

Music and Ecology

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Societies in ecological balance attach great importance to the role of artistic activities in their effort to maintain their ecosystems. These activities also function to reinforce ethnic identity and social integration. Throughout the long history of human existence it is through this ongoing artistic activity that social, cultural and ecological value systems are being shaped and transmitted to ever new generations. In order to explore the role that music can and should play in our present struggle to save our environment, the University of Ljubljana in cooperation with ICTM on August 28 - 29, 2015 called a conference at their Faculty of Arts

The International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) is an organization connected to UNESCO that for many years has supported efforts enacted in many parts of the world for re-culturization of both urban and rural habitats.

The city of Ljubljana, now housing the ICTM International Secretariat, has shown how a music community can lead the way to re-vitalize city life in general. One of these initiatives - the *Dance House Project* has already been reported on in a former JUCR volume. This year the ICTM board felt that time had come to call an international conference to discuss models of music interaction in a wider ecological perspective. The immediate background for calling a conference in Ljubljana

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na, the Capital of Slovenia was the decision by the European Community to select Ljubljana as the European Green Capital 2016, as further explained at the opening of the conference by Natasa Jazbinsek Sersen, Head of the Department for Environmental Protection of the Municipality of Ljubljana and head of the European Green Capital 2016.

A very interesting project among many from the Balkan countries was one initiated by artists, architects and activists, supporting the revitalization of a whole city quarter (Savamala) of Belgrade, Serbia, as presented by Ivana Medic of the Institute of Musicology in Belgrade. The Urban Incubator: Belgrade, according to the concept “aims to improve the quality of life of local residents, arguing strongly in favor of a city on a human scale, and aims to encourage the residents of Savamala to take charge of their quarter.”

Huib Schippers of Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia a leading senior musicologist in a compelling keynote address noticed that musicians today not only are seen to contribute to the survival of urban traditions but increasingly have become aware of the responsibility to assure the survival and vibrancy of music practices and communities. A model for investigating ecosystems of music - *The Sustainable Futures Project*, including the study of music cultures of South East Asia, has been initiated with the aim of describing the impact of major forces upon music practices across the domains of learning and teaching, musicians and communities, media and the music industry.

Focusing again on the cultural losses sustained by the tribal communities of East Asia (Taiwan) and South East Asia (Malaysia) as a consequence of unsustainable development projects planned and forced on communities without a human and cultural dimension Wei-Fa Lin of the University of Music and Performing Arts of Vienna, Austria and the present reporter presented further evidence of cultural threats that the music communities no longer can neglect.

The JUCR is hoping to bring these and other presentations in full in future volumes.