



Interview

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The Youth Symphony Orchestra of Barcelona (JOSB) was created in 2015 under the direction of conductor Carlos Checa. It first performance on 25 October at el Foyer del Gran Teatre del Liceu, launching a new pedagogical system for symphonic music in Barcelona. Since its inaugural 2015/2016 season, JOSB has been firmly committed to its mission, offering a minimum of six symphonic programmes per season.

Complementing the education of young musicians, JOSB serves not only as a platform for musical practice, but also as a didactic and cultural institution that promotes development in an environment of high artistic excellence, where knowledge, desire, effort and talent are shared.

We spoke to Carlos about the orchestra, his vision of music and the particularities of managing an orchestra made up of young musicians.

–Please tell us about your orchestra. What are its main aims and objectives?

–JOSB is a reliable, efficient and outstanding platform for talent development and an excellent educational motivation within a high artistic level. Because the orchestra is part of a large musical community and is located in this amazing city, we are very visible, and this helps to instill in young people that culture is a fundamental pillar of society.

–Is it easy for you to communicate with young musicians? It requires a special attitude, a certain mood, doesn't it?

–Well, for all their diversity, young people are always sincere and determined. If a young person wants to do something, he or she really believes in it. Creating music together with a unique tool, which is a symphonic orchestra, represents an irreversible sign of greatness of a person who is able to transmit the most intimate emotions to listeners. This idea, realised thanks to the young musicians of the orchestra, is a manifestation of culture with a capital letter, where society can look forward to the present and the future.

–Let's talk about the musicians. How many of them are in the orchestra nowadays?

–We have a staff of almost 70 musicians, and over the last few seasons we have grown significantly in terms of creativity, receiving invitations to the concert tours. We developed the season at the Palau de la Música Catalana and made our debut



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Carlos Checa

Artistic and music director of the Jove Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona

«Being a musician is a way of life»



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in London last October. So, the ninth season was a turning point that made us much more visible.

–What is the youngest age of

musicians ?

–There are some fifteen year old musicians, but the average age is around twenty.

–Are there any musicians from

outside Barcelona (e.g. Andorra) in the orchestra?

–The orchestra is open to all nationalities. At the moment, we don't have any Andorran musicians.

–How do you motivate your students?

–Through exciting pieces of music, challenging them with masterpieces of symphonic literature that demand a lot but, at the same time, allow them to enjoy making music “in the family;” that is, with a community where you feel like the protagonist and where everyone listens to you.

–What advice would you give to budding musicians?

–I would tell them that talent is developed through insistence, humility and seizing opportunities. To dedicate oneself to music is to have a calling to serve, and that means wanting and knowing how to share the works of brilliant composers to make our world a little better, even if only for a few moments. A concert should be a transformative experience for both musician and listener. The level of preparation should be maximised. Being a musician is a way of life.



«I would love to come to Andorra again; I have very good memories»

–The orchestra has a very interesting life, a lot of touring... Can you tell us a bit about the orchestra's repertoire?

–Our repertoire is a set of the most relevant symphonic pieces that serve as a pedagogical reference point. Every season, we arrange premieres of young soloists.

This month, in addition to the tour concerts, we worked through an agreement with the Franz Schubert Philharmonic Orchestra, where 14 musicians from the JOSB practised with this professional orchestra. We will also be participating for a few weeks in Bach in the Subway, an international project that brings Bach's music to public spaces, such as the city market or underground stations. In March, we are travelling to perform in Zaragoza. This season, we still have programmes for 5 May and 16 June, and, in the autumn, we will be going on an international tour, which we will announce very soon.

–We look forward to seeing you in Andorra! Are you planning to perform a concert here?

