



Pau Casals UNESCO Chair

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UOC Universitat Oberta
de Catalunya



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Chair



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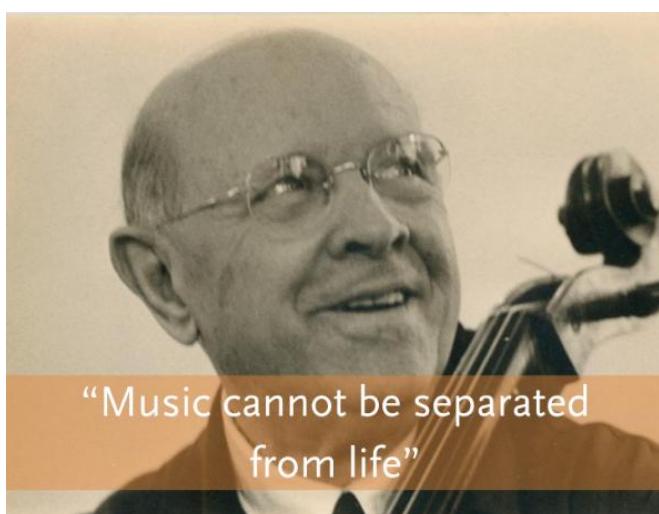


PABLO CASALS

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 UNESCO PABLO CASALS CHAIR for music, the defense of peace and human rights



problems of today's society, to bring together people, researchers, and artists.

The UNESCO 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



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.



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UNESCO CHAIR

The UNESCO Pablo Casals Chair for music, the defence of peace, and human rights was recognized in 2024 by UNESCO, within the framework of the UNESCO/UNITWIN program. This recognition is related to the significance of the project, the importance of Pablo Casals' musical and humanistic legacy, which also highlights his historic connection with the UN. Pablo Casals was invited on four occasions, received the commission to compose the United Nations Hymn for Peace, and in 1971, Secretary-General U Thant awarded him the United Nations Peace Medal.



UNESCO Chairs are an initiative of the United Nations Organization aimed at improving research and training through the establishment of university networks and the promotion of interuniversity cooperation. An initiative approved in 1992 that currently includes 850 institutions from various member states.



DIRECTION



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 Dirección. 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 Identicat.



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.
- **Management technician for the documentary collections**, Isaura Solé. Degree in History of Art from the University of Barcelona, Master's degree in Libraries and Heritage Collections



and PhD in Information and Communication from the same university. Documentalist and management technician for the documentary collections of the Pau Casals Foundation.

- Technical Secretary of the Chair, Laia Duaso. Cultural manager and project coordinator.

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES 2025

January. *The Chair became part of the group of UNESCO Chairs on a Culture of Peace* at the request of the Fundación Cultura de Paz, which launched the project “Red Global de Universidades e Instituciones Científicas y Artísticas, de Apoyo a las Cátedras de Educación para la Paz, la Convivencia Democrática, los Derechos Humanos, Educación y Sostenibilidad”.

16 January. *Lecture by Albert Fontelles and Anna Costal at the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico* entitled: “From Festívol to the Prelude El Pessebre: An approach to Pau Casals’ musical catalogue through his sardanas.”

From 3 February to 13 April. *Submission period for applications for the 3rd Call of the 2025 Research Grants*. With the support of the Entidad de Gestión de los Artistas Intérpretes o Ejecutantes de la Música (AIE).

- Applications: 58
- Nationalities: 27 (Austria, Brazil, China, Colombia, USA, Spain, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Guinea, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar, Nairobi, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, United Kingdom, Rwanda, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Chile, Zimbabwe).
- Origin of applications: 7 from Catalan universities and research centres, 9 from centres in the rest of Spain, and 42 from international institutions.

5 February. *Presentation by Alfons Martinell and Joan Fuster on the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair at the UOC*, within the framework of the Jornada de Transferència.

13 February. *Lecture by Alfons Martinell at the Cultural Observatory of the University of Valencia* as part of “Educating in Cultural Rights: From Declarations to Practices.”





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13 March. *Participation of Alfons Martinell in the Jornada Cultura i Drets Humans* organised by the Catalan Association for Peace, within the framework of the Festival INCERT.

10 March. *Interview with Dr. Alfons Martinell in Melómano* magazine to speak about the Chair. The interview appears in the section “Descubriendo a...”

