

Wir stellen vor ...

We present ...

## Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia – Rome, Italy

CHECCO GALTIERI and CIRO PADUANO

*We dream of a society in which the teaching of music, the training, continuing professional development and research are the center of social life. An integrated system of education that guarantees the practical learning of music for everyone, starting from early childhood. A country in which music is a universal channel of communication that reduces the distances between people, different ages and abilities, ethnicities, religions. We want to be a School of Music useful for all of this.*

What is done and offered in the area of Orff-Schulwerk and what characterizes Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia as an associated school of the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg? Meeting Giovanni Piazza and Orff-Schulwerk back in 1991 deeply changed our way of being a music school, our way of thinking didactically and our way of planning education and refresher courses for our teachers as well as for the rest of the Italian teachers in general. In these few lines we will try to list a few keywords we believe to be fundamental to describe how this happened.

### **Teaching music in Italy today is like being “on the barricades” every day ...**

The intervention conditions in music didactic daily life and in areas of work are very complex: on the one hand you have a legislation which is very much advanced when it comes to stating the principles, whereas on the other hand the ‘in the field’ situation is extremely hard. During the last 40 years the public administration (government) didn’t undertake efficient actions to carry out these advanced teaching programmes which are potentially very interesting and innovative. Instead, the educational task towards the new generations has been supported, in spite of thousands of bureaucratic dif-

ficulties and organizational barriers, by local music associations and schools, bands, etc. However, this important educational and social role has not been acknowledged until now. Consequently hundreds of external operators, who are active in schools, work in extremely precarious conditions, while in the meantime the Orff mindset is spreading more and more among families, teachers and musicians in general.

### Team work – network

We experience Orff-Schulwerk as a collective mindset which is both oriented inwards and outwards.

Outwards: these last thirty years we have tried to multiply the opportunities to collaborate as a network or as a team, working together with others at establishing the Rete Internazionale Musica in Culla (Music in the Crib International Network) for Early Childhood, O.S.I. Orff-Schulwerk Italiano, the Forum Nazionale per l'Educazione Musicale (National Forum for Music Education), the Tavolo Permanente Musica 0–6 (Permanent Table for Music 0–6). All of these might not overlap, yet they are all trying to work together according to each specificities.

Inwards: trying to treasure the different kinds of experiences our teaching staff members have, trying never to stop elaborating and trying to provide an ever-growing structure supplying the 'base' supporting this thought.

### School presentation

The Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia was founded in January 1976. It has been attended by over 40,000 students and there have been hundreds of professional collaborations with artists and teachers from all over the world; the school is a founding member of the C.S.P.M. – Coordinamento delle Scuole Popolari di Musica di Roma (Coordination of the Popular Schools of Music in Rome), and of the "Musica in Culla" (Music In the Crib) national network, and is a promoter of O.S.I., the Italian Orff-Schulwerk; it is a licensed body for training and development for the Ministry of Education and for the Municipality of Rome. Since 1991 the school has been constantly upgrading activities also with the contribution of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, and has implemented professional development courses with contributions from the European Social Fund for the Lazio Region; it is member of the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg (Network of Associated Schools and Institutions).



Our activities are organized in different sectors:

### > Institutional training

Every year, about 500 pupils of all ages attend the school; proposed activities are organised in departments: Early Childhood (0–3 years), Junior (4–13 years), Adult (14–99). Two more sections are: Inclusive Music and Academic Courses. The departments are each directed by a coordinator who harmonises the teachers' work and makes sure each pupil is well tutored. Collective music, performance, use of musical genres, improvisation and pedagogic research: these are the keywords of our didactic itinerary.

### > Activities in schools

The school proposes specialised operators for didactic activities in nurseries, infant schools, elementary schools and middle schools in Rome and the province involving thousands of children from 0 to 13 years of age each year.

### > Training and revisions

From 1991 Every year we offer courses on "Orff-Schulwerk Methodology and Practice", "Piano Didactics", and activities related to early childhood with a project named "Musica in Culla" (Music in the Crib), with hundreds of participants per year. In 2008 the school had the honour of successfully hosting the world commissions of ECME (Early Childhood Music Education) and MISTEC (Music in Schools and Teacher Education), for their first time in Italy.

During our 27 years long activity we have involved almost 10,000 teachers both Italians and foreigners.

### Structure

Constant reinterpretation, a creative use of the instruments set, 'no error' composition and improvisation, integrated ensembles, multidisciplinary activities (body, voice, instrument): working according to these points of the O.S.I Orff-Schulwerk Italiano Guidelines<sup>1</sup> demands good organization. The structure of our school is very complex and we constantly try to encourage a dialogue both within the teaching staff and between the staff and the students together with their families. As a matter of fact, our structure involves a general direction subdivided into different departments, each devoted to a specific age range and represented by coordinators on the one hand, interacting with our users and, on the other hand, providing tutorship together with the teaching staff. Moreover, we have an organism involving the direction of the school, the coordinators of the departments and the secretary staff the task of which is to verify the actual trend of our activities and suggest possible changes.

