

Feeding the soul

Report on recorder pedagogy

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DKDM

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Introduction

One could ask, why do I give the title *Feeding the soul* to my report on recorder and music pedagogy. I was trying to name it differently, but I realized, that this is my main goal of teaching the recorder and music in general, so also in this paper, I decided to reflect on my experiences and knowledge from this point of view. I am not interested in music pedagogy, nor recorder pedagogy that exclude the aspect of the soul, but I try to stand for one, that builds every small detail for this main purpose: *feeding the soul*.

A force/ a person/ a part of something is not good or bad in itself, but it can become dangerous and even destructive, when it loses connection with the whole. We can easily recognize this process in the society but there are examples for it in classical music playing and teaching as well: it is good to work on technic and perfectionism, but if we only concentrate on them for a long time, we may run dry. It is good to go with the flow-also in teaching, but if we only do that, we end up going nowhere, and teaching nothing. So, that's why I would like to feed the soul: something bigger, than just mind/body/emotions/technic and feed the pupils soul as well so that he or she doesn't just get a leading of me as a teacher but more and more of his or her own soul. I know that, these are big words, but I think, music can easily lead everybody to these "big things".

The way from being taught to teach

I realized, that I (like others) tend to teach in the ways I was taught, so it is really important to see, which ways were these, in order to know my tools consciously but also to take aside methods that I don't find useful anymore. Luckily, I was taught (and taught myself) music (and arts) in quite different ways-already in my childhood-, and later, I was consciously searching for "alternative methods" not only in music teaching but in Arts in general. Here, I like to list my most important ways to learn (being taught) and deduct of them some general thoughts/methods/ point of view or exercises for music and recorder teaching.

Folk music and dance

I danced Hungarian Folkdance from the age of 5 to 19, and while doing so, I learned to sing many songs, and a lot of melodies went under my skin, because my body experienced them through its movements. So I learned partly by listening and imitating, partly through dancing (which is a way of really deepening into the rhythm and emotion of the music). I can very much build on these experiences when teaching the recorder (especially in Hungary): the wider knowledge of Folksongs helps me to understand the ones that are well-known, and I can also teach songs that are not part of recorder schools. Further, when I know, that a pupil also dances /learns Folk music I like to ask him to bring a melody that he already knows, so we can make a connection between the two worlds. Also: if he danced to it before, there will be already a deep knowledge in his body, so it will be much easier for him to learn the melody on the recorder. When I will come to the point to teach a Danish child, of course I wouldn't teach him all the time Hungarian Folk songs, because one of the reasons why they go so deep inside is, that they are in one's mother tongue and really grown out from the soul of a nation..., but still Hungarian Folk music is a big part of me, and I would definitely make an advantage of this "exotic" knowledge when teaching a person of any nationality.

Music school

I was quite lucky with my recorder teacher at music school and do thank him for some basic knowledge about teaching, that I carry with me when teaching myself:

- Being as attentive as I can to the pupil
- Not pretending to be the one and best player in the world, but opening up the pupil's eyes to other players/ teachers/ possibilities (f. e. masterclasses) that could interest him
- Being demanding and understanding at the same time

- Good balance between teaching technic, style, expression and having fun
- Deep and calm concentration, patience also in chaotic situations – like a group of ten year old girls having consort lesson
- Taking very much care of pupils, especially nervous ones in concert/ competition situation, in order to avoid traumata. F.e. before the Hungarian national recorder competition, he trained us in the following way: we had to run around the building and then come back to the class and play the piece, in order to experience an extreme physical state, and get used to it.
- Never stopping to learn as a teacher: he was originally a clarinet player, who became a recorder teacher by accident (what happened to quite a lot of wind players, but they handled the situation quite differently). He made big efforts to learn about the recorder in times (70`s), when it was almost impossible, or at least in the Eastern Block. He was quite clear about what he knew and what he didn`t know, and that made him wise in my eyes.

