

Under a Preservation Order?

The Innovative Potential of *Musikvermittlung* to Renew Concert Life

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“Just as one is told about the advantages of a frying-pan cleaner at a trade-fair stall, today art is explained by professional “interpreters” before one can enjoy it. It can apparently no longer speak for itself and about itself – that, too, is a statement about its condition”,

wrote the four authors of the pamphlet “Der Kulturinfarkt” [The Culture Heart Attack] in 2012, when – long before the COVID-19 crisis – they polemically painted a picture of what they saw as a cultural sector too heavily financed by public funding and on the verge of collapse (Haselbach et al. 2012a: 111).

The collapse has indeed occurred, but in the light of the Corona pandemic in a different way than expected. Practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* or “professional interpreters” (see above) have to struggle with the same problems as other actors in the (classical) music business, whether musicians, promoters or agents – resilience, creativity and savings are needed to deal with the current crisis in the concert business. After the initial shock at the beginning of the pandemic, the cultural sector was divided into two factions: one that hoped that everything would soon return to the way it was before the crisis and the other that hoped that this dramatic emergency braking might lead to a categorical rethinking.

“Politics has always given subsidised culture an increasingly costlier place, driven by the belief in growth and the bubbling taxes of the boom years. The idea that public culture is systemically relevant, that every production site is indispensable, is just an attempt to delay the presentation of the bill.” (Haselbach et al. 2012b)

Much has been said and written about the systemic relevance and indispensability of culture in German-language (social) media in recent months, but the realisation remains that the systemic relevance is mainly invoked by or apparent to those who are part of the art system. Outside the arts and culture scene, priorities are assessed differently in the face of exponentially rising unemployment, national debt for years to come, insolvencies and a profound sense of COVID-19 insecurity gripping all parts of society. On the other hand, there is a music business that is picking up speed under strict conditions, and in order to continue to exist needs interpreters between the inside of the concert hall and the outside social conditions even more than before: “This pandemic has shaken the ground under our organizations, and those without deep community foundations are in danger of collapse. The audience is just shaken: people are suffering financially, emotionally and psychologically.” (McIntyre 2020)

Today, practitioners of *Musikvermittlung*, in particular, are confronted with diverse challenges of interpretation: if they were already the actors within the concert business who were most aware that their own cultural standpoint can only be a starting point for projects with people in a differentiated society, it will become even more important in the future to mediate between different cultures, to negotiate cultural differences without violence and to find new interfaces to make concert halls, orchestras and ensembles relevant places of conversation and encounter (see Richter-Ibáñez 2018). If it was already difficult to address “everyone” in the 1970s, when Hilmar Hoffmann coined the catchphrase of “culture for all”, then today the situation seems even more confusing due to the current profound changes brought about by global migration. The anthropologist Steven Vertovec uses the term “super-diversity” for societies shaped by the changes in international migration patterns. He does not mean *more* or *larger*, but *more complex*, in terms of the present composition of the population in European states. While the traditional migration movement after World War II followed a simple pattern and large, homogeneous groups of people immigrated into Europe, such as rural Turks from Anatolia or workers from Southern Europe, the number of countries of origin has now increased exponentially. Regions from all over the world are now represented in the population of European states: refugees from wars and crises, reunited families, educational migrants, commuters and the permanent migration of global “high-performers” are changing our society (see Vertovec 2007).

Of course, art can speak for itself in this super-diverse society, but only to and with those who have learned and therefore understand its different

codes. It is therefore very urgent to have mediators who have mastered several artistic and cultural languages and are willing to learn them, who are open and curious about what a diverse audience feels, thinks and associates. This is not what the authors of *Kulturinfarkt* meant, but their polemic only really makes sense today.

In this article, I first describe the current state of *Musikvermittlung* in the cultural sector on the basis of primary modes of action such as moderation, interaction and staging, and on this basis ask what potential for innovation might lie in these modes of action for the classical concert and the staging of classical music in view of the expected consequences of the Corona pandemic.

