

Samuel A. Mehr

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and Child Study Center, Yale University

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Google Scholar: [Wh0RWbgAAAAJ](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Wh0RWbgAAAAJ)

Citizenship: United States and France
Permanent residency: Canada and New Zealand

Employment

2022– Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, University of Auckland
2023– Assistant Professor Adjunct, Child Study Center, Yale University
2022–2023 Senior Scientist, Haskins Laboratories
2017–2022 Research Associate, Department of Psychology, Harvard University

Affiliations

2023– Member, Natural/Artificial/Organisational Intelligence Institute, University of Auckland
2023– Board Member, Centre for Global Childhoods, University of Auckland
2019– Associate Member, International Laboratory for Brain, Music, and Sound Research,
Université de Montréal
2018–2022 Visiting Scholar/Lecturer, School of Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington

Education

2014–2017 Doctor of Education in Human Development and Education, Graduate School of
Education, Harvard University
Thesis committee: Howard Gardner, Catherine Snow, Steven Pinker, & Elizabeth Spelke
2012–2014 Master of Education in Human Development and Education, Graduate School of
Education, Harvard University
2011–2012 Special Student in Psychology, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University
2006–2010 Bachelor of Music in Music Education, with Distinction, Eastman School of Music,
University of Rochester

Funding

Active:

- 2024–2029 Dutch Research Council Vici Talent Programme VI.C.221.052, *Understanding nonverbal vocalisations: A computational ethology approach* (total funding: €1,500,000; Mehr award: €55,000). Role: Co-Principal Investigator (with PI Disa Sauter).
- 2024–2025 Early Career Research Excellence Award, University of Auckland (NZ\$25,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2023 Faculty of Science Open Access High Impact Publication Fund, University of Auckland (US\$4,995). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2023–2025 Faculty of Science Research Development Fund, University of Auckland, *Effects of music interventions on infant and parent health* (NZ\$20,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2022–2027 Royal Society of New Zealand Rutherford Discovery Fellowship RDF-UOA2103, *Psychological and cultural foundations of music* (NZ\$800,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2022–2025 Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund Standard Grant MFP-UOA2133, *Structure of human music perception* (NZ\$839,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2021–2024 Fonds de recherche du Québec Team Project 2022-PR-299652, *Examining universals in music and animal communication to reveal biological foundations of music* (CA\$190,500). Role: Collaborator (with PI Sarah Woolley).
- 2017–2024 National Institutes of Health Director's Early Independence Award DP5OD024566, *Psychological functions of music in infancy* (US\$2,081,950). Role: Principal Investigator.

Previous:

- 2022–2023 National Science Foundation Pathways to Enable Open-Source Ecosystems Grant 2229631, *An open-source ecosystem for massive online experiments and citizen science* (US\$296,162). Role: Collaborator (with PI Joshua Hartshorne).
- 2021–2023 NIH Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research (supplement to NIH DP5OD024566; US\$110,382). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2021–2022 Harvard Data Science Initiative Special Projects Grant, *Advancing data-driven scientific discovery for cross-cultural music research* (US\$5,000). Role: Co-Principal Investigator (with co-PI Steven Pinker).
- 2017–2022 Harvard University Department of Psychology Teaching & Development Grant (US\$15,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2017–2020 Harvard Data Science Initiative Postdoctoral Award (US\$170,000). Role: Principal Investigator.
- 2015–2016 Harvard Mind/Brain/Behavior Interfaculty Initiative Faculty Grant, *Caregiving and the core functions of music* (US\$50,000). Role: Investigator (with PIs Howard Gardner & Elizabeth Spelke).
- 2015 Harvard Mind/Brain/Behavior Interfaculty Initiative Graduate Student Grant, *The natural history of song* (US\$3,000). Role: Co-Principal Investigator (with co-PI Manvir Singh).
- 2013–2014 Dana Foundation Grant, *Arts and cognition* (US\$168,625). Role: Investigator (with PI Elizabeth Spelke).

Awards and Honors

- 2023 Early Career Research Excellence Award, University of Auckland
- 2021 Rising Star, Association for Psychological Science
- 2020 New Investigator Award, European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association

2019 Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Harvard College
 2018 Postdoctoral Research Award, Human Behavior and Evolution Society
 2016 NSF Travel Award, International Conference for Music Perception and Cognition
 Travel Award, Human Behavior and Evolution Society
 2015 Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Harvard College
 2014 Travel Award, International Society for Infant Studies
 2013–2015 Travel Award, Harvard Graduate School of Education (three awards)
 2012–2017 Presidential Scholarship, Harvard University

Papers and Preprints

Throughout, * denotes advisee and ^ denotes equal contribution. All datasets, materials, & code are available on request; most are open-access at <https://osf.io/6nvpe> or <https://github.com/themusiclab>. Please contact me if you need assistance with any of these.

