

Welcome and President's Report

Dear Colleagues,

Dear IAML Members and Friends,

It is my great pleasure and privilege to welcome everyone to the first session of the "IAML Online 2020: Virtual Meetings and Discussions." I would like to welcome everyone very warmly, and send the best greetings from sunny Krakow, the place of the IAML Congress of 2019.

We were very excited to welcome everyone to Prague with a rich professional programme and an exciting series of accompanying events. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, we have not been able to gather in Prague this year. The IAML Board and the Organizing Committee of the IAML Congress 2020 have decided to postpone the Congress in Prague to 2021. The Organizing Committee in Stellenbosch, South Africa, has also agreed to postpone the IAML Congress originally planned for next year. This will now take place in June 2022. Once again, I would like to thank the Organizers for their quick and supportive response.

It has been already mentioned, that postponing the Congress to 2021 has some organizational implications. According to the Constitution, elections to the posts relating to the Sections have to be done by personal vote held during the annual congress. By convention, the changeover of Presidents takes place during the congress, and the terms of Chairs of the Committees are also ending this year. The election of IAML officers during the Congress and the official changeover of all positions have its important social aspects; it is an opportunity to summarize the activity, and also an essential element of encouragement, emphasizing the importance of the role that new officers play in the structure of our Association.

The IAML Board has asked the Constitution Committee to consider the constitutional implications of 'freezing' the present year and postponing the changeover of all elected and appointed positions that should have taken place in 2020 until 2021. This would mean that the present post holders in IAML's positions would serve an additional year. This proposal was recommended by the Constitution Committee and approved by the IAML Board, and IAML officers. We are aware that this solution requires additional efforts, but we believe that it will allow us to undertake other forms of activity and prepare for the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of IAML in 2021 in Prague.

For the current year, the Board has decided to organize something instead of a Congress, to provide an opportunity for everyone to connect, report on current activities and projects, and discuss professional issues arising from COVID-19.

There will also be two regional meetings organised by the IAML-US and IAML-Spain national branches, informal coffee lounge meetings, and social hours every day in the week.

Several proposals of presentations or discussion topics have arrived from the IAML members. Thank you for your response and initiative.

At start of this session, I would like to say a big “Thank you” to everyone involved in preparations of the IAML Online Meetings. Particularly, many thanks to the small programme team consisting of the members of IAML Board: IAML Programme Officer – Rupert Ridgewell, IAML President-Elect – Pia Shekhter, and Secretary General – Anders Cato, for elaborating the idea of a virtual week, preparing the programme of sessions, and coordinating registrations. It was a huge task to organize everything in a short time. Several other people were also involved, and certainly, there will be an opportunity to thank them all, too.

Let me make a few general remarks.

- I would like to remind participants to keep their microphones on mute to limit the risk of audio interference. You can switch your video off if you wish.
- Participants can use the chat facility to make comments and post questions. We will read out questions at the end of each presentation.
- For the discussion sessions, participants should raise their hands and speak when they're called.
- The timing of international online meetings is problematic and there are no easy solutions. More than two hundred people have registered from all over the world. We are aware that colleagues are joining us from all parts of the world, some at very unsocial hours.
- The 'social hours' have been added to the programme and there is now one each day at different times, to make it possible for everyone to join at least one of them. See introduction for details, how to connect and interact with different groups of people.
- And I would also like to mention that we will be recording the meeting for possibly sharing it on the IAML website later.

This is an entirely new format for IAML, so it is quite experimental. Please, bear with us if anything goes wrong. Feedback would be very welcome, too.

Now, I would like to present a presidential report of the activity since the Congress in Krakow.

In a late September and early October I participated in two events: in Paris – the 38th International Music Council General Assembly (27-28 September 2019), which preceded the 6th World Forum on Music (28 September – 1 October); and in Hilversum – The 50th Annual Conference of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA).

IMC World Forum on Music

During the General Assembly of IMC I had a possibility to make a short presentation about IAML and invite representatives from African countries to come to IAML Congress in Stellenbosch, South Africa (now postponed to 2022). Several people, including the president of African Music Council Lupwishi Mbuyamba (RDC/Mozambique), were very interested in this initiative.

