



# Perspectives

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“Space is a Really Big Place”:

Life Cycle of a Song

Making Music With Joy!

Active Listening, Singing,

Playing and

Dancing with Children

Research Review

Rhythmic Engagement with

Music in Early Childhood:

A Replication and Extension.

Journal of Research in

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Book Review

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Research

Within Reach

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# Perspectives

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Volume 10 Number 2, 2015

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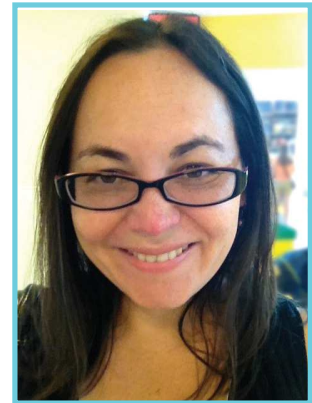
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# Letter from the Editor

Beatriz Ilari, PhD  
*Perspectives* Editor—[bilari@ecmma.org](mailto:bilari@ecmma.org)



Welcome to the Spring 2015 issue of *Perspectives*!

I like to think of an editor as a puzzle maker. Each issue of a journal is a different puzzle that the editor puts together. But the puzzle could never be completed if it weren't for its "pieces", or the many people that make it exist. That is, editing a journal offers many opportunities for one to learn about the profession while meeting some wonderful colleagues – authors, reviewers, proofreaders, translators, editorial assistants of all kinds, and graphic designers, to name a few.

Aside from learning the ropes of the job, in the past few months I have been working closely with the Chair of the Editorial Committee, Dr. Diana Dansereau, to implement changes to *Perspectives*, as our journal continues to grow. The first important change that we have implemented refers to our peer review board, which has been expanded. Please join me in welcoming Drs. Elizabeth Andang'o, Angela Barker, Lily Chen-Hafteck, Claudia Gluschankof, Lisa Koops and Diane Persellin to our team of reviewers. They bring with them expertise in different subareas of early childhood music education, as well as different worldviews, which will enrich our journal. And please stay tuned for more changes in the forthcoming months!

This issue of *Perspectives* brings forward two articles on the theme "Music for, with and by young children". In the first featured article, Dr. Amanda Niland, Chair of ISME's Early Childhood Music Education Commission and lecturer in the Institute of Early Childhood of Macquarie University in Australia, discusses the life cycle of songs in early childhood. The second featured article, by Dr. Graça Boal Palheiros from the Escola Superior de Educação of the Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Portugal, celebrates the work of Belgian music educator, Jos Wuytack, who, in his lifetime, has taught more than 1000 workshops and courses for music educators, spanning more than 50 countries. Jos Wuytack has influenced an entire generation of music educators across the globe, and many of his ideas can be applied to the education of young children. I am certain that fellow early childhood music educators will find some worthwhile ideas in the article that can be adapted and applied into their own teaching. Diana Greene invites us to ponder the "difficult child" in early childhood music education in her inspiring Notable Notes. In research review, Judith Sullivan discusses a recent study on rhythmic entrainment in infancy and toddlerhood. Angela Barker, reviews 3 recent studies on young children's perception and production of music, and Leilani Miranda shares her impressions of *Original Mind* by Dee Coulter.

I look forward to many more excellent papers on a wide range of topics flowing in over the next few months. Please remember that your work is vital as we assemble these "puzzles" in the near future.

*Beatriz Ilari*  
Editor, *Perspectives*

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# MAKING MUSIC WITH JOY! ACTIVE LISTENING, SINGING, PLAYING AND DANCING WITH CHILDREN

Graça Boal Palheiros

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## Introduction

In recent decades, extensive research has been carried out into musical development suggesting not only that humans are born with strong music potential but also that, from early childhood onwards, they display remarkable musical abilities and competences that are similar to those of adults (Trehub, 2006). Children's musical development occurs through acculturation, or, regular exposure to the music of their culture, but also involves training (Sloboda, 1985). Music educators and researchers alike have emphasized the importance of offering children the best possible music education during their early years. Children's learning potential proves very high (Gordon, 2000) and their musical development may be accelerated by practice. Singing nursery rhymes, songs with actions, moving, and playing musical games develop language, motor co-ordination, and communication skills. Numerous studies show the benefits of musical learning for children's cognitive, linguistic, logical and spatial abilities (Rauscher, 2009; Schellenberg, 2003). Other studies emphasize its impact on the development of concentration, creativity, emotional sensitivity, self-discipline, self-confidence, and sociability. In sum, musical learning contributes to children's intellectual, personal and social development as well as to their physical development, health and well-being (Hallam, 2010).

