

The teaching of singing

Which skills for which profession ?



A Study produced by
Missions Voix en Région

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PLATE-FORME INTERRÉGIONALE
D'ÉCHANGE ET DE COOPÉRATION POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT CULTUREL

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A preface is a particular type of document which consists, for the author, in first reading what is contained in the opus to come all the while knowing that what he intends to say will be contained completely in the following pages. His consolation is knowing that a preface is not a text on which readers would spend large amounts of time ; rather he would go quickly to the quick of things in the main text. Thus the author is left with saying a few words about what he thinks is important as if advising friends or eventual listeners about the necessity of paying particular attention to that which will be read publicly.

The singing teacher, whether he be in specialized training or some other field, is often seen as a person somewhat in the shadows: a kind of workhorse, almost unknown. One knows little of what he does, one has difficulty even understanding his thought process and problem solving mechanism.

Nevertheless, over a period of some forty years since the creation of the first Regional Polyphonic Art Centre (see page 10), the situation has changed considerably. Clear evidence of this is the multiplicity of new choirs and song groups, and the growing number of adult groups as well as among the young. What is less apparent, but still viable, is the importance that has been given to the singing voice, not only in society (we will see this in the first chapter of this document) but very specifically in general music education even when it does not concern itself with the training of youths or adults for a career in singing.

Much has contributed to the rise (or renaissance) of the human voice as an art form. One of the most important elements has been the discovery of the heretofore unrecorded voices of peoples in remote parts of the world (and this even outside of the closed family of "specialists".) These have revealed great diversity and unfathomed tones and timbres. Also, there has been a shift in Conservatory teaching methods which has fused an essential link between instrumental learning and vocal practice as well as musical training based on the *soflège* technique (where musical phrases are deciphered) or on the insistence upon putting musical education at the centre of a general curriculum with the creation of CFMI (University diploma for those who teach in grammar schools, middle schools and high schools) where the importance of the voice in personal development is fostered without limiting it to a therapeutic situation. And, it must be stated, that the pleasure of singing is communicative. All of this and many other factors have contributed to the rise of singing in society.

This study lays out the principle functions, putting into the forefront the artistic and not just social or homeostatic ones. Only one part is presented as a reference guide to competencies within the realm of specialised teaching. Not to be omitted, however, are the vocal practices (which are at the heart of the mission of the *Plateforme*) which work in unison with other teachers and players in basic and continuing education.

What may be wished by one who has witnessed this effort is that further documents treating this subject be written, and these precisely in the area where the voice teacher must be the one who oversees a general musical education, from the training of music teacher, to primary school, from the grassroots to the governmental agency, from the household to the city, from the school choir to the University Master Class.

One condition of the call to arms is the reverse fear that those measures of preparation in pedagogy, in the name of well-intentioned excellence, push some from the bandwagon who might be considered outside of the scope, thus undoing several decades of work to expand the horizons of artistic practice. Even now one sees the effects of the reduction of the work-week on activities around music teaching in primary schools. Certain positions have been taken on pedagogical grounds, within the training of music teachers, which are certain to cause instability.

From a gasp to suffocation is but a short distance, and a simple institutional decision can quickly cover this distance. It is obvious that, for a singer, such a loss of air would be disastrous. Only a very few exceptions to this exist. We would hope that the care in preparing this document might prevent such an event.

INTRODUCTION

In France, there are quite a number of singers and those who would train their voices. There is a corresponding increase in the number of voice teachers and the diversity of the demands expressed. New repertoires, a vast variety of motivations, a whole range of ages, practices across the spectrum.

In the face of these needs, and in the context of musical training which is also evolving, *Missions Voix* have wished to make available to all persons a better perception of the different means within voice training and thus which skills to focus upon.

To do so, *Missions Voix* has put together a think-tank which would supply food for thought for various metiers. Forms of this intervention include seminars, workshops, open houses, encounter groups, exchanges with other music professionals...

The result of all of this study is presented here with all of the ambition that comes from long endurance : to share, to encourage, to participate in the evolutions necessary to teaching and professional practice.

Teachers, potential employers, teacher trainers... all can contribute to the improvement of the responses given to any who wish to learn how to sing in our country.

It is perhaps immodest to tackle all voice techniques and all singing forms at once. Nevertheless, what is at risk is the place of singing in society and the role that teachers may play in it. Thus, we propose, first, a quick listing of practices which will give a notion of the wants and needs by which teachers are confronted.

