

DESIGNING AN EDUCATIONAL CONCERT. THE ANALYSIS OF *THE NOAH'S ARK* CHILDREN'S CONCERT

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SUMMARY. To design an educational concert, for it to be a valuable cultural-educational event and be attractive to children, various pedagogical, psychological, musical, and organizational aspects must be considered. These will be presented and illustrated through the analysis of the Noah's Ark children's concert, moderated, and conducted by the author as part of the *Do Re Mi Start!* educational program of the Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy.

Keywords: educational concert for children, repertoire, visual elements, elements of music mediation.

Introduction

The design and development of an educational concert is a complex process that requires for multiple aspects to be considered, the well-thought-out combination of which contributes both to the public success of the concert, as well as to the educational value of the event itself.

The basic components of an educational concert for children must be carefully considered and combined: the musical repertoire and moderation, plus the visual aspect, which is very important for children today. However, the starting point of designing the concert must always be a theme and a set of musical-pedagogical objectives that the concert aims to achieve. A common mistake is to choose the repertoire before establishing the musical-

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pedagogical objectives.² Even if the repertoire is pre-established, because of the need to reuse works from another concert program, the composer of the educational concert must find a suitable concept and theme, independent of the composition of the original program, from which repertoire he or she must choose.

In order to be able to meet the quality criteria that an educational concert for children must meet, it is desirable that those responsible for the design of the concert should, on the one hand, be well informed about the educational concert activities of various artistic organizations and be familiar with examples of good practices from as many parts of the world as possible, and, on the other hand, acquire knowledge based on research in the field of music pedagogy and mediation, as well as psycho-musicology.

In the following pages, we will present the different parts of an educational concert, focusing solely on the conceptual ones and not on the organizational, logistical, and financial aspects, which of course play an important role in the practice of such endeavors.

Repertoire

The musical works to be performed within the educational concert are chosen according to the musical-pedagogical objectives pursued and the theme of the concert. To establish a repertoire suitable for a particular age group, it is imperative to know the research results concerning the musical preferences of the audience, i.e., that of children. The scientific literature in this field is quite rich³ and provides particularly interesting results for organizers of children's concerts, as works with musical characteristics preferred by young audiences ensure the greater part of the success of such concerts. Children generally prefer instrumental music with a fast tempo, steady meter, and varied dynamics, and in terms of melody and harmonies, tonal-functional melodies, especially those with relatively high frequencies; consonants and classical forms are the ones that are most popular. Romantic music, music of moderate complexity and especially music that is familiar is most suitable for gaining the children's interest. Because of its accessibility, programmatic music is a constant feature in educational concert programs.⁴ One aspect

² League of American Orchestras: *Factors in Repertoire and Scripting What makes a great education concert?* p. 2, https://americanorchestras.org/images/stories/knowledge_pdf/coolscriptsandrep.pdf, accessed on 10.03.2017.

³ Leif Finnäs, „How Can Musical Preferences Be Modified? A Research Review”, in *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, no. 102, 1989.

⁴ Ștefana Țițeica, „*Concertul educativ pentru copii-repertoriu și aspecte vizuale*” (*Children's Educational Concerts – Repertoire and Visual Elements*), Doctoral thesis, Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music, 2014, p. 67.

to bear in mind when selecting the repertoire is children's attention span, which implies a judicious choice of repertoire also in terms of the duration of the musical works, i.e., the need to limit themselves to mere fragments of lengthier pieces. When choosing a repertoire, it is advisable to consider the opportunities offered by different works for the introduction of audience participation activities.

Visual elements

Numerous studies have dealt with the influence of visual stimuli on auditory perception and have found that the visual elements of a live (or audio-visually recorded) concert have a significant effect on the perception of music. The live concert has an inherent visual component, with the audience visually perceiving the venue (hall) and lighting on the one hand, and the performers on stage, their appearance, clothing, and stage behavior, as well as the movements required for the musical performance, on the other. While the visual aspects inherent in musical performance are of little relevance in the composition of an educational concert, although there are some interesting studies on how children react to performers' clothing or stage behavior, the intentionally added visual elements are particularly important.

The deliberate addition of visual elements in the educational concert is not in itself a new idea.

