

## Research Article

# Music educational processes in old age: An introduction to the young academic discipline of music geragogy<sup>1</sup>

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### Article Info

**Received:** 21 December 2022

**Accepted:** 6 February 2023

**Available online:** 30 March 2023

### Keywords:

Dementia

Music education

Music education in old age

Music geragogy

Music pedagogy

### Abstract

Music educational processes in old age require a specific approach. Methodological and didactic approaches from music education traditionally target children and adolescents in research and teaching. In Germany, the independent academic discipline of music geragogy emerged a few years ago. This article highlights the scientific background and practical applications of this new discipline. Music geragogy is located at the interface of music education and geragogy, the study of education and learning in old age. Since life expectancy is continuously increasing, it is necessary to understand, on the basis of methodological principles and best practice examples, what musical work with seniors must look like in order to promote the quality of life of the 60+ age group and to enable educational participation into old age, even with physical and mental ailments. 60-year-olds today are much more active and healthier than the previous generation. As a result, the demands on the quality of life in retirement age have also increased. For a long time, ageing research only focused on what seniors could no longer do due to physical and mental losses. Due to a paradigm shift in research, the focus is now on the competences and resources of seniors that are still available. Under the umbrella term of “successful ageing” the focus is on the abilities and experiences still available from one’s biography, which are linked to educational offers. Music is an excellent field for transferring this resource- and competence-oriented perspective on ageing into practice. Studies show that more than half of 80-year-olds are still convinced that it is possible to acquire or develop artistic skills in old age. Apart from the motivation to be artistically active by playing an instrument or participating in a choir, social contacts or personality-building elements are important for the older generation. In addition to music activities with like-minded people, playing instruments and singing together with younger people, for example the grandchildren, also plays a role, the so-called intergenerational music-making. The methods and insights of music geragogy make it possible for actors such as educational institutions, institutions for the elderly, hospitals and private providers to adapt to the specific needs of the clientele. The spectrum ranges from activities for engaged, healthy seniors to musical support for dementia patients. Interdisciplinary networks of music geragogy exist with disciplines such as geropsychology, geragogy, geriatric medicine, social work, music therapy and nursing sciences.

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### To cite this article

Sinsch, S. (2023). Music educational processes in old age: An introduction to the young academic discipline of music geragogy. *Journal for the Interdisciplinary Art and Education*, 4(1), 11-22.

### Introduction

An important impulse for the development of a separate discipline of music geragogy was provided by the “International Year of Older Persons”, which the United Nations proclaimed in 1999 under the motto “Towards a society for all ages” (Hokenstad, 1999). The aim was to draw attention to a demographic development that brings

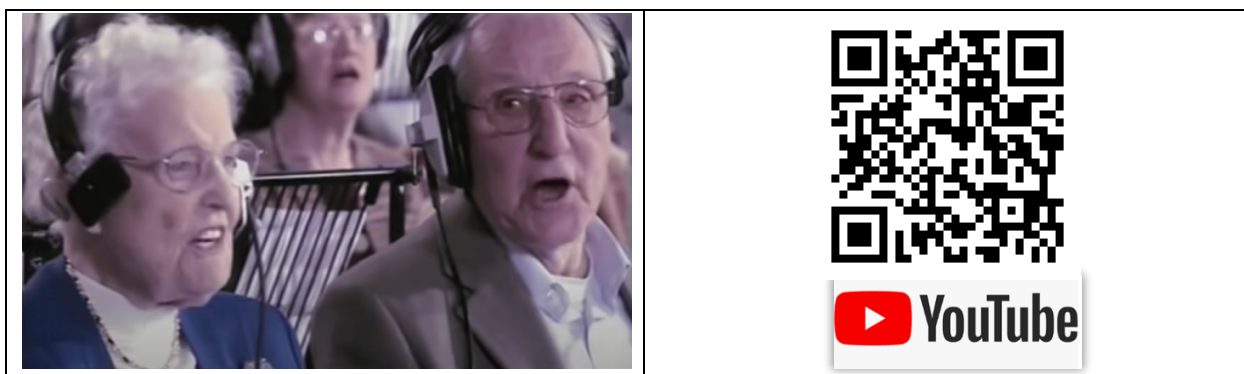
<sup>1</sup> This article was presented at the 2nd International Rast Music Congress on January 14-15 2023, Antalya, Turkiye.

