

Music pedagogical conference on research and practice in music education

Report on the conference held from 19–21 September 2024

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Abstracts: This report provides an overview of a music education conference with international participation in September 2024, hosted by the Department of Music Education at the Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague. Over three days, participants presented scientific papers, two symposia, and practical studies. The conference featured numerous inspiring workshops, a meeting of music education didacticians, a memorial session dedicated to Pavel Jurkovič, and a very successful and musically well-prepared accompanying programme with three evening concerts. The conference was held on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Society for Music Education of the Czech Republic.

Keywords: Music pedagogy, music education, conference, Society for Music Education in Schools of the Czech Republic, course of the conference

Introduction

An international conference serves as a meeting place for experts from a given professional field, a place for the transfer of experience, the presentation of research results from specific areas or new publications, professional discussions, and inspiring workshops. It is also a place for collegial networking and

human connections. The Music Education Conference on Research and Practice in Music Education, which took place at the Faculty of Education of Charles University from September 19-21, 2024, encompassed all these aspects and was also dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Society for Music Education of the Czech Republic. The conference was attended by speakers from

the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, and Italy, as well as nearly 100 students, guests, and teachers.

Conference Proceedings

The conference opened with a welcome address from its main expert and programme guarantor, PhDr. Jiřina Jiřičková, Ph.D., Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Education of Charles University and teacher in the Department of Music Education.

The first two conference days began with keynote plenary lectures on current issues in contemporary music pedagogy: *Music education as a Means of Health Promotion* (Dr. Phil. Dr. rer. nat. Dr. paed. Dr. paed. habil. Dr. rer. medic. Dr. sportwiss. Wolfgang Mastnak, Beijing Normal University BNU & Hochschule für Musik und Theater München) and *The Relevance of Leo Kestenbergs Music Pedagogy and its Influence on the Formation of the Foundations of National Concepts of Arts Education in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe* (Prof. Dr. Jaroslav Chacinski, Pomeranian University in Słupsk). Since the conference had an important sub-theme, namely the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Society for Music Education of the Czech Republic, the third plenary lecture was devoted to this topic. It was presented by the long-standing chair of this society, PaedDr. Jan Prchal (Jabloňová Elementary School in Liberec, UJEP in Ústí nad

Labem) and was entitled *90 Years of the Society for Music Education against the Background of the Revision of the National Frameworks Curriculum*.

In connection with the anniversary of the society, the conference participants also remembered Pavel Jurkovič during a memorial programme led by Mgr. Jana Žižková (FZŠ Umělecká, Prague 7) and PhDr. Jarmila Kotůlková (former chair of the Czech Orff Society).

The conference programme was structured into parallel, professionally specific sections.

The scientific part featured presentations by respected foreign and Czech scholars: *Training the Non-Specialist Music Teacher: a project to increase artistic and musical skills through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach at the Free University of Bolzano* (Prof. J. v. d. Sandt (University of Bolzano), *The Role of Improvisation in Introducing Contemporary Music - Experiences from the Educational Artistic Project* (Prof. G. Konkol, Stanislaw Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdansk), *Challenge Well-being: Pathways to satisfied music teacher students & classroom music teachers* (Prof. G. Sammer, Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg), *Examining the Factors Influencing Students' Musical Attitudes* (J. Váradi, Ph.D., University of Debrecen), *Researching the Quality of the Musical Environment of the Contemporary Family and its Influence on the Development of the Musical Abilities of a Child of Younger*

School Age (PaedDr. L. Kaščáková, Ph.D., Comenius University in Bratislava), *The Teacher as a Key Actor in the Music-educational Process* (J. Jurášová Šteigerová, Ph.D., Comenius University in Bratislava), *Music Education in the Context of Regional Education and Folk Culture in Slovakia after 1989* (PaedDr. M. Krušínská, Ph.D. (Catholic University, Ružomberok), *Cooperation between Artistic Disciplines in Concerts for Children and Youth* (Mgr. M. Václavová, Comenius University in Bratislava), and *Singing with Soul: Traditional and Alternative Singing Techniques* (Mgr.art. S. Maggioni, Art.D. (Comenius University in Bratislava)).

The Faculty of Education of Charles University was represented by a number of contributions: a paper on *Subject Competences of Music Education Students at the Undergraduate Level (research probe)* (Prof. PaedDr. M. Nedělka, Dr.; PhDr. Petra Bělohávková, Ph.D.; PhDr. Helena Lipková, Ph.D.), a requested lecture, *Creative Interpretation as a Part of the Analysis of a Musical Work in the Framework of Undergraduate Preparation of Music Education Teachers* (PhDr. P. Bělohávková, Ph.D.), a summary report, *Reflection of Music Creative Workshops by Students of Teachers at the Faculty of Education of Charles University* (PhDr. J. Jiříčková, Ph.D.), *The European Music Congress EAS in Prague in 2005: 'Everything depends on a good beginning'* (Doc. PaedDr. M. Kodejška, CSc.), and *The Teacher's Musical Skills through the Eyes of Kindergarten Teach-*

ers - first results of a questionnaire survey (Mgr. M. Kmentová, Ph.D., in cooperation with PhDr. J. Chumchal, Ph.D. (Pedagogical School and Secondary Medical School Krnov, University of Ostrava)).

Two representative symposia were also held during the conference, both addressing highly topical themes and linking professional knowledge with the reality of school practice. These were of great interest to the conference participants, who discussed them together long after they had finished.

