

Music and Inclusion. Steps towards an inclusive society in Europe and Latin America, Technical University of Dortmund, Germany



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Summary

Piano inclusive in Brazil 22 October – 2 November 2013

Piano inclusive, an ensemble of 12 professional musicians and musicians with special needs, presented its programme at UNIRIO during the II Colóquio Internacional de Educação e Inclusão between 23-25 October 2013, giving workshops and concerts. A meeting with the Associação de Pais e Amigos dos Excepcionais (APAE) in Sao Paulo and performing concerts at the University of São Paulo (USP) on 1-2 November at the German House for Science and Innovation (DWHI) completed the tour dedicated to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly in developing models of cultural participation.

Key words

Music, social inclusion, academic relations, intercultural learning



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The cooperation of many institutions and activities brought the ensemble piano inclusive to Brazil in order to present a model of cultural participation and to discuss the practice of building an inclusive society according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The project was organised as follows:

1. The UAMR, University Alliance Metropolis Ruhr formed by Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen in the Ruhr-Area, Germany, runs academic liaison offices for North America, Latin America, and Russia, to widen the academic relations within a global network. The head of the Latin-America-Office in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo is Prof. Dr. Christoph Käppler, TU Dortmund University, Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences, the office is run by Dr. Stephan Hollensteiner.
2. The Federal State of North Rhine Westphalia in terms of the governor's department and the Ministry of Work, Social Integration and Welfare. The Ministry, supporting the development of an inclusive society, enabled the project Dortmund Model: Musik (DOMO: Musik) during the years 2010-2013.
3. DOMO: Musik was headed by Prof. Dr. Irmgard Merkt, TU Dortmund, Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences. The project aimed at gaining the experience in educational models, musical-artistic models, as well as structure and organization modes of working together with professional musicians. Finding out more about mechanisms that hinder inclusion was meant to be as important as providing examples of good or best practice.
4. The German House of Science and Innovation (DWHI) in Sao Paulo supports scientific activities in international cooperation.
5. A module consisting of the Deutschland + Brasilien 2013-2014 year. This activity is to intensify the relations between Brazil and Germany in many respects such as politics, economy, culture, education, science, sustainable development, sports, etc.



Piano inclusive in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo

Between 23-25 October 2013 one of the main events of the opening ceremony of the conference II Colóquio Internacional de Educação e Inclusão was dedicated to signing a contract between UNIRIO and TU Dortmund to strengthen further research projects in the field of inclusive education, an area that still lacks a lot of scientific foundation. The Memorandum of Understanding was concluded by the rector of the Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Prof. Luiz Pedro San Gil Jutuca. Parallel to the lecture on music and inclusion, given by Prof. Merkt on behalf of the conference, the ensemble prepared the first warming up and a workshop for students and the participants of the conference ran by Claudia Schmidt, the leader and conductor of the ensemble. The participants were instructed how to build a choir for everyone and the first concert generated standing ovations and made the Brazilians audience dance.



Visiting APAE in Sao Paulo, got the Germans dancing, when received by APAE's Banda together with the dancing puppets. A concert at the University of Sao Paulo (USP) and the final performance at the German House for Science and Innovation (DWH) were compelling, both in musical and conceptual aspects.

The whole visit was documented and the audiovisual resources were uploaded in December 2013 on our website. http://www.fk-reha.musik.tu-dortmund.de/cms/de/DOMO__Musik/index.html

Conclusion

Inclusion by arts is not only an artistic activity but also an academic field, in which high academic institutions should face their responsibility to prepare students to build an inclusive society. A project like the visit of *piano inclusive* to Brazil shows the importance of sensorial and intercultural experiences through performance elements as workshops and concerts in order to evoke deeper discussions on the quality of inclusive cultural projects. To discuss the conditions and quality of inclusive projects is a genuine academic issue. This is what the project aimed to achieve. It is expected that through bi- or multilateral cooperation this recent topic will be taken into account in further comparative studies and research.

The two-week tour was an inspiration to many people. The exchange of experiences and the discussions about barriers for inclusion and conditions are to make inclusion and participation possible. Comparative studies on the effects of public presence of persons with special needs in the field of arts, especially in music, can be continued in international collaboration.

Author

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Born and raised in Munich, Irgard Merkt studied classical singing and musical education at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Munich, and educational sciences at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU Munich). Since 1991 Irgard Merkt has held the position of the Chair of Musical Education and Music Therapy at the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences, TU Dortmund University. Founder of the advanced study programme (further education system) InTakt and the international inclusive qualification system Europa InTakt – Music and persons with special needs, she is also head of the current project Dortmunder Modell: Musik and at the same time Dean of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences. Her research fields are intercultural musical education and music and inclusion.