The visual aspect of the educational concert has gained particular importance nowadays, when young audiences belong to an eminently visual generation, and the need to add visual elements has increased significantly.

*In today's visually biased world, the hope is that attracting the eye will sharpen the ear.*⁵

Used judiciously, these visual additions can make certain aspects of the music easier to understand; but used inappropriately, they can distract the audience from the music itself. We believe that Bernstein's phrase "*A concert is not a show*"⁶ should remain the motto of any high-quality educational concert.

⁵ Sue Knussen, „Educational programmes”, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Orchestra*, ed. Colin Lawson, pp. 239-250, Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 245.

⁶ Roger Englander, „No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts”, in Leonard Bernstein: *The Television Work*, Museum of Broadcasting, New York, 1985, pp. 29-36, p. 30, cited in John C. MacInnis, „*Leonard Bernstein's and Roger Englander's educational mission: Music appreciation and the 1961-62 Season of Young People's Concerts*”, Dissertation, Florida State University, 2009, pp. 55-56.

Visual elements can include costumes, props, pantomime dancers, puppetry, printed images, projections of still images or pre-produced video, projection of musicians on stage in real time, etc. Regarding the use of modern multimedia techniques, there are also specialists who call for them to be used with restraint, pointing out the danger of distracting the audience from the music.⁷

Added visual elements can only be justified if they are related to the music, as 'the music must remain at the center' and any addition must contribute to enriching the musical experience.⁸

The Act of Moderation

In what follows we will use the term moderation in the broadest sense of the word, including the proceedings of the concert outside the performance of the musical works chosen for the program.

Verbal presentation is also common in live concerts, especially those broadcasts on radio and TV. It sometimes takes place on stage and usually announces the title and performers of the musical work to be performed. Sometimes a few sentences about the work are added, especially when the rearrangement of the stage (e.g., bringing in the piano) increases the length of the break between works. The traditional concert lesson adds verbal explanations for musical-pedagogical purposes and usually illustrates them with a few musical examples.

The moderation of the modern educational concert includes various elements of music mediation, from simple verbal explanation to complex activities with audience participation, designed to facilitate understanding of the music, retain the audience's attention and give the concert an appealing format so that beginner audiences will want to attend other similar events.

Audience participation activities are not only very popular with children but are also most likely to focus their attention on the different elements of music. Those activities that involve movement are particularly effective. Not only do they offer children the opportunity to have a break from sitting while watching the concert, but they add a kinesthetic dimension to the perception of music, contributing to a multi-sensory experience that is known to be conducive to learning. It is crucial for the moderator to strike a proper balance between the different strategies applied in providing a varied program that is both engaging and culturally, educationally valuable.

⁷ David Wallace, *Reaching out: a musician's guide to interactive performance*, McGraw-Hill, Boston, 2008, pp. 29-30.

⁸ Diane Wittry, *Beyond the baton – What every conductor needs to know*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p. 137.

The moderator can be a specifically designated person - actor, musicologist, teaching artist. In English the moderator is often referred to as “host”. Increasingly, however, one or more of the musicians in the concert come to be preferred for the role of moderator. Although there are no conclusive studies on the advantage of having a musician involved in the program as a moderator compared to an “external” moderator, experience seems to indicate that moderation by the musician or musicians contributes to a better integration of the moderation within the music performance. Performers also seem to enjoy greater credibility with the audience, who intuitively perceive them as “experts”. Verbal communication of performers with the audience also helps to reduce the (perhaps unconsciously) perceived barrier in the eyes of the public between the performer on stage and the listeners.

It is therefore desirable that performers - instrumentalists, singers, conductors - increasingly expand their role, becoming facilitators for their audiences. To do this, they need to acquire a thorough knowledge of this field. In the United States, conducting and moderating educational concerts is part of the contract of many young assistant conductors. Many of them feel well prepared for the strictly musical aspect, but insufficiently prepared for the “educational” aspect of these concerts.⁹

Elements of music mediation within moderation

The music mediation that takes place in the moderation of an educational concert takes many forms. Barbara Stiller lists “different forms of approaching contact with music”, encompassing “receptive, reflective, productive, reproductive, interpretive and transformative”¹⁰ components, and David Wallace, violist, teaching artist, Senior Teaching Artist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and Professor of Music Mediation at the Juilliard School in New York, a tireless advocate of the interactive concert, calls them “interactive archetypes and strategies”.¹¹ Based on our literature review, and especially on the many examples of good practices regarding educational concerts we have studied, as well as our own experience of concerts moderated and conducted as part of the *Do Re Mi Start!* educational program we next propose a classification of the elements of music mediation that can

⁹ Hector Jr. Agüero, „Towards a standard methodology in programming children’s concerts”, Doctoral thesis, University of Houston, Texas, 2010.

