

Fifty Years of Songs and Large Concerts for Solidarity

Alba Sanfeliu Bardia

Translated by Alba de Béjar Muiños and Patricia Rodríguez Groba

Solarità, è questa qua la parola chiave che ti do,
aprire farà quegli occhi che si stanno abituando al buio da un po'.
Solarità, intesa lo sai, come chiarezza dove sempre non c'è,
come calore d'umanità che vorrei sentire intorno a me.
Solarità, è questa l'idea, se provi a crederci anche tu, si diffonderà di più...
Eros Ramazzotti, *Solarità*, album: *Calma Aparente*, 2005.

Solarity, this will be the word that I'll make up.
I know it'll open the eyes that are getting used to not wanting to see.
Solarity will mean light and warmth that impregnates each being,
Like a hug of humanity that I would want around my being.
Solarity, this is the idea, if you can accept it, it will give us hope.
Eros Ramazzotti, *Solarità*, album: *Calma Aparente*, 2005.

Throughout history, Occidental music—specifically the style known as pop-rock that surfaced sixty years ago—has maintained a close relationship with the concept of solidarity. This essay will focus its attention on the musical feedback around the notion of solidarity emanating from Europe and the United States. The essay centers on certain given songs that have signaled a turning point with respect to this concept, that is, songs that have meant a break from the past since they were played for the first time. Likewise, the analysis stresses the individual prominence of certain singers and musical initiatives that, by means of music, have promoted solidarity.

Music can both promote solidarity as much as unfasten the opposite reaction; it will all depend on the final ends it may be put to. This essay will concentrate on those examples in which music has contributed to the establishment of a more harmonious world by joining efforts to transform reality and enhance solidarity among human beings. Music is an expressive language that allows us to communicate (both at the individual and collective levels) feelings, lived experiences and reflections about the world stemming from real life or the collective imaginary. Likewise it can increase participation. Artists share their experiences and ideas showing to the world their creations and turning their individuality into something social. Thus, art describes and reinvents the world by means of values based on non-violence, dialogue and solidarity at the same time as it stimulates reflection. Certain values such as solidarity, respect, teamwork—or even listening, dialoguing and communicating emotionally—can be acquired by means of it. Similarly, it eases intergenerational and intercultural communication allowing us to rethink past and present (and even imagined, future) events in order to learn from them and avoid the repetition of the same mistakes in the future.

According to the *Enciclopedia de Paz y Conflictos* (2004, 1070-72), one of the features of the concept of solidarity is its ability to assume the inevitable, though sometimes necessary, “asymmetry” in human relationships and turn it into a common good of humanity—particularly of those who suffer the most its negative consequences. It is as essential for society to join the efforts of its members so as to achieve a common goal, as it is pressing for them to assume a consciously collaborative attitude with all those cultures, societies and peoples that may need them at any given time. Solidarity aims at facilitating the coexistence of all human beings by fostering values of respect, mutual support and interdependence.

Music can, therefore, contribute to this coexistence and sensitize people about certain questions. Musical pieces bear witness to our deeds (both real and imaginary) and encourage us to reflect on our surroundings. We cannot obviate that, just as Johan Galtung states, “[a]rt uproots us into a virtual reality. Art is something that has touched our soul and moved it on” (Urbain, et al. 2008, 54). However, we should not forget either that:

This may not happen at all. We sit through a concert, walk through an art gallery, read a book--yet nothing touches our soul, nothing moves us. Is there something wrong with us? With the artist? Or the art product? Or, possibly a better angle, with the relation? Not the right art for me-here-now? To say honestly, it did not touch me, seems as much a human right as the right to have access to that moving, uprooting, uplifting experience” (Urbain, et al. 2008, 54-55).

Nevertheless, as Galtung comments, in listening to a song it may as well “touch our soul.” It is through listening to that song that we can approach a specific social reality (close or distant) that arouses in us the ability to observe the needs of others. This may bring forth awareness about world issues and, maybe, contribute to universal solidarity.