Secondly, specialised artistic teaching will be addressed. In fact, while we have worked on several different teaching forms and methods (workshops, coaching, private lessons), it seemed essential to us to lay out the possible roles for a voice teacher in the university setting. The first reason for this is that music schools are moving toward a development of practices and genres in direct relation to the proximate population for which singing is important. The second reason is that future voice/music teachers will likely be exposed by this first means thus giving it an important initial role.

Finally, we have listed skills which are necessary for voice teaching while taking into account the various situations in which a voice teacher might find herself. This "guide" may thus be useful for any person who teaches another to sing no matter what the professional context.

THE PLACE OF SINGING IN SOCIETY

Singing styles are varied and span age, life circumstances, social status. From work songs to lullabies, from lyrical art to psycho-phony, from mass music settings to karaoke, song takes on different functions depending on the objectives one wishes to attain, whether they be conscious or not.

Singing is not exclusively used in art, rather it distinguishes itself from other instruments by its readiness to be employed (everyone has a voice and can sing). Singing can accompany, mark, or support an individual or group life event.

Some of these practices are spontaneous and need not be organised. Others demand the intervention of a specialised voice teacher or perhaps even a coach. A coach would then be able to take on a deeper role in forming the voice for extremely diverse situations and for specific contexts from that of personal development to artistic training. These various situations are not exclusive and sometimes are found together. Confusion can arise when this happens and though the given situation may encourage learning, it may not be helpful as a means toward the stated end. This is another reason why we have felt it necessary to examine them.

As a means of structuring the outline of those situations in which a voice teacher might find herself, we have identified four practical functions :

- Social and cultural :
- Musical and artistic :
- Educative and formative :
- Homeostatic (contributing to the equilibrium of the three main components of the human body : physical, biochemical et psycho-emotional).

Within these categories, one can precisely identify the modalities of practice, their places and means, their actors and the skills necessary for each training program and the corresponding diploma.

Below we propose the beginnings of an outline which includes criteria of types of practices and their place in them. This outline could be the base of future works which in turn may serve as a base for further criteria and skills identification (Not sure that this works: I understand what you wish to say, but the two words are not related and may be confusing together.).

THE FOUR PRINCIPLE FUNCTIONS OF SINGING IN SOCIETY :

One can distinguish four principle categories of the function of singing. These are not exclusive, nor are they completely distinct (certainly as pertains to artistic and educative functions which often go hand in hand). What is privileged here is the type of practice, its effect being social, artistic and or educative.

1. Social and cultural:

Objective : To accompany life situations by song. To gather. Singers don't necessarily have a sense of the intrinsic of singing, nor of a pedagogical need or training. The vocation is not musical at its root but this does not exclude a musical approach.

Practice forms : Convivial and spontaneous : masses and church offices, carnivals, community rites and ceremonies, popular assemblies and propaganda, festive evenings, political rallies, work songs, dirges.

Examples of places and frameworks: churches, temples, stadiums, family gatherings, parks, pubs, vacation camps, etc.

2. Musical and artistic :

Objective : Artistic expression through singing.

Practice forms : Classes, rehearsals, concerts, recordings : amateur in general; notably in voice classes (individual or collective in whatever place, by whatever means) choir (professional or amateur) , soloist, master class, music as part of a school curriculum (beyond pedagogy) early learning experiences, karaoke...

Examples of places and frameworks: private lessons at home, music schools (private, associative and public), community centres, rehearsal spaces, radio stations (even those which do so occasionally, such as hospitals or firehouses) company share-groups, labour union meetings, universities, continuing education.

Agents : voice teachers ; choir leaders

NB : There can be both artistic and educative aims, for example in early learning experiences or in continuing education

3. Educative and formative :

Objective : Use of vocal practice as a training or formative means

Practice forms : choral, animation, atelier, individual project accompaniment, training of grade school teachers, school music classes, musical training in general

Examples of places and frameworks : pre-school, kindergarten, from grade school to university, music schools, hospitals, continuing education, re-education.

Agents : animators, school music teachers, outside contract music trainers in the school system, music education professors, coaches

N.B : Singing which is done in an educative approach is within an artistic, creative and musical experience.

