

# Polyaesthetic Education in Slovakia after 1990 – Resources, Concepts, and Prominent Figures (Juraj Hatrík)

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The present study chronologically surveys innovative processes in aesthetic education and the impact of music educators who, after the political and cultural changes in Slovakia in 1989, embarked on the path of developing the concept of polyaesthetic education in line with the ideas of its founder, Wolfgang Roscher, and those of the Salzburg School (Mozarteum), Austria. The aim of the study is to clarify how the ideas of 1990s' polyaesthetic education were applied to the aesthetic education subjects, primarily music education. Theoretical foundations, their adaptation to the Slovak educational environment, and analytical insights into Juraj Hatrík's (1941–2021) creative work advancing the theory and practice of polyaesthetic education are presented in the section on his projects and music workshops. Hatrík's projects, due to their originality and authentic affinity to a child's spiritual world, managed to abandon the space of integrative music pedagogy and consistently followed the principles of polyaesthesia. | *Keywords: Polyaesthetic Education, Integrative Pedagogy, Music and Drama Project, Wolfgang Roscher, Juraj Hatrík*

## 1. Introduction

In the education theory, the aesthetic experience, artistic rendering, and interpretation of aesthetic experiences in the life of both an individual and a society went beyond the limits of arts disciplines over a century ago. From the very beginning, polyaesthetic education was meant to surpass artistic and educational frameworks. The driving force for artistic activities and theoretical reflection in European aesthetics and musical thinking and in its adoption to education was a belief that polyaesthetic education was complementary to technical education and it could foreground anthropogenic and cultural aspects of human individuality. The complex goal was to find the methods of

developing the ability to explore the world through senses, emotions, and cognition while maintaining the balance of reason and feeling that is embodied and ideally becomes visible in artistic creation and its reception.

Sallis (2024) affirms that in the arts, a purely intellectual meaning – wrapped in a perceptual blanket – is transformed so that it is accessible to the lower senses. The arts are the outcome of a double transformation, a kind of transforming the material sensation into the radiance of beauty. “The true sense of art lies in this double transfiguration of sense” (Sallis, 2008, p. 7). In the era of unprecedented accumulation of knowledge, but also of cultural decline and entrusting the computers with communication, it becomes even more necessary to build respect for the asymmetry of human and technical knowledge. However, it cannot be a competition or separation of culture from science, or their “fight to the death” (Henry, 2024, p. 9, our translation). Strengthening the positions of arts and arts education is a way out of a maze.

A child gets to know the world, first of all, through sensory perception; abstract and analytical thinking, necessary for a deeper understanding of the regularities of arts, the search for its meaning and evaluation develops later. Sláviková (2017, p. 160, our translation) asserts that our thinking is not about the decoding of sensory information, it is sensory thinking: “The activity of our senses does not change the requirements imposed on thinking but changes the thinking and the way of our existence”. Through aesthetic relations to the world, children begin to realise the difference between “what they see (material) and what is behind it (thought, meaning, idea)” (Mistrík, 2001, p. 227, our translation). The child does not evaluate the world and objects in it through considering utility but finds linkage through imagination. In doing so, one’s psychological distancing from the object becomes an essential part of the aesthetic relationship to the object. The aesthetic way of knowing the world highlights the synthesis of material and ideas (referential function) and, at the same time, it is the knowledge of something (idea, feeling, thought) as well as knowledge through something. According to Mistrík (2001), cognition, socialisation, and enculturation are carried out through children’s aesthetic relations to the world and through their artistic activities.

The focal ideas represent the basic direction of one of the main streams of contemporary aesthetic education – polyaesthetic education and integrative music pedagogy, their theoretical frameworks and activity-based concept. The present study surveys the impact of music educators who, after the political and cultural changes in Slovakia in 1989, set out to develop the concept of polyaesthetic education in consistency with Wolfgang Roscher’s (the founder) ideas and those of the Salzburg School (Mozarteum) in Austria. In the section on Juraj Hatrik’s projects and music workshops, we present the theoretical foundations, their transformation into the Slovak educational environment, and an overview of the impact that this prominent figure had in developing the theory and practice of polyaesthetic education. When Hatrik’s musical and pedagogical concept was introduced in Slovakia, it was an innovative approach to music education. His musical-dramatic projects

outreached integrative music pedagogy (in which musical activities acted as a musical-integrative component) and approached the concept of polyaesthetic education in the sense of *ad fontes*.

## 2. Aesthetic and Polyaesthetic Education in Slovakia after 1989 – New Challenges

The learning content of arts education and artistic and educational endeavours is anchored in the legislative frameworks of formal and non-formal education in the fields of music education, arts education, literary and drama education, movement and dance education, etc. in general schooling and in after-school arts classes. Needless to say, it is necessary to distinguish between arts education (in the sense of training future professionals, the primary goal of which is the arts creation or interpretation) and education through arts or towards arts (in which the arts are a means or a goal of training). In this sense, aesthetic education intentionally affects a person's personality so that the need for aesthetic experiencing and self-expression can be induced in the human mind. It is understood as the cultivation of personality by developing an ability not only to perceive but also to appreciate and evaluate aesthetic values (in nature, in the creations of human activity, and in everyday life).

In a student's artistic activity, the development of creativity is considered the most effective way of knowing and understanding the arts world, but also the human world as such. The development of aesthetic sensitivity is the way towards the aesthetically informed transformation of the world. (Brücknerová, 2012, p. 14, our translation)

The asset of polyaesthetic education is that the development of creativity refines both its poles: the receptive side of the aesthetic training and the active side, when a student is given the space to experience, co-create aesthetic situations, and create aesthetic values embedded in the arts. In polyaesthetic education, the requirement on both children and teachers for creativity appears to be paramount. Without creative thinking and acting, knowledge is reduced to the theoretical acquisition of acquired knowledge and does not sufficiently enable the application of knowledge in practice. By integrating activities in the musical and educational process, students can achieve a high level of authentic experiencing and aesthetic experience, their musical thinking develops, and spontaneous creativity gradually changes into conscious creativity deliberately focused on the production of new ideas and thoughts (Hudáková, 2015). Essentially, the acquired knowledge makes sense if a child can use it in perceptual, receptive, and interpretive activities.

