

## AL KAMANDJATI ASSOCIATION SUMMER CAMP REPORT 25<sup>th</sup> June / 1st July 2008

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, Al Kamandjati Association organized a summer camp for all its pupils at the end of the month of June 2008 in Faraa village.

The camp was an opportunity for Al Kamandjati to gather its music students from Ramallah and its old city, Qalandiah, Jalazon, Al Amari, Deir Ghassana, Beit Rima, Jenin, Tulkarem and Jerusalem in the same place, and to make them practice music all together during this period. 85 children participated in the camp.

The main aim of the project was to gather them during all the period of the workshop in a large place where they remained with 25 music teachers. They practiced every day, and had individual lessons with the instrumental teachers, as well as group lessons and orchestra lessons.

This experience was important, primarily because it encouraged the children to get to know each other, exchange their experiences, have an intensive practice of music during some days, improve their skills, and see that there are other children in different regions learning music just as they do.

The summer camp ended with a final concert in the summer camp location, which was the culmination of the work of one academic year and of the summer camp itself.



### General description of the summer camp

Al Kamandjati summer camp took place this year in Salah Khalaf Center in Al Faraa village, a former jail turned into cultural center. This center, which features a huge football field and a quite big gymnasium, nowadays welcomes all kinds of youth summer camps (for example sports, music, and education courses).

The center is split between dormitories for boys and girls, as well as teaching rooms. In the middle, 2 beautiful courtyards embellish the place and provide a resting area for the children.

After gathering in Al Kamandjati Music Center in Ramallah on July 25 midday, the music students of Qalandiah, Jalazon, Al Amari, Deir Ghassana, Beit Rima and Jerusalem traveled to Al Faraa village in 2 big buses, with 25 teachers and the camp coordinators. All of them brought their instruments and music which they had practiced during the academic year.



The students from Jenin and Tulkarem went directly to Al Faraa. They arrived before the others and immediately settled in the rooms they chosen. They also had with them 2 upright pianos and one electric one, for the different music activities of the camp.

When the buses from Ramallah arrived, the students continued to settle in the rooms. Then, the coordinators organized the teaching rooms according to the different needs of the classes, and the eating room, as well as the concert space was also prepared.

There was a big canteen, where meals were served 3 times a day. A professional cook was in charge of preparing the meals for everybody in the next door kitchen. For each meal, some students were in charge of helping the cooker, laying on and clearing up the table, cleaning the canteen...

The camp was also an opportunity for the students to learn how to live in a community, to make them take some responsibilities, and to make them participate in the "social" life of the camp.

After organizing everything, a schedule was given to each student for the whole week, mentioning his individual lessons, as well as his group lessons and time and days of his performances. Then, a teachers' meeting took place the first night also, lead by the artistic director of the camp, Mr. Peter Sulski, in order to explain to everyone how the lessons would be organized, where each teacher had to teach, which students were assigned to which teachers, and how the teachers should help the young musicians prepare for concerts.



### Organization of the music-teaching program

The camp was organized by Peter Sulski so that each teacher had a maximum of only 4 students. This maximized the efficiency and quality of the teaching. Almost all instruments were represented, classical as well as oriental.

The mornings were dedicated to individual music lessons: after breakfast, each teacher gave particular lessons to the students he was responsible for. Each teacher had his own room (or teaching place, as sometimes, lessons took place in the yards...).



Then, after lunch, the group lessons took place: chamber music groups were put together, as well as oriental groups and orchestras on an ad hoc basis - depending on what the students and their teachers wanted. It was the opportunity for them to play with children they never played with, or with instruments they never played with, to discover new kinds of music...



In the afternoon, a period of free time was dedicated to sport for most of the students or for rest for the laziest ones.



Then came dinner, followed by the daily concert which took place every evening.

The artistic director was in charge of establishing, in collaboration with the teachers, a daily concert program, according to what the children had work on during the day. We were able to work on jazz pieces, as well as traditional oriental pieces and classical music. All the students and teachers were pushed to prepare something and to present it in front of a large audience, consisting of the students, teachers, visiting parents, and visitors. Teachers and students performed sometimes together; the students of the same instruments but coming from the different localities also performed together for the first time, which was very exciting for them.



The summer camp ended with a final concert, on the last day, where all the students performed what they learnt during the whole week.

There were chamber music pieces, as well as orchestra ones, solo ones...Teachers, as well as students, performed in front of the whole group, all together, proud of what they learnt.





### The outputs of the summer camp

Al Kamandjâti summer camp enabled all the music students to meet and to know each other: The course provides a great experience for a child to discover that the children from other parts of Palestine also learn music in the same way.

The summer camp is also a very rich social experience: the children learn how to live together, to respect each other, to contribute to the general and common welfare, to participate to the common tasks and to be involved in a group organization.

The camp was also the opportunity for the children to study music with different and new teachers, which is very important for them because they learn to see music and their instrument in a different way, as each musician has his own and personal way of dealing with music.



The nature of the musical work they do during the summer camp is different and complementary from that which they are used to during the academic year. So it is good for them because they are seeing music differently, not only on a very strict and serious way, but also through games, group and cross-instrumental experiences, which they do not have time to experience during the academic year.

The children also got used to performing regularly in front of an audience, which is very positive for them as this helped to develop their self-confidence about themselves and their abilities.

### **Thanks:**

Al Kamandjâti Association would like to thank all the institutions and people who supported it for this summer camp.

### **The donors:**

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### **The other supporting institutions:**

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### **The individuals:**

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