

## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOUND 2020+ IN ARGENTINE

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### ABSTRACT

Since the 1960s, in Argentina, dissemination actions have been carried out based on the topics of noise and sound. The global initiative International Year of Sound 2020+ was directly articulated with the activities that are commonly carried out in our country. Within this framework, the International Competition "My world of sounds" for primary and secondary students was very well received and served to channel personal post-confinement experiences. The children who participated not only became aware of the sounds that surround them but also of the importance of caring for their health and the environment. Seven finalist works were sent from our country.

**Keywords:** *IYS 2020+, Argentine, My world of sounds.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The actions that aim to relate noise and sound to society in Argentina have a long tradition. Since the 1970s, the *Asociación de Acústicos Argentinos* has periodically carried out diffusion activities on caring for the acoustic environment, hearing conservation, and raising awareness about the inconvenience and damage caused by exposure to noise. In 2013, the *Week of Sound* was held for the first time in the country. The principal objective, in line with the French initiative, was to promote meetings between specialists and society around noise and its consequences.

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In the local context, the guidelines of the International Year of Sound 2020+ were naturally articulated with these previous activities. As in the rest of the world, the IYS2020+ in Argentina suffered the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the planned activities were suspended or carried out online. In this context, the International Competition "My world of sounds" was held for primary and secondary students, which served as a meeting point for different actors in the post-confinement context.

### 2. BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Argentine and Latin America

The first activity that made visible the problem of noise in our society was the First Argentine Symposium on Noise that was held in 1961 in Córdoba's city. It was followed by the First Acoustics Meeting in 1973. In the First Argentine Conference on Acoustics in 1975 the proposal to create an association that would bring together the country's acousticians was discussed. On May 7, 1976, the *Asociación de Acústicos Argentinos* was founded. From that date to the present, the association annually develops academic and science diffusion activities considering the care of the acoustic environment, the conservation of hearing and the consequences generated by exposure to noise.

In Latin America, these topics have been discussed since 1965 and at the First Latin American Conference on Acoustics organized by the *Grupo de Acústicos de Latinoamérica* (GALA) in Córdoba. In its six editions that were held up to the year 1982, the cities of Santiago de Chile, Caracas, Córdoba, Curitiba and Mexico were the headquarters.

## 2.2 Week of Sound "Sound and sound violence"

Since 2004, *La Semaine du Son* has organized a week of activities with the purpose of opening a space for dialogue and education on various problems related to sound with a transversal approach that includes cultural, scientific, technical-industrial, environmental, educational and economic aspects. Since 2010 Sound Weeks have been held in Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Mexico and Colombia.

The main objective of the Week is to give an account of the importance that sound has in our daily life, both in its positive aspects –such as its role in communication and music–, and in its negative consequences –such as urban noise and noise pollution in general–.

In 2013 the Week of Sound was held for the first time in Argentine at the *Teatro Argentino de La Plata*. The title of the edition was "Sound and sound violence". Its five thematic axes were: science and technology, health, environment, legislation and education. The meeting was the result of the joint work of the *French Embassy* in Argentina, the *Teatro Argentino de La Plata*, the *Comisión de Investigaciones Científicas* of the Province of Buenos Aires, the *Universidades Nacionales de La Plata*, *Quilmes and Lanús*, the *Asociación de Acústicos Argentinos* and the *Audio Engineering Society (Argentine Section)*. The event led to the meeting of professionals who work with sound (acousticians, musicians, sound engineers, instrument makers, sociologists, speech therapists, speech pathologists) and society.

Between 2014 and 2016, the Week was held in Rosario and the topic was Music and Soundscape. The organization was joined by the *Universidad Nacional de Rosario (UNR)*, the *Municipality of Rosario* and the *Centro de Estudios de Tecnologías Artísticas (CETeAr)*. The last edition was Sound Week 2017 "Sound and music in today's society" at the *Universidad Nacional de Quilmes*.

## 3. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOUND 2020+

### 3.1 The acoustic environment and confinement

The period of confinement because of the COVID-19 pandemic was an unusual experience. It brought to the fore the relationship with our private and public sound environment. Sound levels in most of the world's cities dropped and the landscape changed. In the cities, road traffic decreased as well as people on the street, therefore, noise pollution was lower. However, certain individual

noises came to the fore, basically those that remained present (for example, those generated by urban hygiene systems).

Another of the consequences of the low noise level in cities was related to fauna, since the species expanded their habitat, and birds that are usually masked by urban noise were heard.