In the teaching process, integrative musical and drama projects represent a polyaesthetic complex of sensory, motor, emotional, and cognitive perception. It can be used to teach the means of musical expression, structure and form, etc., thus fulfilling the cognitive goals of aesthetic education, which, on the affective level, are reflected through the leaning to an emotional-aesthetic experience. On the psychomotor level, they are reflected in the overall coordination of the processing of vocal, gestural, musical-dramatic and theatrical expression. Brain-based learning is learning occurring naturally through the formation of synapses, i.e. by connecting neurons, which can be

influenced by learning and intellectual activity (Turek, 2005). However, intellectual activity brings satisfaction only if it makes sense, which is why the basic principle of polyaesthetic education is a quest for meaning. According to Mastnak (1994), meaning has three heuristic dimensions: it is related to the quality of life, it cannot be learned, yet, to sensory seekers, it is accessible through an honest search; the meaning of life in the very existence of life is realized by positive development of oneself; the meaning of life is focused on achieving the goal with the perspective of the absolute meaning of being.<sup>1</sup>

The fate of aesthetic education in Slovakia and its struggle for its place also reflected a struggle to find this meaningfulness of being. It also largely reflected cultural and political moods that influenced views of educational strategies throughout former Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of the 1970s, aesthetic education became part of the curricula of grammar schools (actively supported by philosopher prof. Oliver Bakoš and the pioneer of Slovak musical aesthetic thinking prof. Jozef Kresánek in the academic year of 1969/1970); yet it was soon eliminated. It can be assumed that its elimination was an upshot of normalisation (probably aesthetic education itself seemed to some extent 'bourgeois'). More in-depth research could prove this hypothesis valid, considering that the possible resuscitation of its ideas was brought about by the loosened political and cultural situation that was introduced at the onset of the so-called restructuring in the satellites of the Soviet regime in the second half of the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Already in 1987, a professional development program in aesthetic education (since 1992, a further qualification program) was reintroduced into teacher training in order to bring this subject back to the 1990 grammar school curriculum where it rightfully belongs. This was followed by the launch of university programs in aesthetics teacher training at Slovak universities (Prešov, Nitra, Bratislava) at the beginning of the 1990s.

If we want to talk about the possibilities and relevance of polyaesthetic education (essentially drawing on musical ideas and structures) in a given space-time, we cannot claim that music education was dominant compared to all components of aesthetic education. The opposite is true; especially since 2008, in the era of the so-called Mikolaj's reform (named after the then Minister of Education), music education was struggling with great (literally survival) problems. On the other hand, it was music and music educators that have been at the forefront of the integration of the arts,<sup>3</sup> as music has certain

<sup>1</sup> However, if the achievement of a goal is meant as an achievement of performance, it becomes the opposite of the meaning of being.

<sup>2</sup> Restructuring, the original term *perestroika*, originally referring only to the economic reform in the Soviet Union during Mikhail Gorbachov's term of the general secretary of its communist party, till 1986.

<sup>3</sup> Due attention should be paid to an analysis or interpretation of the fact that the concept of integration was employed very smoothly in Slovak music education, which was probably based on the then challenges and opportunities of music education (the situation in the formal training at teacher-training institutions, conceptual changes in education in the new political system after 1989, personnel issues, etc.). For more on the term, see Balcárová (2013). The music-educational project as an application area of integrative music education represents "a symbiosis of the story and music and other types of arts to such an extent that the word and music form a unity of content, meaning, as well as education" (Balcárová, 2013, p. 123, our translation).

peculiarities that multiply its integrating potential.<sup>4</sup> Music is integrated into the social and individual sphere of experience, helping to bridge the difference between the musical sense (meaningfulness of musical structures) and significance, which, however, is not fully fixed in the mere structure of the work (Burlas, 1997). It can partially, syntactically and morphologically (in the figurative sense of the word) connect to human language and human speech;<sup>5</sup> simultaneously, it is open to the visualization of its morphemes and tectonics through analogies, parallels, synaesthesia, and other phenomena bordering four-dimension spacetime (sound as the fourth dimension of 3D space):

Although the semantic possibilities of music are much smaller than those of other arts, the advantage of music is the ability to model mental processes – and in this respect the possibilities of music are much greater than those of other arts. (Burlas, 1998, p. 35, our translation)

The works of Slovak theorists tackling the issue of polyaesthetic education and integrative music pedagogy over the past three decades have provided several explanations why music is a key component, or glue fostering unity of the meaning, expression, interpretation, and reception in polyesthesia-based<sup>6</sup> projects. In her musical projects and theoretical reflection, Tatiana Pirníková, a music theorist and teacher, directly continued the pioneering activities of the composer and music educator Juraj Hatrík, whose teaching was crucial in the course of adapting polyaesthetic education in Slovakia. Based on his activities, she addressed the principle of linking the activities that make part of music teacher training as follows:

A music teacher finds many stimuli in the elementary and archaic layers of a child's psyche, without which the development of musicality is impossible – sensory and motor aspects, archetypal imagination, syncretic associativity. All this is inseparably connected with the use of non-musical activities: movement, sign-and-symbolic artistic expression, dramatization – based on deeply anchored game models, verbalization – metaphorical-associative. (Pirníková, 2010, p. 6, our translation)

The second underlying principle is the change of perspective from a child as an object of pedagogical influence in the past to a child as a partner, a child whose creativity, emotionality, imagination, but also cognition are developed with a view of spiritual and ethical values necessary for a good and fulfilled life. As a result, it was searched for new ways leading to perceiving music through providing for creative situations and for experiencing music through activities (Drábek, 1998, p. 47, our translation), assuming that “perceptual abilities advance on a par with ability to express oneself”. At the same time,

<sup>4</sup> New theoretical approaches are summarised in Sláviková's works (2008, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> According to Burlas (1997), music makes sense primarily if it is an act of communication, creating its own special semiotic system due to its specific sonic and morpho-syntactic system, which forms a specific semiotic set. The interplay of language and musical phenomena is the basis for the pedagogical interpretation of a musical work.