Format versus Content

“When I say I am a Kunstvermittlerin [emphasis added] I have to explain myself. I have to describe, and possibly justify, what I mean by it. It’s not an easy business, *Kunstvermittlung* [emphasis added], let alone the term,” complain Carmen Mörsch and Eva Sturm, two pivotal figures in *Kunstvermittlung* (Henschel 2020: 5). The actors in *Musikvermittlung* are not much better off. Just like *Kunstvermittlung* (art mediation/education), *Musikvermittlung* also covers various fields of activity that are sometimes difficult to combine – from cultural education to audience development, from community art to audience engagement, from curating to visitor orientation, the paths are sometimes longer than expected. Once again, a finding from *Kunstvermittlung* that also applies to the field of music: “The term is used as a marker for art-related educational work in a wide variety of institutional settings as well as for forms of curating, art criticism, gallery sales or cultural management” (Henschel 2020: 19).

To explain and illustrate their professional practice to the uninitiated, the actors often list the formats through which *Musikvermittlung* is practised. They then speak, for example, of

- staged and moderated concerts for children,
- staged and contextualised concert formats,
- moderated concerts,
- introductory workshops and talks before or after concerts, or of
- outreach and community projects.

The listener quickly gets a superficial “aha” feeling: “Yes, I know that, I’ve heard of that before – so that’s what you call *Musikvermittlung*”. But if the conversation ends here, the core of *Musikvermittlung* is already missed. Because that would be like explaining love by listing forms of possible partnership, e.g.: love is found in

- registered partnerships,
- same-sex marriage,
- marriage in the church,
- long-distance relationships, or
- life-stage partnerships.

We would not accept these as a descriptions of love. Admittedly, I could say with the Austrian poet Erich Fried (1921–1988) “It is what it is, says *Musikvermittlung*”,¹ but then the article would be finished, and perhaps you would find that a shame.

When a Swiss colleague asked me for a metaphor of *Musikvermittlung* for her book, I sent her the following text:

“When architects are commissioned to renovate an old house [emphasis added], they consider what new lines of sight could be opened up, which walls should be moved or knocked down, and how the wooden floor could be given a fresh shine without destroying its texture.

When architects build a new house [emphasis added], they plan it together with the inhabitants and create places of communication, reflection and retreat.

Practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* are architects in concert life – they renovate and build new aesthetic spaces, definitely wheelchair accessible, but definitely not prefabricated.” (Wimmer in Weber 2018: 103)

Practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* often find themselves serving institutions in need of renovation, such as concert halls or orchestras. Like the many *Gründerzeit* era² buildings in Vienna, they could be left largely as they are, the stucco is quietly crumbling, but the substance is incredibly stable. However,

1 In reference to the poem “Was es ist” by Erich Fried, [online] <https://www.deutschelyrik.de/was-es-ist-1039.html> [10.4.2021].

2 Gründerzeit era: the Central European version of late 19th/early 20th century historicism.

you could also start renovating from the inside, because the needs of some of the residents have changed and by residents in this context I mean everyone involved in concert life: artists, artistic directors and the audience! Sometimes it is even time to build a new house altogether, because 19th-century architecture does not suit the new concert formats, nor the democratic societies of the 21st century.

“Opening New Perspectives”, or Putting Music into Context

Musikvermittlung looks for ways to continually create new relationships between music and its audience – one possible approach is to expose the cultural-historical or socio-cultural context of a composition in an original way during and before a concert, or to put the composition itself in a current or unusual context and so give it a surprising meaning. The social, historical or formal general conditions of a work influence its performance practice and can change and deepen the audience’s perception if this context is itself made the subject in an exciting way. The perspective basically defines an imaginary line that connects different things and points, and in this way makes new aspects possible. As such, it forms the conceptual line between context(s) and work that stimulates the audience’s listening and supports them in their transient perception of music.

Why do practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* use this method? I would like to quote Markus Poschner, the principal conductor of the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, who answered the question of whether classical music is in crisis in an interview:

“It would be news to me if Bruckner, Schubert and Mozart had a crisis. But what we have to think about every day is the way we communicate art. [...] How do I bring Schubert or Schönberg together with a school class, for example? **How do I arrange a meeting?** [emphasis added] This is not only an Upper Austrian problem, but a worldwide one. It is certainly no longer enough always to go on stage at the same time on a Saturday evening, start with the overture, then the concert, then a symphony, and then let’s see how many people are interested.” (Poschner, quoted from Grubmüller 2017)

“Context” in art goes back to the beginnings of what in the 1930s was known as social history. Just as historiography no longer exclusively presents a list of rulers’ genealogies or the course of wars and the conclusion of treaties,

the work of art is now also given a social background. Considerations are emerging that seek to tie social content to works of art and, in doing so, take into account the audience the works of art are addressed to and the effects that could be achieved through them (Draxler 1994). At the beginning of the 1960s, Umberto Eco abandoned the autonomous work of art in his publication “Opera aperta” (Eco 1962) and defined the “open work” of art, which only emerges in the interaction between the work and the recipient. The structure of interpretation of the work of art remains incomplete and is co-constructed by the listener or viewer. In this sense, the audience becomes an actor. Bakhtin describes this process as follows:

“The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers.” (Bakhtin 1982: 254)

In the following, a few examples will illustrate this way of working in *Musikvermittlung*:

Example I: Staging and contextualising

The Montforter Zwischentöne festival has been held in Feldkirch in Vorarlberg since 2015 and is curated by Folkert Uhde and Hans Joachim Gögl. They formulate their goal as “to establish a new festival form that combines everyday culture and music in formats that facilitate immediate aesthetic experiences” (Uhde/Gögl n.d.). Georg Friedrich Händel’s “Messiah”, which was performed in autumn 2016 as part of the focus on “Dying – On Letting Go”, had several anchoring points to everyday culture and facilitated immediate aesthetic experiences: the audience could enter the hall via two entrances, one “for non-believers” and one “for believers”. Visitors decided for themselves how they wanted to enter the concert hall. On their seats they found a card with questions to fill in about their own attitudes to the existential questions of the work. During the interval, the answers were evaluated and the results projected on the wall when they re-entered the hall. Three times during the concert, there was a live link to a reporter doing interviews. Hanno Settele, a former correspondent for ORF (state broadcasting company), was on the road to people and places, addressing the central questions of the work in a contemporary way. A comprehensive contextualisation of the oratorio therefore took

place, with experts on everyday life topics, such as bullying, terminal care, poverty, birth and resurrection.

Example II: Moderation as contextualisation

The context of a work can also be opened up for the audience in conversation with the artists at a concert. This is done, for example, in the format “listening twice” (see also Petri-Preis in this volume). The method is simple, but all the more effective for that: a work (usually of contemporary art music) is first presented to the audience without any explanation or comments, followed by a discussion with the interpreters of the work, introducing its structure or the particularities of the stylistics, and discussing details of the rehearsal work and the musicians’ personal references to the work in dialogue with the artists. This is followed by the second performance of the piece, so the listener has the pleasure of an intuitive perception and also a contextualised rendition in a concert.

Accordingly, practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* are looking for ways to put the repertoire of concert life into a context that, in Bakhtin’s sense, connects the real world (current and historical) with the world represented in pieces of music.

“Shifting Walls or Tearing Them Down” – the Audience as Actor

Gerhart Hauptmann writes that in 1889 he wrote his play “Vor Sonnenaufgang” [Before Sunrise] “without even thinking of the audience, as if the stage did not have three but four walls” (Brauneck 1974: 163). A concert is not a play, but how many concerts have we experienced where there is an invisible wall between the stage and the audience? A key task of practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* is to find suitable moments in the concert to reduce or even eliminate this separation. There are now many examples of interaction between musicians and audience, two of which are mentioned here to illustrate the approach: *Im Klang* (at the Wiener Konzerthaus) and *Mittendrin* (at the Berlin Konzerthaus) are formats in which the audience takes a seat directly in the orchestra in order to immerse themselves in the orchestral sound at close quarters. Changing seats between movements is encouraged.

