

E-Z 30-MINUTE DANCE COURSE

Cha Cha Cha

An exciting Latin dance that is also rather easy to learn. It's a favorite at many events. Proper footwork is essential for good form and style. Some general principles to develop good footwork include:

1. Carry your weight more on the ball of your foot than on your heel.
2. Align your feet so they are parallel to your partner's feet. Your right foot should be pointed in between your partner's feet. Take straight steps with your toes pointed straight ahead, either forward or backward.
3. When stepping, the motion should originate from the hip, allowing the leg to swing freely from the joint.
4. Don't drag your feet. Take definite steps.
5. If it's a fast song, take shorter steps. If it's a slow song, take longer steps.
6. When you change directions, you will maintain your balance better if your feet are closer together.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

Richard Louis Brown, *Portland*

VICE CHAIR

Lark Palma, *Portland*

TREASURER

Loren Wyss, *Portland*

SECRETARY

Bill Smaldone, *Salem*

Marlene Ankeny, *Lincoln City*

Brian Booth, *Portland*

John Costa, *Bend*

Gene d'Autremont, *Portland*

Kathleen Dean Moore, *Corvallis*

Darrell Grant, *Portland*

Kathryn Harrison, *Sheridan*

Jill Kirk, *Portland*

Peter Lovely, *Portland*

Robert Melnick, *Eugene*

Carole Orloff, *Corvallis*

Marie Rasmussen, *Roseburg*

Carlos Rivera, *Portland*

Joan Shipley, *Portland*

Jennie Tucker, *Summerville*

Charles Walker, *Neskowin*

Christopher Zinn, *Executive Director*

Education is a subject which cannot be discussed in a void: our questions raise other questions, social, economic, financial, political. And the bearings are on more ultimate problems even than on these: to know what we want in education we must know what we want in general, we must derive our theory of education from our philosophy of life. The problem turns out to be a religious problem.

—T.S. Eliot, *Notes Toward the Definition of Culture*

CONTENTS

Fall | 2002

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE	2
TEACHING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION By Anita Helle	4
THE BUTTERFLY ON THE BLACKBOARD: AN ESSAY By Marjorie Sandor	10
THE LANDING AND THE LEAP: THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND STANDARDS IN OUR SCHOOLS By Michael McGregor	16
FINE-TUNING A VISION: NEW TEACHER TRAINING AND RETENTION IN OREGON By Meg Daly	20
THE UNITY OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH: HUMBOLDT'S EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION By Ian McNeely	32
HOW TO COOK RICE By Kathleen Tyau	36
LANDSCAPE LESSONS By Robert Z. Melnick	38
MUSIC AS A WAY OF KNOWING: AN ESSAY By Tricia Snell	42
BOOK REVIEW: <i>WHOSE AMERICA?</i> By Christopher Zinn	48
PRIEST OF THE IMAGINATION By Kim Stafford	50
PERSONAL ESSAYS ON TEACHING Ass over Teakettle	9
Talking with Patients	15
Teaching Gamelan	24
Tending a Forest	31
Teaching Girls Rock 'n' Roll	47
GALLERY: WHAT IS THE READER TO MAKE OF THIS?	25

Christopher Zinn EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kathleen Holt EDITOR
Jennifer Viviano GRAPHIC DESIGN

Oregon Humanities, a journal of ideas and perspectives about the humanities, is published biannually by the Oregon Council for the Humanities, 812 SW Washington Street, Suite 225, Portland, Oregon 97205.

We welcome letters from readers. If you would like a letter to be published, subject to editorial discretion, please include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for reasons of space or clarity.

Oregon Humanities is provided free of charge. To be on the mailing list to receive this magazine, please e-mail us at och@oregonhum.org, or call the OCH office at (503) 241-0543 or (800) 735-0543.



Music As a Way of Knowing

In pursuit of a musical life

BY TRICIA SNELL

Music is so much a part of us that it is difficult to separate it from our own animal qualities. We walk (*one, two, three, four*), we call our children (*Luuuu-kie! Diiin-ner!* in 6/8 time, pentatonic tonality). Our hearts beat in duple time (maybe triple, if we have a flutter), our voices rise in anger, become gentle in love, fall in shyness, break in fear. Even in the cacophony of rush-hour traffic you'll hear the rhythmic *chunk, chunk, chunk* of your tires going across the bridge, orchestrated braking at lights, even some interesting counterpoint in the honking of horns.

Think of it. Waking up to bird song. That rush of good feeling when your body, racket, and ball move in perfect rhythm in a morning tennis match. Singing in the car or shower. Tapping a pencil. Playing music on your computer's CD-ROM. Drumming your best marimba beat on the lunch counter. Strutting down the street wearing a Walkman. Soothing music at dinner. Blasting music at parties. Singing in a band, a choir, at the Irish pub down the street. Playing an instrument. Singing a lullaby to your child at night.

