

Equinox

Charity Music

With the support of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel

I. Meeting project

Children from underprivileged neighborhoods expand their horizons through music. They find their place in the world where music is taught. Musical education is known for saving young people in extremely difficult situations.

I.1 Creation of a children's choir in Brussels

The idea is to create a children's choir in the Marolles district. The artistic director of the choir is **Maria João Pires who applies her very own method. The choir is a permanent artistic ensemble that works almost every day, where children learn not only to sing but also to read music and to discover several languages through the interpretation of the large musical repertoire. A choirmaster is on hand very regularly to advise and guide the children in all these artistic activities.**

Furthermore, prominent musicians are invited to coach and to help the children develop. The choir moreover provides an opportunity to take part in important and high level artistic productions by singing in several concerts not only in Belgium, but also, insofar as possible, abroad.

I.2. Complete young artists – the musician's social mission

A complete artist experiences different emotions in his life. This means that the musician must not only work on his music, theory, aesthetics, etc., but also on the universal side of music, putting it to practice in different settings and different forms. The young artist must, beyond his work as a practitioner of music, explore new musical fields and manage to "transmit" music in all sorts of situations. This enriches the way he approaches music and thus the way he plays and creates music.

II. Education project of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel – constantly evolving

As part of her work with the Queen Elisabeth College of Music, **Maria João Pires has introduced a new subject in the curriculum: supervised by established artists, soloists in residence must develop a project to share music with a social action objective. It assumes the form of interventions with marginal segments of society in difficult situations:**

Prison inmates, hospitalized patients, children cut off from access to culture... These projects are conducted both in Belgium and abroad.

At the same time, we are helping the underprivileged and are raising awareness among the elite represented by talented young musicians. It is always more difficult, and more risky, to try to reach a new audience, which is not trained in the codes or expectations of the world of music.

III. Partnerships are essential for this project

o The Foyer of Young People of the Marolles will welcome the Children's Choir and participate in the organization of activities.

o The Futur 21 foundation, which is involved in the Equinox project and provides considerable financial support

o **SOS Village under preparation**

Equinox, Charity Music

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Maria João Pires

In approaching music, as a performer, one may tend to take hold of a work and interpret it one's own way. Or, conversely, not take hold of it at all, but leave it as such and simply try to confront it. I think that the sacred part of music that brings us unlimited respect is found in instruction too. The student-teacher relationship must be treated with infinitely sensitive, respectful, light and true care.

Biography

Maria João Pires, who is considered among the finest musicians of her generation, continues to captivate audiences thanks to the absolute fidelity, eloquence and vitality of her art. Born on 23 July 1944 in Lisbon, she gave her first public concert in 1948. She studied in Portugal with Campos Coelho and Francine Benoit, and then continued her studies in Germany with Rosl Schmid and Karl Engel. Since 1970, she has concentrated on reflecting on the influence of art on life, the community and education whilst trying to find new ways to apply certain educational theories in society. In the course of the last ten years, she has organized several workshops that have brought together students from the world over and has dispensed her philosophy and her instruction in Japan, Brazil, Portugal, France and Switzerland. In 2012, in addition to her chamber music concerts with the Brazilian cellist Antonio Meneses, she has performed with the greatest European orchestras under the baton of, among others, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado and Riccardo

Chailly. Her frequent trips to Japan in particular will not prevent her from returning there in the spring of 2013 with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernard Haitink.

Maria João Pires recorded under the Erato label for 15 years, and then for 24 years under Deutsche Grammophon. Her discography is sizeable and varied and includes the Moonlight Sonata by Beethoven, Schubert's Impromptus and Chopin's integral Nocturnes, plus a good number of chamber music works and orchestral repertoire. Her last recording of two concertos by Mozart, conducted by Claudio Abbado, will appear in Autumn 2012.