<sup>6</sup> Polyaesthetic education represents a holistic pedagogical impact on a child within the integration of sensory perception by all five senses (multidimensional perception), with an emphasis on the holistic development of human potentialities and efforts to ensure the most comprehensive links between them. The name comes from the combination of Aristotelian concepts denoting the activation of all human senses (*polyaisthesis*) and creative production (*poiesis*).

this research resulted in encountering of *Western* and *Eastern* philosophy of music education, while the transfer of impulses was now received by the highly developed but relatively conservative music education of post-communist Czechoslovakia and, after 1993, autonomous Slovakia. The aim of further considerations is to point out the ways in which the ideas of polyaesthetic education were implemented after 1990 in the practice of teaching aesthetic education or its components (music education, partly also music and drama class and music and movement class). We also aim to present the original approaches of creative arts-based figures (focusing on Juraj Hatrík's works), who committed themselves to developing the theory and practice of polyaesthetic education.

### 3. Polyaesthetic Education and the Process of its Adaptation from German-speaking Countries to Music Education in Slovakia

The philosophical and psychological foundations of polyaesthetic education were known in Slovakia before 1990. Herbert Read's concept, highlighting the complexity of perception and pointing to the importance of an aesthetic relationship to the world, an aesthetic way of knowing, and aesthetic socialisation at the end of the 1960s, attracted attention. Read (1967) promoted the endeavours in arts education through the integration of sensory, psychomotor and analytical understanding of world assessment, with a strong emphasis on the social aspects of learning and joint creative activities. The pioneers of aesthetic education in our country immediately responded to this new concept, and especially those involved in receptive music education became increasingly aware of the need to look for new ways of developing a child's musical activity.

The roots of polyaesthetic education can be seen already in the art school (mainly crafts) called Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar operating in the 1920s; that was based on a creative dialogue between arts and artists. The Bauhaus scene became a medium where the combination of sculpture, scenography, ballet, literary and dramatic art – something that Romanticism artists dreamed of – was put into practice. Sound-scenic, musical-theatre and multimedia improvisations, i.e. the practical areas of the implementation of polyaesthetic education (Mastnak, 1994) originate here. The music teacher and composer Carl Orff (1895–1982), whose theatre of the world certainly had an impact on polyaesthetic education, is also considered a significant inspiration. Orff's legacy was clearly recognisable in the implementation of joint musical-theatrical improvisation projects, starting in the 1960s, by Wolfgang Roscher (1927–2002), the founder of the polyaesthetic concept in Austria, and music therapist Claus Thomas. The key moment was when W. Roscher met with the sculptor Alois Lindner in Salzburg. Lindner made *musical instrument sculptures*; he used natural imperfect materials to create musical instruments that, unlike Orff's set of musical instruments, could not be mass-produced, but had the potential to boost creativity in children who would be able to make them by themselves.



Polyaesthetic education has developed its own forms of artistic expression that are not necessarily meant for professional stages. Their concept lies in the necessary freedom enabling meaningful artistic realisation at every educational level. This applies especially to school and music teaching. (Mastnak 1994, p. 43, our translation)

The author of the concept, composer, musicologist and author of multimodal projects, Wolfgang Roscher, was the rector of the Institute for Integrative Music Pedagogy and Polyaesthetic Education at Mozarteum University in Salzburg from 1991 to 1996. The basic theoretical work laying the foundations of the discipline is his *Polyästhetische Erziehung* (1976), which was followed by many other books. At the beginning of his efforts, Roscher stated five target and value aspects of integrative music pedagogy. He later tagged the five aspects of polyaesthetic education as five different dimensions of simultaneous perception: space – time – society – science – arts. They gave rise to a practical system of six areas (production, reproduction, demonstration, reflection, consumption, reception) the reference sources of which were the works by Friedrich Schiller, Ernst Bloch, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodor W. Adorno. The International Society for Polyaesthetic Education (Internationale Gesellschaft für Polyästhetische Erziehung, abbr. IGPE), led by W. Roscher, based on its numerous activities, was an important supporting platform for the concept successfully developed since 1982 in Mozarteum (Medňanská, 2008).

From its beginnings, it remained tied to sound-scenic and musical-theatrical improvisations that became a method of teaching, constituted a complex artistic genre, a multimodal genre, and became a symbol or emblem of polyaesthetic education that Mastnak (1994, p. 51, our translation) described as the “final sign abbreviation”. Polyaesthetism as a sum of the senses (multi-sensibility, multiplicity variety of sensory perception) and multimedia (integration of artistic media) are the basic pillars of polyaesthetic education. In it, the expressive power of various arts prevents superficial integration, moves towards contemplation in terms of contemplative action and active contemplation. The variety of expressive reactions, elements of contemplation, but also opposite reactions (defiance, turbulence) are potential results of the activity-based experiencing of arts.<sup>7</sup> Dramatic action and play<sup>8</sup> are essential parts of projects that meet the criteria of polyaesthetics:

The psychological power of the theatre, its purifying and healing creative potential and its mimetic and at the same time identification character have deeply branched roots that do not merely determine how the theatre should work but result from the discovery of humanity by means of revealing transformed reality during the play. (Mastnak, 1994, p. 55, our translation)

In 1991, the International Society for Polyaesthetic Education (IGPE) led by W. Roscher began to spread its theoretical framework to Central and Eastern

<sup>7</sup> Contemplation is not a typical child's way of expression. It is rather rare, but it can be part of a calming reaction, cooling of emotions, etc. Rather, it is about knowing through insight.