There are many different pedagogies and teaching strategies in music education. This paper presents the Wuytack music pedagogy, its pedagogical principles, methodologies, and teaching strategies for a music education based on activity, creativity and community. The examples suggested are designed for children about 4 to 8 years-old but may easily be adapted to younger children.

## The Wuytack music pedagogy

Based on the ideas of the Orff-Schulwerk, the Wuytack music pedagogy has been developed by Belgium composer and music educator Jos Wuytack in more than fifty countries all over the world, especially in Belgium, France, Canada, the United States, Portugal and Spain (Boal-Palheiros, 1998). As a premise, music education should be accessible to all children rather than just to the most gifted. Children learn music better when making music with joy, actively and creatively and in community.

Wuytack (1993) departs from both the Ancient Greek concept of *Musikae*, representing the unity of word, sound and movement, and from Carl Orff's elemental music (Orff, 1964), which combines movement, dance, and language to involve children as participants. Wuytack's (1982) music education integrates three forms of artistic expression: verbal (poetry, theatre, drama), musical – vocal and instrumental (singing, playing, creating, improvising) and bodily expression (movement, mime, and dance).

Children's voice and body prove natural instruments, and therefore, correspondingly, their primary means of musical expression. Musical instruments are an extension of the body not intended to replace but rather to enrich vocal expression (Wuytack, 1970). The model for Orff ensembles stemmed from Orff's knowledge of the Gamelan

(Dolloff, 1993). Orff instruments (glockenspiel, xylophone, metallophone and unpitched percussion – metal, wood and membranes) represent a useful resource in the classroom alongside other instruments or sound objects. They seem particularly appropriate to children because they are small, relatively easy to play, possess interesting timbres, and form a 'multicultural' classroom ensemble, which evokes traditional instruments from diverse world cultures (Wuytack, 1993).

## Pedagogical principles in music education

Wuytack proposes a set of pedagogical principles for teaching music to children coupled with very clear methodologies for guiding music teachers (Wuytack, 1993). They are as follows:

**Activity** is a key word for any musical and learning experience. Through activity, children participate in musical practice, and develop concentration and attention skills. Learning clearly proves more effective when children are actively engaged in the learning process.

**Creativity** develops children's imagination and understanding. Creative thinking in music occurs at various different levels, from the spontaneous songs of young children to the works of great composers (Webster, 2002). Children can create music using their voice, body and instruments in order both to express themselves musically and to communicate through music.

**Community** music implies social participation (Blacking, 1995; Small, 1999). Group music making is encouraged by including all children in all musical activities regardless of their different abilities. Ensemble music promotes inclusive education insofar that all children contribute to the group, learn from each other and develop social skills (Wuytack, 1993).

**Adaptation** is essential in teaching as well as in learning. Planning carefully is as important as being flexible in changing the lesson plan according to the circumstances. Teachers need to adapt the musical repertoire to children's ages, interests, abilities, development levels and whichever musical cultures coexist in the classroom. They also need to adapt their teaching approaches to specific learning contexts, which are part of the broader educational, cultural, and social systems.

**Imitation** is the reproduction of an act similar to that performed by a model. Infants imitate the expressive movements of others and much human behaviour is learned

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through observing and imitating other people. Imitation is applied widely in musical learning as a basis for musical performance and creativity.

**Totality** is relevant when learning a musical piece. Its different parts and musical elements are better learned when related to its whole. Totality also holds relevance in music lessons. At the end of lessons, a 'TV concert' integrating the lesson's activities proves highly motivating for both the children and their teachers (Wuytack, 1993). Wuytack also proposes other aspects that enhance music teaching and learning:

**Emotion** is fundamental in music. The enjoyment of music contributes to emotional development. Children's emotional responses to music are culturally learned and can be educated and thus helping them understand the character of music.

**Balance** between mind and body implies relating cognitive awareness to motor co-ordination. Neurological research has pointed to the error of separating mind and body (Damásio, 1994). Psychomotor and cognitive development, focusing on the body and the mind, contribute to children's global development.

**Movement** is indispensable to learning, thinking, and mental processing (Blakemore, 2003). Dalcroze explored body movements in musical learning. Infants respond to



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music with bodily movements and children enjoy movement, either improvised or associated to singing, playing and dancing (Wuytack, 1993).

Arts are important in their own right for education and music itself contributes to children's sensitivity and expressiveness (Winner et al, 2013). Other arts (theatre, drama, mime, dance, painting or literature) are welcome as they also enrich children's artistic education.

