

The Fund for Arts and Culture in Central and Eastern Europe

Semi-Annual Report

January-June 2004

Letter from the Chairman

During the first six months of 2004 social, political and economic conditions in some areas of Central and Eastern Europe have been improving at a steady clip and are encouraging as we move into the last half of the year. In other areas, social and religious tensions and economic uncertainties have continued unabated. For The Fund, however, this has been a very good period. We have substantially increased our activities in Russia, Romania and Georgia; undertaken an interesting project with George Washington University and completely redone our website and electronic communications program. We also undertook a four-week introductory investigation of the Balkans, preparatory to developing an aggressive program for that part of the World.

This has truly been a remarkable year—to date. It has also, however, been a very difficult year financially. Expanded programs require expanded resources. Our programs have increased but our resources have not kept up. This expanded program is dependent upon finding new sources of income and increased support from our traditional resources.

Paul Elicker
Chairman

Association of Directors of Concert Organizations of Russia (AsdicOR) Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia February 9-13, 2004

Bob Jones, former President, Executive Director, and Chief Operating Officer of the National Symphony Orchestra and Vice President, Music at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, led a seminar from February 9-13 for the Association of Directors of Concert Organizations of Russia (Asdic OR) in Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia. The seminar, entitled “Strategic Planning for All the Activities of the Concert Hall”, was attended by thirty general managers of philharmonic societies in Russia.

Though the initial objective of the week-long seminar was to discuss vision, mission, strategy, and planning, it was clear immediately that this was overwhelming subject matter. The terminology and basic concepts were too unfamiliar and did not translate. Therefore, the seminar's goals were changed to focus on a concert hall's operations.

Participants were enthusiastic about new concepts (leadership, self-assessment, vision, and mission), tools (strategic planning, technology), and the specifics of American models of core competency best practices. Discussions were lively and the participants readily engaged in several exercises. They were given projects to work on, self-assessment instruments, and creativity exercises, all of which were explored interactively.

Mr. Jones met with Alexander Kolotursky, Chairman of AsDiCOR and leader of the Sverdlosk Orchestra, regarding his vision for the continuing professional development of his association membership. Together they developed a proposed project that would provide for 10-12 of Mr. Kolotursky's managers to spend up to two weeks with American orchestras, observing American systems in practice and in situ. The Fund agreed to lend what help it can toward implementing this project.

Changing Museums in a Changing World
Murmansk, Russia
March 28-April 1, 2004

How does one market a museum in a city isolated from the outside world? This was only one of the challenging questions faced by Karen Franklin and Ann Mintz during the four-day seminar program entitled "Changing Museums in a Changing World," they facilitated March 29-April 1 in Murmansk. The answer is familiar to many museums: repeat visitation. In the context of a "closed" city, this means to build sustained relationships with the people who have access to the institution in this unusual environment. The three day seminar was held in response to a request from Olga Yevtukova, director of the Regional Art Museum in Murmansk. It followed a seminar in October 2001 given by Sally Yerkovich, Martin Sullivan and Karen Franklin, which dealt mainly with fundraising and planning. The host requested that this seminar focus on audience, marketing, and partnerships, with additional attention given to fundraising. Participants included 22 representatives of regional museums as well as eight staff members from the Regional Art Museum.

Specific topics that were addressed during the four day seminar included how to create a mission statement, audience development, programming as a strategy for audience development, marketing and developing a marketing plan, fundraising, developing a narrative for a grant proposal, budget development, and characteristics of successful partnerships.

Participants viewed a tape made at a previous Fund program in St. Petersburg, which featured noted American exhibition designer Ralph Appelbaum. This led to discussions of the changing relationship of museums with their communities, the importance of ongoing dialog with audiences, and important role in exhibitions of narrative and multiple points of view.

The seminar format included both theoretical and practical information, with many opportunities for small group activities. Five institutions were created for the purpose of the seminar, so that the small groups were working with theoretical institutions. They wrote mission statements for these institutions, developed programs targeted to specific audiences, created budgets for these programs, and wrote narratives for a grant application in support of funds for these programs. Each group presented their work and received both positive feedback and constructive criticism. The final activity was a role-playing exercise in which each group had the opportunity to do an oral presentation requesting funds for their program.

