



THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOUND AND THE STUDENTS COMPETITION

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ABSTRACT

“Importance of Sound for Society and the World” is the motto of the International Year of Sound (IYS), the global initiative that highlighted the importance of sound and

related sciences and technologies for all in society.

During the school year 2020-21 and 2021-22, inspired by the motto, students from all over the world drawn paintings and pictures inspired by sounds and composed the lyrics of the song “The sound of the world”, participating at the IYS International students competition.

Despite the pandemic restrictions, the competition has been successful, attracted many participants and gathered students from many schools.

More than 650 drawings have been collected in the competition category I (primary schools) as well as 150 stanzas (lyrics of the song for the category II (middle and secondary schools).

The final results of the competition and the final version of the videoclip of the song composed by students of several countries will be presented as a part of the special IYS closing session at Forum Acusticum 2023.

Keywords: *iys, sound, students, competition*

1. INTRODUCTION

On January 31, 2020 at the Grand Amphithéâtre de la Sorbonne in Paris, ICA announced the organization of the International Year of Sound in a spectacular opening ceremony. The main activities of IYS, to be developed

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all around the world in 2020 were presented. Among them, the International Students Competition, that aimed to involve students of all grades from many countries in drawing the sounds of the world and in composing and singing a kind of universal hymn, where the refrain is “we are the sound of the world”. In figure 1 a picture of some members of ICA-IYS Steering Committee during the Opening Ceremony is shown.



Figure 1. Opening Ceremony of the International Year of Sound in Paris

The SARS Covid-19 pandemic changed the scheduling and the method of communicate and work together of students, teachers, coordinators of the competition, as well as of many other activities: restrictions and delays influenced the competition but didn't stop it.

A number of relevant results have been reached and testify the success of the initiative.

2. THE COMPETITION OFFICE

The Competition Office was established by the ICA-IYS Steering committee in a meeting right before the opening ceremony Paris and National societies, member of ICA,

were asked to nominate a National representative for managing the competition tasks.

After the outbreak of the pandemic a lot of meetings (unfortunately not face-to-face) were dedicated to addressing and solving the problems deriving from the impossibility for the students to get together to follow the lessons and, consequently, to prepare the competition materials.

The original deadlines were postponed as the IYS 2020 became IYS 2020+. For schools, the plus turned into a transition from the 2020-21 school year to the 2021-2022 year. In fact, in the first year many schools were closed for a long time and students attended lessons from home. The promotion and management of the competition also took place mainly through video conferences.

In figure 2 the screenshot of a videocall meeting involving the members of the IYS Competition Central Office is shown.



Figure 2. Video promotion of the competition made by the members of the Central Office during the pandemic.

Along the two school year (considering also the different dates due to different latitudes of countries) the IYS Competition Central Office:

- wrote the competition regulation,
- promoted the competition on IYS website sound2020.org and in social networks, producing original promotional video, posts, etc.
- coordinated activities, directly and via National Representatives,
- archived the materials received,
- organized the evaluation process,
- produced the videoclip of the song and the documentary.

In Figure 3 the official poster of the competition is shown.

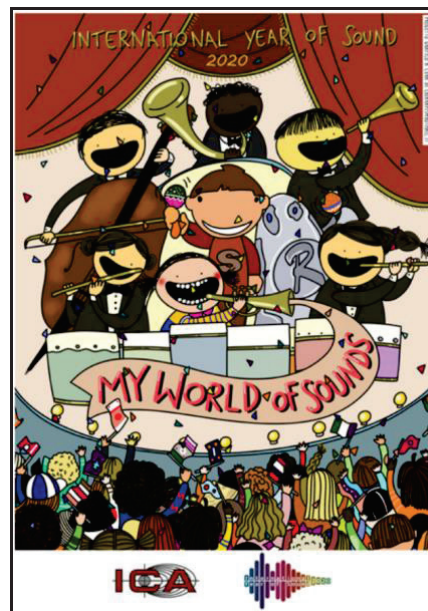


Figure 3. Poster of the IYS Student Competition "My world of sounds".

3. COMPETITION AND PARTICIPANTS

The IYS students competition considered two categories of students:

- students of primary and middle schools (from 5 to 12 years old) were asked to produce a graphic work (drawing, painting, collage, computer art, comic strip, etc.....) inspired by the motto of IYS "Importance of Sound for Society and the World" and by melody and refrain of the song "We are the sounds of our world".
- students of secondary schools (from 13 to 18 years old) were asked to write the lyrics of the the song "We are the sounds of our world", whose music and refrain had been composed by a young musician contacted by the Central Office; the required format was a stanza of 4 verses (in mother language or in English language), following the composed metric and fitting with the refrain of the song.

Thirty-nine National representatives collected and selected contribution from schools of their respective countries (of all continents).

In the competition for students of category I (primary schools) more than 650 items were sent to National Representatives.

In the competition for students of category II (middle and secondary schools) more than 50 items were sent to National Representatives.

Students addressed and actively involved in the competition have been 15.000 approximately (from 80 schools in 16 countries). Figure 4 shows some of the drawings made by students of primary schools.



Figure 4. Drawings made by participants (cat. I)

The musical theme of the song was composed by the Italian young musician Cesare Manganelli. The text of the refrain was composed by the Central Office.

