune-treasures of all English-speaking peoples. It is a matter of a balanced – not an either-or – approach to folksong-based curriculum research. And now we have the opportunity to celebrate how Judy Johnson is embarking on just such a deeper, more comparative journey into Australian folksong. It is the beginning of a great work that will need the willing efforts of many to answer the questions: *Who* are the Australians? *What* are their musics?

It is only at these deeper root-dwelling levels that any of us will be able to make meaningful and lasting musical connections with other peoples. America and Australia are plural societies, and what was just said above also applies to all of our constituent native and immigrant cultures. Each of our lands is blessed with the presence of first peoples and their remarkable worldviews and cultural expressions. Some Native American tribes have taken the initiative to come forth and suggest how their tunes and traditions can be used in English-speaking schools. As my friend and colleague, Dr. Clayton Long, recently told me: “We can see how the world is troubled and that it will benefit from learning how to ‘walk in beauty’ like we Navajos.” I have no doubt that the indigenous peoples of Australia will have something similar to say when they judge the time is right for their intervention. Somewhere, there is a universal musical root system interconnecting us all, but it is not required that any of us lose our cultural identity in order to find it.

This universal nourishing network is oral tradition itself, which according to Frederick Turner is where “a unifying literary theory may begin to take shape” because “the roots of oral tradition reach back as far as our scholarship can trace” and because of its powerful affect on cognitive processes, its “cultural universality” pointing to “a shared human inheritance,” its performance rules and structures, and its “profound involvement with speech acts.”¹¹ Eighty years before Turner came to those conclusions, Kodály the linguist had already defended his doctoral dissertation entitled *The Strophic Structure of Hungarian Folksong* in which he described the tight dynamic relationship between speech rhythm, song rhythm and melodic line existing in folksong.¹² Who knew that the key to a nation’s secret garden of musical delights would be in the safekeeping of the likes of gentle Dickon, a truth that caused Ralph Vaughan Williams to exclaim: “There in the fastnesses of rural England was the wellspring of English music; tunes of classical beauty which vied with all the most beautiful melody in the world, and traceable to no source other than the minds of unlettered countrymen [and women] who liked what they made and made what they liked?”¹³

Of Flowers and Fruits

Roots exist to produce flowers and fruit, which in their turn exist to perpetuate the life of a plant or

a tree. This natural cycle inspired the following metaphor by music psychologist Edgar Willems:

In the first stages of musical education, one can never give too much care to the roots of the young plant. One must be wary of superficial results, particularly of those obtained through instrumental practice. Progress in connection with instrumental technique separated from musicality produces more flowers than the roots can feed. Thus, sensitive students often have the impression that they are engaged in work that surpasses them and which requires the help of a teacher in even the smallest details. They have been trained rather than educated.¹⁴

And in this we have perhaps the most difficult aspect of our work: how to help parents, administrators, other music educators, and often even our own students get beyond equating music with the acquisition of “fingers” without also obtaining musical “ears,” “heart,” and “mind.”¹⁵ Moving our communities toward supporting our efforts to get these four healthy musical growth factors into proper balance is one of the trademark tasks for implementing the Kodály vision in school music. Anything less will always produce a superficial crop of performance fruit with a dreadful post-schooling drop off rate instead of the necessary critical mass of dedicated amateur music makers who will sustain the serious music life of a society.

The solution to this dilemma comes from the simplest of sources: children and their traditional rhythm-rich and melody-rich singing games. According to Dobszay, “most traditional children’s games know much about mysticism [and] the symbolic values of intellectual existence as well.

... [They] may even serve as a model of what it means to be absorbed in music.” He goes on to say how it is up to music teachers “to create this atmosphere again and again, to make the sounds themselves interesting,” and “to play with the sounds, not to use them as a pretext for playing.”

If we conduct our music teaching and learning with such “sounds filling the class and penetrating the spirit,” then such music making will “assume a power that holds teacher and pupils spellbound alike.”¹⁶ It is this affective, motoric, and cognitive richness of natural childhood musical experiences

that sets a child's musical roots deep enough in the psyche to prepare for a lifetime flowering of essential musical attitudes and skills.

Deeply rooted experiences bring forth a proliferation of artistic flowers, which many authors have described in some detail. For Edmund Bolles, our perceptual ways of knowing constitute a "a producer of sensations, of subjective experience" in which "conscious meaning rather than objective knowledge is the fruit of perception."¹⁷ Frederick Turner wrote that "Art is culture communicating with itself and generating a new spring, like the flowers of Botticelli's painting cascading from the mouth of April...It is not authoritarian but infinitely vulnerable; all you have to do is to stop listening or watching or reading and it goes away."¹⁸ Keith Swanwick celebrated how much we need music because it is independent of words but by no means inferior to verbal knowledge because the arts are "fully-flowering systems of precise and richly articulated forms, requiring layers of experience and insight if we are to understand them."¹⁹ And Erzsébet Szönyi, yet another of Kodály's brilliant student-colleagues, reminds us that "school music is not merely a subject in itself, but a powerful means to educate a multitude of other branches of knowledge, not least those of the arts."²⁰

Conclusion

Many more experts could and should be cited, with their extraordinary breadth and depth of insight into our topic of musical growth for home, school, and society. But there is also great wisdom in those who outlive us, who were here before us, and who will hopefully continue after us. I speak of trees, beginning with the 5000-year-old bristlecone pines mentioned earlier, the oldest *single* living organisms on the planet. Each of us is like one of those single trees: we may not physically live that long, but our teaching certainly has the potential to influence the course of individuals and families for generations. Yet there are two even older living organisms on the planet, one a colony of 47,000 quaking aspen trees sharing the same root system and covering 43 hectares (110 acres, or nearly half a square kilometer), considered the largest and oldest living thing on the surface of the earth. It is named *Pando*, Latin for "I spread", is tens of thousands of years old, and ironically lives in Utah very close to the bristlecone pines. Ironically again, the second is here in Australia, the Great Barrier

Reef, an immense underwater garden, considered to be the oldest and largest living thing composed of single organisms *not* having a common root system, but who have joined together to make a difference. It, too, is equally old.

These two flourishing beings bring great hope to those who teach, lessons about initiative, about persistence, about continuity, about permanence, about faith, hope, love, and beauty. Let us find great inspiration in their monumental examples as we contemplate *Advice from a Tree*, a poem by Ilan Shamir

*Dear Friend,
Stand Tall and Proud
Sink your roots deeply into the Earth
Reflect the light of a greater source
Think long term
Go out on a limb
Remember your place among all living things
Embrace with joy the changing seasons
For each yields its own abundance
The Energy and Birth of Spring
The Growth and Contentment of Summer
The Wisdom to let go of leaves in the Fall
The Rest and Quiet Renewal of Winter*

*Feel the wind and sun
And delight in their presence
Look up at the moon that shines down upon you
And the mystery of the stars at night
Seek nourishment from the good things in life
Simple pleasures
Earth, fresh air, light*

*Be content with your natural beauty
Drink plenty of water
Let your limbs sway and dance in the breezes
Be flexible
Remember your roots*

Enjoy the view!²¹

Endnotes

- 1 Lovejoy, Vaughn (1998). www.treeutah.org, edited for clarity.
- 2 Kodály, Zoltán (2002). *Music Should Belong to Everyone*. Budapest, Hungary: International Kodály Society, p. 90.
- 3 Ibid p. 9.
- 4 Jan Amos Comenius "The Great Didactic—Chapter XIX" in Piaget, Jean, et al eds. (1957). *John Amos*

- Comenius 1592–1670—Selections*. Introduction by Jean Piaget, Director, International Bureau of Education. Paris: UNESCO, p. 73.
- 5 Estés in Campbell, Joseph (2004). *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. xxxii.
- 6 Ibid, edited for clarity
- 7 Kodály in Dobszay, L. (1992). *After Kodály - Reflections of Music Education*. Kecskemét, Hungary: Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, pp. 21–22, quoting *Visszatekintés* I.55
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Kodály, Zoltán (1966). *Mein Weg zur Musik - Fünf Gespräche mit Lutz Besch* (My path to music). English translation by Jerry L. Jaccard, publication pending. Zürich, Switzerland: Peter Schifferli Verlags AG «Die Arche», p. 85.
- 10 Vikár, László (August 18, 1993). Interview with Jerry L. Jaccard at the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut.
- 11 Turner, Frederick (1985). *Natural Classicism: Essays on Literature and Science*. New York: Paragon House Publishers, p. 6.
- 12 Kodály, Zoltán (1906). *A Magyar Népdal Strófa-Szerkezete* [The strophic structure of Hungarian folksong]. Doctoral dissertation, Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary, n.pn.
- 13 Ralph Vaughan Williams in Sharp, Cecil J. (1965). *English Folk Song - Some Conclusions*. Fourth Edition, prepared by Maud Karpeles. Belmont CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company Inc., p.vii edited for punctuation and clarity.
- 14 Willems, Edgar (1956, 1987). *Les Bases Psychologiques de L'Éducation Musicale* [Psychological Foundations of Musical Education]. Translated by Jerry L. Jaccard, publication pending. Bienne, Switzerland: Éditions «Pro Musica», p. 20.
- 15 Kodály in Bónis, F., ed. (1964). *The selected writings of Zoltán Kodály*. New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., pp. 163, 196, 197.
- 16 Dobszay, László (1992). *After Kodály - Reflections of Music Education*. Kecskemét, Hungary: Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, pp. 55–65
- 17 Bolles, E.B. (1991). *A Second Way of Knowing - The Riddle of Human Perception*. New York: Prentice-Hall Press, p. xxi.
- 18 Turner, Frederick (1995). *The Culture of Hope: A New Birth of the Classical Spirit*. New York: The Free Press, p. 1.
- 19 Swanwick, Keith (1988). *Music, Mind, and Education*. London, New York: Routledge, p. 47.
- 20 Szönyi, Erzsébet (1973). *Kodály's Principles in Practice*. New York: Boosey & Hawkes, p. 69.
- 21 Shamir, Ilan. www.YourTrueNature.com, accessed 21 August 2008.



Looking for classroom resources, games, activities, worksheets and more.

Look no further than Crescendo Music Education.

www.crescendo.com.au is bounding with fun and helpful teacher resources.

Check out the FREE Downloads and subscribe to the FREE newsletter.

Become a member for only \$50 per year and receive access to exclusive resources,

Worksheets, Teaching Ideas, Repertoire, Games, Activities, Clip Art and more.

To register and become a member go to www.crescendo.com.au, click on "register" in the Login section in the bottom right corner. Follow the prompts.

Join today and begin enjoying all the resources this great site has to offer.

www.crescendo.com.au

BLOOM WITH MUSIC

by Judy Johnson

Australian and international Kodály Music Educator and author



Judy Johnson

Bloom with Music – what a wonderful title for our National conference which begins today. It conjures up thoughts of growth and transformation; spectacle and colour – all adjectives we would gladly associate with our continued search for the very best way to help children everywhere obtain their musical heritage. Looking for the best way continues to be the driving force for the music educator. In this we are guided by the words of Zoltán:

“Evolution is a gradual process without leaps and there is no progress without accepting the natural laws of nature. As a house must be built from the foundation upwards, the base of music culture must also be rooted in the instinctive expressions of the people. This is the only way to gradually create musicians. An understanding, inspired and inspiring group must be formed around them from all layers of society and in this way the seeds of hope can be sown that the future generations will be susceptible to even higher quality music.”¹

Carl Seashore was an American psychologist who lectured on philosophy and psychology at Yale University. He had musical training as a young man and in the later years of his career he made extensive studies of the problems of musical psychology. He devised various tests of intellect, feeling, imagination, memory and so on and in the preface to his book “Psychology of Music” he described musical talent in this way:

“Musical talent is a hierarchy of talents, branching out along certain trunk lines into the rich arborisation, foliage and fruitage of the tree, which we call the musical mind”.²

This is the musical talent that comes to us as music educators to be developed and nurtured and the title of this conference and its analogy of blooming and growing is very apt to our approach to teaching children. The good gardener knows that the spectacle of a beautiful garden does not happen without planning and it doesn't happen overnight. The secret is in the planning. The gardener has to know what the garden will need. He or she needs to read and learn the best way to achieve the results they want. The music educator needs nothing less. We need to be prepared: to learn what our students need and plan the best way to give it to them.

The good gardener works hard. Preparing the garden bed is not easy but it has to be done if the garden is to be fruitful. The gardener needs to fertilize the soil to carefully plant the seeds, to water the beds and after the seeds germinate to watch and deal with the pests and insects which may still spoil the overall effect unless they are dealt with. The gardener also needs to prune prudently, to cut out weak and deformed branches so that the central trunk of the plant will thrive.

The music educator's preparation is long and is really never finished. To “fertilize” his or her work they must continue to read, to attend conferences such as this, to meet with other educators to

compare notes and learn from one another; and the problem of “pests and insects” is by no means restricted to the garden. Our “pests and insects” appear as badly or non-trained teachers, who (often through no fault of their own) are expected to implement music programs in schools, or teachers with little knowledge or training, who, after attending one or two workshops, suddenly appear as the experts in a field. The pruning shears are as necessary for the music educator as they are for the gardener!

Even after a wonderful flowering, or an abundance of fruit, it all then needs to be done again. The season is finished and it is time for the gardener to think about what has been done. Was there a better way that would have achieved better results? The cycle never finishes and in teaching we face almost the same problems.

From the many writings of Kodály we could summarize his thoughts on music education quite succinctly.

1. Music is an indispensable means of human education which should be available to all and in all education programs;
2. Beginning tuition should be with the singing voice and the young child;
3. Only music of the highest value should be used, be it folk or composed song or the music of the masters.

Kodály supported the first of these, “Music as an indispensable means of human education”, with these words:

The purpose of music is not that it should be judged, but that it should become our substance. Music is a spiritual food for which there is no substitute; he who does not feed on it will live in spiritual anaemia until death. There is no complete spiritual life without music, for the human soul has regions which can be illuminated only by music.

The purpose of music is to understand better; to evolve and expand our inner world. Legends of many peoples deem music to be of divine origin; thus, when we have reached the boundaries of human understanding, music points beyond, into a world that cannot be explored but merely guessed at.”³

Music as an indispensable means of human

education can be achieved by one means only. Music, as a subject, must be restored to the prominent role it played in schools of ancient times. Plato suggested:

*Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythms and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul.*⁴

These thoughts were endorsed by Martin Luther:

*We must teach music in schools; a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard him . . .*⁵

One could move through the centuries quoting similar thoughts and yet here today in 2008, we are continually having to justify our existence. Continually having to fight the concept that music is a Cinderella subject becomes tiring to say the least. How can we make people understand the words of Shinichi Suzuki:

*Teaching music is not my main purpose, I want to make good citizens. If a child hears fine music from the day of his birth, and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. He gets a beautiful heart.*⁶

In the second point, “Beginning music with the singing voice”, Kodály was simply reiterating the wisdom of centuries.

St. Augustine: *Sing with your voices, and with your hearts, and with all your moral convictions, sing the new songs, not only with your tongue, but with your life.*⁷

William Byrd: *There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voices of Men, where the voices are good, and the same well sorted and ordered.*⁸

John Ruskin: *If you have any soul worth expressing, it will show itself in your singing.*⁹

Ralph Vaughan Williams: *The human voice is the oldest musical instrument and through the ages it remains what it was, unchanged; the most primitive and at the same time the most modern, because it is the most intimate form of human expression.*¹⁰

Of course the list could go on but there is also a

practicability to the use of the singing voice. We all have one and so do all of our students. They don't cost us anything and that suits many an administrator but most important of all, using the singing voice works. Using the singing voice is an effective way to begin a musical education, providing the teacher knows what to do with it, and providing the teacher encourages and compliments the learner in an honest way to develop their confidence and skill.

Daniel Webster Hoyt in his “A Sermon in Rhyme” said this:

*If you hear a song that thrills you,
Sung by any child of song,
Praise it. Do not let the singer
Wait deserved praises long.
Why should one who thrills your heart
Lack the joy you may impart?*¹¹

And what of “Beginning with the young child?” In her book, “Music, Young Children and You”, Doreen Bridges says:

*Early childhood is the best time to help children to develop positive attitudes to music and to give them experiences which will provide a firm basis for later music learning when they are ready for formal music lessons. ... Just as their all-round development is bound up with their musical development, so their musical development can contribute to other facets of development – their thinking processes, language development, control and co-ordination of body movements ... their ability to relate to others and development of self-control and self esteem ... Probably no other single pursuit has the potential to do so much for the child.*¹²

Kodály put it even more succinctly:

*....the smaller the child, the more easily it learns, the less it forgets.*¹³

And so to our final point that “Effective music programs function best when good music is used”.

In his book “After Kodály”, Laszlo Dobszay quoted these words of Kodály:

“Good music has a general human educative function because it radiates a sense of responsibility and

*moral earnestness. Bad music lacks all these and its destructive force may have such dimensions that it undermines one's faith in the moral law”.*¹⁴

Dobszay continued,

*“The role of music in education cannot thus be separated from the delicate issue of distinguishing good music from bad. Moreover, it must be claimed that music education is justified by the works of the greatest masters alone.”*¹⁵

Dobszay later pointed out that Kodály used the analogy of the gardener to describe the need for good music in music education programs. Kodály said:

*In botany the victoria regia and the weed on the roadside are two subjects of equal rank. As for the gardener, he destroys the weed.*¹⁶

And later he wrote:

*If we do not sow the seed of the beauty found in music in tender years it will be vain to try it later on; the soul will have already been overgrown with weeds. Is there any nobler vocation than to sow the first good seeds in a new garden?*¹⁷

And finally he said:

*Just as weeds occur in much greater abundance in nature than useful plants and just as the gardener is weeding daily and fighting continually against the weeds, so must the educator as a good gardener, steadily protect his saplings from and against bad music.*¹⁸

If you like what you see and hear at this conference go away and use it. Denise Bacon put it this way.

