

DECLARATION ON THE FUTURE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART MUSIC CREATION IN EUROPE

We, the representatives of composer organisations from twenty-nine European countries, working together in the European Composers' Forum (ECF) and the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA), have come together in Glasgow, in October 2009 – the European Year of Innovation and Creativity – in order to address the future for contemporary art music in Europe.

Art music is of singular importance in the European context. The social and educational potential in this sector is enormous, and it makes an enduring contribution to local economies.

Music starts with the creators. Throughout history, composers and other creators have worked to represent their own time and place. This has made a fundamental contribution to the building of national cultures, thereby developing the cultural diversity which is the heart of today's Europe and the promise of its future.

However, twenty-first century composers find it increasingly difficult to sustain a living, and contemporary art music is under threat. To lose the continuity of such a living heritage would be disastrous.

For the attention of the European Union and Europe as a whole, we propose the following six actions:

- 1. Increase the visibility of contemporary music and the profile of composers who create it**
- 2. Raise the status of Culture in the European political arena and reinforce the position of music within cultural policy**
- 3. Legislate effectively on authors' and composers' Rights through increased dialogue and consultation between creators and European policy-makers**
- 4. Ensure fair principles of Intellectual Property and the administration of Rights in a global context**
- 5. Continue to develop a just and transparent European legal framework for the benefit of all music professionals**
- 6. Encourage investment and subsidy for new art music and improve access to funding at EU level**

1. Increase the visibility of contemporary music and the profile of composers who create it

It is time for the development of a new European approach to the recognition of and support for composed music. Much new music, which will form part of the repertoire of tomorrow, is not acknowledged today, and is in danger of being lost. Whilst this is not a new situation, it is the first time that global industries, dedicated to shareholders' interests, have had so much power to appropriate the musical arena and distort its values.

Even when there is respect for the music itself, there is often a lack of appreciation for the people who have created it and the structures necessary to support it. Political will and creative endeavour should unite to recognise musical values and those structures for the benefit of a living and dynamic European culture.

2. Raise the status of Culture in the European political arena and reinforce the position of music within cultural policy

The importance of culture in the European community is obvious and well known. It is important to tourism and exports, as much as to social cohesion and well-being. European cities have benefited greatly from initiatives such as being designated a Capital of Culture. Culture deserves equal consideration from policy makers as that given to other significant sectors of the economy, as advocated in the 2005 UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity.

There is an urgent need for recognition of art music as an essential and front-line element within the cultural mix. Composers, together with other creators, have contributed to the development of both national and European culture. Therefore, cultural policy must reflect this.

3. Legislate effectively on authors' and composers' Rights through increased dialogue and consultation between creators and European policy-makers

There is a need for consultation and structured dialogue between the author/composer community and the decision making bodies such as the EU Commission, the European Parliament and national governments.

The music industry is based on business interests and has well established, well resourced and regular lobbying access to policy makers. Consumer groups have legitimate priorities which policy makers listen to, but these are often one-sided, misinformed and influenced by other considerations. Without composers present,

these two lobbies crowd out the point of view and the interests of the creators of the music itself. Composers themselves must be included from the start of policy considerations, and organisations such as ECSA exist to enable this very procedure.

4. Ensure fair principles of Intellectual Property and the administration of Rights in a global context

As enshrined in world-wide treaties and agreements and the Berne Convention, composers have inalienable Rights in their works, and they need legitimate opportunities to benefit from the commercial exploitation of them. At present, vested interests (primarily commercial) weaken the implementation of the Rights to an extent which damages the long-term sustainability of the profession.

This may be corrected by supporting the existing Rights Management Societies at the highest level and addressing the threats that they face. In particular: (1) securing an authors' Rights framework that benefits the author as well as the industry; (2) harmonising the legal frameworks of authors' Rights in such a way that will protect less powerful societies; and (3) constructively rethinking processes to develop a future-proofed revenue collection system in the context of the challenges of new technology. This will also counter the growing threat of distribution without remuneration to the creators.

5. Continue to develop a just and transparent European legal framework for the benefit of all music professionals

As well as establishing a situation in which Rights are respected, it is necessary to ensure that contracts and other legal instruments are drafted in a way that is not detrimental to the interests of the composers. Examples include the protection of Moral Rights, and reversing the coercive practices often employed when music is synchronised to other media. Legal protection should be offered in the case of agreements relating to music which is supposedly published but in fact merely appropriated, in that no real publishing activity takes place. As a result, returns which are due to writers are diverted to the commercial interests of others.

6. Encourage investment and subsidy for new art music and improve access to funding at EU level

There is a need for investment from both private and public bodies. Music can provide returns on investment, to businesses and also to communities and centres which promote it. But there is also a need for subsidy, as art music frequently takes

many years to return a financial advantage. This time scale means that the creators may not achieve the remuneration which they deserve and which is essential to their ability to continue to write.

Subsidies for new music need to be increased. These should be equivalent to subsidies in the other arts, but also reflect the higher costs of the infrastructure necessary to support musical performance and the need for the creation of new repertoire.

Where possible in European Community environments, fiscal benefits should be encouraged, such as providing tax advantages for creators and investors in new music. It would help if patronage of new music were supported by tax relief in the same way as sponsorship. Furthermore, there need to be simple, realistic and efficient procedures by which to apply for European funding in support of music in a similar way to the established procedures for agriculture and other industries.

THE EUROPEAN COMPOSERS' FORUM

The ECF is the representative body of European composers of art & classical contemporary music working through 29 European member societies: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, FYR Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The ECF is the pillar of the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA) representing the composers of art and classical music.

Under the auspices of ArtMusFair in Glasgow, hosted by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA) and the Scottish Music Centre, the ECF held meetings in October 2009 and formulated this declaration.

THE EUROPEAN COMPOSER AND SONGWRITER ALLIANCE

ECSA is the single voice for all composers in Europe. It comprises three pillars:

ECF The European Composers' Forum

APCOE The Alliance of Popular Composer Organisations in Europe

FFACE The Federation of Film and Audiovisual Composers of Europe