As a result of the seminar, discussion is now under way over ways to establish a professional association to encourage ongoing communication and establish a network to serve the museum professionals of the Kola Peninsula.

Peter's Gates: Information Center of the North-West Region

Saint-Petersburg, Russia

April 7- 9, 2004

The seminar "Peter's Gates: Information Center of the North-West Region" was held on April 7-9, 2004 in the Peter and Paul Fortress in Saint Petersburg. Jillian Poole, President of The Fund and Ralph Appelbaum, noted museum designer, guided the seminar. The organizing committee of the seminar included the State Museum of History of St. Petersburg and the Foundation of Development of the Peter and Paul Fortress (Saint-Petersburg City Museum Foundation). Directors and representatives of the North-West museums took part in the seminar.

The goal of the seminar was to create an Information Center in the Gorsudarev Bastion of the Peter and Paul Fortress in order to combine cultural and tourist information of the North-West region into one integrated system. By doing so, both the museums and tourists programs of the North-West region would be introduced to Information Center visitors and Internet users. The seminar also sought to facilitate interaction among the museums in the frame of inter-regional programs.

Jillian Poole underlined the importance of the seminar in understanding the general concept of the Information Center and its role in attracting tourists to the North-West region. Ralph Appelbaum discussed museum development and promotion in the United States, as well as the importance of visual presentation. Mr. Appelbaum highlighted the importance of choosing a proper strategy for a museum while taking into consideration cultural and historical heritage.

Participants were divided into working groups with the task of creating the Information Center based on key reasons of its importance. The participants were then asked to define specific characteristics of the North-West region that can be used by tourists to create associative images about the place. The next assignment was to design the Information Center.

The final day began with a presentation by Alexander Bokmarev on the structure of an Internet portal to the Information Center. Mr. Appelbaum underlined the fact that the key to organizing the Center is to understand the tourist's motivation in planning a visit to the North-West museums. Ms. Poole ended the seminar with a discussion on fundraising.

As a result of the seminar, the joint project of creating the Information Center of the North-West museums in the Gorsudarev Bastion of the Peter and Paul Fortress was formed. After the seminar, Jillian Poole and Ralph Appelbaum consulted with principals from The Fortress to develop a comprehensive long term strategic plan for the development of the holistic museum complex on the territory of the Peter & Paul Fortress, a major monument of Russian history and architecture. At the request of the State Museum of Political History of Russia, they developed a plan to create an interpretive design of the entire museum. These projects together will make dramatic impacts on both the intellectual and cultural life of the second city of Russia. The Fund agreed to partner with Appelbaum Associates to try to secure funding. If this is successful, it will start late in 2004 and continue into 2005.

ACUSPEC and Guest Speaker Assignments
The Balkans
April 19--May 13, 2004

From April 19 through May 13, Jillian Poole, President of The Fund, visited Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, and Croatia. She was joined by Paul Elicker, Chairman of The Fund, in Macedonia for the trip's duration. The Fund's objective was to explore whether there might be use for The Fund's services in these Balkan countries. Mrs. Poole and Mr. Elicker were gratified to find that in every case except Albania they succeeded in defining further activities. As for Albania, The Fund is including some of their people in our response to the State Department's RFP which we are developing with the Media Center in Bosnia.

Belgrade, Serbia, April 19-25

A five day seminar began on April 20 in Belgrade. There were twenty-five attendees, including museum directors and managers and representatives from the Ministry of Culture. The Minister of Culture opened the seminar with a speech that included the need for cultural institutions to have a "clear business plan" when they come to the Ministry for support. It soon became clear the institutions were expected to develop these plans on their own. This, then, became one of the goals of the seminar.

Participants were divided into four groups to identify and then report on the principal challenges they believe face cultural institutions in the present era. These included: developing a national strategy for culture; educating the general public on culture; establishing interconnectedness of cultural institutions and their programs; motivating employees; and developing strategies for fund raising.