4. Homeostatic:

[Definition]: contributing to the equilibrium of the three main components of the human body: physical, biochemical and psycho-emotional]

Practice forms : personal development by the means of vocal practice, art therapy by means of singing (implies artistic practice within a therapeutic context) psychophony, psychotherapy, prenatal singing (chant), practical education by vocal means (teachers).

Examples of places and frameworks : Singing classes (depending upon the student's particular project, teacher's skills, and within a private course framework), private lessons, medical and paramedical environments, alternative medicine, professional development, continuing education as a means of personal development, associative, etc.

NB : It is important to avoid confusing the functions of a voice teacher and those of a therapist. Each of these disciplines implies specialised training and diplomas for the practitioner. Thus, using the voice in therapy should not imply that therapy is musical training, and vice versa.

A voice teacher can be confronted with all of these demands and others, directly and indirectly (especially while training another person to be a voice teacher). All ages are represented, from toddlers to seniors. Depending on the teacher's professional situation and her own interests, her role may shift . It is therefore very important that the particular needs of each student be the priority and that whatever interventions are made be within the framework of the students' goals. Particular discernment is necessary to distinguish between what is musical teaching and what may not be in a given context.

THE ROLE OF THE SINGING TEACHER IN MUSIC SCHOOLS

Even if voice teaching cannot be limited to merely what touches the teaching of a specialised art form, it seemed necessary to us to lay out the possible roles of a music teacher within the conservatory or music school context. There are many similarities between these and those of teachers in other disciplines. However, the voice being an instrument universally available and used, it gives a special status to the music teacher.

The voice, then, holds several places of importance within the specialised teaching establishment. It is the principle instrument of students who are singers, either soloists or within a choir, as well as for choir masters. It can be a complementary instrument for other types of musicians. The voice is also important

for such disciplines as the dramatic arts. There must certainly be other uses of the voice which cannot be listed here ... These "other" uses of the voice are not exclusive and can be part of the tool box of any one person. The multiplicity of these practices and the fact that singing is so universal can lead one to believe that singing « just happens » naturally without paying any particular attention to technique, or how the sounds are produced. One could easily pass up the skills of a trained music teacher in such cases. This can happen even within the confines of a conservatory.

Yet, whatever one does with one's voice, the voice teacher within the conservatory is the person the

best able to help exploit its qualities. He must develop different pedagogical modalities which adapt to a particular voice and a particular goal in a particular context never losing sight of the fundamentals in terms of how the voice works and sounds as well as the various repertoires suited to an individual and her projects.

I. The singing teacher is a pedagogue

I .1 – In a conservatory, the main job of a singing teacher is to train singers.

« singer » : would mean in this context any person whose goal is to sing, and this on whatever level (professional or amateur) in whatever aesthetic, whatever her age, whatever her resultant training (soloist, choir, other...)

Classes can take on various forms depending on the establishment's projects and the type of student concerned by the training. These may be group classes, individual classes, master classes, workshops, specialised in one aesthetic or another, in one style or another, etc... The teacher may face adults or adolescents or even children, especially within the master class context.

However, whoever the public may be, the objective is to give to the singer a better understanding of her voice and a means whereby she may exploit all of its possibilities within the artistic project.¹

I .2- The voice teacher can be a resource for those students for whom the voice is not the principle instrument.

Obviously he can give classes to those students studying music since their ability to sing is key to their succeeding in other disciplines. The teacher can also give lessons to drama students, to dancers, to children in the early learning process....

In a choral setting, the students are likely to be singers and will have voice classes of one sort or another. (cf. I.1).

The voice teacher has a special role with respect to teaching those who lead choirs. Choir directors certainly need to know how to sing. But they also need to know how to give technical instructions enabling others to sing. To do so, they must work on their own voices and have an arsenal of pedagogical tools.

I .3 – The singing teacher can be a resource for those who need a trained voice to teach or accompany an artistic practice.

First, he can work with his colleagues who need to be competent in voice training. Within the establishment, we may think of chorus teachers, elementary school teachers, drama professors, etc.... Outside of these specialised teaching establishments, many are in charge of teaching children and adults to sing: middle and grade school teachers, choir leaders, group accompanists, etc.

For this public as well as for her colleagues, the voice teacher can help them to use their voices as a tool of musical expression and also to acquire the pedagogical elements necessary to help others sing in the best of conditions.