<sup>8</sup> The game opens the door to a personal dimension of its protagonist. At the same time, the psychodynamics of a pupil, their experience, self-knowledge, the development of artistic skills and abilities in the perception and creation of art, and the reflection of the sensory experience of meaning are affected.

European countries (Medňanská 2008). In Czechoslovakia (after 1993 in the Slovak Republic), after the change of the political regime, professional organisations emerged to ensure the effective functioning of music education and arts education at all levels. In 1991, the Slovak Society for Music Education, namely its pedagogical section (today's Slovak Association of Music Teachers), began to organise musicological and music-pedagogical conferences to which foreign experts were invited. At that time, experts in music-movement pedagogy following Carl Orff's Schulwerk were contacted for the very first time. The society organised two conferences in Slovakia in 1990 and 1991, attended by Wolfgang Hartmann, Vladimír Poš and Wolfgang Roscher (Kopčáková, 2021).

In November 1991, the Pedagogical Section of the Slovak Music Society, at the time led by the composer Juraj Hatrík, invited leading Austrian figures of music pedagogy to the seminar *Integrating music opportunities and artistic education for children and youth*. Important theorists of polyaesthetic education, prof. Wolfgang Roscher and his wife and close associate Dr. Eva Roscher from Salzburg, accepted the invitation and came to the Children's Town of Trenčín-Zlatovce. The discussions were moderated by the world-famous Czech music scholar Jiří Fukač. The Roscher couple presented the concept of polyaesthetic education by Wolfgang Hartmann from Klagenfurt for the first time in Slovakia, and professor Wolf Peschl from Vienna ran a workshop. The total of about 300 experts and teachers gathered there. In 1992, prof. Irena Medňanská and prof. Juraj Hatrík participated in the national congress of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Muikerzieher Österreichs (Association of Music Educators in Austria, AGMÖ) in Vienna. During the congress, they were offered cooperation within the newly constituted European Association for Music in Schools (EAS). Medňanská soon became a member of the EAS Presidency, her active participation in symposia on polyaesthetic education (Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia) was followed by her research stay at Mozarteum University in Salzburg in 1994. She had a chance to attend the lectures, academic and artistic events led by the founding father of polyaesthetic education, prof. Roscher. Together with Juraj Hatrík, she tirelessly spread the ideas of polyaesthetic education in Czechoslovakia.

The composer Hatrík presented the principles of polyaesthetic education and integrative music pedagogy through his creative artistic activities in projects with children between 1990 and 2011, and called them music workshops. He gave the same name to a course that was part of a music theory program at the Faculty of Music and Dance of the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava. At the same place, between 1997 and 2011, Hatrík initiated and organised workshops for teachers called Pedagogická dvorana (Teacher's Hall). For six successful years, between 2004 and 2011, a partner event with similar content, called Prešov Music and Pedagogical Forum, was organised under the auspices of the University of Presov and in cooperation with the Methodological and pedagogical center in Prešov. In the following years, Hatrík's Pedagogická dvorana (Teacher's Hall) developed into a two-day seminar with a stable structure of lectures and workshops (Kopčáková, 2021). Musical activities were their fundamental component:



Music is the central art in the implementation of polyaesthetic education, and this is because the ancient ideal of musicality was the most effective predecessor of today's concept of polyaestheticality with the relevant participation and even dominance of musical activities. (Medňanská, 2008, p. 462, our translation)<sup>9</sup>

In the search for innovations in music education after 1990, music educators and composers were naturally enthusiastic about the ideas of polyaesthetic education and integrative music pedagogy. The most distinctively creative but also lecturing figures can be considered prof. Juraj Hatrík and prof. Bela Felix, who brought their own models of artistic and pedagogical projects into Slovak aesthetic education, namely in the training of pre-service music teachers, in-service music lecturers (at teaching-training faculties in Slovakia and the Czech Republic), as well as professional artists and theoreticians (at the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava). In the next part of the paper, we present Hatrík's model showing significant affiliation and affirmative consistency with the Wolfgang Roscher system. It is characterised by the principle of storytelling, dramatisation, metaphorization, connotational approach to the creation of concepts and understanding of structures, the principle of integration and multimodality.

#### **4. The Theoretical Background of Juraj Hatrík's Musical-Pedagogical Concept**

The founding father of polyaesthetic education, composer, music theorist and university lecturer, prof. Juraj Hatrík (1941–2021) studied composition at the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava under the guidance of the composer Alexander Moyzes, and the theory of music and aesthetics under the guidance of the composer Oto Ferenczy (1958–1963). After graduation, he taught music theory at the Conservatoire in Košice and Bratislava, at the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava, where he was later admitted to a research postgraduate program in composition and music theory (1965–1968). At that time, he was awarded his first compositional awards at home (Piešťany City Award, 1967) and abroad (Skopje, 1967). Godárová describes him as a composer in the following way:

Hatrík is strongly inclined to non-musical stimuli, to other arts, especially to literature and poetry, and he intensively deals with the aesthetics and philosophy of a musical work. The central axis of his compositions is the contrast and struggle of opposites: good and evil, beauty and ugliness, love and hatred, life and death, fantasy and reality, which is becomes reflected in the means of expression and composition, which often embody the clash of simplicity and complexity. The human voice, as the bearer of the text, is a very common interpreter of the humane message of his work. (Godárová, 1998, p. 115, our translation)

After the political turmoil at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, Hatrík worked outside the official education system. In 1971–1990, he was an expert

<sup>9</sup> The author probably means the concept of the so-called trinity – the unity of dance, singing, and poetry in ancient artistic expression, in which music as an isolated or independent art type did not exist.

