Elements of Music Mediation in the Educational Concert: Analysis of the Educational Concert The Carnival of the Animals*

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ABSTRACT – The present study focuses on the mediation elements in the educational concert for children: verbal explanation and dialogue with the audience, musical examples, comparative listening, focusing auditory attention, modelling activities and participatory performance activities. The description of several representative examples from concerts by Leonard Bernstein, David Wallace and the author hereof is followed by the complete analysis of the educational concert The Carnival of the Animals, moderated and directed by the author. The detailed presentation of the concert allows a thorough understanding of the use of various elements of music mediation in the context of the dramaturgy of the concert in question.

Keywords: music mediation, educational concert, elements of music mediation.

Introduction

The worldwide phenomenon of alienation of an increasingly large part of the population from classical music is becoming a problem not only for musical institutions and artists but also for society as a whole. “For these reasons, the profession of a music mediator is in full swing. His/her mission: to facilitate the understanding of musical works and to create the connection between an institution and audience groups it usually does not reach.” Thus “music mediation in the sphere of concerts and musical theatre moves between the poles of marketing and cultural education and reacts to the changed relationship with classical music in society”¹. The continuous increase in demand for music mediation offers has led to the emergence and definition of the professional profile of the music mediator.

Music mediation is a relatively new field. In Germany, the term Musikvermittlung was introduced in 1998 to refer to the concert pedagogy program of study offered by the Detmold Conservatory, thus setting it apart from other pedagogical studies.² In Italy, in 2018, the music mediator was still considered “a new professional profile in the field of musical culture”³. However, the field of music mediation holds an increasingly important place in cultural education in more and more countries⁴.

The purpose of music mediation is not to promote the practices of (instrumental or vocal) music performance, but to bring a novice audience closer to classical music by developing their ability to receive and understand the musical language. The music mediator makes use of different methods and formats to create bridges between the musical work and the audience. Music mediation, initially limited to concert and musical theatre pedagogy activities, has developed rapidly and is currently carried out in increasingly varied contexts.

Mediation elements in the educational concert

Music mediation, which takes place within the moderation of an educational concert, takes many forms. Barbara Stiller lists different ways of approaching the contact with music, whereas David Wallace, violist, music mediator and Senior Teaching Artist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and music mediation teacher at Juilliard School in New York, a tireless supporter of the interactive concert, calls them “interactive archetypes and strategies”⁵. In what follows, based on the analysis of the specialized literature and particularly on multiple examples of good practice of the educational concerts studied, as well as on our own experience from the concerts moderated and conducted within the educational program Do Re Mi Start!, we propose our own classification of the elements of music mediation, which can be used in the moderation of an educational concert.

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¹ Allwardt, “Musikvermittlung – Ein Überblick… über Ziele, Angebotsformate, Strukturen und statistische Erhebungen”.
² Allwardt, “Musikvermittlung – Ein Überblick… über Ziele, Angebotsformate, Strukturen und statistische Erhebungen”.
³ “Un corso per mediatori musicali”.
⁴ Allwardt, “Musikvermittlung – Ein Überblick… über Ziele, Angebotsformate, Strukturen und statistische Erhebungen”.

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Verbal explanation and the dialogue with the audience

In the traditional lesson concerts, moderation consists mostly of the verbal explanations of the “presenter”. Verbal explanation also has its place in the new forms of moderation, but it should be used flexibly, avoiding both unnecessary lengths and an academic approach. A strategy that makes it easier to maintain the audience’s interest and attention is to distribute an explanatory text to several performing musicians on stage. This technique, which David Wallace calls “ping-ponging”, “maintains the audience’s attention [...] during the verbal sections of the presentation”\(^8\). The dialogue between musicians is a constant presence in the moderation of the educational concerts within the Do Re Mi Start! program\(^9\).

The dialogue with the listeners in the hall is the easiest and most widespread form of interaction with the audience. The moderator and the musicians participating in the moderation communicate with the audience, most often in the form of a question and answer. Such a well-planned and skillfully coordinated dialogue can result in obtaining the desired information from the audience and can thus successfully replace the explanatory monologue.

In the educational concert What is American Music?\(^9\) from the cycle Young People’s Concerts, L. Bernstein collected information from the public regarding musical works belonging to the national schools of composition. Bernstein asked the listeners what the music they were about to hear would bring to their mind, then conducted an excerpt from Maurice Ravel’s Spanish Rhapsody, and the audience unanimously answered that it was Spanish music. For the following two fragments (from Johannes Brahms’s Hungarian Dance No. 5 and the finale of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4) the audience’s answers were also correct, and thus the information about the Hungarian and Russian origin of the music was also provided by the audience.

Musical examples

Accompanying the verbal explanations with demonstrations of musical examples in order to introduce the piece to be played is a traditional element of a moderated concert. Musical examples are used as mediation elements in the educational concert not only in the traditional form but also especially in different interactive forms, which will be presented in the following sub-chapters.

In his educational concerts, L. Bernstein used to illustrate verbal explanations with musical examples played by him on the piano, along with musical examples played by some of the musicians of the New York Philharmonic or by the entire orchestra. Thus, in the concert dedicated to the elucidation of the concept of mode (What Is a Mode?), Bernstein exemplified the major scale, the minor scale, and the arrangement of tones and semitones on the piano. Then a group of instrumentalists from the orchestra performed vocally a church song, after which Bernstein performed on piano and voice the song Along Comes Mary, recorded by the American pop music group The Association, to illustrate the Dorian mode.

In the educational concert Melodia costumată [The Costumed Melody] held within the Do Re Mi Start! program and intended to assist the audience in understanding the theme with variations, the two too academic terms were replaced by the terms “melody” and “its costume”, which are familiar notions and images to children. “Melody” was musically illustrated with the final theme of W. A. Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet KV 581 (mm. 1-8) in an arrangement for the four string instruments, after which the audience listened to this melody in “costumed” form, with the “costume” being played by the clarinet (Variation I).

