

FIRST WORLD SUMMIT OF COMMUNITY ARTS CENTERS AND NETWORKS

23-28 September, 2014, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria

PROCEEDINGS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

DEVELOPING CREATIVITY and WELLBEING through a
GLOBAL "CULTURA VIVA" PLATFORM and I3C NETWORK connecting
"POINTS OF HAPPINESS" towards
"RE-ENCHANTMENT" of the WORLD

1. CREATIVITY AND WELLBEING

"Creativity and Wellbeing for All: Changing the Future!" was the theme of the **First World Summit of Community Arts Centers and Networks**¹, worldsummit.international3c.org, organized in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, on 23-28th of September, 2014, by the International Council for Cultural Centers, www.international3c.org, in association with the European Network of Cultural Centers, www.encc.org, and the cooperation with various cultural networks and organizations across the globe, due to the generous hosting of the Municipality of Veliko Tarnovo.

The choice of the theme was rooted in all participants' year-long experiences in international projects and research, which have so far revealed how people's participation, in particular *co-creation* in the arts and in local cultural practices and intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, affects positively their personal wellbeing and thus in the long run improves the overall living conditions and sustainable development in neighbourhoods, communities, cities, and countries.

The World Summit's participants were a wide range of organizations, networks, and experts, united by the shared vision of employing the arts for social change and social inclusion and participation. The Summit's opening written address was given by UNESCO General Secretary Irina Bokova on the importance of community arts and community cultural centers for the two main recent UNESCO Cultural Convention, on the *Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* and on the *Promotion of Cultural Diversity*. Rich experiences on community arts and social change projects were shared in the presentation of the main continental networks: **Africa and the African Arterial Network**, with a presentation on the South African network of community cultural centers, mainly in the Johannesburg region, and the particularly rich experience of the Community Arts Project and the Greatmore Studios in CapeTown; **Asia and the Arts Network Asia** with an address from Anupama Sekhar, the President of the Asia-Europe Foundation; **Europe and the European Network of Cultural Centers** and the **AMATEO European Network for Active Participation in Cultural Activities**; **Latin America** and the **Cultura Viva Comunitaria** continental platform and movement together with

¹ Read more at <www.worldsummit.international3c.org>.

the **Latin American Network of Arts for Social Transformation** as powerful grassroots movements that managed to lead to the drafting of national cultural policies in various countries on the continents and served as a main model and inspiration for many of the discussions and decisions of the World Summit.

The **Budapest Observatory on Cultural Policies** Director, Dr. Peter Inkei, shared his year-long academic research and discussions at international conferences and working groups on various cultural measurements and indexes, in which he consistently noted the **lack of any consideration of “community cultural centers” as part of the cultural institutions that should be measured and included in any kind of cultural index**, as well as the lack of the notion and field of “community arts” in the same field of cultural policy considerations and measurements. This is absurd considering the fact of how many such community cultural centers exist across Europe and the world and considering their crucial social impact engaging in co-creation people of all backgrounds, ages, disadvantaged groups, disabilities and special needs, immigrants, etc. Dr. Inkei has been proposing the inclusion of cultural indicators such as “community cultural centers” and “community arts” in various UN, EU, American, Dutch and other indexes, and this will be one of the future collective actions and research projects that will evolve out of the World Summit.

On the particular topic of the Summit “Creativity and Wellbeing for All”, the AMATEO European Network for Active Participation in Cultural Activities, fully supported this vision and global movement towards “Creativity and Wellbeing,” sharing their experiences from a previous **AMATEO Conference on “Culture, Health, and Wellbeing”**² in Stockholm, Sweden. One of the First World Summit’s expert speakers, Damian Hebron, further shared the rich experiences of the **UK Forum on Arts, Health and Wellbeing** which ranges from co-creative programs in hospitals and prisons to various community-based initiatives, which due to the networks and connections established during the World Summit will spread beyond the UK to other continents, towards the celebration of an annual Week of Arts and Wellbeing to be celebrated across the globe.

2. CULTURA VIVA GLOBAL PLATFORM

The First World Summit of Community Arts Centers and Networks was concluded with the collective commitment by national and continental networks and organizations from 5 continents to start building a **trans-continental, global network dedicated to the world-wide spread and impact of community/participatory arts**. The vision for the network at this stage is to not be formally registered as an organization so as to avoid bureaucratization, but it will connect in active cooperation various organizations, civic groups, and networks sharing the same vision and mission: working towards improving

² Read more at <<http://www.voluntaryarts.org/policy-and-research/europe/>> : <http://www.amateo.info/Site/Data/1939/Files/Gallup%20Wellbeing%20Index%20-%20AMATEO%20FINAL.pdf>>.

individual and community wellbeing through the arts and in particular arts that inspire and involve *co-creation*.

