

**« Parade Europe »**  
**European Citizens' cultural Parades Project**  
**Mission 2008, European year of intercultural dialogue.**

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A co-operative project involving those responsible for citizens' festivals and parades in Europe.



*“A means celebrating cultural activity in Europe and adding a European dimension to cultural celebrations”*

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An initiative based on the experiences from

La Biennale de la danse de Lyon (Lyon, France) – LE DÉFILÉ  
The Beat Initiative (Belfast – Northern Ireland, UK) – BELFAST CARNIVAL  
Zinneke (Brussels, Belgium) – ZINNEKE PARADE  
Associazione Oltre (Bologna, Italy) - PAR TÒT PARATA

With  
Fundatio Societa i Cultural FUSIC (Barcelone Espagne)  
and  
Banlieues d'Europe (Strasbourg, France) - European cultural Network

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## 1. A common story going on

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This project follows a lot of earlier contacts with what we can call the basic historical parades: Lyon's *Défilé*, *Belfast Carnival*, Brussels *Zinneke Parade*, and Bologna's *Par Tot Parata*. It is the natural extension of preliminary information exchanges, official meetings, and asserted opinions. The interest shown today for that approach by other cultural operators (*FUSIC*, Barcelona, *Dansparade* The Hague, *Massalia* Marseille, *Carnival der Kulturen* Bielefeld) but also by future pioneers for « parades » (Bucharest, Istanbul, Ljubljana, Gdansk, Kaunas) is the result of the practical evolution of a more general project proposed to everybody's thought from September 2004. The result will really be the combination of anybody's contribution.

The initiative brought by **FUSIC** with its « 5th technical day for street arts » general theme of the 23rd of September 2006 allows to realize the ambition and to enlarge it by inviting the participants: the Foundation is completely part of the stating of the « Europe Parade » and its support, the Parad'Eur Network.

### ***Introductory Meeting organized by the European cultural network Banlieues d'Europe- "Parades & New Carnivals" held in Strasbourg in 1997.***

It was at this meeting that some links were made and inspired the future Zinneke Parade (created for Brussels 2000). There met Jean Hurstel (President of the European Suburbs network), David Boyd of **Belfast's Beat Initiative** and Michel Crespin from Marseille who was, at that time, Director of the National Centre for Street Art, and Marcel De Munnynck, future Brussels 2000 programming coordinator.

We learned in particular how functioned and worked the « **Défilé de la Biennale de la Danse de Lyon** », born in 1996 by its Director's idea, Guy Darnet, back from Brazil, and inspired by the participative dimension of the carnival. The support brought by the "City Policy" let it be concrete. The success comes directly considering as well the participation (more than 4.000 people) as the audience (near 300.000).

### ***Other meetings and cooperation***

Other contacts were formed in October 1998 through another network (***Rencontres de la Villette***) which addressed a similar theme "**City Parades**" but which had not led to any concrete actions.

In 2000, the **Zinneke Parade** is born in **Brussels**, an unexpected success considering as well participation as audience, similar to Lyon's (4.000 participants, 300.000 spectators). One group welcomes already some choreographers from Lyon in a total cultural diversity. It becomes a biennale.

From 2002, links are growing with **Belfast**. But, a lack of finances did not permit it. By chance however, a costume designer attached to the Beat Initiative went over to Brussels at the beginning of May 2004 and worked in Zinneke Parade's preparatory workshops.

The link with **Lyon** was always strong. Mutual visits ended up in 2004 on the participation of young people from Brussels to the Défilé. That operation is very good related by a video document made by and broadcasted on France 3 TV.

Also, thanks to a former Italian student completing his studies in Brussels at the time of the first Zinneke Parade, **Bologna** set up its "Par-Tot" Parade with Associazione Oltre. The two remained in touch and the Director of Zinneke came to the university of Bologna at the end of March 04 to give a talk in a meeting « *Quando la strada va in cattedra* », an other one in 2005. Exchanges followed and ended in 2006 on mutual participations in Brussels and Bologna's parades.

## **Two meetings held in 2002: in Brussels and in Lyon**

Those organizing the Zinneke Parade have already remarked upon how they would like to take their festival onto the international scene. A meeting was organized for the night before the festival (i.e. 24 May 2002) for interested parties. A second meeting took place in September 02 just prior to Lyon's parade. Due to a lack of people's resources and time only a bi-lateral exchange took place between Lyon and Brussels during 2004's parade in Lyon.

Following these initial meetings, certain points are emerging.