–I would love to come again; I have very good memories! I'm sure that in the future, circumstances will allow us to do that. ≡

TikTok and the protection of minors

The European Commission opens a formal procedure against TikTok for a breach of the new Digital Services Act

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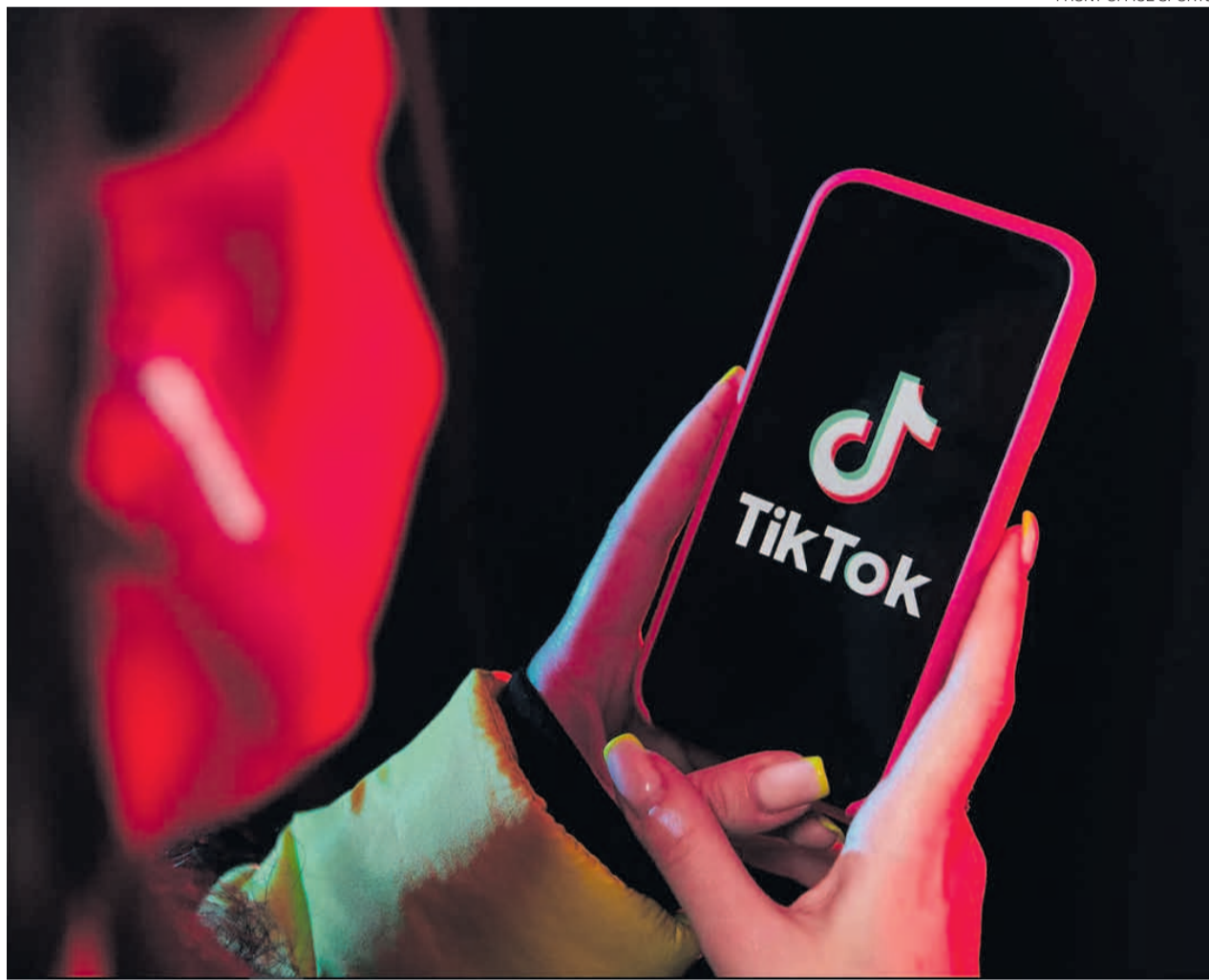


On February 17th, the Digital Services Act, a landmark piece of European Union legislation aimed at making the online environment safer, fairer and more transparent, comes into force for all online intermediaries in the EU.

