

ENICPA round table meeting 2009

November 12 - 13, Aix-en-Provence

hosted by ARCADE Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

by Piia Ahonen

Participants

Members:

Piia	Ahonen	Dance Info Finland
Sylvia	Andriantsimahavandy	ARCADE Provence-Alpes-Cote D'azur
Jean-Louis	Battistetti	ARCADE Provence-Alpes-Cote D'azur
Dorota	Buchwald	Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, Warsaw
Bianca	De Waal	Theater Instituut Nederland
Michael	Freundt	German ITI
Sindre	Jacobsen	Dance Information Norway
Agnieszka	Kubas	Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, Warsaw
Bernard	Maarek	ARCADE Provence-Alpes-Cote D'azur
Bart	Magnus	Vlaams Theater Instituut
Dries	Moreels	Vlaams Theater Instituut
Laurent	Sebillotte	CND / Médiathèque
Kamma	Siegumfeldt	Danish Dance Information Centre - Dansens Hus
Ondrej	Svoboda	Art & Theatre Institute, Prague
Anna	Valimaa	Finnish Theatre Information Centre
Anna	Valls	Institut Del Teatre, Barcelona
Thilo	Wittenbecher	Mime Centrum Berlin

Guests:

Yohann	Floch	HorsLesMurs, Paris
Timothée	Guicherd	Lab for Culture/European Cultural Foundation
Jacques	Jaricot	Ballet Preljocaj-Centre Choregraphique National, Aix-en-Provence
Mathilde	Laroque	Contredanse, Bruxelles

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12

The programme of the two-day round table meeting was divided. The first day was dedicated to the network and its members' projects.

General Assembly

The meeting and the General Assembly started with a short round of introductions. After the introduction the GA handled **the financial matters**, namely

- Approval of the books of 2008 and Acquittal of the Board for 2008

- Follow-up of budget 2009 (membership fees paid)
- Discussion & approval of proposed budget 2010

The books for 2008 were discussed already at the spring meeting in Bratislava, but due to the small attendance there, the board could not be acquitted. Therefore this late discussion. The books for 2008 were approved and the board acquitted unanimously.

The treasurer told that the invoices for the 2009 membership fees had not yet been sent, but would be sent soon after the meeting. After that he presented the GA a draft budget for 2010, showing reserves of 10 000 euros at the beginning of the year and of 9 000 euros at the end of the year. It was pointed out that there were no reservations yet made for the possible costs from the travel programme, which was going to be presented next by the president. There were no other comments and the budget was approved.

The next item on the agenda was **the activities for 2009 - 2011**. It was announced that two activities will be discussed later on in the meeting, namely the new website of ENICPA and the collaboration with SPACE project. Unfortunately in the end there was no time to discuss the new website during the meeting.

Michael Freundt then presented a draft for **a new travel programme**. The idea first came up last year during the round table meeting in Dublin. The initial idea was to set up an internship programme within ENICPA, for young employees to go and spend some weeks in another ENICPA member organization.

The board discussed this idea in length at their meeting in Seville in March, and discovered several problems. For example, it might prove to be difficult to be away from ones own work for a month or so. On the other hand, it might be difficult to host an intern for such a time period. Also language can prove to be a big problem. In the end the board decided to suggest a travel programme, where individual employees of the members organizations could get some support from ENICPA to visit another organisation for a couple of days. *See the draft for more details.*

The suggestion was received with interest. It was decided that the programme will be launched for a test period of one year, starting immediately. After the test period the benefits and experiences will be evaluated by the board and the GA. Dries Moreels pointed out that at the moment the structure of the budget does not allow the continuous support of such a programme. Therefore it will be necessary to discuss how to fund the programme, if the members want to continue it after the test period. One possibility is to raise the membership fee.

It was also mentioned that ENICPA can't give out grants due to taxes. Therefore the amount of support is not fixed, but for budgeting reasons it is estimated to be a maximum of 600 euros per visit. Bianca de Waal suggested that the supported person should write out a short report (one page) of the visit to share with the network as a return. This way the programme will also benefit the other members, through the shared experiences and possible new ideas. The reports will also help to evaluate the benefits of the programme.