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challenges but also opportunities for industrialised and developing countries (Hartogh, 2005). Along with Japan, Germany recorded the highest rate of demographic ageing at the beginning of the 21st century. The reasons for this are increasing life expectancy, but also a decline in the birth rate. Simulations show that this development will intensify by the middle of the 21st century (Birg & Flöthmann, 2002). The interaction of birth and death rates is called the demographic transition. Basically, a worldwide decline in birth rates can be observed, which also affects developing countries. Many developing countries are still at the beginning of this transition, which means that these nations are currently still growing strongly. At the same time, life expectancy has increased considerably in many of these countries (Betz, 2004), which also leads to a growing number of older people and thus specific challenges.

In Germany, for example, the cohorts of people over 60 will be the most numerous in 2050, and the proportion of 80-year-olds will be higher than that of newborns (BMFSFJ, 2010). Compared to earlier decades, over-60s are more active because they are healthier and have more time and money. Accordingly, the demands on the quality of life and the shaping of the post-working life phase are also increasing. In addition, this age group usually has higher educational qualifications and also shows a greater willingness to learn - even at an advanced age - than previous generations. In the future, there will thus be significantly more people interested in educational opportunities from the older generation (Köster, 2008; Schröder & Gillberg 2005). This development does not only affect physically and mentally fit seniors, but also people who live in nursing homes with health impairments. This is because physical and mental limitations are not necessarily an obstacle to pursuing educational interests (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014).

Age from a pedagogical and geragogical perspective should therefore be viewed primarily in qualitative terms. Relevant here are the changes in physical and psychological life circumstances, life forms and life demands, quality of life and life satisfaction as well as participation in social and cultural life in old age (Hartogh, 2005). Over the years and decades, chronological age is becoming less and less important (Staudinger, 2003). The view of old age is individual and is not necessarily in line with social attributes such as retirement age, which often occurs at the age of 65 or 67. Artists such as Tina Turner, Madonna or Mick Jagger, who are still performing on stage at an advanced age, are helping to redefine images of age in society. The business world is also increasingly addressing offers to the older generation, referred to in advertising as "best agers" or simply with the suffix 50+ (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014).



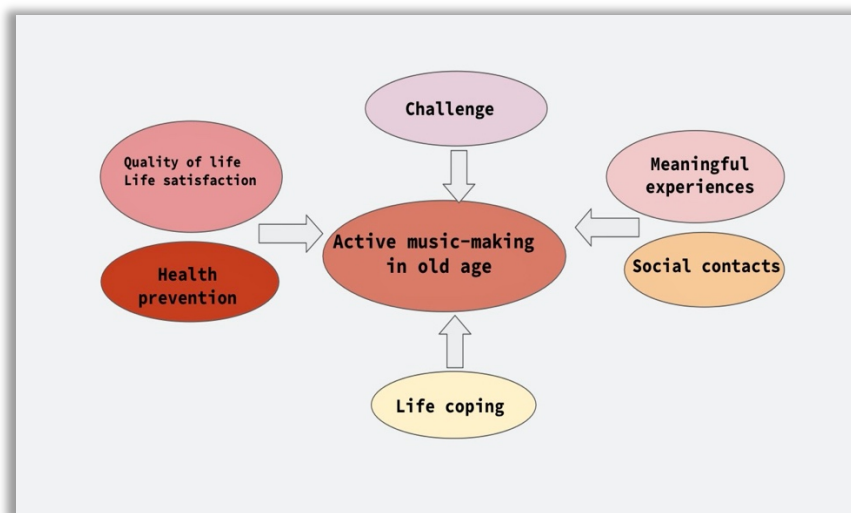
**Video 1.** Redefining the image of old age. Senior Band "The Zimmers" (The Zimmers/OskPetursdottir, 2008)