Albouy, P., **Mehr, S. A.**, Hoyer, R. S., Ginzburg, J., & Zatorre, R. J. Spectro-temporal acoustical markers differentiate speech from song across cultures. *bioRxiv*. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.01.29.526133>. In review.

*Bertolo, M., Müllensiefen, D., Peretz, I., Woolley, S. C., ^Sakata, J. T., & ^**Mehr, S. A.** Sex differences in human music perception are negligible. *bioRxiv*. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.05.23.541970>. In review.

Maymon, C. N., Crawford, M. T., Blackburne, K., Botes, A., Carnegie, K., **Mehr, S. A.**, Meier, J., Murphy, J., Miles, N., Robinson, K., Tooley, M., & Grimshaw, G. M. The presence of fear: how subjective fear, not physiological arousal, shapes the experience of presence. *PsyArXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/2dx7n>. In revision.

Katiyar, T., Bonnefon, J-F., **Mehr, S. A.**, & Singh, M. (in press). Discovering the unknown unknowns of research cartography with high-throughput natural description. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/24euk>

*Yurdum, L., Singh, M., Glowacki, L., Vardy, T., Atkinson, Q., *Hilton, C. B., Sauter, D., Krasnow, M. M., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2023). Universal interpretations of vocal music. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 120(37), e2218593120. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2218593120>

Mehr, S. A. & Bortfeld, H. (2023). Music, a piece of many puzzles in developmental science [Introduction to Special Issue "Music In Development", Guest Editor]. *Developmental Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13438>

Singh, M. & **Mehr, S. A.** (2023). Universality, domain-specificity, and development of psychological responses to music. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 2, 333-346. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-023-00182-z>

^*Liu, J., ^*Hilton, C. B., Bergelson, E., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2023). Language experience predicts music processing in a half-million speakers of fifty-four languages. *Current Biology*, 33(10), 1916-1925.e4. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2023.03.067>

Long, B., Simson, J., Buxó-Lugo, A., Watson, D. G., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2023). How games can make behavioural science better. *Nature*, 613, 433-436. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-023-00065-6>

^*Hilton, C. B., ^*Crowley-de Thierry, L., *Yan, R., Martin, A, & **Mehr, S. A.** (2022). Children infer the behavioral contexts of unfamiliar foreign songs. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 152(3), 839–850. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0001289>

- ^*Hilton, C. B., ^*Moser, C., *Bertolo, M., *Lee-Rubin, H., Amir, D., *Bainbridge, C. M., *Simson, J., Knox, D., Glowacki, L., Alemu, E., Galbarczyk, A., Jasienska, G., Ross, C. T., Neff, M. B., Martin, A., Cirelli, L. K., Trehub, S. E., Song, J., Kim, M., Schachner, A., Vardy, T. A., Atkinson, Q. D., Salenius, A., Andelin, J., Antfolk, J., Madhivanan, P., Siddaiah, A., Placek, C. D., Salali, G. D., Keestra, S., Singh, M., Collins, S. A., Patton, J. Q., Scaff, C., Stieglitz, J., Ccari Cutipa, S., Moya, C., Sagar, R. R., Anyawire, M., Mabulla, A., Wood, B. M., Krasnow, M. M., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2022). Acoustic regularities in infant-directed speech and song across cultures. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6, 1545–1556. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-022-01410-x>
- *Atwood, S., ^Schachner, A., & ^**Mehr, S. A.** (2022). Expectancy effects threaten the inferential validity of synchrony-prosociality research. *Open Mind*, 6, 280-290. https://doi.org/10.1162/opmi_a_00067
- *Hilton, C. B. & **Mehr, S. A.** (2022). Citizen science can help to alleviate the generalizability crisis. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 45, e21. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X21000352>
- Li, W., Germine, L. T., **Mehr, S. A.**, Srinivasan, M., & Hartshorne, J. K. (2022). Developmental psychologists should adopt citizen science to improve generalization and reproducibility. *Infant and Child Development*, e2348. <http://doi.org/10.1002/icd.2348>
- Gartstein, M. A., Seamon, D. E., Mattera, J. A., Enlow, M. B., Wright, R. S., Perez-Edgar, K., Buss, K. A., LoBue, V., Bell, M. A., Goodman, S. H., Spieker, S., Bridgett, D. J., Salisbury, A. L., Gunnar, M. R., Mliner, S. B., Muzik, M., Stifter, C. A., Planalp, E. M., **Mehr, S. A.**, Spelke, E. S., Lukowski, A. F., Groh, A. M., Lickenbrock, D. M., Santelli, R., Schudlich, T. D. R., Anzman-Frasca, S., Thrasher, C., Diaz, A., Dayton, C., Moding, K. J., & Jordan, E. M. (2022). Using machine learning to understand age and gender classification based on infant temperament. *PLOS ONE*, 17(4), e0266026. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266026>
- *Yan, R., *Jessani, G., Spelke, E. S., de Villiers, P., de Villiers, J., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021). Across demographics and recent history, most parents sing to their infants and toddlers daily. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, 376, 20210089. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2021.0089>
- ^*Bainbridge, C. M., ^*Bertolo, M., *Youngers, J., *Atwood, S., *Yurdum, L., *Simson, J., *Lopez, K., *Xing, F., Martin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021). Infants relax in response to unfamiliar foreign lullabies. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5, 256–264. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-020-00963-z>
- *Bertolo, M., Singh, M., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021). Sound-induced motion in chimpanzees does not imply shared ancestry for music or dance. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(2), e2015664118. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2015664118>
- Mehr, S. A.**, Krasnow, M. M., Bryant, G. A., & Hagen, E. H. (2021). Toward a productive evolutionary understanding of music [Response to commentaries]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 44, e122. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X21000030>
- Mehr, S. A.**, Krasnow, M. M., Bryant, G. A., & Hagen, E. H. (2021). Origins of music in credible signaling [Target article]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 44, e60. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X20000345>
- ^McMahon, E., ^*Kim, D., **Mehr, S. A.**, Nakayama, K., Spelke, E. S., & Vaziri-Pashkam, M. (2021). The ability to predict actions of others from distributed cues is still developing in children. *Journal of Vision*, 21(5), 14. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/pu3tf>