Fine Arts

Though, it is not directly related to recorder playing, I must mention it. I started to draw and paint very early, had lessons from the age of 5-19. On the paper, I could create, use my fantasy, draw anything over the years, also before I started to improvise in music, and I think, that through these activities, my brain, my whole system got used to it so much, that later I could somehow transfer this to music. The aspect of creation is very much missing from institutional music teaching (except if one is learning composition, of course), what I see as a pity. In my teaching, I realized, that children are very happy, when they get a chance to create and when I give my attention and-, professional help for them. And I also saw, that young adult musicians are very much scared of creating something on their own. I don`t want that my small pupils end up being so. Depending on the pupil`s interest, I often invent exercises like I play something, the pupil draws something to it, and then, he uses his drawing as a score, and does an improvisation based on the drawing. I am not a neurologist, but I have the feeling, that if a pupil learns something (a song/ a new note) consciously and then gets the space for using the new – and also the old- knowledge in a form that he creates, it gets much more rooted in him. I often experienced, that a pupil had a technical problem, that disappeared, when he was improvising.

Movement Theater

From these workshops, and performances I use mostly the work with inner images in my teaching (and playing). Inner images are a strong but invisible expression of oneself, that can have a big effect in non-verbal art forms – like music and dance. When a pupil “doesn`t feel the piece”, I help him entering it through letting him associate to the music, sometimes even draw to it/write a

story, etc., or just ask him to close the eyes and listen very carefully, when I play it for him. I don't believe in teaching a specific expression (the way I would express it).

Early Music Department in the Academy of Leipzig

Beside Hungarian Institutions, this German one had a great impact on me as well. I had quite a lot of historic performance related subjects (Notationskunde, Quellenkunde, Historical Improvisation, etc.), and also my main teachers were quite into this topic, so I learned to play from facsimile back until the end of the 15th century approximately, and I am happy to pass on this knowledge, if a pupil is already being ready for this. We had consort projects in Trecento, English and Italian Renaissance. Of course, there is still a big part of knowledge in the field, that I am still lacking myself, f. e the right use of hexachord solmization, improvisation on cantus firmi, etc., but there is already a certain amount of knowledge, that I do possess, including my love to Early Baroque and Renaissance music, all of which I can pass on.

There is another important reflection from this time: with one of my main teachers, I partly struggled a lot, although I admired her at the same time. I learned, that it is impossible to implant my musicality in any pupil, I can just do my best to let his musicality grow (through teaching technic, style, etc.). Sometimes, I had the feeling, that the consort-projects we were playing should have been played by my teacher, because they were so much her. I felt like she should have put teaching away for a while and just do own projects. Although I liked those consort projects a lot, I still had this strange feeling. Maybe, that is also why I decided to stop teaching in the music school after 2 years (what is not such a long time). I felt empty and wanted to concentrate on my own playing. Also, I felt very bad, when I sometimes took teaching as a routine. So, to sum up these different reflections from my time in Leipzig: I learned, that I have to keep a good balance between teaching and playing, to be able to stay a good and inspiring teacher, and that this balance can change a lot during the years.

Self teaching

As a teenager, I listened to a lot of Alternative Rock Music, and was singing it and accompanying it on the guitar with my friends. After a while I took the recorder, and played some fitting melodies to the songs. There were absolutely no expectations (at least any musical ones) towards me, so I learned by trying and also by using my already existing music theoretical knowledge. I mention this fact, because I would be much poorer without it, and this again leads me to the one-sidedness of instrument teaching. So I do- as much as I can- encourage pupils to experiment with the instrument. I had a quite special, 10 year old guy who f. e. did experiments on playing while having a bath, so partly playing under water. I didn't hear myself, how it sounded, but it felt for me good to create a recorder lessons, where those "crazy things" are included, beside learning a proper articulation.

