

ENICPA –
Performing Arts Hub Norway – international promotion

Bilde 1.

Performing Arts Hub Norway work with a broad perspective to strengthen the visibility of the performing arts field. This has to do with good working conditions and opportunities, as well as good infrastructure, information and visibility for performing arts in Norway and internationally.

This presentation will focus on the background and the way we support the international engagements. The photos are from artists that tour with support from us and the ministry of foreign affairs, and from previous networking events.

Bilde 2.

When the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2003 decided to recruit strategic partners and advisors from the different arts fields, they chose to invite Performing Arts Hub in to fill this role for performing arts. With this role came the managing of the travel support system on behalf of the MFA.

Performing Arts Hub had the professional expertise, and we embrace all expressions within performing arts; dance, theatre, performance, modern opera etc. and the Ministry of foreign affairs had the local expertise. Since 2003 with the decision to be partners and work together, this combination has proved to be very fruitful and useful.

With the managing of the travel funding system, and the active role as advisers to the MFA, we saw the need to assist the artists with international advice and support in their work to establish international contacts and networks.

We want to strengthen the artists' and company's own networking opportunities and international potential, and to develop it side by side with support system, to create the strongest synergies.

Bilde 3.

We believe the globalization of performing arts is not just about "selling and buying" or "export". This is of course a big part of it, but international presentations are consequences of artistic recognition, networks and relationships.

In our strategy for strengthening international collaboration it was therefore important to focus on the entire “food chain” the artists must go through to get to the point where they present their performances. By the time they apply for travel support, the rest of the job is already carried out. The piece is already invited.

So then the strategy is about facilitating meetings between Norwegian artists and the international performing arts communities, so they meet their potential international partners, and that these partners get the chance to see Norwegian performances live.

Bilde 4.

In 2009, with project funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs PAHN began to work more actively to help Norwegian artists on the international market. Part of this work is to go with delegations of artists to international markets, such as CINARS in Canada, Tanzmesse in Germany and PAMS in Korea. In January each year we arrange an extensive Norwegian network delegation to New York. In the US, we have also entered into a long-term partnership to promote performing arts from Norway in the best possible way. The United States is large and complex, and local expertise is invaluable when it comes to finding the right potential partners and programmers for the Norwegian artists. In collaboration with our American partner we arrange a week of intense networking and platforms.

In addition to the following up over time, the markets are not static, they change constantly. It is therefore important to be able to navigate in a world that is constantly changing. Continuous international presence is necessary. It is therefore crucial that the Foreign Ministry supports these annual long-term initiatives and enables us to work with a long-term perspective.

Bilde 5

Another significant part of the promotional work is to arrange visiting programs to Norway for international experts, this means programmers, curators, journalists and other professionals. We know that no programmer will book a performance without having seen it live. This is a rule that obviously have exceptions, but this is mostly the case.

The role of PAHN in these visiting programs is to be the bridge into Norwegian performing arts. When should the visit take place? Who would the programmers be interested in meeting? And to find the performances they should see. It is so important that the guests get a good professional and eventful program. Expert visits is one of the best instruments we have to follow up the promotional work and networking that the artists have done at the markets and festivals, and it really brings results.

The Norwegian embassies provide travel funding for the experts, which again secure the dialogue with the arts environments in the respective countries.

Bilde 6

When we start the work on planning exhibitions and networking events, it is very important to be open and accessible. All artists and companies that participate in these projects apply to participate through open calls, and we always bring a mix of well established companies and up and coming artists.

It is important that we can offer something for those who are in the start of their career, and for those who already have international networks and audiences.

If a company wants to pursue international presence and networking, there are several things to consider. It is important to know that to establish international networks and opportunities requires time and presence. Relationships take time to build, and one cannot expect concrete invitations after the first international effort. One has to work hard to get in touch with the

right people, and sometimes go into a personal promotional situation that many of Norwegians perceive as unnatural.

However, we see that performing art from Norway has huge international potential, and we in Performing Arts Hub Norway will do our best to continue to contribute to increased international opportunities for Norwegian artists.