- ^Sheskin, M., ^Scott, K., Mills, C. M., Bergelson, E., Bonawitz, E., Spelke, E. S., Li, F.-F., Keil, F., Gweon, H., Tenenbaum, J. B., Jara-Ettinger, J., Adolph, K. E., Rhodes, M., Frank, M. C., **Mehr, S. A.**, & Schulz, L. (2020). Online developmental science to foster innovation, access, and impact. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 24(9), 675–678. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2020.06.004>
- *Young, N. R., La Rosa, M., **Mehr, S. A.**, & Krasnow, M. M. (2020). Does greater morning sickness predict carrying a girl? Analysis of nausea and vomiting during pregnancy from retrospective report. *Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics*, 303, 1161–1166. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00404-020-05839-1>
- Jacoby, N., Margulis, E., Clayton, M., Hannon, E., Honing, H., Iverson, J., Klein, T. R., **Mehr, S. A.**, Pearson, L., Peretz, I., Perlman, M., Polak, R., Ravnani, A., Savage, P. E., Steingo, G., Stevens, C., Trainor, L., Trehub, S., & Veal, M. (2020). Cross-cultural work in music cognition: Challenges, insights, and recommendations. *Music Perception*, 37(3), 185–195. <https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2020.37.3.185>
- Mehr, S. A.**, Singh, M., Knox, D., Ketter, D. M., Pickens-Jones, D., *Atwood, S., Lucas, C., *Egner, A. A., Jacoby, N., *Hopkins, E. J., *Howard, R. M., Hartshorne, J. K., Jennings, M. V., *Simson, J., *Bainbridge, C. M., Pinker, S., O'Donnell, T. J., Krasnow, M. M., & Glowacki, L. (2019). Universality and diversity in human song. *Science*, 366, eaax0868:1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aax0868>
- Kotler, J., **Mehr, S. A.**, *Egner, A., Haig, D., & Krasnow, M. M. (2019). Response to music in Angelman syndrome contrasts with Prader-Willi syndrome. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 40(5), 420–426. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2019.05.003>
- ^**Mehr, S. A.**, ^Singh, M., *York, H. W., Glowacki, L., & Krasnow, M. M. (2018). Form and function in human song. *Current Biology*, 28(3), 356–368.e5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2017.12.042>
- Mehr, S. A.**, *Scannell, D., & Winner, E. (2018). Sight-over-sound judgments of music performance are replicable effects with limited interpretability. *PLOS ONE*, 13(9), e0202075. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0202075>
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Spelke, E. S. (2018). Shared musical knowledge in 11-month-old infants. *Developmental Science*, 21(2), e12542. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.12542>
- Mehr, S. A.**, Kotler, J., *Howard, R. M., Haig, D., & Krasnow, M. M. (2017). Genomic imprinting is implicated in the psychology of music. *Psychological Science*, 28(10), 1455–1467. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617711456>
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Krasnow, M. M. (2017). Parent-offspring conflict and the evolution of infant-directed song. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 38(5), 674–684. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2016.12.005>
- Mehr, S. A.**, *Song, L. A., & Spelke, E. S. (2016). For five-month-old infants, melodies are social. *Psychological Science*, 27(4), 486–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615626691>
- Mehr, S. A.** (2015). Miscommunication of science: Music cognition research in the popular press. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6(988). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00988>
- Mehr, S. A.** (2014). Music in the home: New evidence for an intergenerational link. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 62(1), 78–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429413520008>
- Mehr, S. A.**, Schachner, A., Katz, R. C., & Spelke, E. S. (2013). Two randomized trials provide no consistent evidence for nonmusical cognitive benefits of brief preschool music enrichment. *PLOS ONE*, 8(12), e82007. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0082007>

Other Writing

Bertolo, M., Bainbridge, C., Martin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021). Recording quality does not influence relaxation responses to lullabies; sampling criteria do, as they should (Reply to “Sampling criteria and recording quality influence relaxation responses to lullabies”). *PsyArXiv*.