Thus, the voice teacher is an essential resource for those who direct musical practice within a given

geographic area , whether it be an amateur choir, in art education, or in current popular music trends.

II – The voice teacher is a “singer/artist”

This is actually a prerequisite and a foundation for all of her pedagogical activity. She can thus participate hands-on in the musical life of her establishment or area.

As with all teachers of the arts, she may have to organise concerts or other types of public performance, within or outside of her place of work. Planning a project, conceiving a performance (in its scenic and musical dimensions) is necessary for the students' development and to integrate their work into the larger community. To do so is to give of oneself on a deep artistic level, which goes beyond one's simple identity as a singer or voice teacher

It is necessary to highlight that the voice (as a soloist or in the choral context) is the only instrument that can convey words to listeners. The voice teacher has a particular responsibility as to researching, choosing and explaining the texts in question. This relationship must be kept in the forefront as a key skill as well as within a cultural context.

III – Team work and networking

The skills necessary to put into place all of these functions are numerous and are described above, referenced by group. Nevertheless, over and above the individual qualities of a teacher, there must be a strong insistence upon good teaching conditions. It is thus unthinkable to ask that one person have all of the skills necessary to answer a demand in all areas, be it aesthetic, objective, or other interests. Therefore, it falls to the team to furnish support be it institutional or geographic in scope. A team of teachers can answer the collective call for a variety of demands better than any one individual teacher specialised in a particular stylistic domain. If, as is seen more and more, the establishment is formed around a variety of musical genres (early music, pop music, folk music...), then it is useful, even vital, to include in the team representatives of each of these specialisations within their given frameworks. In any case, each specialist would engage himself in the general discussion of voice teaching itself within a pedagogical , departmental, or regional context. Team work between group voice professors or choir directors has shown the efficacy of such collaboration within conservatories.

Participation within a regional network has its importance as well. It permits a direct connection between existing external structures and students being trained. Conditions for this to work are to have some knowledge of what other resources exist within a given area and allowing for the students' mobility. This is of an even greater importance if the training establishment is not large enough to allow for a separate voice department ...

¹ Cf. « Enseigner le chant : panorama et perspectives », Actes de la rencontre nationale des 3 et 4 juillet 2008

LIST OF SKILLS FOR THE TEACHING OF SINGING

The purpose of this guide is to act as a basis for reflection about initial and continuing professional training within the scope of music education. It applies to all persons who train within this scope, no matter what the context or aesthetic. It attempts to address, in a wider sense, the multiplicity of needs generated by singing in society, and by extension, the needs of those who teach it. This guide is not a professional registry or instruction booklet. It is a work in progress to be completed by field observation in a professional sense, by teachers, by employers, or even by those being trained.

The voice teacher is similar in many ways to the teacher in other artistic fields, however, her particular speciality includes particular elements which have to be taken into account.

To be addressed in this list :

- Text : Singers are the only musicians that have to address this (meaning, culture, pronunciation).
- Constitution of the individual voice, since the voice is a constantly changing instrument. Not only must the teacher be aware of this evolution, but he must sometimes accompany voices quite different from his own. One cannot see a voice!
- Training of the body and the senses : whereas the body is essential in all musical teaching, there is no getting around the need for body awareness in voice training.

This guide is organised by knowledge and particular skills around three main axes :

- The fundamentals of the discipline
- Pedagogical structure
- The teacher in her environment

We should remind ourselves that it is nearly impossible to unite all of the skills noted below in a single person, especially since they cover all aesthetic notions and all situations in which a teacher might find herself. Nevertheless, within each aesthetic, there are commonalities and standards, which are part of the basic discipline.

Beyond these skills, the voice teacher uses his knowledge and shares professional behaviour which is appropriate no matter what discipline one practices.

First, art is the basis of his professional practice. This is the first criterion for exams and being hired for a position. He is an artist who continues to refine his art, to evolve, to examine his base. There is a continuous evaluation of his professional practice and his pedagogy which themselves are within musical culture and are constantly evolving.

Additionally, it is important that he be connected to a professional network and that he contribute to it. We have in mind a network of professional information, of creation and dissemination, and of pooled resources. On the one hand, these networks could help the evolution of musical practice through shared experiences, meetings, and the exchange of ideas. On the other hand, the teacher's connection to the network could help his students who could then be oriented along various paths within the network but different from the teacher's.

