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*It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*



# Musical Education in Italy: *Organization, Achievements, and Problems*

By Carlo Delfrati

*Conservatory of Music G. Verdi*

**Abstract:** This article is a survey of music teaching in Italian schools with a focus on general music. To facilitate comparison with situations in other countries, it includes information both about the teaching of music in various types of schools and about the overall structure of the Italian school system. The author also includes an overview of recent trends and suggestions for reform in music education in Italy.

The structure of the Italian school system is relatively simple. All students up to the age of 14 participate in a single curriculum, which is divided into three compulsory levels of school:

1. The nursery school (*Scuola materna*), which lasts three years, is attended by children ages 3 to 6;
2. The primary school (*Scuola elementare*) lasts five years and is attended by children ages 6 to 11; and
3. The secondary lower school (*Scuola media*), of three years duration, is attended by students ages 11 to 14.

After the age of 14, students may end their formal education or enroll in the secondary higher schools (*Scuola secondaria superiore*) and choose from diverse curricula. A variety of courses are divided into a number of categories, e.g., classical, scientific, technical. Study in these areas lasts from three to five years. After successful completion of the secondary higher school, at about the age of 19, students may enter the university.

A substantial part of the Italian school system is administered and operated by a single state agency, the Ministero della

Pubblica Istruzione. Since 1989, the universities have been run by a new ministry, the Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca. In the three compulsory school levels, education is provided practically free of charge, and matriculation fees at the secondary higher schools and the universities are very low.

Private schools and schools administered by local authorities do exist in Italy, but these are far fewer than the state-operated schools. Table 1 shows the relationship between the two types of schools in the school year of 1987-88.

The state administers the educational system through local educational authorities called *Provveditorati agli Studi*. One exists in each of the 90 provinces of Italy. These authorities are very influential. For example, teachers may be hired for the state-operated schools, from the nursery school to the secondary higher school, only from a graded list prepared by each education authority.

But state intervention doesn't stop here, for the state also influences decisions about which subjects are studied in each type of school. The selection of syllabi in each subject is also decided at the state level, although Italian syllabi tend to be less specific than North American ones; through the secondary level, for instance, textbooks to be used in the course are never specified.

These educational policy decisions are made, in general, by national commissions of educational experts appointed by and periodically renewed by the Minister of Education; thus, the make-up of the commissions inevitably reflects the political bias of the government in power. Paradoxical as it

may seem to a North American reader, this centralization is seen as a democratic procedure guaranteed by the state and providing all Italian citizens with exactly the same educational opportunities.

Ideologies have a strong influence on the Italian social and political scene, and this explains the frequency of internal conflicts. Yet, for the last 12 years or so, the commissions have tended to represent a greater variety of ideological positions than was usual in the past. While this might seem to ensure that the syllabi are not politically biased, in fact the opposing positions of the members (as this writer can testify, having served on one such commission) tend to neutralize each other. As a result, the syllabi (including the musical ones) do not always address important and controversial matters in areas such as content, methodology, repertory, and so on.

The headmaster or principal of each school is responsible for ensuring that the syllabi are respected, but this form of control is rarely exercised. Thus, while the state remains in theory a highly centralizing influence, in practice teachers are allowed a great deal of freedom in interpreting the standard syllabus and maintaining classroom routines. Nonetheless, the ministerial syllabi reveal a great deal about pedagogic trends and developments. For instance, syllabi drawn up in the 1970s stress creativity in both content and goals, while more recent syllabi lean more toward cognitive objectives.

## Music in Nonspecialized Schools

At the nursery-school level, the ministerial syllabi offer no more than general guidelines for teachers. The current music syllabus was formulated in 1968 and proposes the usual activities, such as using the voice and the simplest instruments and involving games and movement. It does not state how much time the nursery school teacher should devote to musical activities. The services of experts in music education are not suggested. The only qualification for nursery school teachers is the diploma of the Teacher's Training School or *Scuola magistrale*, taken at the age of 17 and followed by a qualifying exam.