<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/c97uy>

Mehr, S. A. (2020). How to write a lab handbook. *Biologist*, 67(2), 26–28.

<https://thebiologist.rsb.org.uk/biologist-features/158-biologist/features/2299-how-to-write-a-lab-handbook>

Mehr, S. A. (2019). Sensitivity analysis is a useful tool for detecting influential observations. *PsyArXiv*.

<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/z3wvm>

Mehr, S. A. (2013, December 22). Music and success. *The New York Times*, p. SR12.

<http://nyti.ms/1ALHw9J>

Mehr, S. A. (2012, September 18). The mind and the ear [Letter]. *The New York Times*, p. D4.

<http://nyti.ms/Pm3xTI>

Conference Presentations (Peer-Reviewed)

*Schelp, Z. M., Purdy, S., Roberts, R., **Mehr, S. A.**, Lambert, A. (2023, November). Anauralia and working memory. Poster presented at the 12th Australasian Cognitive Neuroscience Society Conference, Sydney, Australia and Auckland, New Zealand.

Bertolo, M., Müllensiefen, D., Peretz, I., Woolley, S. C., ^Sakata J. T., & ^**Mehr, S. A.** (2023, August). Human music perception is not a sexually dimorphic trait. Poster presented at the 17th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition, Tokyo, Japan.

Bertolo, M., Müllensiefen, D., Peretz, I., Woolley, S. C., ^Sakata J. T., & ^**Mehr, S. A.** (2023, July). Human music perception is not a sexually dimorphic trait. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Sydney, Australia.

*Yurdum, L., *Cho, E., *Hilton, C., *Ebinne, E., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2023, August). Effects of parental singing on infant and parent health: An ecological momentary assessment study. Poster presented at the 17th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition, Tokyo, Japan.

*Hilton, C. B., *Liu, J., Bergelson, E., & **Mehr, S.A.** (2023, April). Language experience predicts music processing in a half-million speakers of fifty-four languages. Paper presented at the Australasian Experimental Psychology Conference, Canberra, Australia.

*Coleman, P. Gustavson, D.E., **Mehr, S.A.**, & Gordon, R.L. (2023, February). Citizen science approaches to support musicality genomics: validating music involvement phenotypes at the population level. Poster presented at 14th International Conference on Human Genetics, Cape Town, South Africa.

*Yurdum, L., Singh, M., Glowacki, L., Vardy, T., Atkinson, Q., *Hilton, C. B., Sauter, D., Krasnow, M. M., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2022, July). Cultural invariance in musical communication. Paper presented at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada.

Singh, M., Zeng, T.C., Aygen, A., Bollée, J., Choi, J., Kaur, N., Kunaparaju, A., Mackiel, A., Nhuquynh, N., Owens, A., Quintana, S., Sanders, S., Stasta, C., Xue, M., Yin, H., Barrett, J., Moya, C., Baumard, N., Blasi, D., Chaudhuri, P., Crockett, M., **Mehr, S. A.**, Tamir, D., Tangherlini, T., & Tehrani, J. (2022, April). Introducing Anansi, a global story database. Oral presentation at the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference (online).

*Crowley-de Thierry, L., *Hilton, C. B., *Yan, R., Martin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021, July). Children infer the behavioral contexts of unfamiliar foreign songs. Paper presented at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Vienna, Austria.

*Hilton, C. B., Fietcher, J., Benjamin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2021, July). Am I tone-deaf? Assessing pitch discrimination in 700,000 people. Poster presented at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Vienna, Austria.

Mehr, S. A. [symposium chair] (2021, June). Universality and variability of music across the lifespan and across cultures. Paper presented at The Neurosciences and Music VII, Aarhus, Denmark.

^*Bainbridge, C. M., ^*Bertolo, M., *Youngers, J., *Atwood, S., *Yurdum, L., *Simson, J., *Lopez, K., *Xing, F., Martin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2020, August). Infants relax in response to unfamiliar foreign lullabies. Poster presented at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (online).

^*Bainbridge, C. M., ^*Bertolo, M., *Youngers, J., *Atwood, S., *Yurdum, L., *Simson, J., *Lopez, K., *Xing, F., Martin, A., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2020, July). Cultural invariance in infant responses to world music. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the International Congress of Infant Studies (online).

