

MUSIC EDUCATION IN SOCIAL CONTEXTS – A STUDY PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This article outlines the foundational considerations of the academic qualification ‘Music Pedagogy in Social Work’ conceptualized and realized in Potsdam, Germany. Based on knowledge about possible benefits of cultural and musical education for the aims of social work, namely the empowerment of individuals, social participation and inclusion, the author specifies the needs and competences for professionalization in this field. Examples from student and graduate experiences with musical education in kindergarten, youth clubs and other social institutions make clear the objective of the qualification. The importance of aesthetic experiences and aesthetic education in social work contexts constitute the theoretical framework for an interdisciplinary combination of music education competencies with an academic qualification in social pedagogy. The evaluation of musical pedagogy in social contexts underlines the necessity of an artistic musical qualification as fundamental for successful implementation of music education in the context of aesthetic and cultural education within social work.

Keywords: Music education & social pedagogy. Aesthetic experience in education.

RESUMO

EDUCAÇÃO MUSICAL EM CONTEXTOS SOCIAIS - UM PROGRAMA DE ESTUDO

Este artigo descreve as considerações fundamentais da formação acadêmica “Pedagogia da Música no Trabalho Social”, conceituada e realizada em Potsdam, Alemanha. Com base nos conhecimentos sobre os possíveis benefícios da educação cultural e musical para os fins do trabalho social, principalmente o empoderamento dos indivíduos, a participação social e a inclusão, o autor especifica as necessidades e competências para a profissionalização neste campo. Exemplos de experiências de alunos e graduados com educação musical em jardins de infância, clubes de jovens e outras instituições sociais tornam claro o objetivo da qualificação. A importância das experiências estéticas e da educação estética nos contextos de trabalho social constitui o marco teórico para uma combinação interdisciplinar de competências em educação musical com uma qualificação acadêmica em pedagogia social. A avaliação da pedagogia musical nos contextos sociais aponta para a necessidade de uma qualificação musical artística como fundamental para a implementação bem-sucedida da educação musical no contexto da educação estética e cultural no âmbito do trabalho social.

Palavras-chave: Educação musical e pedagogia social. Experiência estética na educação.

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RESUMEN

LA EDUCACIÓN MUSICAL EN CONTEXTOS SOCIALES - UN PROGRAMA DE ESTUDIOS

Este artículo describe las consideraciones fundamentales de la formación académica “pedagogía de la música en el Trabajo Social” conceptualizadas y realizadas en Potsdam, Alemania. Sobre la base de conocimientos sobre los posibles beneficios de la educación cultural y musical para fines del trabajo social, principalmente el empoderamiento de los individuos, la participación social y la inclusión; el autor especifica las necesidades y competencias para la profesionalización en este campo. Ejemplos de experiencias de alumnos y graduados con educación musical en guarderías, clubes juveniles y otras instituciones sociales dejan claro el propósito de la cualificación. La importancia de las experiencias estéticas y la educación estética en contextos de trabajo social es el marco teórico para una combinación interdisciplinaria de competencias en educación musical con una cualificación académica en la pedagogía social. La evaluación de la pedagogía musical en contextos sociales apunta a la necesidad de una cualificación musical artística como fundamental para la implementación exitosa de la educación musical en el contexto de la educación estética y cultural en el trabajo social.

Palabras clave: Educación musical y Pedagogía Social. Experiencia Estética en educación.

Sounds in Bahia – My initiation to musical education projects

In the year 1990, I was blessed with the opportunity to hear and see the Banda Mirim of Olodum in Salvador da Bahia: a band of young percussionists from the ages of 8 to 16. Further on during this time I spent in Salvador, before and during Carnival in Bahia, I also had the opportunity to see the Banda Mirins of Ilé Aiyé, Malé de Balé and other famous blocos afros, which initiated a musical and cultural revolution, later called *Axe music*, in commercial terms. Salvador in that period was still in the very beginnings of quite essential sociocultural developments, especially regarding cultural respect for the majority African-Brazilian population in the city, which has suffered racism and social exclusion ever since the so-called abolition of slavery. Police riots in the Pelourinho area were very common and friendship between white and black people, especially a black and a white woman were regarded as suspicious and weird. Poverty and social misery were the main qualities to be noticed in the elder quarters of Salvador da Bahia with no or few chances of education and professionalization for children and young people.

The musical qualities and socio-educational benefits and possibilities of being part of a Banda Mirim, immediately caught my eye and ear: regular practices, frequent meetings with more or less the same group often combined with regular meals, appropriation of musical skills, developing of self-esteem, success in society, as being seen as part of musical presentations etc. Generally speaking, a chance to learn all the soft skills necessary for any path of professionalization, namely concentration, social competencies, self-efficacy, creativity etc. Thus, I could witness during my following stays in Brazil that the model of the percussion groups “Bandas mirims” from Bahia spread all over the country. Percussion projects with children and young people popped up in many Brazilian states and big cities, most of them as Samba and Samba-Reggae batucadas, others with local rhythms and instruments, such as, for example, the Maracatu percussion groups in Recife. The benefits and efficiency of this kind of social, educational and musical work with children and youngsters were persuasive and very successful.

