



FestFlash 2 - August 2008

**FestFlash on Intercultural Dialogue – Arts Festivals’
Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue brought to life!**

In the spotlight

Festival d’Avignon: Art as a laboratory for intercultural dialogue. The “Rencontres européennes” 2008

On the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the Festival d’Avignon, one of the [eminent initial signatory parties of the Arts Festivals’ Declaration](#), together with the Festival d’Aix, dedicated a series of round tables – the “Rencontres européennes” – to the artists’ role in enhancing dialogue between cultures (see Avignon festival [programme](#) page 81).

Avignon offered its festival as a unique platform for dialogue and placed Art and the artists at the heart of the debate on the European political project in 2008: As a laboratory for a reflection, spectators, artists, policy-makers and cultural operators reflected on intercultural dialogue, based on concrete artistic experiences.

Perfectly in the spirit of the Arts Festivals’ Declaration, the message of the “Rencontres européennes” was spread widely: It was broadcasted by [Radio France](#) and by Télérama, featured in the press and on the [French website of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue](#) – thus reaching out to an even greater audience outside the actual festival framework - *“Reaching the largest number of people for the promotion intercultural dialogue is an important goal, as there cannot be any intercultural interaction if the people have no means to get in touch.” (the Declaration).*

In dialogue with...

The Round Table “**Can art be a laboratory for the intercultural?**” held on 11 July 2008 in Avignon discussed questions such as: Can the intercultural dialogue that we witness in the most innovative artistic practices be considered a laboratory for a multicultural Europe? What new artistic languages can emerge from intercultural experiences?



Odile Quintin, European Commission Director General for Education and Culture: “It is obvious that art is an expression of identity, of identities, the most important expression of intercultural dialogue. (...) Art can contribute to the debates on respect and on dialogue between people and cultures.”

Agnieszka Holland (Poland), Director and screenplay writer and Ambassador of the Year of Intercultural Dialogue: “Curiosity is the key for exchange, for openness. The question is: how to translate this curiosity of the creator into the curiosity of the spectator, of the public?”

Frédéric Deval, essayist and Director of the Department of oral and improvised music (Royaumont Foundation): “In Royaumont, artists from all over the world, musicians, choreographers and poets, meet, talk and envisage artistic projects, programmes and encounters of artists of different cultures and musical styles. (...) In a trans-cultural encounter there is a desire to exchange. The condition of such a laboratory is that without this initial desire nothing is possible. (...) This kind of encounter with different cultures stimulates artistically and intellectually. (...) One form of artistic expression can nurture the other.”

Dgiz, one of the great slam performers/improvisers in French language: “Every artist should desire to move a bit away from his own formats. (...) The encounters of artists from all over the world are eclectic. (...) It is important to be able to meet, to encounter and to travel.”

Ballaké Sissoko (Mali), one of the best kora players open to all musical adventures and influences: “I like these intercultural encounters.”

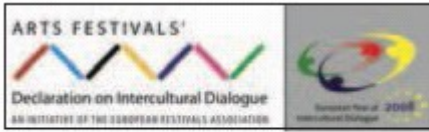
Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (Belgium), choreographer who is an important figure on the European stage and recognized for his inventive style: “You have to be like a chameleon. Everybody has to be like a chameleon and everybody has to put himself in the others’ shoes.”

Michel Wieviorka, sociologist and study director at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Science Sociales in Paris: “Circulation opens horizons. (...) I would propose another title for this Round Table: ‘Does interculturality create the conditions for art?’”

The entire round table covering the whole conversation organized by the Festival d’Avignon will be featured in EFA BOOKS 4 that will be dedicated to the responsibilities, impacts and challenges of festivals in developing intercultural competences.

FestFlash Highlights

Edinburgh International Festival celebrating Artists without borders!



EUROPEAN YEAR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE WHAT DOES THE NEW EUROPE MEAN FOR ARTISTS AND CULTURAL POLICY MAKERS?

This debate brings artists, politicians and cultural policy makers together to discuss how Europeans relate to each other, define their sense of community and imagines what it means to be European in the context of a Festival programme dedicated to exploring shifting borders.

As Avignon, another renowned European Festival joins the debate on intercultural dialogue!

