

The World Summit on Arts and Culture

14–18 June 2006 NewcastleGateshead, England *Transforming places, transforming lives*

The Report





'Creativity and imagination should be at the heart of what we do and at the heart of education. Everything achieved in human endeavour begins with 'what if?'. Creativity is the next step, and culture is the consequence

of creativity. A society that ignores the arts also ignores humanity and our sense of self.'

Sir Ken Robinson



Introduction



Welcome to the Report on the 2006 World Summit on Arts and Culture. With 500 delegates from nearly 80 countries, the third World Summit is the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies' (IFACCA) biggest ever event. Our hosts, Arts Council England, provided

the ideal setting – the North East – to explore the theme 'transforming places, transforming lives'. Across five days, prestigious speakers and delegates from the world over shared their knowledge and expertise in culture and regeneration.

This report provides impressions of the Summit from the perspective of speaker and delegate, photographer and poet, organiser and worker and a gallery of images capturing the spirit of the event. The programme, presentations and speech notes themselves are available from www.artsummit.org.

On behalf of the board and members of IFACCA, I would like to thank Arts Council England for organising such a memorable event with such generosity. I also extend our gratitude to the NewcastleGateshead Initiative team, the Summit sponsors, and the many people who made the Summit a success.

The response from delegates was enormously positive. The Summit provided a superb opportunity for arts policy-makers and administrators from diverse backgrounds to meet each other, gain new insights, and forge new collaborations.

We look forward to building on that energy and enthusiasm as we plan the fourth World Summit. And we look forward to seeing you there.

Risto Ruohonen, Chair, IFACCA Director of Arts and Cultural Heritage Division, Ministry of Education, Finland

Front cover: Welcome to the World – Baltic Square. Photo: i2i photography

Left: Simon Corder's display at The Alnwick Garden, Summit Dinner. Photo: i2i photography





The World Summit on Arts and Culture was a genuinely global gathering of cultural leaders from 77 countries. It really has been a great privilege for Arts Council England to organise this, in this our 60th year of celebrating the arts.

The Summit proved that there is a global appetite for international cultural debate and dialogue. We heard many speakers challenge and inspire us – by their own example or through their analysis of the barriers to change. Many communities around the world face similar issues of redefinition and reinvention and the Summit shared experiences of success, frustration and the vital importance of the artist's vision in the transformation of places and communities.

NewcastleGateshead, and indeed the whole of the North East region, proved to be a great backdrop for our conversations. It provided us with concrete examples of the arts and culture transforming both urban and rural settings. It welcomed the delegates in its unique way, with a truly international cultural programme. Some may have gone away thinking that *all* of England's city centres were like that: to which I can only say 'I wish they were!'.

The Summit had a tremendous energy about it, and I believe it sent delegates back to their homes with refreshed vigour. New partnerships, exchanges and relationships will no doubt grow from the contacts and friendships made during five packed days in North East England. We look forward to sharing our experience of making it happen with the organisers of the next Summit.

Sir Christopher Frayling Chair, Arts Council England, UK

'The bonds that tie communities cannot be those imposed by government. Before understanding must come dialogue and exchange. The arts are a space for shared experience.' Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, UK

The Programme Director's Perspective



When the International
Federation of Arts Councils and
Culture Agencies (IFACCA)
announced that Arts Council
England was to host the 2006
World Summit on Arts and
Culture in NewcastleGateshead
the scale of the opportunity and
challenge started to dawn on
people both nationally in the UK

and locally in the 'twin cities' of NewcastleGateshead. Our vision was to grow the event to bring at least 50 countries and 500 senior delegates from across the world to look at the role which arts and culture has played in transforming places and transforming lives. The grand title and brand of 'The World Summit on Arts and Culture' is something which many people commented on over the two years of programming and planning the event. We wanted to create an experience which lived up to that title, both in terms of its implicit international ambitions and its significance as a gathering of cultural leaders.