Kokas-pedagogy

Klara Kokas was a pupil of Zoltan Kodaly, who invented her own method in the 70-s-90-s, and I learned this method in Hungary in the last years. This special method is mostly directed at teaching a group, but one can easily bring the way of thinking and some exercises to a one-to-one instrumental lesson. Kokas pedagogy is somewhere between Music Pedagogy, Music Therapy, attention training and ritual. The strongest experience, I had with it in my lessons was the following: I had Reka as a pupil, a 7 year old girl, who had started to play recorder a few months ago. We started with a song (G`-C``), which goes in this way: *I bring fire, I bring blaze, look here, look there, there is a shawl above it.* In a Kokas-lesson, I would go around in the room with all the participants, while singing the song and then maybe asking somebody: how is your fire? How does it move? Does it sing? Does it dance? And he would answer, show a movement, and we would imitate, and go further, to the next person, maybe to some other question. So before I started to teach the song on the recorder, I asked Reka, how her fire would look like. She described it deeply in details, telling about the quality of the colour of the blazes. Her inner image was so strong, that I still today I can remember the image it made in me. After her description I asked her how it would move. She showed it to me, I almost felt dizzy, it was so real. And then, we started to learn the song on the recorder. Of course I also could have just taught her the song, but in the way I decided to do, a link had been established between a very personal part of her and the new knowledge. You can see her drawing of her fire in the appendix.

DKDM

The teaching of Bolette gives me a lot, also in terms of how I would teach. From my experiences until now, I would highlight the followings:

To dig very deep, and go in little steps- f. e. if there are technical problems- is efficient.

To teach technic can be very exiting and I should more and more let go of my fear, that it would be boring for the pupil, if I teach technic. When teaching *tr* for Esben, I gave him a small melody, that is often used as a diminution of the sopran clausel, to play in different pitches. In this way, he didn` t just practice the articulation, but did it immediately "in style".

Anatomical approach: practicing is like doing sports: one can live without doing sports and one can play concerts without practicing, but it hurts after a while.

Teaching recorder at beginner level

I taught pupils at beginner level (5-10 years) in Germany for half a year and in Hungary for two years both in music school and privately. These two years in Hungary of a half position (two afternoons in a week) were very important for me, and as I was not teaching in one of the competitive music schools in Budapest but in one in the agglomeration, I could experiment a lot.

For teaching recorder to absolute beginners I realized a few things:

- I begin to teach by playing-listening-imitating, and not with studying the score. I add the notation little by little, also through letting the pupil notate a song he already could play. I would like to give the impression that music exists without score, but not vice versa. I also take in consideration what the pupil already learned in ear training/ music theory to decide when to play the first time from the score.

- I teach first the notes of a D pentaton scale, in this order: H A G E D D'. As many Hungarian Folk Songs are anyway pentaton, it is easy to find some, that the pupil already can sing and can then learn to play. For the fingering, it is convenient to learn F and F sharp later as they are Fork fingerings and also C, as it is often hard to cover for small children. I personally think, that pentaton melodies have a good influence on the mind, they harmonize us. I prefer them to Dur melodies for the beginning. Apart from existing folksongs, I like to invent new melodies to poems. I found a folk song-like poem ("During three whole days..."), that tells about the creation of a recorder, which children like very much. You find the facsimile in the appendix.

- In the first half year, I very much like to teach (after some pentaton ones) easy songs, that the pupil already know very well- so to connect to the singing. This is something I learned from folk musicians, it is their most used learning method.

- I do let my pupils improvise very early (even with three notes). I saw, that an average child is able to improvise also in concert situation, when he learns that improvising is a normal thing to do, so there is no reason of being afraid from it.

- I have the image in my mind, that there is already music in every child. Not just in the ones who have well educated parents and listened to Mozart at the age of 2, but as their nature: there is a strong wish for harmony, self-expression through sound or rhythm instinctively in everyone. I try to connect to this instinctive level in order to let recorder playing have deep roots in a child, and add cultural knowledge (=instrument technic, style, music theory, score reading, etc.) little by little.