*Jessani, G., *Simson, J., *Bainbridge, C., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2020, April). Motivation and music: Does motivation matter? Poster presented at the Harvard Graduate School of Education Student Research Symposium, Cambridge, MA, USA.

*Atwood, S., ^Schachner, A. M., & ^**Mehr, S. A.** (2020, February). Does participant expectancy account for prosocial effects of synchrony? Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA, USA.

Mehr, S. A., Singh, M., Knox, D., Ketter, D. M., Pickens-Jones, D., *Atwood, S., Lucas, C., *Egner, A., Jacoby, N., *Hopkins, E. J., *Howard, R. M., O'Donnell, T. J., Pinker, S., Krasnow, M. M., & Glowacki, L. (2019, May). A natural history of song. Paper presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Boston, MA, USA.

*Moser, C., *Lee-Rubin, H., Infant-Directed Vocalization Collaboration, *Bainbridge, C. M., *Atwood, S., Krasnow, M., **Mehr, S. A.** (2019, May). Acoustical regularities in infant-directed vocalizations worldwide. Poster presented at the 177th Meeting of The Acoustical Society of America, Louisville, KY, USA.

Mehr, S. A., Singh, M., Knox, D., Ketter, D. M., Pickens-Jones, D., *Atwood, S., Lucas, C., *Egner, A., Jacoby, N., *Hopkins, E. J., *Howard, R. M., O'Donnell, T. J., Pinker, S., Krasnow, M. M., & Glowacki, L. (2019, April). A natural history of song. Paper presented at the European Human Behavior and Evolution Association Annual Conference, Toulouse, France.

^*Bainbridge, C. M., ^*Atwood, S., *Xing, F., *Bertolo, M., *Lopez, K., *Bitran, A., *Youngers, J., & **Mehr, S. A.** (2019, March). Infant responses to foreign lullabies differ from responses to other foreign vocal music. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Baltimore, MD, USA.

- Mehr, S. A.** (2018, July). Form and function in human song. Paper presented at the Postdoctoral Research Award Symposium, Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- Pashkam, M., *Kim, D., **Mehr, S. A.**, Spelke, E., & Nakayama, K. (2017, October). Children can predict actions from subtle preparatory movements, but not as well as adults. Poster presented at the Optical Society of America Annual Vision Meeting, Washington, DC, USA.
- Mehr, S. A.**, Singh, M., Jacoby, N., *York, H. W., O'Donnell, T., Krasnow, M. M., & Glowacki, L. (2017, June). Universality of infant-directed music. Paper presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Boise, Idaho, USA.
- Kotler, J., **Mehr, S. A.**, *Egner, A., *Howard, R. M., Haig, D., & Krasnow, M. M. (2017, June). Evaluating the origins of music in individuals with imprinting disorders. Paper presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Boise, Idaho, USA.
- *Howard, R. M., Spokes, A., **Mehr, S. A.**, & Krasnow, M. M. (2017, April). Welfare tradeoff ratios in children. Poster presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Austin, Texas, USA.
- *Howard, R. M., Spokes, A., **Mehr, S. A.**, *Egner, A. A., & Krasnow, M. M. (2017, January). Welfare tradeoff ratios in children. Paper presented at the Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development, Budapest, Hungary.
- Mehr, S. A.**, *Song, L. A., & Spelke, E. S. (2016, July). For five-month-old infants, melodies are social. Paper presented at the International Conference for Music Perception and Cognition, San Francisco, California, USA.
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Krasnow, M. M. (2016, July). On the origin of music: Parent-offspring conflict and the evolution of infant-directed song. Paper presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Vancouver, Canada.
- Krasnow, M. M., **Mehr, S. A.**, Kotler, J., & Haig, D. (2016, July). Mommy sings because you cry: Testing the Attentional Investment Theory of music evolution. Paper presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Vancouver, Canada.
- *Howard, R. M., Spokes, A., **Mehr, S. A.**, & Krasnow, M. M. (2016, June). Welfare tradeoff ratios in children. Poster presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Conference, Vancouver, Canada.
- Mehr, S. A.**, *Song, L. A., & Spelke, E. S. (2015, October). For five-month-old infants, melodies are social. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Columbus, Ohio, USA.
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Spelke, E. S. (2014, July). For five-month-old infants, melodies are social. Poster presented at the International Conference on Infant Studies, Berlin, Germany.
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Spelke, E. S. (2014, March). For five-month-old infants, music is socially modulated. Paper presented at the Harvard Graduate School of Education Student Research Conference, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.
- Mehr, S. A.**, & Spelke, E. S. (2013, October). Infants selectively attend to singers of familiar lullabies. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Memphis, Tennessee, USA.

Mehr, S. A., Schachner, A., Katz, R. C., & Spelke, E. S. (2013, May). Inconsistent evidence for nonmusical cognitive benefits of preschool music enrichment. Poster session at the Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention, Washington, DC, USA.