20 March. Presentation of the 2023 research grant projects and the *Papers de la Càtedra* collection at ESMUC.

- *From Festívol a the Prelude of El Pessebre. An approach to Pau Casals' musical catalogue through his sardanas.* Project presented by Anna Costal and Albert Fontelles.
- *The Evolution of International Protection Mechanisms for Musicians at Risk. A historical perspective exploring the legacy of Pau Casals.* Project presented by Laurence Cuny.



23 April. *Presentation of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair at the Auditorio de Tenerife by Alfons Martinell.*

6 May. *Celebration of the 4th Conference “Fem música junts. Educació i participació creativa”* at the headquarters of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC).

43 in-person attendees.

The event was framed within the humanistic and musical legacy of an artist who understood music as an expression of the best of the human condition. For him, music represented a profound connection with the meaning of life, a source of self-esteem and dignity.

The objective was to reflect on how citizens in our society have access to culture and basic musical education, as well as on the role of music studies both in schools and in professional training. The event featured speakers and participants such as:

- **Anna Busquets**, Director of the Arts and Humanities Studies at the UOC.
- **Ester Bonal**, music teacher and activist. Co-director of EducArtS, El Teler de la Música and Xamfrà.



- Anna Carné, coordinator at ConArte and cello teacher.
- Marta Torrella and Helena Ros, musicians and members of the duo *Tarta Relena*.
- Quim Carandell, musician, singer-songwriter, and vocalist of the Catalan band *La Ludwig Band*.
- Abel Antón Delgado, violinist
- Marta Roma, cellist and educator.
- Paolo Bortolameolli, Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Music Director of the Esperanza Azteca National Symphony Orchestra (Mexico), and Principal Guest Conductor of the Santiago Philharmonic (Chile).
- Núria Sempere, Director of the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya.
- Joan Fuster-Sobrepera, Co-director of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair and Associate Professor in the Arts and Humanities Studies at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC).
- Alfons Martinell, Co-director of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair.
- Jordi Pardo, Director of the Pau Casals Foundation.



13 May. Resolution of the third call for Research Grants:

- “*Pau Casals and the Nobel Peace Prize: A Candidacy during the Cold War.*” Project submitted by Joan Esculies Serrat.
- “*Music Against Conscription: Cultural Resistance and Anti-militarist Protest in Spain (1984–2002).*” Project submitted by Andrés López Estapé and Violeta Caballero Caballero.



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31 May. Publication of the *Chair Papers* collection on the Chair's website and in various online repositories of Catalan universities and libraries, including: CCUC (Collective Catalogue of Catalan Universities), Aladí (Catalogue of the Libraries of the Barcelona Provincial Council), Open University of Catalonia, the Specialized Libraries of the Government of Catalonia, and the Digital Library of Catalonia.



18 September. Presentation of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair to the Friends of UNESCO of Masnou by Alfons Martinell.



26 September. Participation in the preliminary sessions of Mondiacult 2025 held in Barcelona. The Chair organised a roundtable entitled “The Protection of Artists at Risk and Cultural Rights”, held in the CERC auditorium. This side event was co-organised with the Fundación Gabeiras. It featured the participation of:

- Laurence Cuny, lawyer and expert in cultural rights, specialising in cultural rights and artistic freedom.
- Xavier Cutillas, Director of the Catalan Association for Peace.
- Gemma Rodríguez, Director of PEN Català.
- Manel Jiménez, Vice-Rector for Alliances, Community and Culture.
- Alfons Martinell, Co-director of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair.
- Joan Fuster-Sobrepere, Co-director of the Pau Casals UNESCO Chair.
- Jordi Pardo, Director General of the Pau Casals Foundation.



Poster



June–October. Submission of the final research papers by the 2024 grant recipients.

- *The Musical Aesthetics of Pau Casals. The Philosophical Influence of Henri Bergson on Pau Casals' Musical Conception.* Presented by Magda Polo.
- *Nations in Harmony: The Roles and Functions of Music in United Nations Peacebuilding.* Presented by John Gledhill.

September. Submission of the progress report on the research projects of the 2025 grant recipients.

18 November. Participation of Alfons Martinell, Co-director of the Chair, in the 4th edition of the *Escola de Defensores*, presenting an overview of the defence of cultural rights. Organised by the Catalan Association for Peace and International Action for Peace.

10 December. Participation of Alfons Martinell, Co-Director of the Chair, in the talk organised by EnRaonar to discuss cultural rights, held in the context of the 77th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, at the Sala Tarafa (Granollers).



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