### **Resource-oriented Instead of Deficit-oriented: Paradigm Shift in Ageing Research**

In recent decades, old age has no longer been viewed as primarily deficit-oriented; instead, the focus has increasingly been on the resources and competencies that seniors still possess. Scientifically, this paradigm shift is reflected in new theories of ageing. The "activity theory" or "competence theory" focuses on what older people can still do themselves and which biographical experiences can be used to learn new things or successfully expand existing knowledge. The concept of "successful ageing" can be illustrated by the SOC model. SOC stands for selection, optimisation and compensation. This perspective can be proven with meaningful examples, especially in the musical field. (Hartogh, 2005). Hartogh and Wickel cite the pianist Arthur Rubinstein as a prominent example of the SOC model. Rubinstein was asked in an interview how he still managed to play Chopin concertos successfully. Rubinstein replied that he had

reduced his programme and was selecting his pieces (S for selection). He would practise this selection intensively and thus optimise it (O for optimisation). Since the fluency of his fingers had diminished over the years, he discussed with the conductor in which passages in the orchestra the tempo had to be reduced. The proportionally slower tempo in the orchestra would still give the audience the impression of enormous virtuosity. Rubinstein thus devised a strategy (C for compensation) to compensate for his declining fluency of the fingers (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014).

More leisure time, higher living standards and quality of life challenge society to design educational opportunities that can be used by people well into old age, including in old people's homes and nursing wards. Musical activities give in late adulthood and old age meaning orientation, concrete life support, promote and create new social contacts. Through emotional activation, musical work contributes to life satisfaction and enhances quality of life. Since cognitive functions are also activated by music, a contribution is also made to health prevention (Gembris, 1998). Demographic developments, but also research findings on music in old age, have presented music education with new challenges. For too long, music pedagogical contents have concentrated on children and adolescents. Since the 1990s, there have been various initiatives in Europe to establish music education in old age. The European Music School Union (EMU), for example, called in a resolution for the development of specific music education programmes for older citizens in European countries (Hartogh, 2005). What was still missing at that time were concepts generated from theories that set out various practical images and objectives of music education in old age.



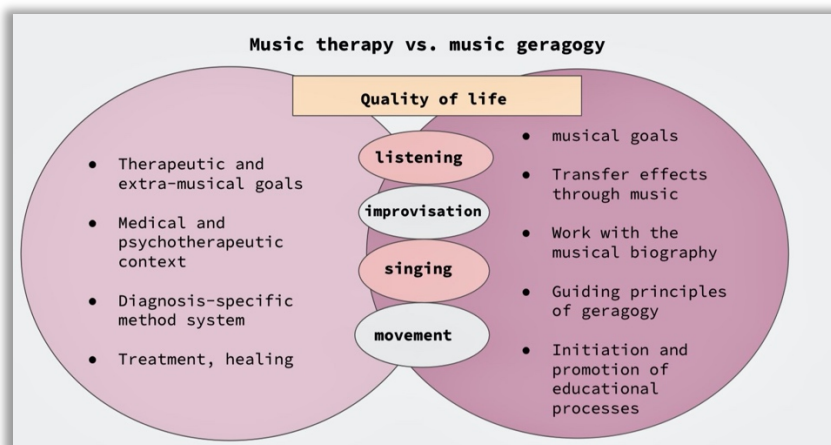
**Figure 1.** The benefits of making music in old age (Sinsch, 2022)

### **The Need for Music Geragogy as a New Academic Discipline**

It did not seem sufficient to simply integrate didactic approaches into music educational processes in old age, but basic work had to be done to establish a new discipline of music geragogy, closely linked to relevant disciplines (Hartogh, 2005). The name music geragogy indicates that the subject area is located at the interface of music education and geragogy. Geragogy is the study of education and learning in old age. In addition to music pedagogical basics, findings, impulses and techniques from the neighbouring disciplines of geriatric psychology, social work, music therapy, nursing science and medicine (geriatrics) are incorporated. Thus, as a discipline of sociology of science, music geragogy has its own profile with direct influence on music education, in which a lifelong engagement with music is aimed at (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014). Since music geragogy also includes work with people suffering from dementia, it is important to distinguish the discipline from music therapy.

Hartogh & Wickel (2014, p. 5) write: "For all the similarities in terms of musical activities such as singing, improvising, moving to music and listening to music, music geragogy sees itself as educational work, i.e. it does not focus on the transfer effects or the therapeutic effect of making and listening to music, but on the music itself and its mediation". In music therapy, the focus is on improving the patients' state of mind (Timmermann, 2012). "The music geragogue's task is to stage an aesthetic space of experience." (Hartogh, 2012, p.11). Music therapy, music education

and thus music geragogy draw on common historical roots. History, media and target group are common, many music pedagogical concepts integrate therapeutic thoughts, which speaks for a complementary approach (Hartogh, 1998).