¹⁰ Barbara Stiller, *Erlebnisraum Konzert: Prozesse der Musikvermittlung in Konzerten für Kinder*, ConBrio, Regensburg, 2008, p. 127.

¹¹ David Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

be used in the moderation of an educational concert: verbal explanation and dialogue with the audience, musical example, comparative listening, activities directed at focusing auditory attention, activities designed at modeling certain musical aspects, activities regarding participating in the performance.

Noah's Ark Concert Analysis

The *Noah's Ark* educational concert was conceived out of a desire to present children with a musical portrayal of animals in the biblical story of the Great Flood and Noah who built an Ark at God's command, saving a pair of animals from each species. The primary musical-pedagogical objective was an intuitive understanding of programmatic music and its characteristics. Some of the works in the selected repertoire were also used to facilitate knowledge of musical instruments.

The theme of the concert was the illustration of a story through music. The biblical legend of the Great Flood offers the possibility of following a narrative thread, which allowed an explicitly thematic approach based on the idea that music can "tell a story". The narrative provided an opportunity to extend the musical illustration beyond the portrayal of the various animals, by adding the moments leading up to the animals' entry onto the ark and the flood. At the beginning of the event, a misunderstanding was staged between the narrator who was installed on stage to tell the audience the story of Noah, who is then interrupted by the entrance of instrument players preparing to perform a concerto. The situation is resolved by a compromise of "telling the story by way of music". For the title of the concert, I have chosen the title of the Bible story, if the audience made up of children have at least heard of the story. We carried on upon the assumption that the adults that accompanied the children (teachers or parents or grandparents), being familiar with the title of the concert, had done a minimum of preparation with them.

The educational concert was designed for children aged 5-10 and was performed three times in Cluj-Napoca, at the Studio Hall of the Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy, for kindergarten groups and primary school classes (twice in Romanian and twice in Hungarian) and for families (as part of the 26th edition of the Mozart Festival). The hall has a 200-seat capacity. The concerts lasted about 60 minutes.

Repertoire

The *Noah's Ark* educational concert program followed the narrative thread. The introduction to the concert set forth the subsequent goal: a story illustrated by music. To this end, a dialogue skit between the moderator, a prop man and then the double bass player was introduced at the beginning of the concert, highlighting on a humorous note that music can "tell" a story, facilitating an intuitive approach to the notion of programmatic music.

We list below the moments of the narrative illustrated by music and the motivation for choosing the appropriate musical examples. We illustrated the feud between people that aroused God's wrath with the piece *Limoges* from Mussorgsky's piano cycle *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a programmatic piece describing the fair in the southern French town of Limoges. The original title of the piece is in French: *Limoges. Le marché. (La grande nouvelle)*.¹² The composer himself originally wrote down a few phrases in French in the score, reproducing the gossip between the market vendors, which he later removed. The music critic Vladimir Stasov, mentor of the Russian composers included in *The Five* and dedicatee of the cycle, commented on the piece as follows: "French women arguing fiercely at the market".¹³

The next moment of the narrative that was illustrated through music was the work of Noah and his sons to build the ark according to God's command. The *Gypsy Chorus* from Verdi's opera *The Troubadour* was chosen for this. It is one of the most famous examples of the use of the anvil as an instrument in classical music, alongside Richard Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelungs*. Verdi's chorus is also known in the English-speaking world as the Anvil Chorus.¹⁴ In the educational concert an instrumental arrangement of the chorus was performed, to which a piece of metal rail was added, with which the percussionist played the anvil chorus. This evocatively illustrated the noise of the tools with which Noah built the ark.

This was followed by the parade of animals that boarded the ark. A group of children in animal masks entered from the back of the hall to the sounds of the *Turkish March* from the incidental music to Beethoven's *The Ruins of Athens*, which was arranged for the chamber ensemble that performed in the concert. Beethoven's march is particularly appropriate as it suggests, through its dynamics, a march that comes from far away

¹² *Limoges. The Market (Great News)*.