Finally, every teacher – in an embodiment of his **relational qualities**, which are in turn essential to pedagogical efficacy. Included in these qualities are the capacity to listen, that of being available, and of a tailored approach to pedagogy. These same qualities are necessary as part of the work within the team as well as all who are touched by the music teaching experience (parents, public, professional partners, etc.).

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DISCIPLINE

Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be continually active, artistically and dynamically engaged (particularly in collaboration with other musicians) - To help with the perfection and evolution of artistic qualities and execution and interpretation techniques . - To technically communicate artistic gestures (body, instrument) - To accompany students in their sensory development - To use empathy as a tool toward mastering technique - To take into account each student's psychology, culture and path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long experience with the instrument (technical and aesthetic) - Understanding of physiology, anatomy and acoustics - Knowledge of texts : meaning and values of words and phrases - Musical culture and knowledge of music theory – an understanding of cultural context (artistic, social, anthropological...) - An understanding of the pronunciation and basic comprehension of the languages being sung - Understanding of the characteristics of the social functions of singing in the world - Understanding of specific techniques necessary to produce certain aesthetic values (amplification, vocal technique...) - Artistic techniques used within the art (tools, instruments, software, etc.) - Basic understanding of the use of a polyphonic instrument - The evolution of the profession - Theory and practice of artistic languages

PEDAGOGICAL STRUCTURE

The pedagogical triangle of Houssaye, reviewed par P. Merrieu, is a possible way to structure pedagogy. The three points are : Knowledge (here as singing), the student and the teacher. The sides of the triangle are the relationships between the three points : that between the teacher and knowledge : the didactic (cf. see above "fundamentals of the discipline"); that between the teacher and the student : the training; that between the student and knowledge: apprenticeship. This is not necessarily an equilateral triangle, however the three dimensions are always more or less in some pedagogical relationship. The importance given to one side or other of the triangle depends upon the pedagogical situation.



Skills	Knowledge
Student project (apprenticeship)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify different categories of public - To detect and enhance the individual expression, personality and sensitivity of each student - To establish a technical and musical diagnosis - To counsel students and to accompany them in their professional choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of the cultural and artistic environment and its evolution - Understanding of what teaching opportunities are present within the area - Understanding the risks, evolution and legal framework of performances and specialised teaching - Cycles, levels and study nomenclature
Pedagogy (training, didactic)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To elaborate a pedagogical method or process - To put into place a pedagogical project - To adapt one's pedagogical methods and practices to students - To compose and execute a consistent set of evaluation criteria - To conceive, put into place, and evaluate an individual and collective pedagogical program - Where possible, to participate in the organisation of a jury - To identify and to apply new techniques and practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employing interpersonal relational techniques and principles (listening, adapting, expressing, etc.) - Using pedagogical methods and techniques - Using evaluation methods and tools - Understanding jury procedure - Having psycho-emotional skills

THE TEACHER IN HER ENVIRONMENT

Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To manage and fine-tune collective artistic practices - To work within a team - To identify area resources - To conceive and plan pedagogical projects (meetings, artistic mediation, expositions, ateliers) - To identify and develop sponsorships and partnerships having some connection with an artistic project - To be abreast of the evolution of practices having a bearing on artistic and cultural modes - To put into place evaluation criteria related to pedagogical programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowing the socio-cultural characteristics of the geographic area where one works - Being aware of the institutional and professional environment: personnel, institutions, programs - Understanding live performance and cultural professions - Using project management principles and techniques - Using efficient communication techniques - Being aware of continuing education options in the arts - Knowing the legal and economical framework of artistic presentations

CONCLUSION

If one considers the current topography and its givens- generally described in this work- of the place of singing in society, teachers have a central role to play in its being brought to its proper place of importance. However, teachers themselves are victims of a general misunderstanding of their profession, and are frequently isolated and insufficiently trained to keep up with demand.

Possible evolution is within the realm of initial and continuing education. To give those who teach or wish to teach an access to those means which allow them to deepen and test their artistic skills is, by extension, to enable them to better serve the needs of their students (and to avoid serious vocal health issues).

Music school teacher training seems to be a priority for these particular establishments, and this same importance would have an impact on other professions : community centre animators, school teachers, private teachers, coaches, etc. It is true that these disciplines, depending upon their specificities, have their own training locations and resources. However, since the majority of them see singing as just one part of a global professional activity, they are not likely to treat voice training in any profound way. Nevertheless, it is as important, in each specific area of expertise, to work on the fundamentals of the singing discipline as it is to work upon those specific skills connected to one's own professional practice.