**Figure 2.** Music therapy vs. music geragogy (Sinsch, 2022)

Despite occasional overlaps and cooperation with neighbouring disciplines, the relationship between older people and music, as well as the methodical-didactic musical processes in old age, is the core of music geragogy. Thus, music geragogy encompasses all musical interventions in work with the elderly that are not therapeutic or educational in nature. From an anthropological point of view, it is about the interconnectedness of people and music. It is not institutional structures but patterns of interpretation and action that determine the individual educational process. As the evaluation of autobiographical material has shown, life experience, needs and interests steer the educational process. Therefore, lifeworld and biography are guiding principles for music-geragogical work; the goals are to promote competence and increase life satisfaction. Listening to music and actively making music represent an aesthetic space of experience in which no isolated experiences are made. In addition to the acquisition of specific musical knowledge, there is ample evidence of how positive the influences of music-geragogical work are on other areas of competence. Community experiences with music have an effect on the shaping of relationships in everyday life, help in coping with individual life crises, and convey a feeling of being accepted and affirmed in reference networks. (Hartogh, 2005).

### **Educational Potential Exists Even in Advanced Dementia**

Numerous music projects have shown that even people in need of help with diminished autonomy have the need and potential for education and that it is possible to develop musical skills (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014). In the so-called Berlin Age Study, it was found that there are correlations between increasing age and memory loss, but that people are capable of learning well into old age (Mayer et al., 1996). Maintaining and promoting individual competencies is therefore an empirically supported demand. Although health status has an important influence on cognitive performance, intrinsic motivation and personal experiences are central to individual educational behaviour in old age (Hartogh, 2005).

Education in old age therefore includes all forms that serve the interests of seniors and their self-discovery. It is therefore no longer about acquiring qualifications; organised and externally determined learning are not relevant. The older person no longer allows himself to be educated or trained, but educates himself on the basis of acquired knowledge and competences so that new options for action become possible. Support and impulses from instructors therefore serve to develop or further develop self-determined competences in old age (Hartogh, 2005). Musical work can support seniors with dementia or other physical and mental impairments to not only be seen from a medical perspective with health deficits, but to be perceived holistically with resources and competences. In this way, the discipline of music geragogy simultaneously provides social answers to the phenomenon of dementia (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014).

A study from 2015 showed that, compared to other brain regions, the area responsible for long-term musical memory shows only minimal cortical atrophy and disruption of glucose metabolism in Alzheimer's disease (Jacobsen et al., 2015). This coincides with numerous observations made time and again in nursing homes and clinics. Even in advanced dementia, which is accompanied by loss of speech, patients are able to sing complete songs without errors. Music is therefore an important resource against brain decline. In addition, in many cases music shows a positive effect on dementia-associated behavioural problems, improvement of balance and gait stability (Kressig, 2022). A study conducted over three months with 90 residents of a Spanish nursing home suffering from mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease compared the effects of listening to music in the group with active musical interventions. In addition, there was a control group with whom no musical interventions were carried out at all. The pieces of music for the group that only listened to music were identified in advance with a questionnaire. The residents had the opportunity to express memories and feelings about the music played. The active group each completed a unit consisting of a welcome song, rhythmic games, music quiz and goodbye song. In the control group, animal videos were shown without music. The results showed that the brain areas responsible for cognition, behaviour and function improved in the active group, the passive music listeners showed stabilising effects and there were no changes in the control group (Gómez-Gallego et al., 2021).

### **Musical Biography as a Central Building Block of Music-geragogical Work**

Critical analyses have shown that the needs and lifeworld foundations of the target group cannot be captured with didactics oriented towards the school. Biographical research is therefore an educational-theoretical basis for gaining insight into the demands that musical processes can meet in old age. In order to capture people's interpretative and action patterns in their individuality, music education and music geragogy must use methods that have been developed through qualitative social research methods (Hartogh, 2005). Grimmer worked with narrative interviews and used them to demonstrate the significance of life situations, motives, wishes, experiences of suffering and sensory experiences for instrumental lessons with adults. Wishes as a child, or the catching up on childhood dreams, were therefore shown to be particularly important for resuming instrumental lessons in adulthood, also as a kind of coping strategy. (Grimmer, 1989).

