BG Pulse Journal USA
ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg

CHILDREN'S MUSIC AS A KEY PARADIGM OF MUSIC-PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION

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doi:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24245763

Abstract. This article examines children's music as a key paradigm in music pedagogy, exploring its educational and artistic-aesthetic significance, as well as its primary genres and directions. Particular attention is given to national musical folklore, the works of Uzbek composers, and the development of a music-pedagogical repertoire tailored to the age-specific characteristics of children.

Key words: children's music, music education, musical upbringing, national folklore, Uzbek musical culture, musical repertoire.

The art of music serves as a particularly effective means of introducing the younger generation to national and universal spiritual values. This occurs through the creative assimilation of the artistic experience accumulated by previous generations, while simultaneously fostering a lasting need to engage with musical works. By virtue of its immense moral and aesthetic potential, music helps shape a holistic understanding of the interactions between the individual and society, as well as between the individual and the natural world. Furthermore, music contributes to the artistic and creative development of a child, offering significant aesthetic possibilities. As the new generation masters musical and artistic values and traditions, it inherits the finest achievements of its predecessors—in the realms of creative expression and the emotional, value-based perception of the world and the surrounding reality—thereby ensuring the continued development and adoption of musical cultural traditions. These elements constitute a fundamental platform for the core paradigm of music pedagogy, as they encapsulate the essential principles and concepts governing the historical and artistic evolution of music intended for children—a subject that, within the field of music education, plays a vital role in shaping the creative identity of the future educator.

"Children's music" is defined as music intended for performance or listening by children and adolescents, or music performed by adults for children. "Music for children is a distinct sphere of art, the significance of which for spiritual development can hardly be overstated. Accompanying a child's life from almost the moment of birth, it stimulates the awakening of fantasy and imagination, while fostering artistic intuition and a creative spirit" [1, p. 5].

History and practice reveal two interconnected paths within musical upbringing and education: specialized music education and general music education. Together, these two approaches form the basis for a specific domain of musical creativity—widely known in everyday life as "children's music" or "music for children and youth." As an integral part of musical art and culture, music for children has its origins in the following: a) it dates back to the dawn of human musical culture and has been a subject of human engagement since the emergence of civilization; b) since ancient times, music has been employed in the upbringing of the younger generation—manifested in children's musical folklore, lullabies, and the triad of social and daily life (mother, child, and music)—which has been inextricably linked to the concept of education, as evidenced by records from the ancient East, India, and China.

In the 19th century, music became actively integrated into processes of upbringing and education, which branched into key areas: aesthetic, moral, and physical development. The emergence of professional music for children was driven by two interdependent factors: 1) the need to create a specialized repertoire for performance and pedagogy; and 2) the need to create music intended for listening by children and young audiences. "Musical practice consists not only of singing and playing an instrument but also of listening to music" [2, p. 230].

Consequently, the development of a body of music for children is closely aligned with the goals and objectives of musical education—broadly defined as the purposeful, systematic cultivation of an individual's musical culture and their creative musical abilities. The process of musical education involves the transmission of the socio-historical experience of musical culture, as well as spiritual, moral, and traditional values, to the younger generation. The history of music for children demonstrates that this distinct domain of musical culture arose in response to a specific societal need; throughout its evolution, it has explored the full spectrum of music's potential to foster personal development in accordance with the principles of beauty. The creation of a repertoire of music for children—intended for performance before and listening by child and adolescent audiences—follows certain principles, shaped by psychological and pedagogical requirements that have emerged through historical experience and the development of humanity.