The vision was to create an event which would attract inspirational speakers and case studies from across the world. We wanted to bring together artists, politicians and cultural workers who had made a difference to their villages, cities or nations and people at the cutting edge of cultural policymaking and research who could shed a global light on the powerful story of regeneration through arts and culture. Another ambition was to give the Summit relevance to developing countries as well as those fighting to position the arts and culture in more crowded economies. We also wanted to start international conversations, share good practice from across the world and forge new networks.

It has been a challenge, honour and privilege to be Programme Director of the Summit and to be in contact with so many people across the world. Whilst we had over 290 proposals for speakers and case studies, some of the most powerful choices came through personal contact or recommendation and I am grateful to all those who helped in that process.

The success revolved around the quality of the delegates and speakers. On the opening evening we hosted a briefing dinner for speakers. We went around the world in 30 minutes with 30 individual portraits and previews of the Summit content. The fact that so many of our speakers chose to stay throughout the Summit was perhaps the best testimony to the quality of the programme as a whole and the bond that was created by that initial gathering.

I hope that people will take home personal memories of NewcastleGateshead and North East England, of The Sage Gateshead, The Alnwick Garden or one of our cultural venues. More importantly, I hope that delegates have been touched in some way by the words of a speaker, whether it be the beauty of Ammar Khammash's vision for architecture in Jordan, the simplicity of Howard Chan's virtual museum project in Hong Kong or the powerful narration of Albie Sachs' description of the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg. I also hope that you have made new friends and contacts around the world.

It has been a pleasure to work with such a strong Summit team from Arts Council England and I'd like to pay particular tribute to Susie Hargreaves, the Summit Coordinator; Susan McKeon, Head of Communications at Arts Council England, North East; and Sarah Gardner at IFACCA, who have worked tirelessly on the project for 12 months.

Andrew Dixon
Summit Programme Director
Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead Initiative, UK



'Arts and culture should be seen as a right and we must all see ourselves as citizens – part of our cities. The challenge is to interest citizens not just in the work, but in the artists themselves, as human beings and members of society.' Gatéan Morency, Cirque du Soleil, Montréal, Canada

Arts Council England, North East's Perspective



For five days in June 2006, the North East region of England – and specifically the Arts Council and our partners – played host to 500 people from 77 countries. We know they went home with fantastic memories of the event and the region – whether they were from Bogotá or Botswana, the Cayman

Islands or Croatia - but what has it meant for us?

Well, first of all it was a tremendous privilege to meet so many fascinating speakers and delegates and show them our 'home'. It was an enormous boost to have reflected back the achievements of the Arts Council and the North East region in building the kind of arts venues and organisations we experienced at the Summit.

It was also a huge learning experience. This was one of the biggest, most international gathering of leading cultural figures ever held in the UK, and putting it together taught us more about international and intercultural working than anything any of the team here had ever been involved with. (And I must say here that I learnt – again – quite how great the staff at the Arts Council are, how energetic and imaginative and committed.)

Thirdly, we have gained many new friends, contacts and relationships which we will build on over the coming years. Our International Policy is very much about the artists' right to roam, but it is also about increasing our own skills, capacity and contacts. The Summit has really accelerated that.

Central to that has been the deepening of our relationship with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA).

It's been a personal pleasure to work with the staff and board of IFACCA during the organisation of the event, and we look forward to playing an active role in IFACCA in the future. I would like to thank them for the chance to organise this Summit.

People are using the arts to regenerate their communities in many different contexts around the world – following deindustrialisation, following conflict and war, following huge political change, following demographic change. Perhaps the most powerful thing to emerge from the conference was a shared understanding that collectively arts councils and cultural agencies and the artists and arts organisations we support and represent have an increasingly global reach and have the power and imagination to help address problems others have found intractable. We were also able to recognise and understand the limitations and difficulties of that.

So there are a number of important strategic things to say. But the Summit was also about being reminded that strategies and policies are written by human beings, and mean nothing without people to make them real. The best things about the Summit were intensely human things. Dancing. Conversation. Singing. Food. Drink. Debate. Questions. Laughter. Friendship. I picture South African dancers and local children handing out flowers as the Reg Vardy Band played the Floral Dance. Ammar Khammash presenting the architectural riches of Jordan. Yetunde Aina bringing Lagos to life. The gasps of awe from the foreign delegates as they walked through Alnwick Castle and Gardens. Rick Lowe's inspiring tale of how artists had saved a whole area in Houston. I could go on and on...

Mark Robinson
Executive Director
Arts Council England, North East, UK

'Self-confidence in communities has an unstoppable momentum... Gateshead's results came from the perseverance of an older generation. We need to ask ourselves if we are really ready and flexible enough to address the dreams and aspirations of a young generation.' Lord Puttnam of Queensgate, CBE, President of UNICEF UK



The Speaker's Perspective



The proposed title, *Transforming places, transforming lives*, for the 2006 World Summit on Arts and Culture drew my attention. The Summit seemed like an appropriate platform to share my ideas, experiences and concerns regarding indigenous arts and artists that had earlier in the year

prompted the launch of an innovative project in Ethiopia called CultureWatch.

Besides sharing of ideas, the proposed Summit therefore presented an ideal opportunity to present the approach adopted by CultureWatch Project, representing the weaver's work from Ethiopia. With a little support, training through skill enhancement workshops plus an opportunity to experiment with their materials, this marginalised group has managed to transform their lives, economic status and also public opinion towards textiles in Ethiopia and Shiromeda weavers. Skills in narrating stories through textiles have given them immense confidence, pride and joy in their work as 'artists' and have prompted a wave of transformations in their lives, their social, creative and interactive spaces. This I felt was an appropriate case to be presented at such a forum that seeks to bring together various experiences under the banner of, Transforming places, transforming lives.

True to its intention, the Summit brought together people from various parts of the world and provided

ample opportunity for delegates and participants to mingle, share and learn from each other's experiences. It has certainly assisted in initiating many partnerships that we as speakers and participants will cherish and benefit from. CultureWatch would like to extend its assistance to all friends and colleagues wherever possible. The realisation that many of us face similar problems and difficulties, especially within the African continent, brought us much closer. CultureWatch received positive responses and has found many avid supporters through the Summit. We hoped to touch people's hearts as, working on a shoestring budget, the project constantly seeks support and assistance in continuing its work and meeting its responsibilities.

Organisers of such international events shoulder the immense responsibility of appropriately presenting key ideas and issues, as well as rising to the challenge of bringing together appropriate and relevant participation that represents a wide cross-section of international community. I congratulate the organisers for successfully bearing this responsibility and for this wonderful event. I hope that the next Summit would further extend its participation by including artists and practitioners of indigenous arts/crafts background who usually do not find representation within mainstream visual cultures. I congratulate and thank the Summit organisers and hope to be there next time.

Dr Neeti Sethi Bose Asst Professor/Coordinator CultureWatch Project Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia



'One of the biggest criticisms of communitybased regeneration art is that it is difficult to critically assess, because it is a 'do good' project. We need to explore ways of being critical. Artists should be at the forefront of regenerating the places where people live.' Rick Lowe, Founder, Project Row Houses, Houston, USA

The Delegate's Perspective



Attending the Summit, in my mind, meant five to six days of complete immersion in cultural discussions and activities. I also anticipated networking and making new acquaintances with practitioners and experts in my area of work, from various regions of the world. Having spearheaded the move

for Belize to become a member of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, I also looked forward to finally meeting personnel I have been in communication with as well as delegates from other member states and institutions.

From the time the Summit opened, I kept thinking that this was an experience that should have been shared by all my colleagues working in the field of culture and the arts in Belize. Listening to speaker after speaker, my imagination bounced back and forth applying ideas and concepts to the Belizean reality, sifting the relevant from the irrelevant.

It soon became clear in my mind that the theme *Transforming places, transforming lives* is actually what our work in Belize was all about. The word 'regeneration', though not part of our everyday vocabulary in Belize, is very much the same process that has resulted in the establishment of Houses of Culture in different parts of the country and the transformation of what was once Her Majesty's Prison into what is now the Museum of Belize. I visualised

this most during the presentation of Justice Albie Sachs of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. It was memorable when he reminded us that 'starting with nothing' can (at times) actually be a good thing.