The Digital Services Act improves the protection of European Union users against illegal goods and content and strengthens the respect of their rights on online platforms where they interact with other users, share information or buy products.

Standalone platforms and users have new responsibilities. All online platforms with users established in the European Union, with the exception of small and micro-enterprises that employ less than fifty people and have an annual turnover of less than 10,000,000 euros, are obliged to implement measures to fight against illegal content, including goods and services.

The implications of these responsibilities include the obligation to protect minors, including the total prohibition of targeting minors through advertising based on profiles or personal data, and users must be informed by providing information about the advertisements they receive, including why they are shown to them and who funded the advertising. Advertising targeting users based on sensitive data, such as their political, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, etc., should be prohibited. On the other hand, they must provide a justification to users affected by a content moderation decision, such as the deletion of content or the suspension of accounts, include this justification in the database for the transparency of the Services Act Digital, and also provide users with access to a complaint mechanism to challenge content moderation decisions. It is compulsory



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to publish a report on the content moderation procedures, at least once a year. The general conditions and parameters used by their content recommendation systems must be clear and they are obliged to designate a point of contact for the authorities as well as for the users.

In this way, the Digital Services Act protects users against illegal content, counterfeit products and misinformation. Promote transparency in content moderation decisions and platforms' algorithms. It encourages competition in the digital market and creates a safer, fairer and more transparent online environment for all EU users.

Within this regulatory framework, on February 19th, 2024, the European Commission opened a formal procedure to assess whether TikTok is in breach of the Digital Services Act in four main areas

The European Commission considers that TikTok does not provide researchers with transparent access to public data on the platform

linked to the protection of minors, advertising transparency, access to data by researchers and risk management of addictive design and harmful content.

Based on the preliminary investigation conducted to date, including an analysis of the risk assessment report submitted by TikTok in September 2023, as well as TikTok's responses to formal requests for information of the Commission (on illegal content, protection of minors and access to data).

With this assessment of breaches of the protection of minors, the European Commission questions the effectiveness of TikTok's age ver-

rification tools and default privacy settings for minors. In addition, the mitigation measures applied in this regard, in particular the age verification tools used by TikTok to prevent minors from accessing inappropriate content, may not be reasonable, proportionate, and effective.

With regard to advertising transparency, the investigation focuses on the lack of a searchable repository of advertisements and possible deficiencies in the information provided to users.

In the area of access to data, the European Commission considers that TikTok does not provide researchers with transparent access to

public data on the platform.

And finally, it evaluates Risk Management where the European Commission examines whether TikTok is taking sufficient measures to mitigate addictive risks due to its design including algorithmic systems, which can stimulate behavioral addictions and to prevent the dissemination of harmful content.

This assessment is necessary to counteract the potential risks for the exercise of the fundamental right to the physical and mental well-being of the person, respect for the rights of the child and its impact on radicalization processes.

The consequences, if these breaches are proven, would be that TikTok would face significant sanctions, such as fines or the suspension of its services in the European Union.

The opening of a formal procedure authorizes the Commission to take additional enforcement measures, such as interim measures and non-compliance decisions. The Commission is also authorized to accept any commitment acquired by TikTok to resolve the matters subject to the procedure.

What we can say is that the European Commission's decision will set an important precedent for the application of the Digital Services Law and that the case could have a significant impact on TikTok's business model and its operations within of Europe

The European Commission is taking a tough stance against big tech platforms to ensure compliance with the Digital Services Act and the TikTok investigation highlights the challenges of regulating online platforms and the influence they have on the society and specifically in minors with their human interaction and definition as people.

It remains to be seen whether the opening of this formal procedure against TikTok is an important step for the protection of online users in the European Union and whether the outcome of the case will have a significant impact on the European digital landscape. ≡

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