Throughout the history of music composed for children, the finest works have been characterized by artistic clarity, simplicity of form, conciseness, and accessibility—for instance, the small preludes, inventions, and fugues of J. S. Bach, Robert Schumann's *Album for the Young*, and Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*. In the 20th century, works were created in this genre that are performed by adults for children and young people; notable examples include Benjamin Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Rodion Shchedrin's ballet *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, and Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. Contemporary music plays a particularly significant role in the development of cognitive thinking. Discussing music for beginners composed by talented figures of our time—such as Bartók, Bennett, Ibert, Kabalevsky, Lutosławski, and Prokofiev—D. Hamilton notes that these pieces are not only easy to perform but also of high artistic quality; beginners perceive them as genuine music rather than mere pedagogical material [3, p. 227]. Composers from Uzbekistan have also made an invaluable contribution to this field. Striking examples include A. Mansurov's opera *The King of Beasts*, Kh. Razimov's *Album for Piano*, D. Amanullaeva's *Alifbe* (Alphabet), M. Otajonov's musical fairy tale *Diaglessa*, and R. Abdullaev's piano cycle *Fairy Tales*. "For a child raised in an Uzbek family—an environment typically filled with Uzbek folk music—encountering the finest works by Uzbek composers will not only enrich their musical experience but also serve as a guiding thread, leading them—via familiar sonic pathways—into the broader world of music created by composers from other cultures" [4, p. 5]. Equally significant are children's songs, which reflect a child's world and help shape their perception of reality.

"Songs for children represent a distinct genre of musical composition. Such songs are characterized by clear and accessible musical imagery, vivid poetic lyrics, simple form and content, and a vocal range that is compact and comfortable for performance" [5, p. 55].

The diverse and multifaceted realm of music for children—encompassing songs, instrumental pieces, sonatinas and sonatas, choral works, suites, musical-dramatic works (such as operas, ballets, and musicals), as well as music for children's theater and cinema—forms a pedagogical repertoire that can be categorized into several fundamental areas. Our focus here lies on the system of general musical education, including musical literature designed for preschoolers, students of various school ages (primary, middle, and secondary), and participants in amateur youth arts activities.

It is worth noting that the term "children's music" is closely related to the concepts of "school music" and "school musical repertoire." The curriculum for the subject "Musical Culture" (*Musika Madaniyati*), which spans grades 1 through 7 in general education schools, incorporates works by both classical composers and contemporary composers from Uzbekistan. The inclusion of children's music in the school curriculum is primarily due to its status as an integral part of both global musical heritage and the national culture of Uzbekistan. Vivid, striking imagery, programmatic elements, and original creative concepts—combined with a high level of artistic execution—activate a fundamental aspect of human existence: the innate capacity of children to perceive and appreciate beauty [6].

The categorization of individuals by age—children, school-age youth, and adolescents—has not only led to the emergence of terms such as "music for children," "music for school-age youth," and "music for adolescents," but has also given rise to the concept of a "children's composer"—that is, a composer whose body of work is dominated by pieces specifically intended for children and school-age youth, and in whose creative output themes related to childhood prevail. The notion of "children's themes" encompasses more than just a deliberate focus on composing music for a young audience; it also entails reflecting the multifaceted social world and interpersonal relationships of this age group, as well as the broader realm of childhood and adolescence.

Taking into account the developmental psychology of children, two primary educational principles have emerged in pedagogy—principles that also play a significant role in music education: the progression from the simple to the complex, and accessibility [7].

It is well understood that music for children is closely linked to the development of their musical perception. These principles are fundamental to the process of fostering an interest in music in general—and in the work of specific composers in particular—as well as to the ongoing expansion of children's understanding of musical art as a whole.

In music education, the principle of accessibility is intrinsically connected to the level of musical and artistic value inherent in a given work. We can identify several characteristics that, taken together, serve as criteria for determining the high ideological, artistic, moral, and aesthetic value of music intended for children: 1) melodic expressiveness; 2) a foundation in folklore; 3) artistic imagery; and 4) age-appropriate accessibility. This involves the composer's selection of ideas, themes, and imagery that resonate with a specific age group—children, schoolchildren, or adolescents. Examples include fairy tales, fantasy, nature, everyday life, school, home, family, childhood experiences, games, and toys—the world of childhood and dreams. It is precisely these qualities that have, in many instances, led to the inclusion in school music curricula of works originally composed for adult audiences by prominent figures from both the past and the present. It must be noted that the process of creating music for performance by or for children and young people follows specific patterns, dictated by the psychological and pedagogical requirements of the core paradigm of music education, as well as by historical experience and the ongoing evolution of modern music pedagogy.

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