A call to invest in all our creative futures

European culture is in the midst of a crisis. How decision-makers choose to respond now will set the scene for the next decade of cultural and creative life in our union.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, theatres, cinemas, music halls, museums and other venues of cultural expression have remained closed. Many of those venues will simply not reopen.

The result has been to squeeze the life out of the cultural and creative sectors, exacerbating the desperately perilous situation in which culture, the arts and the creative sectors at large find themselves.

Cultural and creative sectors are Europe's third largest employer. Meaning the economic consequences of a stagnant sector have reached far beyond the realm of culture.

But, despite such a diminished cultural landscape, it is to culture that we have all turned during this time of great personal and societal adversity.

It is music that has brought us together on balconies, films and TV series that have entertained us, documentaries, books, performances, pieces of art that have all truly comforted us in our solitude and helped us to escape intellectually and creatively.

Europe's most treasured asset is our culture. It is a culture united in its diversity, a culture that draws in millions of people from all over the world every single month.

Cultural expression in all its diversity is at the heart of what is meant to be European.

Despite strong messages from leaders of the European Union that our sectors would be firmly supported, the current proposals for a recovery plan and a European budget strangely fail to consider the needs of the cultural and creative sectors.

As creators and professionals from the sector, we call on the EU leaders to be bold and to invest in culture and the arts, to invest in all our creative futures.

We need a plan that revives our cultural ecosystem and inspires the next generation of Europeans.

This means providing the financial resources at a level which will allow art, culture, cultural and creative enterprises, creators and creative workers to continue their work, to survive and thrive into the future.

This is an opportunity for the EU to amply demonstrate that it can honour its values. The time is now for Europe to be ambitious and invest in its creative future.

Culture is the fertile soil out of which Europe's next generation will unite and flourish. Let's show Europe's next generations what kind of future we want to offer them!

List of signatories

1. Aga Zaryan, jazz vocalist (PL)
2. Agnieszka Holland, filmmaker (PL)
3. Agustín Almodóvar, producer (ES)
4. Alberto Guijarro, director of Primavera Sound and Sala Apolo (ES)
5. Alberto Iglesias, film music composer (ES)
6. Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, contemporary dance choreographer (BE)
7. Benny Andersson, musician, composer (SE)

8. Bernie Sherlock, conductor (IE)
9. Björk, singer-songwriter (IS)
10. Charles Sturridge, filmmaker (UK)
11. Dame Evelyn Glennie, percussionist and composer (UK)
12. Daniel Buren, conceptual visual artist (FR)
13. Isabel Coixet, filmmaker (ES)
14. István Szabó, filmmaker (HU)
15. Ivo van Hove, theatre director (NL/BE)
16. Jaco Van Dormael, filmmaker (BE)
17. Jean-Michel Jarre, electronic music pioneer, musician (FR)
18. Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, filmmakers (BE)
19. Jean-Xavier de Lestrade, filmmaker (FR)
20. Joan Fontcuberta, conceptual artist and photographer (ES)
21. Lisa Kaindé Diaz Zayas and Naomi Diaz Zayas - IBEYI, singers, songwriters, and music composers (FR)
22. Marian Urban, Scriptwriter and Film Producer (SK)
23. Marina Abramović, performance artist (US/SRB)
24. Martin Šulík, Film Director and Film Producer (SK)
25. Maryla Rodowicz, singer (PL)
26. Michał Urbaniak, musician and composer (PL)
27. Milo Rau, theatre director (BE/CH)
28. Mirga Grazinyte, conductor (LT/UK)
29. MØ, singer, songwriter, and record producer (DK)
30. Moritz Eggert, composer (DE)
31. Nele Neuhaus, writer (DE)
32. Nicola Campogrande, composer (IT)
33. Nina Bouraoui, writer (FR)
34. Nina George, writer (DE)
35. Olga Neuwirth, composer (AT)
36. Olivier Guez, writer (FR)
37. Paul Dujardin, CEO & artistic director of BOZAR (BE)
38. Phil Manzanera, composer, guitarist (UK)
39. Salvador Sobral, musician (PT)
40. Sebastian Fitzek, writer (DE)
41. Stijn Coninx, film director (BE)
42. Thomas Anargyros, producer (FR)
43. Tiago Rodrigues, writer, director, artistic director Teatro Nacional D. Maria II (PT)
44. Tim Etchells, artistic director, artist, writer (UK)
45. Yuval Weinberg, conductor (IL/DE)