Why do practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* want to give the audience the chance to get so close to the action? Because music is an opportunity for communication, and through communication relationships are created between

the musicians and the person in the nearest seat in the audience which are artistically refined in the concert through the music. Interaction in this sense does not mean taking part, but a special way of active listening on the part of the audience, which reaches a completely different intensity when sitting chair to chair with the orchestra's oboist or violinist, directly feeling the musician's body breathing, sweating, turning the pages, concentrating.

In 2016, the Ensemble Modern, together with three other contemporary art music ensembles (London Sinfonietta, Asko|Schönberg and Remix Ensemble), launched the "Connect" project in Frankfurt, commissioning new compositions that interactively involve the listeners in the action and already embed this in the work (see Toelle in this anthology).

"I have long been a fan of collaborative theatre that interacts with the audience, creating theatrical experiences in which the audience become protagonists of the drama. Since I am also very interested in politically engaged music and music theatre, I am bringing together elements from both fields here." (Philip Venables quoted from Ensemble Modern 2018)

Here, the composer Venables hints at an attitude that will appear later in this article as "artistic citizenship". This artistic approach to interaction in the work itself is currently being taken up by numerous artists in the contemporary music and music theatre scene and is regarded as a field of experimentation.

However, interaction with the audience can also be incorporated directly into classical concerts. In the context of a concert with the four percussionists from the Graz Philharmonic Orchestra, something that has become standard in concerts for children took place to the delight of the adult audience: after the concert, those interested were invited to try out the timpani, marimba and drum themselves and to give free rein to their playing instincts and, above all, their curiosity.

Practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* want to involve the audience in the concert process more than before, to encourage them to participate actively and enable them to gain new perspectives on the musical activity, in order to initiate aesthetic experiences that also continue to have an effect after the concert.

“Giving the Parquet Floor a Fresh Shine” – Opening Up Classical Concert Repertoires for Young Audiences

Children’s and youth concerts have become very differentiated since the early days of my career as a practitioner in *Musikvermittlung* in the concert business 25 years ago. Large orchestras regularly offer moderated, staged or choreographed concerts for schoolchildren and families. They find themselves in artistic dialogue with chamber music initiatives that stage perfectly rehearsed concerts in international cooperation. These lead children and young people into a different aesthetic world, where the boundaries between storytelling, theatre, dance, performance or concert blur in favour of a poetic *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Musicians work together with directors, scenographers and choreographers in intensive rehearsal phases and create touring concerts that have found their own booming market in Europe’s major concert halls. In 1998, Anke Eberwein surveyed 76 professional German orchestras to ascertain which repertoire was played most often in their concerts for children. She came to the conclusion that “Peter and the Wolf” (1936) by Sergei Prokofiev, “Pictures at an Exhibition” (1874/1922) by Modest Musorgsky, “The Moldau” (1874) by Bedrich Smetana and “The Carnival of the Animals” (1886) by Camille Saint-Saëns, i.e. predominantly compositions for children or programme music from the classical-romantic repertoire, had been most frequently performed in children’s concerts since 1970 (Eberwein 1998: 72). This finding has changed significantly in the meantime: with the Tonkünstlerorchester Niederösterreich, Nicole Marte and Christoph Matl have shown that children under the age of ten can and will listen to an entire symphony by Gustav Mahler if it is contextualised accordingly.³ Thus, in the course of the symphony, Gustav Mahler himself, a hunter and a female muse appear or emerge from the orchestra to lead the audience through Mahler’s world of thought in search of the musical embodiment of a Titan, the description of nature and the impetus of springtime feelings. With Lilian Genn, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra embeds a classical orchestral repertoire by Franz Schubert or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in delightful stories

3 The Zentrum für Musikvermittlung has made a recording of the “Tonmahlerei” project by Nicole Marte and Christoph Matl, available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWKwvbopVJo> [9.1.2021].

for children.⁴ Likewise, concepts by Moritz Eggert and Heiko Hentschel⁵, or Bernhard Gander and Axel Petri-Preis⁶, show that there is no reason to shy away from contemporary music in children's and youth concerts if it is embedded in exciting storytelling. In painting and film workshops, writing workshops and workshops teaching composition, children and young people explore the nature of the works and the meaning that this music can have for them personally before attending the concert.