The nursery school music syllabus has often been criticized for its overemphasis on the classical repertory and for underrating the children's musical potential. A variety of modifications have been suggested by teachers and scholars:

- A. To make use of the children's aural experiences of the world. Before (or while) they come into contact with codified forms of music, children should explore the components of their particular acoustic environments.
- B. To develop not only the affective relationship with sound and music, but also a cognitive one, stretching the children's potential to the fullest limits.
- C. To encourage multi-media activities in which sounds interact with gestures, words, and images.
- D. To rescue music listening from the role of mere background to other scholastic activities

School Level	Classes		Pupils		Pupils per Class
	State	Non-State	State	Non-State	
Infant	34,995	32,110	804,927	781,923	23.6
Elementary	202,166	12,873	3,107,008	263,701	15.7
Secondary Low	122,451	4,823	2,500,241	118,438	20.6
Secondary High	112,676	12,378	2,458,353	260,981	21.7

**Table 1. Enrollment in state-supported and private schools, 1987-1988.**



and offering it as a subject to be explored and studied actively by children.

A new commission was installed by the ministry in 1989 to draw up new guidelines for the curriculum of the nursery school, including music. At the time of this writing, the commission is still at work.

### Primary School

The music syllabus for the primary schools was drawn up in 1984. Emphasis is explicitly placed on the students' ability to perceive, understand, and manipulate environmental sound. The paragraph on the use of the voice demonstrates the new, broader outlook adopted by this syllabus—in contrast with the traditional emphasis on singing alone—and represents a good example of the style used in official Italian syllabi:

The children should be stimulated to use and analyze the sounds they are already capable of producing with the voice and body:

- the speaking voice: analysis of vowel and consonant formation and of the production of vowel sounds (the use of the lungs, the diaphragm, and the vocal cords).
- voice games: speaking, reading, whispering (these games are obviously useful in helping with the pronunciation of words).
- individual and group games using the singing voice; analysis of the differences between the speaking voice and the singing voice.
- the performance of songs with emphasis on gestures, rhythm, the movement of the whole body or parts of it, and various nonvocal sounds (the clapping of hands, the stamping of feet, etc.).
- research into and exploration of the various types of vocal timbres: the use of the voice in music and in a variety of human activities (public speaking, ceremonies, theatrical performances, information systems, cinema, television, etc.).
- research into and analysis of various vocal forms of expression, both spontaneous and calculated (shouting, crying, laughter, etc.; pop songs, opera, etc.).
- organization of voice games based on the imitation of sounds and noises derived from everyday experience, musical instruments, and other objects.<sup>1</sup>

The ministerial syllabus does not specify how much time should be devoted to music each week. Obviously, the standard of the actual teaching doesn't necessarily match the quality of the syllabus; it all depends on

individual teachers and their training. Until the late 1980s, a single teacher taught all subjects in each primary school classroom; music was inevitably one of the most neglected subjects, owing to the inadequacy of musical training for teachers.

The only qualification required for primary school teachers is a diploma from a teachers training school (*Istituto magistrale*), taken at the age of 18 and followed by a qualifying exam. Past experience has yielded disappointing results when an external specialist was called in to teach music. At best (that is, when the specialist was a trained teacher as well as a trained musician—a rare circumstance in Italy) the hour of music was experienced by pupils as a sort of parenthesis, unconnected with other school activities. This situation persists today in various forms. All primary schools can organize extracurricular music courses, mostly paid for by the pupils themselves.

The music education situation in the primary schools should change, however, very soon. The reorganization of the primary schools, authorized in May of 1990, consists of dividing the various subjects in each classroom among three teachers. Music will be taught by the most highly qualified (or the least unqualified) of the three.

### Secondary Lower School

Musical education is recognized as part of the secondary lower school curriculum and treated in the same manner as other subjects. Of a total of 30 instructional hours per week, general music is taught for two hours. The subject is compulsory.

Each school can plan a longer curriculum if it wishes, including afternoon lessons, thus becoming a *Scuola media a tempo prolungato*. In such cases the students study music for three hours per week. At secondary levels, the teaching of music is undertaken by a specialist who possesses a state conservatory diploma.