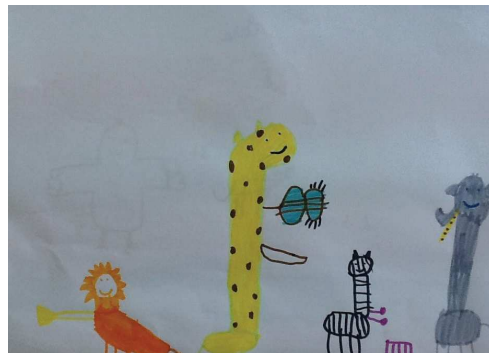



Figure 1: A child's drawing: the four animals playing musical instruments: A lion playing the trombone, a giraffe playing the violin, a zebra playing the xylophone and an elephant playing the soprano recorder. Image courtesy of Graça Boal-Palheiro.




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## The pleasure of learning, the joy of making music

Reflecting upon effective ways of teaching and learning, Wuytack (see figure 2) has been profoundly inspired by an ancient Chinese thought, attributed to one of Confucius' disciples, and which he practices during his courses for music teachers:

*Tell me, I forget*  
*Show me, I remember*  
*Involve me, I understand*

This idea synthesizes Wuytack's way of teaching and involving learners. For example, when teaching a dance, the teacher first explains it and the children listen. Should only the explanation be provided, they will likely forget it. Secondly, the teacher shows how to dance it, and the children observe the movement and think. The visual demonstration becomes better remembered. Thirdly, the children dance, becoming independent from the teacher. They do not only know how to dance but they can dance as they have learned it well, are conscious of it and fully involved in it.

After learning the dance, children perform it several times both to improve it and to enjoy it. Educators fostering the best possible quality here take on the greatest of importance. This develops children musically while giving them the satisfaction of achieving good results and having positive experiences. After training the technical aspects, children perform the piece time and again in order to fully enjoy it. The attitudes of educators are also crucial: far more than transmitting knowledge about music, they need to love music, understand children and communicate to them the pleasure of making and appreciating music. In order to develop musical understanding, starting with musical experience is

essential, getting involved with music actively and creatively, learning in group, and making music with joy!

## Active music listening

Children encounter difficulties in listening attentively to the "classical" Western repertoire because of both its musical complexity and their unfamiliarity with it (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001). Music unfolds in time, and its totality is therefore hard to perceive. Visual perception of art, conversely, takes place in a given moment and thus making it easier to perceive its totality (Wuytack, 1971). Children understand and enjoy classical music far better when active

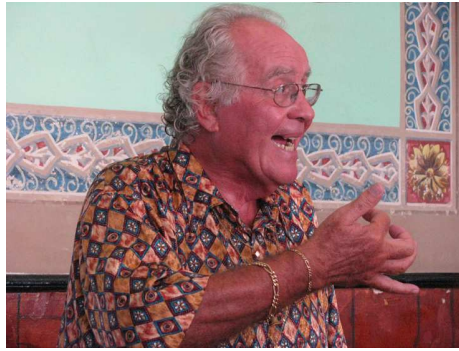


Figure 2:  
Jos Wuytack.  
Image courtesy  
of Graça  
Boal Palheiros  
and Jos Wuytack.

teaching strategies are deployed. Being active (involved, with intentional and focused listening) increases concentration on the music (Boal-Palheiros & Wuytack, 2006). Visual materials and bodily movement also serve to enhance musical appreciation (Geringer et al., 1997; Shiobara, 1994).

Active music listening through recourse to the Musicogram was first created by Wuytack (1971) for teaching school children to listen to classical music. His approach demands children's physical and mental participation with visual perception serving to enhance musical perception. This undergoes development in the following phases:

- 1) Children learn the musical materials before listening through performing them. While listening, they recognize those musical materials and may also simultaneously perform them.
- 2) Children focus their attention on the music by following the teacher's indications on a musicogram – a visual representation of the totality of the musical form.
- 3) Children listen again whilst simultaneously indicating on their own small musicograms and thereby demonstrating their understanding of the music.

The musicogram (figure 3) works best from late childhood onwards. However, the first phase in the active music listening system does adapt to early childhood as it incorporates learning the music through performance (e.g. moving, singing, playing or dancing).