The global platform, provisionally called “**CULTURA VIVA**”, will build on the already successful and very strong **Latin-American “Cultura Viva Comunitaria”** continental platform and movement, www.culturavivacomunitaria.org. The concrete steps towards constructing the CULTURA VIVA online portal/platform – which could also be an English-based extension of the existing Latin-American platform - will be discussed at the next Cultural Viva Comunitaria international meeting in October 2015 in El Salvador, and until then the database with information of organizations partners of the First World Summit and new ones that will join between 2014 and 2015 will be gathered and available at the First World Summit website, worldsummit.international3c.org.

Cultura Viva Comunitaria is an informal, non-institutionalized but very active and proven efficient network of cultural organizations across Latin America that have been able in only a few years to inspire a few governments to adopt cultural policies specifically geared towards supporting community/participatory arts. One of the best practices and model in such cultural policies has been the **Brazilian “Cultura Viva” Program and its “points of culture” (pontos de cultura) network** of community cultural centers and organizations.

Within the CULTURA VIVA global platform, there will be chapters/networks dedicated to particular themes, projects, and types of cultural organizations working in community/participatory arts involved, and as such there will be specialized **CULTURA VIVA Chapter for Community Cultural Centers Networks across the globe**. This particular chapter will be supported and coordinated with the help of the International Council for Cultural Centers (I3C), which has been since its establishment in 2008 the visionary and catalyst for the creation and strengthening of such a global network.

3. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CENTERS’ GLOBAL NETWORK

The International Council for Cultural Centers (I3C), in addition to supporting the coordination of the informal Chapter/Network for Community Cultural Centers Networks in the CULTURA VIVA platform, will further build and develop a **network of I3C associated members: global network of national networks of community cultural centers from all continents**. The reason for associated and not full membership was determined by the participants as a relevant first step, which at this stage allows the specialized networks of community cultural centers to be united in a relevant network that is useful in terms of sharing structures, vision, and needs, but is not rigid and bounding with membership fees or heavy administration and governing elections. Such I3C network of associated members is a light yet constructive first step towards a potential organization of a full-membership global network of networks of cultural centers within I3C with institutionalized membership and governance structure, if such a structure is considered necessary and useful in the future by all constituents of the network.

Through the World Summit, the networks of community cultural centers presented and invited as I3C associated members included: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, the European Network of Cultural Centers (with its constituent European national networks of cultural centers), South Africa, and South Korea. These networks when national are in some cases represented and coordinated by **ministries of cultures, in others by NGOs and civic networks, and in third by a mixed system of NGO-government partnerships**, and as such any kind of organization or structure, including an individual cultural center in a country could become an I3C associated member, as long as the organization has the shared vision to promote social inclusion and civic participation through community arts and heritage preservation. I3C has located other similar networks in countries that could not be present at the World Summit or where communication has not yet been established, and I3C welcomes any future inquiries and applications towards joining the I3C associated network from countries, networks, and/or individual community cultural centers. The database of networks of community cultural centers will be gathered and available at the I3C website, www.international3c.org.

The **key benefits to individual community cultural centers from the existence of such a global network**, regardless of whether one-day institutionalized through membership fees or not, discussed during the World Summit include: needed and useful information and connection among similar networks in order to improve the local and national programs; to develop international partnerships and funding grant proposals and projects; to coordinate research on the social, cultural, ecological, and economic impact of these centers; to help increase the self-confidence and cultural management capacity of the centers and networks; to raise the profile and prestige of community cultural centers before their own national governments and cultural policies as well as before international cultural organizations such as UNESCO, the EU, MERCOSUR, OAS, and all other continental inter-governmental structures in order to seek and secure their support.

4. POINTS OF HAPPINESS

It is from the experience of the Brazilian “points of culture” that I3C proposes the concept of the **“points of happiness”** as an overarching concept and term that can embrace and connect all these community cultural centers around the world through the shared vision that the arts in community positively affect the happiness/wellbeing of the individual and the community. These “points of happiness” cultural centers are sometimes organized in national and then continental networks, as is the case of the European Network of Cultural Centers (www.encc.org), and sometimes they are individual, active community cultural center, which are hungry to share with other similar spaces around the world their local successes and problems, to strengthen each other, to cooperate and to co-create, and to work towards sustainable and socially-beneficial national cultural policies.

These globally spread “points of happiness” function already and would further continue developing community engagement with the arts, incubating local artistic and co-

creative projects fomenting people's well-being. Among the various types of community cultural centers, the World Summit discussed also the role of **social entrepreneurship** for these community cultural centers, and the example of the Bread Houses Network as a **mix of community cultural center and social-enterprise bakery** was enthusiastically greeted and considered as a good model for other cultural centers to develop their own social enterprises, no matter whether linked to food, crafts, arts, cultural industries, etc., as long as they strive to engage disadvantaged sectors of their local population in self-sustainable enterprises.

On the topic of the **link between "creativity and happiness/wellbeing"**, Brazil offers another good practice along with the now world-famous Bhutan Happiness Index: the **Brazilian Gross Domestic Happiness index** (*Felicidade Interna Bruta no Brasil*)³. In a recent project called "HappyNes(t)s" funded by the European Cultural Foundation among I3C and the FabriC Regional Cultural Center in Bulgaria, and organizations and universities in Poland and Spain, there resulted further elaborations on a **"Creativity and Happiness" index**.