associate of the Slovak Music Fund.<sup>10</sup> In 1991–2014, he worked as a lecturer at the Faculty of Music and Dance of the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava, where he lectured on music theory: music analysis and pedagogy (since 1997 as a university professor). As part of his pedagogical specialisation at the Academy of Arts, he introduced a course *Music workshop*.<sup>11</sup> The composer's efforts at syncretism in arts culminated in his stage work, represented in particular by a stage play *Janko Polienko* [*Baby Johnny Littlelog*], the opera *Šťastný princ* [*Happy Prince*] based on O. Wilde's story, a fairy tale *Mechúrik Koščúrik s kamarátmi* [*Friendly Sack and his party on the go*] based on M. Rúfus's poem, a humorous short story *Turčin Poničan* [*Turkish horseman in Poniky*], and music drama *Statočný cínový vojačik* [*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*] based on H. Ch. Andersen (Godárová, 1998; our translations). Some of these became the basis for the composer's later musical-dramatic projects created and interpreted together with children. Integrative musical-dramatic projects were an important part of Hatrík's work. These included stage or media outputs: radio shows (created in the 1970s and 1980s in the series called Broadcasting for Preschools and Elementary Schools) and television shows (conceived as club meetings for youth), TV productions and films.

Alongside these activities, the composer worked on the integrative concept of educational concerts for schools and began to cooperate with the Slovkoncert arts agency (now the Department of External Relations of the Music Centre in Bratislava). Thanks to these experiences, he later improved his concept of the course on music workshop. He drew not only on the theoretical knowledge and practical experience of the founders of the polyaesthetic concept, but also on his own experience in running educational concert programs for schools. He manifested compositional mastery and receptivity to the phases of children's musical ontogenesis in integrative musical-dramatic projects for children: *Cirkus Muzikus*, *Melódia nad zlato* [*Melody above Gold*], *Spievaj, klavír!* [*Piano, Sing!*], *Medzi trpaslíkmi* [*Among the Cute Dwarfs*], *Záhadne pesničky* [*Mysterious Songs*], *Statočný cínový vojačik* [*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*] (Čunderlíková, 2009, our translations). In these projects, he focused on communicating musical-theoretical knowledge of music to children through fairy tales, his own themes and scripts, using the metaphorization of musical speech, while offering a sophisticated methodology for educational practice (Čunderlíková, 2009).

When composing music for children, from the beginning, he sought the meaning and impact of musical forms and structures and subordinated them to the idea, non-musical content, philosophical subtext – music was always a mission to him. (Čunderlíková, 2011, p. 224, our translation)

Hatrík formulated and gradually clarified the theoretical basis of his concept in his books, out of which, not exhaustively, we consider the following the most

<sup>10</sup> In this position, Hatrík was involved in organizing and moderating recordings, during which he led a discussion with the Composers' Club and was part of discussions at the Music and Youth Centre.

<sup>11</sup> J. Hatrík was a chairman of the Slovak Association of Music Teachers; there he started and developed the tradition of regular seminars for teachers "Pedagogická dvorana" [Teacher's Hall], focused on the development of creativity.

important: *Drahokam hudby I.* (1997)<sup>12</sup> [*The Jewel of Music I*], *Projekt ako rekonštrukcia a revitalizácia skutočnosti* (2002) [*The Project as the Reconstruction and Revitalization of Reality*], *Kapitoly z integratívnej umeleckej pedagogiky a didaktiky* (co-authored with E. Čunderlíková, 2012) [*Chapters on Integrative Artistic Pedagogy and Didactics*], *Cesty za hudbou a k hudbe* (2016)<sup>13</sup> [*Searching and Finding Music*], *Bermudský trojuholník hudobnej pedagogiky alebo Kam sa v pedagogickom procese stráca hudba?* (2018)<sup>14</sup> [*The Bermuda Triangle of Music Pedagogy or Where Does Music Get Lost in the Pedagogical Process?*]. Hatrík devoted a large part of his creative activity to a child, whom he perceived as an artist, a listener and a partner. In his compositions for children and musical scenic projects, he tried to educate future artists and music listeners (Godárová, 1998). He envisioned a child listener who, during joint creative effort, is not burdened by stereotypes of conventional music education.

Today, we can see that Hatrík's contribution in elaborating his polyaesthetic concept is in providing a child with a holistic understanding of music, in the experiential nature of knowledge as a quest for a balance between reason and feeling, in developing creativity, and in activation during theoretical and *mental* education. Hatrík understood that metaphorized speech helps a child *describe or touch* the world of music, name the musical experience and ideas, develop imagination and creativity, and motivate them to further discover the world of music. In the music workshops, which he was the first to introduce in Slovakia, as a composer, he combined the multilayered nature of various musical areas into a whole.<sup>15</sup> For the university course on music workshops, Hatrík set the main goal and also named its partial goals accompanying it:

The growth of creative abilities through exposing the principles of creativity, through training fluency and flexibility – without emphasizing authorial, individual creation. Contrariwise, focusing on group communication, on models of "behaviour". However, this does not exclude but assumes a technological and constructional aspect. (Hatrík, 1994, p. 95, our translation)

He divided the contents of musical workshops into two cycles, as two ways of creating polyaesthetic projects. The first cycle, called *facile*,<sup>16</sup> is based on model exercises on fluency and flexibility, always with an emphasis on the emotional and situational-dramatic component. The effect on the child is achieved through imagination, fantasy, metaphor, and through the expressive capacity of music that the teacher verifies by means of emotional affect games

<sup>12</sup> This is a university textbook for the course on music education teaching methodology (not only) for students of primary school grade 1-4 teacher-training program.

<sup>13</sup> The text is a collective edition of the composer's published texts (studies, reflections, analyses, music examples, etc.), a selection from the years 1966–2014.

