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## A New National Branch Addition: Greece

The Board of the Greek IAML Branch

Fontes Artis Musicae, Volume 64, Number 1, January-March 2017, pp. 83-85  
(Article)

Published by International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation  
Centres



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## CORRESPONDING EDITORS

Greece

### A NEW NATIONAL BRANCH ADDITION: GREECE

The establishment of the Greek branch of IAML was formally introduced at the 65th IAML Conference that was held in Rome, during the General Assembly, on 5 July 2016. There, the President-Elect, Stanisław Hrabia officially introduced the new group to the General Assembly and welcomed it to the IAML family. This was just the end of the first phase for all of us in the Greek branch. A long effort that has successfully arrived at its first milestone, but we have more plans to fulfill in the near future.

It was at the beginning of this year that a group of music librarians took the initiative of summoning other colleagues in order to achieve the formation of a Greek IAML Branch, even though the intention was there for a long time. The music academic environment and research have changed for the better in recent years in Greece due to the establishment of the four university music departments, the development of musical academic libraries, the formation of music collections in general libraries, and the development of the special Music Library of Greece. Along with the above, a generation of music librarians, musicologists, and information specialists, interested in the special needs of music libraries and archives has cropped up. Through this network of people, the music libraries and local music collections have become better, more flexible, and offer new services to their users.

The obvious next step was the proper and formal collaboration of the professionals in the field, in order to get to know each other, as well as the specifics of the subject in Greece and finally to see things in a broader international context. For this to happen, it was necessary for us to come together. This happened in two phases. Firstly, the working group, comprised of people from the Ionian University in Corfu and the Music Library of Greece, but also from abroad that was established in the beginning of the year, worked as a temporary organising committee for the branch. Through continuous meetings and brainstorming, we managed to launch a mailing list that would include anyone who was interested in the establishment of the branch, to compile a Constitution that would be acceptable by IAML, and finally to organise a meeting in which all those who would like to help could come and express their ideas and willingness to participate in the launch of a Greek IAML branch. The meeting took place on 14 May 2016 at the Music Library of Greece and the temporary organising committee presented the scope of their efforts to the attendees. To our surprise, more than forty people attended the meeting and there were also a few who attended through the Web. During that meeting we decided to form a Board through elections, to apply for official recognition of the Branch by submitting our constitution to the IAML Board, and to try and initiate a campaign in order to have as many members as possible.

After the 14 May meeting, the temporary organising committee set a date for elections to take place, and at the same time formed a working group to add some final touches to the Constitution which was submitted in both English and Greek to the IAML Board by the newly-elected Greek Board that was to come out of the upcoming elections.

The election committee ran the elections through ZEUS Digital Voting system and twenty-three members, both institutional and individual, voted for the Board. Therefore, the newly founded Greek branch has eleven institutional members (Library of the School of Music Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Music Library of Greece of the Friends of Music Society; Library of the Music Department of the Ionian University; Archives of Athens Conservatory; Institute for Research of Music and Acoustics; Library of the Technological Educational Institute of Epirus; Philharmonic Society of Corfu; the Manolis Kalomoiris Society; Greek Composer's Union; Archive of the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation-ERT; and the Friends of the Museum of Folk Instruments), as well as twelve individual members. The actual participation of twenty-three members was a pleasant surprise for everybody, considering the fact that until recently IAML had only just a handful of members from Greece.

After the elections and the formation of the Board, the first and foremost action that we had to take was to apply for official recognition by IAML, something that was absolutely successful and resulted in the announcement of the formation of the Greek IAML Branch at the IAML Rome Congress that was mentioned earlier. For the sake of history, the first ever Greek IAML Branch Board is comprised of:

President: Alexandros Charkiolakis, Head of the Erol Ucer Music Library, Lecturer in Historical Musicology, MIAM - Istanbul Technical University

Vice President: Stephanie Merakos, Head of Library, Music Library of Greece, The Friends of Music Society, Athens

Secretary: Vera Kriezi, Head of Cataloging and Technical Services, Music Library of Greece, The Friends of Music Society

Treasurer: Aristides Bazmadelis, Music Librarian, School of Music Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Member: Christina Theodorica, Librarian and Information Specialist, Library of the Technological Educational Institute of Epirus

However, this is not where we stop, but actually where we start. Greece has a very rich music tradition from ancient times to the present, including Byzantine, Medieval, and post-Medieval religious music, folk, and art music. Accordingly, its resources are numerous and vary from relics of ancient music to Byzantine codices, manuscripts, recordings, and other archival material. Music collections are scattered among monastery libraries, museums, universities, societies, public and private institutions, and mostly in private collections. As a result of this, access to most collections is difficult due to the lack of basic documentation and lack of proper handling of the collections. This environment is definitely changing because of the establishment of special institutions, the availability of music librarians, and the development of academic music research.

Based on the present situation in the country, the goals of the Branch include:

- The creation of research and working groups that will deal with matters such as the completion of a directory of Greek music archives and music resources, classification of archival material, subject headings in Greek, digitisation, and documentation of music resources, etc.
- The development of communication between institutions and individuals who share the interest of promoting music librarianship and music information as a discipline
- The promotion of music librarianship and its special techniques as the main way to music research, education, and development

- The presentation of the Greek music librarianship community to the international fora and the cooperation with other National Branches
- The encouragement of our members to actively participate and get involved in IAML and its various activities.

In order to achieve these goals, the Board is willing to proceed into action in the upcoming months. Firstly, we plan to establish a fully functional Web page that will include information about our efforts and forthcoming plans. Also, we will initiate our presence on social media through Facebook and Twitter. More importantly, the Greek Branch is planning to hold an annual conference with the first of its kind to be held in April 2017 in Athens. A call for papers is currently being prepared and will be circulated in the weeks to come. In this conference we expect to motivate more people from the field of music libraries who did not participate in this first phase of the establishment of the Branch and we plan to invite other scientific and professional bodies such as the Greek Musicological Society to participate with a discussion panel. Moreover, the Board is willing to take the initiative and launch the first research and working groups but also to encourage its members to establish their own and submit their proposals for evaluation. Finally, we have already started formal communication with other scientific and professional bodies in Greece, as well as in Cyprus that work in the areas of librarianship, musicology, and music in order to organise common events and to initiate discussion about issues concerning music research and librarianship.

The purpose of all these actions is obviously very important for establishing the active presence of the Branch, mapping the situation in Greece, and recruiting new members that will bring forward more ideas in order to expand interest about music libraries and music librarianship, enhance research, and bring forward solutions that could be established on a national level.

We believe that music librarianship in Greece is a field that could develop immensely in the near future. The Greek IAML Branch and the members that comprise it are all experienced librarians, musicologists, and music librarians that have a genuine interest in many aspects of the field. We are convinced that we are entering a new and exciting phase in our profession, but also in a field that excites us and offers many opportunities for personal scientific development. What we only need to do really is to take things to the next level, and that is what we are working towards to. We hope that everyone enjoys the ride with the Greek IAML Branch!

*The Board of the Greek IAML Branch*