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### WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK REPORT

Concert of Three Cultures - 8th Edition

Joven Ensemble Interreligioso Español - JOIRE

Madrid | 05.02.2022

Starting from 2014, every year <u>Arco Forum</u> in partnership with a dozen of other institutions has been organising a series of <u>Concerts of Three Cultures</u> in the framework of the World Interfaith Harmony Week, declared as such by the United Nations in 2010.

These concerts have been held in a number of cities throughout Spain like Madrid, Barcelona, Toledo, Alcalá de Henares, Getafe and Alicante. The concerts include performances by groups representing Christian, Muslim and Jewish cultures. The Concert of Three Cultures is an approach to three Abrahamic religions, *i.e.* Judaism, Christianity and Islam, through a universal language, the music. By organising this event Arco Forum wants to contribute to the promotion of values like respect, tolerance and dialogue through the creation of ties between different cultures and communities, facilitating their mutual recognition and offering three different visions of the sound art throughout History.

This idea facilitates knowledge and contributes to the approach of a large audience to the three religious traditions through the interpretation of Christian, Muslim and Jewish-Sephardic musical styles in an environment of mutual respect, fraternity and collaboration.

On Saturday, February 5th 2022, <u>Arco Forum organised the 8th Edition of the Concert of Three Cultures</u> in the Royal Basilica of Saint Francis the Great as part of the activities scheduled to celebrate the World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The concert, that can be watched entirely clicking <a href="here">here</a> (Youtube Channel of JOIRE - Joven Ensemble Interreligioso Español), was organised in collaboration with several institutions and initiatives: <a href="Foro Abraham">Foro Abraham</a>, the Spanish Federation of UNESCO Associations and Clubs (<a href="Federación Española de Centros y Clubes UNESCO (FECU)">FECU)</a>), the Delegation of Interfaith Relations of the Archdiocese of Madrid (<a href="Delegación de Relaciones Interconfesionales de la Archidiócesis de Madrid">Archidiócesis de Madrid</a>), and the European CommUnity Project.











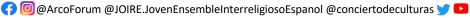












The concert was performed by the Spanish Youth Interfaith Ensemble (<u>Joven Ensemble Interreligioso Español - JOIRE</u>), a formation that emerged by the initiative of <u>Arco Forum</u> within the framework of the European CommUnity project, co-financed by the European Commission. These young artists are not only an interfaith music group, but also a coexistence project in which they exchange ideas and experiences; JOIRE represents a way to broaden their personal and cultural horizons and enrich themselves, not only as musicians, but also as human beings.

These young enthusiasts wish to share, through music, their message of brotherhood and harmony in different parts of the world, starting in Spain and in different European cities such as Brussels, Strasbourg, Geneva, Berlin and Rome, and later on in Dubai, New York, Riad and Jerusalem.

The event began with a warm welcome from Father Pedro González, <u>Commissioner of the Holy Land</u> and host from the Royal Basilica of Saint Francis the Great, who actively <u>promoted this gathering</u>.

Afterwards, the Executive Director of the Association Arco Forum, Temir Naziri, addressed a few words of introduction to the audience gathered in the Basilica (nearly 500 people), explaining about the importance of World Interfaith Harmony Week and International Day of Human Fraternity and the concept of Concert of Three Cultures to the broad audience. He also presented Julio Maroto, the conductor and Musical Director of JOIRE.

On that special evening, JOIRE accompanied us on a journey through the music of the three most important monotheistic religions in History. The musical programme of the concert was divided into different blocks, each one containing a Muslim, Christian and Jewish musical piece, generating a musical and cultural harmony between the three Abrahamic religions.

The concert began with the call to prayer from the Islamic world (Adhan), a formula recited in Arabic from the minaret of the mosque by the muezzin calling to prayer.

To find a moment of call to prayer in the Christian religion, JOIRE decided to interpret the theme of the famous film "The Mission" by the Italian composer Ennio Morricone.

To close this first block, from the Jewish tradition, the piece "Shalom Aleichem" ("Peace be upon you") was performed, which is sung by the Jews to welcome the Shabbat.























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In the next block, JOIRE focused on the Eucharist as a central element of Christianity. The mass is also considered a renowned piece of music, the reason why great composers in History, such as Mozart or Beethoven, composed these pieces. In this case, the Kyrie, the Hallelujah and the Gloria of the Missa Humilis, composed by one of the members of the group, Manuel Jimena, were performed at the concert. This block ended with a traditional Islamic song "Tala' al-Badru 'Alaynā" ("The full moon rises above us") dedicated to the Prophet Muhammad to welcome him to the city and considered to be one of the oldest compositions in the Islamic culture.

The concert continued with a piece from the musical "The Physician", based on the novel by Noah Gordon, which tells the story of a young man's journey to Persia to learn the art of Jewish medicine. It was followed with an "Islamic dua" ("Allahumma salli") a prayer to Allah for the Prophet Muhammad and his family.