### **Brussels 25 May 02**

Clearly **fundamental to each of these projects** are the following:

- *Citizens are celebrating difference via creative and artistic forms*
- *A central parade where citizens are reconnecting and claiming once again that they belong to the city*
- *Recognition of and by the city's inhabitants, media and public agencies of the population's artistic skills and how the parade is a mechanism to promote social inclusion.*
- *Quality events whose artistic prowess is brought out by professional artists who mentor the participants.*

*There is also the fact that these projects do not belong to anyone in particular but to everyone, from those who participate to the spectators.*

It is **noted that:**

- *The events are a huge success – for the participants and the general public alike*
- *They go without incident – proving that energy is used positively and that everyone has a sense of belonging*
- *Participants and the general public want them to continue*

*Central to the events are the themes of social integration, education, use of public space – all of these are achieved through the interaction of professionals with the citizen.*

*It is important to highlight **the key values underlying the initiatives**. The underlying principles must be safeguarded, especially post 9/11. Local authorities should show an interest in these projects without taking them over. To do so one must assess what these events do for a city in terms of social, cultural and economic outputs. These artistic events question the theory of cultural citizenship and place it in the same arena as the political and economical – one must make sure that politicians are aware of their economic value. If one had a Charter it would give events a solid base on which to go forward and where they would sit comfortably with state and financial institutions as well as with the organizers.*

We note a common desire amongst the cultural organizations **for what the future should entail:**

- *To meet round a Charter of Common Values*
- *To assist each other in organizing events, feeling the operational environment and the similarities and differences between the projects undertaken*
- *To consider, from what we have learnt from each other's work, the potential for group/artist exchanges or other forms of international partnership working*
- *Ensure that the state authorities, who offer financial assistance, recognize the importance of the work undertaken.*

**Lyon, 14 September 2002**

*A quick reminder of the contextual background:*

*Objective 1 – begin thinking about the project's finer details and to develop a Common Charter*

*Objective 2 – exchange and collaborative work regarding the respective projects involving art, public space and the inhabitants.*

*To note:*

- *In preparatory text the amount of voluntary work and all actions undertaken by authorities and the community in addressing social exclusion and promoting social inclusion should be outlined.*
- *Voluntary and charity work does not align with the common market's perusal of profit. This methodology fits in better with the principles of the countries of Eastern Europe who are more open to this approach. One must emphasize that it is important to be more culturally minded and less market orientated.*
- *Who is the Charter aimed at – cities, local representatives, national government (within the European context)? Therefore one should create an international co-operation involving cities rather than nations, but which should also include local organizations and thereby link in with those agencies who have the ability to deliver such a project.*
- *Look at European cultural co-operation programs which ally to that of the Socrates position- one which includes exchanges but which should also consider who could fund such a program- should the next meeting be financed by the European Commission?*
- *Investigate further what we mean by:*
  - *The city- a general concept it may be but it should be one that is still connected to the citizens and which is also a place of contradiction and tension*
  - *Citizen's parade – an event that includes citizen's participation, which has a common cause, which is celebratory, that reveals of and tackles social exclusion, is well prepared*

*It is therefore important to consider why they take place at all and look in depth at the events in each of the cities.*

***The meeting that made the decision:***

***“New urban celebrations, new well being in Europe» by Banlieues d’Europe in Lyon 17 and 18 September 2004,***

“Over and above one-off events, new urban festivals are developing in Europe, closely linking neighborhood communities. The urban centre of Lyon is an emblem of this new cultural policy. On the eve of the Parade of the Biennale de la Danse, this meeting/debate aimed at raising critical questions on the place and the priorities of the festivals for inhabitants, in the framework of work on the territory of a town, an urban centre, or a region, and through debate it will situate the question in a European perspective.” The debate has been centered on different themes: Artistic forms and community participation, Festivals: continuity, renewal, emerging forms ?, The place of festivals in urban space, Styles and priorities of public action , aided by the presentation of projects, in the presence of artists, researchers, local councilors and participants from the Lyon area, and also different European towns.

***European Cooperation:***

This was an other opportunity for Zinneke Parade, Belfast Carnival and Par-Tòt Parata to meet each other, with Guy Darnet (Biennale de la Danse, Lyon) and Sarah Levin, Director of Banlieues d’Europe (Strasbourg).

All of these existing events have one thing in common:

*the involvement of the city’s population no matter what its composition and cultural differences in a major event- one which allows them to be creative and to express their aspirations through art and a demonstration of the melt pot of cultures which go into making up the city.*

Each event is organized differently as each has its own particular background, operational environment, players and of course audience. As each festival has some degree of public finance so it can be said that the organizing committees are to some extent institutionalized. But they imagine cooperation on European level and declare to start a common project.

