

# MONOGRAPHS

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## INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

by Margaret Halpin and Linda Martin

*"The arts enable all of us,  
regardless of our own  
cultural background, to  
express the heart of the  
human experience."*

**i**n December 1991 an International Cultural Forum co-sponsored by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and the Institute of International Education was held in Washington, D.C. The theme of the Forum was "Shaping the New World Order: International Cultural Opportunities and the Private Sector." In her address to the Forum, poet Maya Angelou sought to remind participants of the unique role which the arts can play in shaping a new world order.

Angelou told of her visit to Yugoslavia, years earlier, and of a dinner party in the hills where this young, intellectual, black, southern woman found herself totally alone among rural Serbo-Croatian villagers. Her background and culture were just as alien to the villagers as the color of her skin. Yet she was able to communicate and establish friendships because of her willingness to focus on the commonalities of the human experience. She shared the common activities of singing, eating, and drinking in a festive atmosphere and in so doing was welcomed by the villagers. The point of her artfully told story was that in shaping a new world order, "It is wise . . . to consider how similar we are: that human beings are more alike, than we are unlike."

The truth of this insight has only become more ironic and poignant as Yugoslavia has descended into a war of "ethnic cleansing". A descent which should serve as a warning to us all. The new world order proclaimed with such optimism only two years ago can never become a reality without tolerance, understanding, and appreciation of seemingly alien cultures.

Furthermore, the truth of this insight, as the riots in Los Angeles and other cities should have made only too clear to us, applies not only to international community relations, but to our own local community relations.

It is here that the arts, through international cultural exchanges, have the ability to play a unique role. The arts enable all of us, regardless of our own cultural background, to express the heart of the human experience. Through them we can communicate with seemingly alien cultures by sharing the experience of our common humanity. And it is from this experience that we can begin to develop a tolerance,



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understanding and appreciation of others. As Maya Angelou reminded the International Cultural Forum, we — like Terrence — must realize that “Homo sum. Humani nihil a me alienum puto,” “I am a human being. Nothing human can be alien to me.”



This MONOGRAPH begins with the results of a National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies (NALAA) survey of local arts agencies (LAAs) engaged in international exchange. It continues by addressing the value of international programming within the context of local community arts agencies through examples of formally and informally organized exchanges, ranging from artist collaborations to large scale festivals, and includes some recommendations for starting an international program. The intent is to initiate an enduring discussion on philosophy, policy, concepts, programs and procedures.

**50 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS HAVE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

The National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies conducts an annual survey of local arts agencies. In the 1992 survey, a preliminary assessment of international activities of local arts agencies was included. Four questions were asked:

- 1) Is your organization involved in international arts administration exchanges of any kind?
- 2) Is your organization involved in international artist and arts program exchanges of any kind?
- 3) Is your organization involved in a professional collaborative relationship with: Sister Cities, Arts International, Partners for the Americas, other organizations?
- 4) Does your organization offer any program or services in a language other than English? Spanish, French, Japanese, Chinese or other.

The results reveal that 51.9 percent of the 208 respondents are involved in some kind of international arts administrator, artist or arts exchange program. Sister Cities collaborations comprise 24.5 percent of those programs and 6.25 percent are collaborating with other organizations. Less than one percent have collaborated with Partners for the Americas. The structure of programs with Arts International is directly with artists, which might explain why no LAA acknowledged having collaborated with Arts International.

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A slightly less significant number of LAAs, 13.8 percent, participated in arts administrator exchanges. A look at the distribution of LAAs with international arts administrator exchange programs, in regards to population, reveals that LAAs in areas of populations larger than 100,000 tend to be 10-17 percent more likely to have an international arts administrator exchange.

| POPULATION        | % of total LAAs with international arts exchange programs |                          |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|
|                   | w/arts administrators program                             | w/artist or arts program |
| 0 - 29,999        | 13.8%   | 13.8%                    |
| 30,000 - 99,999   | 10.3  | 25.9                     |
| 100,000 - 499,999 | 27.5  | 37.9                     |
| 500,000 - 999,999 | 20.7  | 10.3                     |
| 1 million+        | 27.5  | 12.1                     |

Of the LAAs offering programs in a foreign language, Spanish, at 13.9 percent, is the leading language program or service available. French and Chinese follow at 3 percent, with Japanese at 1.4 percent and other languages comprising less than one percent.