*Be the best teacher you possibly can, but don't say you are teaching Kodály, for you are not, you are teaching music! And furthermore, you are not just teaching music – you are teaching people music.*¹⁹

As music educators we need to be continually reminded of these truths – because truths they are. Students of all ages need dedicated, well trained teachers supported by administrators who understand that failing to provide the resources needed for good music education is detrimental,

not only to the students, but also to the cultural development of the Nation.

Let me finish with some words of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius.

If your plan is for 1 year, plant rice;

If your plan is for 10 years, plant trees;

If your plan is for 100 years, educate children.

References

1. Zoltan Kodaly, Visszatekintés Vol.III, 1989 "The Example of Kecskemét", 1930, p.23
2. Carl E.Seashore, Psychology of Music, 1938, Preface.
3. LP (SB HED 0001-3). The Kodaly Concept of Music Education by Helga Szabo. London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1969, Ed. By Geoffry Russell-Smith: "What is the Purpose of School Music Societies,"
4. Plato, Republic.
5. Martin Luther, Table Talk, 1569.
6. Shinichi Suzuki quoted in Reader's Digest November 1973
7. St. Augustine (354-430)
8. William Byrd, Reasons ...To Persuade Everyone to
Learn to Sing, 1588
9. John Ruskin, Sesame and Lilies, 1865
10. Ralph Vaughan Williams, National Music, 1934
11. Daniel Webster Hoyt, A Sermon in Rhyme, 1878
12. Doreen Bridges, Music, Young Children and You, 1994, Hale & Iremonger Pty.Ltd. p.14.
13. Zoltán Kodály, Visszatekintés Vol.III, Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1989.
14. Zoltan Kodaly, Visszatekintés (Retrospection), Ed. F.Bónis, Budapest, 1974.
15. László Dobszay, After Kodály, Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, Kecskemét, 1992, p.18
16. László Dobszay, After Kodály, Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, Kecskemét, 1992. p.18.
17. László Dobszay, After Kodály, Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, Kecskemét, 1992, p.18.
18. László Dobszay, After Kodály, Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, Kecskemét, 1992, p.20
19. Denise Bacon, Hold Fast to Dreams, p.175

ANIMAL SOUNDS

CD, Booklet, Set of Animal Cards
and Colour Master for Reproduction

Limited stock - sale price until December only \$12 including postage!

The purpose of the Animal Sound CD Pack has been achieved! The goal was to encourage listening in silence with the most challenging age groups of children aged 1-3 yrs. Through concentrated listening the child's memory is developed where recall and 'thinking' becomes an exciting challenge particularly for older children who can't wait to verbalise their logical responses. You can almost see the little cogs turning in the minds of these children and teachers who are equally challenged to recall the various animal sounds vocalised in succession.

A children's gift with a difference!
Ideal for Christmas, Birthdays and giving for no reason at all!

Available from:
Music Lyons (Gail Godfrey)
gc.godfrey@hotmail.com
Ph: 07-3801 1154

MUSIC EDUCATION, RIGOUR AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING: UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE KODÁLY APPROACH

by James Cuskelly

Co-ordinator of Music Education and Aural Studies at The University of Queensland



James Cuskelly

The title of this paper highlights particular concepts within education but I would like to start with some questions. Throughout my teaching career I have always wondered what rigour in music education is and whenever I find myself musing on this question I am always forcibly struck but what it is not. It is not a badly composed pop song that is to be performed in an annual, once-off event across the nation. While there may be some justification for what is clearly a media stunt – and I certainly applaud anything that causes the entire country to focus on music education – such an event does not recognise the cumulative and substantial discipline-specific knowledge needed for effective and long term participation in music. Similarly, rigour is not evident in the moves in at least one Australian state to equate years of discipline and commitment in the learning and mastery of a musical instrument with 'playing the CD'. I acknowledge that students have their own

preferences in 'selecting repertoire' and it is good to remain conscious of the tastes and preferences of the students we teach, but playing the CD hardly equates with the years of discipline associated with instrumental performing. Again, musical rigour is not evident in computer assisted software that allows students who are entirely lacking in core theoretical and stylistic knowledge and notational skills to produce compositions consisting of electronically generated loops and downloaded samples. Yes, such activities may promote accessibility to music and students certainly enjoy these activities but let us not confuse accessibility and enjoyment with rigour. While I don't mean to sound harsh or cynical here, the point to be made is that we need to be clear in our understanding of such terms and the ways in which such ideas pertain to our discipline.

To return to my initial musings about rigour in music education, I wonder if certain activities require more intellectual prowess than others? Is performing more demanding than dictation? Do the generative activities of improvising and composing present greater challenge for students than writing an historical essay? Is listening for particular structures more difficult than memorising rhythmic patterns? There is no immediate answer of course because each of these activities represents a particular facet of music and significant challenge may be found in any of these areas of endeavour. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that music is a multifaceted art form that requires high levels of intellectual functioning across a range of seemingly disparate activities. Dealing with this range of knowledge is a particular form of complexity in itself and the development of student understanding of the intricacies of each of these core areas as well as the development of an understanding of the ways in which these somewhat specialised spheres of knowledge are connected represents another layer of challenge for both students and educators. It must also be

acknowledged that student ability generally varies across the spectrum with most excelling in one aspect over others. Given this, it is not surprising that many approaches to music education are reductionist, choosing to focus on one core area only. Thus, we have entire systems which are predicated upon performance – as in the AMEB, Trinity College and Royal Schools of Music or the Band methods common across the USA – while others focus on listening (as in the Music Education as Aesthetic Education) or composing (with advocates like Burnard, 2000, 2002; Paynter, 1972, 1982, 2000; Schaeffer 1965). The point to be made is an emphasis on one aspect of music provides only a partial understanding of the multifaceted complexity of music. I believe that it should be our goal to develop and implement approaches to classroom music education which more properly reflect the inherent nature of music.

Does recognition of these core areas in music then suggest separate intelligences in each of these areas which require individualised attention and development? Given such a scenario, music educators would be faced with an endless fragmentation of focus. It is my belief that all music activity – listening, composing or performing, whether instrumental or vocal – need be underpinned by processes of music thinking. Gordon refers to this musical thinking as audiation and explains that

Audiation is to music what thought is to language. Consider language, speech, and thought. Language is the result of the need to communicate. Speech is the way we communicate. Thought is what we communicate. Music, performance, and audiation have parallel meanings. Music is the result of the need to communicate. Performance is how this communication takes place. Audiation is what is communicated (1999, p. 42).

Kodály’s concept of musicianship and inner hearing – the ability to *hear and comprehend* music in the mind – is closely aligned with that fundamental tenet of music learning theory, audiation. While Kodály teachers (and many others) use the term “inner hearing”, there is great resemblance between this term and “audiation”, and it is clear from Kodály’s writings that he believed that the development of sophisticated inner concept of the music was a matter of unqualified significance. Kodály’s belief in the

pre-eminence of musicianship is clearly evident in his famous address “Who is a good musician?” (1953) when he states: “Developing the ear is the most important thing of all” (1974, p. 186).

For Kodály, the “inner ear” was an essential characteristic of the well trained musician, and this ability was fundamental for all of the activities in which musicians may be engaged. Despite criticisms that Kodály music education is too restricted and prescriptive (DeVries, 2001), it is clear that Kodály’s conceptualization of the inner ear was extremely broad. For example, he believed that a performer was a good musician only if they could “guess in a new piece and know in a familiar piece what is coming – in other words, if the music lives not only in your fingers, but in your head and your heart, too” (1974, p.190). For Kodály, it was insufficient that a performer had mastered the notes, and a grasp of the melody alone was also considered short of the mark. “Your pieces must not be in your ten fingers only: You must also be able to hum them without a piano. Train your imagination until you are able to retain not only the melody but also its corresponding harmony” (1974, p. 187). Clearly, Kodály did not restrict music education to mere technique or physical co-ordination but believed that it was the workings of the musical mind that was of greatest significance.

Unlike much contemporary thinking about generating original music, Kodály believed that composing too was essentially a product of the mind’s ability to imagine sounds. Importantly, he did not believe that it was satisfactory for the would-be composer to have some vague impression of the new work. Rather, he considered that a composer who was a *musician* was able to use their inner hearing in an extremely sophisticated manner. “When you start composing, do everything in your mind first. Only when the piece is quite ready should you try it out on an instrument” (1974, p. 191). Kodály refers to this stirring of the “inner sense of sounds” as a “matter for rejoicing” (p.191), clearly indicating that such mental processes were held in high esteem.

The Kodály philosophy is characterized by singing: “Try to sing, however small your voice, from written music without the aid of an instrument. This will sharpen your ear” (1974, p. 187). Kodály believed that the “essence” of all music education could

be expressed in one word, *singing* (p. 206), as it was the singing that most powerfully promoted the inner hearing. The sequential and intensive development of an internalized and sophisticated sense of aural musicianship based on singing remains one of the key cornerstones of Kodály philosophy and practice.

The other concept under scrutiny here and this is the notion of higher order thinking. In the broader educational context, higher order thinking is generally associated with words like synthesise, generalise, explain, or hypothesise and in this light is cast entirely within a verbo-linguistic framework. When I try to apply this thinking to music I am confused because in my understanding the primary carrier of meaning in music is musical sound not words. I would posit that higher order thinking in music is not constrained within a verbo-linguistic framework and that reducing musical understanding and meaning to words fails to evidence an understanding of the nature of music. While it is absolutely fine to reflect upon and discuss aspects of music, the fundamental nature of music is to be found in the sounds of music, and it is engagement with those sounds of music that must provide the arena to demonstrate higher order thinking in music.

While great energy has been devoted to empirical research in trying to understand what precisely constitutes musical intelligence, we do not yet have a lucid understanding of the precise sources of musical intelligence. Further, given the great diversity of musical expression both within and across cultural groups, exact definitions and descriptions of intelligent musical behaviour remain moot. However, it is my observation that practitioners within the field of music hold quite sophisticated ideas about what constitutes musically intelligent behaviour, and that this behaviour is readily identified, defined and assessed. Such an observation has resonance with Resnick (1987) who agrees that thinking skills resist precise definition but who goes on to point out that higher order thinking skills can be recognised when they occur. According to Resnick (1987) some of the characteristics of higher order thinking are the following: it is nonalgorithmic, it tends to be complex, it often yields multiple solutions and it involves the application of multiple criteria, uncertainty and self-regulation. Newmann and Wehlage (1993) agree that

when students engage in higher order thinking, an element of uncertainty is introduced, and instructional outcomes are not always predictable, but they also suggest that higher order thinking requires students to manipulate information and ideas in ways that transform their meaning and implications. Manipulating information and ideas through these processes allows student to solve problems and discover new (for them) meanings and understandings.

When I read that students need to solve problems and discover new meanings and understandings for themselves, I am reminded of a year 2 class that I taught. This class and I had been discovering all of the important components of a new rhythm and we had already discovered that the new rhythm had four even sounds on one beat, and that these sounds were twice as fast as *ti-tis* (quavers). At this point we were using a visual reinforcement and I had written the four stems on the board under a beat circle and joined them up with a beam. "Year 2, I don't think that we have drawn our new rhythm properly because we have used one beam to join them all together. However, we know that when sounds are joined together with one beam that we call them *ti-ti*. But we know that our new sounds are twice as fast as *ti-tis*. Can anyone think of a way that we can show that the new rhythm is twice as fast as *ti-tis*?" Immediately, one of the students, excitedly put up her hand and proclaimed, "We just need to use two beams because that would show that these sounds are twice as fast. Two beams equals twice as fast – do you understand Mr Cuskelly?" The students all agreed and I dutifully added the extra beam. It was so gratifying to witness the excitement of these students in being able to capture their understanding of this concept using an icon. The ability of the students to take their understanding of this new element and represent it in a visual form is a clear example of higher order thinking as it can be found in a year 2 music classroom. While such thinking is always carefully scaffolded and guided it is important to understand that such thinking is possible for even quite young students and that higher order thinking is not only evidenced in verbal forms.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise the enormous contributions to music education embedded in the Kodály approach, particularly in terms of discipline-specific intellectual rigour

and higher order thinking. From this discussion, it is clear that the ongoing development of musicianship and audiation skills constitutes core business in all situations of music education – in early childhood, the general music classroom, instrumental and choral rehearsals, or in the private teaching studio –and that it is this area of musicianship that continues to provide students with both challenge and satisfaction. It is imperative the music educators continue to grapple with key ideas within the broader educational context and that we apprehend the import of such thinking within the context of our own discipline. I am concerned that music education continues to labour under false assumptions about the nature of music performance and music intelligence and that, in order to progress, there is an urgent need to embrace a model of curriculum that fundamentally recognizes the nature of musically intelligent behaviour and organises learning to maximize opportunities for students to engage with and systematically develop their musical thinking. Such an approach provides pathways for all students to engage in and learn music in meaningful ways, and does much to ameliorate issues of the talent model. A key element of this approach is the conviction that all normally endowed students are capable of learning music. Such an approach would, therefore, devote less energy to determining which individual students were musically intelligent or talented in the initial instance and concentrate on organizing curriculum to maximize the construction of musical knowledge. Further, such a profoundly radical change in the way music education is conceptualized would do much to ameliorate the problems of access, elitism and accessibility, and in line with the philosophies of Kodály, offer pathways for the development of musically intelligent behaviour for all students.

References

- Adey, P. (1999). The science of thinking, and science for thinking: A description of Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education (CASE) [INNODATA Monographs–2]. Geneva, Switzerland: International Bureau of Education, UNESCO.
- Adey, P., & Shayer, M. J. (1994). *Really raising standards*. London: Routledge.
- Adey, P. (1999). The science of thinking, and science for thinking: A description of Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education (CASE) [INNODATA Monographs–2]. Geneva, Switzerland: International Bureau of Education, UNESCO.
- Adey, P., & Shayer, M. J. (1994). *Really raising standards*. London: Routledge.
- Burden, R., & Williams, M. (1998). *Thinking through the curriculum*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Burnard, P. (2000). How children ascribe meaning to improvisation and composition: Rethinking pedagogy in music education. *Music Education Research*, 2, (1), 7-23.
- Burnard, P. (2002). Investigating children's meaning-making and the emergence of musical interaction in group improvisation. *British Journal of Music Education*, 19, (2), 157-172.
- Carmichael, J. W. (1981). *Project SOAR (Stress on Analytical Reasoning) instructor's manual*. New Orleans: Xavier University of Louisiana.
- Chance, P. (1986). *Thinking in the classroom: A survey of programs*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- De Bono, E. (1985). The Cort thinking program. In J.W. Segal, S. F. Chipman & R. Glaser (Eds.), *Thinking and learning skills* (Vol. 1, pp. 389–416). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- DeVries, P. (2001). Reevaluating common Kodály practices. *Music Educators Journal*, 88, (3), 24-28.
- Feurstein, R., Rand, Y. & Rynders, J. E. (1988). *Don't accept me as I am*. New York and London: Plenum.
- Gordon, E. E. (1999). All about audiation and music aptitudes. *Music Educators Journal*, 86, (2), 41 – 44.
- Greeno, G. G., & Goldman, S. V. (Eds.). (1998). *Thinking practices in mathematics and science learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Halpern, D. F. (1992). *Enhancing thinking skills in the sciences and mathematics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Kodály, Z. (1974). *The Selected Writings of Zoltan Kodály*. London, New York: Boosey & Hawkes.
- Lipman, M. (1985). Thinking skills fostered by philosophy for children. In J.W. Segal, S. F. Chipman, & R. Glaser (Eds.), *Thinking and learning skills* (Vol. 1). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Marzano, R. J., Brandt, R. S., Hughes, C. S., Jones, F., Presseisen, B. Z., Rankin, S. C., & Suhor, C. (1988). *Dimensions of thinking: A framework for curriculum and instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- Newmann, F. M. and Wehlage, G.C. (1993). Five standards of authentic instruction. U. S. Department of Education and Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin.
- Nickerson, R., Perkins, D., & Smith, E. (1985). *The teaching of thinking*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Perkins, D. N., & Grotzer, T.A. (1997). Teaching intelligence. *American Psychologist*, 52, 1125–1133.
- Paynter, J. (1972). *Hear and now*. London, Universal Edition.
- Paynter, J. (1982). *Music in the secondary school: Trends and developments in class music teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Paynter, J. (2000). Making Progress with Composing. *British Journal of Music Educators*, 17 (1), 5-31.
- Schaffer, R. M. Toronto: BMI Canada Limited, 1965.
- Resnick, L. (1987). *Education and learning to think*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Resnick, L., & Klopfer, L. (1989). Toward the thinking curriculum: An overview. In L. Resnick & L. Klopfer (Eds.), *Toward the thinking curriculum: current cognitive research: Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Schoenfeld, A. (1992). Learning to think mathematically. In D.A. Grouws (Ed.), *Handbook of research in mathematics teaching and learning* (pp. 334–370). New York: Macmillan.
- Schoenfeld, A. (1999). Looking toward the 21st century: Challenges of educational theory and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 28(7), 4–14.
- Tishman, S., Perkins, D., & Jay, E. (1995). *The thinking classroom*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon..
- Zohar, A., Dori, Y. J. (2003), Higher order thinking skills and low-achieving students: Are they mutually exclusive? *The journal of the learning sciences*. 12(2), 145-181.

IKS BULLETIN ARCHIVES CD

A CD (in searchable PDF form) is now available with the first 30 years of International Kodály Society Bulletin publications (1976 – 2005).

This CD is an invaluable source of articles and research data. Drawn from 59 Bulletin publications, the 455 articles include photographs and general information about the International Kodály Society.

The materials are available in "Bulletin-form" (as an exact reproduction of the hard copy publication) and as "individual articles" per publication. Research can be done in every possible way: names of authors, subjects, titles, etc. Furthermore there is an excel file with an alphabetical list of the authors and the titles of their contributions, a read-me.doc and a file with the Hungarian font, necessary for certain search commands.

