

# Editorial

Children's and young adult literature and media offer a symphony or polyphony of sounds. The word »sounds« evokes a whole concert of related associations. The term relates to a spectrum of auditory phenomena that encompasses the complex areas of tone/sound, word/language and music as well as noises of all kinds. It also leads to questions of sensory perception(s) as well as to sound art, be it in classical, experimental or popular culture forms. Literary sounds range from the multifarious aspects of the lyrical (poems, lyrics, etc.) to questions of intermedial references in texts; specific sounds and soundtracks are also audible in children's and young adult media.

But it doesn't just thrum and throb in young adult novels; sounds are also audible in picturebooks, for example, and political and ideological messages can be transmitted in all medial forms via sound. Narratological aspects are showcased when the voice of the narrator, the childlike tone or the fast beat of a novel are alluded to. Sounds can be interwoven with speech melodies, introduced with foreign-language quotations or underlaid with montaged and collaged noises. The chirping and rustling of nature is depicted via sounds, the (literary, composed) symphony of the big city sets a sound monument to metropolises.

In media contexts, too – both in the field of acoustics and in visual media – sounds are of central importance. Hence the relevance of probing the connections between sound and media development as mirrored in all media products and practices for children and young adults.

The focus of the fifth *Yearbook of the German Children's Literature Research Society* is the historical and contemporary dimensions of sound in children's and young adult literature with seven articles that examine its manifold implications in various medial forms – from both a theoretical and material perspective – and discuss these in terms of their significance for today's children's and young adult culture.

## Content

Heidi Lexe explores how sounds are evoked by different literary devices. She examines the role of pop music, including the use of literary soundtracks, in young adult literature and adapts a tool from the field of film music studies to discriminate between the diverse functions that such soundtracks can have. Lars Oberhaus and Mareile Oetken write about the picturebook as a sound medium, and chart the various possible relationships between images, words and sounds, with a special focus on the narrative dimension of this multimodal text form at the interface of sonic worlds.

Two English-language articles address historical aspects of children's music making. With the help of a digitally supported close reading, Ulrike Kristina Köhler analyses the texts of two famous eighteenth-century English hymn books for children, Isaac Watts' *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* and Christopher Smart's *Hymns for the Amusement of Children*, tracing the construction of the singing child in explicit representations as well as in the stylistic, formal and phonetic features of the hymns. Matthew Roy examines piano music publications specifically for children in the second half of the nineteenth century by Robert Schumann, Cornelius Gurlitt and Théodore Lack. He explores

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the significance of this music as an instrument of socialisation and the hidden influence of the adult composer in showing children their musical and social boundaries.

In the first of two articles about composers' biographies, Andreas Wicke examines the image of Mozart in children's literature and media, tracking the portrayal of the composer as divine child and wunderkind in the 1940s and 1950s to contemporary representations which strip him of his heroic status in texts and allow modern children, via time travel, to meet him as an equal. Amrei Flechsig engages with biographies of Mozart and Beethoven in Soviet youth literature, where the medium of biography was seen as having potential for providing heroic role models, and probes their ideological and educational slant. Heiko Strunk gives an overview of Lyrikline, a website that presents contemporary German and international poetry in text and sound. Its poetry archive offers the voice, sound and performance of poets, as well as poems in their original languages and in translation – a veritable sound art library in the WWW.

Beyond the focus theme, three articles explore questions of children's and young adult literature and media from a historical or theoretical perspective.

Maren Conrad presents the preliminary findings of a research project that aims to systematise, as ›precarious literature,‹ texts of nineteenth-century children's literature which were then highly regarded, influential and widely read but are today largely forgotten. As an exemplary ›precarious‹ text, Conrad reads *Was sich der Wald erzählt* (1850) [*What Was Said in the Woods*] by Gustav zu Putlitz. Petra Josting offers some results from a research project on German-language children's and young people's literature in the media network from 1900 to 1945, and focusses in her article on radio programmes from 1924 on, that engaged with this literature. Ute Dettmar writes about a theme central to German memory culture: the (self-) depiction of childhood during German Reunification. She explores narrative and generational viewpoints in autobiographical texts, especially in graphic novels, which constitute an archive for this transitional period.

A total of 22 individual and collective reviews of current publications undertaken by the members of the German Children's Literature Research Society present and discuss current research on children's and young adult literature and media.

A tusch at the end for those who played a part in this *Yearbook*. We welcome Christine Löttscher, the new member in the editorial team, who has been involved since May 2021. We thank our authors who staked out academic horizons and made the *Yearbook* 2021 resound with their articles, the peer reviewers for meticulously checking and commenting on the articles, Agnes Blümer (Cologne) and Lena Hoffmann (Frankfurt/M.) who have, once again, coordinated the reviews in this volume with great care and circumspection, and Simone Fischer for her typographical energy and the humming cover.

We wish all our readers a sonorous, groovy and, in any case, inspiring read.

Cologne, Lüneburg, Ludwigsburg, Zurich, Autumn 2021

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