The Edinburgh International Festival, signatory party of the Arts Festivals' Declaration, dedicates itself to show the character of a “new Europe” via a rich, diverse, colorful and interculturally most interesting programme. As Jonathan Mills, Director, explains: “Europe today is a different place. Borders have been redrawn in every direction (...). A festival is an expression of the creative ambition of the community it serves. It’s also a place where the personal and collective challenges we face as a society can be explored; explored by artists working across and beyond the very boundaries which often seem so problematic.”

- The Edinburgh International Festival **reflects**...

...on cultural identity as well as on artists and intercultural dialogue. On the occasion of 2008, the Festival organized – in collaboration with the Festival of Politics – a seminar on Intercultural Dialogue involving artists and politicians to explore questions such as: Do cultural identity and national identity coincide? What role do artists have in exploring our many-layered identities?

- The Edinburgh International Festival 2008 **presents**...

...“Artists from Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia and Georgia are juxtaposed with work from Lebanon, Turkey, Palestine, Israel and Iran, all countries with particular challenges on their own borders. Music from orthodox Christian traditions is heard alongside devotional masterpieces from Islam. Most illusive of all are the rich traditions of gypsy music, a source of inspiration to composers from Brahms to Bartók, which reject the idea of borders of any kind altogether.” (Jonathan Mills)

Flanders Festival-Antwerp invites to imaginary visits of early dialogue in Hanseatic towns

This year, in August, Antwerp's early music festival - LAUS POLYPHONIAE 08 - spotlights the fascinating [musical past of the Hanseatic League](#). It leads its visitors on an enthralling journey from the North Sea to the Baltics in imaginary visits to the Hanseatic towns of the middle ages and the renaissance.

International Gaudeamus Music Week transforming Amsterdam into a place of encounters

For one week (31 August-7 September), 13 young composers of contemporary music from eight different countries from all over the world, from Japan to Mexico, Cyprus to the USA, will perform together during this year's [Gaudeamus Music Week](#) - a unique meeting point that enables young musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds to enter into a dialogue.

Maribor Festival/Slovenia: Bringing together different cultures on one stage



The Maribor Festival 2008 (4-14 September) celebrates a mutual enrichment of the musical heritage of the Old and New World by showing the musical [diversity of different cultures](#), bringing together Beethoven's famous piano concerto, original folk music from Rumanian Roma villages, a leading representative of the ancient musical instrument of Australian Aborigines, an Arabic lute and percussions accompanied by the most traditional genuinely Mozart-style ensemble of all European orchestras.

‘Recontres – Promenades’ of ProQuartet – Centre Européen de Musique de Chambre promenades through Europe’s cultures

EFA member ProQuartet is awarded one of the major ‘Intercultural Dialogue projects’ in France - see [French website of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue](#)! Its festival “Rencontres-Promenades” bases its objectives directly on the principles of intercultural dialogue reflecting on the mobility of artists, artistic productions and creations in Europe over the past centuries.

Intercultural Congress reflects on „Diversity unites“



The Arts Festivals’ Declaration and the work of festivals throughout 2008 will be [shared](#) with [congress](#) participants and 37 speakers and presenters from over 10 European countries and 27 European cities in Dortmund/Germany, taking place from 3-5 September. Theme: “The Arts and Intercultural Dialogue in European Cities”!

New signing parties

The European Festivals Association invites all arts festivals to sign up the Arts Festivals’ Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue. Read the Open Call [here](#).

About FestFlash

The monthly **FestFlash** brings news about festivals and their activities implemented in the spirit of the [Arts Festivals’ Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue](#).

It is the roadmap to **EFA BOOKS 4** that will be published by the end of 2008. EFA BOOKS 4 showcases most outstanding examples of festivals’ work and reflects on the challenges in the context of intercultural dialogue.

More on the Arts Festivals’ Declaration’s website at www.efa-aeef.eu where 25 language versions of the Declaration can be downloaded! To sign up the Declaration, write to juliane@efa-aeef.eu.

The **Arts Festivals’ Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue** is an initiative of the [European Festivals Association](#) in the framework of the [European Year of Intercultural Dialogue](#).

EFA is a member of the [Rainbow Platform on Intercultural Dialogue](#) and collaborates closely with the initiative [A Soul for Europe](#).



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