Hartogh conducted a study on educationally relevant aspects of music geragogy based on biographical material as part of his educational theory outline for the discipline of music geragogy (2005). Here it was shown that above all the parental home and then school as well as social environment in childhood and adolescence are decisive for a lifelong commitment to music. Songs performed by parents or grandparents are remembered for life. Parents' musical activities left a lasting impression, caused admiration and special moments in the sense of protection and security. In school music lessons in Germany, the singing of songs was influential until the 1970s, and beneficial aspects were often linked to the person of the teacher. Before and during the Second World War, even Nazi songs did not dampen the childlike joy of singing, which is interesting both in terms of music sociology and music psychology. Auditions and singing in class, like performances, also had a lasting motivational effect on those Hartogh interviewed. However, performance assessment at school also ensured that one's own musicality was classified and assessed well into adulthood. Great importance was also attached to the judgement of instrumental teachers. If there was a lack of encouragement, this was regretted well into adulthood. The interviewees often reported on the joy they felt in actively accompanying their own children or grandchildren in making music, by listening to them or encouraging their lessons (Hartogh, 2005).

Other musical biographies deal with autodidactic learning of instruments, for example when there was no money available in a family. Music created friendships, both in adolescence through singing together in a choir or in amateur orchestras. Visits to the opera were often initiated through friends or colleagues. Other interviewees report inspiration from street singers. Musical preferences also show themselves closely linked to performers experienced on stage in the course of life. Radio and recordings continue to play a major role in the formation of musical preferences. Regardless of the preferred style, respondents linked their favourite music with concepts such as joy of life or coping with life,

which means that music is charged with biographically grown meanings. Music is associated with the memory of the first kiss and, in general, music can have a relationship-promoting quality when singing or playing music together with the partner or listening to a song that connects the two. In old age, memories of musical situations can provide comfort, give the feeling of being young again, or make people who have already died more present through music. In addition, the musical biography can also be linked to spiritual experiences, for example through participation in the church choir or the sound of the organ. Events in the life course that lead to the interruption of active musical activities or prevent the learning of an instrument in adulthood are professional training, a marriage with divergent interests of the partner, starting a family, illness or even times of war. Later, the advanced age is often referred to in a sweeping way as a reason not to resume or to start music activities anew. (Hartogh, 2005).

Hartogh's biographical study has shown that promoting and maintaining quality of life and life satisfaction are central to the music education of the elderly. Although the musical lifeworld of childhood and youth no longer exists, it is possible to recall pieces or songs and exchange experiences. In music-geragogical work, it is possible to work highly individually. Group activities, on the other hand, require situational didactics and a high degree of methodological sensitivity, as very different musical interests of the participants come together (Hartogh, 2005). Feelings of strangeness can quickly arise, especially when members of different social classes come together (Muthesius, 2002). In music geragogy, therefore, there cannot be one curriculum for all in terms of methodology and didactics. Fields of work are too heterogeneous, access to musical biographies too different and often participants are severely limited in their communication due to an illness such as dementia. (Hartogh & Wickel, 2022). The starting points for biography-related musical work with older people are therefore to work out, discover and initiate musical educational opportunities that have not been lived, to create situations in which musical exchange can take place, and to remember and discuss key experiences with music, enabling access to music that is often difficult to access today, using previous musical knowledge in education for the elderly or in intergenerational music making, providing assistance in the use of media and working in a resource-oriented way to continue making music despite limitations or to make it possible for the first time (Hartogh, 2005).

### **Music-geragogical Studies and Competences**

In his evaluation of musical biographies in 2005, Hartogh made it clear that initial and re-entry situations of musical work with the elderly can only be planned with difficulty by laypersons in order to trigger sustainable educational processes. Events in institutions must also be designed in such a way that self-organised educational processes can succeed. Factors such as physical and psychological impairments must also be recognised and mitigated in the work with seniors so that fulfilling music-making is possible. It was therefore necessary to professionalise the field of music geragogy with its own competence profile. The professional background of those offering musical activities for the elderly is still very heterogeneous. There are instrumental and vocal teachers, church musicians, instrumentalists, singers, music teachers at schools, music therapists, geriatric nurses, social workers and volunteers. As the field of work is very complex, a trained music geragoge must be able to leave his or her discipline of origin. Not only musical and music pedagogical knowledge is required for the job, but also geragogical and gerontological knowledge. The music geragogue is to be understood as a kind of moderator who stages aesthetic spaces of experience, initiates and accompanies educational processes, encourages self-learning and supports and positively evaluates results. Dialogue is to be understood as a fundamental mode of the music-geragogical relationship (Hartogh, 2005).