## 2. 1st project for 2006 (non realized)

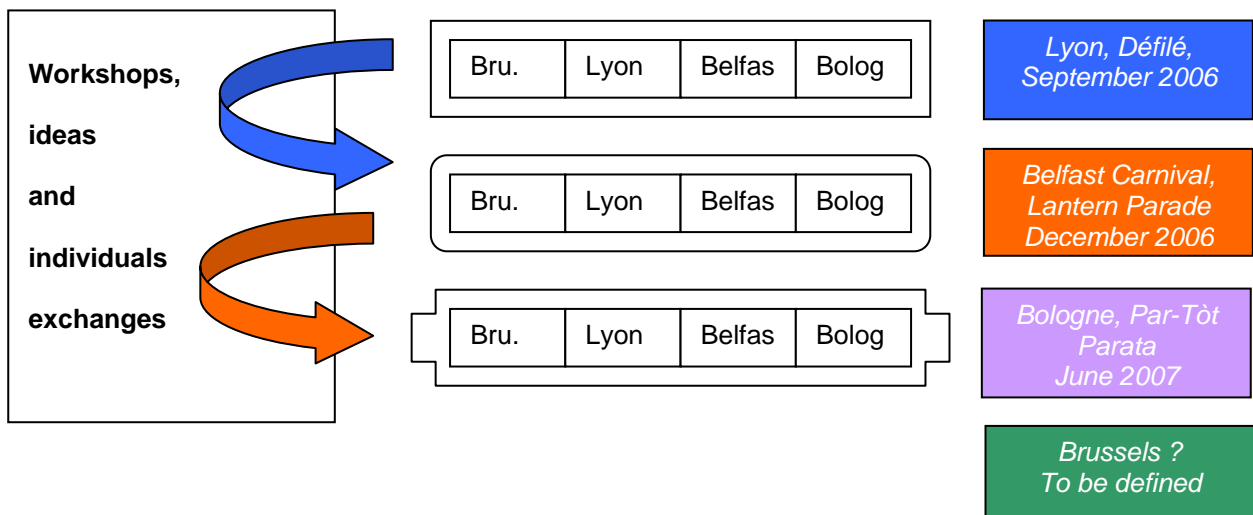
Co-operated project in the first instance to build on their own festivals and secondly to develop domestic "European Parades" where participants would not wear national dress but where they would be representative of a common culture which would also allow them to highlight local particularities.

But this co-operation would go beyond the creation of an inter-European "Parade Forum". Each city would, in the build up to a parade have its own area of expertise according to its previous experiences e.g.

- Artistic- certain cities specialize in a particular form e.g. Lyon = dance, visual arts in Belfast, Brussels' is stage design.
- Production – in some instances this involved professionals whereas in other cities it was managed on an "ad hoc" way.
- How the parade fits in with society and human values
- Methodology and teaching methods
- Urban strategies- whether it fitted in with a regeneration strategy or not
- Holding workshops
- Internal and external communication

### 2006-2007: The mission

The co-operation could, in 2006-2007, take on a new dimension by gathering together in a group (made by a central group of 15 musicians and 40 participants from each city) into a Parades Organizing Committee who would portray what it is to be European and who would agree, from the outset the theme, what the story should tell, the art forms, music (whether it is composed specifically for the parade or not), costumes, floats, color scheme etc. It would first take place with its first form as part of the Lyon's Défilé, then in Belfast after an adaptation, and finally in Bologna, Brussels would be out this time because of the calendar.



## Further detail

### *Belfast*

The Beat Initiative has already taken part in collaborative projects involving partners from within the island (e.g. Galway) through the Training Program which, with six companies from around Ireland. Three worked on a common production and toured it; highlighted each partner's forte; had common goals: education, artists' development

The group is no longer live but there was a transfer of practice in that the methodology employed is still being used and the training covered topics applicable to all 3 partners and permitted an exchange of experiences.

The methodology employed in this project is as applicable to a local project as it is to an international one.

The Beat Initiative also uses the "Play Resource Warehouse" to purchase materials. This is similar to Zinneke relationship with a company called "DIY without boundaries". Could this environmental concern be considered in the project?