Teaching recorder at intermediate level

I have been teaching Esben in the last one and half months. He is learning in an MGK and will do entrance exam for the academy in one year. The situation of teaching him would have been really different, if I would have been his only teacher, but I haven't. So I decided to act "real", and worked with him mostly on themes and pieces that he was not familiar with yet but interested in: mainly with Early Baroque and Renaissance Repertoire, Improvisation, listening to himself, imagination, expression through movements. In our first lesson, I could see, that he is a very musical, but somehow restrained recorder player, focusing at the moment maybe too much on "playing in the right way". As it was very clear, that his teacher is playing much attention on technic and he is well trained, I didn't work much on it with him, just on some specific aspects.

In the first lesson, my main aim was to connect his feelings and imagination to his playing. He played the 8. Fantasia of Telemann. I asked him to say his associations to the first movement, and we slowly ended up by a story of a funeral – in addition with the moving qualities of water. I also asked him to experiment with water at home. The second movement, we worked with at the second and third lesson. I realized, that he doesn't uses any *tr* or *dr*, which are quite useful articulations for baroque music. It is difficult to say r for a Danish person, but is is easy to find a consonant at the place of the r. He found this sound as I asked him to say consonants between d and l (while moving the tongue back and forth). I was very happy about the result. After a while, I realized, that my Hungarian teacher in Leipzig told me the same story some years ago – just with a German pupil, instead of Danish - so subconsciously I used her method. The third movement of the Fantasia is quite challenging, especially in terms of rhythm. I asked Esben to accompany me playing it with body percussion, and after, also to move to it. If I would teach him longer, I would for sure include more exercises of this type, as he doesn't uses his whole body for playing, or just as a tool for stable sound and posture, but not for expression.

We worked with free improvisation in two lessons. I made some cards with the words: story, nature, space, object. He took one, and then, got a specific task. First, it was story, and he did an improvisation about the story of his day. Afterwards, his homework was to play a similar impro every evening. The second time, he chose nature, and did some impros on different inner pictures. I like very much to use nature as inspiration for improvisation, as it implies not to play too complex things and connects one also to ones own nature. And: it is understandable and enjoyable for a five year old or an adult as well. So we had fun with free improvisation, but he was not challenged enough- it was too easy for him, so I looked for some repertoire that could be a good starting point for more structured improvisation, and found the Spanish variations on *Guardarme Las Vascas*.

Bolette told me, that it would be quite important to make Esben listen more to his own playing. So we took a recording of a concert he recently played, and listened to parts of it together. I gave him some aspects to focus on (dynamics, articulation, sound, expression, etc.), let him tell what he heard and also told him my observations. I would also go on with these exercises, if we would continue working together. Further, Bolette encouraged me to really challenge Esben, so I decided to give him a Virgiliano - Recercata in facsimile. It is written with a C-clef,- there are no bar lines. I was not sure about how he would react, but I had a feeling, that with his brain and will, he would manage this task. After 3 lessons, I gave him the modern notation as well, but only after the moment, when I felt that he had managed to forget about bar lines (– that has no function in this music). The recercata was also a good terrain for working more on *t r*.

General reflections

In the work with Esben I could see some general difficulties, that I have, quite clearly: I feel sometimes strange/bad about, when I can't change things immediately in the pupils playing. (This impatient reaction I do often have to myself as well.) I don't tell it to the pupil, but I have more thoughts like "I am not a good enough teacher, that's why he can't make it". My second difficulty was to teach systematically, because I am often afraid, that me and the pupil would get bored, when doing so. That doesn't mean, that I don't have a plan at all, I do have a quite clear mind, but the wish to try out something new with the pupil is very big so I have to moderate myself in order to not be too fast, but work steadily, while still bring in my new ideas.

