

What belongs to today's Orff Instrumentarium?

The question is difficult to answer, because many factors play an important role, including financial considerations. The instruments cannot really be grouped according to importance. Each one has its own task to fulfill. It is exactly this function that we would like to present.

Barred instruments have been the nucleus of the instrumentarium. They carry the combined responsibility for rhythm, melody and in a particular sense, harmony. One cannot speak of an Orff Instrumentarium without glockenspiels, xylophones and metallophones. They are both musically and pedagogically indispensable. Characteristic of these instruments is their easy playing technique and clear arrangement of the bars. They are like the rungs of a ladder and impart one of the first insights into music theory.

Most significantly, barred instruments come in three different sound qualities with a range of four and a half octaves! Because of this there are innumerable possibilities - one could say exciting possibilities - for combining sounds to stimulate the unquestionable delight children have in experimenting.

A special form of **barred instrument** is the single bar mounted on a resonator. These can be used alone or in groups and lend themselves well for movement and playing in a variety of combinations. They come in xylophone and metallophone types. Large and small **instruments with skins** like hand drums, tambourines, bass drums and timpani also belong to the Orff Instrumentarium. These are rounded out with the contrasting **rhythm instruments** made of wood, metal and other materials. They provide accents, decorations, extend and support allowing many participants to make music together.

It should be mentioned that there are many other instruments which are suitable and recommended from the point of view of timbre and volume: string and wind instruments including the recorder, key-boards and indigenous folk instruments. The choice is yours.

Tip for different instrument sets for your special use are ready for download under service.

Practical suggestions for setting up an Orff Instrumentarium

Prime consideration should be for the kind of music making and the number of players involved. For family music making at home an excellent start is an alto glockenspiel and an alto xylophone, eventually adding single bass bars, a hand drum and a few small instruments like triangle and claves. A recorder is ideal.

There are important considerations when planning instruments suitable for kindergarten and preschool use. The preschool child likes simple and easily played instruments. The chromatic (double row) instruments are unnecessary as they are too complicated and real chromaticism is seldom heard in the preschool. Another important point, children prefer the larger instruments which absolutely must be included. The bass drum seems to be the most desired instrument and one that affords pure joy. Other favorites are timpani and the large bass xylophone. But children also like to play xylophones and metallophones in the higher registers. The small bars of the glockenspiel demand higher concentration from the player, especially when quiet playing is called for a goal that is worth striving for. High pitched instruments can sound harsh, penetrating! Deeper ones of course have a strong "room-filling" sound but warmer and more restrained - not the least bit uncomfortable. Thus, in setting up such an instrumentarium we must give precedence to the lower pitched instruments. Please note that the pitch of the glockenspiels lies 1 - 2 octaves above the voice range of young of children.

The single separately-mounted bars are also recommended for use in the preschool. Alto and soprano bars can be placed on a table or held in the hand and are especially well suited for accompanying oneself in movement and dance forms. The bass xylophone mounted bars can be used as a substitute for timpani, especially in smaller rooms where a large volume of sound is not required. The first set of these bass bars should include the tones of the most frequently played keys - the tonic and dominant (Bordun) for the most useful accompaniment. An excellent group includes C, G, F, D and A which can be used for four major and minor keys.

In family music making it is a joy to bring one who is a rather passive member and thinks he or she is unmusical into the group, taking a single bar in hand or placing it on a table, gaining a meaningful musical experience while playing along with one tone!

The instrumentarium for **elementary and upper schools** can include a greater range and variety to fulfill the abilities and readiness of older students. It is recommended to have a few chromatic (double row) instruments, especially when playing more demanding contemporary literature requiring a chromatic melody line that cannot be performed on the single row diatonic instruments. Bass and contrabass bars are preferred, rotary timpani and perhaps also kettle drums along with more

skin and rhythm instruments and in some cases other instruments in the "Concert Pro-gram Royal Percussion" from STUDIO 49.

Totally different needs are required in the many faceted areas of **Special Education and Music Therapy**. Here it is rather difficult to make a recommendation for a concrete instrumentarium. It is important to consider the kind of handicap for each individual. For example, emotionally handicapped children are known to respond to instruments with quiet, flowing sounds - metallophones (alto and bass), large hanging cymbals, bass and especially contrabass resonator bars. The latter are indispensable for working with the hearing impaired. The rich overtones produce a strong vibration that can reach the hearing impaired or the totally deaf and also fascinate those who are not handicapped. Of course there are other instruments important for all handicaps and deficiencies - most definitely the rhythm instruments, drums, claves, triangle, cymbals. They are more easily mastered than flute, piano or violin and can be therapeutically effective.

Another very useful instrument is the "Tongue" Drum or Slit Drum as it is known today. It evolved in Middle America and is possibly related to the famous old Mexican wood drum "Teponatzli." It comes in different sizes and construction.