

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC
Annual Meeting 2014

**Greetings from the European Association of Conservatoires
(AEC)**

Hubert Eiholzer
Past Vice President, AEC

Dear President, Dear Members of the Association,

Good morning!

As AEC Vice President, until my term of office ended just a week ago, it is a privilege, and a great pleasure, to be with you at your annual meeting and to have this opportunity to address you.

I bring warmest greetings from your friends and colleagues in AEC: from our President, Pascale De Groote, from my colleagues on the Executive Committee and the AEC Council and from AEC Chief Executive, Jeremy Cox, AEC General Manager, Linda Messas, and the whole AEC Office Team.

It was an equally great pleasure to welcome for a second year your President, Mark Wait, to our annual Congress, which took place last week in Budapest. Mark, we appreciate enormously your giving up the time to be with us when there must have been so much to do in preparation for your own event.

The bond between AEC and NASM is now one of long standing that operates at every level: from fruitful professional interaction and mutual respect to the warmest of personal friendships and cherished shared memories. From this bond has come a close common understanding on a whole range of issues that affect both our organisations. This is so despite the different geographical and cultural regions in which we operate.

For AEC, perhaps the most priceless gift of its relationship with NASM has been the example, advice and inspiration you offer us of how an organisation can be dedicated to the support of its members at the same time as it operates procedures that evaluate them. You have been our friend, guide and mentor throughout the journey that we, as a membership association, have taken towards a fully developed review and evaluation role in relation to our own members. It is no exaggeration to say that we couldn't have come as far as we did without you.

I should like to emphasize that AEC engages in a wider range of activities than just quality assurance and quality enhancement. We have just completed the third and final cycle of Polifonia; a large project on higher education in music funded by the ERASMUS networks programme of the European Union. Polifonia started in 2004 and since then has studied a range of subjects related to professional music training at the European level. Among the subjects covered have been Learning Outcomes at different levels of music education, Entry into the Profession, International Coordination, Education for Entrepreneurship and Artistic Research.

Some of these, in particular Education for Entrepreneurship and Artistic Research, will become deeply relevant in AEC's future efforts to help its member institutions enhance their role as cultural engines in European society. We were recently able to obtain fresh funds from the European Union which will allow us to deepen our activities in this direction. The new Programme will be launched shortly under the title FULL SCORE.

The close relationship between our organisations brings to AEC an international perspective that is highly beneficial. For European music schools, international still mostly means crossing boundaries within the European space. But higher music education is becoming increasingly global. It is important that, while always respecting the integrity of each other's area of operation, we work together, and increasingly closely, to harmonise our practices and share best practice wherever in the world we find it. Equally, it is through shared knowledge and understanding that we will best be able to recognise, respect and, where necessary, protect the diversity in our practices that is the precious reverse side of the coin of globalisation.

I am confident in the enduring strength of our capacity to move forward into ever closer cooperation, underpinned by our shared values. Despite handing over the mantle of Vice Presidency to others, I shall continue to be closely involved in developments within AEC. I hope that, through that close involvement, I shall also maintain the valuable and deeply appreciated links I have been able to establish with colleagues from your organisation.

I wish you a successful and productive meeting and look forward to joining you in its various sessions and networking events. I am sure I shall bring back a rich storehouse of experiences, insights and inspiration to my colleagues in AEC.

Thank you very much.