In the following years, I immersed myself deeply in the musical phenomenon of African-Brazilian percussion over the course of several research periods in Brazil. First working on my research on the blocos afro for a Master's thesis in ethnomusicology and then finalizing with a doctoral thesis about the secret of the "Suingue Baiano" – the micro-rhythmic interactions and feelings in African-Brazilian Percussion (GERISCHER, 2006).

Since the 1990s, I have also been part of a developing percussion scene in Germany, performing Samba and Samba-Reggae in Berlin and Potsdam, promoting percussion workshops, stage and street performances. In the second half of the decade, I became a Brazilian percussion educator, teaching Samba groups and giving workshops, sometimes in youth clubs or schools. The magic of percussion as a medium for social and educational projects happened to work out in Germany, as well as in Brazil. In the early 2000s, I was very pleased to conduct an intercultural project of the former House of Cultures (Haus der Kulturen) in Potsdam, introducing *Moleque de Rua* (MOLEQUE DE RUA, 2017) from São Paulo¹ to regular schools in the federal state of Brandenburg. The purpose of the project was to prevent racism and xenophobia in the former DDR state, which was a serious issue at the time (and still is!). Though the group would often work and play for only three or five days in several schools (in Rathenau, Eberswalde or Spremberg), their success was overwhelming. Their offering created a perfect understanding between young people from Brazil and Brandenburg. Despite not having a common verbal language, they communicated through music and dance. The thrilling musical and creative skills of the African-Brazilian percussionists, who themselves were barely older than the students, provided a good breeding ground to plant the seeds of immunization against racism.

In Spremberg, a small town near the Polish frontier, *Moleque de Rua*, supported by the Bahian artist Eva de Souza, who specialized in the creation of masks, conducted an interdisciplinary Carnival

Project for a whole secondary school. The three days of the intensive school project included percussion and dance courses, as well as workshops in mask building and costume sewing. The project ended with a procession through the town center with special dressed dancers accompanied by a percussion batucada and pupils wearing masks or carrying big self constructed puppets (WEINHOLD, 2003). This had been, until that moment, an unseen happening in town and the astonishment of the watching citizens was very obvious. But instead of rejection to the strange performance, sympathy predominated. The procession was repeated the day after in the context of 'Father's Day' on the date of Ascension's Day, hosted by the big mining industry of the town. As foreigners are still rare in smaller towns in the eastern parts of Germany, this transcultural experience generated by a dozen Brazilians, together with about twenty teachers and 150 pupils, created a very positive atmosphere towards a rather extravagant and for sure, unusual performance.

In 2010, a private church foundation (HOFFBAUER STIFTUNG, 2017) engaged in kindergarten and primary, as well as secondary, school education, founded an academic institution, which became a private university of applied science in 2016, the 'Fachhochschule Clara Hoffbauer Potsdam' (FHCHP) (FACHHOCHSCHULE CLARA HOFFBUER POTSDAM, 2016). One of the main issues of this private university is to implement the study of social work in combination with a professionalization in skills of aesthetic praxis and cultural education. The three BA programs are today: 'Music Pedagogy and Mediation of Music in Social Work', 'Pedagogy of Movement and Dance in Social Work' and 'Language and Facilitation of Language in Social Work'. I am very grateful to have been part of the development, guidance and management of the musical education program since the very beginning. My former musical experiences in Brazil and Germany provided me with a clear purpose and conscience about the tasks and the aims of the study program. In this paper, I intend to outline and discuss the framework and paradigms of the study program, its successes, challenges and further possibilities.

¹ *Moleque de Rua* is one of the international successful percussion projects with young people from a poor quarter in São Paulo.

The Curriculum: Music Pedagogy and Mediation of Music in Social Work²

Music education is part of the general education program in German schools; thus, it should be a mandatory subject from the first to the final twelfth grade. On the other hand, especially in primary school (first to sixth grade), music education in schools suffers from a lack of music educators, which results in the fact that half of the music teachers who are giving the music lessons are not specialized in music. In secondary schools, music usually continues as a facultative subject, which may be chosen or dismissed. The issues, contents and repertoires of music education in school, developed from a former orientation toward classical music and the singing of a traditional song repertoire to an openness towards popular styles and the contemporary musical interests of the students. Non-European music should be a mandatory part of the curriculum, but the encounters and dialogues with South American, African or Asian music styles and genres depend highly on the knowledge and motivation of the music teacher. Usually music lessons in schools are a mixture of listening and analyzing music, music theory and experiences in music practice – instrumental music, as well as vocal music. In bigger cities and some German regions, can be found schools with more emphasis on musical education. Within the school subject, music teachers are obliged to give marks, which generates advantages for students with former musical education or musical family backgrounds. Negative experiences in music classes in schools and bad grades in the subject of music unfortunately lead rather often to the opinion: ‘I am not musical’ (see below).