In the family concert Punguța cu doi bani [The Purse with Coppers Two] held within the Do Re Mi Start! program, in which each character of Ion Creangă’s tale was represented by an instrument of the winds quintet that performed fragments from an arrangement of Modest Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition, the musical examples introduced the audience to the musical ”heroes”: the oboe, representing the old woman, performed measures 9-12 of the Goldberg and Schmuyle movement, the bassoon, representing the old man, played measures 1-8 of the same work, and the horn, in the role of the rich man, played measures 38-45 of Bydlo.

Comparative listening

Juxtaposing musical examples (or even short works) for comparison can help in understanding the differences between instruments, as well as the differences in tempo, dynamics or character.

In the educational concert What Is Orchestration?\(^10\), Bernstein explained to the audience the difficulty of the composer’s task of choosing between numerous options in terms of instruments and multiple possible sound combinations, exemplifying the importance of choosing the ideal instrumentation by comparing musical fragments in the original orchestration and in an arrangement. The famous solo flute opening Claude Debussy’s Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun was exemplified first in the original version and then played by the solo

\(^9\) Since 2012, the author hereof has acted as a conductor and moderator of the educational concerts within the Do Re Mi Start! Program of the National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima” in Cluj-Napoca.
\(^10\) Bernstein, What Is Orchestration?.
trumpet; the highly distinct clarinet glissando opening George Gershwin’s Blue Rhapsody was first performed in the original version and then played by a viola, while the beginning of Johann Sebastian Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 was first performed in the original version for string orchestra and then in an arrangement for brass winds.

Particularly popular are the comparative listening activities presented in the form of competitions between instrumentalists, in which the audience is invited to take on the role of the jury. David Wallace gives the example of a competition between different instruments for the interpretation of the melody and of the accompaniment in the movement Variations on a Shaker Melody from AaronCopland’s Appalachian Spring, in a concert of the New York Philharmonic’s Young People’s Concert series, and of a competition for the instrument that best imitates an insect before the performance of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s Flight of the Bumblebee, from a Tanglewood family concert11.

Activities for focusing the auditory attention

Children’s auditory attention rarely stays focused for the duration of an entire musical piece. It is one of the reasons why the duration of the works should be taken into account when choosing the repertoire. Maintaining the children’s auditory attention can be facilitated by activities designed to focus attention on certain musical elements in the piece. These activities are explained before a piece is performed and can make use of various strategies. The audience can be encouraged to recognize a certain aspect of the music with which they have been familiar before, by being prompted to react (most often through a gesture that does not sonically interfere with the performance) to some elements of the music while listening to the piece. Particularly effective for focusing attention are activities that model certain aspects of music.

Activities for modelling aspects of music

We use the term modelling, frequently used in the scientific and technical field, for participatory activities in which the audience simulates one or more musical elements of the piece they are about to listen to. This leads to the recognition of these elements while listening to the music. David Wallace believes that simulation is one of the most influential forms of interactivity and recommends including such activity in every concert12. Depending on the musical piece, modelling can be applied to a rhythmic formula, a melodic cell (interval), tempo, character, programmatic elements and musical form.

Modelling a rhythmic or rhythmic-melodic cell

Modelling a short and prominent musical element from the work to be listened to can be used frequently and with great success. These rhythmic or rhythmic-melodic cells can be modelled with the voice by reciting or with a form of body percussion (most often clapping). Voice modelling can be supported by simultaneous kinaesthetic activities13.

In the educational concert What Is American Music?14, Bernstein helped the audience understand the rhythm of jazz music by modelling syncopations with the rhythmic clapping of the entire audience.

In the Christmas Concert presented for children by the “Transylvania” Philharmonic Choir in December 2014 (without collaboration with the Do Re Mi Start! program) for which the author hereof conceived the moderation, before the performance of the American carol Jingle Bells, the rhythmic cell that dominates the entire piece (two eighth notes followed by a fourth note) was modelled with clapping.

Modelling tempo

Tempo modelling can be done in multiple ways: with the voice, with the help of body percussion activities, or with conducting activities. Tempo is one of the temporal elements of music that contributes to the natural impulse of moving along with the music, and thus modelling tempo can be most effectively achieved through movement15.

In the educational concert Invitație la dans [Invitation to Dance], conducted and moderated by the author hereof within the framework of the Mozart Festival (Cluj-Napoca 2015), the repertoire included dances from different periods and from different geographical and cultural areas. They were organized in the form of an imaginary journey through time and space. In order to programmatically illustrate travelling to different historical eras, the dance chosen as “leitmotif of the journey” was the Sailor’s Hornpipe dance, which is traditionally sung at faster and faster tempos. By rotating their forearms at chest level, the children imitated the movement of the wheels of a carriage and locomotive, as well as the propellers of a plane. The movement was performed by the

14 Bernstein, What Is American Music?.

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audience simultaneously with the performance of the piece at faster and faster tempos. The wheels of the carriage turn very slowly, the locomotive starts slowly and accelerates gradually (accelerando) and the plane’s propellers spin very fast. This activity familiarizes children with the concept of musical tempo through the direct kinaesthetic experience, without the help of theoretical explanations, and the need to coordinate the movement with the tempo of the music requires focused listening. Listening to the same piece throughout the concert gave the program unity and made the musical journey easy to follow. The repeated occurrence of the moment of audience movement also has an important role in maintaining attention during the educational concert.

Modelling timbre
A particularly original form of modelling was used by L. Bernstein in the educational concert What Is Orchestration?16, to illustrate the concept of orchestration. The audience, divided into two large groups, “orchestrated” a harmonic interval of a third in various ways, using different syllables that create different “timbres”: the timbre of an organ was modelled on the vowel “u” in piano, humming on “hm” the timbre of the strings orchestra in piano and buzzing on “bz” the strings in forte, the woodwind instruments with short, sharp equal sounds on the “tick-tick-tick” syllables, and the brass instruments with a typical rhythmic formula (two sixteenth notes and a fourth note) on the syllables “ta-ka-ta”.