The second, third, and fourth days of the seminar were spent on managing people, writing a mission statement, joint programming, implementing children's clubs in several museums, public relations, fundraising, strategic planning, budgeting, and applying for funding. The need for national cultural policy was brought up again on the fourth day. By then, the mood seemed to have shifted to a consensus that perhaps it was not a priority since much could be done with the initiative of individual institution and planning joint or cooperative activities.

At the conclusion of the seminar, the Agency for Cultural Development's secretary general, Dragana Petrovic Radjenovic, asked for comments and elicited some ideas for future cooperation. While the consensus was that the sessions had been useful, there was no shared opinion on what the next steps should be. The Fund's future work, dependent upon the availability of funding, will include intensive consultations with three senior people from a few selected institutions, such as the National Museum, Ethnographic Museum, the National Museum, and Museum of Applied Art, for a five-day period twice a year.

Podgorica, Montenegro, April 25--27

Twenty-three people from various cities attended the two-day seminar in Podgorica. The attendees were divided into four groups to discuss the three major challenges their institutions are currently facing. The consensus was a lack of updated cultural law/strategy; divisions between cultural organization under authority of the Ministry and those controlled by municipal authorities; lack of equipment and facilities; lack of opportunities for staff development; and no flow of information among cultural institutions. The attendees immediately embarked on a negative discussion of reasons things could not be changed or accomplished.

The group's final discussions included developing an administrative organization and an agenda for first a meeting, writing a statement of purpose, and developing ideas for sponsorship. The attendees were reminded to keep the intra-museum organization simple, continue to foster communication, and provide a forum for shared challenges.

Ohrid, Macedonia, April 27--30, 2004

The seminar in Macedonia was held at the House of Robevci, a museum of archeological artifacts, in Ohrid, a small tourist town on a large lake. Thirty attendees represented a wide range of cultural institutions from the town and the area. Among their principal concerns were human resource development (staff training and upgrading, motivation, instilling a sense of ownership, etc.), updating space and equipment needs, sustainability (fund raising), marketing, and communication to develop cultural tourism and conservation. Mrs. Poole and Mr. Elicker were able to discuss personnel management and fund raising, but only in superficial ways.

On April 30, Deborah Jones, PAO, joined Ms. Poole and Mr. Elicker for a meeting with the Minister of Culture, Blagoja Stefanovski. Mr. Stefanovski discussed his concern for management training, especially for directors, and said this was his priority now that the new law

on culture was being eliminated and cultural institutions were being divided among those to be the primary responsibility of the State and municipalities. He strongly endorsed a regional conference for directors from the whole region, including non-former Yugoslav countries, to be followed up by four-day intensive sessions with the directors and their senior staff from four or five selected major institutions in each country.

Tirana, Albania, May 3--5, 2004

Three short meetings were held on May 4 with different cultural groups. Discouragement and a negative fatalistic mind-set seemed evident among leaders of some of the most important institutions; those leaders who did seem to have a clear course and initiative belong to such a diverse group of small institutions that finding a common core of interest may prove difficult.

A wrap-up session with Brian Shott, Assistant PAO, and Mirela Cupian, Cultural Affairs Assistant, led to the conclusion that, given the present economic conditions, there are probably no immediate future activities for The Fund in Albania.

Bosnia-Herzegovina, May 5--9 2004

A day long seminar was held on May 6 in the Media Center in Sarajevo for twenty-one cultural leaders. They came from a wide range of organizations, including a writer's group, theatres and performance venues, an art gallery, an orchestra, and the media center. Lively discussions included taxes as incentives for giving, forming a lobbying organization, getting professional media advice, knowing audiences and building them, obtaining management training, budgeting, and long-range planning and sustainability

On May 7, Mrs. Poole and Mr. Elicker were met at the American Corner in the Library of Tuzla by an audience of twenty-one. It was a short seminar, because it quickly became apparent that the attendees expected to receive funding from The Fund. Half the group left. Mrs. Poole and Mr. Elicker suggested various ways of doing low-cost programs but were met with arguments about their impossibility.

On May 8, Mrs. Poole and Mr. Elicker traveled to Zeneca to meet with a group of twenty-five people from a wide range of institutions. After introductory remarks and explanations, the attendees were divided into five groups. When Ms. Poole and Mr. Elicker realized that there were very few representatives from the arts, discussions were necessarily superficial and covered goal setting, program implementation techniques, ways of motivating audiences and donors, and funding.