At the beginning of the new millennium, Germany suffered the so called PISA shock, meaning that the PISA study revealed that the German education level was far away from the top places of good education in math, sciences and languages in the international comparisons conducted by the OECD (WIKIPEDIA, 2017). The consequences were an uncountable number of debates and struggles to improve school teaching in these subjects and nationwide efforts to create equal levels of education in the different federal states

² See Fachhochschule Clara Hoffbuer Potsdam (2017).

of Germany, but always giving priority or even exclusivity to language abilities, calculation skills and competencies in physics, biology or chemistry. After some years and significant improvements in these areas, predominantly within school education, and facing new challenges which are generated by global processes and their migration streams, cultural education again claims a prominent place on the agenda in the federal consultations of ministers of culture and education:

Cultural education is indispensable for the development of the personality of young people. It improves the requirement for a successful education biography and enables youth to acquire cognitive and creative competencies. It supports the emotional and social development of all adolescents and their integration in society and is therefore essential to their social participation. (STÄNDIGE KONFERENZ DER KULTUSMINISTER DER LÄNDER IN DER BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND, 2007, our translation).

In the following years, there have been quite a lot of financial support programs for Cultural Education projects with a focus on young people, who are underprivileged in their access to cultural education and activities, as music education and other creative art projects and are consequently in danger to lack education and professionalization in general (BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR BILDUNG UND FORSCHUNG, 2017).

‘Music Pedagogy and Mediation of Music in Social Work’ at FHCHP is a dual study program in order to enable students interested in music and social issues to work with musical and cultural education proposals outside of school education. We share the belief that cultural education is essential for the integration and inclusion of children and adolescents in a society characterized by diversity and that this helps to enable visitors of social work institutions (MCLAUGHLIN, 2008)³ to construct their own self-responsible and successful, in the sense of self-satisfying lives, aims of social work, which are best expressed by the term empowerment. As the conference of ministers of culture in Germany stated in 2007, crucial for successful education biographies are the so called soft skills

³ There exists a controversy discussion about the correct labeling of people visiting institutions of social work.

like social competencies, especially the ability to deal with heterogeneity and change, development of an identity in society, empowerment of individuals to participate in society and ensure their share of educational skills necessary for successful professionalization. I will explain this conviction in detail below; first I want to describe the study program itself.

In Germany there exists a long tradition of duality in qualification programs. The term dual studies means theoretical teachings are combined with practical trainings within common work spaces, where students are paid for their contributions to the work field. Dual studies in our case means students attend the university three days a week while the other two days they are trained and work in social institutions, like kindergartens, youth clubs, in homes for children and youth without or far from their families and institutions for people with special needs or in residences for the elderly and also in schools, but mostly outside regular classes. As the FHCHP is a private institution without governmental financial support, we have to raise tuition fees, which are balanced by the payments students earn in the various institutions of social work. At the university, students take basic courses in social work as well as in music pedagogy and they get a special music education and musical training for the pursuing profession. Students have to pass an entry test to prove a certain musical education as well as musical abilities to begin the study program.

More specifically, there are courses in educational science, elementary pedagogy, youth and adult education, psychology, sociology and methods of social work, as well as psychology and sociology of music, music and media, popular music courses and seminars with other issues of interest in the field of music pedagogy in social work. Musically, everybody is obliged to learn guitar and piano, to apply vocal singing classes and to learn how to conduct a choir as well as an instrumental ensemble, for example a pop or jazz band. One of the major practical subjects in music pedagogy is Elementary Music Pedagogy, a recent specialization, which has developed out of the Orff school of music and the discipline of Rhythmic,⁴

⁴ The specific discipline Rhythmic is the precursor of nowadays Elementary Music Pedagogy (EMP) and in fact was specializing

combining different elements of music with movement and dance. Elementary Music Pedagogy seeks to enable scholars to make music and support musical perception for everybody, independent of age, biography, musical education or physical abilities – for example by moving to music. Scholars of Elementary Music Pedagogy should:

[...] initiate elementary music education, in which they put man and music in an interactive relationship. The setting is completed by reception and production, perception and activity, internalization and expression and within their reciprocal conditionality; they can be shaped as elementary processes (RIBKE, 2002, p. 15, our translation).⁵

Besides this very specialized musical education, the basic consideration of the study program is the conviction that musical education is only one part of the competencies that professionals need in order to offer music education in social contexts. The other part is a deep understanding of the social contexts and especially the heterogeneity of society and students, clients or active costumers (see footnote 3). Diversity as a main characteristic of our times has to be deeply understood to meet the diversity of individuals with the necessary respect, empathy and with a pedagogical repertoire to deal with personal situations and constellations. Musicians offering workshops or regular music courses in social work contexts are quite numerous in Germany (even though insufficient, because of the lack of professionals in the field) and form the basis of such proposals in youth clubs and similar institutions. The pedagogic training of these musicians is mostly about musical training. When children or young people have deviating interests or other problems, the music education proposal may become an excessive challenge for both sides, mostly due to a lack of information and pedagogic training on the part of the music educators. The study program tries to answer this deficit with an interdisciplinary formation and a

for rhythm and rhythmic movement.

⁵ “Ihre (EMP Absolventen) Aufgabe ist es, elementare musikalische Bildungsprozesse einzuleiten, in denen sie Mensch und Musik in einen breiten, variantenreichen wechselseitigen Bezugsrahmen stellen. Rezeption und Produktion, Aufnehmen und Handeln, Verinnerlichen und Ausdrücken füllen diesen Rahmen aus und können in der gegenseitigen Bedingtheit gleichermaßen als elementare Prozesse gestaltet werden.”

close connection between theoretical and practical education. Besides the interdisciplinary curriculum at the university, a major support for these aims is the dual character of the study program. Social realities, demands and conflicts are part of the regular discussions within seminars. During the whole study program the reflection of pedagogical praxis experiences is part of the weekly academic program. Academics visit the students at their practical workplaces and integrate actual questions and problems into their teachings. Professionals in the social work institutions function as additional teachers. Every six months the university invites professionals from cooperating social institutions to conferences about experiences, reflections and conceptions. In this way, the academic studies are well connected with practical needs and challenges.