Songs

This essay opened with a song by Eros Ramazzotti called *Solaridad*, which deals with the notion of solidarity in a positive manner. The song shows an interest in others’ wellbeing, aims at obtaining common good, and presupposes feelings of co-responsibility. The invented word that names the song is thus connected to the notion of solidarity that this essay analyzes. Ramazzotti creates a concept that sheds new light on the meaning of solidarity. The idea is simple: we have a shared responsibility. By means of this song, the author iterates the need to “open the eyes that are getting used to not wanting to see.” When solidarity springs forth, our conscience arouses and allows us to discern all that we wouldn’t or couldn’t see before. Solidarity means ‘union,’ a union in which people realize they are not alone and need each other to live.

As a general rule it is unavoidable to transcend the dimensions of musical pieces and recognize that music is not simply about aesthetics, but also about ethics. As already mentioned, songs may have (or not) an effect over the people who listen to them. As such, they may generate emotions and feelings, promote empathy, augment people’s involvement in certain causes, and provoke behavioral changes. Songs allow us as well to prevent some realities. As Josep Martí explains: “Many of the changes that society goes through are foretold in music before they actually take place; this is so

simply because music conveys ideas and feelings that in a nearby future may derive on social change" (2000, 18).

Many authors have composed songs that, though not necessarily centered on solidarity, have triggered a compassionate response at different levels. This was the case with *We Shall Overcome*, a gospel song popularized by Pete Seeger, which became the hymn of the civil rights movement in the United States of America. The song voiced the need to "overcome" and sang for racial equality. Furthermore, the song has found new applications in different movements around the globe where it has encouraged solidarity among people drawn together by the same cause. Also important was Peter Grabiell's *Biko*, a desperate cry that denounced South African apartheid and captivated international attention around this country's situation. Steve Biko was a black political leader, deceased in 1977, who was arrested by South African security forces without formal accusation or legal procedure. Likewise, the song *They Dance Alone* by Sting was dedicated to the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the May Square) who danced alone facing the disappearance of their husbands, fathers, sons or brothers. The song thus referred to the "disappearances" occurred during the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. Relevant as well was Lluís Llach's *L'Estaca* ("The Stake") which served as a hymn against Franco's dictatorship but which was also put to various ends in different movements (such as, for instance, becoming the hymn of the Polish labor union *Solidarność*).

Though it is hard to measure the impact that some songs may have on society, some of them may be able to produce the springing of universal solidarity in their audience, hence helping us to observe the needs of other humans (near or far) that suffer around us every day; for we are all part of the same reality. Thus, the previously mentioned songs send a message of solidarity, equality, fraternity and mutual help. These values have inspired various social movements and promoted responsibility, generosity, participation and cooperation in human beings.

All these songs, and many others, have elucidated the situations lived in various places that, consequently, have become nearer realities. Furthermore, these songs can generate winds of change, movements of protest and support for the causes they defend. As Jacqueline Adams suggests:

Music can be a source of strength (Eyerman and Jamison 1998), courage (Denisoff 1983; Sanger 1997), and hope for a happier future (Qualter 1963, 99). It can reinforce energies (Garofalo 1992^a; Pratt 1992), produce pleasure (Jasper 1998), and create collective effervescence (Useful to movements) "By transporting participants onto another plane, into what they feel is a more ethereal, or at any rate different, reality" (Jasper 1997, 118).

Related to this notion, and also salient, was the musical movement that surfaced in the USA around the period of racial integration in which racial differences among musicians were left aside to prioritize a common goal: racial equality. The concept of solidarity sprang in the musical field and conquered, step by step, the social, cultural, economic and political arenas. Music managed to change society and improve coexistence long before politics. Some key names of the aforementioned movement were Pete Seeger, Peter, Paul and Mary, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Harry Belafonte, Odetta, James Brown, Nina Simone, Marvin Gaye, Gil Scott Heron, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Abbey Lincoln, Charles Mingus, Max Roach, and Sonny Rollins, in addition to some European figures such as Yves Montand, Simone Signoret, Peter Otul and

Hugues Aufray. With their songs, many already a part of collective memory, change was favored.

