

mozarthaus

st. gilgen am wolfgangsee

Ischler Straße 15 · Tel. 06227 / 20242



Friday, 14th January 2022 10:00 am–6:30 pm UTC + 1h
Mozarthaus St. Gilgen

Symposium

“Child Prodigies”

Children with special skills and
requirements

Program



EINE KOOPERATION VON



10:00 am Musical performance

Shang En Hseih (age 11, pre-college, piano) playing
Un Sospiro by **Franz Liszt**

10:15 am Greeting

by **Chancellor Professor Elisabeth Gutjahr** and **Professor Martin Losert**

10:30 am Gary E. McPherson

Musical Giftedness and Talent Development

One of the most contentious debates in psychology, education, biology and other related disciplines centers on the source of exceptional ability. To what extent can the remarkable achievements of eminent musicians, intellectuals, visual artists, writers and so on be explained through “nature” (genetic endowment) or “nurture” (the environment)? How can these achievements, regardless of their source, be identified and fostered?

The explanation I provide builds on my research across 30+ years as a music educator and researcher that has been devoted to studying children’s musical development and the small pool of children within this population we distinguish as musical prodigies who display extraordinary musical abilities. The presentation will conclude by showing examples of how the various facets described during my presentation form a distinct and unique choreography of interactions that is unique for each child. As part of this explanation I will provide a hypothetical explanation of the facets that are believed to contribute most to the emergence and nurturing of musical prodigiousness. Since much of the existing literature is based on little more than anecdotic support an important part of this explanation will describe issues that would benefit from empirical confirmation of the ideas expressed in my presentation.

11:15 am Tobias Cramm

**Aspects of an alternative way of learning music:
the Neapolitan partimenti example (17th/18th
century)**

We work with the elements we have to hand and enrich them. Music unfolds through recognisable, pattern-like structures. We grow into these structures through exploration – basic structures are identified and varied in many ways, modified, expanded, made accessible. To do so, we

use musical, tonal, instrumental, vocal devices. It's about weaving a web of 'interacting voices' that builds on the process of 'counterpointing', i.e. relating one voice to another, whereupon a musical enactment emerges. In my contribution, I would like to give as specific an insight as I can into the different ways of working with the Neapolitan partimenti, inviting people to try things out for themselves, to listen inwardly, to let their own creativity flow. In short, I'll show how music can (once again) be increasingly experienced as learning a language can.

12:30 pm Anton Distelberger

The perception of autistic people

A person's perception is highly variable, as it is determined by their individual circumstances. There are also at least two kinds of perception – the perception of people on the autism spectrum on one hand, and how we, the 'neurotypicals', perceive these people on the other. Accordingly, we should try to consider how people with autism spectrum 'perceive the world'. Only a conscious change of perspective can open up new viewpoints. Soon it becomes clear that certainty and absolute knowledge do not exist! We easily overlook the fact that the people around us often construct their own realities – as we all do. What's good? What's beautiful? What's pleasant? It's all relative and it always depends on your own point of view. As Patricia Marchart explains, if we seek to unlock the 'autistic worlds', we must exercise caution, be willing to perceive stimuli differently and, in turn, use them to communicate (Autistische Welten, Löcker Verlag, 2017). Following these approaches, makes it quickly become clear that autism is not an 'illness' in the conventional sense. Autism is a condition characterised by very specific, individually coloured forms and types of perception that are quite obviously different from what the majority of people expect. The more we learn about it, the clearer we are about how much we still don't know. Autism in itself is not curable, however, compassionate 'seeing' can open doors within our world and our society. Violence is not a solution, even more so when dealing with autistic people, coercion leads nowhere; only appreciation and love provide access to human dignity and a life worth living. A conscious change in our approach – even if only tiny – can ultimately 'change worlds'

01:15 pm Break

02:15 pm Martin Losert/students

Musical talent, development and socialisation

As part of their studies, students developed their own research projects that addressed the topic of 'musical talent, development and socialisation'. The student project groups present the results of their research, through the medium of posters, on the following topics: Competent performance assessment through testing in both regular schools and at music schools; Quality in online teaching; Socialisation of adolescent choral singers; The connection between socio-economic background and performance anxiety of young musicians; Skill acquisition in group piano lessons; Intercultural education; Knowledge of other cultures.

03:15 pm Emelyne Bingham

Autism, Savantism, and the Social Construction of an Artistic Genius

What is the relationship between autism and savantism? This session addresses this question by examining the qualities, histories, and theories of both syndromes that contribute to the social construction of the artistic genius stereotype. Dr. Bingham will also address future implications for continued research involving those persons impacted by savantism.

04:00 pm Break

04:30 pm Irma Järvelä

Genomic studies to analyze the biological basis of music perception and practice

Although music and other forms of art can develop in diverse directions, they are linked to the genetic profiles of populations. Genomic methods allow the analysis of biological basis of music-related human traits. When searching for genetic markers inherited together with musical aptitude, genes affecting inner ear development and brain function were identified. Analysis of the human transcriptome after listening to music and music performance uncovered the activities of genes affecting hearing, birdsong, cognition, and language development. These data suggest that music and language share a common evolutionary background. In addition, identification of several genes (e.g. SNCA, RGS2, RGS9) known

to contribute to dopaminergic metabolism support the role of the dopaminergic pathway as a mediator of the effects of music in the human body.

05:15 pm Leonhard Thun-Hohenstein und Helena Beyer, Beate Hege, Rebecca Kahr, Raphael Semiz, Lucia Thomas, Christiaan Willemse, Lene Wittke

Thought Experiment. Music – Talent – Mozart?