¹³ Nancy Bricard, „About Pictures at an Exhibition" in *Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition for the Piano*, edited by Nancy Bricard, Alfred Publishing, USA, 2003, pp. 9-14, p. 13.

¹⁴ Martin Chusid, *Verdi's „Il trovatore". The Quintessential Italian Melodrama*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, NY, 2012, p. 47.

(beginning in *piano*) and gradually approaches (gradual *crescendo*). The children took their places in the front row of the hall, from where they took turns to walk onto the stage, adding a visual element to each animal that was subsequently musically presented.

The choice of the order of which animals took turns to climb on the ark was determined by the repertoire selected for its musical illustration. From programmatic pieces with imitative Baroque elements (Heinrich Biber, Vivaldi, Rameau, Telemann) to 20th century music (Respighi, Messiaen), the classical music repertoire is rich in programmatic pieces that make reference to different animals.¹⁵ Works have been chosen which the composers themselves have dedicated to animals, indicating this by title (Rameau *La poule*, Vivaldi *Il gardellino*, Mozart *Der Kanarienvogel*, Rossini *Duetto buffo di due gatti*, Saint-Saëns *Poules et coqs*, *L'Éléphant*, *Personnages à longues oreilles*), as well as works which have a known programmatic link with animals (Haydn's string quartets - op. 50 No. 6 and Op. 33 No. 3 - to which the names 'The Frog' and 'The Bird' respectively were later added, and Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*, with children's instruments imitating various birds). Works whose character is in keeping with the musical depiction of animals were also included in the repertoire, without this having been the composers' intention. Thus, Berlioz's *Dance of the Sylphs* illustrated butterflies, and the fragment of incidental music from Massenet's opera *Thaïs*, with oriental intonations evident even to an audience of children, illustrated camels.

The *Dance of the Sylphs*, included by Berlioz in the "légende dramatique" written for orchestra, chorus and vocal soloists entitled *La damnation de Faust* on a libretto based on the tragedy *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, became famous as a stand-alone orchestral piece. The sylphs, sent by Mephistopheles to lure Faust into sleep, dance to transparent music befitting their airy spirit-like creatures. In the musical portrait of the elephant, composed as a heavy double bass dance with typical piano waltz accompaniment (piano II), Saint-Saëns quotes the theme of this dance in the middle section, giving it a heavy character befitting the animal portrayed. The gag achieved by this musical quotation, which incidentally is not the only indulgence Saint-Saëns allowed himself in *The Carnival of the Animals*, can only be fully enjoyed by listeners who are familiar with the original, which is likely to have been the case for the

¹⁵ Emily Doolittle, „Crickets in the Concert Hall: A history of Animals in Western Music" in *Trans. Revista Transcultural de Música*, nr. 12, 2008, <https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/94/crickets-in-the-concert-hall-a-history-of-animals-in-western-music>, accessed on 15.05.2020.

discerning French audience. But the waltz played by a double bass is also, independent of this exquisite reference, an evocatively humorous musical moment. The sylph dance was arranged for the instrumental ensemble involved in the educational concert program. The original orchestration is for strings, but in the arrangement the first occurrence of the theme (in the high register) has been taken over by the flute with string accompaniment, differentiating the theme from the standpoint of its timbre and making it easily recognizable.

In his opera *Thaïs*, Massenet introduces before a scene set in Alexandria, Egypt, a special musical moment played by an instrumental ensemble in the wings. The music has obvious oriental overtones, both in its melismatic melodic and the ostinato accompaniment. The original instrumentation accentuates its oriental character: the melody is played alternately by oboe and English horn. The accompaniment is played by the piano in octaves in the two extreme registers, doubled by the *clavier de timbres* (glockenspiel with keyboard) together with an *ostinato* rhythm played by the *tambour arabe* with the explanation “*sorte de tambour sans timbre frappé avec une baguette dure*” (an Arabic drum - a kind of drum without strings, struck with sticks) and “*une paire de crotales ou un triangle*” (a pair of crotales or a triangle). For the educational concert, Massenet’s music was arranged as follows: the flute took the oboe’s voice, the viola that of the English horn, the piano played the original score and the percussionist played both scores. The Arab drum was replaced by the *djembe*, introducing the instrument both verbally (as an “African drum”) and visually (by placing the percussionist in front of the other instruments), and indicating that the music would “call the camels”, animals that children associate loosely with the geographical area illustrated by the music.

For the description of the flood, we first included in the repertoire a piece to illustrate the raindrops musically, and then a musical storm. The raindrops were illustrated by a work played exclusively with *pizzicato*: *Pizzicati* from the orchestral suite compiled from the music of the ballet *Sylvia* by Léo Delibes, and the storm from the *Das Donnerwetter* contradance by W. A. Mozart.

The concert ended with a repetition of the *Turkish March*, to the rhythm of which the animals that survived the flood left the ark. Repeating the same work during an educational concert plays a positive role in creating familiarity with the music, a familiarity that is proven to increase preference for said piece of music.¹⁶

¹⁶ Leif Finnäs, *op.cit.*, pp. 1-58.

One of the motivations behind the choice of repertoire was the presentation of certain musical instruments. Thus, we chose Mozart's *Der Kanarienvogel* so that the flautist could present the piccolo. The original dialogue between flute and piccolo was played entirely on the piccolo. Familiar with the piccolo in this way, the audience could then recognize it in the piece depicting the storm (Mozart: *Das Donnerwetter*).

In the concert we also introduced the piece *Duetto buffo di due gatti*, attributed to Rossini. The humorous piece is composed for two sopranos, who sing with piano accompaniment, using only the two syllables of the onomatopoeia of a cat's meow (me-ow). Both for organizational reasons and for pedagogical musical purposes I have replaced the second soprano voice with the viola, thus showing that the imitation of the meow can be performed both vocally and instrumentally. The moderation of the concert was conceived as a combination of narration, which followed the thread of the story, with illustrative musical pieces and music mediation activities interspersed before or after the musical work in question. As the main moderator, the conductor also took on the role of the narrator; all the instrumentalists also participated as secondary moderators, addressing the audience at appropriate moments. For the initial dialogue, the character of a props man was used briefly.

Visual elements

In the scene introduced at the beginning of the concert, to bring the audience closer to the idea that music can tell a story, several added visual elements were used. The narration of Noah's legend was emphasized by placing the narrator with an oversized book in an armchair, and the music to be used to illustrate the story was symbolized by a large stack of scores placed on a small table, to which the bassist explicitly directed the audience's attention, while indicating that the music they were about to hear was notated by the composers in the sheet music.

The audience's concert experience was enriched by the introduction of a pair of cardboard animal masks worn by twenty children invited from the *Sigismund Toduță Music College*. They entered from the back of the hall to the music of the *Turkish March* and then took turns on stage in pairs, wearing the animal masks that were to be illustrated in the following musical work. This added visual element on the one hand enhances the entertainment value of the event but is also an obvious aid to keeping the programmatic nature of each musical piece depicting a particular animal in focus.

The fact that at the concert the conductor also played the role of narrator of the story was underlined by placing her at the beginning of the concert in an armchair, at a small table on which was the book from which she read the story. The prop man who came in at the beginning of the story and started dusting off the piano made for an amusing visual moment, and the appearance on the stage where no other musicians were yet present of the double bass player bringing his instrument in also directed the audience's attention to the visual aspect of the double bass.

Elements of music mediation in moderation

The concept of the concert and the selected repertoire offers the possibility of introducing several elements of music mediation into the act of moderation itself.

Verbal explanation and striking a dialogue with the audience

In the moderation of the concert, we limited verbal explanations as much as possible, choosing instead to distribute them, where possible, among the musicians. Thus, the percussionist introduced his instrument with a phrase before playing the *djembe* (Massenet), the double bass player remarked that his instrument was much too big and sounded much too low for the butterfly dance, being better suited for the elephant dance, and the pianist stated that ten fingers on 88 keys could chirp like an entire flock of birds. Some of the information about the animals was gained through striking a dialogue with the audience, who were also invited to be judges in the competitions held between instruments.

Musical examples

Most of the musical examples included in the moderation highlighted an instrument and how composers use its characteristics in programmatic music. Before the performance of Delibes' *Pizzicati*, with which raindrops were illustrated, the difference in sonority between bowed and plucked strings was demonstrated. After the body percussion modeling of the storm and before listening to Mozart's piece describing the storm instrumentally (*Das Donnerwetter*), the piccolo exemplified the phrase that resembles the whistling of the wind:

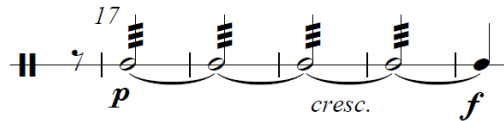
E.g. 1



Mozart: Contredanse in D major, K. 534, *Das Donnerwetter*, bars 17-24 – the piccolo imitating the wind

The bass drum was presented separately with the musical example imitating thunder:

E.g. 2



Mozart: Contredanse in D major K. 534, *Das Donnerwetter*, bar 17-21 – the bass drum imitates thunder

Haydn's motif imitating the twittering of frogs in the finale of the Quartet Op. 50, No. 6 was exemplified in turn by all stringed instruments:

E.g. 3



Haydn: *Quartet Op. 50, No. 6*, bars 4-8 – the twittering of frogs (1st violin)

Comparative listening

The musical illustration of birds chirping was used as a comparative listening example in the form of a competition between instruments. Following a 'contest' set up by the instrumentalists as to which of them could chirp more authentically, the audience was invited to listen to three works using different instruments imitating the birds: two violins (Haydn op. 50, no. 6, 'Bird' Quartet), piano (Mussorgsky's *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks*) and flute (Vivaldi's *Il gardellino*). After listening to the three works, the audience voted to determine which instrument "chirps" the best was decided in favor of the flute in all performances of the Noah's Ark concert.

Musical modeling activities

Modeling a melodic/rhythmic-melodic cell

In the piece *La poule*, written for strings, which musically illustrates the hen, Rameau used the following motif to imitate clucking:

E.g. 4**Rameau: *La poule*, bars 1-3 – the clucking motif (1st violin)**

Before listening to the piece in its entirety, the moderator carried out an activity with the audience to model this rhythmic-melodic cell. The modeling had a vocal and a kinesthetic component. The children were invited to sing *co-co-co-co-da* together, maintaining the rhythm and the ascending fifth leap interval as originally written. At the same time the conductor “modeled” with her hand (palm facing the ground) in the air both the rhythm with small horizontal movements at chest level for eighth notes, and the melodic leap by raising the hand above the head as far as the length of the arm would allow.

To embark the donkeys on the Ark we have included the corresponding Saint-Saëns piece in the repertoire. For this we have introduced a kinesthetic melodic activity in modeling the cell (descending leap) which is repeated throughout the donkeys’ musical portrayal.

E.g. 5
Saint-Saëns: *The Carnival of the Animals: No. 8, Personnages à longues oreilles*, bars 1-5 – modeling the donkey

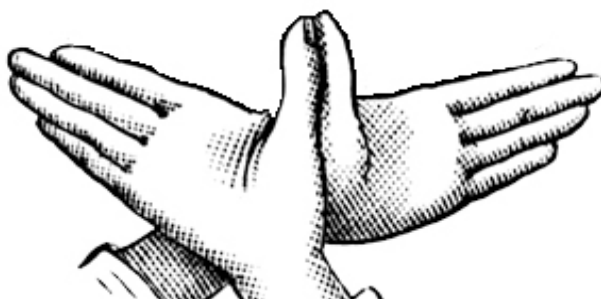
After the audience had imitated the donkey’s “hee-haw, hee-haw” cry, the moderator added wide arm movements to the two sounds: she raised her arm on the “hee” sound and then lowered it on the “haw” sound, modeling the descent from the higher to the lower sound.

Modeling the character of the music

Recognizing the musical character of a melody sung in two different versions (*The Dance of the Sylphs* and Saint-Saëns' *Elephant*) was facilitated by carrying out a modeling activity. The butterflies, portrayed to the diaphanous music of the *Dance of the Sylphs*, were immediately followed in the animal parade by the elephants, which made it easier to compare the character of the two musical pieces.

