

The CSMA has established itself in recent years as a reference centre for Higher Musical Education, both within Spain and abroad, in the Mediterranean regions, and at full European level. Zaragoza is a neuralgic point in south-eastern Europe, as it is the geographical centre and intersection point within the hexagon formed by Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Bilbao. It is located in the centre of an area that has a population of over 28 million inhabitants concentrated within a radius of 350 Km. Besides that, due to its geostrategic location within the Iberian Peninsula and its cultural and linguistic links, Zaragoza is a contact link between Latin America and Europe. The diffusion and recognition acquired by the CSMA in the educational community are due to its potential, with its first-class facilities and teaching staff. This is shown by the high percentage of students arriving from all around the Spanish territory and by the significant numbers of students from abroad (especially Latin American and European countries).

The CSMA wants to get established as a reference centre in music learning and musical research, and to that end, it is firmly committed to internationalisation as a vital and essential means. The future of higher music education requires close cooperation between institutions for our common objectives to be achieved through our joint efforts and strategies. For that reason, our International Office promotes, encourages, and coordinates the establishment of collaboration agreements with several Higher Education institutions from other countries, and makes possible the exchange of both students and teachers interested in developing their activities within our foreign networks. These support and advisory services are available both for the students wishing to carry out part of their studies within the framework of the Erasmus programme and also to the students interested in continuing with their training after completion of their studies at the CSMA. We have already established bilateral student and professor exchange agreements with important institutions of Higher Education from all over Europe, and we are notably increasing their numbers every passing year.

The consolidation of our relations with prestigious foreign centres is favoured by the fact that some of the centre's professors combine their teaching work with seminars, masterclasses, and courses in other similar institutions around the world, as well as with the programming of concerts that allow them to meet and establish relations with performers of recognised international prestige. All this boosts the CSMA growing recognition on the European music scene, thus attracting high-level students wishing to benefit from a dynamic learning experience, fully updated, in constant development, and with high professional standards, which will enable them to pursue their musical careers at the highest level.

The CSMA already has extensive experience in the internationalisation of learning. Since 2007, we offer postgraduate courses and masterclasses taught by worldwide recognized creators and performers. These activities consisting of hosting international guest professors have promoted the internationalization of our center, connecting all our students with professors that are developing their artistic and pedagogic careers in some of the most important music training institutions from all over the world. The International Office also carries out a coordination task that is essential on all this, making possible the communication between these professors and our different departments.

On the other hand, after the implantation of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle studies in the year 2018-2019, we aim to establish new 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle studies in coming years through new agreements with the main Universities within our area of influence (Zaragoza, Rioja, Navarra, Basque Country, Catalonia, Madrid, and Valencia), which will allow for the development of joint teaching and research, thus enriching the learning offer available for our students.

Due to all of the above, the CSMA is at the forefront of music higher education centres in the Mediterranean Arch and strengthens its position and prestige within Europe and Worldwide.

The CSMA is committed to establishing agreements with other European centres in order to share artistic and pedagogical projects, collaborating in all kinds of initiatives that favour the development of the social and integrating roles of music within society.

The CSMA has already taken part in several joint projects with other European centres. Out of which, we may highlight the staging of the operas: W.A. Mozart's "The Magic Flute" in 2011, with the Hochschule für Musik of Freiburg, and G. Verdi's "Il Trovatore" with San Pietro a Majella Conservatory from Naples in 2012.

A different kind of collaboration made it possible for the CSMA to take part in the international "Opus Erasmus III" encounter, organized by the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Boulogne-Billancourt (2013). This project involved the participation of three other European centres: Joseph Haydn Konservatorium des Landes Burgenland (Eisenstadt), San Pietro a Majella Conservatory (Naples), and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University (Istanbul).

In recent years, the CSMA has also been one of the international venues for the Schleswig Holstein Musik Festival auditions, collaborating closely with this institution and attracting to Zaragoza a large number of applicants from all over the world.

The CSMA's plans for the future include being able to organize different kinds of projects for the establishment of new links with other international institutions that favour the development of complementary activities and the flow of ideas between different centres. We have started to develop different thematic areas, and amongst them, we want to highlight the development of the Academies for New music and Early music, whose immediate inclusion in the centre's training sphere would be clearly favoured by the establishment of collaboration agreements with other international centres,

The foremost objective of the CSMA, as a higher education centre of high artistic and educational level within the field of music, is to become an international reference centre due to the quality of its learning. No doubt improving the quality of higher education depends on strengthening international relations between institutions; therefore we aim to expand our network of contacts both within and outside the EU. To this end, we aim to be linked to and integrated into the most prominent formal and informal networks of music studies at the international level.

Intending to promote and export different kinds of projects, we work for getting funding and collaboration with several public and private organisations and institutions. This kind of agreements would make it possible for the work made in our centre to be known, and would be useful for the students as a link between the academic activity and their future professional careers. Artistic studies imply a heavy load of individual work, but it is also vital to be able to count with the means and channels to show the results of that work to the public. Performances should not just be given within our facilities, but also exported to different auditoriums and cultural spaces within our area of influence, besides national and international stages. Currently, the different groups and ensembles of our centre (Symphonic Orchestra, Symphonic Band, New Music Academy Ensemble, Woodwind Orchestra "Sinfonietta", etc.), are already carrying out an important

concert activity at regional and national levels. On the international front, we may highlight the benefit concert the CSMA Chamber Orchestra performed for the victims of the 2011 earthquake in Japan at the Kammermusiksaal of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in Berlin and the joint production of the operas: W.A. Mozart's "The Magic Flute" in 2011, with the Hochschule für Musik of Freiburg, and G. Verdi's "Il Trovatore" with San Pietro a Majella Conservatory from Naples in 2012.

We are also aware that mobility and cooperation between higher institutions are essential for the advancement of society and we aim to promote the direct contact of students and teaching staff with social and educational organisations at regional, national and international level in order to favour the development and professionalization of music in our region and country.

Therefore, the CSMA intends to further increase its international activity by promoting and supporting student and staff mobility and developing our cooperation with partners in other EU and non-EU countries as part of a clear strategy for the internationalisation of our institution.