**This new IKS publication is particularly valuable
for researchers and libraries.**

**Cost to full members is US\$ 10 + postage costs
and for non-members US\$ 50 + postage costs.**

Kookaburra Music

Year Level

Music Workbooks

A series of year level music workbooks:

- ♪ Prepared and tested by practising music teachers
- ♪ Follows Qld Arts Syllabus for each year level
- ♪ Based on Kodály methodology

PLUS support materials:

- ♪ **Kookaburra Song Book** (13 original songs included in workbooks, with copiable music & lyrics, plus vocal & backing CD)
- ♪ **Kookaburra BackTracks** (3 backing CDs to accompany recorder/ instrumental pieces in 3 of the workbooks)



For more information, please visit our website www.kookaburramusic.com.au

Phone: (07) 3216 5486

Email: contact@kookaburramusic.com.au

SONGS SHE SANG TO ME: THE CENTRALITY OF MUSIC TO THE LIVES OF MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN

by Elizabeth Mackinlay
ATSI Unit, The University of Queensland

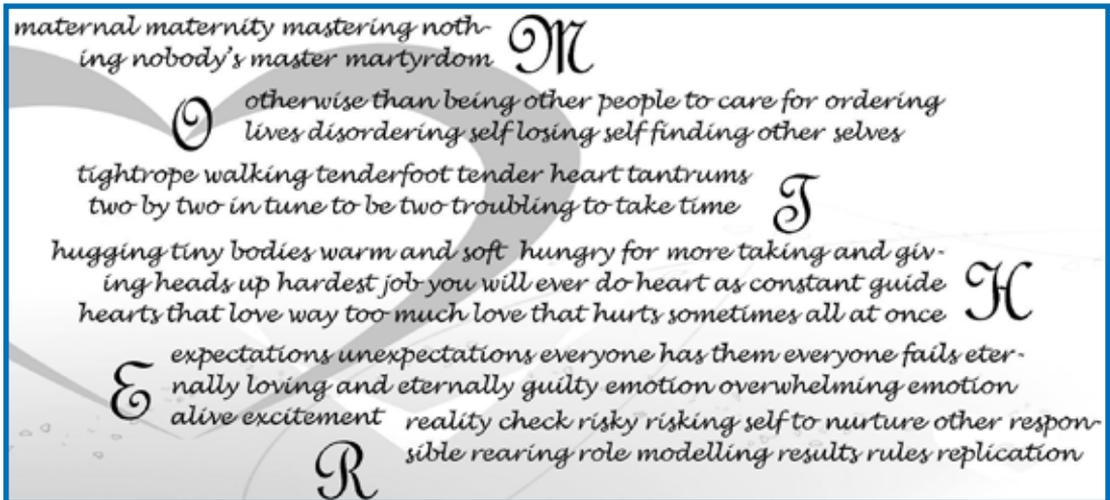


Figure 1: "By association": Liz's reflections on first time mothering, Journal entry, 21 November 2008

Introduction:

Remembering the songs she sang

My mother Lyn and my older sister Sally are sitting huddled next to one another on a floral lounge in our family home. It is July, the middle of winter in Ballarat. The sky outside is grey and foreboding, light drizzle is beginning to fall and I shiver as a cold and lazy wind starts to blow. As I set up my video camera and audio equipment, I look over and notice that my sister is having trouble keeping still

My first thought is that perhaps she is freezing too, but then I see her hands fidgeting in her lap, her toe tapping on the floor, and I wonder if she is nervous. I try to reassure her. "Hey Sals, don't be nervous, I'm not going to ask you anything you can't answer".

Her face crumples with uncertainty and worry as she looks back at me, "It's just that I don't want to say the wrong thing. You know me; I like to be prepared in advance, especially when I am going to be on camera".

"There is absolutely no way you can answer incorrectly – you are your own expert on mothering and that's why I wanted to talk to you and Mum about your experiences as children and as mother's with songs and music". I smile encouragingly and notice that Sally's shoulders have relaxed a little and she has stopped wriggling in her seat.

"I wonder if maybe you'd like to start by talking about any memories you have of women in our family singing?"

Sally doesn't answer right away and I can see her mind is busy taking her back to our childhood. "Probably my earliest memory probably would be of Nana Barlow's singing", she nods as she remembers, "You know, when we were young and Nana Barlow would sing I don't know, was it Amazing Grace or Danny Boy or something old, Old Shep?" Sally looks across at Mum expectantly. "Yes, my Mum – your Nana Barlow – used to sing a lot", Mum assures her.

"I can remember her singing too – if I close my



Photo 1: Sally and Mum at the beginning of our interview, July 2008

eyes and imagine hard enough, I can almost hear the sound of her voice”, I am close to tears and realise in that moment how much I miss my grandmother and how much I would love to listen to her sing once more. I clear my throat and continue. “So do you think Nana Barlow and her family sang a lot at home, do you think they could be called musical?”

Mum pauses, “I don’t think anyone played an instrument; I wouldn’t think they ever had any money to buy an instrument. Mum would have only been eight or nine when the great depression struck, so things were pretty tight. They lived in a Brunswick cottage with other migrant and poor families – it wasn’t quite as fashionable then as it is now. Like many people in those days, Mum used to talk about sitting around at night and singing, it was one way they could amuse themselves”.

I couldn’t help but think, if my memories of Nana singing to me are so strong, what about Mum’s? “What do you remember about Nana singing to you Mum?” I ask.

“Nana used to sing to me a lot – music was definitely in her – what do you call it?” She waves

her hand around in the air searching for the right word. “Mothering toolbox, that’s what I was thinking of! She had quite a nice voice actually. She would sing to me when I fell off my bike, when I was feeling a bit sooky and needed a cuddle, and when I was going off to sleep”.

“When I think about Nana Barlow singing to me, I am always snuggled up safe in her arms – it’s comfortable and familiar there as her voice wraps around me”, I add.

Sally who has been sitting quietly for some time, nods her head in agreement, “I suppose when I think about someone like Nana Barlow singing, her songs bring a sense of being together as families – a certain degree of comfort – and an overwhelming sense of belonging”. She stops speaking and we sit in silence. There is no need to say anything, we are all remembering the songs she sang and the gifts she gave to us as my Mum’s mother, and our grandmother, through singing.

This auto-ethnographic narrative is a remembering and framing of what music and mothering means to my mother, my older sister, and me. Our conversation about my maternal grandmother, her

singing voice, and the songs she sang reminded us of one of the very significant roles that music plays in the lives of mothers and their children – amongst other things, singing has the very real potential to bring the gift of belonging. A child feels connected and loved by her mother when she is cradled and sung to; and, in so many ways, song has the power to open up a place for a mother to receive the same sense of love and belonging in return. It is this aspect of music and mothering that I would like to talk further about in this paper. What does belonging mean for mothers and their relationship with their children, and how does singing facilitate the giving and receiving of this gift? Where does a mother belong when she cannot find her voice both literally and figuratively, and what role can we as music educators play in re-empowering women today with the gift of singing? In exploring the answers to these questions, I want to continue the autoethnographic conversation I had with my mother and older sister on that cold winter's day through narratives and poetry. In this way, I hope that you as reader might find a way to remember the songs your mother, aunt, sister, and/or grandmother sang to you or those you are singing to your own children and thereby join your memories, thoughts and emotions with mine.

Why an autoethnographic approach?

The talk show host looks at me expectantly. “Well, Liz”, he grins from ear to ear, “Are you ready? We go to air in two minutes!” I try to speak but nothing comes out. I can't believe how nervous I am. I'm sitting on a brown leather couch about to be interviewed by David Koch on the Channel 7 program “Sunrise” about auto-ethnography. I am still unsure about why they picked this topic, why they chose me, and why they would think it might interest their viewing audience. They must have auto-ethnography confused with something else, perhaps something to do with autobiography or automobiles. I tell myself to take a deep breath, in ... and out ... in ... and out ... Kochie's voice interrupts my attempt to remain cool, calm and collected. “Welcome back, you're watching Sunrise! And today we want the sun to rise on a topic that some of you might not know anything about, but believe me when I say it's the hottest and most exciting methodological innovation to happen in social science research and it's taking place right here, right now in Australian universities. Dr Mackinlay – can I call you Liz? Welcome to Sunrise!”



Photo 2: Mum having a cuddle with her mother, our Nana Barlow, when she was little

“Good morning David”, I stammer.

“So tell me, Liz, what is auto-ethnography and why would a researcher use that instead of a pie-graph?” Kochie asks jokingly and I can see he is trying to make me feel comfortable and at ease.

Trying to sound confident I reply, “Well auto-ethnography is a way of doing ethnographic work that makes space for a researcher to include and in fact privilege their lived experiences and emotions as a way of knowing”.

Kochie looks confused, “But doesn't too much emotion in academic work discredit the research, too much heart and not enough head?”

I was prepared for this common misconception and answer confidently, “Autoethnography should ‘broaden our horizons, awaken our capacity to care about people different from us, help us to know how to converse with them, feel connected’ (Bochner, in Ellis & Bochner, 1996, p. 26). Autoethnographers write about the world and their

Thinking poetically about belonging and motherhood

Knock knock knock/A new mother lifts her weary head/Places her precious cup of tea on the kitchen table/And automatically her pink fluffy slippers/Shuffle her heavy feet towards the door/"Coming!"/Her call is a whisper/She doesn't want to wake the baby.

Trying not to make a sound/The door creaks slowly and loudly anyway/As the mother opens her front door to this unexpected visitor/Her eyes take in the person standing on her doorstep/It's an immaculately dressed and made up woman in grey/Brief case in hand with homely curves in all the right places/Her stance and demeanour ooze a self-confidence and strength/The mother has long forgotten.

She looks down at her own clothing? Acutely aware that she is still in her yellow polka dot pyjamas/That she has not yet showered/Nor has any intention of doing so any time soon/The mother opens her mouth/To ask the woman what she is doing here/But she is too late/"Hello!" The woman barks.

"My name is Madonna Angelo, but my friends call me Mary/I'm with the agency/The mother has no idea what Mary is talking about/She shakes her head warily as a sign of misunderstanding/"Didn't they tell you I was coming? No?" Mary asks/The mother continues to look blankly at her/"I'm from the agency of motherhood/I'd like to welcome you to our club!"

The mother takes a protective step backwards/And moves to close the door on her visitor/"I don't mean to be rude/But I don't remember joining any club"/"Oh but you did!" The woman insists/"The moment your baby girl"/The mother frowns and interrupts/"His name is Max; my baby is a boy".

The woman does a quick double take/"Sorry, I meant to say baby boy/The moment your baby boy was born - /The act of birth gave you automatic membership"/The mother does not move, she does not speak/She just stares at the woman/Standing on her doorstep/With no intention of leaving.

The mother hesitate/Does she want to become a member of motherhood?/Most of the time she is so caught up/With feeding, settling, changing and holding her newborn/She has not yet had time to see herself as a mother/Most days she is not at all sure what it means/But she knows/It is not at all what she expected.

"No I'm sorry, you must be mistaken/I do not belong to this group called motherhood"/As the words escape from her mouth/Images flash in her mind/Her hands shaking as she tries to position/Her baby's mouth on her breast/Holding him close to her to comfort his cries/That seem to come too loud and too often.

"No", the mother says softly/"I don't really know what I am doing/I'm not a good enough mother"/The woman smiles kindly/And reaches forward to grasp the mother's hands/"Oh my dear girl, don't you see?/You don't have a choice!/You are a mother now/You belong to us".

Journal entry, 21 July 2005

Figure 2

experience of it – their writing is raw, passionate and full of emotion”.

Kochie doesn't say anything for a moment. I can almost see the cogs turning over inside his head as he tries to comprehend the implications this way of working has for research and researchers. “But doesn't that make you vulnerable as a researcher, if you choose to lay bare your soul in that way?”, he asks.

“Autoethnographers”, I take a deep breath as I begin to answer, “do indeed write from the heart as well as the head and generally speaking, don't want readers to sit back as spectators; they want readers to feel, care and desire, to become engaged, ‘emotioned’ and embodied readers provoked to critical self-reflection”.

“You keep talking about the people who read autoethnography, but how does a reader know they are reading autoethnography and not some other social science method?” Kochie is looking directly at me.

“This won't come as any surprise Kochie, but there are no hard and fast rules in regards to what autoethnography should look like – it can take the form of poetry, drawings, lyrical prose, ethnodrama and playlet, autobiography and episodic story-telling, and any combination of these”, I explain.

“So why do you do autoethnography then? How does it come out on the printed page?”, Kochie is curious.

“For many years now I have been researching musical motherhood. I've been exploring different ways of writing to try and capture the experience of being a mother and being a mother who sings to her children. Mothering work is emotional work and writing autoethnography gives me permission in a to share with you how it feels to hold my sleepy children in my arms and sing to them as they drift off to their dreams; how singing a song together eases all kinds of hurt bodies and feelings in our home; and, how life can be more fully experienced with music in the air that I live and breathe as a mother with my sons”. I stop speaking to see if Kochie is listening – really listening to what I am saying. He nods his head as a sign to continue.

“In a selfish way, I want my autoethnographic stories to become those of the reader by evoking a time, a place, a person, and a song sung by a female relative, guardian or mother each person was/is close to, whose voice made and makes them feel safe, loved and complete”, I explain. “Autoethnography allows researchers to bridge fiction with fact, to make a connection with readers so that they can understand particular topics and concepts with both their heads and their hearts”. I breath out loudly, glad to have finished my explanation. Kochie, however, is not finished with his questioning. “But Liz, doesn't that make you as a researcher, and perhaps even the people that you are working with – your research informants”, he begins and I cannot help but wince when I hear the word informant. It sounds so de-humanised and works to confine the people that we work with as objects rather than subjects who live, breathe, talk and feel. Kochie continues, “Doesn't that make you both somewhat vulnerable?”

I nod my head in agreement, “There's absolutely no doubt David that this way of researching is not for the fainthearted. Once you open this Pandora's box of emotion *and* intellect, who knows what might come flying out? (Behar, 1996, p. 19). It is, however, one of the most powerful ways to connect with people and create space for awareness, understanding and transformation to take place”

“Powerful indeed Liz, very powerful words. Thanks for joining us on Sunrise this morning!” The camera cuts away before I have a chance to thank Kochie for having me.

What does belonging mean for mothers?

My own experience as the mother of two sons, revealed to me just how important a sense of belonging was in terms of my ability to cope with my new role and to feel comfortable adding “mother” to my list of subjectivities. When Max was born, I felt terribly alone. My husband and I had moved to Brisbane for work and had left family behind in Victoria and the Northern Territory to pursue my academic career. All of my new friends in Brisbane were too young, too old or too career driven to be interested in listening to my frustrations, fears and failures as a new mother. Like so many other women in similar situations, I did not know what else to do but to turn to and try to take comfort from the words of baby and mothering experts. I

needed confirmation and assurance that the way I was mothering was shared and “good enough”. Like so many other mothers today, I turned to books, words and the writings of motherhood and parenting experts for some insight into how to “belong”. I bought and devoured everything I could try and understand the shift in my sense of self which had happened slowly but surely during the early weeks of Max’s life. To my dismay, most often I read about concepts of belonging for mothers and their children in relation to the baby rather than the mother. Using the language of bonding and attachment, much of this discourse emphasises that the “initial bonding experience with our mother is the first time we begin to create a sense of who we are, especially in relationships and how we feel about people ... This process creates the critical factors that make an infant feel safe, secure, and comfortable in the world” (Poulter, 2008, p. 53). Attachment as a newborn, Poulter further argues, “is the breath of your emotional life” (p. 63) and forms the basis for how successful you are in creating, forming and sustaining healthy bonds with close friends, family members and intimate partners later in life.

While I agree with Poulter’s general understanding of babies and attachment, I think to myself that he has failed to mention something extremely important. I sit and reflect for a moment on his words until a book on my shelf called *Making sense of motherhood* by Tina Miller catches my eye. I open the text and begin to read. Miller (2005, p. 14) writes that attachment as a mother to your newborn is also about feeling safe, secure and comfortable in terms of the biological and physical experience of carrying, birthing and nurturing a newborn baby; in relation to playing and performing a socially embedded and culturally located part as mother, and in terms of the ways an inherently embodied experience impacts upon a woman’s sense of self and presentation of self as a mother. Miller (p. 102) reminds us that “beginning to feel like a mother” is often a slow process and further comments,

Indeed each woman needs time to come to terms with and develop a social sense of self as mother; to jettison previous expectations of an essential, instinctive self as mother. Yet to those around her, family, friends and experts, as soon as her child is born, a woman becomes a mother, this powerful new identity overriding all others (Miller, 2005, p. 103).

Her new identity as a mother should be an obvious truth for women who have just had a baby. For many women though, the “truth of it all” takes some getting used to and they can fall dangerously into the gap between their old life and the new me (Stadlen, 2004, p. 208). My breath catches in my throat as my experience of needing to belong in my role as a first time mother rushes to stand alongside a sudden ontological understanding of what this means. The message I hear in Miller’s words are that while a woman may take time to belong in her new identity and roles as a mother – “to find where she fits” (Lavery, 2007, p. 1) - the social, cultural, and moral identity and roles inherent within the concept of mother have already claimed her as one of their own.

Singing to become, singing to belong, and singing to be a mother

Then my mother’s face filled my head, pushing everything else away. And it was with her hand that I patted Benjamin’s back until he was asleep and it was with her voice that I sang to him (Lazarre, 2001, p. 80).

How the divide between the physicality of becoming a mother and an ontological understanding of the subject position mother is crossed, ultimately varies for each and every woman. Some may never feel as they “belong” to motherhood and others seem to easily adapt to their new identity as a mother. In her interviews with new mothers, Stadlen (2004, p. 185) relates how many women told her that having a baby had not just changed their lives, it had changed their selves, suggesting that right from the moment a baby is born, his or her presence changes her. I was intrigued by Jane Lazarre’s account (see above quote) of her experiences as a first time mother. She openly tells of how she initially resented her baby, how she came to hate her self-perceived inability to meet his needs, and how she grew to loathe other women around her who seemed to be coping fine with the demands of motherhood. Significantly, Lazarre’s story ends with reference to the power of song to relieve and resolve the physical discomforts and emotional uncertainties she was experiencing as a first time mother. Just as my mother sang the songs of her mother to my sister and me, the songs Lazarre sang to her baby boy were those her mother sang. Lazarre’s words imply a certain type of strength and self-assuredness gained from remembering

and recreating her mother's voice to sing her own maternity. Singing enabled her to connect with her baby, to feel as she sings as though he is aware and responding to her, and that ultimately, her ability to meet her babies needs with a song means that she is now a good enough mother.