Modelling the character of the music
An intuitive understanding of the general character of a musical fragment or of a theme can be supported by various modelling activities. Below are two examples of this type of modelling approach.

In the concert From Discord, Find Harmony: A Musical Exploration of Conflict and Resolution, created for the educational program of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic orchestra, moderator David Wallace modelled the character of the two contrasting themes from P. I. Tchaikovsky’s Fantasy Overture Romeo and Juliet by asking the audience to imitate the movements of violin playing by humming the melody for the theme of love, and by imitating trumpet playing and producing violent sounds for the music describing the conflict between the families of the heroes of the tragedy17.

In the educational concert titled Humour in Music18, L. Bernstein coordinated an activity of modelling the character of the music before the audience listened to the slow part of Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 1. The audience sang the famous song Frère Jacques (in major mode), whose cheerful character was transformed by Mahler into a gloomy one by using the minor mode. After performing the modified version himself, he invited the children to hum the song in an as-“gloomy”-as-possible rendition. The conductor further explained to the children that Mahler had enhanced this character by composing the music in the style of a funeral march, requiring the melody to be played by a single double bass, which is also a very “gloomy” instrument.

Modelling programmatic elements
Through its connection to familiar images and stories, programmatic music is more accessible to novices and especially to children than absolute music. Accessibility can be enhanced by modelling some of the musical elements that the composer used to illustrate the extra-musical program of the work.

Simple cells or short imitative elements can be modelled, such as the cuckoo and the quail in Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony (2nd movement), or the voice of various animals in Joseph Haydn’s oratorio The Creation. If the extra-musical program is illustrated by a longer passage or even by an entire work (or movement), its time development can be modelled. Salient examples in this respect are the works that musically describe the storm.

The instrumental description of a storm is found in musical works from the Baroque era to the 20th century. The storm can be modelled together with the audience through a complex participatory activity that includes several (mostly kinaesthetic) elements. With the help of the moderator, the audience creates a short “musical piece” with body percussion and different sounds emitted with the voice (hissing, whistling), to describe the manifestation of a storm in nature, preferably following the unfolding of the instrumental piece to be listened to.

Modelling the musical form
The formal structure of a musical work is one of the elements whose perception is not intuitive. Some researchers state that an awareness of the contrasts and repetitions that underlie the musical form occurs in children only around the age of 1019. However, there are didactic methods that allow the concept of form to be understood even at younger ages. In an educational concert, modelling activities can be successfully used to facilitate the understanding of the form of a musical work.

16 Bernstein, What Is Orchestration?.
18 Bernstein, Humour in Music.
In the children’s concert *What’s So Great about Mozart*, presented by a chamber ensemble at Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, David Wallace, who conceived and moderated the program, modelled, with the help of the audience, the structure of W. A. Mozart’s *Flute Quartet KV 285* finale, to facilitate the understanding of the rondo musical form as an alternation between a repeating refrain and different couplets. The refrain of the rondo thus modelled was the original of the flute quartet played by the musicians, while three different couplets were taken up by the audience: scales played on the metallophone, a drum solo by a volunteer from the audience and the *Happy Birthday* song sung in chorus by the entire audience. “So our rondo will go musicians, metallophone scales, musicians, ‘Happy Birthday’, musicians, drum, musicians”.

A similar activity was carried out in the educational concert *Vine, vine primâvara [Spring is Coming, Spring is Coming]*, moderated and directed by the author hereof. The first movement of Vivaldi’s *Spring* is composed in the typical form of Vivaldi’s concerts: A-B-A-C-A’-B’-A, and has programmatic indications notated by the author at the appropriate places in the score.

To model the main theme (A), which expresses joy at the arrival of spring (programmatic indication *Giunt’è la primavera [Spring has come]*)}, the audience performed the children’s song *Vine, vine primâvara [Spring is Coming, Spring is Coming]*. The modelling of the two B sections, which describe the chirping of birds (*Canto degli ucelli* [birdsong]), was made by the musicians who performed musical fragments from other works that imitate the birdsong. For section C (*tuoni, lampi* [thunder, lightning]), a storm was created together with the audience with *body percussion*, followed by listening to the musical example. Following the modelling of the musical form was facilitated by the addition of some visual elements presented below.

**Participatory performance activities**

One of the most effective forms of interaction with the audience is their participation in the performance. “When we get an audience to sing a theme, clap a rhythmic accompaniment, or make creative and interpretive decisions about music, […] the listeners] become performers and creators in their own right. They experience the joys and challenges of making music and gain confidence in their abilities to make musical connections”. Along with the verbal communication of the performers with the audience in the form of a dialogue, the inclusion of the audience in the interpretive act also helps to suppress the invisible barriers between performers and listeners. “One of the major achievements of perform-alongs is that they totally demolish the delineation between listeners and performers. For a moment, audience members enjoy the thrill of being equal partners with great musicians”.

The participatory performance activities have to be chosen so as to have an obvious connection with the concert program. A judiciously chosen participatory activity that emphasizes the theme of the concert focuses the listeners’ attention on the next musical piece, or gives the listeners the opportunity to contribute to the performance of a piece alongside the musicians on stage. This is one of the most effective ways to ensure the achievement of the goals of music mediation in an educational concert.

In educational concerts for a pre-prepared audience (which can be achieved especially in the case of the concerts for school classes), more complex participatory activities can be included, which the audience is able to study prior to the concert. A description of the activity with notes and musical examples (on a specially prepared CD or with Internet links) is communicated to the teaching staff in a seminar or via the Internet. There are many examples of this way of preparing the audience’s participatory activities for educational concerts, of which we mention a few: the *Link Up* program (offered by Carnegie Hall in New York and reproduced in many other cities in the U. S. and in other countries), the *Discovery* program (*London Symphony Orchestra*), the *Klassik zum Staunen* (*Münchner Rundfunkorchester*).