<sup>14</sup> The book contains lectures and studies in pedagogy, a selection of the most important texts that were created as part of the additional teacher-training study at the Faculty of Music and Dance of the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava. The texts are thematically divided into six areas: 1 Teacher; 2 Pupil/Child; 3 Music; 4 Methods; 5 Projects (focused on the child); 6. Conceptual materials (teacher-centred).

<sup>15</sup> These were study disciplines of composition, musical analysis, improvisation, score playing, auditory analysis, chamber music, etc. In his opinion "A music workshop does not replace or copy these objects but combines them into one homogeneous whole" (Hatrík, 1994, p. 95, our translation).

<sup>16</sup> Italian expression *facile* means something that is light, smooth, malleable.

(joy, sadness, anger, fear, aggressiveness, wonder, disgust, shame, etc.). The completed musical and non-musical (texts) materials are used for deconstruction and analysis of the project content structure. It tries to use the symbolism of mimetics, pantomime, body language and gestures as a response to non-musical and musical stimuli for musical structure. The second cycle of *agile*<sup>17</sup> is active group work of students in which certain typologies of musical activities and creativity are revealed. In this cycle, students' participation in composing music workshops brings other aspects relevant in the process of approximating integration and the polyaesthetic concept.

Hatrík (1994) openly advocated the achievements of Rosher's Salzburg school. He paid attention to those aspects that corresponded with his perception of psychological and aesthetic aspects. These were mainly the following ones: the issue of myth, symbol, alter ego, etc. in various variations, the typology of creative activities, various forms of work-creator relationships, craft-art; searching for analogies of musical structure with natural laws, from metaphor to intellectualism; imitation of historical styles in the aesthetic, philosophical and intermedia backgrounds; verbalization of opinion on the work, performance, metaphorization of musical terminology. Finally, of great importance are communication models leading to the outcome created for an integrative polyaesthetic project (Hatrík, 1994). Musical artistic creativity has a significant dimension, namely emotional activity in the creation process as well as in its presentation – performance and interpretation. The dimension of joint artistic work becomes a sophisticated form of a dramatic whole that “forces the indifferent group to turn into a community” (Hatrík, 1994, p. 98, our translation).

Hatrík's pedagogical publication *The Jewel of Music I* (1997)<sup>18</sup> provides empirical and content insights into his understanding of polyaesthetic concept of education. The author gradually passes through the *layers* of musical education through the sequence of tackling the components of music. He captured the sequences of musical education into components that he called *baskets* and arranged them into a system of nine activities based on the characteristics (vocal, instrumental, movement, dramatic, perceptual components) of action-based musical education. Hatrík (1994) named these components (*baskets*) poetically, referring to folk literature, fairy-tale motifs, or concepts connected through activities to cognitive moments of musical communication: 1. *Spievajte si, spievajte* [*Feel free to sing*] (vocal activities), 2. *Muzikanti, hrajte!* [*Musicians, start playing!*] (instrumental activities), 3. *Do kroku i do skoku* [*For marching and for hopping*] (physical activities with music), 4. *Stavebnica hudby* [*A Music Building Kit*] (musical literacy), 5. *Napni sluch!* [*Turn up your hearing!*] (development of active perception for better reception of music), 6. *Pod' sa so mnou hraj!* [*Come and play with me*] (creative musical and didactic group games, improvisations, music workshop),

<sup>17</sup> Italian term *agile* expresses agility, being swift, smart, fast, etc.

<sup>18</sup> The textbook with the methodology *Drahokam hudby I.* (1997) [The Jewel of Music I.] is intended for primary school grades 1 – 4, for pupils up to the age of ten. Probably, it did not have a sequence, or the continuation of the concept is recorded in other texts written by him.

7. *Na scénu, prosím!* [*Get on the stage, please!*] (musical and dramatic expression of music), 8. *Kde bolo, tam bolo* [*Once upon a time*] (cultivating a sense of time, tradition, history), 9. *S hudbou poza bučky* [*With music to the woods*] (interdisciplinary relations of music, cultivation of the idea of music as a manifestation of life).

Hatrík's approach, although based on a deep knowledge of the paradigm of music, musical psychology and child ontogeny, is highly intuitive and empirical.<sup>19</sup> He presents, explains, analyses, and interprets his visions to the reader through fairy-tale educational projects, such as the project *Medzi trpaslíkmi* [*Among the Cute Dwarfs*], (broadcast in the 1970s on Czechoslovak Radio). In it, the composer presents seven Dwarfs, who represent the 7 tones of a diatonic scale. They are accompanied by a narrator (Mr. Reporter) on their travels across a miraculous land. Hatrík evaluates his didactic work as a milestone representing a shift from an intuitive stage of works for children to the systematic stage (Čunderlíková and Hatrík, 2003). By metaphorizing the musical language, he also works with a 12-tone scale in his *Statočný cínový vojačik* [*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*] project. His *Záhadné pesničky* [*Mysterious Songs*] project presents curiosity while learning to play the instrument and explores musical sensitivity, the world of musical imagination and fantasy. All projects, perceived as intuitive on the outside, represent a well-founded system for cognitive learning of music. By using synesthetic metaphors, symbols, codes, and cyphers as well as stories, the author "provides insights that help discover depth and essence of meaning and purpose, something that a rational procedure would not allow for" (Sláviková, 2014, p. 424, our translation).<sup>20</sup> Sláviková states that, in terms of polyaesthetic education, today's integrative musical-dramatic projects can ensure "[a] wider and life-oriented aesthetic-educational scope, and enhancing complex musical and aesthetic moments" (Sláviková, 2000, p. 54, our translation). Hatrík's artistic and teaching activities have always been directed towards the search for new schemes and forms of aesthetic and educational work and were based primarily on the fact that music is often the most appropriate and most common integrator of artistic syntheses and life attitudes.