The other activities discussed were the ENICPA project **DanceVideoNavigator.org** and its present situation, and then very shortly the situation of the **Playservice.net**, which is not as such an ENICPA project, but involves several members.

The DVN is still active and it has just required a new language, namely Czech. The project requires constant up keeping, which means checking the different connections. It was pointed out that someone should also update the static content of the site. Laurent Sebillote asked if there are any plans to evaluate the project. It turned out that there aren't any plans, but it is a relevant suggestion.

Michael Freundt said shortly that the playservice.net has recently faced some technical problems, but that the project is still going on. Anna Vällimaa told that they have had a lot of problems with updating the database. Dorota Buchwald expressed their institute's interest to join the project.

Presentations of members' projects

The members' projects were not required to relate to the general theme of the meeting. Therefore the projects presented a wide range of activities.

Anna Valls Pasola presented three different projects: 1) Virtual Museum of Performing Arts, 2) European Collected Library of Artistic Performance - ECLAP and 3) Digital Newspaper archive. The first project is about digitalizing the vast collections of the Institute. The second project is connected to Europeana (www.europeana.eu). The last project raised the question of how they are allowed to show PDF-files of newspaper clippings. The answer was by paying a lot for the copyrights. *See the Power Point file for more details.*

Thilo Wittenberg presented a project called Performance Online, which is a pilot project to set up an online video server for the Performing Arts. The project is divided to four modules: 1) Political Body, 2) Contemporary Dance in Discourse, 3) Everybodys and 4) international digital archive for new music theatre.

The two first will require an authorized access, the two other will be freely available. The Mime Centrum collaborates with several German institutions, most importantly with the German Dance Film Institute in Bremen and with the Movement Research Centre at the FU Berlin. Later on also several European information centres with related databases will be allowed to access the server. *See the PDF file more details.*

Kamma Siegumfeldt told about a new online database, which documents the history of Danish contemporary dance. The database, which is still under construction, will feature different kinds of materials about dance productions and artists: videos, photos, sketches. During the project they ended up collaborating with the Swedish Scenarkivet.se. The plan is also to digitalize information about new productions, but so far they have concentrated on past performances. One problem during the project has been the copyrights. Not so much with dance artists, but with other copyright holders, like photographers. It has also been difficult to find experts to consult.

Kamma also mentioned two other projects the Danish Dance Information Centre has worked on recently. The first is organizing the celebrations of the International Day of Dance in Denmark (www.dansesdage.dk). Thanks to a generous grant from a private foundation, they have been able to organize one of the biggest celebrations of that day in the world. The second project is the Nordic-Baltic project keđja, collaboration between six Nordic and Baltic dance institutions (www.kedja.net).

Anna Välimaa presented Seeds of Imagination, a project that aims to enhance the relationships between theatre fields of Finland and Russia. The project is funded by a special EU fund, aimed for projects between one EU country and Russia. So far the results of the project have been excellent. The projects consists several activities, like organizing different kinds of workshops, seminars, performances, networking etc. *More info on www.seeds.fi*

Anna also mentioned shortly TAIVEX Senior Manager training programme, which is aimed at Finnish producers and managers in the culture field. The aim is to develop the skills needed when working internationally. The project is funded by the European Social Fund (ETF).

Dorota Buchwald and **Agnieszka Kubas** gave an overview on the website and projects of Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute. However, they mentioned first that their activities have been downsized considerably because of the current financial crisis. They have for example practically closed their English website.