While it's the rare person who likes *all* music, is there anyone who doesn't love *any* music, who *never* express themselves musically? Even adults who label themselves tone deaf (almost always a lack of nurture, not nature) enjoy music and express themselves musically. Even people with hearing disabilities love and experience music through rhythm, vibrations, and movement.

Music is so much a part of us that we may never stop to think about what it means to us. We may think of it as unserious, a casual indulgence, even a guilty pleasure. At the end of our rational, get-things-done work days, we hop in our cars or snap on our Walkmans and rock out to some band, or opera, or jazz torch song that we think our boss wouldn't dream of listening to. But we are wrong about that. Music is a universal language shared by all, and it's a supreme connector. Music is an expression of our souls, our love, our sexuality, our spirituality, our anger, our grief, our hope and joy in being alive. Although it can be intensely personal, music is enmeshed with family, community, cultural identity, and the stories we want to share.

As the composer and pedagogue Emile Jaques-Dalcroze put it, "Musical education should start nine months before the birth of the mother." Neurological pathways in human brains are wired for the learn-

ing of music. Basic music competence will be learned by the age of three or four or five, just as a child's first language is, if the child is immersed in a musical environment. A musician continues to develop that basic competence throughout his or her life (again, as long as a rich musical environment is present) through listening, singing, playing, moving, improvising, reading, composing, analyzing, and playing music with others. "Even a Mozart had the possibility of becoming tone-deaf depending upon the way he was raised," said Shinichi Suzuki in his book, *Ability Development From Age Zero*.

I think of music as my first language and as almost synonymous with family. My grandmother played the viola, my mother is a cellist, I am a flutist, my brothers are all musicians of one kind or another (classical, jazz, rock, folk). We are a family that sings a lot, in organized groups as well as just in normal life (while we do housework, walking down stairs, on a hike). I feel very fortunate in this. My ten-year-old son, Lucas, is a violinist. He's also a member of a rock band (the Cobras!—watch for them!), a children's orchestra, his school choir, and he's learning guitar as his second instrument. What are the chances that my grandchild, if I'm lucky enough to have one some day, will sing and play music? If we are to cultivate young musicians, we must nurture our own musical natures, and share them, as we share stories, with our children.

Sometime in my childhood, my mother related to me a conversation she'd once had with my grandmother, who told her that no matter what happened to her during her life, she would always have a friend in her cello and her music. I remember my mother saying that she had never forgotten that exchange, and that she had lived long enough to know it was true. I too have never forgotten the story, and I have passed it on to Lucas, too.

Like this thought passed down through the generations, music learning is at its core a person-to-person, one-on-one undertaking. But like a fugue, it builds from that duality, each voice picking up the voice of the one before it, honoring, imitating, developing, layering, and transforming it.

When I asked my musician friends about their childhoods, all of them said that they had at least one parent who was a musician, and many mentioned grandparents or aunts or uncles. Most responded that

both of their parents supported of music education, even if they weren't both musical themselves. Parents don't have to be accomplished musicians to open up the world of music for their children. They just have to show their joy in music, be open to participating musically with their children during the early preschool years, and then exhibit the discipline that's necessary to support their children's musical development throughout the grade-school years.

✦ ✦ ✦

If family is the bedrock of musicality, then music teachers are the forces that carve out musical personalities. My childhood music and choir teacher, Mrs. Dent, is forever a part of me. I smile before any performance because of her influence, and to this day I still see her encouraging face as she mouthed "Smile!" to us pre-concert. Her memory is as of sunshine. In contrast, lessons with a private clarinet teacher during my high school years inspired me not at all. I remember a small, dark basement studio, a grey method book, endless exercises, not being allowed to play the Mozart clarinet quintet, and my teacher's reedy breath. ("We're looking for a bell sound," he said dolefully, week after week, filling up the room with sour air.) After high school, I dropped clarinet and began studying the flute.

A music teacher must teach much more than notes and fingerings. If music is an expression of the soul, teachers must at least recognize, if not embrace, the souls of their students. Music requires listening, collaboration, letting go of one's prejudices and preconceptions. It requires openness, humility, and courage. A teacher needs to model all of these qualities for his or her students. As violin teacher Cynthia Scott, who plays in Sinfonia Concertante and the Columbia Symphony, and codirects the Oregon Suzuki Institute, says, "Music teachers teach values and a way of life, a way of treating other people." She uses the Suzuki method (see sidebar) in her teaching, which, she says, "teaches the whole child through music."