Other studies that took place in 1993 include an International Interest Survey distributed by the Network of Local Arts Agencies of Washington State. Results from the study are expected by January 1994. NALAA is again conducting the LAA survey, including the international questions, for 1993, so there will be a basis for comparison in the near future. In summary, the NALAA research reveals that more than 50 percent of the respondents participate in international projects. Therefore, further research on the specific nature of international arts activities and their impact on communities would be productive and useful to local arts agencies.

**MODELS OF EXCHANGE**

A successful international arts exchange will depend on the participants finding a program whose content and format matches their interests and needs. The exchange may occur informally and lead to more formal exchanges or may be the result of elaborate planning. The contact may be either artist to artist, artist to community, community to community, artist to arts organization or political leader to arts leader. This *MONOGRAPH* seeks to inspire new international arts partnerships and collaborations that facilitate cross cultural appreciation and understanding of our

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commonalities, and appreciation of our diversities as human beings. International arts activities at the local level have not been the subject of extensive research. Yet many initiatives have been successful. Models are presented of successful exchanges whose purpose is to improve community to community relations.

### **ONE ON ONE ARTIST COLLABORATIONS**

#### **Myrna Orsini**

Who would think that the loan of a few tools would open doors for artists between Central and Eastern Europe and the United States. Nevertheless, this simple act resulted in long term collaboration opportunities for sculptor Myrna Orsini, and artists from Lithuania, Russia, and the Ukraine.

The window of opportunity opened at the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle. Visiting Ukrainian artist, Vasily Fedorouk, was working on a sculpture and needed to borrow a few tools. He contacted the Northwest Sculptor's Society and thereby met Orsini, who is a member.

As a result, Orsini was invited to attend the first annual international symposium for sculpture of stone, PLEINAIR (working in the open air) in 1992. The symposium was held in Nikolaev, which is located in the southern portion of the Ukraine on the Black Sea. The symposium was sponsored by the Artists Union of Nikolaev and the Alumina Plant of Nikolaev.

Thirteen sculptors participated in the eight week symposium, including representatives from Russia, Lithuania, Armenia, the Ukraine, and two United States artists: Orsini and Meridith Earles from Edmonds, Wash. Each completed a piece over six weeks, using either granite, marble or sandstone supplied by the Alumina plant. Orsini's granite sculpture, *Firebird*, was declared the premier piece.

During her stay, Myrna produced a series of small sculptures intended as gifts. The symposium's coordinator, Vasily Fedorouk, saw the work and offered Orsini a show in Nikolaev. The idea was planted and the President of the Artist's Union invited her to exhibit 23 works of art from July 19 - September 31, 1993 in Nikolaev, Odessa and Kiev. The Artists Union obtained sponsors for Myrna's expenses, including: stipends for in-country expenses, publicity and an exhibition hall.

In exchange, Orsini covered international travel and shipping costs; worked one on one with artists in the three cities and presented lectures on how artists can best present and market their work in the international market. According to Orsini, artists in the Ukraine are hungry for contacts.

Many other opportunities have occurred as a result of her participation in the symposium:

- Fellow symposium participant and master carver, Vladas Kansiauskas, from Lithuania, invited her to come to Vilnius, exhibit her work and collaborate together on a monumental sculpture.
- Fellow participant and the well known philosopher, poet and sculptor, Volodiniyr Bojnatchev invited her to create additional collaborative works and to show her work at the Artists Hall, in Moscow.
- The director of the Status Crosna Gallery in Moscow invited Orsini to show her work in the gallery in June, 1994.

Additional plans for the future include organizing an International Sculpture Symposium in the Northwest, perhaps at Centrum, an artist community located in northern Puget Sound.

### ADDRESSING URBAN PROBLEMS THROUGH ARTISTIC COLLABORATION

#### Dan Senn and Paul Panhuysen

Abandoned and vacant buildings are a problem of many cities. In the fall of 1993, a grant from the City of Tacoma, Wash., Cultural Resources Division allowed local sound artist Dan Senn to produce *Other Spaces*, an alternative art installation that confronted this problem. Senn, who moved to Tacoma in 1992, sees abandoned buildings as assets. So does his friend Paul Panhuysen, Director of Het Appollohuis in Eindhoven, Holland, a popular avant garde performance and exhibition venue. The two artists brought the community together to explore how sound relates to space, and how people relate to the sound in their spaces.