The institute has had several digitalization projects, which have resulted in different kinds of databases, all connected to their website. Such projects have included the digitalization of the archives of those Polish theatres that were established in London by emigrants after the II WW. The institute has also digitalized the archives of the different alternative theatres operating in Poland in 1960s, '70s and '80s. The institute also initiates research and has organized several conferences and seminars. The latest of these is a conference about re-writing the Polish theatre history. *See also www.instytut-teatralny.pl and the Power Point file.*

Ondrej Svoboda presented shortly the new curated part of the Prague Quadrennial. The PQ itself has changed its name. It will no longer be Prague Quadrennial - International exhibition of scenography and theatre architecture. Instead, the next PQ that takes place in 2011 will be called Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space.

The new part or project connected with PQ is called Intersection: Intimacy and Spectacle. It is a project that features interactive installations/performances. It also aims to combine theory and practise. The project also includes three international symposia, two of them already organized. The third one will be held in 2010. *For more details, see the Power Point file.*

Bianca de Waal talked about two different projects, the Dutch Theatre Encyclopaedia and a pilot project to digitalize clippings. She explained very openly the difficulties they have faced during the projects and shared some lessons learnt. *You can find Bianca's presentations in full in the two separate PDF files.*

Michael expressed his wish to have more presentations like this in the future. So we can all learn not only from each others' success but also from mistakes.

The presentations round was closed with a presentation by **Yohann Floch** about **HorsLesMurs**, the French national information centre for the street art, circus, site specific performances etc. HorsLesMurs has four different activities. It serves as documentation and information centre, it provides consulting services, it has a publishing department and it also works internationally. Part of the international activities is the coordination of the Circostrada network. *For more details, see the PDF file.*

Yohann also talked in length about the way they have handled the copyright issues involved with their vast database. In the end they were able to get all the copyright holders to give them the rights for free, but this was the result of a huge project that lasted for a year. Yohann saw that one benefit from the project was that it also served as an educational project: many of the artists don't really know that much about the copyrights.

At the end of the presentations Michael suggested that since copyrights seem to be a relevant issue for many, it might be sensible to make them at least one of the themes of the next meeting.

The day was closed of with two short discussions in two separate groups. Group one talked about the information centres and social networks. Group two talked about how to handle the mass of emails.

A few centres use the social networks, such as Facebook, as one channel to promote their work. Some have also created user profiles for their projects. The experiences with such uses have been good. Everyone agreed that the issue comes more problematic when creating user profiles for individuals. One has to be quite careful, especially if one's contacts include clients. In the end it was mentioned that there are already a few social networks that are meant for performing arts professionals, such as the web project South-South.info, or the Russian initiative Yartloom.com.

In the "email" out break group participants shared their habits and practises to work with the mass of emails. Especially the issue of sorting and storing the mails was touched. As storing mails into folders (up to 40-50 subfolders in the case of one participant) is very time consuming we discussed ways to handle the search without grouping. Proposals: use search tools like xobni or flag only the important ones or the one you really need to follow up and and transfer everything in one folder. A discussion to be continued.

FRIDAY, NOVEMEBR 13

On Friday most of the day was focused on the issue of mobility and what the role of the information and documentation centres can be.

However, the day started of with a short presentation of the other guest organization, **Contredanse** from Brussels, given by **Mathilde Laroque**. Contredanse is a support centre for contemporary dance. The centre functions as a documentation centre and it publishes all kinds of

materials. At the moment they have a digitalization project, which aims to bring online all their archives. Contredanse also organizes different kinds of workshops. *More info on the separate PDF file and on www.contredanse.org.*

Keynote: Online tools for mobility, Critical overview

Timothée Guicherd from LabForCulture talked in his keynote about the possibilities and challenges that the new online tools mean for mobility issues.

He outlined first the major technological changes that have taken place and changed the entire information landscape and ways of communicating and cooperating. These changes include all the web 2.0 technologies, social networks and other web platforms that facilitate contacts and information provision.

After that Timothée talked about three different aspects of mobility that the online tools deal with, namely virtual mobility, information provision and connections & networking. He talked about how the online tools can facilitate so called virtual mobility but also pointed out situations where the tools fail to help.

