

VI UBC GENERAL CONFERENCE

COMMISSION ON CULTURE

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 1999 – SEPTEMBER 2001

N.E.W.S. – the contemporary art. exhibition

Organised under the auspices of the Commission on Culture was shown in Szczecin in October 1999, in Riga in May 2000, and then in Visby on Gotland (July 2000). 25 artists representing 10 Baltic countries had been invited to the NEWS exhibition which presents the important phenomena in the visual arts of the 90-ties.

The formula of the exhibition designed as an on-going process enables the participating artists to work together in all the exhibition locations which makes NEWS not only an artistic event but at the same time an important tool for mutual understanding and fostering of transnational contacts.

NEWS was accompanied by the course of theoretical seminars organised in Visby September 1999, Szczecin October 1999, Riga May 2000 and Bornholm June 2000.

The seminar materials presenting verified aspects of the contemporary art. practice of the last decade of the 20th century were published in the MARE ARTICUM magazine (issue 1 /6/ 2000) entitled "Desired Community".

II International Choir Festival organised under patronage of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held in Szczecin on 9-11 of June 2000. Szczecin hosted choirs from Germany, Russia, Finland and Poland. The 2nd edition of the Festival was a huge music event which gathered over 500 participants. The music performances were accompanied by a forum of choir conductors and presentations of choir ensembles in Internet.

IV working Session of the Commission on Culture of the UBC held in Szczecin on 9-10 of June 2000.

The session was attended by 30 participants representing 22 UBC member cities from Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland.

During the session the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Commission presented the major activities of the Commission since its establishment in 1993 (working sessions, UBC Culture Festivals, publications, special projects as MARE ARTICUM, NEWS, International Choir Festival).

The second election part of the meeting was organised according to the regulations elaborated during the meeting in Klaipeda in October 2000 .

The Commission on Culture elected 5 cities to the Board of the Commission for the period of next 2 years:

Bergen represented by Mr. Bjorn Holmvik Director of Cultural Affairs

Espoo represented by Ms. Riitta Hurme Project Manager

Szczecin represented by Mr. Sławomir Szafranski Director of Culture Department

Tartu represented by Mr. Hannes Astok Deputy Mayor

Visby represented by Mr. Olov Gibson Culture Official

The new board proposed Mr. Sławomir Szafrński/ Szczecin as a Chairman and Ms. Riitta Hurme/ Espoo as Vice Chairman of the Commission on Culture. The proposal was accepted by all the city representatives present at session.

The first meeting of the elected board was held in Tartu/ Estonia in September 2000. The main purpose of the meeting was discussion on the UBC cultural project for the years 2001-2002.

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture Tartu, 8-10 September 2000

The main goals of this first meeting of the CoC new board were: discussion of the projects submitted, application procedures, forms, CoC's assistance, financing, looking for financial sources and subsidies., means of support to the projects by CoC.

Besides, during the meeting the following proposals were made:

- to involve the Commission on Tourism and the Commission on Education into the co-operation within cultural projects;
- an idea to publish a book "History of the Balics" presented by Mr S.Szafranski.

During this meeting time and topic of next annual CoC Session was confirmed.

The Vth Session shall be held by Helsinki - Espoo, 6-9 September 2001 on the theme "Artistic Education in the Baltic Cities".

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture Espoo, 8-10 December 2000

During this second CoC board meeting following topics were discussed:

- catalogue of cultural institutions - the new one Olov Goibson is preparing and should be in the internet very soon;
- distribution of Mare Articum magazine
- possibility of participating as an observers in furthers meetings of the Council of the Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLARE);
- the European Council has nominated the year 2001 as the European Year of Languages.

It was accepted that the board will have 3-4 meetings a year, one of them in connection to the annual session. Next CoC board meeting will be held in Copenhagen.

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture Copenhagen, 2-3 June 2000

The main topic of CoC meeting was the program of the 4th Session of the Commission in Espoo and Helsinki in September 2001. Ms Riitta Hurme presented information on the subject.

There were also discussed the possibility of updating cultural catalog & calendar of UBC in the future

The 5th Annual Session of the Commission, Espoo & Helsinki, 7-8th September 2001

The convention had close to 30 participants from Kolding (Denmark), Tartu and Tallinn (Estonia), Espoo, Helsinki, Kotka and Vaasa (Finland), Liepaja and Riga (Latvia), Siauliai and Vilnius (Lithuania), Bergen (Norway), Szczecin and Warsaw (Poland) and Gotland, Kalmar, Nacka and Sundsvall (Sweden), about 15 Finnish experts of art education participated the

programme of the first meeting day plus the charming young and very young persons who participated demonstrations.

The theme of the session was art education concentrating mainly in the structure and teaching models adopted in Finland. The representatives of the Ministry of Culture in Poland brought Polish perspective into a discussion. In commentary speeches were brought experiences from art education in Riga and Szczecin as well as some project information. Performances by the students from East Helsinki Music Institute, the Tapiola Secondary School, Espoo, and an art exhibition of handicapped children, pupils of the Espoo School of Art, were demonstrating the methods and results of art education in Finland.

The Board decided to have the next annual meeting in Riga which had announced its willingness to organise the convention. It was also decided that the meeting and sessions in the forthcoming gathering would deal with the same issue - art education. The Board agreed on this.

MARE ARTICUM the Baltic Art Magazine

In the year 2000 MARE ARTICUM published 2 issues of the magazine:

1. **DESIRED COMMUNITY - Baltic art in the 90s**

The issue presents lectures, panel discussions and workshops conducted within the frame of N.E.W.S. (Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art organized in Szczecin, Riga, Visby and Bornholm). Along with the DESIRED COMMUNITY MARE ARTICUM distributes the final N.E.W.S. catalogue presenting the art works produced in all the exhibition locations.

2. **CYBERBALTIC - new media art in the region**

The CYBERBALTIC issue focuses on one of the most urgent questions in contemporary art. practice: media culture which is presented in a series of essays written by media theorists, critics and practitioners.

MARE ARTICUM - N.E.W.S. – the contemporary art. exhibition

Szczecin - Riga - Visby, 1999-2000.

MARE ARTICUM - ARTGENDA

ArtGenda is a net of 18 city partners in the Baltic Sea Area which aims on promoting the young Baltic art scene. The idea of ArtGenda as a instrument of transferring ideas and a tool for stimulation of the new values in cultural environment of the Baltic Region meets the basis of the MARE ARTICUM mission.

MARE ARTICUM closely collaborates with ArtGenda since 1998. Within the Stockholm edition of ArtGenda in 1998 MARE ARTICUM conducted the seminar focusing on the topic of the Baltic Identity, on the invitation of ArtGenda Helsinki 2000 the members of MARE ARTICUM editorial board visited Helsinki. The visit resulted in a series of articles published in the CYBERBALTIC issue of the magazine

The organizers of ArtGenda Hamburg 2002 expressed the will of further development of cooperation and invited MARE ARTICUM to present the new proposals. Currently two projects are negotiated: MARE ARTICUM seminar host by the City of Hamburg (May 2002) and joint production of the CD ROM presenting the works of artists based in the leading Baltic art centers.

MARE ARTICUM at the 52th Book fair in Frankfurt

In October 2000 MARE ARTICUM was presented at the biggest worlds Book Fair in Frankfurt. Along with the presentation of the magazine held by German editor of the magazine Mr.

Michael Haerdter, MARE ARTICUM presented the light & sound installation by a Polish artist Waldemar Wojciechowski.

The presentation in Frankfurt witnessed also the initiation of the MARE ARTICUM website: <http://www.marearticum.szczecin.art.pl> .

MARE ARTICUM - promotion

Within 29.03-20.04.2000 Mare Articum was presented by the Friedrichshein Gallery in Berlin.

MARE ARTICUM in 2001 MAGAZINE

- October 2001 Gender Entropy issue will present the bunch of articles focusing on the cultural definition of gender
- December 2001 New Hedonism issue will present the strong trend in the current art. practice rooted in pop-culture.

MARE ARTICUM - IV Biennial of Contemporary Art

MARE ARTICUM editorial board recommend the artists to the new edition of the Biennial to be open on 26th of October in Szczecin under the title " **SYBARIS. The fatal attraction of civilization**"... The show is curated by Lech Karwowski and Magdalena Lewoc - Polish editors of Mare Articum and organised by National Museum in Szczecin, the Castle of Pomeranian Dukes and Secretariat of Commission on Culture of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

The organisers of the IV Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art in Szczecin wish to put on display in the space of the galleries and other exhibitions in Szczecin sensual, intriguing, professional and carefully crafted art objects without limiting themselves with any restrictions of the form or genre.