The music syllabus for the secondary lower school was drawn up in 1978. It provides a complete and varied musical experience, including the use of the voice and "classroom instruments" (recorders and percussion), creative activities, theory, and listening. To illustrate the nature of this syllabus, here

is the paragraph on music-making:

Musical education should serve to develop a number of fundamental abilities, including:

- A. The reproduction of musical examples given: with the voice or with the musical instruments available, singly or in groups.
- B. Personal adaptation of the musical examples proposed: altering the dynamics, agogics, and timbre in such a way as to vary the melodic, rhythmic, and modal structure of the piece.
- C. Re-creation with the voice or other available instruments, singly or in groups, of the most elementary procedures of which the musical language is composed. In other words, just as happens with other means of expression (figurative, gestural, verbal, etc.), the ability to express simple, yet logical, musical ideas (using rhythmic, coloristic, and dynamic elements, either singly or in combination).<sup>2</sup>

The secondary lower school syllabus does not usually include the study of instruments apart from recorders and percussion, and no individual tutoring is provided. This form of teaching is offered, however, in the special secondary lower schools known as the *Scuole medie a indirizzo musicale*, whose organization was defined by a ministerial decree in 1979. Today there are about 90 such schools serving about 8,000 pupils in Italy. They provide three hours of music teaching per week plus one hour devoted to the study of a single instrument (i.e., piano, strings, woodwinds).

A variety of musical ensembles can be found in these secondary lower schools specializing in music. A repertory of music (as yet quite small) is being built up for these ensembles. In 1989, two competitions were held for original compositions. In the secondary lower schools and primary schools, the recorder is still widely used. The Orff Instrumentarium is much less common, and the guitar is used only occasionally. Teachers' lack of familiarity with electronics has held back the development of new technologies in schools.

### Secondary Higher School

Music is absent from the syllabi of the great majority of schools at this level. It is, however, included in the syllabi of the *Scuola magistrale* and the *Istituto magistrale*. The former lasts three years and trains nursery school teachers; the latter lasts four years and trains primary school teachers.

Music is studied for one hour a week, with the infrequently used option of two extra hours devoted to a musical instrument.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, the syllabi of the *Istituto magistrale* were drawn up in 1923 and revised in 1945. Those of the *Scuola magistrale* were drawn up in 1933. It is obvious that these syllabi are entirely inadequate (and are often ignored by the teachers). A single quotation demonstrates the problem: In their final year, the students are to be given a "brief outline of the most important expressions of musical art in civilized countries." Fortunately, this syllabus doesn't inform us which are the "uncivilized countries!"

The overall reform of the secondary higher schools has represented an area of political conflict for many years. Because no substantial agreement has been reached between the parties, no reforms have been made. The syllabi have remained unchanged for the last half century because those in charge of school politics have subordinated reform in striving for a utopian agreement on the whole system. In terms of general music, when one reads the proposed syllabi (periodically rewritten and equally periodically sent from one commission to another) it is not easy to predict the fate—in terms of hours of teaching—of music. The subject is now a fragile vessel which appears only intermittently amid the boisterous waves of political arguments and official documents.

A special law, however, has provided for the experimental use of alternative curricula. In each school, the teachers can submit alternative proposals to the ministry for approval. Only a small number of schools are experimenting with new curricula, and of these a dozen include the teaching of music. It is in these schools that the most interesting and innovative instructional experiments are made.

As a whole, the Italian secondary schools have grown polarized on the one hand toward a classical-humanistic tradition favoring literary subjects, and on the other toward technical and crafts-based subjects. Music has not been able to establish itself firmly in either of these two areas. This explains the complete absence of extracurricular musical activities in these schools;

there are no secondary school orchestras or bands, with the obvious exception of the music institutes.

### Professional Training

In contrast with the situation in the United States, Italian universities have only a marginal role in the training of musicians. Rather, it is in the conservatories where practical music courses in singing, instrument playing, composition, and other aspects of music are offered. There are currently 57 conservatories distributed in every region of Italy. Pupils may enter the conservatory at the age of 11. In the past, even younger children could enter, but nowadays this is true only of exceptionally gifted pupils in the instrumental classes. Strict selection criteria are used, particularly for students entering at the age of about 14 (which corresponds to the end of the secondary lower school).