Paul Panhuysen, director of Het Appollohuis, Eindhoven, Holland.

Senn and Panhuysen met by chance in May, 1990, when both artists were performing at Experimental Intermedia, in New York City. Panhuysen needed some technical assistance and Senn offered to help. Subsequently Senn performed at Het Appollohuis, and the artists developed a working relationship spanning the globe.

Once you have seen a Panhuysen, you are not likely to forget it because Panhuysen's musical instruments are buildings. "Every building has its own unique acoustical properties," he said. "If it looks interesting I have found, that it usually sounds interesting too."

*Other Spaces* was held in Tacoma's Municipal Dock building. Largely abandoned since 1941, the Dock was home to the Mosquito Fleet, an armada of tiny boats which provided transportation before bridges and the ferries linked communities around Puget Sound.

With the building's high ceilings, it is held up by a series of 200 foot beams that run across its width. Panhuysen used ten pillars on each side of the structure as a series of giant tuning pegs. He fastened piano wire to each pillar and stretched the wire across the room in a large fan pattern. Each wire was pulled tight across oil drums that acted as resonators. The instrument was played by 24 performers who stood between the strings and pulled them, producing sound.

With overcapacity attendance for the event, a second show was promptly arranged. People willingly waited an hour for the opportunity to participate in an experimental collaboration that involved the community and one of its historic buildings.

## EXHIBITIONS

### **The Asian American Perspective**

On November 22, 1993, National Public Radio pointed out that 40 percent of U.S. trade is with Asia. Concurrent with our growing interest in Asia/Pacific, new (and not so new) generations of Asian Americans are being recognized as a vital part of the American landscape. According to *TIME* magazine's recent special edition (the New Face of America), in fall 1993, 37 percent of immigrants were from Asia. Artists and cultural organizations are at the forefront in exploring how people merge their country of origin's history, and family history, while creating new traditions.

International issues were merged with American cultural diversity issues as the focus of *A Room of One's Own: Asian/Pacific American Installation Art*, a temporary exhibit held during the Bumbershoot Arts Festival at Seattle Center in September, 1993. The exhibit, organized by Mayumi Tsutakawa, an independent writer/curator, included installations by 15 Asian American artists who span the experiences of

Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and East Indian heritage. Some are American born and some are foreign born — several are of mixed race background — and all live in Washington State.



Utilizing elements of video, photography, sound collage, assemblage, painting and sculpture, the artists explored such themes as anti-Asian violence and racial exclusion laws, sexuality and gender, treatment of mixed-race individuals, spirituality, media stereotypes and emotional states. The purpose of the exhibit was not to seek a separation from artists of other ethnic backgrounds, but rather to raise awareness of the intrinsic value and quality of art based on a contemporary Asian American (not traditional Asian) aesthetic.

#### UNDERSTANDING AND BRIDGING BORDERS

##### **La Frontera/The Border:**

##### **Art About the Mexico/United States Border Experience**

*La Frontera/The Border* is a major exhibition of new work by 35 artists living on both sides of the international boundary. The Mexico/United States border, nearly 2,000 miles long, is a region of complex cultural, political and economic influence. The exhibit was held in the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, and at the Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, Wash.

As part of the exhibit, featured artist David Avalos gave a talk entitled, “Between a Rock and Some Hard Cash: Public Art and the Civic Imagination.” Avalos also spoke at Centro de la Raza in Seattle, where he discussed *Arte Reembolso/Art Rebate* a collaboration which

involved the distribution of money to Mexican immigrants working in the United States. Avalos described the project as conceptual, in that the action of “giving back” money to immigrants who purchase goods which contribute to the U.S. economy, results in a visual product in the collective imagination of the public.

Avalos expressed pride in an art work which countered an image of Mexican immigrants as takers, rather than as hard working taxpayers. He spoke about how immigrants pay for goods that are taxed, take on jobs that many Americans do not want, such as agricultural workers, and many Mexicans work extremely long hours.

Anna Wallace, *Ma sa sa 'lach' ol?*, from the series “*Amando en Tiempo de Guerra*,” 1989-91 (What does your heart say?, from the series “*Loving in a Time of War*”). From the exhibition *La Frontera/The Border: Art about Mexico/United States Border Experience*.

Avalos' perception of immigrants as contributors was recently supported in the "New Face of America" special issue of *TIME*. Hispanics spend \$180 billion a year on goods and services in this country. Since 1983, spending on Hispanic media has more than tripled to \$224 million. In fact, Ethnic-minority shoppers, predominantly African American, Hispanics and Asians, spent \$600 billion on everything from toothpaste and shoes to cars last year, up 18 percent since 1990.

As part of the Tacoma Art Museum exhibit, Martha Lara Alatorre, the Consul of Mexico, spoke on the subject of "Border Interaction: The Dynamica of Cultural Exchange and Trade." In giving the Mexico Consulate's endorsement for *La Frontera/The Border*, she stated: "The relationship between Mexico and United States has been a complex one. Few issues in the bilateral agenda express so vividly the reality of this relationship, as the subject of the border. The people of the Northwest will be greatly enriched by the opportunity to attend an exhibit that reflects on issues of international importance."

*La Frontera/The Border* was jointly produced by two San Diego organizations: Centro Cultural de la Raza and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. The Tacoma presentation of *La Frontera/The Border* was made possible with the assistance of an advisory committee representing community-based arts and education organizations, including El Centro del la Raza, Centro Latino Ser, Journal de Washington, University of Washington Tacoma, and Tacoma Community House. The exhibition was supported by funders including the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, The Ben B. Cheney Foundation, The Boeing Company, and The Morning News Tribune.

#### REVITALIZING FACILITIES

##### **Common Space, Toledo, Ohio—Sister Cities International**

In the spring of 1993, through an exchange facilitated by Sister Cities International, Toledo, Ohio welcomed 20 visitors from Poznan, Poland and Szeged, Hungary. The group of visitors included elected officials, representatives from the educational institutions and an arts administrator. **Common Space** was one of the facilities they visited that proved to be of particular interest to the arts administrator from Szeged, Hungary.



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Martin Nagy, executive director, describes **Common Space** as a multidisciplinary arts facility that utilizes former school buildings. Old school buildings often are well equipped to handle a variety of arts activities including auditoriums for theater and performances, gymnasium floors suitable for dance programs, food preparation facilities for receptions and banquets as well as large rooms for studio space. The building is leased from the local government and then rented to artists and arts organizations at a subsidized rate. **Common Space** receives funding from a variety of sources, including private, local, state and national foundations and corporations. Senior citizen groups and other community groups are provided with meeting space in return for volunteer time with arts organization programs.

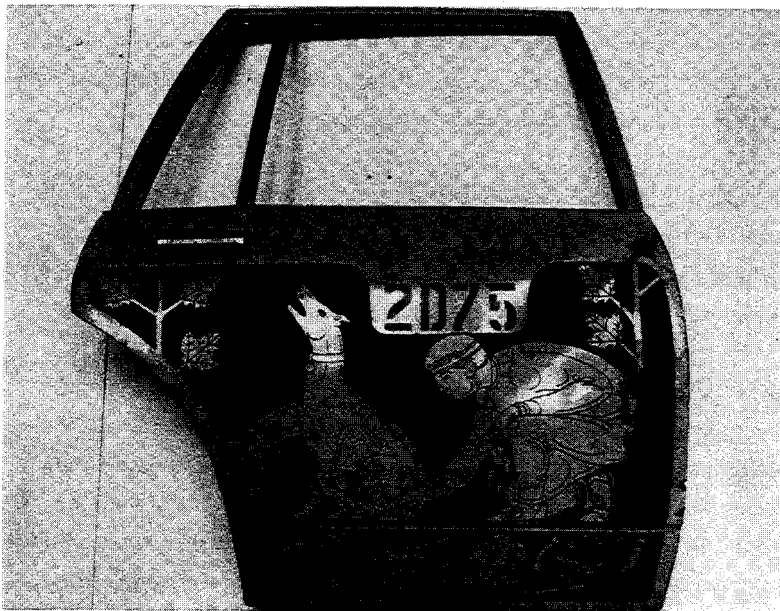
The concept of revitalizing old buildings as facilities for the arts is transferable to the current situation in Hungary, where former government buildings are looking for new uses, while the arts community is searching for ways to survive and thrive. Because of the potential opportunity to adapt the **Common Space** concept in Hungary, another visit was planned and completed. In October 1993, a team of 10 Hungarians, nine folk artists and an administrator, from Szeged, Hungary, visited **Common Space**. The purpose of the second visit was to hold a short-term residency for the Hungarian artists and to have an in-depth look at the management of **Common Space**. During the residency, the Hungarian artists gave presentations to the public. The visitors also had an opportunity to enjoy many local cultural events and plan future joint projects. A trip to Szeged by members of **Common Space** is being planned.

#### **BI-NATIONAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS**

Bi-national arts organizations, in the United States, are nonprofit organizations which facilitate arts and cultural activities in both countries. Programs include lectures, performances, theatre, artist residencies, fellowships, and exhibitions. The organization may also serve as an information exchange and conduit for activities not under its direct auspices.

**Ireland America Arts Exchange, Inc. (IAAE)**, was established in 1981 in the United States to encourage, promote and facilitate exchange of the contemporary arts between the United States and Ireland. The profound influence of Irish writers and playwrights on American literary and theatrical traditions is well known. Also recognized, although less well documented, is the significant impact of the American

visual arts on Irish artists during the past 30 years. Although this deep cultural bond exists, the flow of information and exchanges in the field of the contemporary arts were infrequent and had no formal conduit. Ireland America Arts Exchange, through a series of special programs, promotions and services, aims to broaden the exposure of American and Irish audiences to the work of contemporary artists. IAAE is not a foundation which awards grants.



John Kindness, "Scraping the Surface 1990"  
Taxi Cab Fragment 112 x 87 cm  
Collection Irish Museum of Modern Art

Ireland America Arts Exchange has enabled artists from Ireland to take part in the International Artists Studio Program at New York's P.S. 1, The Museum of Contemporary Art. Providing housing and studio space for one year, the fellowships afford participants the opportunity to interact with international artists of proven ability. The work of artists participating in the P.S. 1 program receives the recognition of critics, curators and dealers, providing further professional opportunities. These fellowships are co-sponsored with the Irish Arts Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Andrew Kearney of Ireland recently completed his Fellowship at P.S. 1 Museum. Kearney said, "Coming to America enabled me to address the myth or illusion of the art world in New York". Aside from the opportunities to establish a network of colleagues, Kearney felt he benefitted in terms of personal growth by the opportunity to interact with artists from all over the world, to gain insight to the different cultures and perceptions, to view the diversity of cultures in New York alone. As a result of the exhibits at P.S. 1 being well attended by the New York City arts community (2,000 people typically attend an opening) Kearney benefitted from the exposure. Tom Sokolowski, curator of the Grey Gallery of New York University, saw Kearney's work at P.S. 1 and invited him to exhibit at the gallery in April 1993.

John Kindness, born in Belfast, and a P.S. 1 Fellow in 1989-1990, was able to complete a set of pieces which became an exhibit titled *Treasures of New York*. The exhibition was comprised of a series of classical images rendered on found objects — concrete slabs, taxi cab fragments, garbage cans, vases and urns. His work is described as

“provocative, witty, and uncannily resonant, the sculptures are finely crafted in keeping with the classical aesthetic and compositional traditions they both replicate and parody.” The show was exhibited at the Arts Council Gallery in Belfast and traveled to the Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, and Art in General in New York. A catalogue, written by Lucy Lippard and David Sandlin, was jointly produced by the Arts Council Gallery and the Kerlin Gallery. Several major institutions, including the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the British Council, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, purchased pieces from this show.

As a result of the fellowship, Kindness has developed enduring professional relationships with artists and arts administrators. He has returned to New York several times and has hosted visits from numerous colleagues, facilitating an ongoing dialogue on the arts in the United States, Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Dorothy Cross, a sculptor from Ireland, was a P.S. 1 fellow for six months in 1989. At the end of her fellowship, she was invited to stay on at P.S. 1 Museum for three months to complete an installation in one of the galleries. The Director of Artpark in Lewistown, N.Y., invited Cross to create an installation at Artpark in 1990-91. The recognition achieved at Artpark led to a meeting with collector Vera List, of the List Foundation Gallery at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. List purchased a portion of the installation for her private collection. Ms. Cross has continued to exhibit in the United States as a result of the network of colleagues she was able to establish and maintain.

Grace Weir of Dublin and fellow in 1991-1992, described her P.S. 1 fellowship as an invaluable experience. In particular, she identified “the opportunity to have access to a wide variety of artwork being produced was an enriching and broadening experience.” The program also enabled Weir to establish professional contacts. Most recently, she was included in a group show of Irish artists titled *Field of Visions* exhibited at the Trout Gallery at Dickenson College in Carlisle, Penn.