In 2016 the fourth age group finished its studies. Many of them were adopted as professionals in their social institutions and others entered easily into professional life as well. These career entries prove the demand for our qualifications. Though it is clearly a necessary and successful program for professionalization in the field of music and cultural education, we still are the only academic institution offering this kind of study program in Germany. Study programs in music pedagogy still concentrate on music education in schools or music education in special schools for musical training in public and private music schools. Universities offering studies in Social Work generally include cultural and aesthetic education in their study programs, but without practical specialization in one or another aesthetic praxis, like music, theatre, dance and movement etc.

In the study programs of Social work, various courses for cultural and aesthetic education are often combined with media pedagogy or movement pedagogy, sometimes also with pedagogy of playing or event pedagogy **and united in one study field.** (KUCKHERMANN, 2015, p. 182, our stress, our translation).

As a consequence, we have students from all over Germany. In the following, I want to take a closer look at this ‘success story’ and its implications and paradigms.

Musical possibilities, claims and tasks in Social Work

A main challenge in German social work is the inclusion of people with special needs, so as to offer children and adolescents of varying capacities and diverging origins, as well as children from families with lower incomes, equal educational chances. Initiated with the UN resolutions, the concept of inclusion pursues the aim of providing everybody, including persons with special needs, the possibility to participate fully in society and culture and to rule his or her own life in a self-determined way (UNITED NATIONS, 2006). The idea of inclusion started with insights about the human rights of persons with certain disabilities, but in the last decade, inclusion has embraced all kind of possible discrimination, be it because of special needs, gender, sexual orientation, cultural and economic background, migration or any kind of heterogeneity and difference to an artificially constructed mainstream. Differences between cities and rural regions might produce discrepancies as big as different mother tongues or certain disabilities may generate. While Germany should have been classified as an immigration country for the past several decades, common knowledge and public opinion took long time in denying and then recognizing this new reality, thus nowadays, there is no doubt. Considering heterogeneity as a main characteristic of groups, classes, courses, clients in social work etc., the focus of social work moved away from analyzing deficits and towards the question of where and what people’s potentials are, how can we support the development of skills and capacities to conduct lives in self-responsibility, how can social work support individual empowerment?

Music is a media to introduce participation and inclusion and conduct possibilities to communicate at eye level as well as to discover new abilities and self-efficacy. Especially in the field of inclusion of people with special needs, music and arts are important media to realize equality at least for a certain time span. Successful inclusive schools in Germany have always invested in aesthetic activities like music, theater, musical productions etc. In these projects pupils could become active in different ways than in normative language, math

or science classes and these activities gave them the chance to interact with other pupils at an equal level, even if they had to deal with disabilities. Our students and graduates follow this path in various ways. First, there are scholars in kindergartens conducting music education for inclusive groups of children, which means part of them do have special needs in their emotional or cognitive development, or regarding their physical abilities. Over three years I had the opportunity to watch and follow one student of the first age group to develop his own musical repertoire with several songs, accompanied by gestures and movements and diverse experimental and improvisational musical proposals. First he offered his musical repertoire only to one group of children. At the end of the three study years he offered musical education to all eight groups of the kindergarten and was always welcomed with delight by children and educators. During the half hour of musical education I could see how music was able to catch the full concentration of 10 to 20 children, including moments of musical improvisation of a single child and all the others giving their attention to her or him in these moments. The interaction during these musical education moments functioned completely independently of the social status or the physical, psychological or cognitive abilities of the involved children. I was very grateful to participate and observe these moments of successful inclusion and participation.

Within diverse institutions and projects for children and adolescents with special needs and school contexts in the same field, students have been creating inclusive music bands with teenagers. One student finished his BA studies with research on the challenges of creating and conducting a music band with young people with special needs. In his case, he had to deal with the wish of one girl with physical disabilities to play the red guitar she had seen and was fond of. The solution to this problem was found in a guitar App, which gave the girl the opportunity to participate in the band communication and even to shine with solos in the public performances of the band. In another case the whole school for children with special needs was involved in a musical play celebrating the farewell to their director. To the astonishment of the public, a pupil with a talking machine played

the lead part. Another student formed an inclusive girls choir in one of the poorer quarters of Berlin, first in the context of a youth club. In the beginning, participation was very low, only two or three teenagers visited the weekly vocal trainings. Over a year, the student had to prove her patience and persistence until she was able to form a choir of eight to ten participants, including one or two boys once in a while. After her graduation she became a representative for inclusive youth work in this quarter of the city and within a year, and based on the choir founded during her studies, she performed a celebrated self-written musical with a mixed inclusive group of boys and girls. In every one of these examples the magic of music to create participation and self-esteem was compelling and in any of these cases it also took a long time to achieve these results, only possible because of the interdisciplinary qualifications and deep convictions and persistence of the young initiators and former students.