### *Bologna*

The Parade is an offshoot of a festival celebrating world culture (Fest-festival), organized by "Oltre". Its sustainability is a little bit more questionable as it is only moderately self-financing. The artists also hold their workshops free of charge and get paid only for their performances during the festival. It is likely however that it will become more professional whilst trying to maintain its closeness with the people. Several methods are being investigated (see record of meeting held in Bologna University, dated March 03). It will be necessary to consider its financial impacts on the city. The festival also generates income through a number of pre-parade events.

One is interested in this project as it will permit an investigation into mechanisms for co-financing, how one can increase the economic returns of the festival and to the artistic methodologies used.

It already has several suggestions to put forward:-

- Creation of a European network of community parades, joint initiatives and multicultural events which are attached onto domestic festivals
- Main themes: participation, citizenship, human interaction with the environment, sustainable development and recycling (everything should include the use of recycled materials to facilitate the demonstration of and accentuate artistic expression)
- Develop think-tanks with stakeholders, artists and inhabitants

### *Lyon*

Taking place in the Biennale de la Danse in Lyon, its specificity is by the choreographers. From the beginning funded with the help of "City Politics", the action has also a real social and urban dimension with socio-professional integration aims.

The Défilé has already welcomed a group from Brussels, integrated into a local group (Le Théâtre du Mouvement) in a bilateral exchange.

### *Brussels*

Amongst the ideas for 2006, which reflect those of Belfast, are the creation of floats, decorations, costumes and accessories all made from recycled goods. One could narrow it down even further – the theme could be "What you get rid of we put to creative use".

### 3. « Parade Europe » Project

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The basic idea: develop toward Europe the « citizen's cultural parades » descended from cultural, social, educative and artistic projects at once. This is however more a cultural project than a social demand: priority given to the artistic emergences linked with the multiple expression forms of the implicated populations, work on the **intercultural imagination**, the mutual influence of the diverse cultures on the citizens of their cities.

*Create a culture between European citizens in the diversity.*

On the base of a charter highlighting the values, the goals and the methods, create a common project to participative cities operating on *style diversity* and preparing its insertion in each other existing parade or other manifestations to be identified, created or encouraged. Each time, *particular styles* would be proposed. The opening to other countries, members of the EU, or candidates for adhesion and also direct or less direct neighbors is a will.

#### Mixing

- artists creating and « showing » different imaginaries and making clear the common heritage, developing original ideas, new artistic and experimental approaches
- non professionals, ordinary citizens, amateurs, bringing also their cultures, their differences and similarities
- specialized mediators: cultural, social workers, teachers, politics sensible for that link between « usual culture » and artistic expression open to discovering.

Acting on visible, conscious heritage and (collective and individual) unconsciousness, considering involved populations as full actors and not as a captive body.

« **Parade Europe** » contains:

- Exchanges about the methodology according to the shared philosophy
- Artists and animators teams exchanges
- Real meetings: groups working on the same project in different cities to end on one parading group in each partner city (*scenario 1*)
- or virtually : communicating technologies allow to create a common object that is identified in each city (*scenario 2*)
- a large scale realization
- Information points
- Training modules to help understanding of the artistic emergence in the diverse social and economic contexts.

#### **General artistic guide lines**

For a first action in common, the accent will be put on the **musical dimension**: mixing professional and amateur musicians creating together *different world music*.

Original songs based on representative music's for each city form a new common and unknown repertory open to characteristic sounds. The plays are composed from each city's proposal and rehearsed on the spot. *Acoustic* music, looking for unheard, far from « standards », from imitations of imported music without any real link neither with their own origins nor with the welcoming city. *Voices to shout* at, not to be just beautiful.

### **Activities- achievement / scenario 1**

*Creation of a stable common group made a multiple of 10 people (one in each city: professional and good amateur musicians having already participated in a similar activity in their city).*

*In each city will joint to this group about 40 people bringing an additional dimension taking account with the local specificity ; e.g. : in Lyon, dancers ; in Belfast, the nocturnal dimension of the « Lantern Parade » ; in Bologna : traditional musicians; in Brussels: urban scenography; and also Barcelona and its Mediterranean dimension, the countries from the east of Europe.*

*Musical workshops will be set up in each city. They are integrated in the approach of each parade and prepare the link with the added people. The intervention of the common group is also adapted each time for a specific result.*

*Also workshops for the creation of inventive music instruments allowing reaching quick results: noisy shoes (tap-dancing, for example), wind instruments with double reed (like in much traditional music), n'fars and other long horns; and to obtain a certain coherence with the percussions: drums assembled with the same technique able to find compatible sounds.*

A workshop for *costumes creation* is centered on Lyon, city of textile tradition.

