



Music4ROM Newsletter n°2 November 2015



Music4ROM has successfully developed its activities for the past two years thanks to the involvement of all its partners. So many wonderful achievements have emerged since the beginning of the project, including the superb Masterclass proposed by Sons Croisés and brilliantly promoted by Jorge Chaminé, which inspired the young Romani and non-Romani musicians that took part in it. In each country, this inspiration gave rise to beautiful achievements involving Romani communities, children and young musicians through a series of participatory workshops. Here are a few inspirational accounts from our partners:

Slovakia: Music workshops to enhance the richness of Romani culture

In Slovakia, **music workshops and workshops on building musical instruments from recycling materials** were implemented in three marginalized Romani communities (Rankovce, Vel'ká and Stará L'ubovna). The aim of the workshop was to show children and young people how influential and powerful music actually is. By highlighting the importance of Romani music in classical European music, children and youth came to understand how beautiful and enriching Romani culture and its features are.

Students attending the workshops were introduced to Romani music instruments and their geographical origins; a few recordings were played to the students in order for them to have a better understanding and learn some history about the diversity of Romani music. Via interactive activities, several academic subjects including geography, history, technology and music were tackled so as to help students broaden their general knowledge and perspective as well as becoming familiar with the brain-activating concepts of association-making and generalization.

These workshops helped participants realize the uniqueness of their Romani origin, find a way of developing their distinctive talent and, despite their difficult life situation, benefit from and be proud of being born a Roma.

Lenka Orságová (ETP Slovakia)

Italy: Dance and music to learn the musicality of life

A number of workshops took place in the Scampia district, using Romani music to enhance self-esteem in young Roma and promote social inclusion. Students were introduced to Romani music

in all its forms, playing percussion, the violin and the guitar. Virtuosity, improvisation and emotional charge, which are common features of Romani music, became a vehicle for cultural and social promotion. In the process, two videos were produced as a result of these workshops.

It was simple enough to also use the music as a tool to enhance and support literacy skills in Romani children. By developing their reading and writing, they were able to connect the sounds of identified words in poetic texts and musical Romani pieces with their deep social and historical signs and meanings.

I believe that the presence of dance in this workshop gave a very strong input that helped achieve the aims of this project by improving the formation of children's personalities, their active involvement and their affective and emotional world while encouraging socialization through group activities and jam sessions.

The knowledge of movement starts with a physical experience, often reproduced for emulation. After visual reproduction, the children were able to invent and construct sequences of movements. Movements were used to perceive the concepts of time and space as well as the close relationship between rhythm and movement.

Through exploring their own bodies as instruments and looking for space in which to make possible bodily actions, the children learnt to perceive the musicality of life, to value diversity and mutual enrichment and to develop their memory and attention, the pleasure of "doing" something and the willingness to cooperate.

Constructing a music and dance project in such a way will result in fostering the development of socialization, the emotional world and creativity in a state of mutual cooperation and promote social development through the bodily experiences of the group.

Giuseppe Parente (MUS-E Napoli)

Spain: Music4ROM is a very symbolic project for us Roma!

Music4Rom represents a great opportunity for Unión Romaní, not only because of the learning of boys and girls who participated in our activities, or because of the resources created by all partners, but **because it is a very symbolic project**.

The European Commission is increasing its efforts for Romani inclusion. It has established a European framework to develop strategies for social inclusion in the different EU Member States. These strategies are characterized by working in four different areas: education, employment, housing and health. From our point of view, these are four basic areas for improving the living conditions of Romani people. However, the Commission has forgotten one critical area: **culture**. Until Romani culture is recognized and valued as one of the cultures within the wider European cultural mosaic, the Roma will never feel included in this society.

The Music4Rom project precisely falls within the sphere of culture. It aims to highlight the importance of Romani music in Europe. Music is probably the area in which the Roma have contributed the most to European societies; its recognition and visibility will help society rethink old stereotypes and prejudices while Romani people will also appreciate the value of our culture.

Pedro Casermeiro (Unión Romani)

Webinars

From 5 to 9 October 2015 the project partners held their 5th meeting in Barcelona at the headquarters of the Unión Romaní. This was an opportunity to show the achievements of the project through a session of webinars developed by Mosaic, Art & Sound, in which Juan de Dios Ramírez Heredia, Jorge Chaminé, Marianne Poncet, Lenka Orságová and Pedro Casermeiro took part in order to bear witness to the richness of the Romani culture, the significant musical influence that Romani people have had on classical music, Yehudi Menuhin's deep attachment to

the Romani people and the progress achieved in Slovakia and Spain within the framework of this project.

Belgium: annual concert, closure event

Next month the annual concert of the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation will be the closing event of this beautiful project on 3 December. **Gilles Apap** and his musicians will take us on a musical journey through the pieces of those classical composers inspired by Gypsy music while **Roberto de Brasov and his musicians** will help us discover the colourful richness of the Romani repertoire from their country, Romania, with Jorge Chaminé's voice building a bridge between these two groups of unrivalled virtuosos.
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