In elementary education as well as in youth clubs, graduate students are involved in offering musical education to young people whose parents don't or can't pay for music lessons in guitar or piano playing, drum set or bass guitar. They offer instrumental education and conduct or coach band projects in youth clubs or in schools. Different from Brazil and similar to the US, many schools in Germany last from 8am to 4pm and schools not only offer regular classes in music, sports and arts as subjects but also as workshops without degrees. Social work in schools is developing immensely because it proved to be very necessary and helpful, especially considering the task of inclusion in schools. The discussion about inclusive music pedagogy during a symposium about music education in social contexts organized by the institute for musical education at the University of Potsdam in 2013 (UNIVERSITÄT POTSDAM, 2013) discussed mainly the question of the necessity of conviction to meet the challenge of realizing inclusive music education. Especially in school contexts, the chances of successful inclusive education are often doubted. Social work contexts offer better conditions for experiments in inclusive cultural education because they are free of judgment constraints.

Another recent challenge in social work was the high margin of refugees from Arabic-speaking countries and other countries who came to Germany especially in 2015. A high percentage of these refugees are children who frequent German schools. To deal with lacks in language knowledge, school administration created so-called welcome classes for pupils with refugee backgrounds. Students of our study program work in these contexts and teach German or work on communication and understanding by playing games and singing songs in these courses. Other students support teachers in regular school classes as educators to deal with the heterogeneity of backgrounds and learning velocities. When students of our study program accompany school teaching they offer, for example, body percussion breaks to refresh concentration.

Demographic change is another essential task for German society. Music and cultural offerings are very helpful to slow down and help against dementia. Integration of the elderly with generation-crossing music projects in kindergartens, schools, family centers and residences for senior citizens, is one of the future challenges for our graduates. Children's hospitals engage clowns to help their clients endure treatments and survive mentally; musically trained professionals may also be of great support in this context. To involve music and musical education in all kinds of social work implicates an understanding of music and musical education different from musical education institutes searching for new talents and artistic or even commercial success. In the next part I want to explain the comprehension of music underlying our study program and the significance of musical experiences in the context of individual developments.

Music and Musicality

“What is music” is one of the first questions in the beginning of the study program, and there are many answers. Is it a sequence of sounds in time? Or is it a shaped sequence of special sounds ordered in time? What about bird song or the sound of a waterfall, is that music? Regular tests in music psychology courses always show the same results: Ten different pieces of music (Pop, Jazz, Classic, Ethnic ...) are classified very differently by a class

of twenty students being more or less the same age and similar socializations and all studying music pedagogy in social work. Classifications depend on degrees of familiarity, on customs of listening to music, musical education, cultural background etc. Songs which make some want to dance are perceived as boring by others etc. The perception of music is very individual, as is any perception. Since Piaget we know that we learn in active open processes of examination of our surroundings in which we construct categories and possibilities to deal with our surroundings and survive in an agreeable and pleasant way. Not without reason, Jean Piaget is considered as one of the foremost mentors of constructivism in cognitive science, founded by von Glasersfeld (GLASERSFELD, 1995). Following their epistemology, the perception of music is necessarily individually generated, depending on experience and listening possibilities. The most embracing definition of music is therefore music is sound in time, which is perceived as music.

Music is neither a higher way of world cognition nor is it hiding some kind of metaphysical truth. Music is music, when we perceive it as music and when it becomes significant for us. It is therefore a very subjective phenomenon and shouldn't be pressed in a straightjacket. (HARTHOG; WICKEL, 2004, p. 45, our translation).⁶

This definition of music may include bird song as well as a composition by John Cage performed in Germany by changing a certain organ sound in a church in Halberstadt, in Brandenburg, every seven years (ORGAN/ASLSP, 2016). Though the discussion about music at the beginning of the study program usually ends with the named insight – music is what man means to be music – the astonishment about the different individual perceptions of music by the findings of the music perception experiment in the second part of the first year is always great again. We love to think music is what we consider as music. But from the perspective of ethnomusicology, music is always more than we ever could perceive as music, considering all the music of the world we don't know. The awareness of music as a

⁶ “Musik ist weder eine höhere Art der Welterkenntnis noch verbirgt sich hinter ihr eine metaphysische Wahrheit. Musik ist Musik, wenn sie uns als Musik vorkommt und uns etwas bedeutet. Sie ist daher ein sehr subjektives Phänomen und sollte nicht in eine normative Zwangsjacke gepresst werden.”

perceptive construction seems essential for music pedagogy in the context of social work (HARTHOG; WICKEL, 2004). Professionals in this area need to respect individual preferences and interests of students and clients and stay open to acoustic objects or sound compositions of unknown kinds and characteristics. One may counter with the question “then any noise is supposed to be music”? No, music is supposed to have an aesthetic dimension, a little later I will explain my understanding of an aesthetic experience and the necessity of aesthetic quality in the context of social work.