### Music together

One of the most characteristic traits of our school is the importance given to practice and to the construc-

1 Giovanni Piazza "A few Guidelines of the O.S.I. – Italian Orff-Schulwerk Pedagogy": [www.orffitaliano.it/english/pagine\\_dirette/english\\_guidelinesdir.htm](http://www.orffitaliano.it/english/pagine_dirette/english_guidelinesdir.htm)



tion of ensembles integrating didactic instruments (expanded to include instruments such as boom whackers and sound shapes) and art instruments, integrating pupils of different ages with different skills and technical competences. In our locations this year we have started 35 ensembles and 9 choirs.

### Teachers co-presence

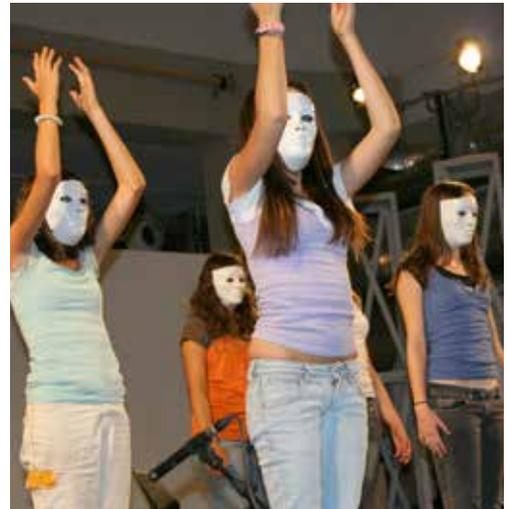
When we are working with children aged from 0 to 7 we organize our activities so that we can have a co-presence of two teachers in the classroom (a male and a female if possible). This double presence represents a reinforcement of the didactic activities and at the same time an immediate opportunity to verify and evaluate the work during the process. Furthermore, it allows an immediate relationship with the children's parents, who are supposed to take part in the lesson until just before their child turns three, in combination with a series of periodic monitoring meetings. In order to favor communication, we have also supported the release of a three-monthly bulletin for the 0–3 area.

Moreover, in the 10 classes we organize every year between Music in the Crib 1 (newborns) and Music is Game 3 (6-years-old) – which are subdivided according to homogeneous age ranges – attendees of our training courses (Music in the Crib and Orff-Schulwerk Methodology and Practice) work as

interns together with our teaching staff members of the department for inclusive music in order to support the integration and participation of children with some form of disability who had previously benefited from our “Consultiamoci” help-desk.

### Working in schools

Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia promotes the diffusion of the Orff-Schulwerk methodology and practice through workshops in Nursery, Infant and Elementary Schools in Rome and in the Province, involving around 3,000 children.



## Refreshers and confrontation (monitoring)

Projects in Public Schools (Primary and Elementary) and in Nursery Schools sometimes are rather short, making it impossible to make mid-term or long-term plans. We face this precariousness organizing a monitoring system through co-presence in internal classes and in external nursery and primary schools, but also through periodic refresher meetings during which teachers exchange materials, methodology examples and verify together each class' activity.

## Music and society

The school promotes network relations with institutions in the area and, through participation to public advisory bodies or third sector organisations, supports all possible initiatives so that in a country with our history and cultural tradition, the State and the local authorities will invest in this sector as much as other European countries do.

Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia also promotes a variety of other solidarity projects and activities. One of these projects, Note di Pace<sup>2</sup> won the prestigious ISME - GIBSON International Awards in Music Education 2008 international prize in 2008.

---

<sup>2</sup> "Notes of peace" is the set of initiatives promoted since 2003 in collaboration with various Institutions. Concerts, seminars, meetings, publications and recordings: "Note di Pace" intends to provide an incentive towards meeting and exchange between Middle Eastern and Italian youths and musicians to contribute to the structuring of musical education in Palestine, a necessary condition for the development of dialogue through the universal language of music.

During the last five years we have been developing a project with an Integrated Orchestra called Tracce Sonore (Sonic Tracks), involving the patients and health workers of the ASL RM 1 (Local Health Department Rome 1).



### Checco Galtieri

Director of the Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia, Vice President of O.S.I. Orff-Schulwerk Italiano, member of the Scientific Committee of the Music in the Crib International Network and Spokesperson of the National Forum for Music Education.

### Ciro Paduano

Teacher in the national courses on Orff-Schulwerk, Coordinator of the Junior Department of the Scuola Popolare di Musica Donna Olimpia. Founding member of O.S.I. Orff-Schulwerk Italiano.

[www.donnaolimpia.it/english-page/](http://www.donnaolimpia.it/english-page/)  
[www.donnaolimpia.it/corsi-orff-schulwerk\\_box@donnaolimpia.it](mailto:www.donnaolimpia.it/corsi-orff-schulwerk_box@donnaolimpia.it)

