

OUTCOME OF LYON WORKSHOP 11th-12th December 2015

Understanding Europe Promoting the European, Public and Cultural Space

To better understand Europe in a manner that leads to promoting its public and cultural spaces, it is necessary to consider how Europe itself is positioned in the modern world. Europe has always developed in relation to other histories and cultures, never in isolation. Further, Europe has been a force for mobility and change, transforming the planet under the impact of its culture, economy and migration over the last 500 years. This implies that any consideration of Europe today cannot avoid the presence of that history and its impact on the modern image that Europe has of itself, together with its present day representations in the world.

Approaching questions of European culture, identity and citizenship, necessarily involves responding to this history and the manner in which it impacts on the present. It means paying particular attention to questions of migration, religious belief, social, ethnic and gender inequalities not simply as belonging to someone else's culture but also as being inherent to the making of the modern European public sphere and its cultural spaces.

In this frame, this project proposes to suggest a set of cultural analyses, investigations and eventual practices that recognise in the European archive a series of resources that permits us to propose critical and artistic responses to the changing nature of contemporary Europe. Here, understandings of European culture are necessarily considered within historical processes that are necessarily open-ended, in the making. This further implies that European heritage is neither a fixed object nor a stable entity. Rather, as a mutating constellation of languages, prospects and voices it potentially offers a home and refuge for multiple experiences and lives.

As a cultural arena, the historical and symbolic space of Europe is crossed by many narratives that contribute in their specificity to the development of public spaces and cultures that are irreducible to a single locality or unilateral explanation. Here contemporary artistic and creative practices can promote the reception and appreciation of a rich heterogeneity in languages and expression that cross the boundaries of individual and collective memory and associated identities. This, in turn, can contribute in a significant manner to education and cultural practices, promoting a set of shared pedagogical tools particularly via digital technologies and their multiple means, for a increased democratic polity. It permits the engagement with cultural and historical differences that translate and negotiate the complexities of modern Europe, its multiple publics and specificities (particular those associated with gender, ethnicities and disability). Through extending cultural knowledge, activities and public awareness, the project intends to promote a more dynamic sense of citizenship in response to the on-going formation of modern Europe.

The project proposes to engage with these themes and perspectives through the following series of Work Packages and associated deliverables:

1. Management
2. Dissemination
3. Global Imaginaries of Europe
4. Cultural Borders, Migrating Histories and Europe as Refuge
5. Artistic and Cultural Encounters in Music
6. Cultural Heritage, Tradition and Translation
7. Cultures on the Move

Cross-cutting issues:

1. Disability and Cultural Access
2. Gender and Sexualities
3. Racism
4. Citizenship, Stability and Security