A letter from Liz to the editor of a parenting magazine

Dear Mums everywhere,

How on earth do I try and describe how singing to my sons has enabled me to find a comfortable place inside my skin, body, mind, heart and identity as a mother? If I were with you, standing right next to you so that you could see, hear and touch me, I would simply hold your hand and sing to you. I'm not sure which song I would choose. Most likely it would be one of my favourites. I would be having so much fun enjoying singing that you couldn't help but join me in delight and we would both begin to feel calm, loved and safe.

I can distinctly remember the day and moment that I realised how central singing was for me as a place to belong to motherhood. My eldest son Max was four months old and it was the day before my 30th birthday. Max had not slept all day but this was not unusual, he was that kind of baby. I always thought it was because he was too interested in what was going on around him and that his young mind could not comprehend that he also needed to rest. I told myself as long he is happy and healthy I can cope – almost. I won't lie, there were many times when I felt alone, depressed, frustrated, angry, absolutely exhausted from the inside out, a failure, and guilty because I couldn't cope or perform mothering very well. At times I don't think I coped at all, but I never told anyone. I loved my baby boy and didn't want anyone to think that I was not a good mother.

All of the baby experts – child health nurses, my general practitioner, older women I worked with – all told me that Max's sleeping patterns were not alright, he should be sleeping more. I tried, I really did try to get him to sleep. Do you know I was even convinced that controlled crying might be the answer? I tried it with Max only once. Once was more than enough. I couldn't bear the pain, torment and anxiety in his loud and piercing cries as I left the room. I couldn't bear the thought that I was walking away from him when he needed me most. He needed to feel like he belonged to me and that I would always be there for him. I had set the timer on the microwave for 2 minutes, just as my doctor had told me. I lasted 30

seconds and had him cradled in my arms within 45. On this cold afternoon in May eight years ago, Max was wrapped up snug and tight close to my chest in our baby carrier. He had been rubbing his eyes, pulling his ears, showing all of the tell tale signs of tiredness for well over two hours but had stubbornly refused to sleep. Now he was crying because he was simply exhausted. Still sobbing quietly as I cuddled him, I walked around the room and noticed a loose CD lying on the floor in front of our stereo. It was a Savage Garden album, one of my favourite Australian bands. I had bought the CD while I was pregnant with Max and had fallen in love with the harmonies and sentiment of their pop songs. "I knew I loved you before I met you", I murmured softly and then I found myself singing. Softly at first, but as my voice mouthed the words, I became louder and more confident. Max stopped crying and was staring up at me with his big baby blues. His breathing slowed down and he was quiet.

I kept on singing and I could see his long eyelashes drooping as if in slow motion. He was desperately fighting his tiredness but finding the comfort to be found in my singing voice too alluring. Finally, he slept. Maybe my heart and emotions are trying to romanticise the memory of this moment, but this image I have and hear tells me that I sang and sang and sang until I lost myself in the song and found motherhood.

I really do not know what I would have done – what kind of mother I would be today without music in my mothering toolbox. I hope you can find your voice as a mother and find a song worth singing so that you too can feel a sense of belonging to motherhood. Best wishes, Liz

A reply to Liz from an expert

Dear Liz,

Thank you for your honest and open letter about your experience of singing as a first time mother. I can certainly relate to your feelings of failure and frustration – in fact, I couldn't help but cry as I read. I'm not sure how you see yourself now as a mother but let me tell you, as a so-called "expert" what it is that I see when I read your letter. "I see a totally exhausted-looking mother, pale with dark shadows under her eyes, who miraculously has the energy to sing and rock her baby in a way that he is starting to recognise. I see him relax, and his tense body seems to melt in her arms. He isn't crying now. His whole being is attentive to the music and wonderful rhythm of the mother who is comforting so well.

It takes a long time until he finally reaches sleep. When he does, the entire room seems at peace. Something momentous seems to have changed. It has been a journey, a transition from distress into harmony. The mother looks up with a warm smile. The miracle was ... [yours but perhaps I have helped you] by being there and seeing what [you] do as 'something' (Stadlen, 2004, p. 258).
 Yours truly,
 Dr Naomi Stadlen

Conclusion: Belonging to motherhood through song

Sally, Mum and I have been talking now for well over an hour. Our conversation has shifted, swayed and sashayed through tears, laughter, shared experiences long forgotten, and our independent lives as grown up women. It's time to finish our interview but I have one final question I need to ask.

"We've talked a lot so far about the kinds of music our children love and the songs we sing to them but I'm curious, how do you see yourselves as mothers and where do you see music fitting as part of your identity or 'belonging' as a mother?"

Sally smiles wryly, "You mean apart from seeing me as ragged, tear away, always running, and flying by the seat of my pants?"

All three of us look at one another and share a conspiratorial giggle, we have belonged to motherhood long enough to know exactly what she means. We become quiet, each of us trying to find the words which might describe us as mothers and the role of music in our lives. Sally is the first to break the silence. Her voice is soft and heartbreakingly honest, "You know, I don't think I'm the perfect mother but I probably think I'm not a bad mother. I love my kids and I think my kids love me. It's the balance I find hard. You give yourself as a mother to your children, to your husband, and sometimes you have very little to give to yourself. But I am glad I am a mother and I couldn't think of anything worse in the world than *not* being a mother".

I clear my throat of tears that threaten to choke my voice and ask, "What about you Mum? How do you remember yourself as a mother and how do you see yourself today?"

"I used to love it really. I was home all the time and I loved it. Dad went to work and because I wasn't offered any maternity leave, I stayed at home and had my beautiful three girls. That was what all of my friends and family did as mothers back then. It didn't worry me, I loved it", she adds with a smile. Sally and Mum look across at me expectantly and I realise that they are waiting for me to say something; it's my turn to talk about myself as a mother.

"When I became a mum, it was you two that I wanted to be like. You were my role models, but we have and still do live so far away from each other; when Max was a baby I felt so alone. All of the conversations we had on the phone when he was just a new babe were so precious to me. When you say you're not sure if you are the perfect mother or not Sally, you were to me. You've both been wonderful role models for me".

Mum reaches across to hold my hand, "Yes, you girls had a very different first-time mothering experience to me. My Mum – your Nana – lived just around the corner and I saw her every day". "I think mothering is a lot harder today", Sally picks up on Mum's train of thought. "We had our children on our own without each other around us. Being able to sing – particularly knowing that the songs you are singing were the same ones your Nana or your Mum had sung to you as a baby – was a constant, almost like an unbroken maternal connection that we nurtured and sustained through singing".

"Maybe singing something familiar somehow made the distance between us seem a little less painful", Mum adds.

"Yes, and for me I thought, if I could sing to my children the way that you did Mum or the way Nana used to sing to me, then I could be a good Mum. Singing with, to and for my boys helped me to feel like my membership as a mother was validated – I sang my way into belonging as a mother". It seems like the right note to end our interview and we embrace warmly. Lying in bed later that night, reflecting on our conversation about mothering and music, I kept on returning to the same idea over and over again. When I held Max and Hamish in my arms as babies and began to sing, something quite extraordinary happened. Both boys would stop crying – perhaps not straight

away – but as their anxiety and upset dissipated with each new song or repetition of a verse, I also began to feel calm. I took pleasure in the song I was singing and the boys would watch me closely, sensing and responding to the change in my mood. We would then begin to relax into each other as the two of us become one by sharing an intertwined, interdependent and embodied experience of song. Holding my baby close to me, rocking gently from side to side while crooning our favourite lullaby, gave me the knowledge, strength and understanding to feel like I belonged to motherhood.

Acknowledgements

This paper would never have been written without the wonderful support and participation in this interview by mother Lynette Mackinlay and my sister Sally Cross. I want to thank them both for sharing their mothers' hearts with me. You have and always will continue to be an inspiration for me as a wife, a mother and a woman. Thanks also to my two boys Hamish and Max - you are the reason that I continue to write about music in my life as a mother, because without you, I would never ever know such magic existed.

References

- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Laverty, J. (2007). Finding a place where you fit: Meanings and understandings of young mothers. In P. L. Jeffrey (Ed.), *AARE 2006 International education research conference: Adelaide papers collection* [Online version]. Melbourne, VIC: Australian Association for Research in Education.
- Lazarre, J. (2001). Excerpt from *The mother knot*. In M. Davey, (Ed.), *Mother reader: Essential writings on motherhood* (pp. 61–80). New York, NY: Seven Stories Press.
- Miller, T. (2005). *Making sense of motherhood: A narrative approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Poulter, S. (2008). *The mother factor: How your mother's emotional legacy impacts your life*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.
- Stadlen, N. (2004). *What mothers do: Especially when it looks like nothing*. London: Piatkus Books Ltd.

Introducing...

Purely Pentatonic

Progressive and interactive exercises for building aural musicianship

About Purely Pentatonic

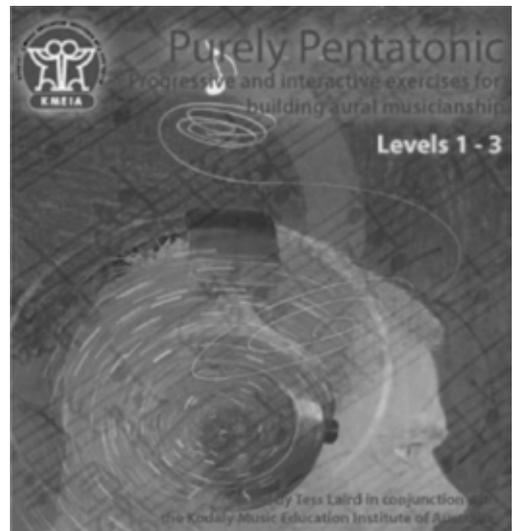
This CD is an exciting new resource for classroom and instrumental teachers. It contains carefully sequenced exercises and aural drills to help develop and practice relative pitch.

- A high quality recording
- A convenient way to practice – simply listen and sing along.
- Can be used to supplement lessons or Great for homework activities
- Both male and female voices are used
- Suitable for all ages and abilities – particularly relevant for older beginners
- Extension activities

Cost \$20 (Plus postage and handling)

Contact Jill on a/h ph (07) 4635 8772 or sales@kodaly.org.au

For bulk purchase rates and altered postage & handling rates for multiple purchases - or any further information.





Sound Thinking Australia invites you to be part of the

Summer School Music Program

*A well-trained ear
A well-trained intelligence
A well-trained heart
A well-trained hand*

Zoltan Kodály (1953)

03 – 15 January 2010

All Hallows School

- EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC
- PRIMARY CLASSROOM MUSIC
- SECONDARY CLASSROOM MUSIC
- CHILDREN'S CHORAL PROGRAM
- SECONDARY STUDENT PROGRAM
- VOCAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Earlybird registration closes Friday, October 30 2009
Standard registration closes Friday, December 11 2009

www.soundthinkingaustralia.com

and follow the links to the Summer School Music Program



Young Voices of Melbourne performing at Federation Square, Melbourne. Photo courtesy of Mark O'Leary.

CHORAL MUSIC IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS FOR CHILDREN WITH UNCHANGED VOICES: A MELBOURNE CASE STUDY

by Coral Rafferty

Deputy Director of Music, Haileybury College, Melbourne

Abstract

Community choirs for children in Melbourne began in 1939 with the Australian Boys Choir. The first girls' community choir, The Australian Girls' Choir, was founded forty-five years later in 1984 and the first community choir for boys and girls, The Australian Children's Choir, was founded in 1976. There are now at least eleven community children's choirs in Melbourne. This report shares the results of one section of a larger study of children's choirs in the Melbourne community. It focuses on two main questions relating to these children's choirs: Why do children with unchanged voices join community choirs? And what opportunities exist in Melbourne for children with unchanged voices to participate in community choirs? The findings support those from previous research studies that one of the overriding reasons that parents seek community choirs is to give their children a higher standard of choral and/or music education than the children may be receiving in their schooling. Although the opportunities for children to join community choirs

in Melbourne have been found to be somewhat inequitable (in terms of their rehearsal localities, their larger number of boys' choirs to girls' choirs and their different auditioning processes), the musical, educational, cultural, personal and social benefits of participating in one of these community choirs are undisputed.

Data

This section of my research has involved the detailed study of three choirs, through an analysis of three forms of data collected respectively from (i) interviewing their Music Directors and a representative parent (having a sound working knowledge of the choir and a perception of its influences on the children) from each choir, (ii) relevant documentation associated with each choir and (iii) a parent questionnaire. The questionnaire, developed with the specific objective of gaining some insight into the reasons why children participated in community choirs, was distributed

to a small number of parents of new choristers from each of the three choirs.

The original intention was to research a boys' choir, a girls' choir and two mixed choirs; however the opportunities to study a girls' choir are very few and attempts to locate such a choir within the time-frame of the project were unsuccessful. Girls are catered for in six mixed community choirs for children in Melbourne, and usually dominate these choirs in their ratio to male participants. An argument explaining the lack of girls' choirs could be that they are unnecessary, given that girls can and do participate in mixed choirs, however this argument could equally well be applied to boys. The long tradition of boys' choirs described in the full report could explain to some extent this apparent anomaly in gender opportunities.

For the purposes of this study, the three choirs participating in this study will be referred to as Choir A, Choir B and Choir C. Choir A represents the boys' choir, and Choirs B and C represent the mixed-gender choirs, the former from an outer south eastern suburb and the latter from an inner suburb of Melbourne.

General comparisons noted from the questionnaire responses from the three choirs

The questionnaires afforded the researcher the opportunity to make several generalisations about why children join community choirs, using the options chosen or comments made. From the questionnaire responses, the greatest similarities between the parents of the three choirs consisted of (listed in descending order of preference): the parents' desire to enrol their children in choirs that had a higher choral standard than was offered in their children's schooling; the chance for their children to mix socially with their peers of similar interests; and the opportunity for their children to access a level of music education not offered at their schools.

Most differences between the responses of parents from the three choirs related directly or indirectly to the varied methods of recruitment employed by the choirs. It was apparent that the mothers were more likely to have initiated their children's enrolment in the choirs, except in the case of Choir A where the children themselves were more often the first to consider joining the choir, following

an audition at their schools. Fathers were never cited as instigating the children's enrolment in the choirs. This could relate to the fact that their choral experiences as children were fewer than those of the mothers, or perhaps it is indicative of the mothers being the main decision-makers about their children's lives in these particular families.

Parents or close relatives had choral experiences as children in each of the selected choirs, although the only choir to have 100% of surveyed parents answering this question affirmatively was Choir C, and Choir B had the least representation of previous generations with choral experiences as children. The relative affluence of the location of Choir C and the fact that many of the parents in this choir were known to be musicians could explain the previous generation's greater exposure to choral experiences as children. The lack of previous choral experience in parents and relatives of the children in Choir B is more difficult to understand, although it may be conjectured that many of the parents had grown up in this outlying area and had possibly fewer choral opportunities. Choir B was formed only in 1986, with no known precursors in the area, and independent schools, where choral and instrumental ensembles tend to be more prevalent, were also fewer in this region during most of the past century.

General comparisons noted from the interviews with representatives of the three choirs

This collective case study gave a predictable mixture of possible generalisations about children's choirs in Melbourne and specific differences due to the individual characteristics of the three choirs studied. Generalisations that could be made from these choirs include that each choir aimed to achieve very high musical standards through the use of structured training levels within the organisations, their choice of high quality music, annual choral camps to learn repertoire more effectively and highly focused rehearsals.

Each choir reported a good rate of chorister retention, with only a few choristers leaving prematurely in their first year of membership when the new choristers and their families were unaccustomed and possibly un-suited, to the culture and expectations of the choirs.

There was a prevailing theme of perceived benefits for the choristers in all three choirs from both the parents surveyed and the Music Directors and parents interviewed. These benefits were considered to be musical, personal, social and educational, and these advantages were believed to be reinforced if the choristers had toured, particularly to other cultures.

Differences between the choirs were also associated with their particular recruitment methods (as was evident from the questionnaire responses). Choir A undertook auditions in local schools whereas the other two choirs relied on choristers approaching them to be auditioned. In the case of Choir B these auditions were not to decide whether the child would be accepted into the choir, but to ascertain which choir level within the organisation best suited the child.

Opportunities for retired choristers to return to their community children's choirs varied greatly. An annual invitation to ex-choristers was given by Choir A to return as tenors and basses to sing with the present choristers in an SATB choir. Choir B featured frequent guest appearances at annual concerts of the adult choir formed by some of its ex-choristers. Choir C had fewer opportunities to incorporate its alumni due to the overwhelming schedule of performances for the present choir and the lack of suitably sized venues at a reasonable cost.

The most obvious difference between Choir A and Choirs B and C was the gender of their choristers, as Choir A was solely for boys unlike the other two mixed choirs. As all three choirs catered only for sopranos and altos, the changing voice of adolescent boys affected the membership of each choir, but in particular that of Choir A.

The researcher would have expected that the ambience of the choirs would also vary due to the individual personalities of the conductors and choristers, the single or mixed gender of their clientele, the methods of instruction being employed, the particular ethos of each choir and the repertoire being studied and performed. Much of this is difficult if not impossible to tabulate, but it would seem likely that the differences would be apparent from observing each choir in succession. Because membership and repertoire changes in each choir from year to year, the individual

ambiences of these choirs would never be static.