The organizational structure of the conservatories was determined in 1930 and has not undergone any substantial modification since then. Each conservatory is divided into separate schools in which the principal subject (piano, violin, singing, composition, etc.) is integrated with "complementary" courses. These courses—theory and solfege, harmony, history of music, etc.—generally have a duration of two years. Depending on the subject studied, conservatory training lasts from five years (singing) to ten years (violin, piano, and composition).

The conservatories give absolute precedence to the pupils' individual study, with the primary objective of training him or her as a soloist (i. e., singer, instrumentalist, or composer). Collective music-making (i.e., orchestras, ensembles, choirs) is thus penalized. Only a minority of conservatories can boast good orchestras and choirs.

For the last 25 years, the reforms proposed by ministerial commissions, professional associations, and political parties have come up against the same obstacles that have prevented the reform of the secondary higher school. In addition, the majority of conservatory teachers seem reluctant to join in these calls for change. What follows is a summary of the most urgently needed reforms:

1. A realistic adaptation of musical courses to the interests of young students, the concrete

needs of society, and the jobs available.

2. The simultaneous study of music and subjects of a more general nature, including arts and sciences. Too often musical studies are undertaken in isolation, without any reference to a broader social and cultural context—that very context which should give meaning to the specialized study. One attempt to overcome this limitation was the founding of secondary higher schools for students from ages 14 to 19 studying in the conservatories. Only ten conservatories offer this opportunity, and then for a limited number of pupils. Consequently, the majority of students holding conservatory diplomas have studied nonmusical subjects only up to the level of the secondary lower school.
3. The integration of practical and theoretical musical studies.
4. More time devoted to contemporary music and new technologies, which at present play only a marginal role in Italian conservatories.
5. The development of teaching methods that stimulate the initiative and creativity of the pupil, rather than simply mechanically pass on cultural information.

The conservatories are state schools.

Alongside them a large number of alternative music schools of various kinds have sprung up—either private, or run by local councils, or operated privately with the financial assistance of local authorities. The diplomas awarded by these (alternative music) schools are not legally recognized as valid for state employees (including teachers in state schools), but they may be validated by the students' successful completion of the final examination given by a conservatory. This explains why the syllabi of these schools, which are in no way subject to state control, tend to closely copy those of the conservatory. In this way, the conservatory retains its status as a "superior" model, in spite of its widely acknowledged defects.

A creative attempt to correct this trend has been made in the Province of Trento. This local authority has introduced a register outlining an overall policy which must be shared by the private music school if it wishes to receive financial assistance from the province. These are the proposals:

The contents suggested are only guidelines. Each school should freely plan its own syllabi, taking into consideration both local needs and the general indications included in this document. The following principles are of particular importance:

**5.1 Authenticity.** The activities offered by the school are chosen exclusively to satisfy the pupil's real need for musical experience, avoiding superfluous technical jargon in practical studies and an overemphasis on the mere transmission of facts in theoretical studies.

**5.2 Self-sufficiency.** Each course, at every stage in the student's development, should be clearly motivated and have definite objectives. No course should be considered simply a preparation for later courses.

**5.3 Cyclicity.** The student's contact with a specific subject matter should not be limited to a single phase of his school career. Each subject matter should be reposed periodically in different contexts and with different applications. This is particularly important for the first two cycles of study, and at the same time should enable those pupils who enter the school at a higher level to quickly catch up with the other pupils.

**5.4 Organic Unity.** The completeness of musical education at every level depends on its comprehensiveness (in other words, the pupil should be actively involved in each of the sectors listed) and its interrelatedness (the activities of one sector are related to those of all the others, in a continual exchange of stimuli).

**5.5 Autonomization.** The ultimate objective of the courses—whatever the level or duration—is to make the pupils autonomous, inspire them to develop their musical experiences outside the school, and provide them with methods by which they may do so profitably.<sup>4</sup>

No Italian university provides for the study of a musical instrument. Music history (and sometimes other musicological subjects) is taught in arts faculties, but the subject represents only one of the exams necessary for a degree in Literature, Philosophy, Languages, or similar subjects. University courses with a particular emphasis on musicology have been introduced, however, at Cremona (*Scuola di Paleografia e Filologia musicale*), Parma (degree course in musicology), Bologna (*Discipline delle Arti, della Musica e dello Spettacolo*), and at Fermo in the Marche region (*Scuola di Musicologia e Pedagogia della Musica*).

