

Bridging curriculum and children's musicking: Recruiting South African children's multimodal musical games as resources for musical education

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Musical play is recognised internationally as a universal feature of childhood. Like children in playgrounds all over the world, many South African children are actively engaged in a range of artistic practices, particularly musical play, outside the classroom. These are self-created, transmitted and adapted according to children's musical identities and interests. However, these multimodal musical practices are seldom recognised as embodying children's prior musical capacities and skills, nor are they recognised as music. This is especially the case in South African music education, where musical epistemologies are problematically articulated in the Creative and Performing Arts curriculum. The result is a dislocation between curriculum and 'local' musical practices, classroom and playground, and between prescribed curriculum knowledge and music in everyday life. State school teachers are bound by a curriculum that conceptualises music as a written literacy and decontextualizes musical elements, facts and skills from their practices, which can result in little active music-making taking place. The paper illustrates some ways in which, by recognising children's musical games as musicking, and "recruiting" them for pedagogy, teachers may begin to overcome the many challenges of music education curriculum implementation in South Africa. I will show some typical musical games documented in Soweto primary schools, demonstrating how their hybridity, multimodal and intertextual features are located within South African urban musical cultures and how the games reveal children's sound design capacities. The paper finally suggests that musical play be considered as valuable resources and sources of prior musical knowledge for all children; that they be recruited as resources (rather than simply reiterated) for music education for transformative learning.

Dr. Susan Harrop-Allin is a lecturer, pianist and teacher-educator who has worked in music development and teaching in South Africa for twenty five years. In recognition of her community music development work, she was one of three arts and culture finalists for the national Shoprite/Checkers Woman of the Year award in 2004. Susan holds a Performer's Licentiate (ABRSM) and PhD in music education and ethnomusicology from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where she lectures in the Schools of Arts and Education. She is developing Community Music as a new area of higher education teaching and research in South Africa, piloting student service-learning projects and supporting community music initiatives in HaMakuya, northern Limpopo. Susan also trains Arts and Culture teachers for arts NGOs and performs as an accompanist and chamber musician with *Il Trio Rosso* and as a member of *The Chanticleer Singers*. She publishes and researches in the area of community music, ethnomusicology and music education, presents papers at international conferences and has published several book chapters and journal articles in international and local publications. She is on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Community Music* and a director of the Johannesburg Youth Orchestra Company and Rena Le Lona Arts Centre for Children in Soweto.