First I want to explicitly state another essential idea of our curriculum foundations, which is that every man is musical (HARTHOG; WICKEL, 2004). Musicality is a gift of humanity, because there is no human culture without music. Music belongs to human societies as well as language. *Amusia*, a disability to listen to and enjoy music as described by Oliver Sacks, is rather rare (SACKS, 2008, p. 105). In his book *Musical Cognition*, Henkjan Honing describes experiments with newborn babies, which show their facilities to recognize rhythms (HONING, 2014, p. 64). The conscious recognition of music by babies, which they heard during pregnancy still within the belly, has been scientifically described (KREUSCH-JAKOB, 2008). Listening to rhythms and melodies is within the range of human perception from the very beginning. What happens to this gift of natural musicality is then deeply dependent on further acoustic and musical experiences individuals are exposed to, probably similar to our human capacities to learn languages: newborns are able to learn any language independent from the parental language (TÜPKER, 2009).

A further essential of the curriculum is the conviction and credo for life long learning. Though children obviously have tremendous capacities for learning in general and musical education in particular, modern life has made life long learning necessary and we can't afford anymore to think “was Hänschen nicht lernt, lernt Hans nimmer mehr” (“You can't teach an old dog new tricks“). Seniors in Potsdam are already a considerably large percentage of music scholars in public and private music schools. Especially boys and popular music musicians often start their musical careers only as

teenagers. There is no good reason to limit access to musical education by age. To the contrary, any age is good to benefit from musical experiences. To answer this urgent request in music pedagogy, Theo Harthog and Hans Herman Wickel developed the study field “music geragogy”, music education specialized for the needs of the elderly (HARTHOG; WICKEL, 2008).

Aesthetic experience as a key process for individual development and joy

The starting point for the described musical program, and also the two other study programs at FHCHP, is the significance of aesthetic experiences within all kinds of tasks in Social Work and derived from this conviction is the necessity for aesthetic education in this field.

Aesthetic experiences are characterized by their difference to everyday experience. They are accompanied by moments of surprise and enjoyment and of special attention and emotionality. [...] It is this difference to daily routines, which is of essential importance within social work, when it aims to alternate perceptions and matrixes of interpretations. (KUCKHERMANN, 2015, p. 185, our translation).

To explain this issue in detail I will reflect on an article by Ursula Brandstätter about Aesthetic Experience (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013). The term aesthetic refers etymological to sensual perception, the greek “aisthesis”. In previous centuries aesthetic perception concentrated on the perception of art. The aesthetization of living environments, enforced by the allover presence of media, situates aesthetic experience in an area of conflict between art experience and daily routines. It also places aesthetic education in the context of critical perception of aesthetic products as commodities and aesthetization of products because of commercial interests (BERNHARD, 2015, p. 247). Aesthetic experience is the object of a long discourse and part of the discussions about cultural education in Germany. A main platform for this discussion about cultural education is an Internet site with articles from various theorists and researchers specialized in culture or / and education (KULTURELLE BILDUNG, 2017). Within this context, Ursula

Brandstätter, a specialist for performance theory, defines her perspective on aesthetic experience and describes several characteristics, which I consider as very important in the context of cultural education in social work (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013):

- There is a large diversity of possible aesthetic experiences, depending on cultural diversity and perceptual variety. Aesthetic experience may be receptive or productive and both at the same time in creative processes. Aesthetic experiences are open processes that are contrary to normative activities. This characteristic of aesthetic experience supports the aim in social work to deal with heterogeneity.

Reflecting on the corporality of sensual perception (MERLEAU-PONTY, 1974)⁷ Brandstätter (2013) points to the dual character of aesthetic experience being a sensual perception of an object and noticing this perception as corporal event of the perceiving individual. Self-consciousness is another issue of social work, which may be facilitated by aesthetic experience. As Bernhard (2015) stresses, this self-consciousness should also evolve and support critical competencies to reflect emotional and subconscious reactions to aesthetic experiences communicated by modern media, commercials and all kinds of product placement.

- Aesthetic Experience does not have the aim of resolving duties or tasks; it is free of external purposes, though it may have multiple functions, such as entertainment, expression of emotions and convictions or even cognition (BRANDSTÄTTER 2013, p. 2). The perception of something and the process of perception itself as an individual activity and ability lie at the center of the aesthetic experience. The awareness of new experiences in perception may help to alter every day perceptions and at best lead to cognitive insights about the possibilities of different perspectives on every day life (BERNHARD, 2015, p. 246). We become conscious of the perception of music as music because an acoustic event gets musical meaning for us. By offering opportunities of

music making we enable one to experience self-efficacy and the capacity to shape one's own surroundings in an agreeable way, which is a further aim of social pedagogy.

- The experience to be a perceiving individual intensifies the perception as an individual (Ich-Erfahrung – I consciousness). The support of the development of identity is an important task, for example, in the social pedagogic work with adolescents.
- Aesthetic experience combines the perception of outer and inner world and may influence and change relationships to one's self or to his/her surroundings⁸. In addition, aesthetic experience is able to generate joy because the parallel perception of the inner and outer world generates moments of wellbeing and congruency. In consequence, joy may generate motivation and motivation supports concentration and endurance, qualities necessary for successful education biographies.
- The special experience of perception may alter the common cognition of time and space. It can create moments of conscious presence and spaces away from daily grinds (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013, p. 3). Aesthetic experience is able to generate moments of different self and life experience which may serve as examples for further possibilities to experience and shape life and open new perspectives on life and one's own possibilities.
- Corresponding with this last issue, aesthetic experience is supposed to create difference and affirmation (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013, p. 4). An important function of art is to question common habits and values and show other perspectives. In this sense aesthetic experience may also question habits and usual ways of perception and develop a critical aesthetic consciousness. Aesthetic experience may also affirm a certain emotion or view of life by giving opportunities to express emotions and convictions (e.g., in song writing workshops).
- Aesthetic experience may also lead to aesthetic cognition, to insights about individual

⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty spricht von der Leibbezogenheit der sinnlichen Erfahrung.