The professional successes for the artists and the venues in both countries speaks to the value of these exchanges. The development of enduring professional relationships is beneficial to the individuals and builds bridges between communities.

*"The Festival exemplifies an important concept: That people of all nations, states and areas can share their cultural traditions through the international language of the arts, creating an atmosphere of friendship, trust and harmony."*

**FESTIVALS — CHILDREN PERFORMING FOR CHILDREN**

**International Children's Festival**

**Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna, Va.**

The International Children's Festival, held in September at Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts in Vienna, Va., is a celebration of the arts for people of all ages. This annual event, which unites people of many nations in a celebration of the arts, is unique among festivals in featuring children performing for children. Each year the Festival focuses on a region of the globe. The 1994 Festival will feature countries of the Pacific and Indian Ocean Rim. This unique event offers simultaneous performances on several stages plus hands-on workshops in the creative arts. The Festival entertains, educates and enriches approximately 35,000 participants each year.

The Festival exemplifies an important concept: That people of all nations, states and areas can share their cultural traditions through the international language of the arts, creating an atmosphere of friendship, trust and harmony. Additionally, the Festival offers a special opportunity to foster global literacy.

Important components of the Festival include the pre-Festival, International Studies Enrichment Program and the post-Festival Educational Exchange. These education programs provide cultural, social and off-stage educational experiences for both the international participants and metropolitan Washington area students. New in 1994, the International Studies Enrichment Program will present lecture/demonstrations by the Festival's international participants as a supplement to the Fairfax County Public School's fifth grade international studies curriculum. Post-Festival, the international participants tour and perform at area schools.

Each year more than 1,500 residents of community shelters, day-care centers, senior citizens centers, as well as individuals with special needs from Virginia, The District of Columbia and Maryland attend the Festival as special guests, through the generosity of the Mobil Foundation and other contributors.

Corporate volunteers are essential to the success of the Festival. The volunteers, who each serve a minimum of one three-hour shift during the Festival weekend, are given a variety of assignments, from handing out programs and refreshments, to assisting at hands-on workshops, to just being available for unexpected tasks. The Festival volunteers are the backbone of the operations of the event.



Chinese Youth Folk Sports Presentation,  
Taiwan, R.O.C.  
1993 International Children's Festival

The International Children's Festival is produced by the Arts Council of Fairfax County, a private non-profit corporation, in cooperation with Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts and the National Park Service. Funds raised through corporate donations and ticket sales are used to produce the Festival each year.

### A BRIDGE AS PUBLIC ART

#### Alexander Brodsky and Illya Utkin

Tacoma, Wash., is a city of 180,000 surrounded by beautiful views of Mt. Ranier, and bordered by Puget Sound. Like an amphitheater overlooking a waterfront stage, Tacoma's natural and man-made environment directs attention toward the shorelines. Standing at city center, saltwater is only a few hundred yards away, yet the I-705 highway cuts off access to the historic waterfront, and the Thea Foss waterway.

To address this problem, the concept of an artistic bridge as a way of linking the downtown with the waterfront was offered to city leaders by Cultural Resources Division Manager, Michael Sullivan. Sullivan was impressed by the Whitney Bridge in Minneapolis, which connects the Walker Art Museum's sculpture garden and downtown Minneapolis' Loring Park. The museum and garden are separated from the park by a 16 lane freeway, so a 375 foot pedestrian bridge was built for easy access to the facilities from downtown.

Alexander Brodsky and Illya Utkin are two Russian architects selected to design the pedestrian bridge. They met during the late 1970s as students at the Moscow Architectural Institute, and began their collaboration that exists to this day. During a pre-planned visit to Tacoma for the 1990 Goodwill Games Contemporary Soviet Art exhibition at the Tacoma Art Museum, in which they were featured, the two architects were invited to propose designs for a pedestrian bridge. The bridge will make it possible for people to cross the I-705 freeway and railroad tracks that run along the water as well as descend the steep cliff that separates downtown from the waterfront.

A fundamental premise in the design of the bridge at 12th Street is that its design aesthetics should equal its functional value. In the bridge design, the architects have sought to incorporate themes which relate to Tacoma's origins and history (logging, the railroad, and the wharf), the city's character and geography, and the region's international relationships and aspirations. The final design, which is a timber trestle, represents this past and present.