Are Zagreb, Croatia, May 9--13

A seminar for 22 arts leaders was held at the American Embassy on May 11. The principal concerns of the attendees included audience development, lack of arts education on every level, local, regional and international collaboration, ways to deal with potential, lack of transparency

and efficiency in governmental bodies, and developing elevator speeches and mission statements.

On May 12, a presentation was held in Split at the Croatian National Theatre for twenty-six people. Much of the time was spent talking about fundraising realities, forming partnerships with sponsors, and their own need to take joint action.

Future Work in the Balkans

Depending on the availability of funding, future activities in the Balkans in 2004-05 may include a regional conference to be held in Romania among cultural leaders from Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Croatia, and possibly Bosnia. The conference will be followed up by four-day intensive sessions with the directors and their senior staff from four or five selected major institutions in each country over a period of two years to cover the wide range of concerns museum directors share worldwide.

The Fund and the Media Center in Sarajevo developed a joint response with The Fund to the RFP issued by the State Department. The Fund agreed to develop curriculum covering the full range of necessary management skills for managers from both the performing and visual arts, provide trainers for each, arrange their travel and housing, and pay all their attendant costs. At the end of the in-country training sessions the Fund proposed to make all arrangements for a U.S. partner to arrange for five seminar attendees selected by the Media Center to intern in the U.S. for further training to qualify them as trainers. The Center is familiar with arts leaders in the region and well qualified to identify qualified candidates. They agreed to undertake all necessary arrangements necessary for successful seminars. They will assign someone to manage this on a part-time basis for the duration of the project and charge all costs at a 'partnership rate' plus 30% indirect costs on salaries.

Confederation, Arts and Culture of Georgia Learning to Plan Tbilisi, Georgia May 11-14, 2004

Jerold Kappel, an organizational development and tourism development consultant, led the seminar, *Learning to Plan*, in Tbilisi from May 11-14. The seminar's objective was to establish a process that the Confederation of Arts and Culture can use to continue to build its organization. This included analyzing the current environment for the arts in Georgia; identifying core challenges and opportunities that the arts face in that environment; identifying the confederation's strengths and weaknesses; and devising strategies and action steps that will achieve the above goals.

Twenty-eight cultural managers attended the seminar, many of whom have attended past Fund seminars. Three full days of planning, much of it done in breakout groups, was productive. The Confederation established a mission statement and three goals to be met over the next 2 _ years. They included: advocating to the public and private sector and to the NGO community for the cultural sector of Georgia; building relations with the business community to benefit both the cultural community and the business sector, and improving the working and living circumstances of people who work in culture.

Strategies for Conservation and Broadening Museum Audiences
St. Petersburg
June 15 – 17, 2004

Fund Vice President Sally Yerkovich attended the spring meeting of art museum directors from across Russia entitled “*Strategies for Conservation and Broadening Museum Audiences*”. Forty-seven directors of Russia’s regional museums attended the conference. Ms. Yerkovich spoke about The Fund’s work in Russia, especially with the Russian State Museum, which has included conducting seminars on a diversity of topics. She discussed how the work of The Fund has changed over the years to meet the changing needs of the Russian museum community as well as to reflect changing trends in museum practice. She also spoke about the importance of collaboration and partnership both in developing audiences and in seeking funding. A number of the participants expressed an interest in upcoming seminars and in the possibility of holding seminars in their regions in the future.

Finally, President Putin is considering the privatization of museums in Russia. This is an issue against which the Russian Museum is lobbying and, understandably, it is an issue of great concern to the museum directors, as they see government support for their institutions continuing to erode. At the same time private philanthropy (foundation, individual, and corporate) is not making up the difference. It would seem advisable for The Fund to continue to identify museum and/or other cultural institution directors who have had success in dealing with this situation and continue to involve them in seminars.

Romanian Museum Seminar
Bucharest, Romania
June 22-25, 2004

Pamela Myers, executive director, Asheville Art Museum, and Robert Workman, owner, Robert Workman & Associates, presented a four-day seminar of discussions and group activities with approximately 30 museum professionals from museums throughout Romania. The group included both museum directors and department directors for curatorial research, education and public information. The seminar was hosted by the staff of the Village Museum in Bucharest, and sponsored by the American Embassy through a Southeast Europe Development grant of the United States.