**Vocal participation**

Using the voice is a natural thing for children, and singing a song makes most of them happy. Including a song that the children can sing along with the instrumental ensemble on stage in the educational concert program is one of the most beloved participatory activities. Collective singing of a song chosen at random certainly has a positive social and even musical effect, showing children the joy of singing in a choir. But the impact of a song chosen so as to fit logically into the performance of the concert through an obvious connection with its general theme, preferably with one of the musical works in the program, is much stronger, and the song can be used to focus attention or to facilitate the understanding of certain musical elements.

Since most educational concerts are addressed to an audience that has not been prepared in advance, the degree of familiarity with the song must first be ascertained, after which, if necessary, the song is studied with the audience. In the case of unfamiliar songs, the learning process is quite fast and soon the audience can sing along with the instrumentalists.

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The children’s concert from the *New York Philharmonics Young People’s Concerts* series dedicated to the Baroque era (the first of the four concerts of the 2006-2007 season exploring *The Ages of Music*) used the song *Happy Birthday* to illustrate the characteristics of the *Da capo aria* genre and the ornamented vocal style typical of the Baroque. After the conductor and moderator of the Delta David Gier concert found a child in the audience whose birthday was exactly on the date of the concert, the audience was invited to sing the song *Happy Birthday* in his honour. Then a *coloratura* soprano in a Baroque costume and wig came from the back of the hall, passed through the audience and joined in the song, adding some virtuosic flourishes. Next, she sang on stage an arrangement of the song in the style of a typical Baroque aria. In the children’s concert *What’s So Great About Mozart*, the song *Happy Birthday* sung by the entire audience was used as one of the couplets of a rondo in the form modelling activity.

The educational concert *Invitație la dans* [Invitation to Dance], held within the *Do Re Mi Start!* Program and which focused on dances from various eras and geographical areas, included the Romanian folk song *Alunelu*24, which was replaced with the song *Haj tánc* in the concerts presented in Hungarian. The lyrics of both songs emphasize the importance of dance and are thus closely related to the title and theme of the concert.

For the educational concert *Punguța cu doi bani* [The Purse with Coppers Two] held within the *Do Re Mi Start!* program, based on Ion Creangă’s tale, a simple melody was composed for the rooster’s cry, which appears as a leitmotif throughout the entire tale (*Cucuriga boieri mari, dași punguța cu doi bani!* [Cock-a-doodle-doo, rich gentlemen! Give me the purse with coppers two!]), which the children learned with great ease, performing this “rooster song” several times during the concert.

The purpose of the educational concert *Melodia costumată* [The Costumed Melody] was to facilitate the understanding of the musical concept of theme with variations. To achieve this objective, fragments from W. A. Mozart’s *Piano Variations KV 265* (Zwölf Variationen in C über das französische Lied “Ah, vous dirai-je Maman”) were also used, each instrumented differently: for string quartet, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet and piano. The theme chosen by W. A. Mozart is an 18th-century French song whose melody has become, along with the lyrics of the poem *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* written by Jane Taylor25 (1783-1824), a well-known lullaby, translated into Romanian as *Stea, steluță ce iucați* [Star, Shining Little Star]. The fact that the audience sang the song whose melody is the theme of the variations facilitated the recognition of the theme in W. A. Mozart’s music.

**Participation with body percussion**

A particularly attractive form of participation for children is the use of *body percussion* sequences along with the music performed on stage.

The easiest way to participate in this manner is by clapping along with the pulse of the music. This often occurs spontaneously in informal musical events, especially in pop music ones. The Vienna Philharmonic New Year’s concerts have for many years maintained the tradition of the audience clapping along with *Radetzky-Marsch* by Johann Strauss the father, which is always played as one of the encores, while the conductor coordinates the entrances and dynamics of the audience’s rhythmic applause.

The *body percussion* activities can be included both simultaneously with the music (as participation in the performance) and for modelling purposes. A more elaborate form than clapping to the pulse of the music is the clapping of a rhythmic pattern. To repeat a rhythmic pattern with different values, coordination with the music performed on stage as well as coordination with the other participants in the audience requires greater focus of attention and better motor coordination. In the 2014 *Christmas Concert* of the “Transylvania” Philharmonic Choir, after modelling the basic rhythmic cell with clapping, it was repeated in *ostinato* together with the American song *Jingle Bells* performed by the choir.

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Ex. 1. Accompanying rhythmic formula for Jingle Bells
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In the children’s concert *What Is American Music*26, L. Bernstein introduced a *body percussion* activity for the understanding of syncopated rhythm: the audience first clapped to a regular pulse, over which the orchestra’s percussionists played a syncopated Charleston rhythm, then the roles were reversed and the audience (with help from the conductor) modelled the syncopated rhythm.

**Participation with instruments**

Audience participation in instrumental performance can be achieved either with very simple percussion instruments distributed to the audience at the concert or with musical instruments brought by the listeners from

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24 Folk song and dance from Oltenia.
26 Bernstein, *What Is American Music*?.

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home. The former form requires a substantial financial effort from the organizers, whereas the latter is possible only in concerts prepared in advance.

A particular example is the educational program Link Up\textsuperscript{27}, initiated in 1985 in New York by Carnegie Hall and Weill Institute, for 3-5 grade school students. During the school year, the classes of the partner schools participating in the program are trained by their teachers who have participated in a mandatory professional development workshop. Children learn to play an easy song on \textit{flauto dolce} (also on the violin in some schools), which they play in the final concert together with a professional orchestra. The program was adopted by many other orchestras in partnership with Carnegie Hall, and in the 2019/2020 school year it was planned at 115 orchestras in the U. S. A. and in many other countries (Canada, China, Colombia, Japan, Kenya, Spain), offering hundreds of thousands of children a unique participatory musical experience. Such a program is only possible with financial help from donations.