Mozart is perhaps the most famous child prodigy we know and his life can give us clues for understanding the concept of talent. What biological and psychosocial influences (bio-psycho-social model) shaped his life? What happened to him during his life and how did these events influence his personality and how he lived? Alongside a group of students from the Mozarteum University and the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, we will explore these aspects of Mozart's life and compare them with what we know today about talent, as we endeavour to determine how best to interact with highly talented children, in this case musically talented children, in a caring and supportive way.

06:00 pm Musical performance

Curtis Phill Hsu (piano, 3th semester in bachelor concert discipline) playing *Déjà-vécu* by **Karim Zech** (age 17, studying Musical Composition at Musikum Salzburg)

With an introduction to the piece by composer Karim Zech

Covid-19 safety measures:

Admission for vaccinated and recovered guests only; the wearing of FFP-2 masks is compulsory.

Gary E. McPherson studied music at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, before completing a master of music education at Indiana University, a doctorate of philosophy at the University of Sydney and a Licentiate and Fellowship in trumpet performance through Trinity College, London. He is the Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and has served as National President of the Australian Society for Music Education and President of the International Society for Music Education. His research interests are broad and his approach interdisciplinary. His most important research examines the acquisition and development of musical competence, and motivation to engage and participate in music from novice to expert levels. With a particular interest in the acquisition of visual, aural and creative performance skills, he has attempted to understand more precisely how music students become sufficiently motivated and self-regulated to achieve at the highest level. Among his particular research interests is a lifelong interest in understanding musical giftedness and talent. Gary has published well over 250 academic publications including 15 volumes for Oxford University Press. His latest edited publication is the two volume Oxford Handbook of Music Performance, to be released in early 2022.

Born in 1971, **Tobias Cramm** studied piano, and later also fortepiano/historical performance practice, in Basel, Switzerland. He now works as a piano teacher and freelance musician. Meeting and accompanying Alma Deutscher during her early childhood (2010 to approx. 2016) led him to conduct research into the learning traditions of the conservatori di Napoli (Conservatories of Naples, 17th/18th century) with regard to their potential for a renewed practice of creative music learning (foci: partimenti and solfeggi). This has resulted in a multifaceted exchange and mutual learning with people of different ages and musical backgrounds, which is also reflected beyond his work in the 'mentiParti' project (next iteration known as 'mentiParti 2022', 10-16 July in Basel and online, see www.partimenti.com).

Anton Diestelberger is a special education and remedial teacher and chairman of Rainman's Home (www.rainman.at). At three locations across Vienna, the association offers structured day care for people with autism or similar special needs.

Martin Losert studied school music, instrumental and music academy education, and concert examination saxophone at the Berlin University of the Arts, followed by Political Science at the TU Berlin and Musicology at the FU Berlin. He has been professor of instrumental and vocal pedagogy at the Mozarteum Salzburg since March 2012. Between 2014 and 2019, he and Simone Heilgendorff led the 'ConTempOhr. Vermittlung zeitgenössischer Musik – mediating contemporary music' study focus in the inter-university 'Science and Art' programme. Since 2019, he has headed the '(Inter)Mediation – Music – Mediation – Context' study focus in the same programme. His previous academic publications have dealt with relative solmisation, music didactic concepts, improvisation, happiness and instrumental teaching, interpretation, learning to move at the instrument, playing music, conscious listening, new music in instrumental teaching and aesthetic education.

Emelyne Bingham is an American conductor, speaker, and an autism self-advocate. She has lead concerts of the Nashville Symphony as its assistant conductor and the Columbus Women's Orchestra as its music director, as well as performances of the Toledo Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Nashville Opera, Nashville Ballet, and Ars Nova Huntsville. She has conducted recordings with the New York City Ballet Orchestra and members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and New York Philharmonic. She has served as the artistic director for the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences outreach project in partnership with the Leonard Bernstein Center and the Nashville Symphony. Currently, she serves as the Artistic Director of the Young Texas Artists Music Competition and teaches at the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University. In 2011, she was named a research member at the esteemed Vanderbilt Kennedy Center where she assists with research on music and autism. Her numerous performances in the recording, broadcast, and movie studio with colleagues ranging from Larry Gatlin to Sandi Patti to Amy Grant, have been broadcast on A&E, MTV, CMT, Public Television, the NAXOS American Classics Series, and National Public Radio. Dr. Bingham has given keynote presentations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the ABLE Assembly at the Berklee School of Music, and the 16. Fachtagung für Inklusives Musizieren, Institut für musikpädagogische Forschung, Musikdidaktik und Elementares Musizieren, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien. Dr. Bingham is an active member of Pi Kappa Lambda and the Recording Academy and holds degrees from Boston University and the Indiana University School of Music.

Irma Järvelä is a medical and clinical geneticist by training and have strong background in identification of genes underlying human disease genes and traits. My major focus has been molecular background of children's brain disorders, autism spectrum disorders and human lactase deficiencies that led to the identification of numerous genes and their variants, many of them as a pioneer work in the field. In order to understand normal brain function our group performed for the first time genome wide studies (GWA) in musical aptitude and studied the effect of music performance and listening on human transcriptome and miRNAs expression. The results identified genes affecting birdsong and language development. These data suggest that music and language share a common evolutionary background. In addition, identification of several genes contributing to dopaminergic metabolism were detected.

Professor **Leonhard Thun-Hohenstein** is a specialist in child and adolescent psychiatry and psychotherapeutic medicine, with an additional specialism in neuropaediatrics. He is also a psychodrama therapist and the former head (until 31 January 2021) of the University Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University Hospital Salzburg, Campus CDK, Paracelsus Medical Private University. He has been teaching 'Social Competence in the Study of Human Medicine' since 2009. President of the Austrian Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (ÖGKJP, 2018-2020), Supervisory Board ProMente Salzburg, Presidium Member of the Austrian Society for Child Protection in Medicine (ÖGKiM).