Differences between teaching at beginner and intermediate level, conclusion

It is hard to draw a straight line between those. When I would do so, I would define it like this: at beginner level (we mostly speak of children of 5-10 years) the question of maybe becoming a professional musician is not relevant. There are of course exceptions, but still I think personally – and Andras Schiff tells about the same when writing about his childhood – that a child should be a child in first line, and not a mini musician. At intermediate level, the question of becoming a professional musician or not, is quite relevant, and, if answered, results in quite different learning methods, tempo, and- expectations towards the pupil. I don't have many experiences with pupils at teenager age, so I wouldn't like to write big observations about them, but I saw children in the beginning of their "music school (and, school system in general) carrier" and young adults, who just finished it, or are before entering an Academy. My point of view at the moment is: when teaching at beginner level, I try to establish a space of freedom (free expression) in the subject of recorder playing, as a sort of preserved freedom of the very early, imaginative childhood. The young adults, who decided to become musician, I try to free up – mostly their playing, of course, through opening up their minds and hearts for unknown possibilities and knowledge. I think, that I am so enthusiastic about connecting/reconnecting somebody to his creativity in terms of recorder playing, because I am bored by many players (classical musicians in general), who are products of institutional music teaching. I strongly believe in, that professionalism and holistic thinking and teaching should not exclude but embrace each other.

I would like to end up with a quotation of Joseph Beuys:

"Also Kunst als Freiheitswissenschaft erst einmal und in folgedessen auch Kunst als Urproduktion oder als die Basisproduktion für alles weitere. Nun ist dieser Begriff scheinbar für viele Menschen zu hoch genommen; viele meinen ja dann, jeder Mensch kann ja nicht Künstler sein. Gerade da handelt es sich darum, den Begriff wieder zu einem zu machen, der eine Wesensbeschreibung des Menschen ist, eben des Menschen, der die Freiheit ausdrückt, verkörpert und als Entwicklungsimpuls für die Welt weitertraegt und entwickelt."

" ...So Art as the Science of Freedom firstly and so Art as base production for everything else. Now, this definition is for many a bit too much, many would think, that everybody cannot be an artist. But it is just about expanding the definition of Art to the following: Art is the essence of a human being, of a human who expresses and incorporates Freedom and gives this impuls further to the world."

(Volker Harlan: *Was ist Kunst?* – Werkstattsgespräche mit Joseph Beuys. Stuttgart, Urachhaus)

Appendix

Examples of books, recorder schools and repertoire collections that I know:

arranged by Piers Adams: *Extraordinary Encores (Dolce)*

János Bali: *The recorder (Editio Musica Budapest)*

sel. by János Bali: *French baroque duetts for two treble recorders (EMB)*

sel. by János Bali: *Repertoire for recorder 1, 1a (EMB)*

sel. by János Bali: *Chamber music for three treble recorders from the 14-18th centuries (EMB)*

Gerhard Braun: *Schule für Sopranblockflöte (Haenssler-Verlag)*

Sylvestro Ganassi: *Opera Intitulata Fontegara*

Walter von Hauwe: *The modern recorder player (Schott)*

Jytte Kusk Holm: *Min Blockfløjtebog (Edition Wilhem Hansen)*

Gabor Kállay: *Key excersises for descant recorder (Editio Musica Budapest)*

Zoltán Kodály: *Otfoku zene (Fivegrade music) I.- IV. (Editio Musica Budapest)*

Hans Martin Linde: *Handbuch des Blockflötenspiels (Schott)*

Lőrincz-Paragi: *Recorder ABC (Editio Musica Budapest)*

Péter Perényi- Eva Perényi: *Treble recorder school (Eotvos Janos Kiado)*

arranged and edited by Péter Perényi - Eva Perényi: *Irish and schottish Tunes for recorder (Eotvos Janos Kiado)*

car per
o: Cor=
Violino:
rfa. esi=
2 Batta=

A page of handwritten musical notation featuring approximately 15 staves. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first few staves are heavily obscured by dark ink smudges, particularly in the upper left quadrant. The text on the left side of the page identifies the instruments: 'Car per', 'o: Cor=', 'Violino:', 'rfa. esi=', and '2 Batta='. The overall appearance is that of an aged, working manuscript.

