Transnational Initiative Projects

International Council of Fine Arts Deans
www.icfad.org

March 2005
edited by Margaret Merrion
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The idea of exchange as a means to evolve or to transform, whether it is a physical transposition to a global destination or a sharing of ideology, was at the heart of the Transnational Initiative Project (TIP). We envisioned a broad scope of projects that were not just a physical trade of people but rather ones that promoted artistic collaborations and joint projects. We also encouraged the participants to consider ways to explore the creative use of technology and artistic media through projects that might achieve international understanding and appreciation in the arts. Thus, the Transnational Initiative Project was created.

The TIP initiative had four major objectives. First, it was designed to create a venue for transnational collaboration and research that would provide institutions within our organization (and beyond) the opportunity to work together in engaged investigation. Second, the initiative expanded the concept of exchange to include innovative approaches to transnational collaborations in the arts. Third, the undertaking was to provide a survey of exemplars or best practices in transnational collaborations. And finally, the initiative would add to the body of knowledge of theory and practice in the arts transnational arena through published results.

In Fall 2001, ICFAD's International Initiatives Committee issued an international call for proposals. TIP was designed as a two-year investigation for which projects were competitively selected from members of ICFAD, the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), and other international venues. The committee reviewed applications and select projects were identified as representative of the tenets of the initiative. During the past two years, the committee has met with the principal investigators for initial overviews with project leaders for annual updates on their progress, including discussions about data collection. These face-to-face interactions have allowed all involved in another level of transnational interchange to engage in a rich discussion of the challenges of creating new paradigms for exchange as well as of the positive transformations that can be used to illustrate why transnational exchange projects work.

The results of our efforts is this exciting publication which provides the reader with an overview of each project in anticipation that we will encourage a new set of initiatives that will stretch the boundaries of creative exchange!

Elizabeth Cole, Chair of ICFAD's International Initiatives Committee, is Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at Bowling Green State University. She may be reached at cole@bgnet.bgsu.edu.
The basic definition of the term “exchange” literally means “to transform” or “the reciprocal giving and receiving.” Therefore what follows are a variety of case study initiatives that are designed to create a synergy for leveraging creative capital. Our TIP participants found a variety of ways that their projects became transformational in scope and in conceptual goals. Before becoming the president of ICFAD, I took an active role on the International Committee and was involved in several of its summer cultural exchange meetings to explore the goal of increasing the international promise of ICFAD. Thus, I am pleased to have been part of the development of the research and leadership agenda for the ICFAD TIP initiatives.

TIP was to be the follow-up to our publishing the revised *ICFAD Handbook for International Exchange*, and was designed as a two-year pilot investigation to encourage the experimentation and documentation of a variety of international exchange project proposals. The International Initiatives Committee assignment focused on the specific goal of offering the membership a published summary of “best practices” of exemplary international exchanges. In our final selection of proposals we became most excited with the proposition to offer a variety of alternative trans cultural approaches in the sharing of faculty personnel, students and programs. We selected a dozen proposed experiments and have featured several of these in this sampler publication.

A special commendation is extended to Dr. Elizabeth Cole, from Bowling Green University, whose creative vision inspired the International Initiatives Committee with managerial and creative effectiveness. She coordinated the TIP teams and kept these projects focused on the ICFAD goals. The ICFAD Board also acknowledges the assistance of the current chair of the committee, Sharon Vasquez (Wayne State University) and applauds the talented editorial skills of this publication’s editor, Dr. Margaret Merrion (Western Michigan University).

It was not our intention for this to be presented as the definitive work. ICFAD’s purpose is to inspire other exchange experiments that build and improve upon these initiatives and give new emphasis to the letter “I” in ICFAD. Enjoy!

*Maurice J. Sevigny, President of ICFAD, is Dean of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Arizona. He may be reached at sevigny@u.arizona.edu.*
It has always been the European League of Institutions of the Arts (ELIA) intention to find ways to promote and disseminate good practice in learning and teaching in higher arts education. We believe the Transnational Initiative Projects (TIP) provided opportunities for high quality staff development for all arts disciplines and gave students the chance to participate in innovative international exchanges.

The outcomes of the study and practice of the arts in higher education contribute to both the cultural development and the economic security of the individual and of society. In both cases, an understanding of the context of the practice is essential. In the former, it enhances intellect through critical self-awareness. In the latter, it provides knowledge of how an individual’s practice relates to the work of others. Without such knowledge an individual would not have any sense of the nature of one’s own creativity nor the culture in which it is set. In learning about the contextual setting of their discipline(s), students also engage with the various related theories within historical, contemporary and cultural settings that inform that context. As a consequence, students develop their own critical disposition in relation to their discipline(s), and the societies they operate within. Participating in the TIP projects, students had the opportunity to reflect on and gain a better perspective and understanding of their own position and practice.

ELIA is very grateful to the International Council of Fine Art Deans (ICFAD) for inviting our members to participate in this programme and look forward to the opportunity for future collaborations in international higher arts education learning and teaching initiatives.

John Butler was President of ELIA in 2004. He can be reached at john.butler@uce.ac.uk.
From the beginning, the International Initiatives Committee of ICFAD wanted to foster international research projects that would advance the profession. Thus, the Transnational Initiative Project was born. The committee designed a mechanism to encourage new thinking about transnational exchanges: supporting investigators with modest grants, convening them annually for project updates, and sharing their findings with the broader international community. This publication is the result.

The authors of the articles that follow describe the outcomes of six research projects. These outcomes both advance and inspire our thinking as an international community. Read carefully, for the authors have been honest in their narratives to identify the challenges and to rejoice in the rewards.

*Eurodans* is prima facie evidence of collaboration, coordination, and creative application of technology in dance. Through the capable hands of Butterworth and Popat, a step-by-step account is presented demonstrating how they prepared students through live and on-line experiences to achieve an authentically collaborative performance.

Calvert and Hull address a very difficult question we all face in the profession: How do we articulate the value of a degree in the arts? Their intention was to design a survey to document professional skills and abilities so we may communicate the outcomes clearly and convincingly. Conducting such a project transnationally for broader application proved to be a worthy challenge.

Hampton implemented strategic use of technology in curriculum design that incorporated four cultures. She makes the case that the arts lead to more effective communication among cultures and uses technology as a modern communication tool to maintain learning conversations and projects through web-based strategies.

Hood and Arnett report that their “educational environment has become immeasurably enriched” through international exchanges, yet they were successful in two *measurable* outcomes. They developed an assessment tool for international exchange students that is used transnationally. A second measurable outcome will undoubtedly be funding for international endeavors, for they identify a more effective alliance between international studies and university advancement offices as another result of their project. This comes as welcome news because all program directors reported financial pressures that threaten continuity of international programs.

Many institutions export performance ensembles abroad, but can the international experience be enduring? Rosenberg documents a major outcome of his project as higher level of performance. He captures this worthy result for the future through televised and recorded projects.

Are there truly unique benefits involved in intercultural exchanges? Shields proofed the field station model as a vehicle for creating alternate forms of scholarship and artistic practice. He makes a convincing case that there are such benefits, and he examines the requirements and challenges along the way. He probes the process of crossing cultures insightfully.

The Transnational Initiative Projects serve as lessons within lessons. And as all good scholars, the authors stand ready to continue dialogue on their work. They welcome readers’ comments to develop even richer understanding.

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The Eurodans Project: A European Collaboration through Choreography and Technology

This paper introduces various elements of a specific European dance project which ran from January to October 2002, and which culminated at the ELIA Dublin conference. The objective of the particular project was epistemological, not conceived in a formal pedagogic context. It became evident, however, that in revealing knowledge and experience of our choreographic and technological approaches, we could further debate. These debates addressed training, educational methods, and the phenomenon of choreography teaching in the academies, and also the growth of technology as a tool for artistic development.

The Eurodans project grew from the desire to offer an ELIA Dance Section performance project for the Dublin Conference that reflected the growth and application of technology in dance, and specifically the use of an Internet site and compressed video to support a choreography project. It enabled European students to be involved in creative collaboration and to work together inter-culturally through live performance. Drawing on the huge professional expertise of dance higher education institutions around Europe, the outcome was a high-quality dance performance that illustrated how dancers from a number of cultures across Europe can work together using new technology in dance.

The Eurodans Project linked 26 dancers from ten institutions in seven different European countries. Together they began collaborating online to create a group piece of choreography, that they would all perform together in Dublin nine months later. The dancers worked with the authors of this article, who took the role of Choreo-coordinators, i.e., those responsible for coordinating choreographic input and guiding the remote groups towards a cohesive final product. The model for this process was developed by Sita Popat as part of her doctoral research using a software prototype: Snugfit developed by Kris Popat at ULTRALAB, Anglia Polytechnic University.

The process began with each institution selecting a group of two to four dancers to work on the project (Fig. 1). Each group elected a rehearsal director, who was responsible for directing rehearsals and communicating with the Choreo-coordinators. The dancers then logged onto the project web site, and each created a homepage, with images and text to introduce him or herself to the other participants. The theme for the dance was discussed online, and a joint decision was reached to use the words “invisible connections” as a starting point for the choreography.

The dancers took this phrase into their individual rehearsal studios and used it as a stimulus to begin creating movement. They recorded sections of their movement on video and captured it onto computers. Next they used the “rehearsal record” template from the Snugfit software to create web pages to show their rehearsal video and describe in text the processes that they had undergone in creating the movement (Fig. 2). They viewed each other’s work and shared communally their responses to it. The Choreo-coordinators left their input on each rehearsal record page, commenting on the rehearsal material and supplying ideas for developing it. Often they suggested that the dancers should take on aspects of another group’s rehearsal, so that the movement began to develop cohesively across all groups.

The Choreo-coordinators created a framework for the dance in nine sections and displayed it on the web site for the dancers to give their comments. Later in the process, the costume and lighting designers displayed designs for the dancers to make comment. Towards the final six weeks of rehearsals, the Choreo-coordinators selected nine phrases of movement from all the material that had been created so far, and they asked all the groups to make variations and developments around these phrases. Thus, when the dancers arrived in Dublin, they had a rich palette of motifs, variations and developments that would fit within the framework that had already been planned online.
In Dublin, the dancers worked together with guest choreographer Wayne McGregor, who completed the formation of the online material into the final forty-minute dance. The dances rehearsed together in “real space” for six days and then performed “Eurodans.net” at the ELIA Conference (Fig. 3). The Eurodans Project was instigated with higher education dance students, but it was not primarily a pedagogic project. Instead, the focus was on communication and collaboration and their effect on the choreographic process. There were a number of objectives set out in the initial stages that primarily promoted an epistemological approach. These objectives were:

To provide a forum where dancers from different European countries and institutions could share their experiences of dance in practical and creative applications.

To promote communication and forge relationships between dancers and their institutions in Europe.

To fulfill the artistic aspect of the choreography, through the creation of a dance product that involved the dancers in a real-space performance.

To adapt and develop new Internet multimedia communications software for creative collaboration.

These objectives were fulfilled to different levels, although there was evidence of the potential for success in the future in all cases. The initial two objectives were fulfilled in part, and for some groups more than others. This type of project requires considerable commitment over an extended period of time, and several groups engaged with such a level of commitment that they reaped the benefits in the realisation of online creative collaboration. Others were less successful. It became evident that these students had varying levels of experience of working creatively in the choreographic process. The project demonstrated the need for a review of pre-project commitment requirements and in-project facilitation procedures to improve the creative experience of the online participants. This model is still under development, and Eurodans has provided essential findings that will feed the progression of this research.
In terms of fulfilling the artistic aspect of the project, the forty-minute dance product was performed at two showings for the ELIA Conference 2002. Twenty-one dancers from six countries appeared on stage together, and the dance was well received by the audiences at both performances. The choreography was largely based on the material that had been developed online, with some additional material from Wayne McGregor. The dancers reacted very positively to this culmination of their experiences as indicated by this poem written during the final week in Dublin by a Eurodans dancer:

Take dancers from all over Europe.  
Add Internet plus creativity.  
Subtract prejudices.  
Add Wayne McGregor with maximum speed.  
Divide into 21 moving bodies.  
The result is Eurodans.

Similar reactions were voiced in almost all the participants’ written responses at this time.

The project raised interesting questions concerning pedagogy for dance choreography, and also about the application of technology as a tool for artistic communication in the preparation of dance performance. A project such as Eurodans is rich in opportunities for all participants. Feedback from the dancers suggested that the cultural mix offered further stimulus to their understandings, and made them aware of cultural identity and difference in a manner not previously recognised. References were also made to specific kinds of dance vocabulary and dynamic range within European groupings, to the challenge of learning movement initiated by others with distinct movement styles, and to the range of languages spoken within and outside the rehearsal room.

For the Choreo-coordinators a number of issues concerning the application of choreography in e-learning contexts arose. Eurodans has posed further research questions concerning the potential of online processes in formal pedagogic contexts, the value of intercultural experiences, and the balance between scholarship and artistry in performance practice. The performances in Dublin instigated a broad yet positive range of aesthetic responses from the directors of academies and dance institutions, and these too are worthy of further interrogation and debate. Further, this experience has persuaded many ELIA members of the value of involving students of all disciplines in future ELIA conferences.

Jo Butterworth and Sita Popat are professors in the School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds in the UK. Butterworth may be reached at pcujbu@leeds.ac.uk. Popat may be reached at pceuip@leeds.ac.uk.
As two fine arts administrators in higher education who met through ICFAD in November of 2001, we recognized a common interest immediately. Pursuing our graduates for information about their artistic and employment trajectories was becoming an urgent concern. We both needed to address increasing demands for rationalized connections between the programs our institutions are delivering to students, and the employment of those students after graduation. Simple employment statistics were not sufficient to portray the rich range of contributions being made to communities, institutions, and workplaces by the artists, musicians, dancers, actors, teachers, arts managers, writers and scholars who achieve degrees from our programs.