Thus, it is important to follow (perhaps even incite) the evolution which is both wished for and sought in the content of initial training and existing degrees.

Continuing education's purpose is to give the means and impetus to explore a lifelong path in one's profession. It is a framework wherein one shares pedagogical and artistic experience and constitutes an effective means to feed professional networks which are lacking, despite the existence of organisations such as l'Association Française des Professeurs de Chant (AFPC - French singing teachers association, member of European Voice Teacher Association - EVTA). These networks are useful for expanding students' options, for enriching one's professional practice, for highlighting the place of singing in society. It is important that all persons in positions of responsibility in structures offering voice training as well as working within music development to focus energies toward the creation and maintenance of this network of voice teachers/trainers

What could be more enriching than to confront different specialties? To mix the skills particular to each metier with those inherent in vocal pedagogy? Or to mix the particularities of a given style with vocal pedagogy? Within the think-tank which put together this work, we have seen that it is upon this common base of skills that one can find the natural place for fruitful sharing between artists-pedagogues of traditional music, popular music or classical music. This exchange allows for an opening toward other aesthetic values and disciplines.

Several testimonies as to the success of pedagogical practices have been offered during the preparation of this work : continuous collaboration with other pedagogues, different forms of classes, mixed publics, aesthetic blending... Yet we are still lacking in the means to render these successes accessible to all.

The interest and reciprocal listening which has been shown by numerous teachers of all genres during the national meeting that transpired in July 2008 show that there is a will to come out of isolation, to participate in research, to multiply interaction and to help disciplines evolve. We hope that this work will be useful to all for whom singing is a daily activity whether it be amateur or professional.

ANNEXES

LES MISSIONS VOIX REGION

Created by an initiative from the Minister of Culture at the end of the 1970s under the name of *Centres régionaux d'art polyphonique* (Regional polyphonic art centres), these associations quickly profited from regional input and implication.

With the expansion of their mission to all that touches upon vocal practice, they became known as *Les Missions voix* at the end of the 1990s.

They specialise in the cultural programs linked to vocal practice and are centres where State values and regional priorities meet.

Their role is to develop, quantitatively and qualitatively, the diversity of vocal practices in each region with all those who work within this particular framework. They do not exist just to insure that there is training or the diffusion of individual or choral singing, but to help, particularly as regards training programs already in place, all who wish to do so and in the best possible conditions and above all, in concert with others. They are charged in particular with maintaining a training continuity, from early learning to a professional level, in general and specialised training, within an associative network. Also, they garner the development of public offerings and the expansion of the presence of the voice in musical creation.

They must thus permit all- political decision makers, music school directors, choir leaders, and live performance producers- to better understand each other so that all may have a global vision of what is happening vocally within their area or region.

Les Missions voix has worked within a network for more than ten years and, though each region has its own set of givens, it works to pool information, ideas, and work tools which are coordinated in turn by *la Plate-forme interrégionale*.

HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS STUDY :

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LA PLATE-FORME INTERRÉGIONALE FOR EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

La Plate-forme interrégionale is an association created in May 2003 and whose purpose is to facilitate work within the network and various interregional projects. This occurs in the domains of music, dance, theatre and all other arts of live performance.

It is a grouping of French regional structures (live performance agencies, music and dance associations, *Missions Voix* and regional cultural observatories) of which the State and/or the region have conferred cultural development (coordination, mediation, information, training, observation, ...).

These regional organisms participate in the structuring of a concerted and integrated approach closely linked to the State, territorial collectives, elected officials, associations, and in connection with amateur practitioners of the arts.

The principle purpose of *La Plate-forme interrégionale* is to facilitate the sharing of methodologies, ideas, experiences and works in cultural projects, to participate in building the cultural infrastructure within the country, artistic education, to provide connexions between networks and to render accessible a certain number of tools, services, and projects.

Its actions have been particularly noteworthy over time with respect to meetings and exchanges, seminaries, training sessions and publications.

PLATE-FORME INTERREGIONALE D'ECHANGE ET DE COOPERATION POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT CULTUREL

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It is also sponsored in part by the territorial collectives connected to each of its members