Also relevant, La Nueva Canción Latinoamericana and La Nova Cançó Catalana (Spain), were two later political and musical movements in which musicians fought against different established political regimes carrying messages of justice, democracy, solidarity and respect with their songs and acts. The ideas of solidarity and cooperation became a collective referent for the political and social transformations of those contexts.

Large Concerts

The celebration of concerts in favor of different causes reflects one of the most obvious relationships between music and solidarity. Music has been an excellent media to bring public attention onto different issues. Thus, concerts have been used to: reclaim peace; show opposition to diverse armed conflicts; gain support for their victims (*Woodstock, War Don Don The Peace Festival, Paz sin Fronteras*); defend nuclear disarmament (*No Nukes*); question established political regimes (*Freedom Festival on Clapham Common, The Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute Concert*); or show respect for the environment as a guarantee of security for future generations (*Live Earth*).

Humanitarian crises have been the focus of great attention from the world of music, particularly so with food crises, which have generated the most intense reactions with respect to the concept of solidarity (*The Bangladesh Concert, The Concert for Kampuchea, Do They Know It's Christmas? Band Aid, Live Aid, Band Aid 20, Live 8, We Are the World*).

Concerts have become great sensitizing resources capable of arousing social attention and awareness around particular issues. These events stand out for the stunning amount of people they attract (we are talking, for instance, of forty thousand people in *The Bangladesh Concert* of the seventies, or two million in the concerts of *Live 8* in 2005). Furthermore, the high levels of media coverage of these events may make people realize their importance.

Hence, music provides a possible space of encounter between individuals from different cultural traditions and ways of interpreting reality. Some of these spaces of encounter have engendered social movements of solidarity. In the words of Josep Martí: “Music, with its unparalleled gathering power, is capable of expressing ways of thinking, of articulating human groups” (2000, 14). Similarly, according to R. Eyerman and A. Jamison, “The music of social movements transcends the boundaries of the self and binds the individual to a collective consciousness” (1998, 163).

In these concerts, the protagonism and leadership of singers has been a key factor in the spreading, reinforcement and promotion of initiatives pro-solidarity. These are well-known singers who are famous not only for their musical careers and the social content of their songs and acts, but also for having become involved in the defence of peace or other fair causes. Their actions can have a “multiplying effect” since their status allows them a greater repercussion and implication at a social, political, ideological or cultural level. As will be shown later on, prime among them are George Harrison, Paul McCartney, Bob Geldof and Michael Jackson. Nonetheless, it is also important to bear in mind that their actions have never been, nor will ever be, exempt

from criticism. Frequently, they have been criticized due to their lifestyles, excesses, eccentricities, opportunistic attitudes...

It was not until the seventies when two solidarity concerts took place, *Bangladesh* and *Kampuchea*, that the union of music and solidarity crystallized. However, the solidarity concerts together with the reunion of musicians to fight against injustices did not acquire international dimensions until the eighties, when various musical initiatives such as the recording of songs and the organization of concerts materialized.

George Harrison and Ravi Shankar organized *The Bangladesh Concert* with the objective of gathering funds for this region which, in the year 1971, gained its independence from East Pakistan¹. This area suffered in its own territory the severest atrocity of war: one million people died and ten million were displaced towards India, upset by hunger, unsanitary conditions, cholera (among other deadly diseases) and problems derived from the floods during the seasonal rains. It was then when George Harrison, sharing Ravi Shankar's personal desire to do something about his people, wrote the song *Bangladesh*: "My friend came to me with sadness in his eyes, told me that he wanted help before his country dies. Although I couldn't feel the pain I knew I had to try. Now I'm asking all of you to help us save some lives. My friend came to me, with sadness in his eyes."

In due time, this song crystallized into a concert that took place in New York's Madison Square Garden, where George Harrison had the support of Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, Leon Russell and Billy Preston among others. This concert became one of the most important gatherings to collect funds for Bangladesh ever witnessed. Forty thousand people attended the event and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were collected. Singers agreed to sing for free and they ultimately ceded the rights of their songs and of the sales of a triple LP called *The Bangladesh Concert* to the cause. Profits went to UNICEF which used them to facilitate basic nutrition for children, drinkable water, blankets and clothes for the refugees. George Harrison created the organization *The George Harrison Fund for UNICEF* to support children in situations of humanitarian crisis².

