

ANHEDONIA: EXPLORING MUSICAL PLEASURE IN MUSIC THERAPY

Music Therapy Workshop with Prof. Katrina McFerran

We are delighted to announce a unique opportunity to participate in a workshop with Prof. Katrina McFerran, an internationally recognized leader in music therapy education, research and practice.

This workshop is open to all music therapists and music therapy students who are interested in exploring an essential topic relevant to many clinical populations.

Music therapists work with many clients who have chronic physical and mental health challenges.

Anhedonia is a transdiagnostic symptom that has been strongly associated with chronic illnesses including depression, schizophrenia, Parkinson's, and chronic pain. This symptom refers to the loss of pleasure in previously pleasurable things, and is often misdiagnosed as depression but is not successfully treated by anti-depressants. Recent research by our group has demonstrated that music therapy can effectively reduce anhedonic symptoms and it may be an important mediator of success in therapy.

This workshop will explore how music therapists address both pleasure and pain in music therapy, drawing on Prof. McFerran's research into 'Healthy and Unhealthy Uses of Music' and with an extension to Musical Pleasure. The implications for practice are related to choosing music/songs in music therapy for pleasure, emotional resonance, nostalgia, aesthetics and identity work. This will be explored experientially and draw on participants' experiences in practice as well as demonstrating the new method from our research.

When

January 10th, 2026, 9:30 am – 5:30 pm

Where

Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (ZHdK),
Kammermusiksaal 1 (5.K13)

Language

English

Costs

CHF 70.–

CHF 55.– (SFMT members)

CHF 30.– (Students)

Registration

Registration by January 5th, 2026



Short Bio

Professor Katrina Skewes McFerran is world-leading music therapy researcher in the topics of music, music listening and wellbeing. She has written six books, the latest of which comprehensively synthesises existing knowledge in 'The Psychology of Music Listening for Health and Wellbeing Professionals' published by Palgrave in 2024 (with Carol Lotter). Her research has been funded by multiple grants from the Australian Research Council and her experience as a music therapist ensures that the knowledge generated can be used to benefit the lives of people with a range of chronic physical and mental health conditions. Prof McFerran has produced a TedX talk with more than 130,000 views (Returning from the Darkside with Music) and a free Massive Open Online Course on 'How Music Can Change Your Life' that has more than 32,000 learners from around the globe. She is a dynamic and well-informed speaker who bridges research, theory and application.

A Cooperation between SFMT and ZHdK

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