

Manitoba MODES

Official Newsletter of the Manitoba Orff Chapter

President's Message

BY ERICA ROTHSCILD

Dear Friends,

As we wrap up another busy year, I just want to take a moment to say thank you. Whether you're a teacher, student, volunteer, or supporter—you've played a part in making this a great year for our music education community.



A special thank you must go to the fifteen MOC Board of Directors, for their time, energy, willingness and flexibility these past two years. We are lucky in Manitoba to have a dedicated community of music educators. Volunteers like these make this chapter and these workshops possible. New adventures are on the horizon as a new board will be taking place next November.

We've seen so many great moments this year! Professional development sessions that sparked new ideas including Fall Fiesta with David Row, and Chantal Dubois with Orffantastique. Experienced a new location for Children's Day at the University of Manitoba. Listened to inspiring performances at Play! in the St. Vital Centre. Connected with the Reading Rhythm book club, including rural connections with Building Bridges. Through it all, your passion for music and education has kept us moving forward.

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It's not always easy, and this work definitely comes with its challenges—but the joy, growth, and connection we see every day remind us why we do it.

As we head into a well-deserved break, I hope you'll take time to rest, reflect, and recharge. We've got exciting things ahead in the new year for the chapter's 50th season.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and music-filled summer!

Warmly, *Erica*



Advocacy Corner

CELEBRATING ORFF SCHULWERK IN MUSIC EDUCATORS
AND THE POWER OF LIFELONG LEARNING
BY AMANDA CIAVARELLI

As another school year draws to a close, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and deepest gratitude to all music educators, especially those dedicated to the Orff Schulwerk approach as part of their instruction in the early years' music classroom. Your creativity and commitment to quality music education has once again inspired a love of music in your students, helping them grow not only as musicians but as expressive, confident individuals.

Orff Schulwerk, with its emphasis on active music-making through singing, movement, speech, and playing instruments, continues to prove its value in classrooms across Manitoba and beyond. The approach's accessibility and adaptability make it a powerful tool for reaching learners of all backgrounds and abilities. At its core, Orff Schulwerk places children at the center of their musical experience—an educational philosophy that is as empowering as it is joyful.

As we celebrate the achievements of the past year, we also look ahead to the opportunities summer brings for rest, reflection, and growth. Professional development is a cornerstone of our teaching practice, and ongoing learning is essential to keeping our passion alive and our classrooms vibrant. All the best to those who are working on their Orff Level I, II, or III certifications this summer at the University of Manitoba.

To all the educators who have navigated challenges, sparked joy, and nurtured curiosity through music—thank you. Your work matters deeply. As you enjoy a well-earned summer break, we encourage you to explore new ideas, recharge, and celebrate all the great work you have done this school year. We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

Children's Day Reviews

WINNIPEG - ENGLISH DAY
BY JOANNE KILFYOLE

MOC Grade 5 Children's Day took place on May 15, 2025 at the University of Manitoba. The University venue was an exciting new aspect to this important and enduring MOC event.

My students were thrilled to attend workshop sessions in recorder, drumming, Orff instruments, movement, and choral singing. Each session had something special to offer and gave some great musical enrichment to my students.

The day was also beneficial for my own professional development. Having the opportunity to watch seasoned music teachers do what they do best is always inspiring and never fails to give me some pedagogical tools and great ideas to improve my own teaching practice. The clinicians provided me with their lesson plans, which will make it easy to implement these great lessons myself.

The culmination of a whole day's learning was a special concert for parents and guests to showcase all the wonderful learning that had taken place. My students were excited to perform the drum circle piece for an audience. It is wonderful to have MOC Grade 5 Children's Day in our province. Fostering skill development and love of music in my students made the day so worthwhile. I highly recommend it to all grade 5 music teachers.





BRANDON
BY HOLLY WALKER

I had the opportunity to attend the “*Prairie Spirited*” Orff Children’s Day at BU School of Music last Friday, and my alma mater as I did a piano performance degree before I became an elementary music teacher. I did not bring any students with me this time, as I was writing for the Manitoba Orff Chapter and was taking valuable notes in the back of the room. I will talk about the highlights and wonders about every session, led by very experienced and passionate music educators. Presenting at a music session for students is on my bucket list as an educator, but I will be doing a session with Dr. Sheila Scott on “Music For All Learners” at Tempo this year! Stay tuned for details on that, it’s going to be very informative!

Choral - led by Janelle Wilts, Ecole Harrison

I had the opportunity in this session to be an accompanist for the choir in my group and at the Sharing Session at the end of the day. We performed Mary Goetz’s “Sing As The Prairie” and it was rhythmically very challenging, with many different rhythms and tempi throughout and lots of vocal improvising. The highlight was hearing the group I was supervising sing while I was playing piano and they sounded so beautiful together. Janelle commented on their voices sounding so great together for their first session, even though they claimed they don’t like singing much. We also did vocalises with the ribbon and I wonder what it would have been like if we did more weather sounds as warmups?



Recorder- led by Kelsey Simpson, Earl Oxford School

Kelsey began with walking to the beat of the drum in 4, then 2, then 3 to prepare us for the song she was going to teach them, which is in 3. Then the students were echoing B, A, G, E, D patterns on the recorder which got them really listening to their own sounds. Then she taught us her composition “Number One Highway” that also had words, then added the fingering to the song before playing it fragment by fragment. The kids were mostly very engaged in this, and then they composed a section to play in groups of 3 with Prairie words such as “Brandon Wheat Kings” using the 5 notes played earlier and I wished that the kids all played their own melodies even in the small groups and ended together.



Basic Orff- led by Sandra Town, Waverly Park

Sandra began the session with discussing adjectives about wind in the prairies in the different seasons, and it has definitely been very windy this spring here in Brandon. She taught the Volume IV, #31 Dance from the Orff Schulwerk. She then taught the “it’s windy ostinato” while she played the recorder melody and then taught them the melodies of the two sections then transferred them to parachute and the barred instruments. I wish we had a bigger space to move the parachute in because I was a bit nervous about the kids making that large step up the risers. I really enjoyed when the students added the accidental to their instruments so quickly, and I will be sure to implement a time limit the next time I do barred instruments.

Movement Session- “Under The Prairie Skies”, led by Angie Weisgerber

Angie began with discussing the Northern Lights photos she had on the board, and they all looked distinctly different from each other. I had the opportunity to make a diamond painting of the Northern Lights, which I will be selling at craft sales later this year. They also played the icebreaker game “Switch It” which is going to different places in the circle if you had a brother, if you like the Jets etc. Then we talked about laban movements and moved to various types of music, then listened to “Neptune” by Holst which had various rhythms in 5/4. They used ribbons and scarves as well as body socks which were really cool. I would have added green, blue and purple finger lights for an even bigger effect of the northern lights, but I did like that the lights were dimmed for the Sharing Session.

Drumming Session- led by Jewel Casselman

We started with the “Under The Prairie Sky” poem, then added a few small percussion instruments to make sound effects to go with the poem, with most rubbing the drum heads to make the wind sound. Then we added some spoken ostenati in 4 different groups, learning about the bass and tone sounds of the tubano drums, then the universal break signal to switch patterns. I stayed for some of this since I had to return upstairs to practice with the choir singing at the Sharing Session right after, and it was a thrill to play the Yamaha piano again with ivory keys (and nerve wracking since the music wasn’t easy). That and the Steinway are my favourites I have ever played at BU.

All in all, it was a great day and I am hoping to add a lot of these ideas to a weather unit I will likely do next year in Music class.

Off the Shelf

BY LORI ARTHUR

Have you ever wondered about the accuracy of musical notation when it's part of a poster or logo?



At Manitoba Orff, we're proud to say our music is authentic, thanks to a valued board member and our logo designer. If you attended this year's Stay 'N Play with Joan Linklater, Dianne Sjoberg, and Ruth Wiwchar, you would have heard the melody featured in our logo performed live! This edition of *Off the Shelf* focuses on the Orff Schulwerk volumes, which were central to that evening's session.

First a bit of history. The journey of Orff Schulwerk to North America is fascinating. **Doreen Hall** was sent by Arnold Walter, director of the Royal Conservatory of Music, to study with Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman in Salzburg in the early 1950s. In 1952, Hall and Walter collaborated to create the first English adaptation of the German "Musik für Kinder" volumes. Hall was pivotal in establishing Orff Schulwerk in North America, particularly through her work at the University of Toronto. There's a lovely memorial to Doreen Hall in the latest edition of *Ostinato* as she unfortunately passed this year at 101 years of age.

Meanwhile, Margaret Murray independently developed her own English version to meet the needs of teachers in the United Kingdom. She adapted the five volumes to reflect the UK's cultural context. Because of these distinct adaptations, specific songs might appear in either the Hall or Murray editions, but not necessarily both.

DIVING INTO VOLUME I: PENTATONIC

This article focuses on the first volume, *Pentatonic*, which is a superb starting point for any music specialist. The volume is thoughtfully divided into sections:

- Part One: A collection of Nursery Rhymes and Songs.
- Part Two: Rhythmic and Melodic exercises.
- Part Three: Instrumental pieces.



The end of the volume provides additional instructions and notes for each section.

Joan, Dianne and Ruth's recent sessions perfectly showcased how these volumes can be a rich resource for players of all levels. For instance, Joan pulled out the canon "Ding Dong" (#30 p.24). Once your students have a solid grasp of this canon, you can jump to #44 p. 136, where the same canon is expanded into multiple layers. This is just one small example of how Volume I offers a plethora of playing opportunities and enjoyable experiences for all learners!

Many Orff-trained teachers own these foundational texts. If you borrowed them for your Orff Levels courses and want to revisit them, they're available in our Lending Library by emailing library@manitobaorff.org. For those new to music education who are curious about Orff courses, mark your calendar for **July 18th at 2 PM** at the Desautels Faculty of Music. At this time, you can experience a brief showcase of the learning which takes place during the Orff Levels being offered.

Hope to see you there.

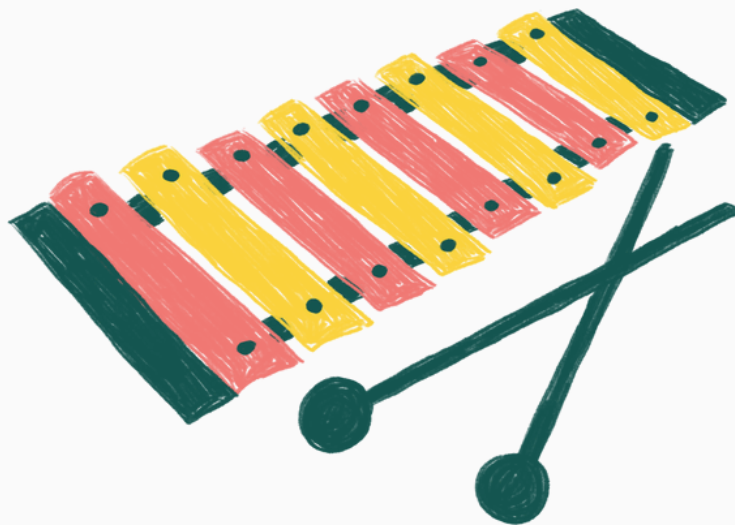


Stay 'n Play Review

BY SONJA WIENS

Have you forgotten how much fun it is to sit down at the Orff instruments with other adults and play lots and lots of awesome elemental pieces from Keetman volumes? Then you should have been at the MOC's Stay and Play event on May 22nd at École Précieux Sang!

In honour of MOC's 50th anniversary, the evening featured three clinicians who all hold a special place in the hearts of Manitoba Orff educators who did their Orff levels in the 1980's and beyond: Joan Linklater, Ruth Wiwchar and Dianne Sjoberg. These three women taught the Orff levels at the U ofM for many, many years and were inspirational to so many of us who are teaching in Manitoba music programs today.



Under their leadership, we played through many pieces that evening, ranging from arrangements you might do with a grade one classroom through to challenging pieces you might tackle over the course of a year with your Orff club. They chose to especially focus on the Doreen Hall (aka Canadian) translation of the volumes, which, partly due to its smaller size, tends to get less attention than the British version translated by Margaret Murray, but which is no less (and possibly more?) delightful. This evening also served as a good reminder that the volumes are not meant to be played “from” as much as they are meant to be played “with”. As Joan particularly reminded us, the volumes invite us to use their pieces as a starting place from which to create with our students, using what makes sense, and changing or omitting what does not.

All in all, it was a wonderful evening of music, laughter, memories and friendship. Thank you so much, Ruth, Dianne and Joan, for sharing your talents and experience with us! Thank you also to Christine Miron, who generously let us use her beautiful instrumentarium.

And if you are regretting that you did not attend this year's Stay and Play, fear not...
we will be doing it again in 2027!



Resource Review

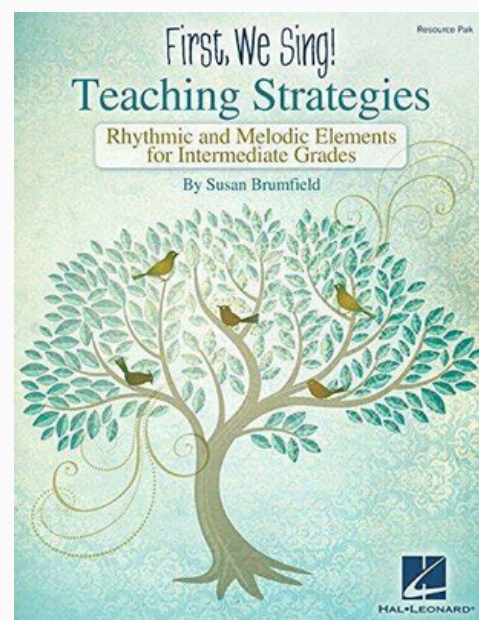
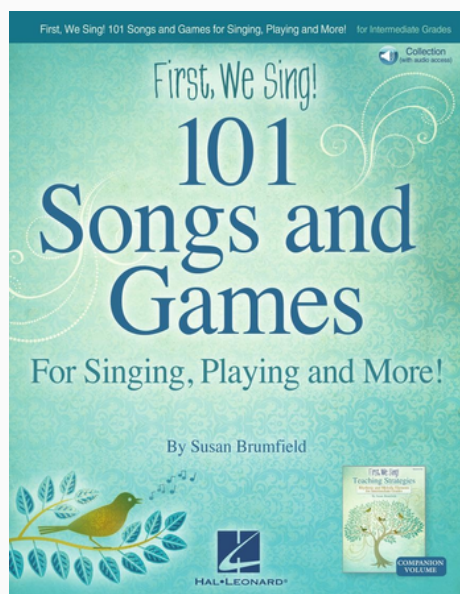
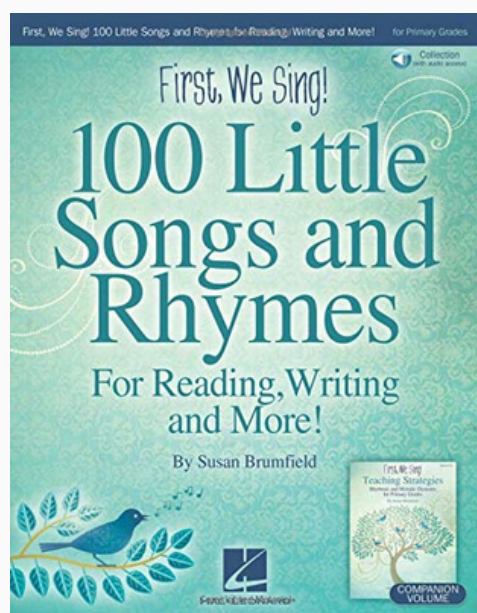
BY JOANNE KILFOYLE

100 Little Songs and Rhymes, *101 Songs and Games*, and *Kodály-Inspired Teaching* are three companion books by Susan Brumfield, which I became aware of last summer when I took the Kodály 1 course at the University of Manitoba.

These books have proved to be valuable resources, and I have used many songs from these books in this current school year. I found that the songs can be used with any elementary grade level and used to teach numerous concepts such as rhythm, solfa, and time signatures, depending what you would like to focus on. Many of the songs have a fun game component which helps to keep the students engaged.

The Kodály-Inspired Teaching book also gives a K-5 scope and sequence, song list, sample year plans, lesson plans, and planning tools. It is helpful to see a recommended order for teaching musical concepts which builds on the previous year's concepts.

The Kodály approach as laid out in these resources is a very structured and systematic way of leading children to musical literacy. One thing that would make the books even better is if each song had a ready-made Orff arrangement to go with it; however, these resources have a Kodály focus and contain a plethora of songs and will certainly be valuable in any music teacher's library.



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