

## ARTS FESTIVALS'



### Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue

AN INITIATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION



## Announcement

Brussels, 6 December 2007

*"Building Europe has always meant integrating histories, value systems, and world views. There is a strong sense in which our process of integration has always been a dialogue between cultures...If we are serious about building a peaceful and creative society for tomorrow we need therefore to build a culture of dialogue and understanding now. Future starts as always – today..."* Ján Figel', Berlin, at the occasion of A Soul for Europe, 17 November 2006

### **Arts Festivals' Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue**

"European arts festivals initiated a vital process of circulating and giving visibility to the different cultural streams of European arts and cultures thus representing a huge step toward the development of intercultural competences."

The European Festivals Association (EFA) is proud to announce the 'Arts Festivals' Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue'. With the participation of European Commissioner for Culture, Mr Ján Figel', the Declaration will be presented and signed on 8 January 2008 in a festive signing ceremony in Ljubljana organized by EFA in cooperation with the Slovene Cultural Ministry and the Ljubljana Festival at the occasion of the official opening of the 'European Year of Intercultural Dialogue' hosted by the Slovene Ministry of Culture and the European Commission. From here, the Declaration will travel to all European festivals, festivals associations and cultural networks throughout the year 2008 promoting the aims and objectives of the Year for Intercultural Dialogue.

The Declaration aims to highlight the excellence of arts and culture, and festivals in particular, in developing and promoting intercultural dialogue and at the same time raise awareness of European citizens of the importance of enhancing dialogue amongst cultures in a global society. Signatory parties are engaged in building an effective intercultural dialogue, in the conviction that it represents an essential tool for the interaction among different cultures, ethnic groups, religions, languages, beliefs and social backgrounds in order to encourage a respectful and enriching exchange of ideas and help individuating the boundaries that define individuals and communities.

The Declaration is a project initiated by the European Festivals Association, the major European network representing festivals in 38 mainly European countries. The text is downloadable from the EFA website [www.efa-aef.eu](http://www.efa-aef.eu). A webpage dedicated to the Year and all related activities will be launched on 8 January 2008 at [www.efa-aef.eu](http://www.efa-aef.eu).

More information on the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue may be consulted at the official website of EYID spreading news on intercultural events taking place during 2008 and serving as a platform for discussion and access to civil society initiatives: [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu). The EYID takes place within the overall framework of the first-ever European agenda for Culture in a globalizing



world which was presented by the European Commission in May 2007 and has been adopted by the Council on 16 November 2007.

The Arts Festivals' Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue is supported by European Commissioner for Culture, Mr Ján Figel' and DG Education and Culture. ([www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu))  
EFA is member of the steering group of the Civil Society Platform for Intercultural Dialogue ([www.efah.org](http://www.efah.org)) and collaborates with 'A Soul for Europe' in this framework ([www.berlinerkonferenz.eu](http://www.berlinerkonferenz.eu)).