Stories with Music... Music with Stories: an inclusive project for audience training

Carla Soares Barbosa*

Contos com Música... Música com Contos is a project with two performing aspects - stories with music and commented chamber music concerts - being complemented with educational measures. Initiated in 2003 by the Academia de Música de Viana do Castelo, it is dedicated to the creation and training of youngsters and children audiences, in strategic interaction with the community of Minho-Lima.

The project’s main aim is to develop training for youngsters and children audiences through regular and structured performative activities in conjunction with educational communities, thus contributing to the knowledge of musical repertoire of the world and to the valorisation of other cultures, by using a perceptible approach. Using a multidisciplinary model that explores the potentials of a narrative/musical repertoire, it aims to encourage contemporary musical creation by commissioning new works to Portuguese composers or those living in Portugal, giving priority to cooperation with foreign countries of Portuguese or Ibero-American expression, using texts of writers of such countries. The project markets both the Portuguese and world musical heritage, promotes close awareness of cultural identities, focuses on the artistic quality of planning and interpretation, values the activity of the new generation of performers and the integration of migrant musicians, and promotes the circulation of musicians and works in Portugal and abroad, especially in Galicia.

This project addresses itself to the educational communities of primary and secondary schools in the municipalities of Viana do Castelo, Ponte de Lima, Paredes de Coura; the educational communities of the professional and vocational music schools in Viana do Castelo and elsewhere; and the remaining student population of those locations, especially higher education, and the general public.

The themes are: 1. Musical story - Constructed artistic work that comprehensively combines oral narration, pantomime, occasional theater or dance, with music. The selection of stories that are to be presented favors texts that address universal values of citizenship and that enable the actual knowledge of cultural identities; 2. Commented concerts - Starting from a formal concert situation, the arranged repertoire frames itself within the cultural context of the time, highlighting the most important features of the composers’ musical language and the musical elements of their countries’ traditional music, or the influence that it undergoes and the way in which sound materials from other cultures are addressed; 3. Related Activities – Processed

* PhD Candidate in Cultural Heritage Management at the University of Barcelona and Dean of the Academia de Música of Viana do Castelo.
Music and Migration

in the form of lectures, exhibitions, workshops and post-concert meetings with composers and writers, by way of animation and interaction with the public, providing a real contact with creative artists.

The project’s principal strategies are the strengthening of regional articulation and cooperation, presenting a regular and systematic cultural offer that involves working with various municipalities. Regarding internal dynamics, the aim is to innovate and to present multidisciplinary artistic proposals, valuing contemporary creation, in an intensive dialogue with schools and artists. It is an inclusive project, particularly developed for the resident populations in Alto Minho, in conjunction with the educational communities. In the field of cultural management, one seeks to professionalise all aspects with regard to the production and dissemination of events, investing in marketing services and in the qualification and certification of the human resources that are involved.

The following musical stories are included in first absolute audition:
- *How to make orange colour* [Como se faz cor de laranja] for narrator and 17 musicians, with music by Pedro Faria Gomes and homonymous text by António Torrado, for instrumental ensemble and narrator. World premiere on 23.03.2007. Teatro Diogo Bernardes, Ponte de Lima, FAM Ensemble. Narration: José Lourenço. Direction: Césario Costa.

The project is financed by the Ministério da Cultura - Direcção Geral das Artes [Ministry of Culture - General Arts Directorate] its partners being the municipalities of Viana do Castelo, Ponte de Lima and Paredes de Coura. This project, developed in culturally disadvantaged contexts, provides the living experience of regular artistic expression, promoting a dynamic process of learning through consumption and fundamental values of citizenship, such as knowledge of and respect for cultural diversity.
Table 1 - Public attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>N.º of Spectators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2003</td>
<td>2750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2004</td>
<td>2407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2006</td>
<td>4252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2007</td>
<td>4130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2008</td>
<td>3323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contos com Música... Música com Contos 2009</td>
<td>In process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AMVC. Annual activity report

In 2005, the project was interrupted due to lack of national funding.