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"KunstStückWerk" – from a Project to a Book Series

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Research & Practice

"KunstStückWerk" – from a Project to a Book Series

Micaela Grüner

Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy is a concept of aesthetic education. The basic concern of our teaching in groups is to encourage people to participate in music and dance: personality-, action- and process-oriented. As a starting point and basis for artistic action - especially with children - the following aspects are in the foreground:

- Sensitisation of the senses, the differentiated perception and dealing with it
- Creative engagement with music, dance and speech as individual forms of expression, and
- Togetherness and learning through play.

Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy is trans- and interdisciplinary per se. The visual arts, as well as poetry for example, provide further fields of interconnection. Our basic intention is to search for these fields, to track them down, to connect them and to make them experiential in group processes and to support people individually in this process.

The combination of music, dance and visual arts has a long tradition at the Orff Institute. Barbara Haselbach was a pioneer in this field, inspiring and leaving a lasting mark on generations of students with her teaching and projects, for example in museums. Her publication "Tanz und Bildende Kunst" (1991) became a standard work in the professional world and has been waiting for a new edition for a long time. The exciting interplay of artistic action and composition is demonstrated again and again in current projects with students as well as with participants of the most diverse teaching practice groups from toddlers to senior citizens, who are taught in weekly courses at the Orff Institute.

"Kunst-Stück-Werk" is a new series of interdisciplinary art pedagogical working materials developed at the Orff Institute of the University Mozarteum Salzburg with students within the curriculum. The editorial team, consisting of the teachers Andrea Ostertag, Barbara Tischitz-Winklhofer, Doris Valtiner-Pühringer and Micaela Grüner, published the first volume in the autumn of 2022 in Edition Tandem, Salzburg (see review on p. 99). Further volumes are in preparation.

On the Genesis

Due to the cessation of live teaching during the Coronavirus pandemic, **alternative learning opportunities** had to be developed in 2020/21. Existing teaching and learning formats needed transformation into a Distance Learning Mode. Instead of the weekly lessons "Didactic Practicum" and "Teaching Practice", and the trying out of live lessons with the respective target groups, lessons were held alternatively only with students regarding the elaboration of impulses for the target groups, who were to become active at home.

This is how the idea of picture books came about. Inspired by works of art of classical modernism, the teachers, together with their student groups, developed interactive picture books with impulses for music and dance activities for diverse target groups:

- Group with toddlers (2 - 4 year olds with an accompanying adult)
- Group with kindergarten children (4 - 5 year olds)
- Pre-school group (5 - 6 year olds)
- Primary school age group (6 - 10 year olds) with a focus on dance
- Mixed-age inclusive group.

Innovative University Didactics

As teachers at universities and academic education centres, we are constantly challenged to place teaching in a contemporary didactic context and to find innovative formats. With this project "KunstStückWerk" we were able to name the following criteria:

- a) novel teaching concepts, teaching methods, and learning outcome orientation
- working on a result across groups (interactive participatory picture book)
 - Online: partly meetings in small groups, individual work
 - additive digital work: Forwarding results (compositions, choreographies), the next person continues working on them (another voice, instrument, music, video editing etc.).
 - interdisciplinary work: Impulses from the visual arts for music and dance
 - find impulses for target group appropriate musical-dance activities through different approaches (ways of looking at a picture)
 - think in three levels as a course leader:
 - a) How do I get impulses? What questions do I ask?
 - b) How do I implement impulses into music, dance, speech?
 - c) How do I present the results in the form of a picture book?
 - flat hierarchy teamwork: teachers and students work together on an equal basis, decisions are made jointly.
- b) Promotion of interdisciplinary competences and qualifications:
- Instrument, voice, speech, movement, dance, graphic work
 - Inclusion of didactic, methodological contents
 - Organisational skills, graphic skills
 - Media skills (dealing with audio and video recordings, editing and sound programmes, use of QR codes, printing techniques)
 - Research work, legal issues.

Further criteria were

- Student-centredness and heterogeneity, e.g. by giving special support to students in the acquisition of individual competences and by taking aspects of inclusion into account.
- Linking theory and practical application of what has been learned, e.g. by locating the experience in the context of art education theories and aesthetic education.

Intentions

were and are:

- That the children and young people, with parents or independently, can go on a journey of discovery with the picture books at home
- Accesses to the understanding of art are created
- Impulses for their own artistic actions are given.

