

# ORFF BEATS

An Orff approach to drumming



Christoph Maubach & Star Sherret

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Christoph is Senior Lecturer in music education at University of Waikato in New Zealand. He has also lectured in Music Education in Melbourne, Australia and given Orff-based workshops internationally. Drawing from his expertise in the Orff Approach Christoph integrates speech, body percussion, drums, singing and dance movement and uses rhythm as a starting point.

Christoph has also created the resource *Dancing 'round the World* (book & CD of folk dances) for Bushfire Press.

## **Star Sherret**

BA Hons Music, Drama & Dance (Middlesex University London), Dip Steiner Education (Taruna College NZ), PGCE Tertiary Education (University of Plymouth UK), Orff Level 1 (ANCOS Melbourne).

Star is an internationally known composer. She developed the thematic sentences for the djembe whilst teaching music at a school in Auckland. She had taken up a position where she found that the majority of the students were unable to understand conventional music notation and it was there that Star first created a 3 step method, enabling the students to easily participate in a world of music through the African drum rhythms.

By using themes and creating sentences which mirrored natural speech patterns, the 3 step method evolved; beginning with the sentences 'sung' using high and low pitches, then moving onto the body and finally played on the drums.

Star is currently using this 3 step approach to successfully teach drum rhythms to both individuals and groups.

Star has also created musical Works for One Little Indian Records UK, Hyperium Records, Nurnberg & Gymnastic Records Munich – including *Snowfish* (CD with Fairies Fortune) and *Sugar Kisses* (CD with Sleeping Dogs Wake).

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### *An Orff approach to drumming*

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# Welcome to **ORFF BEATS**

*Orff Beats* is a simple, clear method for teaching drumming techniques. It is suitable for Djembe, Congas and other hand percussion.

Although conceived largely for groups of students aged 8 to 12, adults, teenagers and community groups can easily use *Orff Beats* as well.

## How to use *Orff Beats*

### 1. The Games

There are 8 warm-up 'Games' lessons, designed to lead students into an exploration of rhythm and rhyme – preparatory to the actual drum lessons.

### 2. The Drumming pieces

There are 5 drumming pieces:

1. **Rabodaille** (Africa/Haiti)
2. **Rhumba** (Africa/Cuba)
3. **Shiko** (West Africa)
4. **Djole** (Gambia/West Africa)
5. **Baio** (Africa/Brazil)

- Each piece consists of 3 rhythm patterns, which, when combined, produce a particular 'groove' or 'feel'.
- The rhythmical speech chants which underpin the drumming rhythms can be used as speech pieces or as songs and have been selected to fit with the drum piece.
- Each drumming piece is taught using a sequential approach, beginning with rhythmical speech, moving to body percussion and leading to drums or percussion.

#### **Say → Body → Play**

- For each piece, 3 speech patterns have been developed around a particular theme (such as *Winter*, *Spring* or *Animals*). Each theme integrates 3 different rhythm patterns via three different sentences. The chanting activity of the speech patterns is a useful articulation and language exercise in itself. It leads seamlessly to body percussion action and successful drumming action.
- This technique is demonstrated, step-by-step, on the DVD.
- Recorded examples of each drumming piece are also on the accompanying audio CD.
- The five drum pieces are sequentially organized and can be played in order from simple to complex.

### 3. The Complementary songs

There are 6 songs in the African style, which can be added to the drumming pieces to make an even more exciting performance.

1. **Humalayla** (Africa/Zaire) matches **Rabodaille**
2. **Ayelevi** (Africa/Ghana) matches **Rhumba**
3. **Kava lay** (Afro style 'mouth works' song by Christoph Maubach) matches **Shiko**
4. **Baba lay la** (Afro style 'mouth works' song by Christoph Maubach) matches **Djole**
5. **Macumba** (Africa/Brazil) matches **Baio**
6. **Ise Oluwa** (West Africa – Yoruba) also matches **Baio**

The songs are demonstrated on the audio CD.

### 4. Web Support

Visit [www.bushfirepress.com](http://www.bushfirepress.com) for additional *Orff Beats* material, including graphic notations of the drumming pieces and hints & tips on drum playing techniques and for news of other Orff-related resources.

### Orff Beats Instruments

*Orff Beats* is conceived for African-style skin instruments such as Djembe drums, however it is certainly possible to use other instruments such as Congas and other hand percussion. This alters the sounds of the African rhythm pieces somewhat, but still provides lots of engaging opportunity for fun-filled rhythmical music making.



#### Hand Percussion

Djembe Drum

Conga Drum

#### Kids hand percussion (skin instruments for children)

Kids Djembe

Kids Conga

Kids Tubano

Kids Hand Drum