##### 5. Application of the Principles of Polyaesthetic Education in the Theory and Practice of the School System in Slovakia – Juraj Hatrík's Projects as Models for Further Development of the Concept

The transfer of the principles of polyaesthetic education through integrative music-educational projects, deriving from Hatrík's artistic thinking and lifelong artistic-pedagogical interventions in the teaching of music was implemented through theoretical clarification and project activities of his

<sup>19</sup> Hatrík, however, realized after some time that it is not easy to transform intuitiveness into a teaching method. Later, doubts also appeared, and he sporadically expressed them in discussions with his colleagues. He wondered whether this type of activity-based conception of aesthetic education (music workshops, musical-dramatic project) was feasible at all in primary school with pupils.

<sup>20</sup> In this process, the inner interiorization of the artistic experience takes place, and the ability of an undifferentiated view of the world around us and in us is also stimulated via thinking, emotionality, intuition, sensory perception (Sláviková, 2000).



contemporaries and followers.<sup>21</sup> In parallel with Hatrik, professor Belo Felix, an artist, composer and university lecturer, who worked at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, was working on his lifelong concept of musical and dramatic projects. In his concept, the experiential activities of the creative process leading to the creation of musical-dramatic projects use so-called inclusion. Felix (2013) outlined its principles in six areas: the principles of heterogeneity, cooperation, transdisciplinarity, individualisation, active cognition, and integrity. For him, the principle of diversity (heterogeneity) represents the combination of students' abilities and skills with different ambitions, and different degrees of self-assertion with the aim to produce original joint work using interdisciplinary relationships. The principle of cooperation is based on equality, with everyone demonstrating a leaning towards tolerance, help, and understanding in their vocal, instrumental, dance, and dramatic abilities.

Felix's (2013) third principle is the principle of transdisciplinarity that he uses for cross-curricular references. At the heart is the polyaesthetic nature of the project, as it integrates cognitive, socio-affective and psychomotor goals, and through arts it opens the way to a multimodal perception of wholeness, to understanding and grasping the whole through experientiality, which leads to possible understanding of the value, meaning, and shape (Sláviková, 2000). The principle of individualisation, or the principle of uniqueness, allows for the existence of the possibility for everyone to express oneself in their original expression, to gradually transform, and to shift their self-presentation skills. The criterion of creativity is novelty; each project has a new theme, topic, script, and creation process, from which Felix (2013) derives the principle of active learning. In various activities, mental activity is improved, fluency and flexibility, divergence and convergence of solutions and overall communication with arts and in arts are developed.<sup>22</sup> Finally, the principle of integrity represents the concept of co-creation leading to a common goal. The joining of 'microparticles' of rehearsing and creation process must lead to one coherent line where the 'macro' as a holistic project is not only completed by implementation or performance, but the essence of the common path is the direction to shared philosophy, to knowledge, to a common goal.

At a first glance, it can be stated that Hatrik's and Felix's thought worlds show a high degree of affinity to the same source. This is also visible in the next important step on the way to fulfilling the ideal of polyaesthetic education in the form of integrative musical-dramatic projects, in which Felix was, so to speak, irreplaceable. It was the introduction of Hatrik's polyaesthetic concept into music education textbooks for primary schools.<sup>23</sup> Finally, there is a

<sup>21</sup> It is a group of active teachers of music and aesthetic education, theoreticians and university lecturers within the formal (primary school, higher art education, university training of music theorists and music teachers) and non-formal (after-schools arts classes) education system in Slovakia.

<sup>22</sup> The aim is a holistic concept, in which it is a balance between the emotional, cognitive, motor, and social components of personality. The teacher is 'only' a facilitator of the entire creation process (Felix, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> In 2013, the Slovak Pedagogical Publishing House in Bratislava started publishing textbooks by prof. Felix and prof. Eva Langsteinová. A decade later, the authors of new music education



number of practitioners and theoreticians who in the 1990s became enthusiastic about polyaesthetic education and followed up on the work of the most inspiring figures of that time – Hatrík and Felix. Specifically, the most important figures are e.g. Dr. Miroslava Blažeková, a university lecturer at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, founder of the Slovak Orff Society (Blažeková, 2011), a theoretician of Montessori pedagogy, who currently works as a lecturer and organizer of creative music and movement workshops for music teachers. Associate professor Tatiana Pirníková, a music teacher and Hatrík's student, has been developing the concept of music workshops practically and theoretically since the mid-1990s (Pirníková, 2004; Pirníková, 2005), from 1994 to 2015 as a university teacher at the School of Performing Arts in Bratislava and the University of Presov, currently as a cultural manager and lecturer of workshops at the Viola arts theatre in Prešov.

Jana Hudáková, who experimentally shifted the concept towards the field of museum pedagogy and educational concerts for primary schools, has been teaching music workshops at the University of Prešov since 2008. She has implemented several projects within music workshops in the setting of the manor houses (in Budimír and Hanušovce nad Topľou), museums (Regional Museum Prešov, Sabinov Museum, Bardejov Spa Open-Air Museum). Her music-educational concerts for schools, held by students of music teacher teaching programs, were thematically set into local and regional history. Hudáková's projects showed that working with the environment and material artefacts of museums and mansions helps to complete and strengthen the ideas of the implementers (students), and at the same time has the potential to have a strong aesthetic impact on participating viewers (primary school pupils). This model of holistic education has multidimensional content and cross-curricular overlaps.

A theoretical reflection on polyaesthetic and integrative pedagogy that is highly acclaimed by Slovak expert audience is present in books of Zuzana Sláviková, a music scholar and university lecturer. Her works (Sláviková 2008; Sláviková 2013), especially the monographs *Umelecká výchova v interdisciplinárnom kontexte* [*Arts Education in the Interdisciplinary Context*] (Sláviková, 2017, our translation) and *Umenie ako poznanie* [*Arts as Knowing*] (Sláviková, 2023, our translation) offer a synthesis of existing studies based on meticulous pedagogical research. The author examines the arts in a complex of philosophical, anthropological, sociological, and psychological contexts. She has managed to adopt a truly interdisciplinary approach to the issue of polyaesthetic education and integrative music education (psychology of perception, psychology of creative and imaginative-emotional processes, depth psychology, philosophy of the whole, mythology, phenomenology, etc.).