One of the most beautiful moments of the concert was the interpretation of the poem "Eli, Eli", written by the writer Hannah Szenesh, a Hungarian girl who, like many Jews, suffered the horrors of the Second World War. For this occasion, it was performed by Mercedes Benzaquén, Director of the Choir from the Jewish Community of Madrid and new member of JOIRE.

The musical journey continued with two gems by the British composer John Rutter. On the one hand, the hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" and, on the other, the song "Look at the World", which celebrate and praise the beauty of nature because of God's work.

The last block of the concert began with a medieval poem called "Lamma Bada", written in Muslim Andalusia in the 14th century that has survived thanks to the oral tradition of the Maghreb.

As a Christian piece of this block, "Nada te turbe", a poem by Saint Teresa of Ávila, with music from the Christian community of Taizé (France) and, as a traditional Jewish song "Hevenu Shalom Aleichem" ("We brought peace upon you"), very popular in ceremonies and youth celebrations.

At the concert, we were also fortunate to have the presence of the whirling dervish Alperen Dikici, who at the age of 7 began receiving Sufi education and performing the Sema dance. According to the Sufi tradition, the whirling dervish raises his right hand asking for everything that would bring kindness, and sends it to the world by placing his left hand on the ground. This event gave Alperen Dikici the opportunity to share such a special moment with all the attendees.













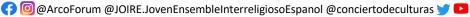












Finally, the "Ode to Joy", from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, was performed as a symbol of union between the different cultures that seek peace and dialogue between them.

In gratitude for their role as collaborators in this edition of the Concert of Three Cultures, commemorative plaques were awarded to Foro Abraham, represented by Amanda Figueras; the Spanish Federation of UNESCO Associations and Clubs (FECU), represented by its President, Alberto Guerrero, and the Delegation of Interfaith Relations of the Archdiocese of Madrid, represented by Carlos Jesús Delgado.

The Executive Director of Arco Forum, for his part, in gratitude to the Franciscan Friars, hosts of the event held at the Royal Basilica Saint Francis the Great, presented a commemorative plaque to Father José Martín.

Finally, Father Pedro González, Commissioner of the Holy Land, presented a commemorative plaque to Julio Maroto, Musical Director of JOIRE, in recognition of their wonderful performance.

At the end of the event, Arco Forum invited the guests to share some snacks and refreshments, in an atmosphere of tolerance and fraternity, that was created not only among the members of JOIRE but also the public, represented by Muslim, Christian and Jewish people, who actively engaged in the interfaith journey promoted by JOIRE.













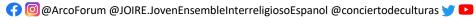












### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

**Part A:** A special photographic report of the event can be found on the following links:

- Facebook JOIRE
- Twitter JOIRE
- Instagram JOIRE
- Arco Forum's Newsletter
- Equipo Ecuménico Sabiñánigo























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## <u>Part B:</u> The Facebook performance regarding the online outreach of the event is shown below:

identificador de la publicación	Nombre de la página	Descripción	Hora de publicación	Enlace permanente	Tipo de publicación	Impresione s	Personas alcanzadas	Interaccion es	Veces compartido	Me gusta	Comentario s	Total de clics	Otros clics	Visualizacio nes de fotos	Clics en el enlace	Usuarios que interactúan
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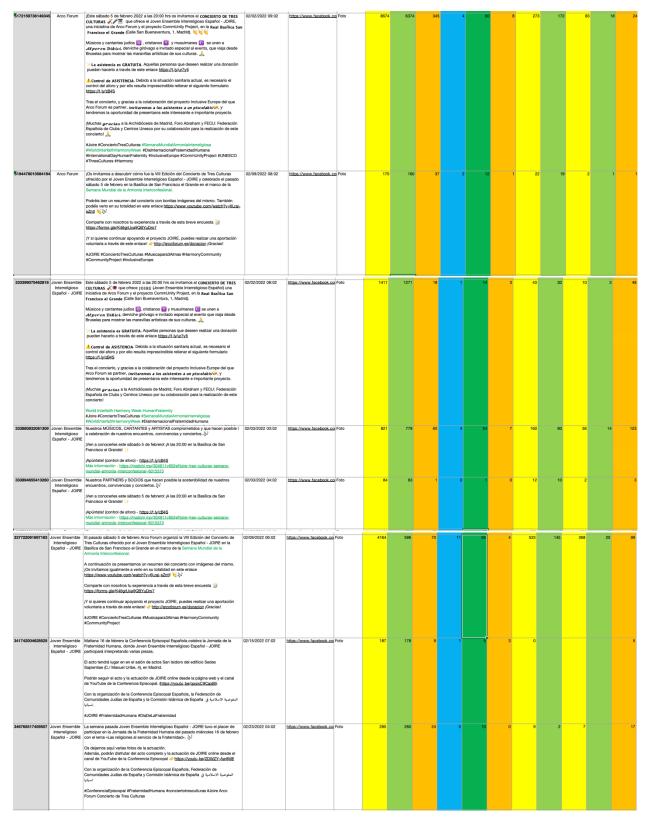




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