Later on, in 1979, *The Concert for Kampuchea* was organized in The London Hammersmith Odeon. The aim was to collect funds to help the people of Kampuchea (Cambodia) since, between 1975 and 1979, this state was under the political regime of terror of Pol Pot (which meant the killing of two million people). Paul McCartney organized the concert and played with The Who, The Clash, The Grateful Dead, Beach Boys and Jefferson Starship among others.

Back then, music helped to "open the eyes" of the people to the events occurring in other places around the world. Those who participated in these enterprises did it, either to enjoy the music and have a good time, to see their favorite bands or as a means of entertainment. Some even attended these concerts because of some personal sympathy with the aim of the event, that is, to fight for justice, equality and solidarity. Solidarity was therefore erected as an essential value that motivated people in their fight for justice. Music was the means through which people from other cultures showed their solidarity for the situations that others were going through, opening possible future scenarios to transform together a reality that affected all humanity.

In 1984, another singer, Bob Geldof, was shocked by the situation Ethiopia was in. Back then, seven million Ethiopians were threatened by death due to the hunger and the illnesses that Sahel's drought had caused. This situation was worsened both by the war between the governments of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Tigray, which caused a large

displacement of civilians, as well as by merciless and endless agricultural politics of collectivization (Mengistu government). After watching on T.V. a documentary by Michael Buerk on this topic, Bob Geldof decided it was about time to do something about it and, together with Midge Ure, wrote the song *Do they Know It's Christmas?* gathering more than thirty British musicians to record the song. This group, known as *Band Aid*, welcomed other bands to the recording such as Duran Duran, Culture Club, U2, Bananarama, Phil Collins and Paul Young. Exploiting the capacity for Christmas to foster solidarity feelings, the song invited occidental societies to open their arms towards the rest of the world. It became one of the best-selling singles in England during that year's Christmas and topped Britain's and other countries' hit lists³. Thus, three million copies were sold in the United Kingdom (eight million copies all over the world), and twelve million Euros were collected and sent to Ethiopia through Bob Geldof's *Band Aid Trust Fund*.

The echoes of these initiatives for Africa were heard in the United States of America where Harry Belafonte contacted Ken Kragen. Together, they decided to call Michael Jackson who wrote the song *We Are the World* with Lionel Richie. These artists brought together the country's most prominent figures at the time under the name *USA for Africa* (*USA, United Support of Artists for Africa*) and had Quincy Jones as producer of the single. More than fifty musicians joined this venture, among them: Paul Simon, Cyndi Lauper, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Diana Ross, Ray Charles, Tina Turner, Stevie Wonder and Bob Geldof. They edited the song and a complete album with some extra materials to collect funds and fight the hunger and drought of that decade in Africa. More than sixty two million dollars were collected, 90% of which went to projects against hunger in Africa (sending food, medicines, clothes and blankets, among other materials), and the remaining 10% was used to fight hunger in the USA. In less than seven days, seven million singles and four and a half million LPs were sold. On the 5th of April 1985, five thousand radio stations all over the world concurrently broadcasted the song, which became the world's most simultaneously listened to song in history. The song emphasizes that "the world must come together as one," hoping to bring people to do something for one another, so "let's start giving"⁴.

Nonetheless, and even though all these initiatives were remarkable, they couldn't eradicate poverty in Africa, and so Bob Geldof set out on a new project, organizing *Live Aid*, a simultaneous super-concert between London's Wembley Stadium and Philadelphia's John F. Kennedy Stadium, that lasted twenty five hours and that took place on the 13th of July 1985⁵. The Who, Paul McCartney, George Michael, U2, Elton John, David Bowie, Madonna, Bryan Adams, Bryan Ferry, Paul Young, Elvis Costello, Queen, Spandau Ballet, Sade, Sting, Dire Straits, Bob Dylan, Beach Boys, Simple Minds, Phil Collins and part of the Rolling Stones, among others, participated in the concert. One hundred and sixty two thousand people attended the concert, ninety thousand in Philadelphia and seventy two thousand in London, plus one and a half billion viewers in one hundred and forty countries around the world. Eighty million dollars were collected and sent to seven African countries (Mozambique, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Sudan, Ethiopia) in order to fund sanitation, agricultural and irrigation projects, send tons of seeds, milk powder, sugar, vegetable oil, energy cookies, medical provisions and vitamins, together with land rovers, water tanks, trucks, hospital tents, and cruises to transport all these materials. Later on, they edited an album that became the best-selling charity album until then, collecting one hundred and forty million dollars with it. Likewise, a DVD came out in 2004 by the name *Live Aid, July 13, 1985, The Day the Music Changed the World*.