Mr. Workman began the seminar with an overview of visitor studies and the importance of gaining correct information about your visitors. Methods for evaluating museums, ideas for improving visitor services, and methods for audience research were also presented.

On the second day of the seminar, Ms. Myers presented the team approach to museum exhibition planning through a variety of examples ranging from large, complex exhibitions to smaller art installations. Discussions centered around the involvement of potential funders and community stakeholders and the critical role of communicating effectively to your visitors.

The third day of the seminar began with a presentation by Ms. Myers on the many ways that public programs expand the impact of a museum's exhibitions and collections for audiences of all ages. The important role of volunteers in museums was also emphasized. Mr. Workman then shifted focus toward the importance of positioning museums within each community through marketing and public relations. Mr. Workman also presented an overview of the fundamentals of opening a museum store.

Ms. Myers discussed cultural heritage and tourism on the final day of the seminar by using the Asheville Art Museum as an example. She demonstrated how, as part of its mission, it has successfully leveraged its position as a destination within heritage tourism within the eastern United States.

The final session of the seminar reviewed questions or issues submitted by the participants that had not previously been reviewed and discussed. Participants were interested in discussing earned revenue and the role of the museum educator and how that professional position works with curators at museums in the United States and Europe. There was also a discussion on how American museums promote their activities and needs to corporations and individuals for possible financial support.

Following the seminar, Bob Workman spent two days visiting several museums and a theatre in Romania. He then met with Mark Tauber and Carmen Fecioru, both of the American Embassy, to discuss follow up opportunities in Romania for both the Embassy and The Fund. It was agreed that a concept put forward by Pam Myers to collaborate on a project with the Village Museum held significant promise. Another promising follow up activity is a seminar conducted by the Fund for Arts and Culture based on the management concepts outlined in *Managing for Money*. This is a seminar that could attract the leadership of many Bucharest and Romanian performing arts professionals as well as museum directors.

Website Update

The Fund concentrated a great deal of effort during the second quarter of this year towards the creation of a modern, interactive website capable of putting current and useful information into the hands of individuals and institutions interested in the art and cultural worlds of Central and Eastern Europe. The results can be found at www.fundforartsandculture.org, an ever-changing and expanding site containing reports, manuscripts and other materials used in our client

countries, many of which are in their native languages as well as in English. Built by Charles Turner of Falls Church, Virginia, the website includes Fund reports from current and prior years; the text of many handbooks from our seminars; progress and trip reports on many of our in-country activities, and sound and film clips from a significant film we made in Russia with Ralph Applebaum Associates. This site is dedicated to the many advisors and expert volunteers who keep our work viable and to the many people and organizations whose financial contributions make it possible.

A measure of the success of our site thus far can be found in a few quick statistics:

- 148 individual visitors arrived at the site in March, the month we started. In June we had 559. The total for the period 1,584
- These visitors were referred to us by as many as 244 other websites that were either linked to us or had some reference to us in their pages. The top referring agents were Google and Yahoo.com of course, but we were also referred by many others, including US Embassy sites in various host cities including St. Petersburg and Georgia.
- It is also worthy of note that we are mentioned on the websites of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy, The Fine Arts Museum in Vienna, Austria and by the European Cultural Foundation, among others.

A key factor in The Fund's ability to grow and serve its broadening clientele in the years ahead will increasingly be its ability to enable the quick and efficient exchange of information—formal and informal—among client organizations, seminar participants, and others interested in the work we do. To this end, we have established FUNDLINK, an electronic communications mechanism that allows our advisory and consultant volunteers and our Board and Officers to communicate, collectively and individually, with each other, with our clients and their staffs; and others who share our interest.

FUNDLINK is open to all who share our enthusiasm for the institutions of Central and Eastern Europe. There are currently more than 60 members of FUNDLINK and more signing up regularly. To join, send an email to listserv@hslc.org. Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the email, type "Subscribe FundLink *Your Name*".