From sound2020.org website it was possible to download the backing track on which the students composed the verses of the song. The backing track was also used to play and sing along to the many versions of the song, the recordings of which were then sent to the Central Office and assembled into the song's video clip and making-off documentary.

In figure 5 the original manuscript of the composed refrain is shown.

Many audio or video recordings of student groups singing their own verses and playing the melody of the song on different instruments were also sent to the Central Office. A selection of these materials became part of the official videoclip of the song and of the documentary titled "Drawing and singing the sound of the world":

In figure 6 a selection of recorded materials is shown.



Figure 5. Manuscript of the song for the students of category II

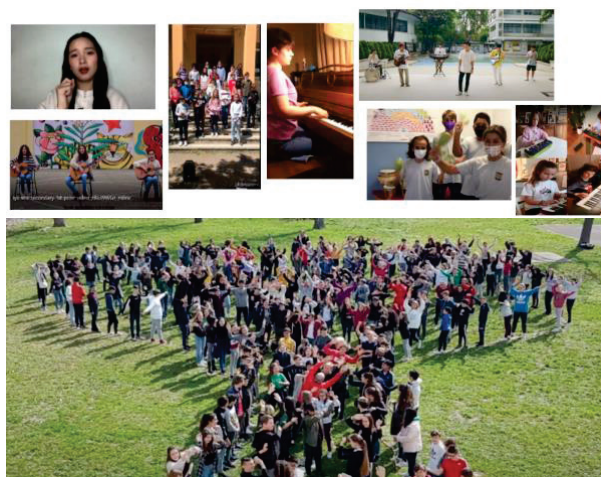


Figure 6. Selection of recorded materials (video)

4. JURIES, WINNERS, AWARDS

The IYS students competition selection of winners was made by two juries: the expert jury and the popular jury. The experts jury was composed of members of ICA IYS Steering Committee. They give preferences with scores from 1 to 5 in a questionnaire that considered a number of criteria for both drawings and stanzas.

The popular jury is based on social networks: preferences are given (one person = one vote) putting likes on anonymous items uploaded on dedicated albums of Facebook and LinkedIn IYS dedicated pages. The outcome from the popular jury was excellent: 4833 likes for the category I and 5170 likes for the category II.

The final ranking was generated by a weighted combination of both the global preferences expressed by expert jury and popular jury.

In figure 7 a summary of the final ranking for category I and for category II is shown.

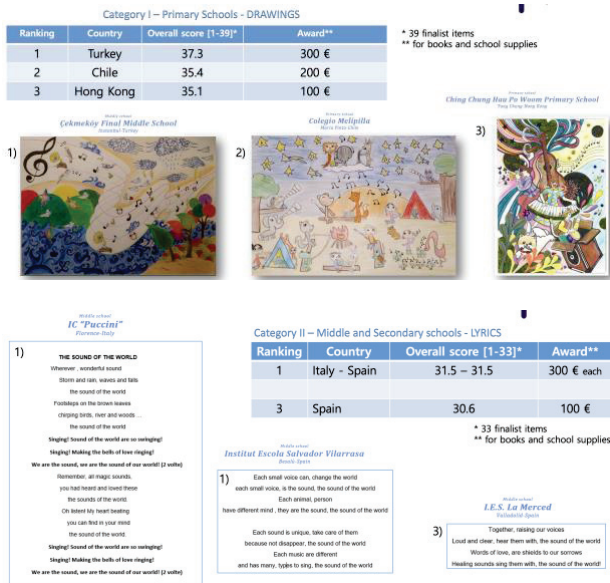


Figure 7. Summary of final rankings

Special mentions were given by the expert jury in both categories. In category I a special mention was given to interactive materials provided with the drawings, in particular to an app that turns noises into sounds. In category II the special mention was assigned to authors of video/audio material provided with the stanzas.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The International Year of Sound promoted by the International Commission for Acoustics, has come to the conclusion. The actions related to the IYS are completed.

We can proudly say that it has been a success and that it has achieved its goal of making many young people in many countries of the world aware of the importance of sound in life and in the world itself.

The world-wide competition for students of primary, middle and secondary schools, even if postponed and a little modified for the difficulties connected to the pandemic restrictions, collected a huge participation of students at a really impressive level of quality in the products (drawings, lyrics, videos, etc.).

Evaluation process has been completed and the awards sent to the school. Both the videoclip of the song “The sound of the world”, with the material produced by winners, and the documentary “Drawing and singing the sound of the world”, including interviews with experts, teachers and a selection of materials sent by students are available on YouTube and have been distributed to the National representatives and National Societies. After its official presentation at Forum Acusticum 2023 it is expected for both videos to be distributed and broadcasted in all participating countries and more.

In conclusion we may say that the International Year of Sound and the Student Competition have been an important professional and emotional experience for those who have worked in the steering committee and the IYS Competition Central Office, like the authors of this article. We hope that the memory of this beautiful initiative will remain as a source of inspiration for other projects aimed at raising awareness of the importance of sound for communities and especially for young people.

This paper, introducing the special session of Forum Acusticum 2023, together with the plenary lecture that close both the convention and the Year of Sound celebration, represents a synthetic report that can be used for the official closing of the ICA IYS Students competition.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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