During the main event – the 6th World Forum on Music – IAML was represented also by President-Elect Pia Shekhter, and the Director of RISM Klaus Keil. IAML and RISM had a stand at the exhibition area called “IMC Village”. The primary location and two nice roll-up posters (one for RISM and one for IAML – I hope you can see one behind me) attracted participants and encouraged visitors to take IAML leaflets and RISM pencils, and – what was the most important – to have talks with IAML representative manning the table. Pia was very much devoted to this role, and IAML–RISM stand was very busy all the time. As a part of a special IMC exhibition “70 projects for 70 years”, RISM presented a special poster summarizing its history, goals, and achievements.

Participation on such events is very important for increasing the visibility of IAML and for maintaining contacts with other worldwide organizations. This is in line with the strategic intention no #3 “Foster active engagement of our members with other library and music organizations”.

Here, I would also like to recall a proposal initiated by President-Elect Pia Shekhter, to establish an International Day of Music Libraries and Archives as recognition of the cultural importance music libraries and archives play in society. The official application letter was sent to the Director General of UNESCO. During the stay in Paris, Pia has visited the Head of The Section for Documentary Heritage Unit, Memory of the World Programme of UNESCO Dr. Fakson Banda, to talk about our application and present the initiative in person. Let's us hope for a good outcome.

70th Anniversary of the International Music Council and 70th Anniversary of IAML

The 6th World Forum of Music in Paris was organized on the 70th Anniversary of the International Music Council.

The establishment of the IMC is in some way connected with the beginnings of IAML. It was this very same time in 1949 that the first exploratory meeting of music libraries took place in Florence.

That meeting, together with another one at Lüneburg in 1950, had preceded the official establishment of IAML in 1951 in Paris under the auspices of UNESCO.

Let me quote a paragraph from the above-mentioned application letter sent to UNESCO.

UNESCO played an important and benevolent role during this early phase. As the distinguished scholar Alec Hyatt King described it in his opening speech of the IAML congress of 1959 in Cambridge: «UNESCO acted as a munificent foster mother to our struggling infancy. It placed its premises at IAML's disposal for the early meetings, helped in formulating the constitution, and over a period of two years financed the work of the General Secretary and the initial preparations for RISM».

IAML will be celebrating its 70th anniversary at the next year's congress in Prague 2021. We hope that there will be good occasion to recall IAML's history and to present key achievements of the association on international, regional or local levels. So, I would like to invite you to join us in preparation to celebrate IAML's 70th Anniversary.

The 50th Annual Conference of IASA

The second conference I participated was the 50th Annual Conference of IASA. It was held at the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, in Hilversum, Netherlands. The main celebration of the 50th Anniversary of IASA took place during the farewell dinner. I had a pleasure to speak on behalf of IAML during this special event.

When we look back at our common history of IAML and IASA, we observe a very strong cooperation that occurred between our associations from its very beginning. The first 19 IASA conferences, between 1969 and 1987, were organized together with IAML; soon afterwards, we had another four joint conferences. The last one was held in Oslo in the year 2004. In addition, members of IAML and IASA are well acquainted with each other; moreover we work in the same institutions, very close to one another. Some of our members are active in both organizations and participate often in either IAML or IASA conferences.

To maintain our relations, IAML and IASA agreed to continue inviting each other representative to our annual conferences regularly. I hope that this will lead us to organize a joint conference in the future.

Inclusion of IAML website in the Library of Congress Web Archives

The Library of Congress has selected our website for inclusion in the historic collection of Internet materials related to the Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive. They consider our website to be an important part of this collection and the historical record. This would be another web archive of "iaml.info" next to the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek [<https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/title/BV042110159>], outside of the regular back-ups of our website.

"Music is one of the first sectors hit by the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis"

This is the first sentence of an Open Letter addressed to European leaders on national and EU level, initiated by several organizations – members of the European Music Council, and co-signed by IAML.

The initiators believe it brings across an important message of short-term and long-term financial assistance for the music and wider cultural sector, and highlights the role of music in creating a sense of community.

IAML has also co-signed another two open letters: "Now Europe needs culture and culture needs Europe", and "Investing in Europe's next generation by investing in culture". All of them were supported by the European Music Council, which IAML is a member of.

During the week, you will hear more from Pia Shekhter about the activity related to cooperation with EMC.

Thank you.

Stanisław Hrabia

20 July 2020