⁸ See also Kuckhermann (2015, p. 208-210).

perception, to awareness of different realities outside of one's own perception and the perception of the different reality of an aesthetic experience lying outside (the burdens) of daily life as well as develop a critical awareness about commercial interests in the mediation of aesthetic experiences.

In the end of her article Ursula Brandstätter regards the model function of aesthetic experience in two ways. Regarding the omnipresence of media and its multiple images and realities, she stresses the possible benefits in dealing with these Challenges:

If we involve ourselves in aesthetic phenomena, we learn to deal with plurality, heterogeneity, differences and contradictions. In aesthetic experiences we become conscious that the realities we live in are just 'images in frames', which can be substituted at any time by different images and different 'frames' (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013, p. 6, our translation).⁹

Secondly she looks at aesthetic experience as a model for perceptual and cognitive processes:

Aesthetic experiences are anchored in the sensuality of perception, but urge reflexive rethinking without losing the relationship to corporality. In aesthetic experiences we experience ourselves and the world outside at the same time and are stimulated to manifold interplays: between sensuality and reflection, between emotionality and rationality, between consciousness and unconsciousness, between materiality and symbols, between the spoken and the unspoken, between the definite and the indefinite. It may be this principle openness, which characterizes these interplays, which makes it a model for human experience and recognition. (BRANDSTÄTTER, 2013, p. 6, our translation).¹⁰

9 "Wenn wir uns auf ästhetische Phänomene einlassen, lernen wir mit Pluralität, Heterogenität, Differenzen und Widersprüchen umzugehen. In ästhetischen Erfahrungen wird uns bewusst, dass die Wirklichkeiten, in denen wir leben, in gewisser Weise nur 'Bilder mit Rahmen' sind, die jederzeit durch andere 'Bilder' mit anderen 'Rahmen' ersetzt werden können."

10 "Ästhetische Erfahrungen sind in der Sinnlichkeit der Wahrnehmung verankert, drängen aber zur reflexiven Verarbeitung ohne dabei den Bezug zur Körperlichkeit zu verlieren. In ästhetischen Erfahrungen erleben wir uns selbst und die Welt gleichzeitig und werden zu vielfältigen Wechselspielen angeregt: zwischen Sinnlichkeit und Reflexion, zwischen Emotionalität und Vernunft, zwischen Bewusstem und Unbewusstem, zwischen Materialität und Zeichencharakter, zwischen Sagbarem und Unsagbarem, zwischen Bestimmten und unbestimmten. Vielleicht ist die grundsätzliche Offenheit, die diese Wechselspiele ausmacht modellhaft für menschliches Erfahren, Erleben und Erkennen überhaupt."

With all these features, aesthetic experience may function as a model for all kinds of perceptual and cognitive processes that support the aims of social work. To help develop consciousness and self-esteem as well as self-perception is one of the main goals of social work with children and adolescents. To create possibilities to perceive and experience other emotions, abilities and perceptions than in daily life is another important issue of social work to support educational potentials. Learning to deal with difference and heterogeneity is essential in our modern world. The claimed openness of aesthetic experience as well as the ability to create and shape space and time opens possibilities to develop alternative perceptions and conceptions of life. Of course we don't believe in automatism, but the generation of possibilities for aesthetic experiences may create models of alternative perceptions and reflections for people who visit social work institutions whether children, adolescents, adults or elderly. Last but not least, it may generate moments of joy and participation.

Communication, participation and musical interaction

Besides the effects of aesthetic experience, musical offers and musical experiences are often interactive and communicative. Social and communication skills are essential for a satisfying and self-determined life. Difficulties in communication may be grounded in lacks of perceptual skills or awareness for the communicating partner. Musical interaction is a perfect training field for the perception and awareness of other individuals and counterparts in communication processes. Usually it is successful interaction between musical partners which leads to aesthetically satisfying results, or: music becomes aesthetically satisfying when it is the result of successful communication. Otherwise it will transport conflicting perceptions and diverging aims without coming together, which probably pleases neither one side nor the other. Awareness and communication of one's own perception and momentary emotional needs are at the center of musical communication, which may be receptive (dance, movement, painting etc.) or productive (band workshop, choir, sing along etc).

Participation, being or becoming part of a group involved in musical activities, is a further benefit of musical offers within fields of social work. Participation and emotional involvement are part of our basic needs whether child, youngster, teenager or senior citizen. Band projects, choirs and other kinds of musical activities may offer the opportunity to participate in social groupings.

Joie de vivre, lust for life, is a further argument for music pedagogy in social work contexts. The described characteristics of aesthetic and musical experiences are able to create a sense of well-being, the joy of musical perception and musical interaction. It is this joy of musical activities which motivates further musical education efforts. The perception of joy and the thereby generated motivation may also function as a model for resolving tasks of individual development.