The division between the private and the public was put into crisis. In a building all the neighbors stayed longer in their homes. Private noises in many cases caused discomfort. Some of them were not produced before the pandemic or were not heard because they were masked by others. At home, activities interfered with each other. Home was the place where you not only lived but also where you played sports, learned, rehearsed, and did telework. In this complex context, children were also protagonists.

### 3.2 General activities

Among the events that were held in our country in line with the objectives of the IYS2020+, we can highlight the V Music and Education Meeting of MOMUSI (Movimiento de Música para niños y niñas) in the Province of San Juan, held in November 2020 and organized by the *Departamento de Música* and the *Secretaría de Extensión de la Facultad de Filosofía, Humanidades y Artes (FFHA)* belonging to the *Universidad Nacional de San Juan (UNSJ)* and the *Área de Supervisión de Educación Musical* of the *Ministry of Education* of the province. The objective of the movement is to work actively in the recovery of sounds, voices, songs and games dedicated to childhood. The event included presentations, discussion tables, and workshops aimed at the general public and, in particular, at teachers, to guide actions to face the challenges of the complex scenario of the pandemic.

For its part, the *Museo de La Plata* of the *Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Museo* of the *Universidad Nacional de La Plata* organized a series of six presentations broadcast on social networks from November 2020 to July 2021, taking as axis the sounds of nature and the native sounds.

The didactic sequence of the sounds of nature focused on four subjects: dinosaurs, the blue whale, the thrush and insects. The sequences of native sounds dealt with whistling vessels, archaeological materials from Pre-Columbian Cultures, and the Kultrún, a Mapuche ceremonial drum.

### 3.3 International Competition "My world of sounds"

Elementary school students between the ages of 5 and 12 participated in the contest. Although most of the works were individual productions, some of them were carried out in groups. The participants presented handmade drawings and collages related to their world of sounds inspired by the IYS2020+ motto "Importance of sound for society and the world". The works represented a multiplicity of subjects, the main ones being: the sounds of the city, the sounds at home, technology and music. Children described their works with these words:

"In this drawing I represented the sounds of my city. I drew myself in a square and the sounds I hear: cars honking, a bird, a dog barking at a cat, a boy playing soccer, and an ice cream man. I am screaming because I discovered that I have an ant on my leg".

"I drew a girl participating in a singing competition, she sings a song of her own called "The moon and the sun". Since all the children in the world like to sing, I think we could all participate in this competition and know each other through our songs".

"I wanted with the drawing to think about my family and to be able to see my surroundings from the sounds".

"I drew an accordionist who plays a song on the beach. The sound of the sea, the waves and the wind accompany his song".

"I drew what sound is to me: headphones, speakers and computer to process sound to compose, listening and sharing music. Above I drew some sound absorbers".

"We draw with my sister when we go to school in the morning. My dad turns on the radio and we sing the songs we listen to".

"I drew what I hear at home, the piano because I am a pianist, my brother's flute and the washing machine that makes a lot of noise".

The contest was a meeting point for the educational and family environment, since both the school and the families were involved in the activity. Personal experiences were expressed, awareness of the sounds of the environment was raised, and the importance of health care and the environment could be put into words and drawings.

Among the works presented from all over the country, the jury selected seven finalists.



Figure 1. Drawing of one of the participants.



Figure 2. Drawing of one of the participants.

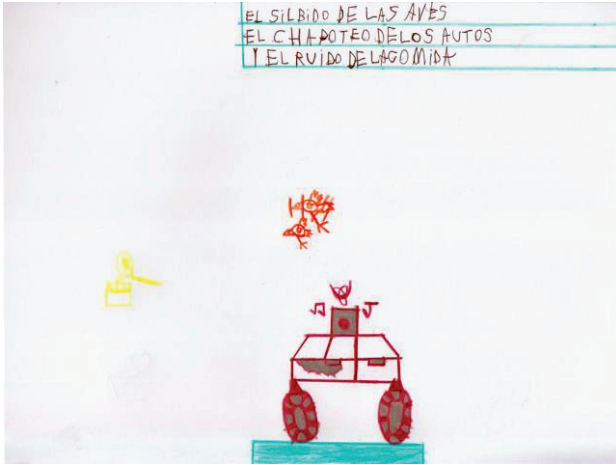


Figure 3. Drawing of one of the participants.



Figure 4. Drawing of one of the participants.

#### 4. FINAL COMMENTS

The International Year of Sound 2020+ initiative was directly articulated with the scientific dissemination actions carried out in Argentina. The International Competition "My world of sounds" served to channel personal experiences resulting from the pandemic, confinement and post-confinement. In the future, the intention is to continue promoting this type of action at the local level.

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