Up to this point, I have proceeded from my image of practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* as architects dealing with how an old house or concert can be renovated or filled with new life. Before I talk about the construction of a new house, I will give an overview of the formats in which *Musikvermittlung* appears today.

Formats – the Status Quo of *Musikvermittlung* in Concert Life

Musikvermittlung formats are continuously increasing in concert life: every orchestra and concert hall now has either a department, or at least one person, responsible for this area, and the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie even has around 20 people. New formats are developed here, and tried-and-tested touring projects are integrated into the houses' repertoire. In 2019, the German Orchestral Association even spoke of a tripling of music-educational workshop and concert activities between 2003/4 and 2017/18. (German Music Information Centre 2019). The main target groups are children, young people and families – although formats and projects for adults are on the increase.

Before the concert, musicians and practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* offer workshops and introductions to the special features of the works to be performed, to their instrument, or start longer participatory processes to provide their audience with low-threshold opportunities to make music

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- 4 A recording of the "Mozart reist nach Prag" school concert by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra is available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfqV8nislKU> [9.1.2021].
 - 5 A documentary on the Musiktheater im Revier Gelsenkirchen project "Teufels Küche" by Moritz Eggert and Heiko Hentschel can be seen online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyaxZAWhd7E> [9.1.2021].
 - 6 Axel Petri-Preis has made the concert "Monsters und Angels" with music by Bernhard Gander, available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiKszetdIl4> [9.1.2021].

together with the orchestra (Wimmer 2018). Most of these offers are directed at a subsequent concert visit or dress rehearsal.

At the moment, *the concert itself* is probably where most experiments with communicative situations take place. Concerts for children already have a long tradition, but interdisciplinary approaches and performative settings are being developed in artistic teams in increasingly professional ways. Here, too, there is a new proximity to concert formats for adults that integrate contextualisation into the performance, or declare interaction with the audience as a conscious design element. *Concert design* and *new concert formats* serve as technical terms to describe this practice. Martin Tröndle created the term *concert studies* around this practice (analogous to *museum studies*) to bundle together theoretical approaches consisting of a mix of musicological interpretation research, cultural studies, cultural management, cultural sociology and *Musikvermittlung* (see Tröndle 2018).

“Then They Plan it Together with the Residents” – Participatory Formats and Community Music

In the second part of my contribution, in keeping with the image of building a new house, it is no longer about renovation but about the transformation of the music business. The second part of my metaphor does not concern the renovation of the regular music business from within, but its transformation: “When architects build a **new house**, they plan it together with the inhabitants and create places of communication, contemplation and retreat”.

In 2018, the six nominees of the 13th “Junge Ohren Preis” [Young Ears Award]⁷ were chosen: orchestras and concert halls in Austria, Germany and Switzerland took part. What stood out was the following: four of the six nominated projects were no longer committed to the above-mentioned, by now established canon of *Musikvermittlung* formats, but the applicants saw the core of their work in a focus that was new for this sector: working in the community.

- The Hamburg Symphony Orchestra founded a community orchestra called the “Moving Orchestra”, in which people of different ages and

7 The “Junge Ohren Preis” is a German-language competition for *Musikvermittlung* projects.

social backgrounds could make and invent music together with the orchestra.

- The Gewandhausorchester Leipzig started a district project that worked together with Leipzig institutions and local associations.
- In Nuremberg, a community opera based on the legend of the Pied Piper of Hamelin was created as part of the Bridging Arts Chamber Music Festival, with artists and amateurs aged from 7 to 83 taking part.
- The Lucerne Symphony Orchestra placed its entire *Musikvermittlung* work under the concept of inclusion. Since then, an inclusion advisory board has supported the musicians in testing concerts and projects for people with disabilities. In addition, there is a mobile music van with which the orchestra travels to markets, open air festivals or to neighbourhoods in deprived areas in order to seek contact with their audience on their own initiative.