### Teacher Training

This is the most delicate and perhaps the weakest point in the whole system of music education. The philosophical idealism which dominated Italian culture in the first half of the century continues to influence teaching in schools today, and it places great empha-

sis on the theoretical basics of the various disciplines while neglecting the need for practical application. One consequence of this is that pedagogy is not recognized as an autonomous discipline but instead is considered simply the application of a philosophy. The key phrase of this belief is: "It is enough to understand the logical structure of something to be able to teach it." This reflects a general failure to recognize the fact that in order to teach a subject, one must be able to transform its logical structure into a psychological structure which lends itself to the learning process.

As a result, the Italian universities produce scholars such as mathematicians, biologists, and historians, not teachers of literature, mathematics, biology, or history. For the same reason, the conservatories produce musicians but take little or no interest in training music teachers.

Conservatory-trained musicians who wish to teach in state schools must first pass an examination designed to test their fitness for teaching. The candidate must demonstrate a knowledge of pedagogy and its practical applications (syllabus-planning, teaching methods, etc.). Yet most conservatories do nothing to prepare candidates for this examination. They study on their own.

The first signs of a new trend began to emerge in the 1960s, when a few conservatories, with the intent of training teachers for the compulsory music courses in state schools (particularly the secondary lower), began to offer courses in music teaching. Thirty conservatories have introduced these courses of study, which are open to students who have already taken—or are about to take—their diplomas. For three years, the students study in five areas: teaching theory and practice, music history, choir singing and choir conducting, sight reading with voice and piano, and elements of composition.

These courses are optional, even for those students who plan to teach. In addition, the certificate awarded at the end of the courses does not suffice if one wishes to compete for a state teaching post, for applicants to the final exam must also hold another diploma. Thus, the great majority of music teachers in state schools have purely instrumental

training and are pedagogically unprepared.

The usual conservatory teaching course is designed to train the music teachers for general schools, not instrumental or specialized music teachers. The latter categories receive no pedagogical training. The idealistic conviction that it is sufficient to have a complete knowledge of a subject in order to be able to teach it means that in choosing an instrumental teacher for the conservatory, one takes into consideration the number of concerts the applicant has performed, while in choosing a teacher of harmony and counterpoint one takes into account the number of compositions the candidate has had performed and (if possible) published, and so on. Proposals to change these criteria haven't yet won sufficient consensus to make radical reforms likely, at least not soon.

A variety of refresher courses is being organized for primary and secondary school teachers (but not for conservatory teachers). Much of this work is organized by 20 specially designed state institutes—one for each of the 20 Italian regions. Local and provincial authorities, individual schools, and private associations are equally active in this field. A very recent law has introduced for the first time in Italy the principle that those who take refresher courses should be economically rewarded. This serves as an encouragement for many teachers—formerly only the most highly motivated had participated in refresher courses.

### Research in Music Education

The neglect of pedagogical studies in the training of music teachers drastically limits the amount of scientific research into the problems of music education. At the same time, many ideas are now being produced and presented in teaching materials that are influenced by the experience of teachers working in state schools.

A conspicuous example is the great variety of textbooks designed for these schools. Each year, teachers are entirely free to choose from a variety of nearly 100 texts. (No government authorization is required for the publication of such texts—in contrast with the centralized authorization of the Fascist regime up to 1945.) There has also

been a notable increase both in the quantity and the quality of teaching manuals published since the 1950s. I have chosen to focus on a few particular problems and innovative trends that are being addressed in these new publications, although I don't claim to do full justice to the variety of ideas expressed by the authors.