**Performing children on stage**

The integration within the program of a musical piece performed by trained children is successfully used in educational concerts. This is not a participatory activity for the entire audience but is a positive example for the children in the audience, who become aware of the possibility that a group of children of their age (the group is preferable to a soloist) can participate alongside professional musicians in the stage performance. The educational concert repertoire of the U. S. A. orchestras often includes a soloistic work in which the winner of an orchestra competition for young instrumentalists is given the opportunity to perform on stage with orchestral accompaniment.

The elements of music mediation described, exemplified and presented above must be included in a harmonious blend in the well-thought-out and attractively presented moderation of an educational concert.

**Analysis of the educational concert The Carnival of the Animals**

Since 2012, the author hereof has acted as a conductor and moderator of educational concerts held within 17 different programs, presented several times both in Cluj-Napoca and in other Romanian cities and totalling a number of 104 performances. Out of 104 concerts, 83 were organized for kindergartens and schools and 21 for children and their families. 18 of the concerts were included in three annual festivals: the Mozart Festival in Cluj-Napoca (4 concerts), the Banffy Castle Days in Bonțida (8 concerts) and the RestArt Music Festival in Satu-Mare (6 concerts). Most of the programs were presented both in concerts moderated in Romanian and in reruns in Hungarian.

In all these concerts, the author hereof, a bilingual speaker of Romanian and Hungarian, assumed the role of conductor and moderator. From the experience of the good practice examples, it is known that a moderator from among the performing musicians of the concerts is perceived by the audience as a more credible person in terms of “explaining” the music played. Thus, the moderator becomes part of the performing musicians as a conductor, which also has the advantage of reducing the rehearsal time for the concert, especially in the case of chamber ensembles that are not stable but meet only for the educational concert.

The educational concert Carnavalul animalelor [The Carnival of the Animals] is part of the educational concerts directed and moderated by the author hereof within the Do Re Mi Start! educational program. The concert is presented based on the following criteria: musical-pedagogical conception and objectives; theme, approach, title; audience, location, duration; repertoire and performance; elements of music mediation in the moderation (verbal explanation and dialogue with the audience, musical examples, comparative listening, auditory attention focusing activities, activities for the modelling/simulation of certain aspects of the music, participatory performance activities); visual elements. A synoptic table of the entire process of conception and realization and of all the component parts of the educational concert under analysis can be found at the end of this study.

**Conception and musical-pedagogical objectives of the concert**

The concert was designed for children between 5 and 10 years of age, starting from the suite \textit{The Carnival of the Animals} by Saint-Saëns. The primary musical-pedagogical objective was an intuitive understanding of programmatic music and its characteristics. The instrumentation of some of the movements of the suite was also used to facilitate the knowledge of certain musical instruments and of the characteristics of their construction, as well as the knowledge of their sonority.

**Theme, approach, title**

The theme of the concert was the musical portrayal of several animals, starting from the different ways of characterizing them through music, from simple to complex. Initially, certain works and activities were introduced to imitate, with musical instruments, the “voice” of animals that children know, through various onomatopoeia;

\textsuperscript{27} Beyond the Stage – Stories from Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute, 14, 40-41.

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then came a less direct way of characterization, provided by the way each animal moves: kangaroos hop, the elephant is large and clumsy, the tortoise moves very slowly. The original name of the musical work was preserved as the title of the educational concert: *The Carnival of the Animals*.

**Audience, location, duration**

The educational concert was designed for kindergarten and primary school groups with children between 5 and 10 years of age and was first presented in Cluj-Napoca, in the ANMGD Concert Studio, after which it was repeated in several Romanian cities, totalling a number of 9 performances. The concert halls had 200–400 seats. The duration of the concerts was approximately 40 minutes.

**Repertoire and performance of the concert**

The repertoire included movements from the suite *The Carnival of the Animals* by C. Saint-Saëns. The concert was performed by a chamber ensemble corresponding to the original instrumentation of the work: two pianos, two violins, viola, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, percussion. Given that movement No. 7, *Aquarium*, whose instrumentation includes the glass harmonica, was not included in the concert repertoire, the percussionist played only the xylophone.

The suite *The Carnival of the Animals*, to which the composer added the subtitle *Grande fantaisie zoologique*, is a programmatic work comprising short pieces portraying different animals. It is used very frequently in educational concerts for children. The decision to approach the presentation of animal portrayals based on the musical means used led to the inclusion in the concert repertoire of only ten of the fourteen movements from C. Saint-Saëns’ suite and to changing the original order of the pieces. The order chosen for these pieces is indicated in the synoptic table in Annex 2.

After the program was repeated several times, small changes were introduced in the concert performances. Thus, the modelling activity preceding the piece that portrays the donkeys (No. 8) was added later. The dialogue with the audience was adapted to the reactions of the children in the audience, and the contribution of the instrumentalists to the moderation varied according to the participating musicians. It should be noted that, for the educational concerts presented in Hungarian, the translation of the moderation text is not enough and that adaptations of the text distributed to the instrumentalists are also necessary depending on their fluency in Hungarian.

The slow movement that musically portrays the tortoises (No. 4. *Tortoises*), was accompanied by the *Can-can* from the comic opera *Orphée aux enfers* [Orpheus in the Underworld] by Jacques Offenbach. The use, for tortoises, of the music of a frantic dance in a very fast *tempo* which was in vogue in Paris at the time when *The Carnival of the Animals* was composed is one of the many musical jokes that C. Saint-Saëns sprinkled in his work. It presents the *Can-can* theme, by altering the original instrumentation in the high register dominated by the piccolo and moving it to the low register of the strings, reducing the fast tempo to *Andante maestoso* and changing the dynamics from *fortissimo* to *pianissimo*. For the educational concert, we made an arrangement for J. Offenbach’s fragment, using the instrumentation of the suite by C. Saint-Saëns.

