

2010 EFA General Assembly and Conference: “Europe is nothing without culture!”

100 festivals commit to open doors to artists and audiences

Press Release

14 April 2010

The European Festivals Association (EFA) held its 58th General Assembly and Conference from 8-11 April 2010 in Merano/Italy. It was hosted by the südtirol classic festival/Meraner Musikwochen. As part of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, 130 festival directors and delegates from 38 countries committed to the statement to “Open The Door” and thus to increase access to festivals for artists and citizens. The official opening ceremony on 8 April included keynote speeches by Nicola Sani, renowned Italian composer and President of Fondazione Isabella Scelsi, and by Doris Pack, Member of the European Parliament and Culture Committee Chairwoman.

This year’s EFA General Assembly and Conference was organised as integral part of the 2010 EFA flagship project “Open The Door” (www.Open-The-Door.eu): Festivals from within Europe – both EU and non-EU countries – and from outside of Europe – such as Israel, Lebanon, Mexico – as well as national festivals associations and cultural networks committed to invest into and reflect upon the transforming power of arts and culture in our societies today.

During the official opening high-level representatives from the South Tyrolean cultural and political sectors welcomed the network of arts festivals to their region: **Hermann Schnitzer**, President Meraner Musikwochen, **Dr. Herbert Dorfmann**, Member of the European Parliament, **Dr. Sabina Kasslatter Mur**, District Administrator, and **Dr. Günther Januth**, Mayor of Merano.

Following their keynote addresses, the speakers **Mr Sani** and **Mrs Pack** engaged in a stimulating dialogue moderated by **Simon Mundy**, poet and novelist, festival director and cultural policy adviser. Stressing that “Europe is nothing without culture,” Doris Pack underlined the need for action from the political side – to support cultural practitioners, artists as well as new creative ideas: “Politicians should not just give speeches on Sunday but take action on Monday.” At the same time, it was agreed that cultural organisers need to dare to take risks and make use of the power of festivals to serve as a platform for arts that challenge citizens.

The conference on 9 April moderated by **EFA Secretary General Kathrin Deventer** included inspiring speakers such as **Enrique Gámez** (Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada), **Fabrizio Grifasi** (Romaeuropa Festival), **Martin Honzik** (Festival Ars Electronica) and **Helen Lloyd** (BBC Proms). Professionals from different backgrounds moderated 4 thematic workshops: **Jelle Dierickx**, **Yohann Floch**, **Valeria Marcolin** and **Salvatore Marra** challenged participants on chosen topics related to access to culture.

The General Assembly and Conference is the most important moment for the European Festivals Associations and its members to meet, network, exchange and discuss the state of play of festival business today. Five new festivals were admitted as members of the Association: Beiteddine Festival (Lebanon), BELEF - Belgrade Summer Festival (Serbia), BOZAR Festival (Belgium), Culturescapes Festival (Switzerland) and Side International Culture and Art Festival (Turkey). “EFA demonstrates that it is more inclusive and allows for stronger participation and further outreach than ever,” underlines **EFA President Darko Brlek**.



EFA is the umbrella organisation for festivals across Europe and beyond representing more than 100 festivals, national festivals associations and cultural organisations from 38 countries. Information on EFA and its activities as well as the outcomes of the gathering can be found on the EFA website at www.efa-aef.eu.

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Abu Dhabi - Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Festival | Ankara - International Ankara Music Festival | Aspendos - Aspendos International Opera & Ballet Festival | Baalbeck - Baalbeck International Festival | Bayern - Cechy - Sachsen - Festival Mitte Europa | Beirut - Al Bustan Festival | Belgrade - BEMUS - Belgrade Music Festival | Bergen - Bergen International Festival | Berlin - Berliner Festspiele | Bodrum - D-Marine Turgutreis International Festival of Classical Music | Bratislava - Bratislava Music Festival | Brescia-Bergamo - Festival Pianistico Internazionale di Brescia e Bergamo | Brno - Brno International Music Festival | Bucharest - George Enescu International Festival and Competition | Budapest - Budapest Festival Center | Bursa - International Bursa Festival | Canary Islands - Festival de Música de Canarias | Cantonigròs - International Music Festival at Cantonigròs | Cividale del Friuli – Mittelfest | Concentus Moraviae - Concentus Moraviae Festival | Cuenca - Semana de Música Religiosa | Dartington - Dartington International Summer School | Drottningholm - Drottningholms Slottsteater | Dubrovnik - Dubrovnik Festival Hrvatska | Echternach - Festival International Echternach | Edinburgh - Edinburgh International Festival | Emilia Romagna - Emilia Romagna Festival | Estoril - Estoril Festival / Estoril Music Weeks | Eszterháza - Haydn at Eszterháza | Flanders - Flanders Festival International | Granada - Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada | Ingolstadt - Audi Sommerkonzerte | Innsbruck - Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik | Istanbul - Istanbul International Music Festival | Izmir - International Izmir Festival | Jeju - Music Isle Festival in Jeju | Jerusalem - Israel Festival, Jerusalem | Le Mans (Sarthe) - Festival de l' Epau | Leipzig - MDR MUSIKSOMMER | Linz - Brucknerhaus Linz | Ljubljana - Festival Ljubljana | London - BBC Henry Wood Promenade Concerts | Luzern - Lucerne Festival | Martina Franca - Festival della Valle d'Itria | Merano - südtirol classic festival/Meraner Musikwochen | Mersin - Mersin International Music Festival | Mexico - fmx - Festival de México | Mexico - Festival Internacional Cervantino | Miskolc - International Operafestival Miskolci | Mosel - Mosel Musikfestival | Mostar - The Spring of Mostar | Nizhny Novgorod - A. Sakharov International Art Festival | Ohrid - Ohrid Summer Festival | Orange - Chorégies d'Orange | Osaka - Osaka International Festival | Ostrava - Janáček May International Music Festival | Passau - Festspiele Europäische Wochen Passau e.V. | Peralada - Festival Internacional de Música Castell de Peralada | Pesaro - Rossini Opera Festival | Prague - Prague Spring International Music Festival | Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur - Les Floraisons Musicales | Ravenna - Ravenna Festival | Rheingau - Rheingau Musik Festival | Rousse - March Music Days International Festival | San Sebastián - Quincena Musical de San Sebastián | Santander - Festival Internacional de Santander | Sarajevo - International Festival Sarajevo Winter | Schleswig-Holstein - Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival | Sion - Festival International de Musique de Sion Valais | Stresa - Settimane Musicali di Stresa e del Lago Maggiore - Stresa Festival | Thessaloniki - Dimitria Festival | Torino/Milano - MITO SettembreMusica | Torroella de Montgrí - Festival de Músiques de Torroella de Montgrí | Úbeda - Festival Internacional de Música y Danza 'Ciudad de Úbeda' | Varna - Varna Summer International Festival | Vézelay - Rencontres Musicales de Vézelay | Vicenza - Settimane Musicali al Teatro Olimpico | Vilnius - Vilnius Festival | Wallonie - Festival de Wallonie | Warsaw - 'Chopin and his Europe' International Music Festival | Warsaw - Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival | Wiltz - Festival de Wiltz | Wrocław - International Festival Wratislavia Cantans | Yerevan - Perspectives XXI - Yerevan International Music Festival | Zagreb - Music Biennale Zagreb



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Association of Irish Festival Events | Association of Slovenian Festivals | British Arts Festivals Association | Czech Association of Music Festivals | Estonian Music Festivals | Federation of Music Festivals in Flanders | Finland Festivals | France Festivals | Italiafestival | Norway Festivals | Rotterdam Festivals | Spanish Association of Classical Music Festivals | Swedish Music Festivals | European Conference of Promoters of New Music | Réseau Européen de Musique Ancienne | Union of European Theatres