This image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged, yellowed paper. The notation is written in black ink and consists of 13 staves of music, followed by three blank staves at the bottom. The music is written in a style characteristic of the 18th or 19th century, featuring a variety of note values, rests, and bar lines. The paper shows signs of wear, including dark smudges and staining, particularly in the lower half of the page. The handwriting is somewhat dense and cursive, typical of historical musical manuscripts. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The notation includes many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, suggesting a fast or intricate piece. The final staff of music ends with a double bar line and a fermata-like flourish. The three blank staves at the bottom are completely empty, indicating the end of the written music on this page.

6. Ricercata per Flauto, Cornetto, Violino, Traversa e simili in Battaglia (7)
(transposed version)

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 2/2 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature of 2/2. The piece is characterized by its intricate rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth-note runs and dotted rhythms. The notation includes various accidentals such as flats (b) and sharps (#), and some notes are marked with red 'r' symbols. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the overall structure is a single melodic line.

Musical score for page 30, measures 60-121. The score is written in treble clef and consists of 12 staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A sharp sign (#) is present above the staff for measure 80. The music features a mix of melodic lines and rhythmic patterns, with some staves showing dense sixteenth-note passages.

60
64
68
73
78
80
88
93
98
102
107
112
116
121

This page contains 14 staves of musical notation, likely for a piano or guitar. The notation is written in a single system, with each staff containing a line of music. The music consists of various rhythmic patterns, including quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, often grouped together. There are several measures with rests, and the piece concludes with a final measure containing a fermata over a note. The notation is clear and legible, with standard musical symbols and clefs.

Seven Variations on 'Guardarme Las Vacas'

Libro de música de vihuela intitulado Silva de Sirenas, (Valladolid, 1547).

(Separated into two parts by Martin Grayson)

Enriquez de Valderrabano (c.1500-after1557)

Treble Recorder

Tenor Recorder

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

f *C* *d* *G* *A*

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for two recorders. The score is organized into eight systems, each with a Treble Recorder part on the top staff and a Tenor Recorder part on the bottom staff. The systems are numbered 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Handwritten annotations in the first system include the letters 'f', 'C', 'd', 'G', and 'A' placed below the notes. The paper is aged and shows some staining.

33

Handwritten musical notation for measures 33-36. The top staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with quarter and eighth notes. The tempo marking 'q-moll' is written below the first measure.

q-moll F-dür Es-dür D-dür

37

Handwritten musical notation for measures 37-40. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line. The tempo marking 'q-moll' is written below the first measure.

q-moll F-dür B D 2/6

41

Handwritten musical notation for measures 41-44. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

45

Handwritten musical notation for measures 45-47. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

48

Handwritten musical notation for measures 48-50. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

51

Handwritten musical notation for measures 51-53. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

54

Handwritten musical notation for measures 54-56. The top staff continues the melodic line. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

"During three whole days..."

Weston (Magyar Ethnol.)

92.

lyd r m k hang :)

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff in treble clef, 3/2 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in Hungarian: "három egész napot bíjtam erdő vadonát".

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff in treble clef, 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in Hungarian: "gomba-merő szikla-tetőt bejártam".

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff in treble clef, 3/2 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in Hungarian: "három egész napot fáragtam egy fenyő-lyát".

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff in treble clef, 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in Hungarian: "vadregésből tudensípót csináltam".

Gergő, K. Lili, Julekival elkészítve

→ Csütörtök ~~Lili~~ keddi

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff in treble clef. The melody is written in red ink and consists of quarter notes. The lyrics "Lili Julek" are written in red on the left, and "vanidob" is written in red on the right.

"My fire"



az én tüzem szív és forró léte. Mígóta nagyon csavargó
széles víz (2009 január), rajzolta 2016 október 23-án