Mehr, S. A., & Fox, D. B. (2010, July). Nurturing musical lives of families through shared experience: Music Times Two. Poster presented at the International Society for Music Education Conference, Beijing, China.

Invited Talks and Workshops

- 2024 Bali Workshop on Music and Brain, Bali, Indonesia
- 2023 Musicality Genomics Consortium, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Amsterdam Brain and Cognition Colloquium, University of Amsterdam
LAB42, University of Amsterdam
- 2022 Haskins Laboratories, Yale University
Musicality Genomics Consortium, Trento, Italy
- 2021 Lullaby Project, Carnegie Hall, New York
Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford
Laboratoire international de recherche sur le Cerveau, la Musique, et le Son (BRAMS),
Université de Montréal
Santa Fe Institute (Colloquium)
Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies, Denmark
Centre for Systematic Musicology, University of Graz, Austria
Methods Event, Society for Affective Science Annual Conference
European Human Behaviour and Evolution Annual Conference (Plenary)
Montreal Computational and Quantitative Linguistics Lab, McGill University
Department of Psychology, University of California Berkeley
Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge (UK)
Département d'études cognitives (Colloquium), École normale supérieure, Paris
- 2020 NeuroMusic Conference (Keynote), McMaster Institute for Music and the Mind, Hamilton,
Ontario, Canada
Center for Behavior, Evolution, and Culture (Colloquium), University of California, Los
Angeles
Cognitive Psychology Seminar, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Music and Audio (Keynote), International
Society for Music Information Retrieval
Learning the Language of Music workshop, Centre l'Oubradou, Plan-de-la-Tour, France
MIT Center for Collective Intelligence (*postponed due to COVID-19*)
Sydney Ideas, University of Sydney, Australia (*postponed due to COVID-19*)
Department of Psychology (Colloquium), University of Sydney (*postponed due to
COVID-19*)
Evolution Pre-conference, Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual
Convention, New Orleans
Spotify Research, Boston
- 2019 Scaling Cognitive Science workshop, Princeton University

Department of Psychology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver
Department of Psychology, The New School for Social Research, New York
ConCats Seminar, Department of Psychology, New York University
Workshop on genomics and music, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences,
Amsterdam
Institut Jean Nicod, Ecole normale supérieure, Paris
Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM), Paris
Laboratoire international de recherche sur le Cerveau, la Musique, et le Son (BRAMS),
Université de Montréal
Cognitive Research at McGill Seminar, Department of Psychology, McGill University
Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology, Schulich School of
Music, McGill University
Centre for Culture and Evolution, Brunel University London
Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Rhythm, Time, and Motion (RITMO), University of
Oslo

- 2018 Center for Research in Language, University of California at San Diego
Current Works in Cognitive Development, Department of Psychology, Yale University
Workshop on cross-cultural research in music, Max Planck Institute for Empirical
Aesthetics, Frankfurt
Social Psychology Brownbag, Department of Psychology, Harvard University
Workshop on music, selves, and society, University of Cambridge (UK)
Department of Psychology (Colloquium), University of Toronto at Mississauga
School of Psychology (Colloquium), University of Auckland
Language Learning Lab, Boston College
Cognition, Brain, Behavior Seminar, Department of Psychology, Harvard University
- 2017 Workshop on the origins of music in human society, Institute for Advanced Study in
Toulouse/Fondation Royaumont, Paris
Institut des Sciences Cognitives Marc Jeannerod, Lyon
Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology, Schulich School of
Music, McGill University
Discovery Lecture, Indian Hill Music School, Littleton, Massachusetts
School of Psychology (Colloquium), University of Auckland
- 2016 Darwin Festival, Salem State University, Salem, Massachusetts
Kanwisher Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research, Victoria University of Wellington
School of Psychology (Colloquium), Victoria University of Wellington
- 2015 Music Department Brownbag, Harvard University
- 2014 Learning and Development Colloquium, Harvard Graduate School of Education
Workshop on arts research and education policy, Crystal Bridges Museum of American
Art, Bentonville, Arkansas
- 2013 Music Department Brownbag, Harvard University