### **Activities- achievement / scenario 2**

To avoid traveling costs, scenario 2 s based on the information exchanges and creating facilities by distance provided by Internet and the other to day's communication ways.

Nevertheless, the responsible artists would meet together at the starting point of the action during a residence in a place to be determined. Their creation, an original repertory, would be declined in all the cities.

No travel for participants would be planned.

### **Artistic management**

The project is leaded by a *General artistic manager*, an experimented musician, and *Artistic manager* assistants, one in each town; in each parade, they are responsible for the development of the common group of 10 musicians but also for the integration with the added 40 people; they are selected in agreement with the General Manager. They are helped by *groups of 3 to 5 « local project leaders »*.

### **How long**

Depending on not yet revealed disposals concerning the European support, the parades would take place

- or from October 2007 (allowing the participation of the Dansparade in The Hague, interested) till September 2008 (ending in Lyon); the full action would be 12 months long;

- or from May 2008 (opening with the Zinneke Parade in Brussels) till October 2009; the full action would be 18 months long.

### **For the long term**

This evolution is endless, it allows to develop styles, to enhance the repertoire; in that sense, this formula prepare the other projects for a European cultural cooperation and later with the world, exploring the notions of Diasporas and migratory cultures. The general goal is the promotion of the cultural diversity.

**Cooperation between the co-organizers for the realization of the project.**

Each partner will be a co organizer: he would be involved in the global project and responsible for the project development on the spot as well on artistic as participation, welcoming logistics, publicity, support levels. Each city can organize its action on its own way but following criteria adopted by the network. This celebration would happen according with the specific timetable of each city, so that exchanges and communication about the initiatives would be easy.

**Added value for this cooperation at European level**

This project is totally European. It is impossible to realize it with only one organism, in just one city.

**The project will benefit to**

The citizens, especially young people (target public); with their participation, they will discover other cultural heritages, other citizenship practices, other people, and will acquire additional artistic tools.

The artists: they will be the first beneficiaries by this exploration of musical heritages and the creation of a repertoire open to other forms.

The co-organizers: these organizations will compare their objectives, the values they defend, their methodologies, and their knowledge and know how.

Europe, highlighted, will have a working tool for the feeling of participants and audience to be part of Europe.

The participative cities, at least: they will be highlighted and mark their belonging to a European cultural dynamic.

## 4. *The Parad'Eur network*

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We suggest the creation of a **network** for partners organizing each year the « Parade Europe », manifestation on public space, moving or not, for works made in artistic workshops, all the year long. Those workshops are places open to different artistic approaches and diverse cultural traditions, around a common project. Professional artists and citizens work together.

That project actualize the collective imaginary and is an invitation to draw the myths of the to day's society, to practice universal citizen's values, free from the original each other community culture.

### **A European quality label**

Such an initiative would exist without elaboration of a global strategy. But we wish start networking with each well **identified, evaluated and highlighted** partner thanks to profitable exchanges. We suggest a European quality **label** as a guaranty for its qualities on the basis of a charter maintaining those different subjects.

The network would be based on expertise existing experiences have and would highlights the maintained values. That experience allow us to consider a creation movement in public space with participating citizens, a high artistic quality, out of all bureaucracy or commercial approach or prefab myths made by the industry.

On the other hand, we have made the demonstration that it is possible to invite immigrate people to work on a common project without folklorist cliché, that each participative project can have a professional artistic quality. The whole process needs method and professionalism that members of this network developed.

We speak about the adequate definition of this network mechanism, that would be able to capitalize the initial group experiences (see above) as well as the ideas appearing into whole Europe, especially in some eastern countries (Poland, Turkey, Slovenia, Romania, Lithuania) as well as in the south (Barcelona, Saragossa). This label gives us the liberty for an efficient communication and coherence between actors quite safe from degeneration.

### **A map making for a new Europe**

This kind of network, with quality guarantee, become a sign of identity from each city where citizens – natives and new coming people - meet each other. It is also an invitation for all Europeans for knowing their cities, highlight their urban landscape and their citizens.

The network materializes by an Internet specialized website opens a communication internal service between actors, allowing efficient exchanges, namely for working methods and artists mobility between the cities, members of the network. The Internet site becomes also a tool for external communication; it becomes a **European map showing cities and dates for discovering « emerging Europe**”, their inhabitants and their urban spaces. An actualized invitation for the visitors.

The site is also an invitation for all European artists and citizens to join each city's workshops to participate on a creative way.