Collecting funds to solve humanitarian and economic problems was the *leitmotiv* of these concerts and songs. Hence, and as this analysis has already stressed, music allied with solidarity in order to achieve a common good brought attention to the life-threatening circumstances people in other areas of the world lived in.

However, and in spite of overall good will, time has allowed us to realize the incapacity of these initiatives to ultimately transform the situation. These events were a momentary patch for the needy but did not succeed in abolishing the causes that had provoked the inequalities, leading to dependency. Even though they turned our attentions towards international issues that deserved notice, channeling possible aids, music, unfortunately, had a limited impact. To achieve real change, efforts should come not only from the world of music, but also from other arenas such as politics or the economy.

In the last few years the concept of the solidarity concert has undergone transformations. No longer is fund-collecting a priority. Nowadays, raising people's awareness about other realities is favored in order to stimulate social transformation. With this aim in mind, Bob Geldof organized the ten free concerts of *Live 8, The Long Walk to Justice*, in the cities of Paris, Berlin, Rome, Philadelphia, Toronto, Tokyo, Moscow (G8 members), Johannesburg and Scotland, in between the 2nd and 6th of July 2005⁶. More than a hundred and fifty bands and one thousand two hundred and fifty artists and musicians of the entire world participated in this enterprise, including Madonna, U2, Coldplay, REM, Elton John, Paul McCartney, Björk, Jamiroquai, Youssou N'Dour, Green Day and Annie Lennox. The live concerts were attended by an audience of two million people, and another three million in more than one hundred and forty countries around the globe, followed it on T.V, radio, the Internet or their mobile phones. The concerts were a part of the international campaign *Make Poverty History*, —international coalition of NGOs and charitable foundations that intended to cut poverty in half by 2015—, and coincided with both the twentieth anniversary of the first *Live Aid* concert, and the summit that the G8 countries celebrated in Gleneagles, Scotland. The aim was to obtain political justice by pressuring these countries so as for them to ultimately eradicate poverty, cancel foreign debt, increase international help and change the rules of global trade to make them more fair.

Bob Geldof asked musicians not to discredit politicians onstage. The motto was to establish bonds with these countries' leaders, so as to put some pressure on them and make poverty a priority on their agenda during the Scottish summit. Kofi Annan, former secretary general of the UN, was one of the participants in the event. He stated:

Live 8 can really help to change the world ... I have come to express gratitude to the artists who are dedicating their talent to such an important cause. It is wonderful to see so many young people engaged in this campaign against poverty. This generation can make poverty become history. They believe that a better world is possible if we have the willpower to build it; these are the real United Nations. The entire world has joined in favour of the poor⁷.

Although thirty million people adhered to the *Live 8* campaign submitting a signatures list to Tony Blair—who was, back then, the G8 President—it is still too soon to know the impact of this initiative.

Thus, in all these concerts music has played a fundamental role since it has raised individual consciousness and fostered collective identity. John Blacking explains: “Music has the role of reinforcing experiences that have turned out to be

significant for social life, while bringing people more closely together” (2006, 17) and similarly, Maria João writes: "Art can be the beginning of a pacific revolution that restores dignity where it seems to have disappeared, constituting a spiritual alternative" (2005, nnp)⁸. Art has been a key tool in the transformation of reality; it has given shape to social movements that inform about the daily routines of other places, sensitizing and mobilizing people.