During the conference, there was also a meeting of didacticians - an informal group of teachers of didactically-oriented subjects in the undergraduate training of future music education teachers. Thanks to the activity of colleagues from the Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc, these regular meetings have become a tradition, and the above-mentioned discussion block, held this time under the auspices of the Department of Music Education in Prague, provided valuable inspiration for the participants.

Practical contributions also enriched the conference. *Improvisation in a Course for Future Music Teachers at University* (Mgr. G. Gvozdevskaia, Ph.D., University of West Bohemia in Pilsen), *Music Tempered by Youth - International Music Festival* (Mgr. J. Štefanová, dipl.um., ZUŠ Sedlčany), *Piano Compositions of J. S. Bach* (MgA. J. Lukš, J. E. Purkyně University, ZUŠ Praha-Satalice, ZUŠ Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav), *The School Band*

in *Primary School* (Mgr. A. Benda, ZŠ Vratislavice nad Nisou, Liberec), *Breath, Music and Speech - an Alphabet for Long-term Satisfactory Teacher Practice* (Mgr. E. Čermáková, Music School Čermáček) and *Project Teaching in the framework of Music Education and Cooperation with Artists* (Mgr. M. Mužík, 2nd Elementary School Bezručova, Říčany).

Workshops

Throughout the conference, a number of inspiring workshops were held for student and teacher participants, each lasting approximately ninety minutes. The variety of topics and the number of workshops undoubtedly exceeded the average for similar conferences.

Mgr. Art. T. Boroš, PhD., ArtD. (Ped Faculty of Comenius University, Bratislava) and doc. I. Šiller (Academy of Arts Banská Bystrica, OZ Superar Slovakia) conducted a workshop entitled *Music as an Act*. The father and son duo, L. Bořek Sr. and L. Bořek Jr., presented *The Charranga Platform - a Valuable Tool to Support the Teaching of (not only) Music at Elementary Schools and in Music Education* and Ing. J. Musil (DISK Multimedia, s.r.o.) gave a broader presentation on *Multimedia in Music Education*. Mgr. Lenka Pobudová from the Vnoř Elementary School in Prague conducted a workshop entitled *With Listening and Activity; Music Education is a Joy*, Mgr. K. Šrámková, DiS. (PedF UK) led the workshop *Integration of Yoga*

into Music Pedagogy, P. Windsor, Ph.D. (Gymnázium Blansko) presented *Welcome to the Magical World of Tintinnabuli or Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten* Arvo Pärt *Under the Microscope*, Mgr. J. Jablunka (VŠPS and SPgŠ Kroměříž) ran the workshop *Music Education in the Year of Czech Music*, and Mgr. J. Šiřická, Ph.D. (KHV Palacký University, Masaryk Elementary School Velká Bystřice) explored *The iPad as a Teaching Aid*. For younger children, the workshops included *Autumn Musical Inspiration for Children and Teachers in Kindergarten* by PhDr. O. Kozánková, Ph.D. (Duhovka Elementary School Prague, Biskupská Elementary School Prague) and *Musical Activities with Boomwhackers in Pre-school and the Pre-Reading Period* by Mgr. Milena Kmentová, Ph.D. Both of these workshops were conducted with the active participation of children.

Prof. G. Sammer conducted the *Impulses for Creative Work in Music Lessons* workshop, and Prof. J. v. D. Sandt the workshop *Ubuntu! - I am because we are! - African Music is Used as a Vehicle for Developing Important Educational Domains*.

On Friday evening, the Children's Folklore Ensemble *Kytice* gave a performance (ages 8-11) showcasing their work with children

Cultural programme

The music pedagogical conference also featured a rich cultural programme. On

the evening of 18 September 2024, the *Piccolo Coro & Piccola orchestra*, under the direction of Marek Valášek, presented a new CD with premiere recordings of works by contemporary Czech composer Jiří Teml as part of the International Festival of Spiritual Art. On 19 September, a concert was held at the Czech Museum of Music, featuring young artists—successful participants and medal winners of the national competition for children and young people, the Music Olympics of the Czech Republic, organised by the Society for Music Education of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Faculty of Education of Charles University and the Grammar School and Music School of the Capital City of Prague. In the first part of the concert, young singers and instrumentalists performed their compositions, while the second half of the evening was prepared by the *Aries percussion ensemble* from the Jabloňová Elementary School and Elementary Art School in Liberec under the direction of Mgr. Sergey Grigorenko.

The concert on Friday, 20 September, also at the Czech Museum of Music, was dedicated exclusively to vocal music. In the first half, the vocal quintet *Zefiro*, led by artistic director Mgr. Čeňek Svoboda, Ph.D., delivered a brilliant stylistic interpretation of repertoire from the Renaissance and early Baroque periods, while the second half of the concert featured 20th and 21st-century popular Music performed by the *Oktet Praha ensemble* un-

der the direction of Sylva Sasková. Both ensembles gave admirable, thoroughly professional performances, demonstrating the vast range of vocal music.

Conclusion

The broad thematic spectrum of contributions highlighted several problems and issues currently being addressed in the field of music education and music pedagogy, underscoring the need for further professional research in sub-fields, which is a prerequisite for the discipline's further growth and streamlining. At the same time, through the large number and variety of active, well-attended workshops, the conference engaged practising teachers and participating students alike, who could not help but notice how much potential music education offers and how creatively motivated music educators can be. In this way, the conference symbolically fulfilled its purpose – to honour the legacy of previous generations of music educators, to celebrate the exceptional anniversary of the Society for Music Education of the Czech Republic in the European context, to critically assess the current state of the ongoing revision of the Framework Curriculum for Primary Education, and to face with resolve the challenges that lie ahead for music education. What remains certain is that our music education continues to be shaped by excellent and passionate music educators.

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