At the beginning of the concert, the fanfare heralds the arrival of the lion, as king of the animals (No. 1). The pieces presented and then sung in the first part were those in which the animals are characterized by their “voice”. This is the most obvious way to portray an animal, which children can understand very easily – as it is familiar to them – thanks to the knowledge of the respective onomatopoeia: the donkey brays *hee-haw*, the hen clucks – *cluck cluck*, the cuckoo sings *coo-coo*. The animals and their voices were presented in the following order: No. 1 (the lion rages), No. 8 (the donkey brays *hee-haw*), No. 2 (hens cluck and roosters crow), No. 9 (the cuckoo sings *coo-coo*), No. 10 (birds chirp).

The pieces presented in the second part are those in which the animals are characterized by their way of moving. This form of illustrating the programmatic idea with musical means is somewhat less direct than imitating the voice, but the portrayal of animals in C. Saint-Saëns’ pieces can be easily understood by children, especially if the moderation makes use of properly chosen mediation elements. Thus the children recognize the hopping kangaroos (No. 6), the elephant that tries to dance but moves with difficulty because it is so big (No. 5), the tortoises that move very slowly (No. 4). The knowledgeable audience recognizes the musical quotations jocosely used by the composer in portraying the elephant (*The Dance of the Sylphs from The Damnation of Faust* by H. Berlioz and *The Dance of the Fairies from A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by F. Mendelssohn) and in portraying the tortoises (*The Can-Can from Orpheus in the Underworld* by J. Offenbach). These “hints” can also be given to children by performing fragments from the pieces from which the quotations are drawn, which can be compared to the way they are used by C. Saint-Saëns. The concert program included J. Offenbach’s *Can-Can* alongside *The Tortoises*, as a comparative listening activity. The conductor began with the provocative question “What would

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28 Țițeica, *Concertul educativ pentru copii-reper toriu și aspecte vizuale* [The Educational Concert for Children – Repertoire and Visual Aspects], 81.
29 See *Modeling a Melodic Cell* below.
30 See *Musical examples* below.

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the tortoise’s dance sound like? Like this?”, followed in \textit{attacca} by the performance of the \textit{Can-Can}. After listening to the fast music of J. Offenbach’s dance, the children’s negative response was unanimous. The accuracy of the answer, which is based on the knowledge that tortoises move very slowly, was confirmed and it was decided, together with the audience, that the music should also be played very slowly. Then the conductor announced that the following passage would be played very slowly (\textit{pianissimo}), “as befits some old tortoises”, indicating the need for absolute silence in the hall. No similar activity was performed for the \textit{Elephant}. This activity was instead included in the moderation of the educational concert \textit{Noah’s Ark} and is described in the case study dedicated to that concert.

The presentation of the piece portraying the fossils (No. 12) was adapted to the age of the audience. Despite being short, the piece is filled with musical jokes, as the composer introduces multiple “musical fossils”: quotes from his own \textit{Danse macabre}, from \textit{The Barber of Seville} by G. Rossini, from the song \textit{Partant pour la Syrie}\textsuperscript{31}, even a fugue (in full Romanticism, the fugue was a truly “fossil” musical form) on the theme of the folk song \textit{Ah, vous dirais-je maman}. All these details are difficult to understand for children aged 5 and up; they are more appropriate for an educational concert for older children, especially if this concert is preceded by preparatory activities in schools or musical mediation workshops. For the children who attended our concerts, fossils were identified with dinosaurs, which they are familiar with. The main theme of \textit{Fossils} (the theme of \textit{The Macabre Dance} in modified meter: from the waltz in $3/4$ of the dance to $2/2$) is entrusted to the xylophone, \textit{imitates} the bones of the fossils. This illustrative programmatic aspect is the only one highlighted for the children’s audience.

Before the final movement (No. 14), a short verbal recapitulation of the entire concerto was introduced, indicating that the music also does a similar recapitulation, bringing back themes characteristic of some of the animals, in their final dance. As an encore, the final piece was repeated, to which the audience was invited to participate with directed applause\textsuperscript{32}. The listening to the performance of each piece was preceded by explanations that emerged mainly from the guided dialogue with the audience.

Some of the pieces from \textit{The Carnival of the Animals} were also used to highlight certain instruments: the clarinet (No. 9), the flute (No. 10), the piano (No. 6), the double bass (No. 5), the xylophone (No. 12). The characteristics of each instrument were illustrated with musical examples. Some features were partly inferred by the children, through dialogue with the audience and through comparative listening. The visual comparison of the stringed instruments and the introduction of the xylophone\textsuperscript{33} facilitated the understanding of the characteristic features of the instruments.

\textit{Elements of music mediation in the moderation}

\textit{Verbal explanation and dialogue with the audience}

Because of the children’s familiarity with the animals, we have kept verbal explanations to a minimum, using mostly the dialogue with the audience. A few explanations were given by the instrumentalists, such as those about the fact that dinosaurs are long gone, but that their bones were found in the ground, or about the xylophone and its wooden boards being hit with hammers.

\textit{Musical examples}

Numerous musical examples were used to demonstrate both how music portrays the animals and the characteristics of certain instruments. The illustration of the clarinet sound was introduced with the instrument’s first measures from Mozart’s \textit{Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A Major K.V. 581}, a fragment chosen because it covers a range of more than two octaves in just two measures and demonstrates the agility of the instrument:

![Ex. 2. W. A. Mozart: Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A Major K.V. 581 (solo clarinet)](image)

The sound of the flute was exemplified with the first measures of \textit{Volière} (No. 10), and that of the xylophone with the theme of \textit{Fossils} (No. 12).

A special case is the exemplification of the fanfare heralding the arrival of the lion as king of the animals (No. 1). The exemplification made by the moderator with the voice, imitating a fanfare with her fist to her mouth (\textit{tu tu-tu tu}), was followed by the remark that there are no trumpets that can play like a fanfare. The pianist offered to show that she could play like a fanfare on the piano.