With the Garifuna language, music and dance having been proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO since May 2001, I found the presentation by Dr Akbar Khakimov of Uzbekistan particularly interesting as he indicated how a similar proclamation has impacted positively on the life of one of the cultures in his country.

The case study of The Sage Gateshead was quite inspiring and gave me numerous ideas along the lines of arts funding and corporate social responsibility. In Belize, we at the National Institute of Culture and History have been making continuous investments in culture and the arts practically independently of alternative funding sources. Now that I am back at my desk, I will advocate for due consideration to be given to not only increasing funding for our programmes, but even more so, expanding the pool of alternative sources.

All the speeches, presentations and discussions, according to my assessment, highlighted the fact that no matter where in the world we all came from, to varying degrees, we all face the same challenges and stand at the threshold of the same opportunities.

Andy Palacio

Deputy Administrator/Cultural Ambassador National Institute of Culture and History, Belize



'When it came to building what I believe to be the most beautiful, most interesting, most playful, most serious, most bemusing, most wonderful court in the whole world, we started with nothing – no resources, no money, no place, nothing. Have you thought about nothing, how interesting nothing is because nothing is always between something and something else? Nothing in time is always before a moment to come and after a moment that's been. We started with nothing and nothing meant we could invent ourselves.' Justice Albie Sachs, Constitutional Court of South Africa

The Delegate's Perspective



The Summit had a considerable influence on my expert knowledge and consequently on the planned future initiatives of the National Culture Fund of Bulgaria.

The Summit provided lots of opportunities for gaining knowledge and experience

in relation to the role the cultural sector plays in social and economic regeneration.

The importance of cultivating people's capacity to be creative and how that creativity is captured in the corporate world was brilliantly exposed in the presentation by Sir Ken Robinson. Through my participation in the Creative Partnerships tour, I had the opportunity and the pleasure to witness the implementation of Ken Robinson's principles and ideas in practice through the activities of different schools.

The presentation on the Olympic Games was definitely important for Bulgaria, being one of the countries offering a bid for the 2016 Olympic Games, and presented evidence of the significance and value of culture for major events.

Welcome to the world, Baltic Square. Photo: i2i photography

At the Summit, I made a number of professional contacts, which gave me a unique opportunity to learn more about different models and practices from across the world.

I have an especially pleasant memory of the street events organised during the Summit where the local community showed a sense of solidarity and belonging to this unique place. Seeing the Summit themes in practice in NewcastleGateshead through the tours and cultural events made the content relevant to all delegates – because culture exists only through and for people who share and create it.

The personal contacts I made during the Summit with people from all over the world gave me the feeling of belonging to one common world and sharing similar perspectives for preservation and development of its diversity and creativity.

As a result of the Summit, lots of ideas are now being discussed and our team has begun to outline the ways of effective inclusion of the culture perspective in the Human Resource Development Operational program of Bulgaria and especially in the development of education priority.

Elitsa Yankova Yancheva Chief Expert, National Culture Fund, Bulgaria



The Volunteer's Perspective



The volunteers – or the yellow T-shirt Brigade – were a group of over 50 staff from every office of the Arts Council, and a few other people as well, who brought specific language skills with them.

Over the five-day event, volunteering duties included

such things as leading guided tours, translating, working on the registration desk or supporting a workshop.

Most of the volunteers from the Arts Council volunteered because they wanted to have the chance to hear and engage with interesting international speakers that otherwise they would miss. It was understood that not all Arts Council staff could or should attend. By volunteering, staff were able to benefit from this international conference. Others also wanted to see The Sage Gateshead and the

NewcastleGateshead regeneration area, and for nearly everyone it was a welcome chance to network and engage with other Arts Council staff from around the country.

There were many positive comments about the Summit and the volunteering itself. The volunteers were impressed by the quick problem solving and actions that were taken by the chief volunteer coordinator and felt that all the Arts Council England, North East staff were welcoming and very helpful. A highlight for all volunteers was being invited to attend the Gala Dinner at The Alnwick Garden. Not only did this allow the volunteers to see the wonderful castle and gardens, but it also enabled better networking to take place between delegates and volunteers, where there were shared areas of interest.

