



Càtedra *Pau Casals*

FUNDACIÓ
Pau Casals

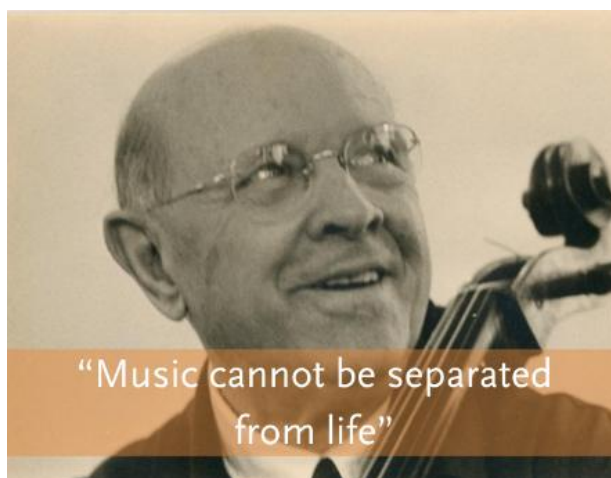
UOC Universitat Oberta
de Catalunya

PABLO CASALS

Pablo Casals was an exceptional cello performer who marked a before and after in the interpretative technique of the cello, one of the most important orchestra conductors of his time, and a great composer. In his capacity as a musician, he combined the defence of peace, human rights, and democracy. In turbulent times, he defended a world without borders with music as a universal language of fraternity among peoples. He was invited on three occasions to visit and perform for the United Nations General Assembly, also delivering historic speeches with great impact. Pablo Casals received from the United Nations the commission to compose a hymn for the UN (Hymn of Peace), which was performed and conducted for the first time in 1971. In recognition of his humanitarian work and the defence of peace, he received the first United Nations Peace Medal.



THE PABLO CASALS CHAIR



The Pablo Casals Chair is a project established in agreement between the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) and the Pablo Casals Foundation with the aim of promoting research, knowledge, dissemination, and contemporary debate on the musical and humanistic dimension of Pablo Casals and his extraordinary legacy, as well as the values he defended throughout his life.

A Chair to foster the commitment of

culture and music to the major problems of today's society, to bring together people, researchers, and artists. A space for reflection and research on the role of music in

intercultural dialogue and the institutions that defend human rights and multilateralism for a better world. The Chair presents two central areas of activity:

- I. The musical legacy of Pablo Casals. Pablo Casals as a complete musician: performer, conductor, and composer.
- II. The humanistic legacy of Pablo Casals and the contemporary interpretation of the defence of peace, democracy, and human rights.

OBJECTIVES

- I. To promote research, dissemination, and musicological and historiographical knowledge of the artistic work and the facets of Pablo Casals as performer, orchestra conductor, and composer.
- II. To promote research, knowledge production, dissemination, and contemporary debate on the relationship between music, the defence of the values of peace, human rights, and democracy.
- III. To contribute to the strengthening of culture, and more specifically musical expression, within the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, and the various UNESCO conventions, with special attention to the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.
- IV. The promotion of music as an intangible heritage fundamental for social cohesion, multicultural dialogue, and conflict prevention.

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

- I. **Training activities:** Teaching scholarships, awards for final projects, participation in the organization of training programs, conferences and seminars, promotion of educational cooperation (internship students), collaboration in the training plans of the company/entity, promotion of expert meetings in the chair's area of interest.
- II. **Research and innovation activities:** Research scholarships and grants, development of joint research lines, carrying out research and innovation projects, completion of doctoral theses in cooperation with the company/entity, promotion of national and international expert meetings on topics of interest, cooperation to obtain research projects at the Catalan, Spanish, and European levels, promotion of entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer.

- III. **Dissemination, knowledge exchange, and international projection activities:** Organization of scientific and humanistic outreach days, collaboration in the promotion of scientific, cultural, social, or humanistic events, encouragement of publications on topics of interest, support for doctoral theses in the chair's area of interest, distinction and recognition of international initiatives related to the musical and humanistic legacy of Pablo Casals.

MANAGEMENT



Dr. Joan Fuster-Sobrepere
Chair Holder

Doctor in History from Universitat Pompeu Fabra and Bachelor in Philosophy from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Postgraduate in Management of Cultural Institutions from ESADE Alta Direcció. Associate Professor of Contemporary History in the Studies of Art and Humanities at the UOC. Former Director of the Studies of Art and Humanities at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. Founder and Director of the Master's in Humanities: Art, Literature, and Contemporary Culture. Member of the consolidated research group Identitat.



Dr. Alfons Martinell Sempere
Co-holder of the Chair

Doctor in Pedagogy from the Universitat de Girona. Bachelor in Philosophy and Letters from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Member of the Spanish Network for Sustainable Development. Former Director General of Cultural and Scientific Relations at the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain. Honorary Director of the UNESCO Chair: Cultural Policies and Cooperation. Professor Emeritus at the Universitat de Girona. Gold Medal of Merit in Fine Arts (2024).

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Chair has two advisory committees composed of distinguished individuals in the fields of music, peace, and human rights.

- **Music Advisory Committee**

Asier Polo, internationally renowned cellist. 2019 National Music Award from the Ministry of Culture.

Bernard Meillat, musical advisor of the Pablo Casals Foundation and artistic director of the Pablo Casals International Music Festival.