Since 2004, the Münster University of Applied Sciences in Germany has offered certification in music geragogy; the university course lasts one year. Music-geragogical elements are also integrated into the Elementary Music Education studies at the universities of Hamburg, Cologne, Würzburg, Vechta, Münster and in the Master's studies at the Pop Academy in Mannheim. Originally, music-geragogical training was aimed at people working in social work and care. It quickly became clear that there was also a need for further training for vocal and instrumental teachers as well as church musicians, and now doctors and music therapists are also seeking certification in music geragogy.

Especially the last two professional groups gain new perspectives on their patients through music geragogy. In this way, people with dementia are no longer only the addressees of therapeutic interventions, but are enabled to learn music in a barrier-free and purpose-free way despite sometimes considerable cognitive limitations (Hartogh & Wickel, 2014).

In addition to professional competences and biographical orientation, music geragogues must have the corresponding ethical attitudes and orientations in order to guarantee older people access to musical education in the sense of enabling didactics. By bringing generations into contact with each other while making music, an enriching exchange is created. Younger people can benefit from the knowledge of the grandparents' generation. Authenticity is another key qualification, because music geragogues must be able to accept other preferences while remaining credible in their own behaviour. Since people at any age want recognition for their musical performance, music geragogues need to work in an appreciative way. Through validation, they are also able to grasp the reality of people with dementia, including their thoughts, feelings and behaviour, and to take them seriously. The musical interaction must not degenerate into reality training, but the behaviour of the person with dementia must be used to sense whether musical contact is desired.

Since the number of elderly people with a migration background is increasing, music geragogues should be able to respond to the needs of this target group. So far, there are still few practical examples, but it has been shown that a relationship to the homeland can be established mentally through music. The music of the country of origin thus not only promotes the quality of life, but also strengthens one's own identity. There is a need for research in music geragogy not only here, but also in the area of gender sensitivity (Hartogh & Wickel, 2022).

### **Practical Examples**

The German Society for Music Geragogy (DGfMG e.V.) was founded in 2009. It is responsible for the promotion of education in the discipline of music geragogy as well as the further development of the discipline in various fields such as care, health care, education and social services. The society is committed to improving the research situation so that the quality of life and life satisfaction of older people can be optimised (DGfM, Ziele des Vereins, w.d.). There are also music geragogues in Austria and Switzerland. The projects show the diversity of music-geragogical work. Some offers are designed to be continuous, others are carried out in project phases. Music geragogues work on a permanent basis or come to institutions as freelancers. Many projects focus on choir work. "Singen im Alter" sees itself as a network to promote choral work with seniors and to facilitate networking. Choirs in which seniors can become members are listed throughout Germany. The offer ranges from dementia choirs to intergenerational ensembles (Singen im Alter, w.d.).

### **Music-geragogical Work in Old People's and Nursing Homes**

In the Pradl residential home in Innsbruck (Austria), there are various music activities for very old people, the approach is based on elementary music education. The units are planned in such a way that the participants with dementia interact with each other and that there is a dialogue between the group and the instructor. The music is not made for the residents, but is created together with them. The group size is limited to eight people, the atmosphere is calm and benevolent. Music is not always the goal in a unit, sometimes it is just the way to be in the moment and in the community. Emotional experience is in the foreground. Sensations are constant and remain even when memory fades. Cognitive impressions can disappear quickly after a music lesson, but the emotional impressions remain. It is important to stage certain lesson elements as a ritual. There is a consistent welcome song and a closing song. Participants are greeted by singing their names. The welcome song must be repeated often so that the seniors eventually sing along. Suitable lesson contents are songs from the past, simple musical movements that can be accompanied by the seniors with percussion or sitting dances. Materials such as cloths, stones or ropes sensitise the senses. Rhythmic activities have a particularly invigorating effect on senior citizens. Instruments such as large timpani are also perceived as pleasant by participants with hearing aids. In the course of the unit, it is possible to create musical dialogues with expressiveness, participants immerse themselves in the game and finish it with clear impulses (Bauer, 2022).

