Introducing "Community Music"

I'm using the documentary „Sweet Dreams" (2012) by the sibling filmmakers Lisa & Rob Fruchtmann, Liro Films, to introduce the idea of Community Music (e.g. Higgins 2012; Campbell/Higgins 2015). My students are not ethnomusicology students per se but rather classical music students. My intention is to make them more aware of the potential in music for social inclusion. Community Music is a very specific concept related to that. In one of the subsequent lessons, I actually invite people who lead such workshops or implement Community Music projects (for Germany, Munich: Alicia de Banffy-Hall).

Outline of lesson:

While students watch the film "Sweet Dreams" (version for education is about 60min long), they have to match the characteristics of "Community Music" or, respectively the intentions of community musicians (e.g. Higgins 2012) to what they see in the film in a handout.

Since the film, in my opinion does not portray enough of the thinking behind this music project, aimed at the reconciliation after the genocide in Rwanda, I quote someone, taken from the Bonus Scene:

Odile Gakira Katese (Kiki): Former Artistic Director of the National University Ruanda

"I always have this idea also of proposing some joy, some simple things, I can't build a school, I can't rebuild the country, I can't do big things. But there are simple things we can do.

… I felt that we also have to plant a culture of happiness and joy we don't necessarily have in Africa most of the time. … And I think that on stage, in performing arts, it's the best space to regain self-confidence and to rebuild yourself first. To be strong enough, confident enough to go to the other."

(Bonus Scenes of "Sweet Dreams", 2012, 02:00; 07:40min)

For German students, the fact that the former German colonial government had implemented racial stereotypes in the first place makes them more aware of post-colonial aftermath.

Resource:

„Sweet Dreams" (2012). Lisa & Rob Fruchtmann, Liro Films. http://www.sweetdreamsrwanda.com/

Higgins, Lee (2012). Community Music: In Theory and In Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Campbell, Patricia Sheehan & Lee Higgins (2015). "Intersections between Ethnomusicology, Music Education and Community Music". The Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology. Svanibor Pettan & Jeff Todd Titon (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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