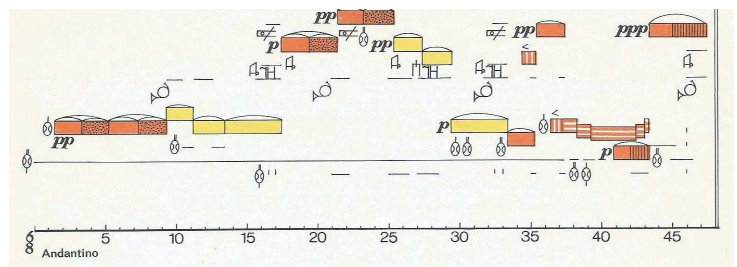


Figure 3: Jos Wuytack's Musicogram of G. Bizet's "The Doll" from *Children's Games* Image courtesy of Jos Wuytack.

## Teaching strategies

Selecting the musical repertoire. The most suitable is instrumental music with a regular meter and a clear structure. Obviously, other genres and styles are also welcome but they might be approached with different strategies (Wuytack & Boal Palheiros, 2009). Among the rich variety of orchestral music, short fragments are recommended (about one to three minutes) in order to facilitate children's concentration. The repertoire may include works for or about children (e.g. Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye*, Kabalevsky's *The Comedians*).

Teaching the musical materials. Introducing the music may include verbal, vocal, instrumental or bodily expression: singing themes; playing rhythms; moving or dancing to the music. In order to facilitate learning, these performances should be correct and expressive. To keep children active, they are always given a task. Strategies are selected according to the music and to the children's age: for example, movement is particularly suitable for young children. Teachers may increase the children's motivation by introducing the music and the composer (e.g. its story, the historical context or biographical data).

Listening to the music at least three times. Research has emphasised the effects of repetition and familiarity upon children's responses to music. Nicolas (1997) identifies the third hearing as the best. (Wuytack (1971) also recommends listening to the music at least three times in order to grasp its totality: first, children get a general impression, then they recognize its musical materials, and later, they understand and enjoy the music.

## A sample of musical activities and teaching strategies

In this section, some musical activities and teaching strategies are suggested, including verbal expression, singing, dancing and listening to music.

1.  $\frac{2}{4}$  Tch Tch pff pff Tch  
 2.  $\frac{2}{4}$  Tch pff Tch pff Tch pff tch Pff  
 3.  $\frac{2}{4}$  Di be di be Di be dib, Di be di be, dib dib Tuu tuu Tch

Figure 4: *The train* by Jos Wuytack. Image courtesy of Jos Wuytack.

## 1) Verbal expression: rhythmic ostinato "The train" by Jos Wuytack

### Teaching strategies

- The teacher performs each ostinato; children learn the ostinati, through imitation.
- The class is divided into three groups: each group performs its own ostinato.
- The three ostinati are superimposed in the numbered order and then again in the reverse order. They are performed many times, first *accelerando*, then *ritardando*, imitating a locomotive.

This short piece draws interest for its capacity to develop rhythmical abilities, vocal expression and articulation, and for experiencing different timbres, pitch, and tempos. This helps vocal development, training breathing and the diaphragm while potentially also stimulating the creation of similar pieces by children. And last but not least, it is fun!

## 2) Singing: song with motions and hand puppets "I met to pet"

Jos Wuytack

An e - le - phant I called. Gi - raffes I on - ly met. A  
 li - on makes me run a - way. A ze - bra I like to pet.

Figure 5: *I met to pet* by Jos Wuytack. Image courtesy of Jos Wuytack.

### Motions

- An elephant: mime the elephant's trunk
- I called: point to your self
- Giraffes: one arm up right mimics the giraffes' long neck while the hand mimes the shape of the head
- I only met: shake hands
- A lion: ruffle your own hair to imitate a lion's mane
- Makes me run away: make a running motion
- A zebra: arms held horizontally, indicating stripes
- I like to pet: stroke arm

## Form

Children sing the song first without motions. Then, they progressively substitute the words by the respective motions: they substitute one more idea each time they perform the song. After each version, children improvise over eighth measures on Orff instruments in F pentatonic: 1. Glockenspiel, 2. Xylophone, 3. Metallophone, 4. Unpitched percussion (this sequence twice), 9. Tutti. Alternatively, they may also use bodily percussion: 1. Snap, 2. Clap, 3. Knees, 4. Stamp, (this sequence twice), 9. Tutti.

## Dramatization

Four children, each with an animal hand puppet (lion, giraffe, zebra, and elephant) hide behind the scene (a puppet theatre). Each animal appears only when its word is substituted in the song. For the last complete performance, the four animals appear and dance together.



Figure 6: Four hand puppets: elephant, giraffe, lion, and zebra. Image courtesy of Graça Boal-Palheiros

## Teaching strategies

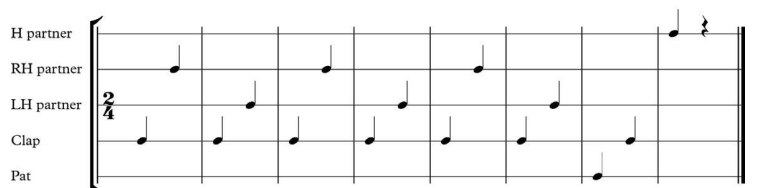
- Children learn the melody, phrase by phrase, imitating the teacher.
- They sing the melody on different syllables, indicating the melodic line.
- They learn the text, saying it expressively, and sing the song with the text.
- They learn the motions and sing the song with the motions.
- They perform the song, alternating in the indicated order each time with improvisation.
- They perform the whole piece with drama, using hand puppets.

This piece integrates musical elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, form), and follows the principles of activity (participation), creativity (improvisation), community (group performance) and totality (vocal expression, movement and drama).



Figure 7: A puppet theatre: kindergarten children playing with the four animals.

## 3) Singing: song and dance with body percussion "I like you"



"I Like you" by Jos Wuytack in Figure 8. Image courtesy of Jos Wuytack.





Figure 9. Kindergarten children clapping hands.

### Teaching strategies

- Children learn the song, phrase by phrase, imitating the teacher.
- They learn the body percussion and perform it individually.
- They sing the song and perform the body percussion with a partner.
- They improvise movement individually to the music improvised by the teacher during eight measures. On the eighth measure, they stop in front of a new partner and the game starts over.

This piece develops motor coordination (singing and moving), creativity (improvisation), and sociability (meeting different partners), and the concept of form (two parts: song with body percussion, and improvised movement).

## 4) Active music listening – G. Bizet’s “Children’s Games”

Children’s Games is a collection of twelve short pieces by Georges Bizet (1838-1875) for piano (4 hands) composed in 1871. These pieces describe different children’s games, and, therefore, evoke childhood. Five of them were also orchestrated and grouped under the name Petite Suite.



Figure 10. “Children’s Games” by Pieter Breughel, the Elder (1525-1569) (Public domain, Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Children.jpg>)

Children’s Games is also the title of an oil-on-panel painted in 1560 by Pieter Breughel, the Elder, a Flemish renaissance artist. The painting depicts children, from toddlers to adolescents, riding hobby-horses, playing with dolls and engaged in leap-frog from among eighty games that have been identified.

### Teaching strategies

- Introduction to the music: children learn and sing the melody of the lullaby ‘The doll’ (transposed to F Major), while gently balancing the body.
- Like most lullabies, this one has a soft melody and slow tempo.



Figure 11. “The doll” by G. Bizet

- First listening: children listen to the piano version of ‘The Doll’, while gently rocking their real or imaginary doll.
- Second listening: children listen again and recognize the timbre of the piano.
- Information about the music: the teacher explains the title of this work and the title of this movement.
- Children observe Breughel’s painting, and try to identify some games (e.g. children playing with dolls inside a house, below left).

- Third listening: children listen to the orchestral version of 'The Doll', and try to recognize the instruments and their timbres while 'miming' them in imitation of the teacher.
- Fourth listening: children listen again while visualizing and 'playing' the main instruments in their order of appearance.

## Suggestions for further activities

- Listen to The top or Soap bubbles while performing the typical movements of these games.
- Invent your own movements while listening to other pieces in this work.
- Observe the painting Boy blowing bubbles (1869) by French artist Edouard Manet (1832-1883).
- Compare the way in which the two artists (painter and musician) portray the hobby horses.
- Create your own music describing one of the games composed by G. Bizet.
- Make your own drawings illustrating one of the games depicted by P. Breughel.



Figure 12. Edouard Manet (1832-1883) - *Boy Blowing bubbles* (Public domain source: <http://www.wikiart.org/en/edouardmanet-boy-blowing-bubbles-1869>)

## Conclusion

Wuytack's active music pedagogy – active music listening, performing, and creating – requires children's physical and mental participation throughout the process of music learning. His way of teaching deeply engages the children at the musical, cognitive, social, and emotional levels. This leads to significant experiences, which improve children's musical development. The quality of musical experiences seems far more relevant than their quantity. Therefore, educators need to consider the long-lasting effects that their music teaching may have on children's musical learning, and the importance of achieving quality, both in school music and in music teacher education. ❖

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