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Brussels, 25 October 1984

INTRODUCING EUROPEAN MUSIC YEAR 1985

(Press conference to launch European Music Year
Monday, 5 November at 3 p.m. in the Commission press room)

The idea of a music campaign, launched by the European Parliament in 1980, was taken up by the Council of Europe and the European Communities. Setting a precedent, the two organisations jointly prepared for the campaign by appointing a European Organising Committee in 1982.

The Chairman of this committee, Mr Walter Scheel, former President of the Federal Republic of Germany, together with Mr Gaston E. Thorn, President of the Commission of the European Communities, and M. Marcelino Oreja Aguirre, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, will introduce European Music Year 1985 on Monday 5 November 1984 at 3 p.m. in Brussels.

The wealth of musical activities sparked off by the decision of the Council of Europe and the European Communities to make 1985 European Music Year has outstripped all expectations. So far, two months before the Year is due to open, some one thousand projects are under way and 24 countries (1) are taking part in this major event which is an expression of European cultural unity in action.

Music Year is in no sense elitist, but its objectives are ambitious. The purpose is to further music-making and musical training among amateurs and professionals, improve musical careers and encourage composition, so as to make music of all kinds and all eras accessible to everyone.

European Music Year's 1985 budget of 730 000 ECUs which is funded by the Council of Europe and the European Communities will cover the joint financing of some 30 multilateral projects which specifically meet the objectives of Music Year. In addition there are national programmes, with some 850 projects, while about a hundred individual projects are being sponsored by the Organising Committee.

Radio and television networks are taking a keen interest in these events and will introduce programmes devoted to European Music Year with a signature tune composed by Olivier Messiaen.

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- (1) Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Fed. Rep. of Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Finland, Holy See and Yugoslavia (observer).

Lastly, in view of the music industry's place in the economy (with a turnover more than twice that of the shipbuilding and aeronautical engineering industries in 1982 in the Fed. Rep. of Germany) the Year is expected to have major economic repercussions. It should therefore give a welcome boost to the cultural sector based on a combination of business and pleasure.