

l'attention des érudits adultes. *Les souliers magiques* est très accessible pour le jeune auditeur, mais la simplicité qui assure la réception facile semble plutôt unidimensionnelle, c'est-à-dire que tous les éléments du texte (personnages, motifs, séquences narratifs) s'orientent vers le seul accomplissement de ce message didactique final. Le dirigisme didactique alors, c'est précisément ce qui empêche que la simplicité soit perçue comme une véritable richesse.

Il faut enfin mentionner les illustrations de Girerd. Les personnages sont esquissés plutôt que représentés par des dessins détaillés et des couleurs solides et le fond des tableaux est constitué par des taches de couleurs vives. L'ensemble de ces deux techniques artistiques semble créer un effet de suggestion, mettant l'accent non pas sur la caractérisation des personnages mais plutôt sur la traduction des sensations et des sentiments intérieurs, aussi bien que sur l'évocation de l'atmosphère particulière de chaque séquence. La tristesse initiale de Julia, par exemple, est traduite par la pesanteur des formes et par le pouvoir suggestif des couleurs plus sombres; la force maléfique de la reine par le tourbillon mouvementé des coups de pinceaux, ce qui connote une présence sinistre; le moment culminant de l'action par de grandes taches de différentes couleurs qui se fondent, ce qui crée un effet de tourbillon et de confusion.

On peut spéculer que les enfants trouveront dans ce conte de quoi les charmer, mais c'est eux seulement qui en seront les meilleurs juges.

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INTRODUCTIONS TO THE WORLD OF MUSIC

The Orchestra, Mark Rubin. Illus. Alan Daniel. Douglas & McIntyre, 1984. 48 pp. \$10.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88899-009-X; **Your child needs music**. Barbara Cass-Beggs and Frederick Harris, 1986. 103 pp. \$14.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88797-268-3.

The publishers describe *The Orchestra* as a non-fiction book intended for children ages four to seven. To my mind, it seems stronger on the non-fiction side: the book is well-researched and its accuracy has been checked by no less than Victor Felbrill, conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The colourful illustrations are also pleasing. As a book for young children, however, it has several limitations.

The text is written in a sweet but impersonal voice, never addressing the reader directly (e.g. "Music is everywhere" or "Music can sound happy"),

etc.). I would prefer to see the child reader personally involved in the text (e.g. "You can hear music everywhere" or "Music can make you feel happy"). Rubin's simple, abstract approach might suit an older age group, but it lacks imagination.

For example, the book contains a subplot that could have been used to make the story more "reader friendly". The illustrations depict two children visiting the instruments during an orchestra's rehearsal, but they do not appear in the story. Why be so subtle? Why not have these children become characters in the text, perhaps even telling the story? Young children especially would love to hear another child's point of view. As it is, everyone in the illustrations remains nameless; not the way I would want young children to first meet the orchestra or the musicians in it!

Finally, when there are already good audio treatments available, I found myself questioning the value of a book *telling* young children about the orchestra without also letting them *hear* what it's all about. The sound of the instruments can be magic for young children and it seems a shame to have them experience it in such an abstract way. The book might better work for the older child already familiar with the subject; I wouldn't recommend it for the age group intended.

Barbara Cass-Beggs, author of *Your child needs music* is a well-known and respected pioneer of early musical education for children. Although I am not familiar with her other books, this one was a pleasure. A real love for children and understanding of their needs comes through on every page. Even if you don't know very much about music, *Your child needs music* can give you great ideas on how to develop your child's musical interest, starting at a very young age.

It is based on the author's proven "Listen, Like, Learn" approach and is written for parents and teachers of young musical beginners, particularly ages two to six. Here is someone who knows her audience! The book presents a complete three-year course based on sound educational principles. At the same time, it encourages spontaneity and adaptation to the individual child's needs.

The six-year-old's after-class comment, "Well, it's been nice, but you have given me *too much* music today", is but one example of anecdotes and touches of humour sure to make a teacher or parent smile. The contents are communicated in a friendly and conversational manner.

Cass-Beggs' frequent use of footnotes might be of greatest interest to the serious pedagogue, but the many musical examples throughout and the extensive appendices would be helpful to any parent or teacher: I found the appendices wonderful, with lists of suggested music, poems, instruments and recordings, plus instruction on how to apply them with various age groups. I also enjoyed the chapters on introducing the musical staff and combining music with other arts.

The one comment I read with skepticism was in the chapter on the voice. I wondered where Cass-Beggs found documentation for her comment that "Father's voice is very satisfying too, but it can't replace mother's. It is merely an added bonus". This type of comment can deal a severe blow to the single male parent and mars an otherwise conscientiously non-sexist book. For different reasons, I also found Cass-Beggs treading dangerous ground in vocal instructions such as, "Open your mouth wide". This clichéd advice can create severe sound distortions and make singing seem strange and foreign — the way it would feel if you spoke that way. The one serious reservation I had about the book was that its format as a course may restrict its general usefulness. It is hard to "dabble" in it, as many parents and even teachers might wish to do. I would also have liked to see specific exercises referenced in a separate index for quick referral.

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CANADIAN CHILDREN'S RECORDS V

"Alive, well, and going places" is a pretty accurate way to describe the current Canadian children's music scene! Each year introduces new artists with sparkling original work as well as imaginative revamping of familiar, well-loved material. The eleven records to be reviewed offer a fine variety of music and story telling for every taste in the age group of two to ten. Several will provide attractive entertainment for the entire family.

For plenty of toe-tapping rhythm, try *Lots more Junior Jug Band* with Chris and Ken Whitely, backed up by Chris's children, Jenny and Daniel. The idea is to create new sounds with homemade instruments, get together with family and friends and have a wonderful jam session. The album combines folk, swing, boogie, and rock. There are songs for working out ("Exercising"), experimenting with the trumpet ("The music goes 'round and around"), easy listening ("Halfway down the stairs," "Take it slow and easy"), and even a rendition of Offenbach's "Can can" arranged for various harmonicas. The voices are clear and pleasing, and the accompaniment of over twenty instruments provides continual surprise. The album comes with an activity sheet with ideas for creating new instruments from common articles around the home.

Clearly more limited in stylistic scope is the album, *Cathy Fink and friends; Grandma slid down the mountain*. Fink is an accomplished banjo player and yodeler and the songs, which lean heavily toward country and folk idioms, are mainly traditional and include campfire favourites ("Brush