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MEDINEA [MEDITERRANEAN INCUBATOR OF EMERGING ARTISTS]

Origin of the Network

Since 2008, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence has acknowledged the necessity of engaging in a cultural policy enabling a fertile intercultural dialogue between Mediterranean countries. Since 2010, the Festival has hosted the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (MYO), bringing together around a hundred young musicians from the Mediterranean region each year since 1984. In 2014, on the initiative of the Festival d'Aix, the MYO partner-institutions founded a network, Medinea, which is active in 17 countries of the Mediterranean basin and consists of festivals, cultural centres, music forums, and higher education institutions.¹ Today, thanks to the support of the European Commission through the Creative Europe and Erasmus+ programmes, the Medinea members can extend the network activities in the Mediterranean basin additionally to the festival season in Aix.

Medinea supports the professional integration of young Euro-Mediterranean musicians by developing intercultural projects that enhance dialogue, transmission, and mobility around the Mediterranean basin. A manifesto has been adopted by the Medinea members in order to bring them together towards a common vision.

Medinea's Manifesto

Convictions

The Medinea members have ascertained the following:

- Bearing in mind the complex challenges that the Euro-Mediterranean region is currently facing, Medinea members acknowledge that we are at a turning point in time which clearly demands the strengthening of intercultural dialogue and creating the right environment for peaceful coexistence.

1 List of members are provided towards the end of the article.

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- It is necessary and urgent to promote cultural diversity, intercultural creations, living together in peace, mobility in the Mediterranean, principles of reciprocity, and equal opportunities between cultures, between countries and between women and men.
 - Music has the incredible capacity to move beyond linguistic, social, political, and cultural barriers. It plays a key role in intercultural communication as it is a remarkable medium for exchange and dialogue between different cultures.
 - Mediterranean music heritage has been shaped over the centuries thanks to permanent interaction and re-appropriation of various artistic traditions, demonstrating richness and diversity which must be made known, highlighted and renewed.
 - Heritage and creation mutually enlighten each other.
 - Transmitting this music heritage to young artists, audiences and future generations enables a better understanding of cultures present in a place and may bring citizens closer to each other and strengthen links between them.
 - Collaboration between cultural institutions in the Mediterranean basin is fundamental for the development, mobility and transfer of knowledge and skills.
 - Intercultural dialogue requires better mobility of individuals.

Objectives

In view of the above convictions, we pursue the following objectives:

- To encourage the circulation of artistic expression, ideas, artists, and professionals in the Euro-Mediterranean zone.
- To promote better knowledge and dissemination of diverse expressions of Mediterranean music heritage to young artists, professionals, and audiences.



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Intercultural creation session in Nuoro, Italy, August 2018

- To support the professional integration of young Mediterranean artists.
- To develop the community of young artists linked to the Medinea network in order to increase opportunities for professional encounters and transfer of skills.
- To strengthen conditions necessary for the development of creative processes in the Euro-Mediterranean zone.
- To reinforce collaboration with educational institutions in the Mediterranean region leading to more effective links between musical creation and higher education.
- To establish Medinea as a label that promotes all the values and convictions of this manifesto.

Activities within the European Year of Cultural Heritage

In 2018, three members of the Medinea network, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (France), the International Cultural Centre of Hammamet (Tunisia) and Ente Musicale di Nuoro (Italy), received the support of the Creative Europe programme in order to realise a series of activities in the frame of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. This is the first project that included a Tunisian institution as co-organiser supported by Creative Europe.

In France, Italy and Tunisia, the project offers training opportunities for young singers and instrumentalists.

Intercultural and Collective Composition

The intercultural creation sessions of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra supported by Medinea are open to a dozen young and talented musicians from diverse countries along the Mediterranean basin and who have had intense practice in musical improvisation and composition. The sessions are designed for a large diversity of musical aesthetics



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Field application in a school ending an Outreach skills workshop in Aix-en-Provence, France, November 2018.

and Mediterranean expressions and hosts all styles of music using elements of improvisations (jazz, traditional music, early music and so on). Fabrizio Cassol, composer and jazzman, guides these sessions together with a guest mentor from the hosting country. The process seeks to reveal individual singularities, nourished by its own personality and cultural heritage, and experiment techniques of collective composition. After two weeks, the musicians perform their common musical production in a final concert.



Sarah Théry, young French soprano, giving a workshop on voice in prison, Brussels, Belgium, October 2018.

Outreach

Led by Mark Withers, the community education project leader at the London Symphony Orchestra, the outreach skills workshops aim at fuelling the musicians' personal quests for excellence and will to share their art with the audience, specially an audience with little access to culture. Gathering musicians from all Euro-Mediterranean countries and musical genres (classical, jazz, current and traditional music and so on), the workshops follow a creative process of experimentation and improvisation. At the end of the workshops, they have the chance to put into practice what they learned with field projects involving targeted audiences.

Following the workshops, in the frame of the Medinea Outreach Programme, a call is launched to the participants inviting them to propose outreach projects that they would like to implement in their hometown. Medinea offers artistic and administrative assistance to the selected project leaders and a communication campaign regarding their project. In 2018, seven outreach projects were brought to light in this frame by the young musicians, in Belgium, France, Tunisia and Turkey.

These new forms of creation lead to meetings and dialogue between civilisations established within the same territory and allow this heritage to be valued and passed on to future generations, young artists and the audience. The project emphasises the richness of the Euro-Mediterranean musical heritage and its multiple influences and to show how and in what way this heritage can be a source of inspiration for contemporary creation.

The project also focuses on disseminating its results to a professional audience. The results of the Medina partners' project are shared during the Medina meetings, a space for sharing, reflecting and exchanging good practices, as well as in the professional networks related to Medina (European networks, professional gatherings and music fairs).

Follow news on Medina: www.medinea-community.com

Members of Medinea

Amwaj (Palestine)

ARC Research and Consultancy (Malta)

Cairo Conservatoire (Egypt)

Casa Arabe (Spain)

Conservatorio 'G. Verdi' di Milano (Italy)

DimaJazz International Festival (Algeria)

Ecole des Arts Ghassan Yammine (Lebanon)

Edward Said National Conservatory of Music (Palestine)

Egyptian Center for Culture and Arts – Makan (Egypt)

Ente Musicale di Nuoro (Italy)

Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa (Portugal)

Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (France)

Higher Institute of Music of Sfax (Tunisia)

Higher Institute of Music of Sousse (Tunisia)

Higher Institute of Music of Tunis (Tunisia)

International Cultural Centre of Hammamet (Tunisia)

Istanbul Technical University/Dr. Erol Üçer Center for Advanced Studies in Music (Turkey)

Lebanese National Higher Conservatory (Lebanon)

Montenegrin Music Centre (Montenegro)

National Conservatory of Athens (Greece)

National Youth Orchestra of Spain (Spain)

Palestine Philharmonie (Palestine)

University of Arts of Tirana (Albania)

University of Ljubljana, Academy of Music (Slovenia)

University of Macedonia, Department of Music science and Art (Greece)

University of Zagreb, Academy of Music (Croatia)

Visa for music (Morocco)