Even if the fine distinction between participatory art projects and community art is not a major concern for practitioners in the field, and the terms have become colloquially ingrained in practice, it is worth briefly recalling here that there is a very significant difference in this approach. Francois Matarasso, an artist, writer and researcher, draws a clear distinction between “participatory art” and “community art”: “Participation and community hold different visions of culture, democracy and human rights. At the risk of over-simplification, the first might be seen as a form of cultural democratisation (or giving people access to arts), while the second aspires to cultural democracy.” (Matarasso 2019: 45f.)

In the projects described above, which were submitted for the “Junge Ohren Preis”, the boundaries between participatory and community art are blurred, although in my opinion the pendulum is currently swinging more in the direction of participatory art, especially with regard to the motivation of the established orchestras and concert halls to initiate these projects in the first place: ultimately, high-culture institutions are increasingly concerned with providing access to *their* art for as many people as possible, providing barrier-free access – *giving people access to the arts*. Practitioners of *Musikvermittlung* are therefore increasingly planning projects for the diverse local inhabitants of a city or region, with the places of realisation as well as the outcome being completely open.

Participatory art requires a new attitude on the part of artists, which David J. Elliott et al. discuss under the term “artistic citizenship” (see El-

liott/Silverman/Bowman 2016). The authors emphasise the need for the cultural sector not to pursue art exclusively as an end in itself, but also as a means of enlightenment, social interaction and empowerment of population groups that would otherwise have more difficult access to publicly funded (high) cultural institutions. “Artistic citizenship” in the understanding of Elliott et al. regards artists as members of society who are endowed with special abilities and talents and who can therefore have an integrative and transformative effect. However, this concept is to be understood more broadly, so that it includes all actors in the cultural sector who see art and their own actions as the key to the development of civil society.

This is where the first cornerstone of innovative and transformative concepts of the cultural enterprise as a whole can be found: “We can thus speak of innovation on an institutional level when the concept of a cultural organisation moves away from art and towards being a social enterprise” (Koch 2014: 189). This does not mean that art would be less important, but it points to a shift in perspective. Until recently, the focus of a cultural enterprise was primarily on the artistic programme, the artists themselves and the best possible production of concerts. The beginning of *Musikvermittlung* programmes and formats (from the point of view of the artistic directors) can also be understood from this perspective: children and young people should be given a playful introduction to cultural heritage, so that as adults they will want and be able to participate with pleasure in the conventional programme of a city’s concert hall.

The programming itself remained immovable and intact at the centre. In the meantime, however, fundamental shifts have been taking place at many houses: the city is moving closer to the concert hall, and the concert hall in turn closer to the city’s districts. The first beacons of this development were Sage Gateshead⁸ in Newcastle and L’Auditori⁹ in Barcelona. Built at the turn of the millennium, these new concert halls are no longer located in the bourgeois centres of cities but in originally socially disadvantaged districts. In their events and programming, they reflect the super-diverse structure of the population and organically integrate educational opportunities on a broad level into their identity as cultural institutions. The audience, in its variety and diversity, takes on a new meaning when one is referring to the interests and

8 Link to the Sage Gateshead webpage: <https://sagegateshead.com/> [9.1.2021].

9 Link to the L’Auditori Barcelona webpage: <https://www.auditori.cat/en/home> [9.1.2021].

preferences of different population groups, as do the considerations of the organising team about how to cooperate with a city's social institutions and to carry out joint projects outside the concert hall. In this sense, both individual artists and institutions are currently setting out to transform concert life as a whole, and to place themselves more firmly at the heart of society than was previously the case: "If the high demands of 'culture for all' are to be realised in the form of real equitable access, and if classical cultural institutions are to be a living part of this social development, they will have to change further." (Brosda 2020: 133)

***Musikvermittlung* as an Innovative Factor in the Cultural Sector?**

"Almost all innovations that are recommended or introduced into the organisational field today come from systems that are now perceived as external. The cultural education programmes, the new musical social forms in the fields of concert pedagogy and *Musikvermittlung* [emphasis added], probably still seem the least alien. The term "educational programmes" indicates that the idea comes from another system, albeit one related to the common ancestor of aesthetic education, that of education." (Koch 2014: 20)

When I look back at the development of *Musikvermittlung*, for me the most significant innovation, apart from the transformation towards the social, is that children have been integrated into the concert scene as an audience. In the meantime, they are a self-evident audience segment just like adults, who, however, have specific expectations of a concert. From early fairy-tale evenings with music at the beginning of the 20th century, artistically demanding and interesting concert formats have been developed and differentiated according to age groups, so that, in terms of quantity, they now account for a third of the total events in Viennese concert halls, and have become an indispensable part of the overall subscription package.

What are known as new concert formats for adults have a much harder time of it, and are still at the stage of invention and not yet of innovation, in the sense that an idea can be permanently established in the concert scene. It is obvious that much of the experimentation taking place in this field, whether at the Montforter Zwischentöne in Feldkirch, at the Podium Festival in Esslingen, at the Radialsystem in Berlin or at King's Place in London, has a lot to do with changes that also began in the sphere of children's concerts more than 30 years ago now: other arts come into play in addition to music, the audience

is directly involved, the context of the music being played is dramaturgically integrated into the concert and not dealt with separately in a programme booklet. As in the early days of *Musikvermittlung*, both the term and the field of practice are spreading into several areas: people with expertise in various arts, dramaturgical contextualisation, cultural education, cultural management and cultural policy are called upon to work well together and develop the sector further.

The communicative mediation between different interests, people and artistic fields of practice has long since outgrown the infancy of a service for the cultural sector as such, and in this sense it no longer corresponds in any way to the image in the opening quotation to this article. This is a development that is not always desired, and which therefore brings forces of inertia into play.

Despite the diverse innovations and inventions mentioned above, “retrotopia” often still predominates in the classical concert scene, without a genuine desire for fundamental change:

- Many orchestral musicians would like all the outreach projects to enable children and young people to eventually go to the “real” classical concert – *Musikvermittlung* as a kind of preparatory listening school for the classical orchestral concert.
- Most artistic directors want young adults in the concert hall, who are indeed supposed to lower the age average in the audience but would have to come to terms with the 19th-century formats and put up with everything from the selection in the interval buffet to the uncomfortable cloakroom situation, which normally does not correspond to their attitude to life.
- Important artistic necessities for staged concerts, such as lighting and sound technology, or flexible use of space, are only marginally available in 19th-century architecture, and even if they are, they are difficult to incorporate into normal operations due to long conversion times and high costs.

Consequently, experimental concert formats remain limited to festival activities or to special concert venues that were not originally intended as such, like the Radialsystem in Berlin or the Kampnagel in Hamburg. So what would the vision of a concert hall look like from the point of view of *Musikvermittlung*?

A Contemporary Concert Hall

A city or a region needs a place that is open around the clock, because the population of a city wants to have different times to engage with art and culture: parents with small children in the morning, professionals immediately after office hours, senior citizens in the early evening, people interested in workshops at the weekend, young people late at night. The concert hall would have a coffee house, a bar and an interesting book and music shop, and provide spaces for intercultural choirs and amateur ensembles, as well as for digital developments in the sector. It would have sufficient space for interdisciplinary workshops and open its doors as a concert hall in the morning, at midday and in the evening in order to programme for a diverse and heterogeneous audience. There, everything we describe as *new concert formats* would simply be concert formats that contextualise the works artistically, historically or politically as a matter of course, invite the audience to interact and relate the arts to one another.

It would be a place where people create new ideas – after COVID-19 not only in live space, but also in virtual space. Where we can get into arguments about art, waste time on experiments and show our social colours.

It would be a place where cooperation is lived sustainably – with educational and social institutions as well as with international partners – and where a changing intercultural advisory board would keep an eye on the areas that need to be discovered artistically and that are relevant in the city or the region.

It would be a place where the artistic director and the *Musikvermittlung* manager make programmes together and interact with each other – and where, like an artistic research and development department, new formats and projects emerge and respond to the times – perhaps some of them will actually become innovations in the cultural sector.

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