

100 Years of 'Isidor Bajić' Music School, Novi Sad

Ladies and Gentleman,
Dear young singers and musicians,

On behalf of European Union of Music Schools I congratulate you on 100th anniversary of your school of music, here in Novi Sad. There are not many music schools in Europe that can look back on such a long and uninterrupted tradition. For the most part of 20th century, music education was still a privilege of children from well-to-do families that could afford additional education such as music. Those families championed humanistic education, the kind that was available only to the aristocracy before the occurrence of the bourgeoisie. Not earlier than in 20th century did someone recognise the significance of education that included music to a broader population. However, the road from the moment of recognition to the point of implementation is, as we all know, a long one- the road that is paved with rough stones, or sometimes even rocks, especially in the tough realm of politics.

Here in Novi Sad, it seems, this road was smoother. Still, it took a public figure that unyieldingly followed the idea of providing music education to the people: Isidor Bajić, a great composer and choir conductor, who succeeded in founding this school in 1909. But he did not want a school for fun- he demanded serious engagement in music.

He supported individual students' work, and at the same time he requested fulfillment of personal objectives and potential. Today, someone might say: Discover your talent and develop it, recognise your potential and use it! However, the society, the public, is responsible for creating the environment for that, as music schools are educational institutions with very serious requirements. It was only last year that the Novi Sad Music School Choir got the opportunity to win over the audience in Bohn by its outstanding quality of performance.

This guideline is our driving force even today. 27 National Associations united in the European Music School Union are after this same goal. And each individual school of music can contribute to our Europe becoming not only a strong economic region, but also a cultural region in which music education has a distinguished role. What is more is that it is so simple- music does not have language barriers. We all speak the same language with different melodies. And we understand each other when we create music.

Therefore, I urge every person in politics and education to support work of music schools and their associations. There is no better investment in development of peaceful and humane Europe!

Thank you very much!

President of European Music School Union
Dr. Gerd Eicker