Synthesis of Findings

This case study provided scope for the researcher to investigate why important area of music education for children in Melbourne appears to be difficult to reproduce in traditional school settings. Key findings about why children join community choirs in Melbourne and what community choral opportunities are offered in Melbourne add to research undertaken in Victoria over the final decade of the previous century. The findings confirm that the main factors relating to children's choirs have changed little over the past decade. Children still seek more challenging and more satisfying choral experiences in Melbourne's community choirs than they can access in their own educational settings.

The Music Directors and parents from the three choirs studied in this report were aware that the profiles of their choirs in the Australian community were not particularly high, and that the kudos of children belonging to these groups was lower than it might be for children in sporting groups. Although this was regretted, it did not appear to have a negative impact on the choirs or their choristers, except in contrast to the merit other achievements were often given in public. Choir C Parent commented on the excitement and support a boy received at her son's school for representing his state in a sporting team, and the disappointment her son felt that his representations overseas as an Australian chorister had been virtually ignored. The participation of choirs at the large sporting events goes some way to redressing this imbalance, and is a worthwhile opportunity for choirs to demonstrate their skills and share their culture to an audience of sporting enthusiasts.

Positive influence

What was evident throughout the research for this report was the positive influence the choirs were having on the children's personal, social, musical, cultural and academic development. It appeared to be a pleasure for parents and music directors to discuss the effects that the choirs had on the choristers, both in the interviews and in the extra comments written on the questionnaires. Although the number of children involved in community choirs is very small in ratio to the population, and not a high profile or well understood phenomenon within Australian society, community choirs are

fertile grounds for musical expression, personal development and building friendships. Two boys from Choir A rated the friendships they had made as the most important benefits they had gained from being in the choir, and asked their mother to emphasise this in her interview for this research.

Although it has been found that the main motivation for children to join community choirs is to experience a choral standard higher than is available in schools, the parents of choristers (during their questionnaires and interviews) perceived a multitude of benefits from their children's participation in community choirs, and described many positive and contented feelings about their children's choral experiences.

Recommendations for Future Research

It would be interesting to discover how many children in community choirs extend this activity into their adult lives, given that choral singing is not an age-specific pursuit. The large number of adult choirs in Melbourne suggests that at least some of the choristers may have participated in community choirs as children, and have enjoyed the experience enough to pursue the interest into their adult lives. It may equally be true that many of these adults were trained and inspired by their choirs at school and not in the community, or indeed have discovered choral singing as a pastime only in adulthood.

The question of whether there are equitable opportunities for boys and girls in Melbourne to join community choirs is an important one, as also is the issue of access to the experience. The western suburbs have just one youth choir available, and this has been available to children in the general public only since 2005.

What are the reasons that opportunity is limited by geographic location? Is it because particular ethnic or socio-economic groups have little interest in singing? Or maybe the perceived lack of interest in children's choirs in the western suburbs of Melbourne is simply because there are so few opportunities available there for children to demonstrate their choral talents and musical interests.

The notion that people in one part of Melbourne are less likely to be interested in the arts than those in other parts is difficult to understand and

thorough investigation in future studies could be helpful in clarifying issues and/or circumstances that hinder participation in community choirs.

Conclusion

It is apparent from the present study and from those of earlier researchers that the wealth of musical, personal, social, cultural and academic experiences that choirs provide for children is an extremely worthwhile community service (although they are fee-paying pursuits, so not free to the choristers) and that these services are complementing the education of children in Melbourne by providing a higher musical standard than is generally possible within schools or home-schooling situations. These community choirs also add to the musical life of Melbourne through their public concerts and through the potential development of their choristers into musically intelligent and discerning audiences of the future.

(The full research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the Master of Music Studies degree, The University of Melbourne, 2008 is available on the KMEIA website.

References

- Adolf Frederik's Girls Choir. 'Adolf Frederik's Girls Choir, Stockholm'. Accessed 10 November 2007.
<http://www.afgirlschoir.net/AdolfFredriksGirlsChoir/adolffredriksgir.html>
- Australian Girls Choir. 'History'. Accessed 10 November 2007.
<http://www.ausgirlschoir.com.au/history.htm>
- Australian Music Association, Ed. Blore, Ann. 'Making the Progression'. Report of the National Music Workshop. August 2006.
http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/national_music_workshop.htm
- Bainbridge, Joyce & Thistleton-Martin, Judy. 'Children's Literature: Vehicle for the transmission of national culture and identity or the victim of mass market globalisation?' Australian Association for Research in Education. Accessed 10 November 2007 <http://www.aare.edu.au/01pap/thi01323.htm>
- Bartlett. 'Education: Music'. *Hansard*. (10 February 2003) Accessed 12 April 2007. <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/reps/dailys/dr100203.pdf> (13 - 14)
- Bresler, Liora & Stake, Robert. 'Qualitative Research Methodology in Music Education', Music Educators National Conference (1992): 75 - 90
- Carter, Robin. 'ABC FM Choir of the Year National Final'. Sing Out, (December 2006): 3 - 4

- Cohen, Louis, Manion, Lawrence & Morrison, Keith. *Research Methods in education*. 5th ed., London: RoutledgeFalmer 2000
- Community Music Victoria. 'Government Funding'. Shout! (October 2006): 1
- Cox, Geoffrey. 'Music at St Patrick's Cathedral: A Profile' St Patrick's Cathedral. (1997 & 2005). Accessed 15 April 2007.
<http://www.melbourne.catholic.org.au/cathedral/musicprofile.htm>
- Cresswell, John. *Educational Research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, 2005
- Gall, Meredith D, Gall Joyce P & Borg, Walter R. *Educational Research: an introduction*. USA: Pearson Education, 2007
- Hale, Bob & Maclean, Karen. 'Overview of Steiner Education'. Steiner Schools in Australia (September 2004). Accessed 6 October 2007.
<http://steiner-australia.org/other/overview.html>
- Home Education Network. 'Support Groups'. Home Education Network. (January 2007). Accessed 12 April 2007. [http://www.home-ed.vic.edu.au/2007/01/06/support groups/](http://www.home-ed.vic.edu.au/2007/01/06/support%20groups/)
- Jung, Janine. Boman, Peter. Williams, David. 'A Comparative examination of South Australian primary students' attitudes towards German LOTE and other learning areas'. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, (vol.7, no.1, 2007): 16 – 31
- Kearney, Michelle F. 'Choice and Community-Based Music: An Exploration of the Factors that Affect Parental Choice of Community-Based Children's Choirs'. EdD thesis, Monash University, 1998
- Leek, Stephen. 'The Australian Voices'. *Sing Out*, (December 2006): 14 - 16
- Louhivuori, J; Salminen V M; Lebaka, E. 'Singing Together: A Cross Cultural Approach to the Meaning of Choirs as a Community'. *International Symposium on Cultural Diversity in Music Education* (2005): 81 - 92
- Marr, Andrew. *Boys Singing Together: A Brief History*. Boychoir Past, Present and Future. Accessed 15 April 2007.
<http://www.boychoirs.org/library/history/hist014.html>
- Negus, George. Vienna Boys Choir, ABC Online (March 22, 2004). Accessed 12 April 2007. <http://www.abc.net.au/gnt/history/Transcripts/s1071232.htm>
- Nettl, Paul. *Music in the Five Towns 1840 – 1914: A Study of the Social Influence of Music in an Industrial District*. London: OUP, 1945
- Page, Anne. 'Girls Choirs'. *Of Choristers – ancient and modern*. Accessed 10 November 2007. <http://www.ofchoristers.net/Chapters/AppGirlsChoirs.htm>
- Parker, Olin. 'Music in the Curriculum – Why?'. *International Journal of Music Education* (no.15, 1990): 23 - 30
- Pearce, Christopher. 'Education: Music'. *Hansard*. (10 February 2003) Accessed 12 April 2007. <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/reprs/dailys/dr100203.pdf> (10 - 16)
- Peery, J. Craig & Peery, Irene Weiss. 'The role of music in child development'. *Music and Child Development*. (1987): 3-31
- Pietsch, Helen. 'Justifying a Choral Program'. *Sing Out* (September 2006): 9 - 10
- Royal Melbourne Philharmonic. 'Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Choir'. Accessed 14 April 2007. <http://www.rmp.org.au/biography.htm>
- San Francisco Girls Chorus. 'About the Chorus'. San Francisco Girls Chorus. Accessed 10 November 2007. <http://sfgirlschorus.org/aboutthechorus>
- Sidebottom. 'Education: Music'. *Hansard*. (10 February 2003) Accessed 12 April 2007. <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/reprs/dailys/dr100203.pdf> (14 - 16)
- Smith, Rosalynd. 'The Effectiveness of Children's Choirs in Music Education'. *Australian Society for Music Education XI Brisbane* (1997): 285 - 290
- Smith, Rosalynd. 'Chosen Voices: Recruitment in Victorian Children's Choirs'. *Australian Journal of Music Education* (1998): 82 - 86
- Smith, Rosalynd. 'Parent Involvement in Children's Choirs in Victoria'. *Children and Music: Developmental Perspectives* (1999): 288 - 293
- Smith, Rosalynd. 'Inaudible Dischords: Ordinary Children and Choral Singing'. *Music of the Spheres Conference Proceedings* (2000): 338 - 349
- Stake, Robert E. *The Art of Case Study Research*. California: Sage Publications, 1995
- Storey, Christine. 'Berwick Youth Choir - Singing Toward the Future'. *Berwick Youth Choir 20th Anniversary Program* (2006): 3
- Wicks, Darren. 'The Kodaly Concept'. *Kodaly Music Education Institute of Australia*. Accessed 11 September 2007. <http://www.kodaly.org.au>

Take Note Music

Exciting new products

Aural and Visual Aids for Pitch activities in the Music Classroom

Just released!
See
website for details

\$135 Giant Floor Staff Kit

Bringing the Music Staff to Life!

- Explore, Imagine, Play & Discover steps & skips in the staff
- Heavy-duty printed 2.5 metre long floor staff (suede backed)
- 11 large black note discs
- Teacher guide for suggested activities
- Multi coloured wool & Bee puppet for vocal exploration
- Individual Student Resource:**
- 10 black plastic counters in each of 25 containers
- 25 x A4 Laminated Staves



Exclusive Puppets

Exclusive to Take Note Music...

Fair Trade Wool Felt Puppets

- Cuckoo Clock - beat activities and s- m
- Bee Finger Puppet - vocal exploration
- Singing Eyes - Fantastic tool to facilitate 'echo songs and call & response - 'your turn, my turn' (not pictured) 2 Pairs in each set
- Plus Crocodile, Mama Duck, Old Woman



\$95 Pitch Staircase

Wooden Staircase hand-crafted to house a diatonic set of Optimum Alto Chime Bars.



\$80 Alto Chime Bars

Set of 8 brightly coloured individual diatonic Optimum Percussion Alto Chime Bars c2 - c3 in zipper bag with beaters. Suitable for use with the Take Note Music Pitch Staircase.



\$28 Chime Bar Magnets

Set of 8 brightly coloured magnetic strips for the whiteboard that represent the C diatonic scale. Designed to complement Optimum Percussion Alto Chime Bars & student Soprano Chime Bar sets. Easily

more resources & order forms: www.takeotemusic.com.au
email: enquiry@takenotemusic.com.au phone: 03 9578 8477

CHOIR AND STRINGS: A MAGICAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

A report on a collection of early childhood songs arranged for voice and strings, with narrative

by **David Banney**

Director of the Newcastle String Academy,
and the Hunter Strings at the Newcastle Conservatorium
and **Julie Logan**
Early Childhood, University of Newcastle



Hunter Strings with conductor David Banney and singers from Julie Logan's Newcastle do-re-mi program.

Abstract

This project was the meeting point of two distinct ideas. First, to provide an enriching performance opportunity utilising the classroom Kodály repertoire of 6-8 year olds that would form a bridge to appreciating art music. This would also expose the children to the process of concert preparation unique to working with instrumentalists and an unfamiliar conductor. The second aim was to produce an Australian collection of songs suitable for use with young voices and strings modelled on the Colourstrings curriculum from Helsinki. These were to serve both pedagogical and performance purposes for young string orchestras (aged 7-18 years).

This paper discusses the musical challenges of composing interesting, varied and appropriate arrangements which meet the developmental needs of both the young singer and the young string player, using simple but beautiful melodic material. The project was evaluated by an anonymous questionnaire to students and parents and responses were overwhelmingly positive. We will also address issues which arose in staging these inspiring and unique performances.

Introduction

A narrative by Catherine Banney entitled *The Magic Music School* provided the framework for ten children's songs arranged by David Banney for voice and strings which were performed at the Newcastle Conservatorium of Music Concert Hall. The choir consisted of thirty children aged six to eight years who attended the *do-re-mi music for children (do-re-mi)* program taught by Julie Logan and Louise Gleeson, and the orchestra consisted of twenty string students aged 12-18 years from the *Brandenburg and Camerata Orchestra* sections of the *Hunter Strings*. David Banney (conductor, teacher and composer) was the conductor. Suzanne Leask, a well-known Newcastle story-teller was the narrator, and Conservatorium staff, Andrew Chubb, April Kelson and Colin Spiers played percussion.

We felt it was a unique concert because it was the first time core songs from the Australian Kodály-based early childhood music curriculum had been arranged for a junior choir and string ensemble. There are now many beautiful songs in use for Kodály-based teaching in the Australian context. For *The Magic Music School*, songs were chosen that can be used for teaching elementary rhythmic concepts. A systematic collection of children's songs offers valuable pedagogical and rehearsal/performance opportunities. The use of a text puts the songs into context, and gives a focus for the songs in concert. It was a wonderful performance and parents and students were very excited to have been part of such a novel experience.

Background

do-re-mi music for children (do-re-mi) is the trademark of teachers who have been approved to be affiliated with the Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia. It is a developmentally sequenced, early childhood music education program for children from zero to eight years old. Using the Kodály approach to music education, it is vocally based, developing aural and sight reading skills through singing games. In Newcastle, school-age children in Kindergarten (5-6 years) to year 2 (7-8 years) attend a weekly 45-minute lesson after school across three levels (Levels 3, 4 & 5). The Kodály curriculum follows a carefully sequenced spiral of preparatory activities followed by presentation of an element, with lots of opportunities to practise in different musical contexts.

Singing games are integral to the success of the program. As is the case in learning schoolyard chants and games, young children enjoy repeating songs linked with enjoyable games. This repetition enables children to internalize the musical patterns which they are able to easily recall when deriving rhythmic and melodic elements. The musical complexity of these singing games increases incrementally, building upon known elements which, once internalized, may then be manipulated by the children into their own compositions.

Children in the second year (aged 6-7 years, NSW year 1) and third year (aged 7-8 years, NSW school year 2) of the school-age program have covered simple-time rhythms including crotchets, quavers, crotchet rest, semi-quavers and the minim. They are familiar with conducting 2 and 4 metre, singing and signing sol-fa using do mi so and la (and some 8-years-olds also use re). The children have some experience of harmony through performing songs in canon or as partner songs. Most of the students have participated in at least one *do-re-mi* end of year concert for parents and friends, with the focus largely on singing a *cappella*.

Hunter Strings is an ensemble-based string program at the Newcastle Conservatorium, catering for school-aged children. There are three orchestras- the Vivaldi Orchestra (approximately aged 7-12 years), Brandenburg Orchestra (approximately 12-14 years) and the Camerata (approximately 13-18years). The *Hunter Strings* program is strongly rooted in Kodály's principles, and each orchestra has a musicianship program as well as its orchestral repertoire.

Origins

This project was the meeting point of two distinct ideas:

1. the so-called 'Singing Rascals' of the Colourstrings curriculum based on Kodály's "musical mother tongue" principle.
2. the need for performance opportunities for young children.

Kodály's "musical mother tongue" principle

Kodály was once asked when a child's musical education should begin. "Nine months prior to birth", was his reply, though later in life he modified this response to "Nine months before the birth of

the mother” (Choksy 1999, p.16)

Kodály believed that the best musical material for early musical development and teaching is music that belongs to the child’s own culture – the children’s songs and folk songs of the child’s homeland. It follows that the principles of music education developed by Kodály must be translated into the musical language of each new culture in which it is used. Lois Choksy (1999) and Deanna Hoermann (1973) have been major figures in bringing the Kodály method into the USA and Australia respectively. There is now an abundance of suitable musical material used by Kodály teachers in Australia.

Singing Rascals

An outstanding example of Kodály-based music education is the *Colourstrings* curriculum, developed in Helsinki by Hungarian brothers Géza and Csaba Szilvay (2005). The success of *Colourstrings* can be seen in the statistic that more than half of Finnish *Colourstrings* students now hold positions as professional musicians.

The “musical mother tongue” principle is a vital part of the *Colourstrings* approach, (Szilvay, 2005), and at the heart of the curriculum are the so-called *Singing Rascals* (Szilvay, Hyrske & Ailes, 1991) – a collection of over 60 children’s songs. These songs are mainly from Finland and Hungary but include some from other countries. While hundreds of songs are used in the entirety of the curriculum, the *Rascals* are core repertoire - used over and over again. The more they are used the more familiar they become. In the early stages they provide ideal material for the simplest musical and technical concepts. Later, advanced techniques and musicianship can be introduced using the same songs – their familiarity allowing for a strong connection between the ear and the instrument. In the author’s experience, *Colourstrings* is unique in the systematic use of such simple melodies.

No such collection exists for English-based songs. As beautiful as they are, very few of the *Colourstrings Rascals* are known or used by Australian children or by Australian Kodály teachers. *The Magic Music School* is the first in a group of collections, each with a different conceptual focus, being arranged by David Banney for voice and strings. The songs were

chosen in collaboration with Julie Logan using the following selection criteria:

1. Musical quality of the song
2. Suitability of the words for young children
3. Current popularity and common use in Kodály-based early childhood music programs in Australia.

In addition the collection as a whole was designed to be suitably varied both musically and thematically. Though this collection was chosen for its potential in teaching rhythmic ideas, each piece has of course many other potential pedagogical uses. Care was taken to ensure that the melodies were also simple, in keeping with rhythms being introduced.