It is the intention of the organisers to make this visually hyper-attractive presentation a kind of a mask under which there is a hidden ambivalent awareness of the optimistic affirmation and the existential concern and social criticism.

ACTION PLAN 2002-2003

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture Bergen, 1-2 February 2002

The representatives from Riga will be invited to Bergen to prepare the program for the next CoC annual meeting. Also the Commission on Education will be invited. The other issue to be dealt with in Bergen is to discuss the future election of the board members.

VI Annual Session of the UBC Commission on Culture entitled "Art Education" Riga, April 2002

During the Session in Espoo and Helsinki in September 2001, was decided to contact authorities of Riga City to organise the next session of the Commission on Culture and continue the theme "Art Education".

Street Artists Festival, Szczecin, July/August 2002

Street Artists Festival is a holiday proposition of the Kana Theatre Association in Szczecin. Its first edition in 1999 in its poetics referring to the tradition of fairy carnival - about 80 artists from all over the world (mimes, clowns, jugglers, acrobats, musicians, dancers, fire-eaters) took

thousands of habitants of Szczecin to a crazy street part - on the street closed for car traffic was filled with colourful parades of artists, and on the "Oddities fair" one could buy and see extraordinary, unusual items, big objects of beauty and small pieces of applied art.

In 2000 the form of the Festival was definitely much more developed - especially theatrically and musically (big shows in the Pomeranian Dukes Castle, the Music Street project covering the series of concerts and performances of various musical groups), many off events.

WE INVITE TO COOPERATION

In 2002 there are plans of further development of the Festival and focusing on such artistic events as theatre, performance and experimental music. We would like to invite to co-operation alternative artists both Polish and foreign - our regular partners are several Berlin artistic and cultural centres, like Schloss Broellin Art Centre - and we would like to establish contacts and co-operation with other neighbouring countries, especially those belonging to the Union of the Baltic Cities.

For further information please contact the organiser: Kana Theatre, e-mail: info@kana.art.pl

Vaasa X Choir Festival

The city of Vaasa (Finland), takes pleasure in inviting choirs from the UBC cities to the Vaasa X Choir Festival, which will be arranged **8-12.05.2002**. The Vaasa Choir Festival is an annual, international, joyful conclusion of the singing season. To the festival next spring there are expecting participants from Baltic Cities and from all over the world.

For further details of the Festival please contact producer Erkki Mendelin, tel. +358 6 325 3755, e-mail: erkki.mendelin@vaasa.fi.

NEYAC The North European Youth Art Circle, 2001-2004

NEYAC is a harmonious collaboration between public cultural departments of 10 Northern European cities representing 10 European Countries.

The project will, over a three years period, produce 10 international art-workshops with a theme of choice, fostering mobility of more than 600 young participants aged 16-20 years old. Every participant city will select annually six young participants and one assisting art-instructor, to participate at the multi-annual workshop program of the project. The cities will be responsible about the planning, the organisation and the total implementation of their own workshop week. The workshops will include the final assignment day, which will be a day of performances, exhibitions, concerning the chosen art themes of every participant city. The final assignment days will be wide-open to the audience and they will be focusing to the dissemination of the art works of young participants during the workshop week.

Workshops will take place from November 2001 to August 2004. The entire spectrum of human artistic forms will be involved; from shadow play, contemporary music and dance to visual arts and environmental

art-installations. In addition to these, History and local gastronomy-traditions will be always present.

Selection criteria for the participants will be basic artistic skills, their enthusiasm for new artistic cultural experiences and acceptable working language capabilities. Social needs and disadvantages of participants will be taken into account.

During the project, meetings will be hosted annually at some of the participant cities, to ensure the success of every annual workshop-program and its performances. Evaluation reports, multilingual publications, video ,Cd-rom , research and active dissemination of the annual results, will invite the final product of the project.

For future information please contact:

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VII Annual Session of the UBC Commission on Culture entitled "Art Museums and Galleries in the Baltic Cultural Landscape", 2003.

Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art, 2003

During this year edition of the Biennial in Szczecin shall be discussed the way of organising and inviting artist for the next exhibition.

Mare Articum - continuation of editing Baltic Art Magazine in the years 2002 - 2003.

Slawomir Szafranski

Chairman of the UBC Commission on Culture