### Sight Singing Concerns

One of the most prickly problems concerns sight reading and how to improve performance in this field. Since the end of the nineteenth century, two methods introduced from France have dominated these areas. The first is *solfeggio assoluto*. It is well known that the terms used in the old solmi- zation (*re, mi, fa*) indicated relative degrees, while absolute pitches were indicated by letters (D, E, F). In the seventeenth century, the system was made more functional to the tonal system with the introduction of the seventh syllable. During the eighteenth century in France (and in Italy a century later), the syllables gradually came to acquire the same meaning as the letters, to the extent that in these countries the letters are used only very rarely. This meant that the tonal functions were ignored in vocal exercises.

In this writer's opinion, this development had the effect of limiting the students' mental concept of the notes, and hence their ability to translate written music into vocal sound. Various recent attempts have been made to reintroduce *solfeggio relativo* in Italy. The first was made by an American woman, Justine Ward, who was active in Italy during the 1930s, while more recent attempts have been inspired by Kodály's teaching. But the practice of *solfeggio assoluto* (where *do* doesn't stand for any tonic, but for the note that in America is called "C") makes it extremely difficult to use systems like movable *do* and tonic *sol-fa*.

### Solfeggio Parlato

During the nineteenth century, the *solfe- gio assoluto* gave way to the practice of simply pronouncing the names of the notes rather than singing them. This method is used with increasingly complex rhythmic schemes. Although this method helps the student to read vocal rhythms, it creates



other problems. Less conscientious pupils (and teachers) tend to replace sung solfeggio with spoken solfeggio, further compromising the ability to sing at sight. The most promising trends in this field—apart from the continuing attempts to revive *sofeggio relativo*—are directed toward providing the student with solidly grounded ear training via mental construction of musical structures, ranging from the simplest to the most complex. Progress in instrumental studies appears to be equally linked to this fundamental perceptive awareness of musical experience. Promising studies point to the importance of an awareness of one's whole body when learning to play the piano. "*Making music with one's body*" or *Suonare col corpo*, is the title of a recently published book on this subject.

### **Innovative Trends in General Music Education**

Traditionally, music education in Italy has been structured according to "adult criteria," and still is in most cases. This means that instructional listening requires hearing music in chronological or strictly formalistic order, knowing musical instruments following classification (families of instruments), and studying musical notation using arithmetical criteria. Repertory was (and is) chosen above all for its aesthetic merits; only music of "intrinsically" high quality is admitted to the syllabus. Aesthetic, chronological, formal, and classificatory values haven't been repudiated by recent pedagogical trends, but rather deferred. While this tradition remains powerful, it is no longer considered sufficient to form the basis of the general music syllabi. Many influences and ideas have caused the review and examination of traditional practices. The traditional reliance on presenting music to children in formalistic ways is changing. Nowadays, a more pragmatic approach is generally preferred, starting from the music that the pupil has already experienced. This approach facilitates an understanding of the personal and social functions of music. Indeed, the systematic exploration of these functions—which involve the worlds of spectacle, dance, work, and so on—serves as the unifying element in the new syllabi.

The question: "What function does music have?" applied to each of these contexts, serves as a starting point for an investigation into the pragmatic and semantic aspects of music, as well as an exploration of the morphology of music: How is music "made" in order to fulfill such functions?

Accordingly, repertory is also chosen according to "existential" criteria. Italian textbooks devote much space to the analysis of music used on television (commercials, jingles, signature tunes, soundtracks), in theatrical performances, and in other social contexts. Aesthetic, formalistic, and chronological values are introduced at more advanced levels as a form of superior organization of the conceptual experiences previously explored in a less formal way.

The strict, linear, chronological structure has been eliminated. This is compensated for by a criterion which is by no means new, but which has not yet been exploited in its full potential: the comparative method. Recent trends in music teaching have tended to emphasize a constant comparison between past and present (in accordance with the historiographical maxim: "Understand the present by means of the past—understand the past by means of the present"), rather than presenting the history of music in a rigidly chronological manner.

Italian music syllabi have only recently introduced popular music and music of other cultures. The latter tends to be used in the same way that music of the past is used in history lessons—not to accumulate knowledge of other musical genres, but to stimulate a comparison between "us" and the "others." Ethnic music is thus not introduced systematically (one lesson for each country!) but rather to widen the students' terms of reference. The aim in this case is to create an awareness of "anthropological relativism."