Performance Opportunities For Young Children

Concert performance should never be the only aim of music education. However, concert performances provide unique challenges and joys that complement the work of classroom teaching. Unlike exams, concerts offer a relatively non-judgmental opportunity for performing. There is little repertoire available for combined vocal and instrumental performances by Australian early childhood music students.

The aim for the *do-re-mi* students was to provide a performance opportunity using their classroom Kodály repertoire arranged for voice and strings. It was hoped this would be an enriching musical experience for young children and a bridge to appreciating art music. Choksy (1999) argued these were important processes for musical development. In addition, they were exposed to the process of concert preparation unique to working with instrumentalists and with an unfamiliar conductor. It was envisaged that the novelty of this type of performance would be motivating to students in multiple ways:

1. to improve their singing
2. to experience “art music” within a familiar context
3. to understand the workings of an orchestra
4. to appreciate the role of the conductor

The Story: The Magic Music School

The story provided a logical and interesting framework for the songs in performance. Too often children’s concerts consist of a disconnected and disorganised sequence of very short pieces. Often the time taken to enter and leave the stage far exceeds the time taken to perform the songs.

The use of a story helps to create a memorable concert event rather than a simple smorgasbord of recently learnt pieces.

The story was about two children, Matthew and Emma, who arrived for their lesson at the music school only to find the studio door is locked. They open a different door that took them into another magical world where animals spoke in riddles and adventures abound. They must navigate unfamiliar terrain where giant bees live and negotiate mysterious “song” clues in order to find their way home.

The narrator was Suzanne Leask whose extensive vocal characterization, in addition to a variety of eccentric costume items (hats, aprons and scarves) brought the story alive and kept even the youngest members of the audience (aged 3) engaged. Niland (2000) has found that adding a story to a song was a useful way of engaging young children and as one parent noted “the story teller used her voice well to keep the audience interested.” Her colourful story-telling also helped keep some of the choir member’s interest as one evaluation particularly commented that “I liked the narrator’s costume”.

Preparation For The Concert

Most of the songs chosen were already familiar to the children as they were selected from the existing repertoire of the Kodály -based classroom program. Three special rehearsals of 50 minutes each were held with the strings orchestra.

There were three songs with which the students were unfamiliar, ‘Little Mouse Be Careful’, ‘Who’s That’ and ‘Bye Bye Baby’. These were taught through a variety of classroom games so all children could sing them effectively. The level of analysis for musical elements depended on the year level of the children. For example, the older children in Level 5 were able to identify all the solfa for ‘Who’s That?’ (do, re, mi, so) and sing with hand-signs. The younger children identified the rhythm (taa, titi and two) and conducted in two metre. Children enjoyed a sense of mastery when they successfully derived the rhythm for a new song, ‘Little Mouse be Careful’, which contains only the familiar rhythmic elements ta (crotchet) and ti-ti (quavers).

The performance also planned to include solo singing. As this was the children’s first experience

of solo singing, an important aspect of preparing them in rehearsals was using groups of three for the solo phrases. Two different groups of three performed phrases in ‘Big Black Train’ and ‘Bye Bye Baby’. Individuals performed the question or answer in ‘Bee Bee’.

Choice Of Songs

For this collection of songs (*The Magic Music School*) representative examples were chosen for the following rhythms:

| | |
|---|--|
| ta (crotchet) | Starlight |
| ti-ti (paired quavers) | Bee Bee, Little Mouse Be Careful, Big Black Train, Old Macdonald |
| sah (crotchet rest) | Hot Cross Buns |
| ta-a (minim) | Who’s That? Bye, Bye Baby |
| tick-a-tick-a (4 semiquavers) | Dinah, Tideo |

The Magic Music School begins (and ends) with the opening of Grieg’s Holberg Suite (Grieg, 1885). This engaging piece is an ideal introduction to string music for early childhood music students, and a welcome challenge for the orchestra among the simpler arrangements of *The Magic Music School*. The songs then proceed as follows:

1. ‘Starlight, Starbright’ (*so-mi, beat, rhythm, ta, ti-ti, lullaby*)

This song is the first to be sung in the story. The arrangement sets the scene of evening, giving so and mi in sequence played as harmonics by the violins, reinforced by viola, cello and piano pizzicato (Fig. 1 – see next page). The melody is extended by inversion in the strings, and a double canon in the strings follows the singing of the melody. The final chord uses deep notes in the cello and harmonics in the violins to give an effect of transparency and the twinkling of stars.

2. ‘Bee, bee, bumblebee’ (*so-mi, beat, rhythm, ta, ti-ti, question and answer, pitch matching*)

The antiphonal nature of this song, and its dramatic context in the story invited a quasi-recitative arrangement. The orchestra begins its ‘buzzing’ behind the text, trilling on notes of the

The image shows a musical score for the opening of 'Starlight, Starbright'. It features six staves: Triangle, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The Triangle part starts with a single note on the first beat. Violin I and II play chords, with Violin I marked *fp* and Violin II marked *pizz.* and *fp*. Viola and Cello play chords, with Viola marked *f* and *pizz.* and Cello marked *f*. The Piano part starts with a chord marked *f*. A note in the piano part is marked with a pluck symbol and the instruction '*pluck string inside piano'.

Fig. 1 – Opening of 'Starlight, Starbright'

D major triad. There is a crescendo interrupted by a loud B-flat 7th chord. A softer B-flat 7th chord (*pizz*) is followed by pizzicato A – F#, which give the starting notes of the song. The song follows immediately, a capella.

3. 'Little mouse, be careful' (*la-so-fa-mi-re-do, beat, rhythm, slow and fast, soft and loud*)

The back desks of string sections often feel left out, and may feel that what they do is unimportant. In this arrangement, a tremolo A is begun by the entire violin section. A diminuendo is created by players gradually dropping out, beginning with the front desks, and working towards the back desks, until only the back desks remain playing. The back desks play this A for the rest of the piece.

This technique has several aims – it provides a constant A for the choir, whose phrases always start on an A. This allows the use of more dissonant harmony, reflecting the text, without losing the pitch of the singers. As an orchestral effect it creates a disembodied, mysterious sound (used by Vaughan-Williams in his Symphony No 5

(Vaughan-Williams, 1932)), and a background to the various other colours used in the arrangement (piano, woodblock, guiro, triangle, cymbals, pizzicato and arco strings). It is a very basic introduction to aleatoric music in that the players must decide themselves when to stop playing the A. The string pizzicato represents the cat hunting (m.6). The music begins *Lento* as the cat hunts, and there is a *subito Allegro* (m.16) as the cat chases and the mouse runs away. The last chord indicates the sorry fate of the mouse.

The strings are also given an exercise in up-bow staccato (m. 16).

4. 'Old Macdonald' (*mi-re-do-la,-so,, beat, rhythm, pause, text and timbre improvisation*)

This arrangement develops the aleatoric skills of the orchestra. Interspersed between passages of conventional notation, the sections of the orchestra are asked to represent a mouse, a bird, a horse and a cow. No instructions are given for this – the players should find their own way of making the sounds. In order to give the appropriate rhythmic drive to the piece the arrangement has a barn dance character, using woodblock, triangle, drum and solo violin in addition to the strings. Each verse contains the traditional 'Old Macdonald' pause – the choir must follow the conductor to start accurately again after the pause.

5. 'Big black train' (*so-fa-mi-re-do, beat, fast and slow, tempo, form, body percussion*)

After a train whistle in the strings, the boys let off steam with a long 'choo', then begin an ostinato 'choo, choo, choo, choo' on the beat. This starts slowly, imitating a train and gradually speeds up. The cello join in playing the beat – this use of low pitched instruments again imitating the low pitched sounds of a train starting off. A quaver figure played by violins and violas enters as the train speeds up and a momentum builds in the music (Fig. 2 – see next page). The girls sing the melody twice through while the boys continue the ostinato. A soloist then sings the melody a further two times as the music slows down, finishing with a final train whistle and 'Choo'.

6. 'Hot cross buns' (*mi-re-do, ta rest, form*)

For the orchestra this arrangement introduces unequal meters – 5/8 and 7/8. For the choir, there is a little trick at the end – they do not sing the last word ('buns'). They must watch the conductor who should clearly stop the music before the last

The image shows a musical score for the opening of 'Big Black Train'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line for 'Boys' and instrumental lines for Violins and Viola/Cello. The tempo markings are 'Maestoso' and 'Lento, poco a poco accelerando'. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'Choo, choo, choo, choo, Choo, choo, choo, choo'. The second system continues the vocal line and includes a piano part marked 'Allegro' and 'f spiccato'.

Fig. 2 Opening of 'Big Black Train'

word. In rehearsal a simple trick is to have the choir cover their mouths instead of singing the last word. Once this is successful, they should imagine that they are covering their mouths.

7. 'Who's that?' (so-mi-re-do, practising ta-a, practising do-so)

This is a very simple arrangement. The violas (often neglected in school orchestra arrangements) play the melody. There is a simple introduction based on the rhythm of the newly invented text 'Knock knock, knock, tap, tap, tap' (ti-ti-ta, ti-ti ta), and the choir sing this on *mi* immediately after singing the melody through twice. For the singers this is a very simple introduction to singing a separate part. This figure is met again as an ostinato used in the two-part a capella version of the song.

8. 'Bye, bye baby' (so-mi-re-do, discovering ta-a, lullaby)

A simple setting of this lullaby – the arrangement uses a slow ostinato (of minims, which are the pedagogical point of this melody in this context)) in the viola and cello. There is a violin solo leading to the song (Fig. 3), sung first by a soloist and then by the group. Harmonics in the violins remind the audience of the stars (see Starlight, Starbright),

and have a gentle sound that adds to the lullaby mood.

9. 'Dinah' (so-mi-re-do, practising tick-a-tick-a, beat, practising ta-rest)

Picking up on the banjo reference, the arrangement is for pizzicato strings and quasi-bluegrass violin solo. A quote from 'Camptown Races' is used (m. 26) to link the violin solo (in the middle of the arrangement) with the final singing of the melody.

10. 'Tideo' (do-la-so-fa-mi-re-do, introducing tick-a-tick-a, beat, developing vocal range)

This arrangement uses triangle, wood block and strings. The introduction makes much use of the semiquaver figure of the song (Fig. 4 – see next page). The introduction finishes with the first two phrases of the melody, giving a very clear starting pitch for the singers. The melody is sung through once, and the final phrase is repeated, softer and softer. Finally it is whispered, and there is rhythmic augmentation of the final 'Tideo'. Thus the music gradually comes to a halt.

Evaluation

The project was evaluated by an anonymous questionnaire to *do-re-mi* students whose parents

Bye bye Baby - Introduction

Solo Vln.

Vln. 2/Cello

mp

Fig. 3 –Opening of ‘Bye Bye Baby’

were asked to assist children with filling in responses. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive and some of the main themes were as follows.

Firstly, many students cited the opportunity to perform both with an orchestra and as part of a larger choral group as the main aspects they liked about the concert.

Secondly, many students commented on the role of the conductor stating that “it is a hard job because he had to instruct the singers and the musicians”. They demonstrated an understanding of his role and that he “helps everyone stay together”, “tells you when it was your turn” and about “going very fast and slow in the music”. Although most children viewed the conductor’s role positively one student thought he “fusses a lot”!

Thirdly, teachers and parents were very impressed by the improved quality of singing in this concert. A number of factors may have influenced this outcome. One is the novelty of performing on a different stage, as many children commented about this and that they found this “fun”. Secondly, children commented on aspects of singing technique such as “open your mouth wide” and “you need to stay in tune” which indicates they were concentrating and attending to detail. Thirdly, for many, it was also their first experience of formal rehearsals where “you have to listen and coordinate with the string orchestra”.

Fourthly, the students’ appeared to have a greater

understanding of the workings of an orchestra and commented on the “different tunes” each section played and how “they practised a lot”. The children were very aware of the need for all parties to be attentive to each other for a successful performance as a number of children noted “the orchestra had to watch the conductor and make sure the choir could sing along”.

However, not all the comments were positive. Some students (and parents) thought the narration made the performance too long as “my legs got tired” and one parent said she “lost track of the story”. One student had this suggestion for making the concert better in future - “sit down and sing”!

In spite of the ambitious length of the performance, the majority of students said “it was fun and interesting” and wanted to repeat the experience. This may reflect an increased level of self-efficacy (see Bandura, in Snowman & Biehler, 2000 p. 235) in students about performing as a result of their feelings of success after the concert. Over half the participants who have since graduated from the do-re-mi program have returned to perform with the choir again this year.

Parents were also asked to comment and were overwhelmingly in favour and “would recommend future groups doing this event”. One of the parents stated that

“it was a great opportunity for children to experience the joy of singing in a choir and seeing an orchestra perform in a relaxed yet professional environment.”

The image shows a musical score for the opening of 'Tideo'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes parts for Triangle/Wood Block, Violin I, Violin II, and Viola/Cello. The Triangle/Wood Block part starts with a 2/4 time signature and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Violin I and II parts enter later with a melody marked *mf*. The Viola/Cello part provides a harmonic foundation, marked *mp*. The second system includes parts for W. Bl., Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. The W. Bl. part continues the rhythmic pattern. The Vln. I and II parts play a more complex rhythmic pattern, marked *mf*. The Vla. part provides a harmonic foundation, marked *mf*.

Fig. 4 Opening of 'Tideo'

Another noted the benefits of experiencing something new from the secure base of known songs:

"Thought it was a fantastic opportunity for him to experience many new things, with the knowledge he was singing known songs with the peer group he had been with for three years."

The variety of musical styles was appreciated as another parent commented that "the choice of songs was fantastic" and six months later, younger siblings in one family continue to imitate the arrangement of 'Big Black Train' at home.

Reflections on the Experience

The choir was not auditioned and the "droners" impacted on the overall quality of singing. Anyone enrolled in Levels 4 & 5 attending the *do-re-mi* program may participate. Although the program is vocally based, not all children at this age are singing securely in tune. However, in view of the age-group involved and in keeping with "Kodály's conviction that music must not be for the elite but

for everyone" (Choksy, 1999, p. 29) any interested choir members are included. The narrative is being revised to reduce the length of the performance.

What became apparent was the importance of the process for both students and parents. While the end product was a concert, and high musical standards were an important aim, it was important to gauge quickly during the rehearsals the real potential of the singers. It was the conductor's aim to fix what could be fixed and work on things that would make the biggest improvement in the choir's sound and performance. Above all, it was hoped that the rehearsals were an enjoyable and musically enriching experience. Some of the most musical moments occurred during rehearsals rather than in the concert – it was important to enjoy them and offer rich praise for beautiful singing.

The positive effect of behaviour modelling by *Hunter Strings* players for the *do-re-mi* students was observed by teachers. This type of modelling

has often been referred to by other authors as an important and effective component of educational programs (Snowman & Biehler, 2000). It was great for the choir to see a slightly older group of peers who were waiting patiently and attentively for their turns in the rehearsals, showing them the types of behaviours all musicians need to develop. A conservatorium teacher commented that he had never seen such young children (that is, the *do-re-mi* students) “so focused on the music itself, for so long”. The rehearsals provided a great opportunity for introducing the singers to the instruments of the string section. The first performance of *The Magic Music School* inspired two members of the choir to take up the violin.

The concert put all of the work done in class and in rehearsal into focus. It was a chance for children to perform, to experience the thrill of pleasing an audience, to dress up, to work as a team with other children, and to refine musical skills. It was a very rewarding occasion for parents who may have been seeing their children perform with an orchestra for the first time on stage; and if the parents are not musicians, perhaps seeing for the first time their children using skills and knowledge that the parents don't have.

Conclusion

The words of children's songs provoke many ideas for programmatic musical arrangements. Melodies of such simplicity offer great challenges for arrangers, however close analysis of rhythms and melodies generates ideas for accompanimental figures, forms and instrumental colours. A systematic collection of children's songs offers valuable pedagogical and rehearsal/performance opportunities. The use of a text puts the songs into context, and gives a focus for the songs in concert. It is hoped that this song collection is an exciting and valuable addition to the Kodály resources of Australia.

The performance of *The Magic Music School* provided members of the *do-re-mi* choir and *Hunter Strings* with an innovative and inspiring musical experience. The choir's teachers and parents were moved by not only the improved quality of singing but the level of determination by all the children to concentrate and put in their best effort for such an extended period of time. All the children involved in last year's concert who are currently attending *do-re-mi* music classes were

keen to repeat the experience by performing *The Forgetful Echo* (the second set of songs in the series) in August 2008. *The Magic Music School* combined performance by *do-re-mi* and *Hunter Strings* was truly a magical night for all.

References

- Choksy, L. (1999). *The Kodály Method*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- Grieg, E. (1885). *Aus Holbergs Zeit*. Boca Raton: Kalmus
- Heriot, J. (1996). The primary choir in the life of the school. *Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia Bulletin*, p.18.
- Hoermann, D. (1973). *The teachers manual for Marta Nemesszeghy's children's song book*. Brookvale: Owen Martin Publication
- Niland, A. (2000). Musical Stories: strategies for integrating literature and music for young children. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 32 (4), 7-11.
- Snowman, J. & Biehler, R. (2000). *Psychology Applied to Teaching*. Boston: Houghton Miffler Company
- Suthers, L. (2008). Concerts for young children. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 32 (4), 50-54.
- Suthers, L. & Larkin, V. (1997). An examination of a young child's responses to performance: Implications for arts curricula. *Journal of Australian Research in Early Childhood Education*, 1, 115-122.
- Szönyi, E. (1973). *Kodály's Principles in Practice*. London: Boosey and Hawkes.
- Szilvay, G. (2005). *Violin ABC – Handbook for Teachers and Parents*. Helsinki: Fennica Ghermann.
- Szilvay, G., Hyske, T. & Ailes, A. (1991). *Singing Rascals La*. London: Colourstrings International Limited.
- Thoms, H. (1994). Nurturing interest in young concert goers. *Music Educators Journal*, 38 (4), 44-45.
- Vaughan-Williams, R. (1932). *Symphony No 5*. London: Boosey and Hawkes.

