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A Program for Recorder Instruction

by Rudolf Schoch

THE AUTHOR is widely known as the pioneer of the recorder movement in Switzerland. He taught summer school in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Seattle, Washington, during the 1964 summer. This article, based on a lecture Mr. Schoch gave in Switzerland, has been translated for the *Music Educators Journal* by Gertrud Bamberger, instructor at the Juilliard School of Music, New York City. Another Swiss manuscript translated by Miss Bamberger for the *Journal* appeared in the February-March 1964 issue.

IN 1947 both the district and city of Zurich, Switzerland, organized recorder instruction as an elective course in all elementary schools. Under the program every child is entitled to one year of recorder instruction free of charge; for advanced classes, a nominal fee is charged. The fifty-minute recorder classes are scheduled during school hours, and, with these sessions added to the four half-hour singing periods each week, the children are exposed to music on five weekdays.

About half of all recorder players proceed to orchestral instruments after a year or two and remain musically active; one of every three students in the age group ten to fifteen receives individual instruction or plays in an ensemble group.

During 1962 the city of Zurich with its population of 440,000 spent 170,000 Swiss francs (\$43,000) on recorder instruction. Every year approximately 3,000 children start recorder lessons, and about 1,800 enroll in advanced recorder classes. The Orff instrumentarium as well as tenor and bass recorders are added. At all times approximately 500 courses are given.

More than sixty communities in the district of Zurich have organized elective recorder classes in a similar manner. In Winterthur, the question of carrying the considerable expenses involved in the program was brought before the citi-

zens in a referendum. The matter was thoroughly explained to the citizens (which at the same time served as excellent publicity), and the proposition was subsequently discussed in every family. The decision was in favor of the program.

One community which did not want to establish a music school at the time chose instead to contribute to every lesson taken with an accredited teacher. . . . In another city where a music school was founded, the city pays half of the tuition when children are taught in groups of two, and a quarter of the fees for individual lessons. The small farming communities in this city's environment have followed the example and contribute accordingly for every child taking music lessons. In addition, many cities and counties have taken steps to initiate or to promote music schools for children.

The following table illustrates how recorder instruction has affected the enrollment in wind and brass classes in the Zurich Conservatory of Music and in the *Musikhochschule* (College of Music).

	1931* (No. of Students Enrolled)	1945 No. of Students Enrolled)	1959-1960 (No. of Students Enrolled)
Flute	6	45	99
Clarinet	6	20	71
Oboe	6	5	17
Trumpet	4	13	29
Total of Wind & Brass Classes	22	83	216

*In 1931 recorder instruction was unknown; in 1934 recorder clubs were organized as extracurricular activities by some *Sing-und Spielkreise*. (This term is hardly translatable as it is an outcome of the youth movement which in German-speaking countries has influenced profoundly the informal singing and playing at home, on hikes, and in musical gatherings. The literal translation is "singing and playing circles.") In 1947 the elective recorder classes were started in the elementary schools.

Since 1960, enrollment in brass and woodwind classes has grown steadily; the enrollment, including bassoon, recorder, French horn, and trombone totaled 300 in the winter of 1961-1962. The number of weekly lessons given in the re-

quired woodwind and brass classes at the Conservatory and the Music Academy rose from 13 in 1931 to 61 in 1945, and to 150 in 1960.

It gives us deep satisfaction to realize that not only in the cities but in rural areas as well new ideas are beginning to get a strong foothold. Obviously, no fixed pattern must be followed in the realization of new projects. Again and again new ways are being found to adapt the plans to local situations. This is the only way to create something that will grow naturally and will promise to endure. The more "model" schools in existence, the more easily each community will find a suitable type for itself. Only the combined forces of teachers, musicians, and school boards will succeed in giving music the place to which it is entitled—in school, in community life, and in the nation.

Often we will have to be satisfied with a modest start; it is most urgent *not to talk about the initial step much longer, but to do it*. Wherever active music-making is promoted, young people grab at the chance—and everywhere parents are happy about new oppor-

tunities. If we proceed properly, the authorities will not be able to refuse our suggestions, for they will recognize that the majority of the people want to give music a broader dimension in the lives of their children.