### **Foreign Influences**

The progress made in the field of musical education in Italy over the past few decades is partly due to an increasing interest in what is being done in other countries (reflected in the large number of works translated). "Absolute" alternatives to the *sofeggio relativo* draw inspiration from the great

pedagogues Maria Montessori and Emile Jaques Dalcroze. The works of Edgar Willems and Maurice Martenot have proven influential in this sense. Orff's method has obviously influenced the instrumental field. Although the original Orff-Schulwerk has not been translated into Italian, teachers at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria, have frequently taught in Italy.

In more recent years, the creative educational techniques used by British educators such as John Paynter and the French group Percustra have proved influential. A recently founded private school in Italy has been propagating the method of Shinichi Suzuki.

### **Musical Education or Education in Sound Experiences?**

Like many nations with a substantial urban population, Italy has experienced noise conditions that have had adverse effects on music education. Many Italians now show signs of audio-dependence, an aversion to silence, and a loss of concentration on and interest in sound.

In recognition of this problem, school syllabi (particularly those of the primary schools) and textbooks underline the need to provide a general "acoustic education" for youngsters before introducing them to musical language. It is hoped that this strategy will help develop the children's ability to analyze the sound world and to understand its cultural significance—the quantity of affective and rational data a person acquires through the experience of sound. Toward this goal, the Italian translation of a number of important works by the Canadian writer R. Murray Schaffer has helped stimulate the development of courses on "soundscape" and "premusical" education.

### **Additional Perspectives**

Readers interested in obtaining additional information concerning music education in Italy have several sources to consider. In 1969 the S.I.E.M. or Società Italiana per l'Educazione Musicale was founded. It is an independent association which organizes music education conferences, courses, and similar activities, and since 1971 has published a quarterly magazine, *Musica Domani*, dealing with educational themes.

In the 1970s other important institutions came into being: the Centro di Ricerca e di Sperimentazione per la Didattica Musicale in Fiesole, which organizes a wide variety of activities throughout the year and publishes a quarterly magazine entitled *Bequadro*; the Centro per l'Educazione Musicale di Base in Milan, designed for primary school teachers and team leaders for musical activities; the Centro Educazione Permanente founded by the Pro Civitate Christiana in Assisi, which is particularly concerned with the social uses of musical education; the Centro Studi Ars Nova in Certaldo (Tuscany), which publishes *Musica scuola*, a magazine on musical education in the lower levels of the school. Apart from the periodicals already mentioned, there are two other interesting publications concerned with musical education: *La Cartellina*, published by Suvini Zerboni in Milan, and *Analisi*, published by the Società Italiana di Analisi Musicale.

There are many exciting opportunities which confront Italian music educators. Establishing music as essential subject matter within the current and often conflicting emphases on literary subjects and technical courses is among our top priorities. Indeed, we must find a secure "home" within both philosophies.

Opportunities also exist in better adapting music courses to the interests of our young students and relating such musical studies to broader social and cultural concerns. Contemporary music and the new technologies must play a more significant role in our country's music education.

Finally, the training of prospective music teachers is, perhaps, our greatest concern. For far too long there has been an emphasis on the technical and theoretical aspects of music at the expense of providing methods and techniques of teaching music to children. This must and will change as we begin to shape the course of music education in Italy for our students of the twenty-first century.

### **Notes**

1. Law 12, February 1985, 104.
2. Law 6, February 1979, 50.
3. In 1986, out of a total of 2,607,749 high school students, those enrolled in the *Scuola*



*magistrale* were 26,709 (nearly all girls), and those attending the *Istituto magistrale* were 172,013. Some other types of schools also provide for the teaching of music: the Istituto per l'Artigianato Liutario (Institute for crafting of stringed instruments), Assistenti per l'Infanzia (day-care workers), Istituto Tecnico Femminile (Technological Institute for Girls) and others. But the number of students who attend these institutes is very small. Overall, about eight percent of high school students receive music education.

4. Quoted by Carlo Delfrati, "La programmazione degli studi nelle scuola di musica," *Musica Domani*, 71, April 1989, p. 18.

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