Support for this project, including preliminary studies, was provided by Weyerhaeuser Corporation; The Buffalo Group; City of Tacoma; Grantmakers Consultants and The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation.

Brodsky and Utkin are currently back in Tacoma, working on a model of the bridge. Their most recent exhibition, which includes the 12th Street bridge designs, is on display at the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Ore., between November 30, 1993, and January 23, 1994.

### **A GAME PLAN FOR INITIATING ACTIVITIES**

#### **Assess local resources**

It is important to assess the international activities currently taking place in your own community. This will enable you to establish a base of information and support for further developments. Make the most of international activities at all levels that have had success. Consider everything from foreign exchange students in the local high school who have artistic talents they are willing to share, to grander schemes involving official partnerships established with other organizations. Potential partner organizations include: Sister Cities International, Partners for the Americas, People to People International, League of Women Voters, and Kiwanis. Contact all your community organizations to find out what they have done, what was successful, what obstacles they encountered and what future plans they have. In addition, find out if there are currently international visitors in your community, i.e. students or business professionals.

Assess the business/corporate community. Are there businesses or corporations in your community operating internationally? Are international business/corporate leaders invited to LAA activities or asked to present programs from their international affiliates? These businesses or corporations may be potential funding sources as international arts programs develop. Many businesses/corporations have outreach programs whereby employees are encouraged to participate in community activities such as speakers clubs. There may be speakers who cover topics on international arts and culture.

Investigate the nearest higher education institution. Is your organization coordinating activities with international studies programs? Are international students invited to LAA events to learn and to share their artistic expertise?

*"An effective start to a relationship is to invite international visitors to LAA events, exhibit openings, performances and concerts."*

Consider coordinating with existing programs. An effective start to a relationship is to invite international visitors to LAA events, exhibit openings, performances and concerts. Informal contacts should be stepping stones to develop community to community programs.

From all these sources gather information about international etiquette. Take time to research international etiquette nuances. This will enable your LAA to plan carefully to host an international artist.

**Information on International Activities**

Maintain records on international activities. Include every small item and note all international contacts. Cumulatively you may find there is a lot more going on than suspected. Disseminate information on relevant international arts news in your newsletter or periodical publication on a regular basis. The accumulated information will be available to use when it is time to complete applications to fund international initiatives.

**The Mission**

Determine what the goals of international arts exchanges in the community are or should be. Define the mission according to involvement levels; i.e. individual, community, city, county, region, state, national and international. Define the conceptual linkages and communication linkages between the levels.

**The Plan**

With a mission formulated, solicit participation of individuals in the community that have worked on other forms of international activity. Formulate a plan of how to integrate the current activities with new art initiatives. Design an infrastructure to facilitate implementation. The intricacies of funding the activities must be customized to the program and more detailed than can be accommodated in this *MONOGRAPH*. Plan for a means to communicate successful initiatives to the community. Create vehicles for dialogue.

**CONTINUING DISCUSSION**

**The growing relationship between government, business and cultural organizations**

Congress recently approved the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),



*"Leadership in the United States has set a course for continuing international dialogue to facilitate free trade around the world. This presents encouraging possibilities for international art and cultural activities."*

while at the same time the Asian Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) took place in Seattle. Leadership in the United States has set a course for continuing international dialogue to facilitate free trade around the world. This presents encouraging possibilities for international art and cultural activities. It is important that the possibilities for art and cultural exchange are not viewed as secondary and less than integral to promoting communication on the international level.

While the Pacific Northwest hosted Pacific Rim dignitaries for the APEC Conference, a diverse group of over 100 Puget Sound cultural leaders, artists, and educators gathered to launch an international cultural initiative aimed at enhancing Washington State's leadership role in Pacific Rim cultural exchange. The participants created a working group to forge greater connections with international business and government leaders, and to establish an international resource center to facilitate future international projects.

