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2018 Declaration of Marseilles

For the Defense of Music and Music Education

On June 7, 2018, the European Transnational Colloquium “Music, Brain Plasticity and Learning” was held at the Cité de la Musique in Marseilles (France). It was part of the Erasmus + Project Art and Learning (2016–2019) which brings together different educational institutions from France, Belgium and Spain.

This colloquium brought together well-known researchers, musicians, educators, speech therapists from Europe and America. The purpose was to exchange ideas related to the educative, social and political importance of music education in compulsory learning centers. The academic profile of the initial music teacher education was also discussed.

The new researches in neuroscience connected to musical practice were also debated among other subjects, as were the current and future perspectives of teaching and research in music education, prevention and reeducation.

What has given the colloquium a political weight is the presence of world-famous personalities from the universities of Marseilles, Nantes and Tour (France), Granada (Spain), Laval (Canada). There were also working groups such as Resodys (France), Performative Music Education Network (PerforME), the group “Research and Innovation in Music and Music Education (RIMME)” and health and education leaders from France and Belgium.

Participants have given special attention to the position of music education and initial music teacher education in Europe. At the end of the Colloquium, the following positions came out of these debates. We consider it to be fundamental to introduce these facts to the political and education leaders of the different European countries :

1. The new scientific research in neuroscience have cleared up any doubt on the potential value of music for people’s health and well-being, for individual or groups. Consequently, considering this obvious educational fact and the democratic emergency, an

easy access to high quality music education cannot be questioned. This education is a right for all citizens to benefit from a democratized culture and from prevention of learning disabilities, as well as a reeducation measure.

2. As provided by the Pact for Excellence teaching in French-speaking Belgium, where music and other artistic languages will be made compulsory at every level of education, we ask the education leaders in Europe to commit to including music education into the general curriculum through a minimum of two hours a week in primary schools and throughout compulsory secondary education.
3. The higher the quality of music teachers, the higher the quality of education. It is therefore essential that the initial music teacher education be focused on a high level of practice and music theory, performance and musicology. Most of all, it must be focused on teaching skills and music didactics both for A-Levels (high-school diplomas) and Masters in Universities and music conservatories.
4. In addition to the educational and socio-educational fields, new fields in therapy and reeducation are emerging, areas in which music will be of great importance, therefore necessitating a high quality initial teacher education.
5. There is an urgent need to ensure research programs in every fields of music; to support PhD programs in universities and to finance research projects focusing on innovation and social progress through music in all forms.

Marseilles, June, 7th 2018