Fiona Mitchell Innes Head, Communications, Arts Council England, East Midlands, UK

'It is important to remember that mental capacity is not finite. Children have a huge capacity to learn and enjoy both academic and arts/sports study. Young people are open to intercultural understanding, we just have to provide the right circumstances/environment.'

Sir Ken and friends as England score against Trinidad and Tobago in the World Cup. Photo: i2i photography



Sir Ken Robinson

IFACCA's Perspective



In less than six years the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) has come a long way. It was at the first World Summit in Ottawa, Canada, in December 2000, that the concept of a federation of national arts support agencies was first proposed. Then in 2003, in

Singapore, IFACCA's constitution was ratified and the first board was elected. Just like the Constitutional Court referred to in Albie Sachs' moving Summit speech, IFACCA 'started with nothing and nothing meant that we could invent ourselves'. As described in the booklet marking our five-year anniversary, IFACCA has 'invented' itself and created five key assets – networks, research, information, dialogue and connections.

Together, through IFACCA, government arts support agencies are developing the sense of connection that Sir Christopher Frayling, in his welcome speech, described as 'bonds of kinship and solidarity'.

Whether created at the Summit, or simply through emails, these bonds are helping to transform people working in arts councils and ministries of culture; transforming them from feeling isolated and overstretched to feeling better informed and better resourced, and therefore more confident to tackle the challenges of leadership in arts support.

The aim of IFACCA's World Summits is to provide a forum for national arts councils, ministries of culture and others to discuss key issues affecting public support for the arts and creativity. This third Summit fulfilled this aim admirably, with much information and inspiration for delegates and the opportunity to hold our first ever CEO seminar, to stage the second General Assembly, and to launch www.connectcp.org. The Summit also created a rich opportunity for international exchange. At the Summit I chatted with colleagues I had never had the chance to meet – from Belize, Namibia, Trinidad, Belgium, UAE, Canada, Chile, New Zealand and South Korea, to name a few. Many others shared this experience: delegates from

60 per cent of IFACCA's 102 national and affiliate members were present.

In the many conversations I had with delegates, perceptions of the Summit were overwhelmingly positive – whether about the programme and speakers, the arts programme, the Summit pack, the volunteers, the translations, the Alnwick Castle dinner, The Sage Gateshead, NewcastleGateshead or the North East in general. Arts Council England was a wonderful host and it was a pleasure personally, and a great benefit to IFACCA, to have been a joint partner in the 2006 World Summit.

After such a stimulating time at the Summit, I know that delegates will have returned home reinvigorated and ready to implement new ideas to improve their work in supporting arts, culture and creative activities in their countries.

IFACCA has many more plans for its next five years – increasing membership, refining services, conducting more research, making the website an active place to network and find information, holding more minisummits and staging the next World Summit in 2009.

As a small team of three people working in Sydney, Australia, our work needs a vision and inspiration. Just before the Summit, this inspiration came in just a few words from Gulumbu Yunupingu, one of eight Australian artists whose work was selected for France's new Musée du Quai Branly. Ms Yunupingu travelled from a remote community in Arnhem Land in the north of Australia to meet President Chirac at the opening in Paris a week after the Summit. When asked how she felt about such an experience, she said she was happy to give her paintings to France. 'Here we are,' she said, 'we come together. I am part of you and you are part of me and we need each other.'

I believe these words sum up perfectly what was achieved at the Third World Summit and they are words that seem to encapsulate the continuing relevance of IFACCA.

Sarah Gardner Executive Director, IFACCA

Sponsors/Acknowledgements

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Terry Carroll and Stephen Farthing,
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for Contemporary Arts
Canon Bill Hall, Durham Cathedral
Miriam Harte, Beamish
Adrian Jenkins, Bowes Museum

lan McGregor, Life Science Centre Sheryl Muxworthy, Discovery Museum

Sally Jane Norman and Eric Cross, Newcastle University Cultural Quarter

Katherine Pearson, National Glass Centre

Anna Pepperall and Mike White, The Angel of the North Anthony Sargent, The Sage Gateshead

Peter Sharpe, Kielder Wendy Scott, Darlington West Park

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Clockwise from left: Nitin Sawney; Vanessa September; Howard Chan, Peter Hewitt, Sir Ken Robinson, Vanessa September, Justice Albie Sachs; speakers, chairs and Commonwealth Foundation sponsored guests. Photos: i2i photography









Handmade (for the World Summit of Arts and Culture, June 2006)

How can we build that city in the soul where neither bricks nor money can be found, raise monuments to mouths we can't console and dig foundations where there is no ground?