Being a musician is a way of life, not a day job. The same could be said for being a music teacher. The collaborative nature of music means that the two roles are really one and the same. "I wouldn't teach if I didn't also perform," says René Berblinger, a Portland guitarist and banjo and mandolin player. "It's



MUSICAL RESOURCES AND PEDAGOGIES

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950) was a Swiss composer who felt that movement was a means for discovering the “nuances of music,” which could then be transferred into improvising with the voice and on instruments. His method, referred to simply as Dalcroze, also emphasizes solfège (doh-re-mi, etc.) and improvisation.

The telltale signs of an Orff Schulwerk classroom are good quality wooden xylophones and metal glockenspiels. Created by the German composer Carl Orff (1895–1992), the Orff method trains teachers to use chants, poems, and games, and often guide their classes in making up movements, songs, and dances to express a story.

Kodaly (pronounced Ko-dye) techniques for teaching music literacy were invented by Zoltan Kodaly (1882–1967), a Hungarian composer who revolutionized music education in his country after the Second World War. Like Orff, Kodaly uses folk songs and solfège, but presents a sequential method of instruction that begins with rhythm then progresses to singing and finally to instruments.

Kodaly invented hand signs to go along with solfège sight singing, as well as mnemonic syllables to express note time values.

The Suzuki Talent Education method is an instrumental instruction method based on individual weekly lessons, set repertoire, aural learning (with note reading coming after the ear is trained), regular group playalongs, and intense parental involvement. Developed by Shinichi Suzuki (1898–1998), a Japanese violinist and music educator, the method became famous (and misunderstood) for its group performances when it was first introduced to America.

The Jazz for Young People Curriculum is not a pedagogical method but an important curriculum resource developed by contemporary jazz trumpeter and composer, Wynton Marsalis, through the Jazz at Lincoln Center program he directs. It is an affordable curriculum covering the essential ideas and history of jazz, and it can be used in fourth- through ninth-grade classrooms.

“Culture is what defines a people,” he writes in his introduction to the curriculum, “and one of the centerpieces of American culture is jazz.

It should be taken seriously and taught to all of our students.”

hard to imagine doing one without the other.” Molly Porterfield, who has performed as a jazz pianist as well as a dance accompanist, sees herself as a guide in the Dalcroze classes (see sidebar) and piano lessons she teaches from her own studio in Portland. “The music teaches,” she says. “Music teachers choose music that teaches a concept, and then it’s the music that teaches.” Linda Bergman, a flutist, choir director, and Vancouver elementary school music teacher, describes her role as a music teacher as a striving for excellence. “I expect my students to be excellent,” she says, “and I try to teach them to expect it from themselves. That’s my responsibility. I’m a part of the village it takes to raise a child!”

As Bergman suggests, ultimately, music education goes beyond family and beyond music teachers. As René Berblinger comments, “community is an essential tool for motivating music learning. Peers, an environment where others are pursuing similar goals, these are huge advantages.”

The community for my son, the ten-year-old violinist, is Portland’s Community Music Center (CMC), a shining example of what Berblinger is referring to. CMC grew out of a parent association in the 1950s that saw a lack of instrumental music, particularly strings, in the schools. One strength of community centers is their low cost and adaptability. Another is the way they encourage musical friendships. Yet another is their flexibility. “You can have ten different families coming here for the same service,” says Michael Walsh, assistant director of the center, “but help them in all different ways.” Another Portland organization, Ethos, Inc., represents a new breed of community music center. Founded by Charles Lewis in 1998, Ethos targets urban and at-risk youth and offers private lessons and classes in a variety of band instruments, drums, piano, guitar, hip-hop, turntabling-deejaying, and electronic sequencing.

Other kinds of communities are summer music camps and institutes, which combine technical excellence with a lot of fun. They lend themselves to impromptu socializing and musical collaborations, while also supplying an annual boost of inspiration. You can find classical, jazz, folk, and band camps across the country. There’s also a wide variety of summer music festivals, often associated with universities or orchestras, like the Boston Symphony’s famous Tanglewood Festival. My son and I have experience with a more

close-to-home institute, the Oregon Suzuki Institute (co-directed by Cynthia Scott and cellist Kathie Reed). It’s an intensive, week-long immersion in music offered each summer at Pacific University in Forest Grove. Lucas loves every moment of it. It’s inspiring for a kid to get up each morning and play for excellent teachers from around the country, then go and kick around a soccer ball with some fellow musicians, play in a lunch recital (attended by friends, of course!), attend group classes in the afternoon (which always involve some surprising musical games), go for a quick swim, then watch your teachers play in concerts at night. There’s an atmosphere of mutual encouragement among the students there, too. And again, we’ve both made musical friends through the institute.