Musical quality and the role of the music educator

The debate about the benefits and advantages of cultural education and in particular musical education has continued for decades. Research in the 1990s proved the positive development of social competencies in a group of children in a primary school, which was exposed to regular musical education. A group of children in the same school without special musical training didn't show the same results in social competencies (BASTIAN, 2001). Though research about the effects of aesthetic or arts training always points to the necessary consideration of individual conditions, positive results regarding perceptual, social, motional, emotional and even cognitive development are unquestionable:

Though there are massive discussions about the methodological reliability of much research, it is possible to state that children and adolescents experience advancements, regarding their intellectual abilities, their creativity, their sensibility for impulses of the environment, their social and emotional competencies, if exposed to artistic activities. The effects are moderate to small and not equal for every child and sustainability hasn't yet been researched. Still, there are enough empirical reasons to argue that

artistic activities strengthen chances of education for many children. (RITTELMEYER, 2013, p. 1, our translation).¹¹

Research in this field is split in two directions. Qualitative research with groups of children or adolescents exposed to additional musical or other arts training on the one hand and neuropsychological research on the other. This latter shows that training in musical or visual arts may influence the development of the neural network between brain areas because of higher levels of activities resulting in longer periods of attention (POSNER et al, 2008). Framework plans for elementary education in all federal states of Germany emphasize musical and visual arts training in kindergartens and primary schools. Since 2007, starting in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and being imitated by several other states in Germany, a well documented and evaluated musical training program was conducted in primary schools called JeKi – “jedem Kind ein Instrument” – an instrument for every child (GERMANY, 2015). The program was realized with so-called tandem teaching, combining a regular schoolteacher with professional music educators. One of the findings in the research about JeKi was the division of functions between the two teachers; one was responsible for the pedagogic challenges while the other for the musical training (NIESSEN; LEHMANN, 2012). With the study program at FHCHP we want to combine these two necessary qualifications in one person. Though the necessity and potential benefits of arts and especially musical training are well discussed and well studied in Germany, as already mentioned, we still are the only institution offering the described interdisciplinary qualification. Most of social work or elementary pedagogy study programs include courses which highlight the role and importance of aesthetic education and teach various methods in this field.¹² But in my opinion they lack a specific

11 “Obgleich es zum Teil heftige Kontroversen um die methodische Zuverlässigkeit vieler Untersuchungen gibt, kann man inzwischen doch festhalten, dass Kinder und Jugendliche hinsichtlich ihres intellektuellen Vermögens, ihrer Kreativität, ihrer Sensibilität für Umweltreize, ihrer sozialen und emotionalen Fähigkeiten durch künstlerische Tätigkeiten gefördert werden können. Die Effekte sind nicht für jedes Kind zu beobachten, ihre Langfristigkeit ist bisher eher selten untersucht worden, sie fallen meist moderat bis schwach aus. Dennoch kann man inzwischen mit guten empirischen Gründen behaupten, dass die künstlerische Betätigung die Bildungschancen zahlreicher Kinder erhöht.”

12 See above Kuckhermann (2015).

musical or artistic qualification to offer professional proposals for aesthetic experiences.

When we talk about aesthetic experience the aesthetic quality of this experience is a crucial factor. In Berlin, there are various “Musikkindergarten”, two of them are well known and function as role models within the discourse about kindergartens specialized in musical education. The international well-known conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim founded one of them, and his concept of “Musikkindergarten” includes regular visits by musicians of the opera house orchestra, conducted by Barenboim. During these visits, lasting about an hour, the musicians present their instruments and play for the children between the ages of one and five. These visits are a regular source of attention, concentration and motivation for other offers in musical education including decisions for instrumental training. The yearly program of the kindergarten also includes performances with musicians of the opera orchestra conducted by Daniel Barenboim (MUSIKKINDERGARTEN BERLIN, 2017). A quite different example for a “Musikkindergarten” is the “Kita am Kleistpark”, where a professional music educator offers regular music classes at least once a week. This methodology includes a yearly CD production with children’s songs recorded by the professional musicians sometimes together with the children and constituting a common musical repertoire for the kids of this kindergarten and their families (NACHBARSCHAFTSHEIM SCHÖNE-

BERG, 2017). In both cases, the success depends on the involvement of professional musicians and their ideal function.

The artistic level of the musical education is an important feature in our aim to guarantee aesthetic quality in the musical work within social contexts. The final examination in Elementary Music Pedagogy is a self-composed performance with different elements of music and movement. Instrumental and vocal classes focus on presence and musicality. Music is the main media and instrument of the pedagogical efforts of our students and graduates. Guitar and piano classes are not a dispensable luxury but a basic qualification. A music educator is always also a performer when active in pedagogical contexts. Pedagogy considered as a convincing activity requires artistic performance qualities. Music education with the aim to support individual developments, inclusion and the chance for social participation for everybody needs music educators with an academic interdisciplinary qualification in music and social pedagogy. Cultural and musical education is not only necessary for peaceful interaction and participation in modern society, characterized by diversity and permanent change, but also a human right for everybody independent of origins or individual abilities. The musical and social pedagogic qualifications have to respond to current challenges, changes and developments in society, especially regarding diversity and new developments in youth culture.

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