



Cultural Diversity – three seminars

Barcelona, 13 - 15 December, 2005

Introduction

Coinciding with the international debate on cultural diversity and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that took place this year at UNESCO, Interarts Foundation organises a series of conferences to promote the international debate in Catalonia and to examine the different dimensions of cultural diversity from institutional contexts to everyday life situations. The seminars aim at reviewing different aspects as regards the relation between culture, human rights, coexistence and diversity, with a special emphasis on fostering common understanding between local and international realities.

The seminars on cultural diversity intend to be pragmatic sessions that promote exchange of experiences and information between countries in order to facilitate the translation of international debates into daily cultural interaction and social development of Catalonia. The selection of participants, mainly from European countries and Catalonia present a wide selection of approaches within a common agenda.

The tree session will take place at the **Sala d'Actes of Palau Marc (Culture Department), Rambla Santa Mònica nº 8 de Barcelona**, on 13, 14 and 15 December 2005 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

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Programme

Tuesday 13 December, 6:30 pm.

The Convention on Cultural Diversity and the international legal framework

After three years of negotiations on 20 October 2005, the General Conference of UNESCO approved the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. The main objective of the Convention is the legal acknowledgement of cultural goods as expressions of cultural diversity and identity.

In this session, the experts will reflect on the drafting process of the Convention and the elements of its implementation by offering a first introduction to the themes of the three seminars. What is the historical framework of this Convention? What are the elements and provisions of this instrument, what critiques has it received and what does the Convention mean in a national, regional or local framework?

Participants:

- **Nina Obuljen.** Responsible for culture in the negotiations of Croatia's adhesion to the European Union; member of the International Network for Cultural Diversity; member of the Croatian Delegation in the negotiations on the Convention on Cultural Diversity at UNESCO; researcher at the Institute of International Relations of Zagreb
- **Mary Ann De Vlieg.** Secretary General of the Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM), European network of performing arts. Funded in 1981 as a membership organisation, IETM has some 400 member organisation from more than 45 countries.

Moderator: **Mercedes Giovinazzo.** Director of the Interarts Foundation and member of the Spanish Delegation in the negotiations on the Convention on Cultural Diversity at UNESCO.

Wednesday 14 December, 6:30 pm. .

And who am I? Cultural diversity, identities and difference

In our world of rapid connections and intercultural relations, cultural diversity is no longer an option but a fact. Our common past is constructed through great movements of people between countries and continents that have intensified cultural influences that people, commerce and cultural products bring along.

But what do we mean when we talk about cultural diversity – a construction of ideas on identity, a wide offer of cultural expressions and forms of life, or just a way to accept difference? What does it mean to live with difference, and to be different? What are the elements of diversity, how should we live with it and is diversity a theme for only a few or do we all represent the different sides of its universality?

Participants:

- **Olu Alake.** Head of Communities, Partnerships & Programmes at the Commission for Racial Equality in the UK, and was till recently the Head of Cultural Diversity at Arts Council England. Member of the Executive Board of a London-based NGO 100 Black Men of London and currently prepares a doctoral dissertation on hip-hop culture in the formation of social identities of black British boys.
- **Ab Cherribi.** Dutch consultant. He has been member of the Amsterdam City Council and Chairman of the Media and Communication Commission. He is expert in themes related to cultural identities, diversity and Islamic culture in Europe.
- **Carme Junyent.** Professor at the Department of General Linguistics at the University of Barcelona. Member of a Study Group on Endangered Languages. She is author of several studies on linguistic diversity of the languages spoken in Catalonia and curator of the Exhibition *the Languages in Catalonia*.**

Moderator: **Annamari Laaksonen**, Fundació Interarts

Thursday 15 December, 6:30 pm.

Cultural Democracy and Diversity in the everyday life

This session presents a series of visions and experiences from different origins in order to examine the richness, pre-judgements and problems of cultural diversity in the daily life. Among other themes, the participants reflect on cultural diversity in the departments of public administration and the representation of ethnic minorities in the media.

How does cultural diversity manifest itself in a daily interaction between people? How do people with an ethnic background find their working environment when working for the police department? Is positive discrimination an effective measure to increase the participation of ethnic minorities in the work life? How can audiovisual democracy be fostered and the images of diversity democratized?

Participants:

- ▶ **Merja Määttänen.** Professor of Mass Communication Studies at the University of Tampere (Finland). She has coordinated a study on the presence of members of ethnic minorities in the Finnish national police forces from the selection processes to integration in the police department up to the impact of cultural diversity in the ways of working.
- ▶ **Jordi Pardo.** Secretary General of the Department of Domestic Affairs of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia. Museologist and Cultural Manager by profession, and among different responsibilities he has served as General Manager of the Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) and Director of the Plan on the Museum of Design.
- ▶ **André Martinez.** Vicepresident of Pensarte Institute, centre that promotes cultural and social development in Brazil. Executive Director of Brant Associados and the Institute of Cultural Diversity. He has been Artistic Director of several cultural institutions in Brazil and is author of *Audiovisual Democracy*.

Moderator: **Jordi Baltà**, Fundació Interarts.