Teaching

- 2023 *PSYCH 200: Foundations of Developmental Psychology*, University of Auckland. Course coordinator.
PSYCH 326: Lifespan Developmental Psychology, University of Auckland.
PSYCH 722: Human Learning and Development, University of Auckland.
- 2022 *PSYCH 326: Lifespan Developmental Psychology*, University of Auckland.
PSYCH 722: Human Learning and Development, University of Auckland.
- 2021 *PSYC248: Lifespan Developmental Psychology*, Victoria University of Wellington.
- 2020 *PSYC331: Perception & Attention*, Victoria University of Wellington.
PSYC231: Cognitive Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington.
PSYC232: Research Methods in Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington.
Methods workshops, Victoria University of Wellington.
Psychology of Music, University of Oslo Summer School for Social Sciences (*postponed due to COVID-19*).
- 2017–2020 *Psychology 2357r: Research Seminar*, Harvard College.
- 2019 Guest lecture in *Introduction to social sciences*, Département d'études cognitives, Ecole normale supérieure, Paris
 Guest lecture in *Why you hear what you hear*, Harvard College
- 2017 Guest lecture in *Psychology of Music*, Tufts University
- 2015 *PSY 1305: Evolution and Cognition*, Harvard College & Harvard Extension School. Teaching Fellow with Prof. Max Krasnow.
SLS20: Psychological Science, Harvard College. Teaching Fellow with Prof. Steven Pinker.
 Guest lecture for Human Development & Psychology Master's Students, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- 2014 *PSY991AB: Senior Thesis Tutorial in Psychology*, Harvard College.
 Guest lecture in *Methods in Economics*, Harvard College
- 2013 *S040: Introduction to Applied Data Analysis*, Harvard Graduate School of Education. Teaching Fellow with Prof. Katherine Masyn.
S030: Intermediate Statistics/Applied Regression & Analysis, Harvard Graduate School of Education. Head Teaching Fellow (i.e., leader of teaching fellow team) with Prof. Ed Bein.
- 2012 *S012: Empirical Methods/Introduction to Statistics for Research*, Harvard Graduate School of Education. Teaching Fellow with Prof. Terry Tivnan.

Mentorship

Postdoctoral:

- 2022– Eun Cho (Haskins Laboratories & Yale Child Study Center)
 2020– Courtney Hilton (Psychology, Harvard University & University of Auckland)

Doctoral:

- 2024– Lidya Yurdum (Psychology, University of Amsterdam; co-supervisor)

2023– Juliet Barry (Psychology, University of Auckland)
2023– Martynas Snarskis (Psychology, University of Auckland)
2023– Sorour Zekrati (Linguistics, University of Auckland; co-supervisor)
2023– Sam Wei (Music, University of Auckland; co-supervisor)
2022– Zoé Schelp (Psychology, University of Auckland; co-supervisor)
2022– Gage Quigley-Tump (Psychology, University of Auckland; co-supervisor)
2022– Jan Simson (Social Data Science, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München;
co-supervisor)
2022– Mila Bertolo (Neuroscience, McGill University; co-supervisor)

Master's:

2020–2022 Lidya Yurdum (Psychology, University of Amsterdam; co-supervisor)
2020–2022 Jan Simson (Behavioural Data Science, University of Amsterdam; co-supervisor)

Undergraduate/Honours:

2023 Estelle Lai (Psychology, University of Auckland).
2020–2022 Jingxuan Liu (Psychology, Duke University; co-supervisor).
2020–2021 Rachel Yan (Psychology, Smith College; co-supervisor).
Joyce Seok (Psychology, Harvard College; co-supervisor).
2019 Jan Simson (Psychology, University of Konstanz; co-supervisor).
2018–2020 Niki Young (Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard College; co-supervisor).
2016–2017 Hunter York (Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard College; co-supervisor).
2014–2015 Lee Ann Song (Psychology, Harvard College; co-supervisor).
2013–2014 Daniel Scannell (Psychology, Boston College; co-supervisor).

Research assistants (post-baccalaureate):

S. Atwood, Constance Bainbridge, Mila Bertolo, Marina Ebert, Alena Egner, Ghazal Jessani, Alexander Mackiel, Vanessa Mak, Sumi Onoe, Mijoo Shin, Jan Simson, Yuefan Sun, Lidya Yurdum

Research assistants (undergraduate):

Hannah Alton, Anna Bergson, Iris Bi, Alma Bitran, Amy Bu, Kamila Czachorowski, Emma Hardimon, Jen Holmes, Sonia Joseph, Anya Keomurjian, Dara Lee, Terry Lee, Harry Lee-Rubin, Jingxuan Liu, Kelsie Lopez, Erin Mernoff, Mona Miao, Brooke Milosh, Marcella Montagnese, Lin Ni, Julia Park, Emilé Radyté, Adrianna Ratajska, Nivi Ravi, Nathan Robinson, Veri Seo, Zachary Smith, Olivia Sommer, Lee Ann Song, TJ Song, William Swett, Dylan Xing, Rachel Yan, KeeHup Yong, Hunter York, Julie Youngers, Bryan Zuluaga

Academic Service

Departmental:

2023– PhD Advisor, School of Psychology, University of Auckland
2022– Member, School of Psychology Research Committee, University of Auckland
2012–2016 Member, Mind/Brain/Behavior Graduate Student Steering Committee (co-chair,
2014–2016), Harvard University

Faculty/Division:

2024– Member, Faculty of Science Research Committee, University of Auckland
2023– Member, Faculty of Science Postgraduate Committee, University of Auckland