\textsuperscript{31} The song was composed in 1809 by Hortence de Beauharnais, Napoleon Bonaparte’s stepdaughter, who became Hortence Bonaparte by marrying Napoleon’s brother. See Baldassarre, “Music, Painting and Domestic Life: Hortense de Beauharnais in Arenberg”, 51. The song, with lyrics by Alexandre de Laborde, was inspired by Napoleon’s campaign in Egypt.

\textsuperscript{32} See \textit{Participatory performance activities} below.

\textsuperscript{33} See \textit{Visual elements} below.
Several musical examples were played to illustrate the characteristics of each animal. The roar of the lion (No. 1) was exemplified with the voice so that it could then be more easily identified in the instrumental version, which varies from one occurrence of the motif to another. The recognition was facilitated by the addition of a visual element. The piano imitates both the crowing of the rooster (No. 2) and the hopping of kangaroos (No. 6):

Ex. 4. C. Saint-Saëns: The rooster motif (piano 1) from The Carnival of the Animals (No. 2)

The two kangaroos appear one at a time, first hopping (musical example: mm. 1-3 in 4/4), then suddenly stopping and “pricking up their ears to make sure there is no enemy around” (musical example: mm. 4-6 in 3/4):

Ex. 5. Saint-Saëns: The kangaroo (piano 2) from The Carnival of the Animals (No. 6)

Comparative listening
Several comparative listening activities were included in the moderation, both to emphasize the characteristics of the music and to highlight the sound of different instruments.

Choosing the “best donkey”, that is, the most suitable instrument for the interpretation of the melodic cell hee-haw that the public had modelled34, was based on competition. The pianist and double bassist played the descending sixth twice each, often choosing a variant that sounded “wrong” to the children: the piano in the super-high register, the double bass in the super-low register. The violinist then offered to imitate the donkey as well, saying that his instrument was the most suitable for the role, and then played the first two measures of C. Saint-Saëns’ work. After listening to the three versions, the children agreed that the version presented by the violin corresponded best to the donkey’s voice.

The competition for the designation of the instrument that can imitate the clucking of the hen “as faithfully as the public”, after the public had just modelled the appropriate musical motif35, led to an “argument” between musicians. The argument was planned based on the fact that the hen motif in the musical piece appears on several instruments. So each of the competing instruments played the clucking motif in the order of their appearance in the score. The conductor of the concert “decided” that all the instruments could imitate the hen very well, and proved it by playing the entire piece.

Another type of comparative listening was used to illustrate the composer’s portrayal of the tortoises (No. 4), juxtaposing C. Saint-Saëns’s piece with J. Offenbach’s Can Can.

34 See Modelling a melodic cell below.
35 See Modelling a rhythmic-melodic cell below.
Auditory attention focusing activities
The cuckoo in the depth of the forest
It is not easy for children to maintain focused attention for the entire duration of a piece written in a relatively slow tempo and with low dynamics. C. Saint-Saëns’ piece portraying the “cuckoo in the depth of the forest”, instrumented for clarinet and two pianos, lasts about two minutes and its dynamic indication for the pianos is semper pianissimo. It is worth noting that the dynamic indication forte for the clarinet must be understood in conjunction with the indication asking the clarinet to play behind the stage (dans la coulisse).

To help the children listen with concentration, an activity designed to focus their attention on the clarinet motif (the cuckoo’s song) was used. The children were first asked if they knew how the cuckoo sings, their answer being followed by the repetition of the onomatopoeia “koo-koo” on a descending interval led by the conductor. Then, from the front stage, the clarinet player demonstrated the descending third imitating the cuckoo’s song. Without explicitly naming the programmatic music, the moderator-conductor described the cuckoo, whose song can be heard in the depths of the forest, in spring. The two pianists were assigned to play the “forest music”, which they illustrated with a few measures of pianissimo chords. The clarinet player was then sent “into the depth of the forest”, that is, behind a screen, to play “koo-koo” from there.

Ex. 6. C. Saint-Saëns: The Cuckoo from The Carnival of the Animals (mm. 1-5)

Next, a kinaesthetic activity was introduced in the form of a “game” in which the children took on the role of the cuckoo hidden in the depth of the forest, emerging from behind a tree every time it sings “koo-koo”. The palms raised in front of the cheek represented the tree from behind which the children had to briefly stick their heads out at each cuckoo song. Covering the eyes focuses attention on the auditory stimuli by interrupting the reception of visual stimuli, helping the audience to react to each occurrence of the clarinet motif. Throughout the piece, the clarinet motif was repeated 17 times. By focusing attention on the clarinet motif, the children followed the entire piece in a concentrated manner and were able to play the cuckoo’s role at the right moment. Due to the general pianissimo nuance of the piece and the desire to hear the musical motif to which they were to react through movement, the activity took place in an atmosphere of silence that exceeded all expectations. Throughout all the performances of the educational concert The Carnival of the Animals, the activity unfolded according to expectations and was a great success with the children.

The lion’s royal march
A particular case of focusing attention is the use of a visual element added specifically for this purpose. The musical motif with which the composer imitates the lion’s roar was visualized with the help of a lion’s head cut from cardboard. By raising it from behind the pianos at each of the motif’s six appearances, the audience’s attention was drawn to the musical motif, which they could easily recognize.

Ex. 7. C. Saint-Saëns: The lion’s roar from The Carnival of the Animals (No. 1)
Presentation of the xylophone
The instrument was introduced only in the second part of the program, brought forward by the instrumentalist himself in order to imitate the dinosaur bones. The directed introduction and explanations on the characteristics of the instrument focused the children’s attention on the piece *Fossiles*, performed later.

**Activities of modelling musical elements**

**Modelling a melodic cell**
The central theme of two of the educational concerts directed and moderated by the author hereof is the musical description of various animals: *The Carnival of the Animals* and *Noah’s Ark*. The piece in which C. Saint-Saëns describes the donkeys (No. 8) was included in the program of both concerts. In their moderation, a kinaesthetic modelling activity of the melodic cell (descending jump) was introduced, which was repeated throughout the entire musical portrayal of the donkeys.

