

ENLIGHTENING SHADOWS. WOMEN IN MUSIC

[L'OMBRA ILLUMINATA. DONNE NELLA MUSICA]

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Description of the content (350 words)

The project "L'ombra illuminata", in progress at the Conservatory of Music "N. Piccinni" of Bari, Italy, is the outcome of the artistic and research experience of its two promoters (in cooperation, for the first year, with former colleague Paola Ciarlantini, herself a composer, now at Adria Conservatory).

It focuses on the work of women composers through the last two centuries, both in research and in performance, to integrate their contribution into the mainstream of the canonized Western music repertoire.

This multi-faced project aims to involve both students and professors in seminars, concerts and research projects meant to improve awareness of the female presence in Western music, so taking root in the very life and activities of the Conservatory: courses, exams, public performances.

Areas in which the project is now active:

- A festival, held in a public concert hall in Bari (the first edition being scheduled for April 8-9-10, 2015), with students, professors and scholars engaged in programs entirely dedicated to female composers, with many first Italian performances. All the concerts are introduced by lectures.
- Thematic teaching activity in Chamber Music and Piano classes, with students studying as soloists and in ensembles, and performing in concerts and exams.
- Translation into Italian from the original language (first Italian translation) of texts by women composers to be published in a yearly thematic Journal, each having a specific thematic focus, as a direct witness of their personal and professional life, education and integration in the musical society of their time.
- Research in public and private archives in Italy and abroad, also supported by Erasmus Staff Training Programme.
- Promotion of students' research on women composers for Music Theory and History courses and exams.
- Involvement of living women composers and performance of their works.

Perspectives of development on a long-term project:

- Involvement of the Ancient Music department.
- Involvement of greater ensembles for the performance of orchestral works.
- Stage representation of operas by historical women composers .
- Creating a network of Italian academic and artistic Institutions sharing the same purposes, progressively extending it to other European Institutions.

About the questions listed in the call (150 words)

The promoters' research about women composers' music has dramatically changed their outlook on music experience. In their concert proposals - recitals, vocal and chamber music - they present a repertoire whose artistic value is of absolute importance.

They share knowledge in teaching and in performing with colleagues, academics and non-academics. In particular, Angela Annese has put her focus on archivistic research and has come in touch with direct testimonials of a 'not-so-past' yet forgotten History.

Bringing women musicians' voice 'back' through their music and words has a strong influence not merely on music experience but on the very cultural perception of our past and present. Orietta Caianiello, who has promoted two Festivals in Rome, now in partnership with Università Roma3, has given concerts/seminars on "Women and Music" in India and Malaysia, which made hinduist and islamic women perceive a different model of female creativity, thus exercising a valuable social function.