The following poem by Barbara Tischitz-Winklhofer is symbolic of this. It is both an intention and a challenge:

"ART PIECE"

Take a PIECE OF ART.

Think of it as a PIECE WORK.

Transform the WORK PIECE

into a new ART WORK.

„KUNSTSTÜCK“

Nimm ein STÜCK KUNST.

Sieh es als STÜCKWERK.

Verwandle das WERKSTÜCK

in ein neues KUNSTWERK.

(Literal translation. The German title is a word game. Kunststück means feat or trick, Kunstwerk = Work of art, Stückwerk= patchwork, pieced together.)

Inspired by this poem, "Kunst-Stück-Werk. Music, Dance, Language, and Painting" became the title for the entire series.

Annex and Contents

Each chapter is dedicated to a work of art. The selected paintings are works by Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró, Paul Klee, and Wassily Kandinsky. The individual works of art are visual aids in the truest sense of the word. Sensitising the visual sense is the entry point to the interdisciplinary journey of discovery.

The books were designed as participatory booklets. Age-appropriate texts and guiding figures, visual elements, music- and dance-related video and audio recordings (accessible via integrated QR codes that were specially generated for this purpose) challenge the reader to engage with the individual paintings and interpret them. Concrete linguistic, musical, dance and art educational tasks encourage activities suitable for each age group and level of capacity.

Artistic-pedagogical impulses should stimulate the personal expression of each individual. In this way, individual perspectives and interpretations or new individual „art-piece-works“ can emerge that demonstrate self-efficacy and strengthen self-competence.

Picture Books for Each Group Member

The five picture books that were produced - made possible by a special grant from the Mozarteum University - were finally sent in printed form to the children and parents who, due to the pandemic, were unable to attend or experience the lessons in the practical groups during the winter semester 2020/21. The concrete, haptic, auditory and visually stimulating material also made it possible to have a lasting effect on the addressees and their family environment.

However, a sustainable effect was also aimed at the students: generally in the university study context through reflection and deepening in theory and practice, and specifically as an impulse for further art education projects with similar or new target groups, thus perspectively for their further teaching or professional practice.

Here are two exemplary voices of participating students in response to the question "What benefits do you take away from this course Didactic Practicum/Teaching Practice Music and Movement?":

"Paintings not only surprise us with their beauty or enchant us with colours, they can also give us many impulses to discover something new: Movement, dance, song, poem, play, ... It has awakened whole new feelings in me and helped me notice things I could use as impulses to 'animate' elements from paintings." (Natalia)

"This project has given me an incredible amount. I am enthusiastic about the kind of cooperation between teacher and students and got the feeling that everyone could participate in this project with his or her strengths. Through the diverse development of the images (choosing the right music, composing music, creating movement sequences, setting painting and crafting tasks, working out rhythm patterns ...) I was able to learn a lot about the age group of my teaching practice group and feel prepared to work live with the children now. Besides, I was able to learn a lot about media design and the different approaches to seeing and creating a picture.

Thank you for this project. It's great to be able to hold a final product of our constant work in our hands." (Alena)

Publication

The positive response to the picture book project and increasing external enquiries about how to access the material suggested a publication. The Salzburg publishing house Edition Tandem was found as a partner. After an intensive phase of work by the editorial team and the individual authors, the tried and tested material of "Kunst-Stück-Werk" will also be available to colleagues in a revised edition in the spirit of "from practice for practice".

Each chapter begins with the "children's pages", which also address them directly. This is followed by several pages for the teachers with different approaches and assignments. They can take individual impulses from these, select them for a lesson plan or compile a whole set of topics and adapt them to their group, class or participants.

Characteristic are the many multimedia working materials. All audio and video contributions for music and dance activities were designed and created exclusively for this series by students of the Orff Institute.

The series is designed for five different volumes. The first volume for toddlers, which has now been published, was written by Barbara Tischitz-Winklhofer and Doris Valtiner-Pühringer. Volume 2 with the target groups of pre-school children by Andrea Ostertag and volume 3 for mixed-age groups are to follow later this year.

Conclusion

Once again it has been confirmed that every crisis also brings opportunities. Born out of necessity, the project "KunstStückWerk" has turned out to be a gain for many sides. With the publication, many teachers can now go on a very special interactive journey of discovery with their students. The editors hope you will enjoy it.

References

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