However, and in spite of the good will of the musicians, these initiatives have had to face numberless critiques; among them those pertaining to: problems in the organization, leadership conflicts, the search for prominence, problems with the funds collected, or around many other matters which, it seems, music has failed to address adequately⁹. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that, as much as these concerts can expand the field of action of solidarity, they can, as well, lose their effectiveness by making such events ‘common.’

Different Musical Initiatives around Solidarity

In addition to those famous songs and massive concerts that focus our attention around solidarity, many other similar though more modest initiatives are being currently implemented. In massive concerts, the huge structure and influence of the event can sometimes obscure the real motive behind it; whereas in smaller initiatives, solidarity springs forth from the interpersonal relationships established among human beings. Solidarity makes no exceptions: it surfaces everywhere from one’s commitment to others. Solidarity is all about allowing the silenced to speak. It fosters co-operation, coalitions, dialogue, understanding, etc.

As an example of this, Cristina del Valle created in Spain the *Platform for Women Artists against Gender Violence* (Plataforma de Mujeres Artistas Contra la Violencia de Género) in 1997¹⁰. This singer had for long tried to create an organization in which women from various cultural backgrounds could come together and lobby for real measures against gender violence. Her initiative gained the support of more than twenty five women artists who organized around this platform and started talks, conferences, interviews, and numerous concerts in various parts of the world. All with the intention to show and share women’s solidarity around those issues that affected them the most. Making use of their condition as singers and females, they denounced and made visible certain issues in Sahara, Baghdad, Palestine and Mexico. It was precisely in Ciudad Juarez where they showed their sympathy to the organizations of mothers of victims and condemned the impunity of the murderers of countless women in that state.

A different proposal is *Music Fund*, created in 2002 by the Belgian musician Lukas Pairen¹¹. The goal of this organization is to recycle old musical instruments from the Occident and use them anew in zones of armed conflict such as the Middle East or Africa, where they may allow its citizens to find new creative ways of coming to terms with the hard realities they face. The idea is to create bridges between Europe and these places by means of music, training luthiers in the manufacturing and the preservation of instruments (By April 2009, one thousand and five hundred instruments had already been recycled in Europe).

In the last few years several multiethnic orchestras have developed where music works as a bond between peoples from different countries and cultures, fostering integration, communication and solidarity. One of the most remarkable examples is the

West Eastern Divan Orchestra, funded by pianist, orchestra director and great peace defender, Daniel Barenboim, and the Palestinian writer Edward W. Said (1935-2003). More than seventy musicians (mostly young Israelis and Palestinians, but also some from other Middle Eastern countries and Europe) play together with “the aim of combining musical study and development with the sharing of knowledge and comprehension between people from cultures that traditionally have been rivals”¹².

The *Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio*, the *08001 project* and the *The Silk Road Project* are also important¹³. The first one, based in Rome, originally assembled more than twenty musicians from around the world drawn together by music. This group offers a powerful message of fraternity and peace, promoting intercultural integration and communication, and disseminating a positive image about immigration. The second, born in Barcelona and conceived as a *work in progress*, is formed by a group of musicians in continuous evolution that opens its musical proposal to all those artists around the globe arriving at the neighborhood of El Raval. Finally, the latter project, funded by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, connects musicians, composers, artists and public from Asia, Europe and America as a way to multicultural and interdisciplinary exchange.

All these enterprises encourage solidarity among individuals from everywhere. Music is the language that allows dialogue and communication. The present context is one in which the projects described throughout this essay can help us establish the bases for a better coexistence between human beings. Solidarity makes us human; it unites us; because sharing solidarity among one another is receiving solidarity in exchange. The lack of solidarity perverts us, separates us and denies our very nature. It is our responsibility to choose what we want.

