

# Negotiating the Global Maze Artfully

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Our topic has been globalization and the arts - how the arts participate in globalization and how globalization affects the arts and the environment in which artists and arts organizations operate. We should be clear about the meaning of both these phenomena - the arts and globalization - for the discussion at hand.

In discussing “the arts”, we concentrated on the activities of nonprofit, professional arts organizations and artists in the “fine” or “high” arts. We focused on those arts because there has been relatively little analytical reflection or shared learning concerning those activities in the context of globalization. Certainly less than in the commercial arts and entertainment industries or among cultural property and preservation interests.

This focus on the nonprofit arts does not, however, blind us to other aspects of an inclusive arts sector. The nonprofit arts are part of a larger cultural ecology that also embraces traditional and indigenous arts, popular art and entertainment and cultural property. Increasingly, there is synergy, interaction and blurring among the elements of this arts ecology. Internationally, the location of any of these arts activities can vary across the public, commercial and nonprofit realms. Clearly, any discussion of the arts and globalization must touch on the entire arts sector, even as it focuses on specific aspects or issues.

Similarly, globalization is a process in the works. At present, globalization has many meanings but no generally accepted definition - especially with regard to the arts and culture. So far, our understanding of globalization derives primarily from economic and technological experience.

Economically, globalization is seen variously as a process by which business expands into markets around the world, the increasing integration of world markets and the parceling out of different stages of production to areas with the most obvious competitive advantage or the increasing interdependence of business and financial systems.

Technologically, the internationalization of communications, media and information delivery and distribution systems supports and drives the emerging global economy. Multinational and transnational communication and media corporations use wireless, fiber optic and Web-based technologies to manage and market their products globally. The Internet and associated activities have made information access easier and faster than ever before.

And the technology keeps evolving at a rapid pace.

Culturally, these technological and economic developments offer opportunity and threat. The arts see the potential of reaching global markets and audiences but fear commodification and the loss of authenticity. The arts, which already express identity and heritage, have a greater potential to share and communicate those characteristics to the world but also fear the possibility of submersion in sonic indeterminate but amalgamated and common global culture.

Since globalization is a process in the works, we have left the exact meaning of the term open. Consequently, we have tried to avoid making assumptions about the ultimate definition and effect of globalization with regard to culture. Instead we have tried to explore possibilities and clarify current choices and constraints.

The 2000 Barnett Symposium program was designed around key questions and concepts, emerging program traits, opportunities to learn from research and experience, and the possible

programmatic implications of various policy frames. Additional views and information were generated in companion graduate seminar offered by the Arts Policy and Administration Program at Ohio State University. This seminar digested an extensive reading list and allowed more extended discussion of many of the topics treated by symposium panels and speakers. A synthesis of key themes, observations and issues derived from all these sources—speakers, readings and seminar discussion—follows.

### **International program themes and traits**

Four observations capture important aspects of the nature and momentum of international cultural interactions.

- International cultural interactions come in many shapes and forms. They involve a variety of artforms and mediums of exchange, including individual artists and scholars, cooperative exhibitions and other kinds of projects; international touring; research, education and training activities; technical assistance programs; commercial coproductions and international trade; and traffic in cultural and intellectual property. Each medium of exchange raises its own constellation of management and policy concerns.
- The volume of such activities seems to be increasing, and the stakes involved are substantial. Cultural and intellectual property products rank as America's second largest export category. Tourism is one of the fastest growing businesses in the world. Culture is frequently used by cities around the world as an engine of development, as can be seen in the examples of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, the designation of Cultural Capital Cities in Europe for the past 15 years, the extensive renovations of Covent Garden in London, the new restoration project of the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires and the opening of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. International cultural and education exchanges are sponsored by public agencies at all levels of government, as well as by many individual arts, cultural and educational institutions. The international mobility of originating and performing artists and their works has been facilitated by technological developments in travel, communications and distribution and is affected by immigration, labor and tax policies. According to the recent U.S. State Department Survey of Public Diplomacy Programs (2000), American embassies and missions abroad value cultural programs as ways to increase the intellectual prestige of the U.S. and open doors to sometimes hard-to reach audiences," to help counter the persistent impression of the U.S. overseas as an insensitive giant," and to "generate positive media and public attention and emphasize that American culture is diverse and vibrant and reflects American values."
- Linkages between domestic and international concerns in these interactions are becoming more evident. That adds to the complexity of such activities and presents an opportunity to build public support and interest. The increasing diversity of many nations helps promote an interest in global cultural interactions. Alternatively, the potential of global markets can spur domestic cultural industries and interests to look inward and outward. Internally, cultural communities are recognizing the need to better preserve their cultural assets as a unique cultural attraction, while externally they market their arts and cultural attractions, products and services more broadly. Cultural tourism is a case in point, as domestic preservation efforts can complement global marketing while over-development and inattention to preservation considerations can damage or diminish the cultural resources that attract global audiences.
- The involvement of non-state and non-governmental actors seems to be increasing in the conduct of foreign relations. The United States has a history of using third-party agents in the management of cultural exchanges - using organizations such as the Institute for International Education (IIE) or the American National Theatre Administration (ANTA) - as well as

working with nonprofit arts organizations on touring exhibitions and programs. Federal agencies often have consulted with and worked through service, trade and professional associations such as Actors Equity, the MPAA, RIAA, AAM and ICOM. The future role of NGOs is likely to expand, offering opportunities for working through third-party agents in public-private partnerships, with regional government agencies and coalitions of nonprofit organizations. Certainly these options bear further consideration and exploration.

The preceding observations and the experiences of various international projects reveal some common traits in the design and practice of effective international cultural programs. These include:

- An aim to be two-way learning and communication experiences. This is in contrast to an “old” program model that viewed international activities as one-way promotions of American culture, values, products or interests. At an extreme, such one-way promotions could be regarded as little more than propaganda or protectionism. In turn, mutual learning and communication are necessities and assets for other program traits.
- An emphasis on building long-term relationships that can serve as a foundation for continuing and evolving projects. It takes considerable time, patience and attention to develop international relationships. Such relationship building can pay off only in the long run through continuing and multiple interactions. Conversely, such costly development efforts would seem excessive if used to support a one-time-only project or program.
- Attention to customization. Customization can be viewed as a design priority and an administrative caveat. Global reach and potential does not mean one-size-fits-all. Quite the contrary. In the cultural realm, international interactions may need to be customized for content, process and context. Different art forms and program goals are likely to elicit different program designs, management processes and administrative agents. Similarly, the cultural economics and governmental structures of different countries are likely to require different program design elements, assumptions and players.
- Political awareness, without political motivation. Different kinds of international cultural interactions are likely to be motivated by different sorts of policy goals. Cultural, informational and educational practitioners often are wary that activities in cultural diplomacy and international exchanges can shade into propaganda and national promotion. However, policy goals can - and should be distinguished from partisan political aims. Similarly, policy goals are distinct from political awareness. An awareness of the shifting winds of politics is a strategic necessity if international programs are to take advantage of open windows of opportunity. The point here is that international cultural interactions are most likely to elicit political and financial support when they are politically aware and policy goal oriented rather than partisanly motivated.

### **Changing rhetoric and definition**

Partly as a consequence of the foregoing, we find ourselves in the midst of adjusting our rhetoric and thinking to reflect new and emerging realities:

- From cultural exchange to international cultural interaction. Although we often use the term “cultural exchanges” as a catch-all description, many of these activities are not actually exchanges, nor do all resemble perhaps the best known exchange, the Fulbright exchanges that involve senior scholars, students, citizens and international visitors. Certainly, cultural

exchanges of educators, artists or others are an important category of international cultural interactions. However, there are many other types of interactions. Therefore, the symposium discussion consciously used the more accurate and inclusive term “international cultural interactions” (ICIs).

- Global rather than international. We are accustomed to thinking of the term “foreign relations” as being roughly synonymous with the term “international.” In both cases, the assumption is that interactions occur primarily at a nation-to-nation level. Today, it is not uncommon for foreign relations to involve multinational corporations, transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and bilateral or multilateral collaborations involving subnational public, commercial or nonprofit actors in any combination. Thus, “international” no longer provides an accurate definitional framework for these discussions or activities. An alternative term—“global”—seems to be gaining currency but has its own problems. Most notably for this discussion, few ICIs are really global in scope. Many are bilateral, some are multilateral, but few operate on a truly global scale.
- Public diplomacy to public purposes International cultural interactions often are perceived to be a tool of foreign policy, falling into the more general foreign policy strategy of public diplomacy. In actuality, ICIs can spring from a variety of motivations and purposes. Cultural diplomacy is one of those purposes. Others include:
  - Commercial ventures
    - international touring
    - legal and illegal trade in intellectual property products and cultural properties
    - cultural tourism
    - cultural coproduction and international investments
    - international travel of individuals of talent and specialized expertise
  - Development activities
    - national economic development
    - urban/area revitalization
    - human capital development
    - social/community development
    - creativity development
  - Noneconomically motivated contacts
    - cultural sensitivity and understanding
    - cultural sensitivity and understanding
    - creative collaborations and inspiration
    - foreign exposure
    - cultural representation
    - conservation/preservation activities
  - Activities prompted or conditioned by other policy frames
    - trade agreements
    - intellectual property regulations and protections
    - cultural property regulations
    - immigration, travel and tourism
    - education policy
    - technology policy

Each of the first three categories requires different evaluations with regard to time, impact and unit of measurement. For example, commercial ventures tend to occur in a relatively short time span; profits and products are assessed in terms of dollars, numbers and quality; and impacts often are a matter of market development and management. In contrast, development

activities tend to take longer, may be measured in terms of jobs, per capita income, education levels and competencies and tax revenues generated. Alternatively, noneconomically motivated contacts are likely to have different and difficult to measure short-term and long-term impacts. Finally, many of the other policy frames are intervening factors that make commercial, developmental and noneconomic interactions easier or harder to conduct, more or less economically beneficial.

### **Globalization and its cultural consequences**

Understanding globalization is a matter of definition, causes and contributing forces, policy options and choices and preferred goals. Although no single definition of globalization was prevalent, there seemed to be a general assumption that globalization was helping to prompt growth and diversification in the incidence and motivation of international cultural interactions.

Raj Isar proposed four vector forces that are driving globalization:

- pervasiveness of market economy principles
- emergence of the information society
- development of “easy” global communication systems, facilitated by technology and a lingua franca, English
- emerging shift from hierarchical to networked administrative and communication structures

Those forces alone do not determine the cultural consequences of globalization. The policy choices of national, state, provincial and local governments are another important factor in shaping these cultural consequences. So too are the choices and activities of members of the cultural and international community. Nor will everyone agree that these are the prime or only important forces involved in globalization.

However, if one accepts the above list of globalizing forces as at least a starting point and if one believes that globalization is a preferred, or perhaps inevitable, development, significant questions become:

- How can public policies advance these developments?
- How can public policies facilitate the ability of American artists and cultural organizations to adapt to these conditions?
- How can American public policies encourage other countries and their cultural communities to adapt to these conditions?
- What can members of the arts community, such as arts organizations artists and arts service organizations, do to advance, adapt to or complement public policy efforts?
- How can private interests most effectively invest their financial and intellectual capital to inform and support such public policy and arts community efforts?

On the other hand, if one objects to the trajectory of globalization questions similar to those raised above are directed at how various globalizing forces might be slowed down, diminished or resisted.

The effects and consequences of globalization for the arts and culture are unclear. Possible outcomes include:

- Americanization, the prospect that American popular culture will conic to dominate, if not replace, other cultural heritages, driving the film, publishing, television and software industries of other countries out of business or into boutique niches
- Homogenization. the amalgamation of unique cultural traditions, identities and styles into a universal, common culture; often carries the connotation that a dominant element of such a common culture would derive from American popular culture
- Repluralization, the rediscovery and renewed awareness of cultural traditions and identities that were historically dc-emphasized in the quests for nation building and modernization.

- Commodification, the perspective that everything has its price and that value is a matter of market appeal. Such a perspective tends to disregard, or at least underplay, non-economic considerations such as intrinsic, aesthetic, altruistic and heritage values.
- Globalism, the increased awareness of global cultural diversity and increased global cultural literacy.
- Glocalism, the enhancement of local cultures and heritages as both an expression of identity and a resources for global interactions.

If one assumes that globalization-whatever its shape might be-is unlikely to stop or be reversed, policymakers face two sets of questions about the cultural effects of globalization:

1. What would the antithesis of globalization be? And what do we seek to avoid? Parochialism? Isolationism? A reassertion of traditionalism? Are these conditions preferable to the current partial globalization? Are they preferable to a state of further globalization? In other words, what is globalization moving us away from? What are the benefits and costs of this change? How can we minimize the costs and losses while enhancing the attendant benefits?
2. Which of the possible outcomes of globalization would we prefer in the realm of arts and culture? What policies would help steer the forces of globalization toward outcomes we prefer? What policies would deflect or minimize the forces of globalization from creating conditions we hope to avoid? Can these choices be implemented as public policies of individual nations? Or will they require international cooperation or the concerted effort of private and transnational actors? Finally, will such decisions and policies occur as a matter of cultural policy discourse or will decisions and policies in other policy arenas effect the condition and evolution of the arts and culture in a globalized, information-rich world? And if the latter, even to some degree, then what other policy arenas are most likely to affect the arts and culture and how can cultural interests influence these policies?

### **A variety of policy frames**

Numerous other policy frames can have significant effects on the arts and culture and on ICIs, directly or indirectly. Symposium participants touched on a number of different policy frames and their possible ramifications on ICI.

- Baraka Sele (NJPAC) talked about how immigration policies influence her ability to bring foreign artists and cultural programs into the U.S. and established conditions, sometimes onerous and often inconsistent, under which they are paid or taxed. William Glade spoke about the ways different kinds of ICIs were affected under NAFTA trade agreements and how those provisions had different practical implications in each of the three signatory countries.
- Wayne Lawson pointed out the linkage between state trade missions and the establishment of ICI opportunities.
- A number of conference participants drew our attention to the impact of technology, such as the wealth and accessibility to information that the World Wide Web provides; the ease of making illegal copies of films, videos and music recordings; widely different conservation techniques and standards; the potential of online presentations and marketing, distance education and virtual tours. Behind each of these is a policy frame that requires understanding and that affects the availability, use and cost of these technologies.
- Juliet Sablovsky, Raj Isar, Bill Glade and practitioners such as Rafi Gamzou, Denise Mueller and David Fraher offered perspectives on how the structure of policy agencies reflects and affects ICIs as to program management, project design and placement or policy capabilities

and resources.

- Bernard Darras pointed out how various policy frames and industrial structures affect and are affected by cultural tourism policies.
- Elisabeth Caillet, Paul Astleford and Wayne Lawson provided case examples of how public policies at the national, local and state levels can promote cultural tourism.
- Sheldon Halpern drew our attention to the many ways intellectual property laws and treaties exert powerful effects on the arts and culture, nationally and internationally, and on the conditions and context of ICIs.

The shape of specific policy frames varies from one country to another and can change over time. One commonality is that a number of countries seem to be rethinking and reorganizing which agencies and levels of government will administer cultural programs and policies. Many countries have gathered together previously dispersed cultural programs into newly renamed ministries/departments of cultural heritage. A number of countries have sought to relocate administrative and financial responsibilities for cultural policies from the national to regional and local levels (decentralization) or from the public sector to the private (privatization). Some countries have done both.

At the very least, such changes have consequences for the administration and development of ICIs, since they shift the bureaucratic location, personnel and context directly concerned with ICIs. These structural shifts also have policy implications and ramifications. On the one hand, restructuring may be a response to globalizing forces. The national heritage agencies might be seen as putting in place a governmental apparatus more attuned to managing global cultural policies. On the other hand, decentralization might be viewed as allocating public authority in a manner more consistent with policies aimed at repluralization.

### **Investing in international cultural interactions**

Different countries exhibit different assumptions about the value of the arts and culture in their societies and lives. Many of the practitioners spoke of ICIs as investment in cultivating mutual understanding, developing working relationships and building program capability.

Developing the implications of this investment concept might:

- imply a long-term involvement and commitment;
- involve the application of some kind of currency or capital
  - financial capital (funding, financial incentives, loan security, etc)
  - cultural capital (cultural property, accrued cultural assets such as repertoire, collections, institutions)
  - creative capital (intellectual property, creative capacity in the form of talent and training)
  - social capital (networks of relationships that undergird a sense of community, trust, tolerance, etc.
  - political capital (supportive officials in legislative and executive branches of government, positive public opinion or other political strengths and resources)
- imply the production of dividends, which might take one or a combination of forms, including artistic/creative, financial, social, educational and political
- be highly contingent on leadership, information, public attitude and policy frame

Similarities between the investment implications stated above and the traits of effective international cultural interactions discussed earlier are obvious. Effective programs are two-way engagements; dividends are expected by all investors, even if they expect different kinds of dividends. Both assume a long-term perspective, Customization is not only a matter of administrative and artistic context but also a matter of the kinds of dividends expected and the kinds of capital involved. Finally the political awareness of effective ICI programs resonates with the highly contingent nature of investing.

Public funding for cultural exchanges and other ICIs has never been plentiful. Different kinds of ICIs have quite different financing patterns and practices and give rise to a variety of economic issues. Public funding is not necessary for all types of ICIs, for example, the sales and profits of American entertainment and other cultural industries are substantial and involve little direct government money. However, the cultural industries in other countries often receive substantial public funding.

Appropriations for cultural public diplomacy programs of the United States have generally decreased over the past 49 years. Special appropriation for national representation at international festivals, fairs and expositions is often uncertain. Those conditions prompt considerable interest in devising methods of securing and directing public support to ICIs that do not rely on annual appropriations. Among the funding mechanisms mentioned were:

- endowments or trust fund established to support State Department cultural exchanges
- federal resources pooled through interagency collaborations
- multistate mutual funds raised for particular projects
- public - private partnerships
- nonprofit/public international coproductions, such as the Washington Opera and the Seville Opera
- nonprofit international collaborations, such as the Guggenheim and Hermitage museums
- nonprofit cooperations in ICIs, such as Ohio Foundation for the Arts and the Ludwig Foundation
- state /nonprofit partnerships in ICIs, such as OAC and Arts Midwest for international traveling exhibits
- interagency partnerships at the state level in ICIs, such as OAC and Ohio State University for professional development and training programs for international visitors or for meetings such as the Barnett Symposium

Each of these mechanisms requires further exploration and evaluation to understanding its strengths and weaknesses, where it is most appropriate and how it may be facilitated or nurtured.

Despite the relative scarcity of public funding for ICIs, public policy can contribute to and affect each of the investment implications identified earlier. Public policy is perhaps most helpful in addressing contingent elements. For example, policy efforts could be undertaken to cultivate leaders and share leadership experiences and to support or engage in the collection of information that could be useful in identifying potential and likely partners for ICIs.

Leadership recruitment, training and succession planning are expressed needs of nearly every nation's cultural and creative industries. There is considerable interest in university programs in arts management, media and entertainment management and cultural policy analysis. Likewise there is an apparent need for short executive training programs to update or add new skills to midcareer cultural professionals. International communication and interaction is still relatively new and limited among scholars and public cultural administrators between countries. Collaborative projects are quite rare, even though there is considerable interest. There are few peer programs for creative and administrative staff of cultural organizations. Some service organizations have begun to internationalize their membership and build some of these connections. The improvement of distance educational programs and delivery offers possibilities for educational and training interactions on an international basis.

Furthermore, in an environment of change—technologically economically, demographically—entrepreneurial leadership seems to be at a premium. Entrepreneurialism is not simply geared toward financial and market innovation, nor is innovation confined to the artistic/creative realm. Rather, entrepreneurialism can apply in any area that calls for thinking outside the box, for innovation and informed experimentation, for creative response to changed

circumstances and a changing environment. Such ICIs would seem to have the attraction that everyone can learn something from others and that confronting similar problems or challenges might lead to collaborative learning.

Andrea Galan presented an account of the kinds of information that are useful and increasingly necessary for the development of ICIs. The panel on the infrastructure for ICIs talked about research, professional associations, and networks as devices that can facilitate the gathering and analysis of information and the cultivation of leadership. Public policies can be key mechanisms for organizing, coordinating and maintaining such informational and infrastructure efforts.

Public policy can recognize and give greater legitimacy to a variety of types of capital that can be—and often are—invested in ICIs and also stipulate how that capital is secured. Although the development of such policies is still in its infancy, one can, perhaps, point to the heightened effort to operationalize the concept of social capital as one way of assessing the impact of cultural policies.

Alternatively, the interest of many arts organizations and corporations in the value of branding might be seen as a growing awareness of a nonfinancial capital asset. How the value of this asset can be established as part of an investment strategy in international cultural interactions has yet to be worked out.

Similarly, established accounting and investment procedures do not have a broadly accepted way to evaluate cultural capital assets, such as repertoire or collections, or creative capital, such as individual talent and sweat equity. Indeed, we may need to invent new concepts and measures for the different kinds of capital that can be invested in cultural activities. On the one hand, such concepts might be analogous to the way nonprofit organizations and their contributors include the idea of in-kind donations within their comprehensive understanding of institutional support. On the other, valuating creative capital might be akin to the way the film industry thinks of certain actors, actresses or directors as bankable.

### **Implications for policy and programs management**

Going global comprehensively may be beyond the administrative and expertise capacity of federal governments to handle. If that becomes the case, the role of national agencies may shift more toward assuring conditions that are conducive to ICIs—whether through trade agreements, immigration and travel regulations, access to communication and distribution technology or creation of inventories of people and organizations interested in ICIs.

For example, in the area of cultural tourism, there seems to be a need for cultural policy officials to use their positions of authority to act as brokers coordinators, conveners and advocates. Conveners to assemble the necessary but diverse stakeholders. Brokers to develop policy goals, priorities and program guidelines. Domestic advocates to develop policies and resources at each level of government and with private interests. International advocates to work toward greater harmonization and interconnection between nations.

Concurrently, if the government role gravitates in those directions, specific selection processes and program management may need to devolve to numerous other agents: state or regional arts agencies, local tourism boards, professional and trade associations, universities or specially designed project coalitions.

Clearly, globalization is a process in the works, one that demands creative and entrepreneurial efforts to shape the ways culture and globalization will influence one another.