5. "RE-ENCHANTMENT" of the WORLD

The notion of "re-enchantment of the world" (*reencantamento do mundo*) is another concept that was born in Brazil, mainly from the literary works and community projects of Brazilian poet Hamilton Farias, Director of the Polis Institute in Sao Paulo. The work of Mr. Farias and the Polis Institute over the past more than 20 years has been dedicated to integral and sustainable urban planning and management with particular focus on community arts and sustainable development through various cultural activities from the preservation of local intangible cultural heritage and cultural diversity to contemporary art forms and projects connecting professional and voluntary/amateur arts: all of these projects, from Brazil out to world through various international conferences and projects spread under the motto of "*Re-enchanting the world!*".

With the First World Summit of Community Arts Centers and Networks, the motto of "*Re-enchanting the world!*" becomes the uniting spirit of co-creating and sharing for a new and better possible world through *participatory arts*: without the need to distinguish whether created by or with professional or amateur artists, or in a community cultural center or in the open air, the common mission and vision of the global CULTURA VIVA movement is, indeed, to re-enchant the world with the simple but very powerful truth that

*when people of all backgrounds create freely together there is
no space for conflict and exclusion!*

³ See more at www.felicidadeinternabruta.org.br.

ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORLD SUMMIT ENDORING ITS PROCEEDINGS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

AFRICA

Continental network(s):

- Arterial Network

SOUTH AFRICA

Greatmore Studios Woodstock, CapeTown

ASIA

Continental network(s):

- Asia-Europe Foundation and Culture360: Connecting Asia and Europe Through Arts and Culture
- Arts Network Asia

EUROPE

Continental network(s):

- European Network of Cultural Centres, www.encc.eu
 - AMATEO: European Network for Active Participation in Cultural Activities
 - Trans-Europe Halles
 - Budapest Observatory of Cultural Policies
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- AZERBEJDJAN
 1. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan, National Network of Cultural Centers

 - AUSTRIA
 2. IG Kultur Österreich
 3. Im_Flieger
 4. Social Impact Aktionsgemeinschaft

 - BELGUM
 5. Vereniging Vlaamse Cultuur en (VVC)
 6. Vlabra'ccent (Flemish-speaking network of cultural organizations)
 7. Association des Centres Culturels de la Communauté française de Belgique (ACC), Belgium/The Association of cultural centres of the French Community of Belgium
 8. ASTRAC, Réseau des professionnels en Centres culturels asbl

9. Blaise Patrix, international artist developing “Sociable Art” methods
- BULGARIA
 - 10. Innovative Community Centres Association (chitalishte network)
 - 11. AGORA Platform - Active Communities for Development Alternatives (chitalishte network)
 - 12. Intercultura Consult ®
 - 13. *Za Bukvite* Chitalishte newspaper
 - 14. The FabriC regional center for culture, Gabrovo
 - DENMARK
 - 15. Cultural Centres in Denmark (Kulturhusene i Danmark)
 - GERMANY
 - 16. Bundesvereinigung Soziokultureller Zentren e.V.
 - LATVIA
 - 17. Municipal agency Cesis Culture and Tourism Center
 - LITHUANIA
 - 18. Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre
 - NORWAY
 - 19. Eva Bakkesslett, artist, associated with the Bread Houses Network
 - 20. Aasmund Bjoernstad, book writer, associated with the Bread Houses Network
 - POLAND
 - 21. Osrodek Kultury Ochoty / the Ochota Cultural Centre (OCC)
 - 22. WANDERING FORUM of CULTURE "LOWER SILESIA"
 - 23. MIEJSKI OŚRODEK KULTURY W KONSTANTYNOWIE ŁÓDZKIM
 - SPAIN
 - 24. "PROCEDIENDO: design and social creativity lab for sustainable local development"
 - SERBIA
 - 25. Creative Economy Group regional platform
 - UNITED KINGDOM
 - 26. National Alliance for Arts Health and Wellbeing
 - 27. Bury Art Gallery, Museum & Sculpture, representing the Bury Cultural Quarter
 - 28. Republic of Imagination, Cynefin Theater Group

LATIN AMERICA

Continental network(s):

- Cultura Viva Comunitaria
- Latin American Network of Arts for Social Transformation

- ARGENTINA

- 29. Crearvalelapena Foundation, Buenos Aires

- BRAZIL

- 30. Ministry of Culture of Brazil, department in charge of the Cultura Viva Program, coordinating the Pontos de Cultura network

- COLOMBIA

- 31. Ministry of Culture of Colombia, Regional Development Department, coordinating Casas de la Cultura network

- 32. Municipality of Bogota, Department for “Cultura, recreacion y deporte”

- HONDURAS

- 33. Municipality of la Ceiba, Dirección de Cultura y Artes, La Ceiba, Atlántida

NORTH AMERICA

- 34. I AM PRO WORLD Foundation (USA and Netherlands)

MORE INFORMATION: www.worldsummit.international3c.org