An example of mobile music-geragogical work is the so-called sound cart. A music geragogue visits old people's homes, clinics, but also private living rooms with a converted market trailer. The sound wagon not only transports a lot of instruments for musical work with senior citizens, but can also be used as a music stage or an intimate music-making room. The German Society for Music Geragogy also promoted courses for interested people aged 65 and older to learn how to play the saxonet as part of the project "New start after Corona". The saxonet is a woodwind instrument with a simple reed that is played similar to a recorder. It is easy to handle and well suited for beginners. Seniors can use the wind instrument not only to improve their cognitive skills, but also to benefit from other positive health effects with breathing exercises, sensitisation of the lip muscles and movement of the body (Neustart nach Corona, 2022). While a healthy adult still has every opportunity to learn an instrument, at an advanced age, changes in the musculoskeletal system, respiratory system and jaw area need to be considered. Playing the violin can be difficult with problems in the neck and shoulder area, artificial hip joints pose a challenge with the cello and harp. Some instruments are also perceived as uncomfortable by tinnitus sufferers (Walsleben, 2009). Music geragogy responds here with adapted concepts, including for string instruments, ukulele, chamber music offerings and even rock bands for seniors (Hartogh & Wickel, 2019).

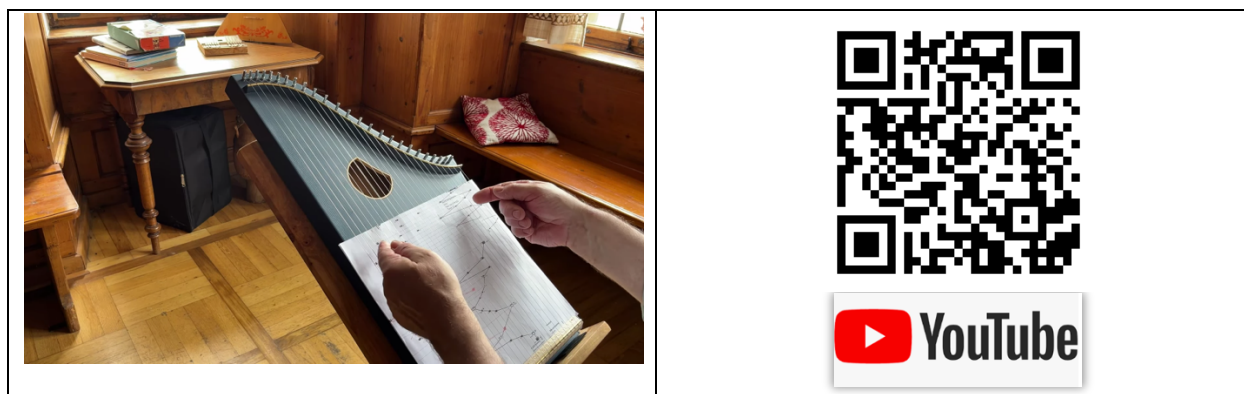


**Picture 1.** First steps of a little artist by Erman Turkili. A piano method suitable for intergenerational music-making between grandparents and grandchildren (Turkili, 2020)

### **Learning an Instrument is Still Possible**

The idea of offering piano lessons to people suffering from dementia is initially surprising. In a study published in 2013, Kehrer showed under which conditions and with which methods beginners with dementia can learn the piano, whereby her approach clearly distinguishes itself from music therapy and shows that age, illness and artistic quality do not have to be a contradiction. The result is also a teaching concept that can be directly implemented in practice (Kehrer, 2013). The method "First steps of a little artist", originally developed by Türkili for children, can also be used with seniors alone or in intergenerational music-making between grandparents and grandchildren. The piano method works with coloured symbols and explicitly encourages learners to compose (Sinsch, 2022).





**Video 2.** A Table harp is played with templates. (Tischharfe, 2022)

Table harps are also a popular instrument in music geragogy. It is an instrument similar to the zither that is plucked with the fingers or a plectrum. The instrument goes back to historical models, the current form is designed for people with physical and mental limitations and is thus also suitable for dementia patients. Playing templates, which are followed with the finger, can be slid under the strings. Pitch and tone duration are thus fixed like regular musical notation. In a project carried out with seven people suffering from various forms of vascular dementia, individual lessons were given on the table harp. The focus was on the promotion of joy of life and quality of life as well as the effect on deficits caused by the disease and motor skills. The assessment was carried out with the Barthel Index for the evaluation of daily living skills, the DEM-Tect as a screening method for dementia, Box and Block as well as the Nine-Hole-Peg-Test for the determination of motor skills. The results showed that playing the table harp improved both gross and fine motor skills. In addition, the severity of aphasia was significantly improved in two participants (Hoedt-Schmidt, 2010).



**Picture 2.** Table harp (Prisma Foto, 2020)

### **Music Geragogy for Prisoners**

If music geragogy is to enable cultural education and participation, it is also necessary to think of imprisoned seniors. Criminological and forensic-psychiatric research has so far dealt preferentially with younger people. According to Leygraf (2009), criminality in science is a domain primarily of the second and third decades of life. However, not only demographic change, but also increasing mobility and activity of senior citizens are causing changes. As the ageing of the population continues, intramural music services for delinquent and additionally possibly mentally ill seniors must also be considered. At the Salus State Hospital for Forensic Psychiatry Saxony-Anhalt, a patient learned to play the table harp under music-geragogical guidance. Within only one year, he not only succeeded in playing the instrument in two voices without any previous musical knowledge. He even produced his own composition for table harp, which

won a prize in an art competition for prisoners (Mit Kreativität und Geschick gewonnen, 2022). The new aspects carried out in a musicgeragogical intervention in the context of a custodial measure are interesting. Acquisition and internalisation of new behaviours, along with the development of musical skills, are core to musical action in the penal system (Hartogh & Wickel, 2019), which is particularly interesting with regard to readiness for therapy in forensic clinics and for resocialisation in general. This is because intramurally new meaning references in music are recognised, the receptivity is expanded and one's own musical biography is perpetuated. (Hartogh, 2012).

### Conclusion

The goals, orientation and attitude of the still young discipline of music geragogy have solidified in recent years. Cooperation with social work and music therapy has become closer, although this can still be expanded. Social inclusion as an artistic and music-pedagogical as well as music-geragogical challenge continues to determine the professional discourse. Practitioners are already doing excellent work at the grassroots level in old people's homes and centres and are also convincing with innovative projects. Didactic research, which provides practitioners with a basis for their work at the grassroots level, is being developed and must continue to grow. The discipline must also continue to establish itself in areas that were not originally envisaged as a field of action and also provide answers to intercultural and gender-specific challenges. Another example is the penal system, where the first foundations for music-geragogical work are currently being laid. One topic is continuous professionalisation, not only in further education. The question arises as to which degree programmes music geragogy can be anchored in. In order to achieve a social positioning, projects at the grassroots level are one way. However, music geragogy must also be present in concert life. A survey of German symphony orchestras in 2009 revealed that the situation regarding differentiated concert offers for seniors is rather sobering. At that time, just half a dozen orchestras offered concerts for the special needs of older people (Sinsch, 2009). Since then, things have changed and numerous concert formats for older people have been developed. The Cologne Opera launched the project "Opera for Young & Old". Other examples are the interactive concert "Unforgettable" for people with dementia or the project "On the Wings of Music", which is also aimed at concertgoers with dementia.

### Biodata of the author



Sandra Sinsch is a certified music pedagogue, music therapist and music geragogue. She studied at the national music universities in Hamburg and Trossingen, the University of Applied Sciences Munster and was a scholarship holder of the German National Academic Foundation (Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes). From 2011 to 2016, she was a lecturer at the ITU State Conservatory in Istanbul, after that she worked as a music pedagogue in Egypt. Today Sandra Sinsch works as a music therapist at the Salus State Hospital for Forensic Psychiatry Saxony-Anhalt in Stendal, Germany. The clinical pictures treated there are: Schizophrenic psychoses, personality disorders such as antisocial/dissocial personality disorder, borderline personality disorder/emotionally unstable personality disorder, sexual preference disorders, intelligence deficits, brain-organic disorders, autism and ADHD. She uses active and receptive methods of Western music therapy as well as classical Arab and Ottoman music therapy. Since musical work in the context of custodial measures goes beyond conventional music therapy, she also integrates music education and music geragogical elements into her work. This is also reflected in the topic of her dissertation project conducted at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. "Music education in the Forensic Psychiatry - conditional factors for strengthening resources and promoting participation, social learning and cultural education". She is a member of the following societies: AMPF- Research in Music Education, German Society for Music Geragogy, DGM German Society for Music Psychology, IASE- Islamic Working Group for Social and Educational Professions Germany. E-mail: sinschsandra@gmail.com

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Web 3. <https://www.dg-musikgeragogik.de/>

Web 4. <https://www.sandrasinsch.de/>

#### **Suggestions for Reading**

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