Even today, Hatrík's<sup>24</sup> numerous projects allow for multifaceted use in pedagogical practice. They are a great inspiration, but for many teachers they can still seem

textbooks took over the relay, from 2021 the Taktik publishing house in Košice began cooperation with university lecturers and authors, namely Hudáková, Lenka Kaščáková, associate professor Pavol Brezina and Dr. Bönde.

<sup>24</sup> Let us at least mention projects *Vysoký otec, široká mať*, *Statočný cínový vojačik*, *Bájký o Levovi*, *JAR -RAJ*, *Tváre hudby*, *Jarná polievka*, *Turci idú!*, *O neposlušnej Cindy*, *TOY BOX H.CH.A.* [Tall

like an unattainable goal today. When highly intense creative activity and enthusiasm came to a halt (as a result of the changes in the education field after 1989) and, at the same time, when several leading representatives of polyaesthetic and integrative music education in Slovakia (Hatrík, Felix, Pirníková, etc.) stopped being active at the end of 2010s, the time has come to critically evaluate and reflect on the achievements. With the passage of time, we can say today that Hatrík's musical and pedagogical concept was innovative and progressive, but despite its qualities, it encountered several pitfalls and practical problems. We summarise them in five points and/or symptoms of the aesthetic and educational education system in the process of its current reform:

1. *Unpreparedness of the school system.* J. Hatrík's concept emphasised creativity, perception and interdisciplinary connections, which, however, often did not fit into the inflexible system of music education (especially at after-school arts classes and conservatoires). Many schools preferred performance-based approaches (e.g. mastering the instrument, score), while Hatrík promoted creativity, active listening, and cooperation. As a result, it was more difficult to ensure the stable presence of his methods in practice, and it was hard to beat the resistance of more conservative educators.
2. *Dependence on the teacher's personality.* J. Hatrík believed that the teacher's personality was crucial. The teacher must be creative, empathetic, and open to cooperation. However, such an approach requires highly motivated and creatively disposed teachers, which is not commonplace. Therefore, when putting this concept into the hands of less engaged teachers, the method was reduced to only superficial elements without deeper understanding.
3. *Time-consuming and methodologically complex activities.* His concept of perceptual analysis of music or creative workshops required more time, preparation, and personal involvement. In a standard school environment, where music instruction is often limited to one class per week, it is very difficult to apply Hatrík's approach in all its complexity.
4. *Lack of didactic materials.* Hatrík created works for children, but there was no comprehensive system of methodologies and textbooks that would transform his concept into everyday school reality and that would correspond with the given system of upbringing and education. Teachers did not have clear methodological support, they often had to improvise, therefore, without deeper preparation, the concept was easily distorted or rejected.
5. *Conflict with traditional authority in the classroom.* Hatrík also emphasised children's work and their participation in the creation of artwork, which was contrary to the then traditional hierarchical arrangement, i.e. against the model: teacher equals authority, pupil equals receiver. Some educators and institutions considered this approach to be a 'reduction' of aesthetic requirements and sometimes considered its process and approach too avant-garde.

Father, Wide Mother, The Steadfast Tin Soldier, Fables of the Lion, SPRING -PAPARADISE, Faces of Music, Spring Soup, The Turks Are Coming!, About disobedient Cindy, TOY BOX H.C.H.A.] as a development of the theme *Statočný cínový vojačik*, *Melódia nad zlato*, *Cirkus Muzikus* [The Steadfast Brave Tin Soldier, Melody Above Gold, Circus Muzikus] and others.

## 6. Conclusion

By a child's participation in integrative projects following the polyaesthetic concept, the interconnection of multiple senses has a multidimensional significance for the development of personality, even it may have a psychotherapeutic effect. The interconnection of the senses is realised in the verbal, musical, movement (gestural, movement and spatial coordination) and expression aspect of the produced work. The absence of divergent tasks in the prioritised areas of school education reinforces the need to introduce or maintain subjects such as creative drama and polyaesthetic education, which draw on the divergence of solutions specific to a situation and a person while being part of teamwork. At the same time, the artistic project is a prevention against the loss of the ability to feel, perceive, and learn more deeply and comprehensively, to think systemically and analogously, to understand one's mental state and processes (Sláviková, 2023).

The values that are anthropological constants, especially community, family, human solidarity, trust, and the ability to cooperate, can show us the way out of the complexity of this world. These are the qualities by which we live and are human. Aesthetic and educational efforts, represented by musical, artistic, dramatic, literary and dance education, show us how to create, strengthen or heal weakened social bonds. In particular, by giving every child space in the process of the creation and artistic activities so that they can use their best developed dispositions and transfer their ideas about the world into the project. In these processes, the arts become part of a child's life – it is about life as art and art as life in its essence.

Thus the promise of art concerns the way in which its future may take shape. It concerns the future of the work of art – that is, the prospect that this future will take shape in such a manner that art might remain decisive in its bearing on still reserved happenings and on this future itself. (Sallis 2008, p. 152)

The true meaning of the arts is how it always returns us to humanity in the sense of our perspective of *homo aestheticus*. The path out of the vicious cycle of dehumanization caused by the overuse of technology, the breakdown of social ties, the breakup of culture and science is also shown to the world by a community of passionate teachers of aesthetic education, promoters of topical elements of the Orff School, polyaesthetic education and integrative arts pedagogy. It is a very difficult path, which requires courage and determination, but we know that not all ideals will be fulfilled. In this unwaveringness, Juraj Hatrík was an inspiring musician, creator, and music teacher who has his followers in Slovakia.

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