*Ex. 8. Modelling the donkey from The Carnival of the Animals*

After the audience imitated the donkey’s *hee-haw* bray, the moderator added ample arm movements to the two sounds: she raised her arm on the “hee” sound and then lowered it on the “haw” sound, modelling the descent from the high to the low sound.

**Modelling a rhythmic-melodic cell**
After establishing through dialogue with the audience how the hen clucks, the following activity was performed in order to model the rhythm and melodic interval chosen by the composer to imitate hens.

*Ex. 9. The hen from The Carnival of the Animals*

The modelling had a vocal component and a kinaesthetic one. The children were invited to sing along *co-co-co-co-da*, maintaining the rhythm and the leap of an ascending fifth from the original.

*Ex. 10. Modelling the clucking of hens from The Carnival of the Animals*

At the same time, the conductor “modelled”, with his hand (palm turned towards the ground) in the air, both the rhythm with small horizontal movements at the level of the chest for the eighth notes, and the melodic leap by raising the hand above the head as far as the length of the arm allowed.

**Participatory performance activities**

**Audience participation with body percussion**
The final piece of the suite (No. 14), which concluded the concert, was repeated as an encore, on which occasion the audience participated by clapping to the pulse of the music. In the spirit of the traditional clapping to the beat of the *Radetzky Marsch* by J. Strauss, children were invited to clap their hands rhythmically along with the music and follow the conductor’s cues to “perform” the *forte* passages and keep silent during the *piano* ones.

**Visual elements**
The activity of focusing attention on the musical motif of the lion’s roar was facilitated by the addition of a visual element in the form of a lion’s head cut from cardboard. A musician hidden behind the pianos would raise the lion’s head above the pianos according to the score, visually indicating each of the six occurrences of the motif and directing attention to the aurally received motif.

In the moderation preceding the piece that portrays the elephant (No. 5), a visual moment was added to compare the size of the stringed instruments. The moderator first had a dialogue with the children in order to

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36 See *The lion’s royal march* above.

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choose together the most suitable instrument for the role of the elephant. Deliberately omitting the double bass, he invited the other string musicians to the front stage, where they lined up in ascending order of the instrument size: first violin, second violin, viola and cello. After comparing the instruments, in dialogue with the audience, it was determined that the biggest instrument and therefore the most suitable for an elephant is the cello. But the double-bassist, who then stepped in and stood in line with the others, proved that his instrument was far bigger than all the other stringed instruments. The audience then approved and agreed to have the elephant dance performed by the double bass.

The presence on stage of the musicians and their instruments constitutes an inherent visual element of a live concert\(^{37}\). However, we believe that the fact that a “theatrical” entrance of the xylophone was staged before the piece in whose instrumentation it plays the main role can be classified as an added visual element, which was used to focus attention on the instrument.

A visual element was added for fun to the comparative listening activity that preceded the piece portraying the donkeys. A hat with donkey ears was worn in turn by each player who tried to imitate the donkey’s braying: the pianist, the double bassist and the first violinist. Then both violinists wore such a hat while playing the piece in its entirety.

The elements of music mediation selected to facilitate the realization of the musical-pedagogical objectives of the concert and to correspond to the way in which the concert’s theme is approached were logically and harmoniously integrated into its development. We recommend giving particular importance to the participatory elements. In this regard, it is telling that David Wallace gave his book titled Reaching Out, from which many of the examples presented in this study are drawn, the subtitle A Musician’s Guide to Interactive Performance. From the programs directed and moderated by the author hereof she has found that the audience of children between 5 and 10 years of age to whom the educational concerts are addressed reacts with the greatest enthusiasm to the

| Musical-pedagogical objectives | Intuitive understanding of programmatic music
|---|---
| Theme/Approach | Musical portrayal of animals through different ways of characterizing them (animal’s voice, way of moving)
| Title | Identical to the title of the musical work
| Target audience | Children between 5 and 10 years of age: Elementary school classes and kindergarten groups; families
| Location | Program presented 9 times; halls with 200–400 seats
| Duration of the concert | 40 minutes
| Original instrumental ensemble | String quintet, 2 pianos, clarinet, flute, xylophone
| Repertoire | C. Saint-Saëns: from The Carnival of the Animals
| | No. 1. Introduction et marche royale du lion
| | (Introduction and Lion’s Royal March)
| | Nr. 8. Personnages à longues oreilles [Characters with Long Ears]
| | Nr. 2. Pâtes et coqs [Hens and Roosters]
| | Nr. 9. Le Coucou au fond des bois [The Cuckoo in the Depth of the Forest]
| | Nr. 10. Volière [Aviary]
| | No. 6. Kangourous [Kangaroos]
| | Nr. 5. L’Éléphant [The Elephant]
| | Nr. 4. Tortues [Tortoises]
| | Nr. 12. Fossiles [Fossils]
| | No. 14. Finale [Finale]
| | J. Offenbach: Can Can from the comic opera Orphée aux enfers [Orpheus in the Underworld] – fragment, arrangement
| Main moderators | The conductor
| Occasional moderators | Instrumentalists: the two pianists, 1st violinist, clarinettist, flautist, double bassist and percussionist
| Elements of music mediation in the moderation | Verbal explanation and dialogue with the audience
| | Musical examples
| | Comparative listening
| | Activities for focusing auditory attention
| | Participatory performance activities
| | Modelling activities
| Visual elements added for musical-educational purposes | Cardboard picture with a lion’s head
| | Entrance of xylophone on stage
| Visuals elements added for amusement purposes | Two hats with donkey ears

Table 1. Conception and performance of the educational concert under analysis

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Bibliography

Book:


Journal Article:


PhD dissertation:


Online article:


