

Conference "Music on Troubled Soils"
**«Sete Sóis Sete Luas Festival:
an experience of intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean»**
Jerusalem, 26th October 2008.

SLIDE 1:

The SSSL Festival is a Cultural Network for the Mediterranean and Macaronesia (the high Atlantic area that includes the Azores, Canary, Cape Vert and Madeira Islands), a transnational cultural project that has been consolidating in its 17 years of existence as a project with unique traits. The aim of the Festival is to build bridges for the dissemination of Mediterranean Arts, through unique cohesion policies among small and medium cities from the two shores of the Mediterranean and Macaronesia.

SLIDE 2:

Sete Sóis Sete Luas Festival, at its 17th edition in 2009, is being promoted by a Cultural Network of 30 cities from 9 different countries:

(SLIDE 3)

Cape Vert, Croatia, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain.

It promotes projects of peoples music (traditional but at the same time contemporary), plastic arts, and symposia with the participation of great figures of European and Mediterranean culture.

SLIDE 4:

Thanks to its European dimension, the project received the support of the European Union with Kaleidoscope (1993, 1998), Culture2000 (1999, 2003, 2004, 2007) and Interreg IIIB Medocc (2005) Programs. The Honorary Presidents of the festival are Nobel Prize Winners José Saramago and Dario Fo.

SLIDE 5:

The symbol of the Festival

SLIDE 6:

(what does the symbol of the festival represent?)

It is a flying machine, a symbol inspired from «passarola», the historical machine invented and tried out by Father Bartolomeu de Gusmão in Lisbon in the 18th century, as José Saramago tells us in its novel “Memorial of the Convent”.

So what is the SSSL Festival all about? It is a tool that make us fly, go on a long journey from Macaronesia to the Mediterranean Sea, a long arch that begins travelling in Santo Antão Island in Cape Vert and, after having passed through 30 cities of Portugal, Morocco, Andalusia, South of France, Sicily, Tuscany, Istria, Croatia, Epirus, lands one year after in Israel, in the city of Raanana.

SLIDE 7:

(aims of the Festival)

The symbol of the Festival helps us understand its aims:

promote arts and cultures of the countries where it takes place, according to the principle of dialogue and artistic exchange: as an example, the Festival promotes Valencian artists in Tuscany, artists from Tuscany in Portugal, artists from Portugal in Cape Vert, artists from Cape Vert in Israel, artists from Israel in Andalusia, artists from Andalusia in Greece... but does not promote Portuguese artists in Portugal or Italian artists in Italy.

The Festival adopts a cultural decentralization policy in the South of Europe and the Mediterranean, being convinced that quality cultural initiatives and national premières must not necessarily be held in big cities. For example, a few years ago, the Festival promoted a première concert by Emir Kusturica, in a small town of 10.000 inhabitants of the Valencian coast.

SLIDE 8:

Inviting artists from the country where the Festival takes place, it promotes original music productions. In this way, the Festival becomes an active production centre, not only promoting the dissemination of Mediterranean cultures but also building a dialogue among the common elements of these cultures, especially in the field of music.

SLIDE 9:

7SÓIS ORKESTRA (video) and MED'SET ORKESTRA: there are two 2007-2008 productions of the SSSL Festival: each Orkestra works with 7 important musicians coming from different countries of the Mediterranean.

During an artistic residency, each Orkestra produced a new musical repertoire, inspired from the different musical cultures of the various artists, and a cd-live. After that, during the summer of 2008, the two Orkestras played in more than 20 cities of the SSSL Festival Network, having received an excellent feedback from the public and reviewers.

SLIDE 10:

MED'SET ORKESTRA (video)

SLIDE 11:

Medium-term aim:

a strategy of strong intercultural dialogue among the countries of the different Mediterranean areas, with the goal of extending the SSSL Festival to a greater number of countries of the south and west shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

SLIDE 12:

In fact, the Festival represents a great opportunity for artists, institutions and young people coming from the cities of the Network to enlarge their horizons. But, at the same time they protect and enhance their own cultures and identities, which get richer thanks to the intercultural dialogue dynamics.

The SSSL Festival aims to build a sort of common language of the Mediterranean, a "koiné dialektos", made up of the exaltation of its rich differences and of the union they create.

SLIDE 13:

It is a back and forth project enabling each single city from the SSSL Festival Network:

1) to see, in its own territory, some of the most interesting artistic works of the Mediterranean and Macaronesia, made possible by a good programming.

2) to use a sort of platform, a stage that allows them to disseminate their own musical, artistic and cultural works, well beyond a market approach.

Thanks to the contribution in information and experience that is brought by the representatives of cities and institutions, the SSSL Festival is a great meeting of cultures and languages of the Mediterranean and Macaronesia, with a unique and non-standard programme, arising from a deep research work on the musical and cultural heritage of the cities of the Network.

The Festival programme is the result of many sources of information, contributions and ideas of various culture makers, coming from different cities of the SSSL Network.

Another surplus value of the Network of the Festival is the SSSL brand: tourists, young people, journalists and the public can identify the SSSL brand in the different places of the Mediterranean, regardless of the country where the Festival is taking place. In fact, the Festival has the same name, the same image, the same poster in all the 30 cities of the 9 countries where it takes place.

SLIDE 14:

Artistic exchanges: the Sicilian musical group Nakaira in Santo Antão Island in Cape Vert

SLIDE 15:

Marisa Paredes (Spain), Maria de Medeiros (Portugal) and Laura Morante (Italy) perform a recital for the Festival as a tribute to the women of the novels of Portuguese writer José Saramago

SLIDE 16:

Nobel Prize Winner, Nobel José Saramago, at the SSSL Festival in Rome, saying the text "No to war", written by himself

SLIDE 17:

Teresa Salgueiro, the voice of the famous Portuguese group Madredeus, at a national première concert in Mascalucia (Sicily)

SLIDE 18:

Nobel Prize Winner, Dario Fo, drawing and signing the poster for the SSSL Festival in 2003.

SLIDE 19

The 2003 festival poster, drawn by Nobel Prize winner, Dario Fo

SLIDE 20

Exchange of arts and crafts, wine and food products among the SSSL Festival cities.

Wine from Canary Islands, Tuscany, extravirgin olive oil from Sicily, moscatel wine from Frontignan (south of France), tuna fish from the Algarve (Portugal), honey and terracotta pottery from Tuscany

SLIDE 21:

Articles on the SSSL Festival published in different countries

SLIDE 22:

Financing the Festival:

City Councils are at the basis of the economic support for the Festival, since they pay for expenses that are made in their own territory. There is not one single institution that supports all the Festival expenses. So, the Festival is financed through a complex mosaic of small and medium financing bodies.

SLIDE 23:

The possible support of programmes from the European Union does not happen every year, but it depends on applications and is aimed at musical and artistic productions of the Festival.

SLIDE 24:

European programmes: they make possible the development of Festival productions, especially fusion projects with the participation of musicians and artists that represent the different cultures of the Mediterranean and Macaronesia. In fact, the support from the European Union allows the SSSL Festival to develop the projects that it could not make with City Councils' support alone.

SLIDE 24:

The future of the Festival: a plea to the European Parliament (*picture: signing in Florence*)

The SSSL network aims to become a reference project for the Mediterranean area, a vehicle for peace and culture, capable of taking Festival sections, not only to the south of Europe, but also to many cities and countries of the south and western Mediterranean.

In order to attain this goal, help was asked for to some Parliaments (Tuscany, Sicily, Andalusia, Valencian Community) and we are about to ask for the collaboration of other Parliaments (Azores Islands, Istria, Basque Country, Languedoc-Roussillon).

The help that was asked for to the different Parliaments consists of a joint commitment, so that the European Commission can firmly recognize the SSSL Festival as a strategic project for intercultural dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean and encourage the creation of new and original cultural actions in favour of cohesion and decentralization.

For this reason, on December 1st, 2006, in Florence, various representatives from Parliaments met in order to sign a plea to the European Parliament (the first person who signed it was Nobel Prize Winner, José Saramago, Honorary President of the Festival), including the following points:

SLIDE 25

The Parliaments of Andalusia, Sicily, Tuscany and Valencia make a plea to the European Parliament and the European Commission, so that they enable Sete Sóis Sete Luas Festival to attain its institutional aims, primarily developing the intercultural dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea, so that they consider the Festival as beneficiary of triennial support for pluriannual cultural cooperation programmes (Cultura2000) and triennial support programmes for bodies acting at European level (Decision No 792/2004/CE of the European Parliament of 21.04.2004)