Reprint: This article was first published in the *Australian Journal of Music Education* 2008 No. 2



Music Theatre program students performing 'Hair', Hartt School, Hartford, Connecticut.

FROM SOLFA TO THE STAGE: DEVELOPING BASIC MUSIC LITERACY SKILLS FOR OLDER BEGINNERS AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

by **Anne Comiskey**

Associate Professor, The Hartt School, University of Hartford, USA

Beginning the journey towards music literacy is not restricted to students in primary school, first year high school, or adults choosing to learn music as a recreational pursuit. Many of today's tertiary students are beginners in terms of the type of music literacy that Kodály educators believe is integral to good musicianship. Some students, including the majority who successfully audition for the Music Theatre program at the Hartt School, are also beginners in the study of music theory, lacking even the most basic knowledge of keys, clefs and metre which are pre-requisite for proficient reading. They enjoy singing and have a large (often rote-learned) repertoire from classics to music theatre. Many have a résumé that includes leading roles in school and community musicals. Helping to open the door to music literacy for these students has become one of the most rewarding aspects of my work.

This article provides an overview of the literacy component of an ear training course designed as the third and final semester of the older beginner

program for these music theatre students. They enter the final semester with a repertoire of basic pentatonic and diatonic songs; able to sight-sing basic exercises as a group but not individually; and able to demonstrate a degree of accuracy in group performance of basic simple time rhythmic work. Pentatony is a syllabus requirement of the first year course. Ensemble part-singing is confident, although many students still learn the music in the way they feel the most comfortable – by rote. Individually, fluency in sight-reading pentatonic and diatonic exercises and in singing known diatonic repertoire with solfa is not secure. Analyses of student achievement, interviews with students, anecdotal evidence and course evaluations from this final semester strongly suggest that a more rigorous first year program would have a positive impact on student learning and motivation to practise. Three semesters is a very short time for beginner tertiary students to develop meaningful literacy and aural skills. Moving diatonic learning and skill development into the first year program would allow more students the time to develop skills to the level where they would acknowledge

the relevance to their other studies: the confidence and competence to learn repertoire for rehearsals and voice lessons by reading, rather than by rote.

Pentatony versus diatony

There is no question that pentatony is a valid starting point for young students and for absolute beginner adults who have little sense of intonation and no formal music learning. Pentatony establishes a scaffold for the long-term development of secure intonation in young children. In primary school music classes, limited pitch pentatonic songs/games that will form the basis of the teaching repertoire are learned by rote, well in advance of the students learning any symbol or name. Similarly, students entering the music theatre program have a comprehensive repertoire of music theatre songs, and they are very familiar with the sound of major and minor tonality. Many, however, do not associate the sounds they hear with the symbols (notes on the staff). Pentatony is a foreign sound to them. Pentatonic music can, and should, be taught as part of the curriculum for these students, but not as a prerequisite to the study of diatony.

Developing music literacy

Developing basic music literacy is the core of the course. Moveable *do* solfa underpins all pitch work. As with any language/symbol system, students are immersed in solfa from the first class, with the difficulty increasing in each subsequent lesson. Solfa work in each lesson includes rote repetition or recognition of short motifs, scale and chord patterning exercises, prepared reading exercises, performances of songs from memory, and part-singing. Individual solfa singing by every student in every lesson, beginning in the first class, builds confidence. (Letter name singing occurs in each lesson as well. It is not included here because it is not a part of the process used to develop a memory for pitch relationships for these students.)

A diagnostic assessment of each student's reading level at the beginning of the course provides information for assessing a student's improvement throughout the course. The majority of students appreciate an honest appraisal of their entry level and their progress (in every aspect of the course, not only in music literacy). Throughout the course the students are continually made aware of the relevance of assessment items

and of their individual progress, regardless of how minor it may seem to an observer, to others in the class, or to the teacher. The teacher is responsible for ensuring a supportive classroom, and for administering fair diagnostic and graded assessments. The students know that "supportive" may not often mean "comfortable." Several factors ensure that, at the conclusion of the course, negative feedback on the type, and frequency, of assessment is rare: very specific course goals; detailed assessment guidelines, including dates when the assessment items will occur; opportunities for individual assessment that is not counted towards the course grade; homework and test items that require students to prepare and practise; very regular assessment; teacher availability for one-on-one assistance; lessons structured to allow as many students as possible to work at their individual level; and regular positive and constructive teacher feedback.

Techniques and exercises that encourage individual singing in primary classes work just as well at the tertiary level. Singing a well-known song or exercise around the class in solfa, beat by beat, bar by bar, or note by note, encourages even the least comfortable student to build individual confidence. The laughter generated is infectious and the inevitable lesson tensions subside, at least for a moment! Short aural identification exercises are given every lesson, often a number of times during the lesson: intervals, chords, random notes within an octave, and longer dictations. Because the initial emphasis is on identifying the pitch relationships, the rhythm for some melodic dictation exercises is given, freeing the students to listen for the pitch relationships only. Accurate staff sight-reading is not possible unless the students know the relationships between the various pitches, the relationship of pitches to the tonic, and what each pitch looks like on the staff. If staff reading is not developed at the same time that the students are working with stick notation, they falter at a staff exercise because they can't identify the pitches on the staff quickly enough to sing them accurately. For beginner readers, sight-reading a number of exercises in the same key and in the same clef reinforces the "look" of the pitches on the staff. Some students appreciate this reinforcement throughout the semester. This is a common primary classroom technique and is just as appropriate for older students.

Establishing a sight-reading routine is imperative in classes with little or no music theory knowledge. Key signatures, clef reading and metre are incorporated in every reading exercise to reinforce the theory. A routine tune-up exercise, established at the beginning of the semester, helps the students build their skills and confidence within a structured and supportive environment. Because a melody is a combination both of pitch and of rhythmic duration, melodic readings (using only known rhythms in well-known contexts) are attempted without first practising the rhythm. A successful reading routine, required from every student for the whole semester, is as simple as:

1. What is the key signature? (the number, then name of the sharps/flats, in the correct order)
2. What scale has that key signature?
3. Establish a tempo that will work for you.
4. Sing the tonic chord aloud in solfa.
Major key: *do-mi-so-mi-do-so-do*
Minor key: *la-do-mi-do-la-mi-la*
5. Sing random notes from that tonality in solfa.
(Major: *do-la-do-fa-do-mi-do-re-do*)
6. Sing the starting interval in solfa.
7. Sing the exercise in your head keeping a steady tempo.
8. Sing the tune-up chord aloud again.
9. Sing the exercise aloud in solfa.

This reading sequence is not the only possible way. Some teachers will see it as much too pedantic; others will find gaps. However, having a sequence that is introduced in the first lesson of the semester, and then used consistently, is an aid to ensuring development in reading skills in beginner readers. At first the teacher is modelling all of the appropriate responses. The degree of difficulty of the exercises increases gradually. Readings from earlier in the semester reappear throughout the course, giving the least competent students a chance to develop confidence. As the course progresses the time it takes to work through the reading sequence decreases. The responsibility for continually challenging good readers to work at their level, rather than remain at the level of the class, is the teacher's.

A comprehensive sight-reading book is a required text for this class. From a large collection of repertoire in any well-edited collection, a teacher can choose a sequence of examples suitable to the rhythmic and melodic levels of a particular class. Completing full chapters is a

useful teaching technique because it allows the organised and motivated students to move ahead, and the motivated students who are at beginning levels to practice many examples at one level. Extension opportunities abound in these texts; individual students can be challenged while others continue to work on basic reading examples. Early examples at the beginning of the book are usually of limited pitch, rhythmically simple and with movement mainly by step or small, tonal leaps. Using these examples to develop the facility to sing in major and its parallel minor, although initially very frustrating for the students, helps to reinforce minor key singing from the early stages of the course. (Classes working at a higher level of musicianship benefit from practising these same examples in as many modes as they have studied.) A textbook has uses far beyond sight-reading, providing prepared reading and dictation excerpts. For students motivated to work at a more advanced level the later, more difficult chapters in texts provide rhythmically and tonally challenging material.

The tools

No syllable system is used for rhythmic work because there is no consistent rhythmic syllable use at the university. Rhythmic work is always practised with reference to a beat or pulse, but without syllable names. A gentle vocalization on a neutral syllable encourages students to make music with the most basic rhythmic exercise. In the hands of these music theatre students who are accomplished stage performers, the rhythmic exercises become a vocal improvisation to a set rhythm. Hand signs are never assessed and are not required for every reading exercise in class. However, they are a very valuable tool for these classes. Having to associate a hand sign with a solfa syllable requires the students to spend much more time practising a reading activity outside of class time. Hand signs are one more aid for some students in their long journey to become more proficient readers. If one student finds the use of hand signs helpful then it is a worthwhile exercise.

Stick notation is not a precursor to staff notation for these students. It doesn't provide an easy road to reading notes from a staff. It is, however, a way of reinforcing and practising a series of notes within a tonal context without having to decode another symbol system first. Stick notation is the most secure way for many of these students to

take dictation faster and more accurately, without the encumbrance of staff conventions. It also provides a way of practising melodies without the staff. Stick notation does not replace staff notation for these students. It merely provides a way of practising skills.

The repertoire

Pedagogical discussions on repertoire focus on the importance of using music of the highest quality. Perhaps more important is the amount of quality music that the students read each lesson. An analysis of the vast collection of teaching exercises that Zoltan Kodály composed (and of the extensive use of music examples in teaching materials developed by his students) confirms that he believed that the use of a significant amount of quality repertoire was crucial to the development of literacy. With literacy as the core of this older beginner program a large collection of appropriate repertoire is necessary. The simpler rhythmic and melodic excerpts from J.S. Bach's vocal music form the basis of solfa memory and performance. English translations of short movements from works such as the comedic *Peasant Cantata* (BWV 212) provide class singing opportunities with the same material being studied in solfa. For these music theatre students the translations bring the music they learn in solfa to life.

Much Renaissance repertoire, with its less difficult melodic contours, repetition, and simple melodic structure complements the folk, Baroque and Classical music that is often the core of repertoire for introductory classes. Homophonic examples that move from simple to compound time are particularly appropriate for reinforcing basic rhythmic learning. Although much music theatre repertoire is too difficult melodically or rhythmically for developing basic reading skills, an occasional excerpt from an upcoming production helps the students make links between the ear training class and their "real world." Discussions at music teacher conferences regularly suggest that to build and maintain student interest in older beginner programs well-known/popular styles of music should be used as core repertoire. Course evaluations for the Fall semester 2008 (evaluations which are anonymous and not returned to teachers until the following semester) suggest otherwise. A concern about course repertoire was raised by only one of the 25 students, with the suggestion that a Stephen Sondheim song should be included

because of the difficulty, not because of the genre.

There is no one way to teach

This overview provides only one of the many possible ways of developing literacy in an introductory program at tertiary level. Criticism of "Kodály" teaching is often based on the implausible premise that every teacher teaches in the same way - that there is one "method." In the wider educational community, respected researchers regularly publish papers supporting or criticising teaching and learning practices using data collected in pre and post testing. Often, however, they provide scant evidence about the many other factors that influence teaching and learning for any one student working with any one teacher. Each student learns in a different way from every other student in my class. Each student perceives my teaching in a different way. In their course evaluations students consistently cite the improvement in individual reading and the strong skill development emphasis as the most important and relevant areas of the course. They also comment on the importance to their individual learning of a structured and sequenced program of multi-level learning opportunities. The most difficult, yet also the most fulfilling part of my work with the music theatre students, is finding ways to inspire them to motivate themselves to learn, and to achieve well beyond the level that they believe is possible. Zoltan Kodály's comment on adult learners, in the preface to his *333 Reading Exercises*, is as relevant today as it was in 1943:

Up to now I have wanted to help the youngest. But adults can also be pupils as "there is no royal road to learning."

Annotated Reference and Repertoire List

Kodály, Zoltan, *333 Reading Exercises*. Revised English Edition London: Boosey and Co. 1963.

The preface gives a valuable insight into Kodály's thoughts on teaching reading to beginner students. Of particular interest is his paragraph explaining the reasons for additional examples in the revised edition.

Reading textbook

Ottman, Robert and Rogers, Nancy, eds. *Music for Sight Singing*. Seventh edition. New Jersey: Pearson Educational, 2007. This is a comprehensive collection of mainly art music and folk examples (only a few excerpts were composed specifically for

the collection). The early chapters are appropriate for beginning readers and include duets suitable for sing and play exercises. Later chapters contain some examples that are useful at early levels including the non-chromatic Chapter 20 modal melodies.

Part work: Reading practice, memory and singing for enjoyment

Bolkovac, Edward, ed. *Sing We Now Merrily: A Collection of Elizabethan Rounds from Ravenscroft*. Hal Leonard, 2007.

Hey Ho, What Shall I Say

Let's Have a Peal

Sing We Now Merrily

To Portsmouth

Molner, Antal, ed. *Classical Canons Without Text*, Budapest: Editio Musica Budapest, 1955.

No. 75 by Telemann. This major key canon, although not easy to read, becomes a favorite if rehearsed well over a number of lessons.

No. 21 by Praetorius. Written in minor this is a good exercise for practising solfa and pitching in parallel major and minor.

Nos. 106, 109 by Haydn. These minor key canons include only one chromatic, the raised seventh *si*.

No. 14 by Gumpelzhaimer. This Dorian canon has only one chromatic *di*. Although this is not a required sight-reading exercise it provides an example of an extension opportunity that students enjoy.

Part work: Singing for Enjoyment

Both of the following books are well known to many teachers working with primary students. In an older beginner class the rounds lighten the atmosphere after a particularly intense dictation or aural activity. They are not core repertoire, and usually only one or two are used during the semester. These books are not always readily available new. Many available collections include similar rounds.

Harrop, Beatrice and Gadsby, David, ed. *Flying a Round: 88 Rounds and Partner Songs*. London: A. and C. Black, 2002.

The Duchess by Arthur Lucas

The Wreck by Jan Holdstock

Nelson, Esther L. ed. *The Great Rounds Song Book*. New York: Sterling, 1985

My Dame Hath a Lame Tame Crane (available in many collections)

Avocado Round

Memory using solfa

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet*, BWV 212. This secular "Peasant Cantata"

has a number of simpler melodic excerpts suitable for memory work and dictation. Accompanying parts provide extension material for more advanced readers.

Online public domain sites

The Choral Domain Public Library is an excellent site for research. Scores are available for download. Accessed 30 May, 2009 <http://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page>

A significant collection of Renaissance music is available in score format (available for PC users only by downloading NoteWorthy Composer from the site) and MIDI. Accessed 30 May, 2009 <<http://www.cpd.org/brianrussell/Music.html>>

One of the many suitable Renaissance part-work examples is *Fata la Parte* by Juan del Encina. It is available in score format (available for PC users only by downloading NoteWorthy Composer from the site) and MIDI. Accessed 30 May, 2009 <<http://www.cpd.org/brianrussell/Encina.html>>

Different interpretations of *Fata la parte* are available on Youtube.

PROFESSIONAL READING SUGGESTION*from the Editor****The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of personal triumph from the frontiers of brain science (Scribe Publications, 2008)*****Norman Doidge, M.D.**

This book has serious implications for all educators including Kodály music educators. Readers will learn about neuroplasticity and that the brain has remarkable powers to change its own structure as a result of the experiences we provide for it – including from our viewpoint, music experiences. Norman Doidge brings science to life in a highly readable way.

From the Scribe Publications website:

<http://www.scribepublications.com.au/book/thebrainthatchangesitself>

This book is an Australian bestseller; *A New York Times* bestseller; an Amazon US top ten science book of 2008; one of Amazon Canada's top books of 2008; and one of Slate top books of 2008. Well worth your investment.

Oliver Sachs wrote: 'Only a few decades ago, scientists considered the brain to be fixed or 'hardwired' and considered most forms of brain damage, therefore, to be incurable. Dr. Doidge, an eminent psychiatrist and researcher, ... describes in fascinating personal narratives how the brain, far from being fixed, has remarkable powers of changing its own structure and compensating for even the most challenging neurological conditions. Doidge's book is a remarkable and hopeful portrait of the endless adaptability of the human brain.'

THE 2009 SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM, BRISBANE*From James Cuskelly*

The UQ Summer Music Program was held from 4-16 January 2009 at the University of Queensland. It offered a wide range of courses for accreditation including core courses in early childhood, primary and secondary classroom music education. The 157 participants, including 32 postgraduate enrolments, demonstrated their ongoing commitment to improving their musicianship and music education skills and knowledge. Summer program lecturers report that the overall quality of the graduating music educators continues to rise.

The 20-strong staff included two Hungarian visiting lecturers. Balazs Cserynyik taught musicianship and choir, and Monika Benedek directed a jazz course which attracted secondary and tertiary students. Students in this course not only received daily tuition in musicianship, conducting and choir but also explored applications of the moveable solfa system within a jazz context. Students reported that this was a stimulating and rewarding course – and the performances in the final concert were testament to their success.

A further initiative in the 2009 summer program was the introduction of a vocal program. International vocal pedagogue Joseph Ward O.B.E. led a team that included Shaun Brown (Brisbane) and Rosario la Spina (Milan) in a program that included opera excerpts, lieder and song, stagecraft and performance techniques. Again, final performances were outstanding and there is already a great deal of interest in the upcoming program vocal program on offer in January 2010.

The final concert in the All Hallows Chapel was outstanding and special mention must be made of the performances given by the choirs conducted by brother and sister team, Reka and Balazs Cserynyik.

A 2010 Summer School Music Program will be run by Sound Thinking Australia from January 03 – 15 at All Hallows School, Brisbane. Full details are available at www.soundthinkingaustralia.com For further information please contact James Cuskelly at james@soundthinkingaustralia.com



NATIONAL COUNCIL NEWS

KMEIA National Council has been witness to a year of excellent workshops and activities through

which Branches and Chapters have shown their commitment to quality music education.

