

## **The live concert as a turning point in the community soundscape at school**

The presentation focuses on two examples of the *Levinsky School of Music Education Community Program "Live Music Encounters"* for young students in primary schools which are divided by status, ethnic-cultural, national splits.

Splits between Jews and Arabs- Palestinian young students, immigrant children of foreign workers, religious and secular, and segregated schools were in the minds of the Live Music Encounters leaders, ten years ago, at the time it was initiated by the Keynote Program (Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the Shesh- Besh Ensemble ) and later on, in the North of the country, with the Kadma program in cooperation with "The Haifa New Symphonic Orchestra " and the Haifa Arab- Palestinian Ensemble "Vatar".

The ideological implications to co-existence and tolerance was the basic principle in our rationale .

The operative central aim of the "Live Music Encounters" program was to introduce the students to the "live" music world, through a musical repertoire that goes beyond styles and cultures. First, to cultivate music appreciation through a common experience, sharing "together" the pre- learned repertoires and the live concerts experience in an high frequency ; second, to expose the audience to a wide repertoire of symphonic and chamber music; and finally to enhance listening skills for different kinds of music and audiences.

At the same time it has developed a concept of its own – to make frequent encounters with "live" music a chief component of the school, with the collaboration of the music educator and the participation of the general staff, in order to enable an accumulative, meaningful, collective experience, in which music and orchestra turns into a common asset connecting the young listeners during the process of preparation and its degree. Based on the idea that the concert event is a collective work and a shared experience, the interaction emerging from the individual listener, the audience, the performers ,become a crucial topic.

**The program was made up of a number of components:**

a. **In-class activities** in which the young students learn , in the framework of the ongoing music lessons, about works of music that are played, later on, at the live concerts during each semester.

b. **Preliminary concert preparations-**

Mini-concerts -In-school , (chamber ensemble performances, narrated by young music educators graduated of the LSME). These performances are held prior to the concerts and focus on the pieces played at the final concerts. They allow the pupils to get to know the musicians and their instruments in a more intimate setting.

c. **Final live concerts** at the community auditorium, which are the culmination of the in-school music preparation so, the well knowing repertoire and the concert sharing become a potential meaning of a kind of bridge between different cultures.

**d. Sequence and continuity**

The "Live Music Encounters " Program is defined as a comprehensive and multi-year music education program in the elementary school (designated for 8-12 year olds)

The frequent events towards the "live" concert are all compared to links within the districts of memory, which are born and survive by the feeling that a spontaneous memory does not exist, and that it should be invented at a continuous fixed time and date, for the long term, in the space and place identified with its continuous structure.

**e. Partnership**

Our Community program and its implementation is based on the Partnership involving the Levinsky research Dept., together with the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, the Haifa- New Symphonic Orchestra, the music education district Inspectorate, and the municipal authorities

### **The LME program and leadership**

The multi-systemic connection in the community around the *live concert* had reached a new level of conceptualization when nine years ago I was honored to introduce an academic course on communal initiatives around the live concert, focused on transformative leadership in educational institutions and the surrounding community, along the skills development of live concerts design and narration.

In order to promote a transferability process of skills and know ledges , the course was designed for musicians who have been giving concerts in schools for many years, for music teachers in the formal and extra-curricular systems who fulfill a key function in the community, for municipal facilitators responsible for music and education, and student teachers- training at the LSME.

The given space for a process of leadership emerge with an awareness of the artistic and social commitment of those young leaders, an awareness of their roll as facilitators between the individuals members of the community and the music in it's totally potentiality.

### **Confronting crucial dilemmas**

This phenomena of diversity involved a complex process of awareness, recognizing differences amongst the program leaders, and the music teachers themselves.

The live concert repertoire chosen, the narration language and the animation and presentation style, considerations concerning seating arrangements in the concert hall, disagreements as to the right balance between Middle Eastern - Arab works and Western symphonic classic repertoire that have been taught . All those are part of a sensitive cluster of issues that are controversial among school principals, parent committees and even teaching staff. The reception of a defined repertoire includes the music educator and the role of subjectivity, under the light of the West academic institution, and the differences on traditional cultural practices and teaching- learning strategies. The diversity of traditions in teaching- learning the shared repertoire, based on the nature of teachers' implicit in-action mental models about children's minds and learning, as inferred through the ways they teach. (S.Strauss & T. Shilony, 1994).

Confronting the integrative vision , our programs became an interesting topic of discuss from the music teacher's view. Musical, pedagogical and cultural issues arise among the music educators during the meetings and sessions for enrichments strategies towards teaching the repertoires in class .

But above all, the intimate meeting between Israel and Palestine performing artists, as well as students of different cultural backgrounds, provides in itself a preliminary model of a connection through the "live" music.

Such a kind of human-artistic scenario, for example, was strengthened towards two of the concert programmes that took place in the past two years

The first being, " Fiesta Española - EL Andaluz " for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders , who had studied the works by Isaac Albeniz, Manuel de Falla on one hand, and traditional Arab- Palestinian song , *Lamma Bada Yatatana* that echoed in El Andaluz on the other, and whose mutual influence was expressed, both on the historic-geographic level and on the stylistic-cultural one, in Southern Spain.

The second concert programme, "East-west and within our space", was constructed on the basis of cultural exoticism, with works such as "Sheherezada" by Rimsky Korsakov or "The Bachanalia Dance" by Saint Sains, and Hebrew- middle-eastern style pieces from Jewish composers; alongside, in the programme Arab works by Farid-El-Atrash and Salim-El-Masri interweaved , side by side with Persian folk songs, that were descended from past generations, among both Jewish and Muslim populations.

1. Our Rational was constructed on the conception and the praxis that school is a learning community- In context , and that the “Live” concert and its frequency, serve as a potential model for a dialogue between fractured populations

According to these is it necessary to provide an applicable model in the continual process of building such a bridge by:

.Placing the multicultural encounter by means of “live concert” on the community agenda in a significant number of elementary schools

.Increasing an awareness of membership in a listener multicultural community

.Providing Preparatory chamber music meetings, for each pair of schools (one Jewish and one Arab) for a mutual exposure, familiarity, and a common experience of the student population and school's staff representing different cultures.

From the last annual report, which involves semi-structured interviews, testimonies and open discussions with the young students, school's staff, music educators, and schools principals (from both Jewish and Arab schools ), we can conclude that the "Kadma "program is undoubtedly a potentially powerful tool for multi- cultural bridging and empathy- promotion. (Shteiman,Y. & Vinograd- J'an. T. , 2007). It is no surprise , though, that in a multidimensional split and war- torn society such Israel, a major challenge lies in the responsibility of all of us, musicologists, music educators, designers, promoters and implementers of music education programs to dialogue and interact from a perspective of true and deep recognition of multi cultural experiences , joys and pains

The live music encounters leadership demands an awareness of social and musical inclusiveness, and the passion component that provides a reflex ion of the present in the light of the past, and on a transformative construct of a future.

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