The afternoon working forum at Seattle Center's Intiman Playhouse began with an address by Seattle Port Commissioner Paul Schell, who stressed that cultural relationships are the first step to building profitable business relationships and are key to the success of any APEC activities. "Mutual understanding and respect are key to strong economic partnerships," Schell pointed out. "And those intersections and connections can only come from understanding each other's cultures . . . . If we are to have economic links with Pacific Rim countries, we must first have cultural links." Schell added that the Seattle/Tacoma area is uniquely suited to be a major Pacific Rim cultural center because it is one of the hemisphere's most important ports, has an enlightened citizenry open to new ideas, and is a natural and vital cultural port, midway between many Asian and European points.

Acknowledging that cultural education and exchange are key to the future of the Pacific Northwest, participants ranging in size from the Seattle Symphony to the Tacoma Chinese Language School, voiced a commitment to working together to make Puget Sound a truly international cultural center. They discussed the hundreds of successful exchange projects that have already put the Puget Sound on the cutting edge of Pacific Rim cultural exchange, and listed specific goals to increase the regions's expanding role in the evolution of Pacific Rim cultures.



**Participants determined that their immediate priorities are:**

- Developing a constant information flow about cultural developments throughout the Pacific Rim via a Puget Sound-based international resource center and through the establishment of computer networks;
- Strengthening relationships among government, business and cultural organizations;
- Encouraging immigration policies that provide for the open exchange of ideas through arts and culture;
- Fostering cross-cultural education;
- Identifying and pooling the region's existing cultural resources;
- Promoting the clear connection between cultural exchange and tourism.

The forum's sponsors included the Seattle Arts Commission, the City of Tacoma's Cultural Resources Division, One Reel, On the Boards, the Washington State Arts Commission, and the Tacoma and Seattle Art Museums. A working group spearheaded by the sponsors will publish the results of the intensive working session, and reach out to Asian Pacific cultural and governmental leaders to further the goal of enhancing the links between culture and commerce.

**CONCLUSION**

Maya Angelou urges that cultural exchange focus on the integral common qualities of all cultures. Exciting examples of arts and cultural exchange programs have been provided. The west coast has opened up a forum for continued discussion on the topic to facilitate the ongoing development of international arts and cultural exchange. Herewith NALAA has opened a format for sharing information and discussion on successful programs and challenges you to continue the discussion on appreciation of our cultural diversity and commonalities. We invite your comments.

**HELPFUL RESOURCES**

■ **Computer Networks**

Internet (accessible from subscriber networks) now has a discussion topic for arts administrators that have contacts internationally, initiated by MBA/Arts Administration Program of the School of Management at Binghamton University in New York. CompuServe and Artswire also offer networking options.

■ **National Endowment for the Arts International Program**

The purpose of the NEA's International Program is to assist artists and organizations in developing their work by experiencing other cultures and through collaboration with artists from other countries.

**Programs for Artists**

For the artist with little or no international experience, the NEA's *US/Japan Fellowship Program* and *US/Mexico/Canada Residency Program* offer residencies of six months and two months respectively.

For artists with previous international experience, the *Travel Grants Program* offers awards of up to \$5,000 to artists who want to engage in "substantive and collaborative interactions with colleagues and audiences in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, South Asia or Southeast Asia."

**Programs for Artists and Organizations**

NEA's *ArtsLink* program is designed to strengthen ties with eastern European countries, the Baltics and independent states of the former Soviet Union. Grants support arts organizations wishing to host an artist or arts manager from one of these regions, and also assist U.S. artists to undertake collaborative projects with colleagues in those regions abroad.

The *International Projects Initiative Program* offers matching grants to cultural organizations to support a wide range of innovative projects involving any of the arts disciplines.

You can obtain guidelines for these NEA programs by calling or writing the International Program, NEA, Room 618, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20506-0001, tel 202.682.5422.

■ **Publication**

An excellent resource for artists and organizations researching funding opportunities is *Money for International Exchange in the Arts*, which can be obtained by writing the American Council for the Arts, 1 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022, or your local bookstore. ▼

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*Linda Martin is director of the Tacoma Arts Commission. Since graduating from the School for International Training in 1978 with a Masters in International Administration, she has held a strong and abiding belief in international programming as a catalyst for world peace, and as a key to strong economic partnerships. Martin has managed community development programs for the relief organization, CARE, and developed cross-cultural programming for the University of California, Berkeley (International House). In 1993 she was awarded an international fellowship from the NEA. Most recently, she co-hosted a forum linking cultural exchange with trade, during the 1993 APEC Conference. Currently, she is researching information networking systems which can link governments, businesses, and cultural organizations interested in international exchange.*

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