He then talked in more detail about information provision, referring to a study about cultural mobility, carried out by ECOTEC. The study lists four sections of information provision, where there is a gap:

- Regulatory issues (taxation; social security; visas; customs regulations; law; intellectual property;
- Opportunities for jobs, cross-border projects and co-productions;
- Funding opportunities for cross-border projects and to cover the costs of cross-border mobility;
- Country and region profiles explaining the structure and profile of the cultural sector.

Timothée also presented a mapping of several online information sources, based on which of these four sections of information they provide. It was also mentioned that one extra challenge is how to find information that is suited to each persons special needs. Timothée then continued by pointing out also some other issues that should be considered when talking about information provision.

He also introduced in the same manner the new challenges and possibilities the online tools create for networking and connections between people. At the end of his speech Timothée listed out some future issues and also made a few recommendations for improvement.

For more details, see the Power Point file of the keynote.

In the discussion following the keynote it was pointed out that the mapping made by Timothée about the different online information sources is slightly misleading. This is due to the fact that even initiatives that offer on the surface information about same issues, have actually produced the information for different uses. Timothée replied by saying that this is exactly what he meant

when he mentioned the difficulty to find the right kind of information, the kind that is suited for YOUR needs.

Also the role of information centres was discussed. It was pointed out that the centres mostly act as mediators between the client/individual looking for information and the online information providers. It was therefore suggested that maybe the info centres should focus more on how to present and package the information produced by the different initiatives, in such a way that the information will be useful to their clients. On the other hand, it was also mentioned that at some point the online tools are just not enough; the face-to-face contacts will have to be introduced at some point, without them there will be no mobility.

A case study: Practics

One result of the fact that mobility has been officially included in the European Agenda of Culture, is the four pilot projects on mobility that got funding from the EU last year. The pilot projects will be giving recommendations to EU's next Culture programme, about how to enhance mobility. Anna Välimaa shortly presented one of these pilots, **Practics**.

During the project these three actions will take place:

- Conceptualising and piloting Cultural Mobility Contact Points => Infopoints;
- Staff exchange and exchange of best practices, training;
- Evaluation and recommendations.

The project has just finished its first phase, namely conceptualising the infopoints, and they are just starting the second phase, which consists of piloting the Infopoints.

One concrete outcome of the project is a quality charter that lists ten quality principals that the Infopoints should follow. Michael Freundt suggested that these are something that could be adopted even more widely by the ENICPA members. *For more details, see the Power Point file.*

A demo of Travelogue

Dries Moreels and **Bart Magnus** presented more in depth Travelogue, which is one part of the SPACE project. SPACE is also one of the four pilot projects funded by EU. It concentrates on the touring of the performing arts in Europe. SPACE has three parts. One offers education to managers, producer and critics. A second part focuses on supporting organizations that are involved in touring. The third part is Travelogue, which deals with data: what do we actually know about touring? *More info on the whole SPACE project on www.spaceproject.eu*

The idea behind Travelogue is to use the linked data technology to link together the already existing data about touring. In order to get there, the project aims to do the following:

- identify existing data;
- find the matching elements;
- build a prototype using existing data;
- visualisation of asymmetric data;

- iterative development;
- test a set of definitions for new data to be created and linked.

So far they have contacted 145 organizations and received as a result 16 relevant datasets. They have started to build a prototype by using these datasets in order to find some answers to the above mentioned issues. On the other hand the prototype aims to prove that the concept actually works.

They have already realized that the matching elements in the data are not all that precise. There are many different ways to present the relevant data, depending on the need of the organization that collect the data. Therefore they have ended up using quite wide definitions for the common elements, such as there is SOME information about the location of the performance.

All the datasets that they received are now put into a test database. However, this is just for the testing purposes; the aim of Travelogue is not to build a new service as such. The test server is built by using an open source tool called D2R, which runs on top of the actual database and opens up the “doors” for the new linking. The difficult part with using linked data is to how to explain by common web standards what your database includes. For example, it has become quite clear that there is a need for a new vocabulary, which can describe data about performing arts.

