
Lecture

Katrina McFerran

Wednesday
14th January 2026
18.00 h

Health Benefits of Music Listening

Lecture hall 3.K01
Floor 3

A coproduction of ZHdK, Master Performance and Music Therapy Studies, Institute for Music Research and SMG, Sektion Zürich

In this talk, Professor McFerran will explore the health benefits of music listening drawing on theory from brain studies, psychology, and therapy. Each field provides a different explanation for why music makes us «feel good», but the mechanisms of action underpinning successful treatment with music are not yet clear. The talk will include illustrations and examples of music that will help the audience to reflect on what music might help them and their clients to benefit from listening.

Katrina McFerran will reside in Zürich through a Scientific Exchange Visit with Friederike Haslbeck (Music as Therapy in Neonatal Care and Beyond) sponsored by SNF.

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.



Toni-Areal, Pfingstweidstr. 96, Zürich

**Free entrance –
zhdk.ch**