Notes

1. For further information visit: <<http://www.concertforbangladesh.com/>>
2. This foundation continues to support the UNICEF program for this country.
3. The song inspired other local and international musicians to follow this example and create different *Band Aid* groups. In the summer of 1985 twenty similar albums had seen the light in different countries: *Band Für Africa*, in Germany, with the song *Nackt Im Wind*; *Chanson Sans Frontiers* in France; *Tears Are Not Enough* from the group *Northern Lights* in Canada; *All of Us* in Norway; and *Yu Rock Mission* in the former Yugoslavia. Similar concerts, by the same slogan, were held in the former USSR, Japan, Austria or Australia.
4. Another important song during this decade was *Cantaré, cantarás* recorded in Latin America in order to collect funds for the UNICEF campaigns. 90% of profits went to Latin America and the remaining 10% went to Africa. The song made a plea for solidarity: “*My friend, my friend there’s nothing to fear, I’m with you.*” (Originally: “*Amigo, amigo no hay nada que temer estoy contigo.*”)

In 2004, a different concert under the slogan *We Are the Future* took place in Rome. This concert, produced by Quincy Jones (producer as well of the former *We Are the World*), was turned into a song later on. Musicians such as Carlos Santana, Alicia Keys, Andrea Bocelli, Fher (de Maná), Josh Groban, Herbie Hancock, Juanes, Noa, Khaled, Youssou N’Dour or Zucchero were part of this initiative. Entrance to the concert was for free, but the funds collected thanks to

- donations, publicity and rights of retransmission, went to the construction and maintenance of six childhood centers in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Rwanda and Cisjordania. Information extracted from the website: <<http://www.wearethefuture.com>> (currently unavailable).
5. That same year, *Tam Tam pour l’Ethiopie* (an album) was recorded in order to fight hunger in Ethiopia.
 6. For more information see: <<http://www.live8live.com/>>.
 7. Comments extracted from the internet websites: <<http://cronica.com.mx/nota.php?idc=189958>>; <<http://iblnews.com/story.php?id=619>>
 8. Valverde, Fernando, “*Maria João Pires propone una revolución de las artes*”. El País, 31/08/05: final edition.
 9. For instance, in David Rieff’s “Dangerous Pity”, (*Prospect*. Issue 112. July 2005) the author suggests that the help derived both from the song *Do They Know It’s Christmas?* and the *Live Aid* concert contributed to a project for the relocation of the displaced populations fostered by the Mengishtu government.

Another point of friction surfaced around the huge presence of European and North American singers in the *Live 8* concert as compared to the small participation of African artists, when the goal was to increase the visibility of poverty in Africa. On the other hand, in 2003, a *Live Aid* version was implemented in Africa under the slogan *A birr for a compatriot* (Birr, Ethiopian coin) which names the organization created to fight hunger and poverty in that country. They recorded a song under that same slogan which says: “Let’s fight against the enemy with hoes and a spade... To change our name from receivers to achievers.” Available at: *Ethiopian Singers Release Live Aid-style Song*, <<http://medilinkz.org/news/news2.asp?NewsID=2487>> (07/05/09).

In 2004, twenty years after *Do They Know It’s Christmas?* was recorded, the twentieth anniversary of the original *Band Aid* song took place. To celebrate the event, Bob Geldof recorded a new version of the song with the newly formed *Band Aid 20* in which artists such as Robbie Williams, Dido, Sugababes, Fran Healy, Bono, Ms Dynamite, Tom Chaplin (Keane) or Joss Stone participated. In spite of the time elapsed since the first version of the song came out, they decided to keep the lyrics intact except for a few new verses: “Spare a thought this yuletide for the deprived, if the table was turned would you survive?... You ain’t gotta feel guilt, just selfless, give a little help, to the helpless YO!” This time, profits went to Darfur (Sudan), region which was suffering an intense humanitarian crisis.

Even though it is true that overall plans to overcome poverty have not produced the expected results, it is also true that international aid has developed since the 1980s. Nowadays, paternalistic reactions to promote development are senseless. What is the sense in recording a song with the same lyrics? Or, in celebrating an anniversary? Are we still facing the same reality? Why hasn’t music being able to react?

10. Available at: <<http://www.cristinadelvalle.com/web3/modules/news/>>
11. Check out : <<http://www.musicfund.be/>>
12. Quote taken from: <<http://www.barenboim-said.org/>>

13. For the Roman project check: <<http://www.orchestradiapiazzavittorio.it>>; for the 08001 project see: <<http://www.08001.org/>>; to access the information about the Silk Road Project please visit: <<http://www.silkroadproject.org/>>

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