1

Imagine this. From nothing on a well-scrubbed board, a feather flick appears, as though the goldfinch sun was filling in that tint we lack; a holy pupil lands, fly-like, and the painting from no hand begins

as though the Gospels' ABCs inscribed themselves at Lindisfarne as vellum-pelted calves were born. And thus acheiropoietas depicts a culture as release from knowledge of its artistry.

This is the way the word must pass till, speechless, it arrives at us.

Dr Tom Shakespeare. Photo: i2i photography





2

Now let me sketch in etchy taste this Summit in some Northern place, then like Achilles' god-wrought shield, establish what its out-takes yield. First in that Jagga Jagga zone where Tessa Jowell sits enthroned, behind this handmaid's straining ear the halo of a bridge appears that's garlanded with primulas across which music's locals pass (and one small tusker, but who knows where elephants, like memories, go?) like sirens in this carnival where drum speaks unto drum till all these lords and ladies leap from Horn of Africa to stamp out scorn.

And in this raw creative swelt their instruments begin to melt: an angel's wing of harp is fused with long blonde hair as chords cut loose, the melodeon smiles as fingers breed typewriters from its centipede, and over all the bagpipes vaunt their union of fly with elephant. These fireworks in the daylight frazzle and deafen where they do not dazzle, that ink and paparazzi cloud gives way to Star Wars belted out by contest-dented buttery brass who afterwards light tabs and mass around that quarter of this field where even buzzwords gladly yield to Peter RoboKop-star Crouch, our angel of the rusty slouch -

since alcohol and poor football (and this should surely not appal), football and well-played alcohol will break down every social wall.

But I prefer these slighter sights: one boy, his startled half-delight that Africa was in his face, forgetting how to clap; the pace at which a small blue-sweatered girl ran past the speeches – half the world – to perch upon a rusty seat until the concert was complete.

The Alnwick Garden, Summit Dinner. Photo: i2i photography

3

There is a footprint filling up with rain upon a mountain in Sri Lanka that is the opposite of Jerusalem, since all the gurus, mullahs, reverends peaceably attempt to claim that their God or His agent made it.

It is the same length as a man and stamped into the very rock of Sivam adi Padam, Adam's Peak, or Samanala Kanda, depending on your need to name.

Shiva danced it, Buddha glanced it, Adam balanced there a thousand years atoning for his sin of being human.

The mountain's other name is for the butterflies which each year come to die there in their tattered yellow thousands.

And when we talk of culture, which do we mean: the footprint or the rainfall or its covering of wings?

Welcome to the world, Baltic Square. Photo: i2i photography





Councillor Mick Henry, Leader of Gateshead Council

4

How shall we reach that city in the soul which neither bombs nor finance can destroy, where icons click on myths we can't control, portray our griefs as brow to breast with joy?

How shall we build a ship to house the ghosts, our dear unheard-of dead, the unborn sons of our still-undelivered daughters, and that Ulyssean parasite still clinging to a sinking spar of rib – our own conspiring spirit?

The soul makes do for city and for ship, both home and how we voyage home, since we are all returning, or hoping to return and never quite arriving at the Ithaca of this, our present, our only gift for now.

We travel in its shiftless skiff that's crafted from those untouched things – a glimpse we know in unknown faces, the city we pass through to find our soul has always lived within, that echo in the setting of a song:

A woe no mortal hand can cure the if and not the how of reaching shore.

Notes

Acheiropoietas – (Greek) literally made without hands, referring to an icon of supposedly miraculous origin

Jagga Jagga – Naija (Nigerian) expression for topsyturvy

Tab - Geordie for cigarette

'A woe no mortal hand can cure' is derived from 'The Winter It Is Past' by Robert Burns



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