The schedule for the project is:

- by the end of 2009
 - clear picture of available datasets
 - specification for prototype
- by May 2010
 - working prototype
 - published datasets
 - generating hypotheses

At the end of the demo Dries explained very briefly the principals of linked data. The main idea is - put very roughly - that in order to link data and not web pages, you start to create hyperlinks already on the level of data. The D2R server helps you with this and opens up your database to be linked with other similar databases.

For more details, see the two Power Point files and www.vti.be/travelogue

Round table discussion: promotion of artists and mobility issues

Chairs: **Sylvia Andriantsimahavandy** and **Michael Freundt**, guest speaker: **Jacques Jaricot**

The round table discussion was started with Jaques Jaricot presenting the artists and producers point of view to the issue. By using a current international co-production of Ballet Preljocaj as an example, he listed out several aspects connecting with mobility. These included budgeting issues, cargo, different nationalities and cultures, but most importantly things to do with visas, working permits etc.

Ballet Preljocaj is in a lucky position since they have a good reputation and have relatively large staff, but even for them international working is problematic, yet crucial for survival. All in all M. Jaricot was of the opinion that international working requires passion also from the producers and managers.

Sylvia Andriantsimahavandy asked if M. Jaricot saw that the information centres could help in some particular way or if he ever advises for example young producers to contact information centres. The reply was that mostly the best advises come from colleagues and that what they mostly would need is something that no one provides, namely a world wide contact database, a global marketing tool. Therefore Ballet Preljocaj has such a database of their own, constantly updated by two people.

These views were supported later on in the discussion by Yohann Floch. He stated that HorsLesMurs makes a difference between emerging and established artists. Their databases provide information and contacts that the emerging artists often need, but it still is more common to call other companies or artists, when needing advice about visas or other legal issues.

Before the actual discussion about the information centres relationship to mobility issues and promotion, Agnieszka Kubas shortly presented a national mobility project that their institute has been involved in. The project called **Theatre Poland** is about bringing theatre to little towns and villages, where theatre is not normally seen. *For more details, see the PDF file.*

The rest of the round table discussion was used on reflecting what the information centres can do to facilitate mobility of artists. Sylvia said that in ARCADE they have adopted the view that supporting the artists should be seen more as a chain. One thing is to think what kinds of tools we can build. ARCADE has for example built a web tool or platform called La Pacabox that presents the work of the artists in PACA region (<http://pacabox.arcade-paca.com/>).

One issue during the conversation was the publishing of different kinds of promotional materials, like DVDs and magazines. Different organizations have very different experiences with this. For example in VTi's experience publishing DVDs is not a very efficient way to do promotion, but HorsLesMurs has very different experiences. The difference in the experienced efficiency lies in distribution: HorsLesMurs' DVDs have been widely distributed by Culture France.

This led to a discussion about the difficulty of making the necessary choices about who to promote. Sylvia pointed out that information centres have to consider very carefully what their relationship to direct promotion of artists can be. Also experiences about organizing showcases were discussed in this context. All in all most information centres seem to do promotion, but in the form of producing background information or by networking.

One important strand in the information centres work towards facilitating mobility is education. Quite a few centres organize some sort of training connected to mobility issue, either on regular basis or occasionally. The topics of these training sessions involve regulatory issues, informing about EU applications, entrepreneurship in the culture field etc.

As a conclusion it can be stated that information centres can have an important role in advancing mobility. We act as mediators when it comes to distributing information and knowledge back and forth between the artists and the different supporting structures.

See also Sylvia Andriantsimahavandy's thoughts on the issue in the separate PDF file

Closing words: next meetings

At the end of the meeting it was announced that the next round table meeting of ENICPA will be held in Prague on the second half of November 2010. The meeting will connect to a larger meeting of the SPACE project.

It was also announced that the board will look into the possibility to organize a smaller and more informal spring meeting in May 2010 in Brussels, in connection with the next Travelogue working seminar.