Field-wide (Research):

2022– Co-chair, Working Group on Phenotyping, Musicality Genomics Consortium

Field-wide (Editing):

2021–2023 Guest Editor, *Developmental Science*
2020– Associate Editor, *Collabra: Psychology*
2018– Editorial Board Member, *Music & Science*

Field-wide (Reviewing):

Journals *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*
Analytical Approaches to World Music
Animal Cognition
Behavior Research Methods
Biology Letters
BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth
Cerebral Cortex
Child Development
Collabra: Psychology
Cognition
Cognition & Emotion
Communications Psychology
Consciousness & Cognition
Current Biology
Developmental Psychology
Developmental Science
Early Childhood Research Quarterly
Evolution & Human Behavior
Health Psychology Review
Infancy
Journal of the Acoustical Society of America
Journal of Cognitive Psychology
Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization
Journal of Experimental Psychology: General
Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition
Journal of Human Evolution
Journal of Learning Disabilities
Language & Speech
Music Perception
Music & Science
Musicae Scientiae
Nature Communications
Nature Human Behaviour
Neuroscience Letters
Open Mind: Discoveries in Cognitive Science
Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin
Perspectives on Psychological Science
Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B
PLOS ONE
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences
Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences
Psychological Bulletin

Psychological Science
Psychological Review
Psychology of Music
Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, & Brain
Royal Society Open Science
Science Advances
Scientific Reports
Social Cognition
Vision

Publishers *Routledge Companions*
Routledge Monographs

Funders *Austrian Science Fund*
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
French National Research Agency
Harvard Data Science Initiative
John Templeton Foundation
Leverhulme Trust
National Science Foundation (USA)
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
Royal Society of New Zealand
Swiss National Science Foundation
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conferences *Cognitive Science Society*
International Congress of Infant Studies
Society for Music Perception and Cognition
Society for Philosophy and Psychology
Society for Research in Child Development
Super Linguistics Workshop

Media

Selected interviews:

2024 *The Definition of Happiness*, *Apple TV* documentary film (with Tim Elwin)
2023 *Radio New Zealand Concert*, 20 November (with Bryan Crump)
Radio New Zealand Saturday Morning, 3 June (with Colin Peacock)
TVNZ Breakfast, 3 May (with Matty McLean)
2022 *Public Radio International The World*, 18 July (with Marco Werman)
2021 *A life in music*, *BBC Radio 4* documentary (with Jude Rogers)
2019 *CBC Radio (Canada) As It Happens*, 25 November (with Carol Off)
CBC Television (Canada) The National, 28 December
2018 *National Public Radio (USA) Science Friday*, 26 January (with Ira Flatow)
CBC Radio (Canada) Quirks and Quarks, 9 February (with Bob McDonald)

Selected articles:

2022 *New York Times*, 24 July, '[Parentese](#)' is truly a lingua franca, global study finds (Oliver Whang)
2021 *Nautilus Magazine*, 28 April, [What makes music universal](#) (Kevin Berger)

- 2020 *National Geographic*, 19 November, [What the lullabies we sing to our children reveal about us](#) (Hannah Reyes Morales)
- 2019 *Prospect Magazine*, 24 December, [The universality of music](#) (Philip Ball)
- 2018 *New York Times*, 15 August, [Singing with my grandbaby](#) (Paula Span)
- The Atlantic*, 25 January, [A study suggests that people can hear universal traits in music — but some music scholars have doubts](#) (Ed Yong)

Full list of coverage:

ABC Radio [Australia], ABC Radio [Austria], The Atlantic, BBC Radio [UK] (Naked Scientists; Radio 4 Special), Big Think, The Boston Globe, CBC Radio [Canada] (As It Happens; Quirks and Quarks), CBC Television [Canada] (The National), CBS Radio [US], Daily Mail, The Daily Star, Cosmos Magazine, De Standaard, Der Spiegel, Deutschlandfunk, Discover Magazine, The Economist, Forbes, Galileu Magazine, GBH News [US] (Curiosity Desk), Globo Television [Brazil], The Guardian, Ha'aretz, Harper's Magazine, IFL Science, Inside Science, La Republicca, Le Monde, Le Scienze, Magyar Nemzet, National Geographic, National Public Radio [US] (Morning Edition; All Things Considered; Science Friday), Nature, NBC Television [US] (TODAY Show), Newshub NZ, Newsweek, The New York Times, Pacific Standard, El País, Le Parisien, Popular Science, Il Post, Prospect Magazine, Psychology Today, Public Radio International (The World), Radio Nacional de España, Radio New Zealand (Morning Report; Afternoons; Saturday Morning), Radio Waatea, Reddit Science (AMA), Reuters, Science, Science News, Sciences et Avenir, Scientific American, Slate, Der Tagesspiegel, The Times of London, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Week, Whakaata Māori+ Television