Enrique Barón, president of the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation Spain.

Ester Bonal, co-director of Xamfrà, Center for Music and Performing Arts for Social Inclusion, winner of a 2022 Gold Medal from the Spanish Academy of Performing Arts.

Jonathan Brown, violist of the Casals Quartet.

Maria Claudia Parias, president of the Batuta National Foundation (Colombia).

Marie Hallynck, internationally renowned cellist.

Mireia Pacareu, classical music editor at the European Broadcasting Union.

Núria Sempere, general director of the Higher School of Music of Catalonia (ESMUC).

Ruth Miura, teacher trainer for the European Suzuki Association.

- **Peace and human rights advisory committee**

Ana Barrero, president of the Spanish Association for Peace Research (aiPAZ) and director of the Culture of Peace Foundation.

Arantza Acha, director of UNESCO Etxea, the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country.

Daniel Innerarity, professor of political and social philosophy and researcher at the University of the Basque Country.

Esther Barbé, researcher at IBEI and professor at UAB.

Hannes Swoboda, president of the International Institute for Peace.

Jean-Jacques Bedu, writer and founder of Mare Nostrum – Une Méditerranée Autrement.

Joan Manuel Tresserras, professor at UAB and former Minister of Culture of the Generalitat of Catalonia.

Xavier Mas de Xaxàs, journalist and diplomatic correspondent for La Vanguardia.



Pol Morillas, director of CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs).

TECHNICAL TEAM

- **Direction of the Pablo Casals Foundation, Jordi Pardo.** Member of the UNESCO Cultural Policy Expert Group 2011–2015; member of the European Commission Expert Team for European Capitals of Culture 2012–2016. He has directed and advised cultural projects in various countries across Europe, Asia, and the Americas.
- **Historical and documentary advising, Núria Ballester.** Director of the Pablo Casals Museum with experience in conservation, research, and heritage dissemination. Cultural affairs and community relations.
- **Technical Secretary of the Chair, Marina Galbe.** Cultural manager and project coordinator

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES 2022

25 of January. *Signing ceremony of the agreement between the UOC and the Pablo Casals Foundation to establish the “Pablo Casals Chair: Music and the Defence of Peace and Human Rights,” at the UOC headquarters.*

The aim of this chair is to promote contemporary research, dissemination, and debate on the musical and humanistic dimension of Pablo Casals and his extraordinary legacy. A chair designed to foster the commitment of culture and music to the major challenges of today's society, bringing together individuals, researchers, and artists. A space for reflection and research on the role of music in intercultural dialogue and the institutions that defend human rights and multilateralism for a better world.



Signing of the collaboration agreement between the Pablo Casals Foundation and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, carried out at a public event in January 2022.

Signing of the agreement between Rector Planell and Mr. Narcís Serra.

27 October. / *Chair Conference: Culture and Heritage at War*, at Pati Manning in Barcelona (CERC of the Barcelona Provincial Council).

32 in-person attendees / 50 online attendees / 112 subsequent views



The first Chair Conference highlighted the importance of defending human and cultural rights in times of conflict and featured presentations and contributions from: Jan Hladík, exsecretari del Comitè de Protecció dels Béns Culturals de l'UNESCO.

- Jesús Prieto de Pedro, Emeritus Professor at UNED, specialist in cultural law
- Isber Sabrine, Syrian archaeologist, President of Heritage for Peace
- Glòria Munilla, Chair of Historical and Archaeological Heritage at UOC
- Ricard San Vicente, Professor of Slavic Philology at the University of Barcelona
- Jordi Pascual, Culture Coordinator at UCLG and specialist in cultural rights

- Alfons Martinell, Co-director of the Chair
- Joan Fuster-Sobrepere, Director of the Chair
- Jordi Pardo, Director General of the Pablo Casals Foundation

Poster



More information

2022-2024. *Research project: Pablo Casals and Aid to Refugees*. Researcher: Gemma Caballer, PhD candidate at the University of Barcelona. With the support of the Memorial Democràtic of the Generalitat de Catalunya.



The first research project was assigned to Gemma Caballer, a doctoral student at the University of Barcelona (2023–2024).

The objective of the research project is to study the figure of Pablo Casals and his humanitarian work, particularly within the Spanish Refugee Aid, a charitable organization that raised funds to help Spanish refugees exiled in southern France, founded in 1953 by Nancy Gardiner McDonald (1910–1996).

Pablo Casals served as Honorary President from its founding, alongside the President of Mexico, Lázaro Cárdenas. The active role Casals took in this organization was highly significant and represented most of his charitable activity until the final years of his life. He continued collaborating with the organization until his death in 1973.

From its founding in 1953 until its dissolution in 2006, the SRA provided aid to nearly 6,000 Spanish refugees through its New York headquarters and its French offices in Paris, Montauban, and Toulouse.

The completed research work has now been received, and a publisher is being sought to publish and officially present it.

Sources consulted:

- Pablo Casals Collection, National Archive of Catalonia
- SRA (Spanish Refugee Aid) Collection, Memorial Democràtic, Generalitat de Catalunya
- Spanish Refugee Aid Collection, Tamiment Library & Wagner Labor Archives, New York





From April 13 to 19, the researcher travelled to New York to consult the Spanish Refugee Aid Collection at the Tamiment Library & Wagner Labor Archives.

[More information](#)



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