Many churches instill a desire to practice and learn and share music, though they are not set up specifically for music education. Music helps build community and is an ancient, ritualistic element of congregational worship. Churches were perhaps our country’s first musical communities, and in their pursuit of competent choir members, they spawned America’s first school music programs. In Portland, the Central Lutheran Church has gone beyond simply music to focusing their ministry on the arts. This choice was made partly as a reaction to the lack of arts in schools, says Linda Bergman, who is also director of the church’s Children’s Choir, and partly to serve the community around them. Bergman says that the church provides ample opportunities for children to participate, not only in choir but in services, ringing hand bells during the gospel, singing a story to the congregation, or making the call to worship at the beginning of the service. “We want the children to be worship leaders too, to feel ownership of the church and the community,” she says.

Nowadays, more and more for-profit music entities, not just community centers and churches, are operating with a public, community-oriented mission, too. Artichoke Music in Portland, for instance, calls itself “a folk music shop and guitar emporium” but goes way beyond that stated role. Artichoke’s owners, Steve Einhorn and Kate Power, welcome players of all levels in the weekly lessons, workshops, and concerts offered in their studios and performance space. They also bring excellent artists from around the world for their concert series, perform regularly themselves, and promote local musicians and instrument builders.

Other private programs, such as Music Together of Portland, offer music classes specifically for children. These classes provide playful, musically rich (with lots of world music), challenging but not intimidating ways of learning music for young children, far from the strict, rather homogenous music classes of my own kindergarten experiences. Music Together is actually a national program (with local programs now developing quickly all around the country) developed by contemporary composer Kenneth Guilmartin of the Center for Music and Young Children at Princeton University. Classes, which include infants and preschoolers and their parents, emphasize improvisation, movement, a variety of tonalities, rhythms, and moods, and general little-kid silliness. Like Suzuki, Music Together rests on the belief that all children are musical and that family participation is essential. “I’m passionate about Music Together’s philosophy, and the unstated goal of bringing music back into families,” says Mary Beth Camp, the co-director of Music Together of Portland. “Families want to turn off the stereo and make music with their kids, but they need guidance and materials.”

As a Music Together teacher myself, I’ve noticed that the parents in my classes are having just as much fun as the children are. Michael Walsh says there’s been a resurgence of adults studying music at the Community Music Center, too. Music is a basic human way of communicating and understanding the world, from prespeech infancy until old age. Ultimately, music is a way of knowing at all stages of life. I’ve recently discovered a national grassroots movement called Music for People, which encourages adults to return to music and develop musical confidence and improvisational skills. Founded by cellist David Darling (a member of the Paul Winter Consort in the seventies and now an accomplished soloist and recording artist), Music for People conducts workshops to help you learn how to improvise, and at the same time trains you to lead improvisation workshops yourself (the heart of their grassroots work). They welcome music-lovers of all kinds, whether trained or not.

In contrast, public school music programs are not thriving the way these private programs are. As they wrestle with shrinking budgets, public schools often cut music, other arts, languages, and physical education. This is troubling. Music should be available to

all children, and public schools should be natural musical communities. However, in Portland Public Schools, for example, only thirty-four of the sixty-one elementary schools have music programs. Some of these programs are excellent, some not so, handicapped by a lack of support. Middle and high school music programs are just as inconsistent. “The creative spirit will always endure,” Michael Walsh says. “It’s just not getting much encouragement in the schools today.” Cynthia Scott agrees, saying, “I feel optimistic [about the future of music in America] when I see people’s desire to provide music to their children, though the outlook for the school system is not so good.” Linda Bergman adds that as a public school teacher she has to be optimistic, then in the next breath she refers to the William Blake quote: “Degrade first the Arts, if you’d Mankind Degrade.”

Like the theory of diversity in nature, if we promote quality music education in a multitude of genres and in a multitude of communities, including our

schools, we will be cultivating a green musical future. “It’s not night yet,” say Regina Pirruccello, an Orff/Kodaly teacher and the music and drama specialist at Portland’s Buckman Elementary, an arts magnet school. And last Friday, as I watched Lucas sing in the Buckman choir on the sidewalk in the Hawthorne District of Portland, I had to agree. He was surrounded by friends, an audience of families that spilled out onto the road, and passersby who smiled and paused for a moment to listen. “Music changes people’s hearts,” Pirruccello says. “It fosters collaboration. It’s food for the soul. If more people could join in, we could change the world for the better.”

Tricia Snell is a flutist, private flute and recorder teacher, and certified Music Together teacher for preschools and Music Together of Portland. Snell is the author of Artists Communities (2000) and a contributor to Art Papers and Artist in Residence/Guide to the World. Among her awards are the Sherwood Anderson Scholarship and the PEN Syndicated Fiction Award.