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**Article:** Opening Urban Social Spaces through the Arts

### **Abstract**

The ongoing turbulences in many parts of the world, which raise concerns about the lack of security and uncertain future could also be seen as a challenge and as a plethora of opportunities in search for better systemic solutions. Even though we live in a technologically well-developed world, it is clear that neither improved machines nor pharmaceutical industry could provide sustainable solutions to the conflicts and their devastating consequences on human wellbeing. How could the arts and music in particular, understood in a broad sense that exceeds their solely aesthetic understanding, contribute to the betterment of the current circumstances? This presentation provides a qualitative analysis of three case studies based on the author's first-hand experience as a foreign-born, South Asian musician and researcher in the selected urban centers within the Central European country Slovenia. Based on the studied dynamics of the existing practices, it proposes the development of new views and strategies suitable for urban renewal processes.

### **Personal Information**

Dr. Lasanthi Manaranjanie Kalinga Dona was lecturer at the University of Colombo and certified artist in Indian classical music at the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), while she currently contributes to the teaching in ethnomusicology at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She earned her B.A degree in Fine Arts from the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, M.Mus (Master of Music) degree in North Indian classical music (violin) from the Banaras Hindu University, India, and the Ph.D. in musicology (with focus on medical ethnomusicology and music therapy) from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. As a performer (singer, violinist) and scholar, she gave presentations in more than twenty countries in Asia, Europe, and North America. For several years, she served in the juries of the international festival-contest Voices of the Golden Steppe in Russia and of the State Musical Review of Children with Special Needs in Slovenia. Dr. Kalinga Dona is the author of several scholarly publications, including the book Music and Healing Rituals of Sri Lanka: Their Relevance for Community Music Therapy and Medical Ethnomusicology. She represents Sri Lanka in the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM).