



DVD review

“Between Freedom and Ritual” Means of Expression with Music and Movement for People with Disabilities

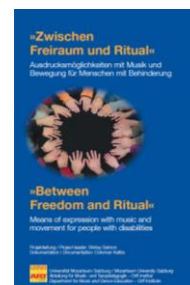
Shirley Salmon & Coloman Kallós

Reviewed by Melanie Voigt

“Between Freedom and Ritual” – Means of Expression with Music and Movement for People with Disabilities

Shirley Salmon & Coloman Kallós

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Shirley Salmon, lecturer at the Orff-Institut, University Mozarteum, Salzburg since 1984 and director of the university training course “*Musik und Tanz in sozialer Arbeit und integrativer Pädagogik*”¹, and Coloman Kallós, lecturer in media didactics at the Orff-Institut have published a DVD in English and German concerning the use of music and movement as a means of expression for people with disabilities. The combination of Salmon’s expertise in music and dance with

persons with special needs and Kallós’s expertise in videographic results in a very informative presentation regarding the possibilities of musical activity with this population. The DVD shows how this work was developed over many years and how it is now implemented at the Mozarteum within the Department for Music and Education at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria.

The DVD is divided into three major parts: History and development, Insights into practice, and Background and reflection.

¹ For further information about the course, see: www.moz.ac.at/en/studium/sr.php?nr=83&c=2

History and development

The first part of the DVD presents the history of the development of the use of Orff-Schulwerk with persons with disabilities. The work of Wilhelm Keller and his influence on the work with this population up to the present time is covered in particular.

Keller's adaptations of Orff-Schulwerk for use with persons with disabilities and also within the area of integration with persons without disabilities are described using film excerpts of his work and of his teaching practice. This description starts with his meeting with Carl Orff in 1947 and his founding of the *Institute for Social Work and Remedial Education* in 1973. The humanistic and integrative foundations of his work are stressed at all times. He coined the idea of a "Musikalische Lebenshilfe" – in English, "music, a life enrichment". The idea that integration is dependent upon everyone having his own role within the whole is a major aspect of this work. Video excerpts from interviews and performances as well as of learning situations, international symposia in Orff-Schulwerk, and courses of study specialising in this area of work illustrate the development of working with persons of all ages with disabilities using Orff-Schulwerk.

Insights into practice

The section giving insights into the practical work of Orff-Schulwerk with individuals with disabilities contains four chapters: Introduction, Theme-centred work, Materials and instruments, and Qualities of relationship.

The first chapter, *Introduction*, describes the basic structure of the sessions which are carried out regularly with clients from a sheltered work centre. These sessions take place within the course of study in the Orff Institute at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. Short video excerpts of the different phases of the sessions illustrate not only the structure of the sessions themselves, but also the roles of the students who are receiving training and who are working with the clients within that structure. Within the sessions, structure and exploration are combined, taking into account what frameworks are necessary in order for the often very individual needs of the clients to be met. Principles from Orff-Schulwerk become very apparent within this introduction. The combination of music, speech, movement and dance, always adapted to the capabilities of the clients who are then able to play an active role in the musical activities can be recognized by the viewer with no problem.

Theme-centred activities are described in a chapter of their own, using the following topics: autumn, sun and clouds, flowers, hands and spring.

The multisensory aspects of Orff-Schulwerk are dealt with here, and possibilities for enabling the clients to have these experiences in the group and individually are well described. For example, structure can be provided by a song used as a point of return for the group after individual improvisations have been performed that have been developed using instruments, materials, the body, movement, the voice, language and sounds as well as recorded music. Not only musical aspects are pertinent. All senses can be included, for example smelling flowers.

The video clips are well chosen. The social contact and interaction between clients, between clients and students or between clients and the teacher are very apparent. The teacher of the group guides the activity, supporting the clients through descriptions or actual support of actions or through actions of her own. Because of the structure provided, all clients are able to understand the situation and thus, to play an active part in the development of the activities and to act freely within the structure when required. This gives them a sense of autonomy while promoting the integration of all in the group.

The third chapter of this section discusses materials and instruments. The use of different materials (also non-musical materials) within the sessions is discussed. The materials are seen as being helpful in supporting perception, cognition and action. Contact can be established with the material, with oneself and with others and can provide a means of enriching nonverbal communication. Examples of areas that can be supported through the creative use of materials are communication, opening up playing space, development of imagination and self-perception and group work, allowing sensory experiences. The characteristics of each material are discovered within the structure of the session and are seen as providing an extension of individual expression. One example given is that of using coloured ropes together with movement.

The characteristics of instruments as well as the ways in which they can be played can be used at different developmental levels. Because of the different developmental abilities of the clients, a wide variety of instruments is necessary. Body instruments are used as an example here. For example, whistling, vocalising or clapping can enable all to take part. Possible uses of many different instruments, including different ways of playing them are shown, again in excerpts of actual sessions with the clients. Instruments can be, and are made by the students for the different clients, always taking the clients' capabilities into consideration. Rhymes are often used to introduce the clients to new instruments and to support

exploring them. Movement can be made audible through the instruments.