To emphasize the musical character of the two pieces, determined by the very different character of the movements of the two animals, we introduced a kinesthetic participatory activity. Unlike other modeling activities, these were preceded by listening to each piece of music, after which the conductor suggested a movement corresponding to the character. To imitate the flight of butterflies with their palms, the children overlapped the thumbs of their hands and gently moved their palms like wings.

Figure 1



Hand movement to mimic a butterfly

For the elephant waltz, the children stomped their feet, with an emphasized step on the first beat and two normal steps - body percussion like Carl Orff's "*stampfen*".¹⁷ Performing very different movements corresponding to the two pieces of music makes it easier to understand the concept of character in music, which might seem quite abstract to children. Listening to the same melody played first by the flute (with delicate high string accompaniment) for the butterflies and then by the double bass (with a 'rustic' piano accompaniment - *Allegretto pomposo tempo* indication, *forte* dynamic indication) for the elephant, children also intuitively understand the role of instrumentation in creating the character of a musical work.

¹⁷ acc. to Orff: *Schulwerk*


Modeling a storm

The performance of W. A. Mozart's *Das Donnerwetter*, a work illustrating the storm, was preceded by kinesthetic modeling of a storm.

The moderator divided the children in the room into four groups, each to perform a different body percussion sequence: finger snapping to imitate the sound of small rain splashes predicting the storm, clapping on the chest for rain, clapping on the thighs for the beginning of the storm, and stomping on the floor to imitate thunder. After the separate interpretation of each element, a storm was created that comes from far away, increases in intensity until it peaks and then gradually subsides. The dynamic increase was achieved through successive group entrances and was matched by an acceleration of tempo, both coordinated through conducting. The gradual calming of the storm was achieved symmetrically. This kinesthetic shaping not only led to an easier perception of dynamics and tempo but also to the recognition of the structure of the musical pieces *describing* the storm as well as the role of the conductor. The table below shows schematically the unfolding of the storm created by the audience with *body percussion*.

Table 1

| dynamics | <i>p</i> | <i>mf</i> | <i>cresc.</i> | <i>ff</i> | <i>descresc.</i> | <i>mf</i> | <i>pp</i> |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| tempo | <i>lento</i> | <i>moderato</i> | <i>accel.</i> | <i>presto</i> | <i>ritard.</i> | <i>ritard.</i> | <i>lento</i> |
| instrumentation | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| symbols |  | finger snapping | first rain drops |
| |  | chest clapping | heavy rain |
| |  | thigh clapping | windy storm |
| |  | foot stomping | thunder |

Body percussion storm Participatory activities within the performance

Audience participation with body percussion

For the end of the concert, we planned a *body percussion* activity that would allow the audience to clap rhythmically: this was to take place in conjunction with an encore of Beethoven's *Turkish March* played at the end of the program, accompanying the moment when the animals leave the Ark. But even during the first performance with the parade of animals the *entrainment*¹⁸ phenomenon occurred: the audience reacted after a few bars with rhythmic applause in the meter of the music. Thus, the participation activity took place spontaneously. The conductor responded to this by directing the dynamics of the applause in accordance with the score and, as usual, the audience appreciated this kind of participation.

Child performers on stage

After the 'best chirp' competition between instruments, the conductor announced "a surprise" to the audience. A group of primary school children from the Sigismund Toduță College of Music took to the stage to perform a minuet from Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*, alongside the musicians.

¹⁸ The phenomenon whereby a person synchronizes his movement with the beat of the music. Sylvie Nozaradan, Younes Zerouali, Isabelle Peretz, André Mouraux, "Capturing with EEG the Neural Entrainment and Coupling Underlying Sensorimotor Synchronization to the Beat", in *Cerebral Cortex* vol. 25, no. 3, 2013, pp. 736-747, p. 736, <https://academic.oup.com/cercor/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/cercor/bht261>, accessed on 09.08.2020.

Conclusions

The Noah's Ark educational concert is one of the programs analyzed by the author within the framework of the research on the elements of mediation in educational concerts. It has been designed to follow the results of scientific research and examples of good practices. The young musicians who participated in the concert applied their knowledge of music mediation and gained valuable experience in the field. The concert was a great success and has been repeated 15 times (in Romanian and Hungarian); it is planned to be repeated at various philharmonic institutions in Romania. We hope that the present study can become an example of good practice for those who wish to work within the field of educational concerts.

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