In September 2008 approximately 140 members attended the biennial national conference in Canberra. In May 2009 Victoria held its popular Autumn Seminar while SA continued their workshop program and hosted the National Council for the Annual General Meeting of KMEIA.

Queensland offered the innovative 2009 Open Classroom Series, where visitors experienced a snapshot of excellent music education practice in eight Queensland classrooms. Choral festivals and courses for certification were successfully completed in Townsville, Mackay and Brisbane.

In April 2009 New South Wales and Queensland hosted the visit of Hungarian early childhood educator Professor Inci Jenőné Nagy. Her 1996 publication Kindergarten Education with Artistic Emphasis has been adopted by a growing number of European kindergartens and focuses on the child's emotional development, well-being and creativity.

Early Childhood Conferences in July 2009 in both Sydney and Brisbane featured American Dr John Feierabend and attracted over 120 participants during ten action-packed days in Brisbane and Sydney.

National Council agreed on a new curriculum for the Australian Kodály Certificate starting in 2009, completed online membership arrangements, commenced work on KMEIA history with a timeline of events, initiated a review of the national website, commenced the processes for a possible Vocational Graduate Certificate in Management (Music Leadership), and commenced discussion with branches on national conference guidelines and insurance arrangements.



UPDATE ON do-re-mi

*from Gail Godfrey,
do-re-mi
National Coordinator*

The mission of do-re-mi is to immerse children in a musical world of joyful discovery. After completing the required levels of training teachers use their

skill and enthusiasm to transform the lives of children and educate communities on the rich benefits of early childhood music education.

Queensland has 40 accredited do-re-mi teachers including a teacher in Singapore and another in Melbourne. NSW has 16 accredited teachers with a large number of children being taught in NSW. Accredited teachers are required to complete 180 hours study for the Australian Kodály Certificate in Music Education (Early Childhood) or 120 hours study for the Australian Kodály Award in Music Education (Preschool).

KMEIA also recognises the excellent work of those KMEIA members working in early childhood in all states of Australia, who do not choose to be accredited as do-re-mi affiliates. The do-re-mi name developed as way of identifying those



Australians at Katowice, Poland, August 2009

teachers who wanted to become self-employed and needed a vehicle for advertising purposes and networks. For further information please visit www.do-re-mi.com.au

David Hawkins is New South Wales Co-ordinator
David.Hawkins@newcastle.edu.au

Debbie Wilson is Queensland Co-ordinator the.
willows@bigpond.com



IKS MESSAGE

from Gilbert De Greeve, President of the International Kodály Society

Over the years the name 'Kodály' has become famous, so famous that it is commonly used as a reference to 'a way of teaching', a 'methodology' or even a 'training-style' for choirs... The name is almost at stake to become just a 'brand'. A little bit like it is with 'sandwich'. How many people still know that the word is linked to a human being, Lord Sandwich, and is not just merely a 'word'?

Therefore, we should never forget that everything named after Zoltán Kodály is named after an exceptional human being and great composer. Only if we understand that well, we can interpret and apply his universal vision in the best way.

To be a 'good' teacher, more is needed than just the knowledge and skills. It requires full engagement as a human being, not only in a professional, but also in a pure human and ethical way. It requires developing the given talent and

offering the benefit of it to all students. That is the core of the so-called Kodály-vision.

Zoltán Kodály, in 1966, receiving a Honorary Doctorate at the University of Toronto in Canada, included the modest comment that the university had honoured his striving rather than his results.

The 'striving' is the most important. If that striving is consequent and based on knowledge and integrity, the 'results' will follow. As it is in the Olympic idea, 'winning' is not the most important, 'doing' is that far more. And Zoltán Kodály was a 'doer' a man who not only 'identified' the problems, but found solutions and realized them.

The International Kodály Society (IKS) is 'striving' for the dissemination of Zoltán Kodály's vision every day again. Through its biannual scientific Bulletin, regular publications, workshops etc, the IKS is offering expertise and know-how to its membership and to the world at large. Many Australians attended the biennial International Kodály Symposium which took place this year in August in Katowice, Poland, at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music. Colleagues came from many cultures to enjoy high-level performances and discuss present and future aspects of good music education.

If you have not done so yet, please consider joining the IKS and, in doing so, support your colleagues from all over the world. The application form can be found at www.iks.hu



IKS NEWS

James Cuskelly, Australian on the IKS Board of Directors

Australians were well represented at the IKS biennial International Symposium in Katowice, Poland, 10-17 August 2009. 17 attended and 5 presented. Judy Johnson gave one of the keynotes and papers were presented by Dr James Cuskelly, Daniel Crump, Jennifer Bergstrum and Rachael Dwyer. The total attendance was around 110 with fewer than expected Poles influenced apparently by all sessions being in English. There were two concerts daily each day with 4 or 5 different performers/groups. The performance by the Radio Children's Choir (directed by Gabriella Thiez and Laszlo Nemes, Budapest) was fantastic, as were concerts from two outstanding Polish pianists and from string groups.

The next IKS Symposium will be held in Seoul, Korea in 2011 and we got a very nice presentation about that during the symposium. The decision was made that, after Seoul, symposia will only be 4 days plus a registration day - the idea is that this would have less of an impact upon people's work commitments.

I commend to you the IKS Bulletin Archives. This is an outstanding resource and one that deserves a place on the bookshelves of every music educator and in every library. Order from the IKS website www.IKS.org.hu

BACKGROUND TO KODÁLY SUMMER COURSES IN QUEENSLAND

Judith Johnson and Ann Carroll

The first Kodály-based Summer Courses in Brisbane were offered, with tertiary credit, by Holy Names University, Oakland, California, in conjunction with the KMEIA Q'ld Branch. They were coordinated by Judith Johnson. Holy Names is the alma mater and provider of the Masters degrees of many distinguished Australian music educators. The Holy Names courses commenced in Brisbane, 3-17 January 1988, with assessment providing full credit towards the Holy Names Kodály Certificate, and the Holy Names Master of Education with Kodály Emphasis. Holy Names courses were held in 1991 at Banyo, and 1992 and 1994 at Clayfield, all in conjunction with KMEIA Q'ld.

In January 1994 a Brisbane Summer Institute, replacing the Holy Names course, was offered at Clayfield College, Brisbane. It offered credit towards the Australian Kodály Certificate in Music Education which course was similar to that of the Holy Names University. These courses continued to be offered at regular intervals until January 2000 when the School of Music at the University of Queensland (UQ) introduced its Summer Music Program. Successful graduates from the Holy Names and the Brisbane Summer Institute courses were able to obtain credit towards their upgrading degrees from several universities.

Meanwhile, UQ introduced its coursework masters degree in 1995, which permitted achievement of a Kodály-based masters degree. The Summer Music Program with Kodály-emphasis was introduced in 2000, offering accreditation at certificate, diploma and masters level in addition to the opportunity to study for the AKC in Music Ed. The summer program continued until the January 2009 Summer Music Program.

Guest lecturers who are experts in their fields have come from the UK, Hungary, Canada, USA, Finland, Philippines, to join their Australian colleagues who are among the most highly regarded Kodály-based lecturers in Australia.

Enrolments in all of these courses over so many years were never fewer than 150 people and often surpassed 200. Participants have attended from all States and Territories of Australia, and from New Zealand, Japan, Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia – the course has been both nationally and internationally recognised and respected.

NOTES FROM AMERICA

Anne Comisky

International Kodály practitioners are regularly invited to present at Australia's KMEIA national conferences. These leaders in music education inspire us with their classroom practices, insights, and personal teaching philosophies. Delegates comment positively on the "new" ideas and "exciting" trends from overseas.

Workshop and conference organizers in the US take a different approach. Keynote speeches regularly feature American practitioners. The theme of the 2009 Organization of American

Kodály Educators (OAKE) national conference was “A Musical Legacy.” An audio-visual presentation at the opening ceremony traced the legacy of the Kodály movement in America. Past presidents of the organization participated in a standing-room only forum presenting their views on the current impact of the Kodály movement, and offering their ideas and preferences for future directions. With great differences in academic year and summer programs throughout the country, discussions about a national curriculum for Kodály certification programs become very lively! However, despite significant philosophical and methodological differences, the public acknowledgement and the collective wisdom of past and present leaders strengthens OAKE’s ability to advocate nationally for Kodály music education.

The relentless emphasis on national literacy and numeracy testing in US schools continues to place great curricula and time constraints on all teachers, regardless of their curriculum area. I was intrigued by the title of a locally-advertised roundtable. Organized by an Early Childhood professor at the University of Hartford, “Conversations at the Heart of Vibrant Teaching” attracted a small, diverse group of teachers, school and district administrators, and educational researchers who had not met previously. Invited speaker Sam Intrator, Associate Professor of Education at Smith College, Massachusetts, spoke of his educational research and his involvement in programs designed to address the increasing isolation of teachers within their schools. Interspersing his presentation with beautiful poetry from master poets, Sam stressed the need for teachers to sustain themselves through professional conversations, personal learning and poetry.

KMEIA has provided or facilitated similar programs for many years. Australian teachers have developed professional networks that meet regularly, outside work time, to build teaching and musicianship skills, and to nourish their souls through singing – much like the programs that Sam Intrator, among others, endorses. My memories of KMEIA national conferences are the rigorous musicianship, the invaluable methodology and the choral rehearsals in which all delegates participated - rejuvenating and sustaining each participant as a vibrant teacher.

While there is no question that international input

is a necessary and laudable aspect of professional development, it is essential that excellence in Australian Kodály practice is acknowledged and commended, and that those who have the skills and passion to inspire the next generation of teachers are identified and mentored. Just as teachers from other countries perceive their programs as unique, so too are Australian programs. Many teachers have developed music programs strongly influenced by Kodály’s philosophy and humanity, using quality folk and art music repertoire, and with a strong literacy focus. Each program is unique: each teacher has adapted the methodology they learned to suit their teaching style, their students’ learning styles, and the physical and cultural environments in which they teach.

Changing community perceptions about music education can occur on many levels. Grassroots advocacy by teachers in the field, especially for each other’s work, is as important as advocacy by national and international Kodály leaders. We should continue to champion good teaching at the local level and encourage teachers currently teaching in Australia (including those with divergent views and practices), at every level of the education system, in classrooms and in private studios, to document their programs and to share their Kodály best practices with others.

Dr David Banney (MB BS (UQ), a BMus (Hons) from UQ, and a certificate in Colourstrings teaching from the East Helsinki Music Institute) was ABC-Westfield Australian Young Conductor of the Year in 1995, and has conducted many of Australia's professional ensembles, including the QSO, the QPO, Opera Queensland, the Canberra Symphony and the WASO. David is director of the Newcastle String Academy and the Hunter Strings at the Newcastle Conservatorium. He has composed many works for strings and choir based on the principles of the Kodály approach. David also teaches Kodály-based musicianship courses for adults and children.

Associate Professor Anne Comiskey (MME from Holy Names University, BMus (UQ) and AMusA Violin) has taught ear training and ear training pedagogy at undergraduate and graduate level at the Hart School, University of Hartford USA since 2005. Anne had an extensive career as an Australian music educator, curriculum developer, and presenter at regional, state and national KMEIA conferences, at national Kodály conferences in Washington, Denver and San Francisco, and at the IKS Symposium in Ohio. For nine years Anne was leader of Education Queensland's 300 hour 10-week Music Inservice Courses. Anne taught musicianship and methodology for Holy Names University Summer Institutes and Masters program.

Dr James Cuskelly (BA, DipEd, MMusSt (UQ), PhD (UQ) in Music Education, Kodály Certificate, Holy Names University, California) is Coordinator of Music Education and Aural Studies at the School of Music, The University of Queensland. He has been Director of the UQ Summer Music Program since its inception in 2000. James has taught in pre-school, primary and secondary programs, teacher in-service, curriculum development and choral conducting in Australia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, China, Singapore and New Zealand. He has presented at conferences in the UK, USA and Hungary. In 2007 he was elected as a Director of the Board of the International Kodály Society.

Associate Professor Jerry-Louis Jaccard (BMusEd University of Arizona; MME with Kodály Emphasis, Holy Names University; EdD University of Massachusetts at Amherst) is a full-time faculty member in the Brigham Young University School of Music, and an Affiliated Faculty Member of the BYU School of Family Life in Provo, Utah. He specializes in pedagogical systems, comparative folksong musicology, and literacy acquisition in music. Dr Jaccard is Vice-President of the International Kodály Society (Budapest, Hungary), a member of the Oxford Round Table on Public Policy in Arts and Sciences Education, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Association Internationale de l'Éducation Musicale Willems (Lyon, France).

Judith Johnson (MMusEd with Kodaly Emphasis, Holy Names University and TMusA, implemented a P-12 Kodály based program for over 26 years. At the School of Music, The University of Queensland, she taught aural musicianship and classroom methodology. She continues to provide in-service training for teachers both locally and overseas. Judith is a Past President of the Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia and chairs

the Education Committee. She served for eight years as Vice President of the International Kodály Society and is the author of a number of texts for music education which are used extensively throughout Australia.

Julie Logan (Master of Early Childhood Education (Newcastle), Australian Certificate of Kodály Music Education, B Ed Primary Music (Canberra School of Music), Diploma of Teaching Special Education (UTS). She has extensive experience in music and movement programs in early childhood services and primary schools in Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle as well as the Newcastle Conservatorium of Music Early Childhood program. She has taught music education at the University of Newcastle and TAFE, the Kodály Teacher Training Certificate NSW, and given workshops and papers at national (invited presenter) and international conferences. She teaches 0-8 year olds through the do-re-mi music for children program in Newcastle. Julie is on the KMEIA National Council and President of the KMEIA NSW Branch.

Dr Elizabeth Mackinlay (BMus Hons, PhD Adelaide, PhD Queensland) is a Senior Lecturer in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland. Liz completed her PhD in Ethnomusicology in 1998 and also has a PhD in Education (2003) in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Queensland. She is undertaking research with Yanyuwa women at Borroloola in the NT and is working on projects associated with gifted education, music and motherhood, and Indigenous education. She is currently training as a primary teacher.

Coral Rafferty (MMusSt, BMus, DipEd, (Melb), BEdSt (Monash) and AMusA) is the Deputy Director of Music at Haileybury College in Melbourne, where she runs the Music Department at the Berwick campus. Since her school days at MLC Coral has enjoyed accompanying choirs. For the past twenty years Coral was accompanist for the Choral Institute Melbourne (Chime Choir), and has also spent some years accompanying each of the following: the National Boys Choir of Australia, the Berwick Youth Choir and the Da Capo Singers including touring within Australia and overseas with three of these choirs.

Dr Sheila J. Scott (BMus, BMusEd (Saskatchewan), MMus (Calgary), PhD (Alberta) in Philosophy of Elementary Education) is an Associate Professor of Music Education in the School of Music at Brandon University (Manitoba, Canada). Dr. Scott studied the Kodály Concept under Lois Choksy and has published articles in numerous journals including *The Kodály Envoy*, *General Music Today*, and *Contributions to Music Education*. Professor Scott teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in music education and her research is in the areas of student assessment and inquiry-based music education.

Notes for Contributors 2010

The Australian Kodály Journal is the national annual publication of the Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia. It is a peer-reviewed Journal that acts as a forum for musicians and music educators to share their considered views on topics of interest to our members. It is intended that the annual Bulletin will provide material that inspires us, that challenges us in our thinking, and that informs us of practices, materials or issues that we might not ordinarily access in our own professional activities.

Members of KMEIA and those whose research or discussions are relevant to the objectives of KMEIA are encouraged to submit an article for the Bulletin. Acceptance of material provides authors with an ideal opportunity to have material published in a recognised professional journal. The editorial board also welcomes photographs of KMEIA activities which would be of interest to members nationally.

Papers for publication in the annual Bulletin that may include any of the following:

- Original research
- Discussions of topics / practitioners relevant to music education (especially those related to the Kodály concept)
- Reviews of publications of interest to Institute members

The following guidelines are offered for papers/articles:

Research Reports

Papers consisting of reports of research should be 2000–5000 words long. The following will be taken into account during the review process

- the worth of the topic and contribution(s) it could make to music education;
- choice and explanation of the methodology used in the study;
- clarity and development of argument(s) and discussion; and
- well documented citations.

Papers relating to Action Research and/or Reflective Practice must include a discussion of how and why informed practice may or did change.

Discussion of Topics

Papers consisting of topical discussions should be 1500–2000 words long, and relate in some way to the Kodály concept. The following will be taken into account during the review process:

- relevance of the topic;
- clarity and logic of argument or thesis; and
- well documented citations.

Reviews

Papers consisting of reviews of publications of interest to KMEIA members should be 500–1000 words long. The following will be taken into account during the review process

- relevance of the publication being reviewed;
- clarity of description and logic of discussion.

General Information

Papers should be submitted as an attachment in Word document format by email to The Editor: bulletin@Kodaly.org.au

Papers may be sent at any time prior to 31 March 2010.

References in the text and the reference list should conform to the current APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines.

The first page of the paper should indicate the title of article, author's name, current position and institution (if appropriate), current email for correspondence, and address and telephone details. These details will be removed before the paper is sent to three referees for anonymous editorial review by members of the Editorial Panel.

Contributors should also submit an abstract of no more than 150 words and a short biographical note of no more than 100 words. There should also be the following statement on the title page: This article is submitted exclusively to the Australian Kodály Bulletin and if accepted for publication it is agreed that it will become the copyright of the Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia (KMEIA) Incorporated



Music Matters

National Conference for Music Educators

Featuring outstanding international presenters:

• *Fernando Malvar-Ruiz (USA)*

Choral specialist and director of the American Boy Choir

• *Géza Szilvay (Finland)*

Acclaimed string pedagogue. Author of the Colour Strings method

Melbourne, 26-29 Sep, 2010

Caulfield Grammar School, East St. Kilda

Empowering teachers, engaging learners

www.kodaly.org.au



The Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia Inc

© KMEIA 2009