Also in this chapter, the necessity for a combination of structure and freedom to experiment can be observed. Through very careful planning, the structure necessary for creating a situation that can be understood by the clients makes it possible for them to explore and play freely within that structure. The use of the multisensory aspects of Orff-Schulwerk plays a very important role here. Scenes in which caregivers/students work with individual clients, exploring the possibilities of playing and interacting using the materials and instruments are shown as well as are group situations in which the instruments are used in playing music together under the leadership of the teacher.

The fourth chapter of the section is: qualities of relationship. The AQR – an instrument for assessing the qualities of relationships – is considered to be applicable for use in working with clients with disabilities. The AQR-Instrument (Assessment of the Quality of Relationship) (Schumacher & Calvet 2007) is an instrument originally developed for the assessment of the quality of relationships in children on the autistic spectrum within music therapy. The use of this instrument within the pedagogical work with clients with disabilities using instruments is described here. The aim of using the AQR-instrument in the work with these clients is to determine if the methods used are adequate for the capabilities of the client to form relationships. The seven different modes of the AQR are defined and illustrated with scenes from the sessions. The quality of the client's ability to develop relationships is seen as corresponding to his or her developmental level. The client's developmental level should then be matched by the teacher when she develops activities to be offered to each client. The examples shown in the video make the heterogeneity of the group and the necessity for providing individual possibilities for participation clear.

It can be argued legitimately that developmental disabilities are very complex, and that looking at only one aspect – in this case relationship – does not do justice to describing the developmental level of the client. However, in the examples shown, the AQR-instrument does seem to be of assistance here in assessing whether or not the teacher reaches the client with her suggestions for activity in order to provide a basis for interaction on the social level.

Background and reflection

The section entitled *Background and reflection* consists of two chapters: Discussion and Interview.

The first chapter, Discussion, shows a discussion with Shirley Salmon, caregivers of the sheltered workshop attended by the clients, and the students of the Orff Institute. The purpose for the video documentation to determine what approaches to music and dance and methods of teaching these can be beneficial for the group of clients receiving these sessions is defined at the beginning of the discussion.

The caregivers from the workshop make it clear that the group attending the Orff Institute enjoys the sessions very much. They also see this participation as an opportunity for contact with others outside of the workshop and as enrichment for those with complex disabilities.

The students reflect on their experiences working with this very heterogeneous group of clients and stress that working with a wide spectrum of clients was a very positive learning experience for them. Some other topics that are discussed are structure and free play and improvisation, working with one person versus the group, and goals that can be pursued in addition to enjoying music.

In the second chapter, an interview is held with Karin Schumacher, especially known for her work with children on the autistic spectrum and for the development of the AQR-instrument. The question to be considered is the usefulness of the Orff-Schulwerk approach with clients with disabilities. Some topics that are discussed are the group size, the heterogeneity of the group, methods that can be used in the students' training to make them aware of possibilities and limitations of the clients as well as of necessary adaptations, perhaps even during the sessions. Karin Schumacher speaks from the point of view of a music therapist. Here, the interface between music therapy and music education with persons with disabilities becomes very obvious, showing similarities and differences as well as themes from which each discipline can profit from the other.

Conclusion

The DVD "*Between Freedom and Ritual*" – *Means of Expression with Music and Movement for People with Disabilities* gives the viewer an insight into the history and development of the Orff Schulwerk approach as well as into the practical application of it. One possible form of assessment is presented. The discussion between Shirley Salmon, the caregivers from the sheltered workshop and the students makes goals and experiences clear. The interview with Karin Schumacher brings therapeutic views into play. The motivation of the clients and the involvement and commitment of the students and teachers of the training course "Music

and Dance for People in Integrative Education and in the Community" can be perceived by the viewer.

Shirley Salmon and Coloman Kallós have managed to create a film that can serve many purposes. First of all, it informs not only how the use of Orff-Schulwerk with persons with disabilities was developed out of the original idea of Orff-Schulwerk, but it also shows how such an approach can be implemented in today's practice. Secondly, possibilities of integrating students' training in a "real live situation" are shown. The students involved in the groups reflect on the advantages of this type of training in the discussion with Shirley Salmon and the caregivers from the sheltered workshop. Thirdly, the film can give music educators who work with persons with disabilities useful ideas and suggestions for developing their work further. In my opinion, music therapists working in institutions with groups of persons with disabilities can also receive important input for their work from this film. The 'grey area' between pedagogy and therapy is almost always present when working with this group of persons in music therapy.

The title of the film "between freedom and ritual" is well chosen. Several factors are necessary in order to work with persons with disabilities. The leader of the group must achieve the right balance between structure and free play and/or improvisation. He or she must have the courage to allow the unusual in playing instruments or using sounds. At the same time, he or she must create a situation that the client can understand within the framework of his own abilities.. Structure, in the form presented here, gives a point of orientation. This point of orientation makes it possible for the clients to express themselves freely, to experiment with their own possibilities for play and to interact each other with the materials and instruments, the students and the teachers.

This film is a valuable tool for communicating the possibilities of music making with persons with disabilities. It also provides important complementary knowledge and ideas for training professionals.

References

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