

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Since my youth I have been collecting fine string instruments of the 16th to the 18th Centuries. The collection which thus ensued has been classified by international experts as “unique in the world”. It comprises over 170 choice violins, violas, violoncellos, violas da gamba, violas d’amore, barytons and historical bows created from 1570 to 1780, all of which have been faithfully restored to the original measurements and are playable; they are regularly lent to professional musicians and excellent students for recordings, competitions, auditions and concerts. This is why the collection, besides being a precious patrimony for mankind, represents also a living and vital heritage for our society today, which has been classified by internationally renowned experts as “absolutely unique in the world”. The complete documentation on the collection and its activities found below include also the project of exhibitions with concerts, courses and special programmes for schools and conservatories presented in 2007 through a generous grant from the European Community in the programme Culture-2000. The commissars of the European Community in Brussels were so pleased with the results achieved that they encouraged us to submit further projects.

In case of interest, I wish to request an interview in order to investigate together with you the possibilities of a participation of the Orpheon Foundation in the realm of your cultural initiatives. We wish this to be the beginning of a lasting cooperation between us, which is the true aim of such European projects, and a prospect well worth considering.

Two possible means of cooperation:

1. Exhibitions, concerts, courses

Project of exhibitions, with concerts using the instruments of the collection and a programme for the schools and conservatories.

2. Permanent residence for the Collection of Historical Musical Instruments

Possibilities for a future permanent residence for the collection and its musical and pedagogical activities

With my best regards,

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ORPHEON – THE LIVING MUSEUM

PROPOSALS:

I. EXHIBITIONS - ITINERANT

II. THE LIVING MUSEUM – PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR THE COLLECTION

I. EXHIBITIONS - ITINERANT

What we wish to accomplish:

Through the exhibitions on tour throughout Europe and overseas we propose to bring this patrimony (but also the renomée of its permanent residence) to a more extensive public in order to make it aware of the intrinsic value of the cultural, organologic and musical heritage that these instruments represent.

Project of exhibitions for 2009-2011 (submitted for approval to the European Union):

THREE GREAT MASTERS:

HENRY PURCELL (* 1659)

GEORG FRIEDRICH HÄNDEL († 1759)

JOSEPH HAYDN († 1809)

Consists of:

A. Exhibition of the historical musical instruments

B. Cycle of concerts around these masters

C. Courses employing the historical musical instruments of the collection

A. Exhibitions

What we wish to accomplish:

More than 100 instruments, bows, period paintings and other objects from the Vázquez Collection of the Orpheon Foundation, Vienna. See complete catalogue and photographic documentation below. The guided visits and the programme specially developed for schools, conservatories and universities help bring this historic, sonorous heritage closer to students of all levels (but also to all of our visitors), and impart insights into the aesthetics of the construction of these instruments and the music which can be interpreted on them.

B. Concert cycle

The exhibitions are accompanied by a cycle of concerts, with commentary, which present the works of the three great masters being celebrated in 2009: Henry Purcell, Georg Friedrich Händel and Joseph Haydn, which bring our public closer to the aesthetic of the music of these masters.

1. Music of the Time of Shakespeare

Henry Purcell, John Dowland, William Byrd, William Lawes and others
Vocal soloists, viola da gamba consort, harpsichord, organ

2. Händel in Italy

The composers which Händel met and studied during his sojourn in Italy: Alessandro Scarlatti, Händel, Vivaldi and others

3. Händel in Germany

Composers which Händel heard and studied in his formative years:
Dietrich Buxtehude, Georg Ph. Telemann, Johann Sebastian Bach, Händel

4. Soirée at Esterhazy: Haydn in the service of the Prince

Works for baryton, viola, violoncello by Joseph Haydn and Andreas Lidl

C. Courses employing the instruments of the collection (optional)

What we wish to accomplish:

The courses offer the opportunity to a numerous professional musicians and university and conservatory students of a direct access to these historical instruments and their musical heritage. No other collection exists in the world where such first-hand experience may be gained.

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II. THE LIVING MUSEUM - PERMANENT RESIDENCE

What we wish to accomplish:

A. Establish a permanent residence for the collection and its musical and pedagogical activities with its own early music festival using the instruments of the collection. We are convinced that there is a great potential and a significant interest in this museum, since ours is the only collection in the world where all of the instruments are restored to playing condition and placed in the service of music.

B. Demonstrate unequivocally the significance of a viable, active and dynamic cultural entity, with its obvious potential for tourism, education and the cultural enrichment of its citizens.

C. Make accessible in a systematic manner this cultural heritage to the educational system: schools, universities, conservatories of the home country, in order to preserve the interest in this heritage among the young.

The establishment of a permanent residence for the collection of historical musical instruments, beyond the very evident point of reference which it represents for a city, a region, a province or even a country, does not geographically limit the field of action of this collection. One should bear in mind that this patrimony belongs, at least in principle, to the whole of Western Culture and, by consequence, to all non-western cultures which historically and in our times share and appreciate these affinities. Therefore it is not just desirable, but rather of great importance that the cultural activities which this center generates, should carry the aesthetic values and the cultural patrimony to other regions of the world.

In the precise wording of the Commission for Culture-2000 of the European Union:
“In order to assure the transnational circulation of cultural and artistic works and promote intercultural dialogue.”

THE INTERNATIONAL SCOPE OF THE PROJECT: Repercussions and implications beyond the frontiers

As a consequence a series of multifaceted and interdisciplinary activities around the collection and its permanent residence should be conceived, which will in the future result in bilateral agreements with other international organisations sharing similar goals and the establishment of :

“CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE”

for the study and interpretation of Renaissance, Baroque and Classical Music, organology, restoration, etc., which would allow us to extend the programme throughout the world, thus helping to disseminate the knowledge obtained through the work with these instruments.

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Centers which have already worked with the collection:

- JINDRICHUV HRADEC – Czech Republic:, from 1999
- THOIRY – France, from 2000
- IBIZA – Spain, from 2004
- AUSTRIA: from 1988 at the University for Music Vienna
- CHEMNITZ – for the first time in 2010

CYCLE: JOSEPH HAYDN

Series of concerts with the divertimenti by Joseph Haydn for baryton, viola and violoncello. 2009-2011.

What we wish to achieve – two goals:

- the presentation of these early masterworks by Haydn to a greater public, which because of the particular instrumentation are very seldom heard in concert. In these works Haydn laid the foundations for his epoch-making symphonic creations of the master's mature years.
- the production of an complete recording of these trios, which will become a point of reference for this composer.

Programme Haydn:

<http://orpheon.org/OldSite/P-009/Haydn-Bk.pdf>