We believed that creating a systematic inventory of the activities and values of arts graduates would offer understanding and a transnational solution to the misunderstandings about employability in the arts. We also hoped that greater understanding would enhance appropriate support for arts programs in higher education.

We needed an instrument that would capture authentic commitment to these art forms — ways of thinking, creating and working that have so many direct and indirect applications in the world. Some questionnaires and data sets expose the numbers of working artists employed fully in their artistic disciplines (e.g., French Horn players in civic orchestras, actors fully engaged in the theatre professions), but they don’t depict the graduates using their arts backgrounds to any significant effect in allied vocations and avocations.

To reveal these nuanced profiles, we designed a survey using our own and others’ expertise in instrument design, arts curriculum development, and research methodology. The object of the inquiry was to establish a globally applicable questionnaire and, from its implementation, create a baseline set of data to record ways fine arts graduates value, use and apply their arts education, in terms that are arts—not business—relevant.

Our survey has been tested in our own schools and will be implemented across the world with the help of senior managers of participating fine arts academies. Institutions are being contacted through ICFAD and ELIA to participate in the project implementation. A joint meeting of the members of ICFAD and ELIA will take place in London in July 2005. This venue is well timed and located for the dissemination of the completed survey protocols to interested institutions. To conduct the international survey, information about the instrument will be sent to the participating institutions for distribution to their alumni, including a letter notifying participants of the purpose of the survey, and instructions to access the online instrument and supporting materials.

Once the project’s framework is transmitted to the participating institutions, we foresee several key advantages in using Internet communication to manage data:

- Former students of a large number of arts institutions can be contacted and surveyed by this method.
- Data can be centrally collected and analyzed by a small team of researchers.
- Communication of early findings and study results among globally distributed institutions can be carried out directly and quickly.
- Collaborative development of the final profile and implications of the study are facilitated by the online nature of the international implementation.
These data will create an international profile and comparison of the career paths and achievements of recent graduates, determine any trends, and draw implications for program design, marketing and benchmarking of higher education in the arts worldwide.

While we have been challenged by actual distances between us and the complexity of preparing a major research study in the midst of two demanding administrative careers, the reception for our initiative, as we have presented the stages of planning and testing to organizations in several countries, has been extremely encouraging. For those preparing artists and arts workers, there is no greater concern than the opportunities, recognition and achievements that await our graduates in the wider world. We have found the work exciting and hopeful at every turn.

Armed with the information this study will provide, we trust researchers will have greater understanding of the intrinsic value of the disciplines, scholarship, and productivity of their institutions in terms based in the disciplines themselves. Such data and findings will be valuable evidence available for provision to the administrations of participating institutions, governments, donors, accrediting agencies and funding organizations.

The validated instrument will be available for future data collection to facilitate benchmarking, assessing comparative effectiveness of programs, and documenting educational initiatives over time. Participating organizations will gain a measure for arts education effectiveness, and insightful data on activities and long-term involvement in the arts by arts professionals and cultural workers. Our institutions will gain a set of benchmarks from which to determine future program decisions, and an enlightened group of arts academics who can better inform decision and policy makers on the rigorous nature of creative arts training and research, as well as its positive outcomes.

Finally, informed by the results of this study, students and graduates will be more aware of the preparation and skills that they acquire during their training. They will be better able to represent themselves to employers and funding agencies.

We anticipate long-term indicators of success will include:

- More recognition by government and other funding agencies of the productivity, in arts terms, of those who have been educated in arts programs represented in the study.
- Increased funding for arts programs in higher education due to clearer purposes and outcomes.
- Increased recognition by the public, employers, cultural agencies and government bureaus of the important contributions of artists, performers, and creative workers to the cultural and economic well being of communities and nations.
- Heightened communication between and among arts education institutions about programs, graduates, and long-term outcomes of curriculum strategies.
- More diverse employment prospects for graduates of our programs.

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This project is rooted in the important shared understandings across cultures as experienced through the arts. Professors in four institutions collaborated for creative exchanges to further transnational understandings with the aid of technology.

The globalization and interdependence of the economies of nations require that today’s students must gain a thorough understanding of the various cultures, values, and customs of the people with whom they will come into contact. The arts produced by a given culture express and communicate important information about the history, values and culture of its people. In addition to serving as a vehicle for gaining a better understanding of the culture, the experience with art leads to more effective communication within a given cultural context.

The arts are the voice and conscience of a society. Through the arts we see and hear broad cultural reflections in painting, sculpture, music, dance, drama and film created by artists who are the true guardians and visionaries of every society. The arts also offer a unique window of understanding into who we are as individuals within those societies and they influence our behaviors. For example, history repeatedly points to the importance of great story telling in chronicling and influencing human affairs. Even today, a powerful, authentic narrative can foster trust and respect between disparate cultures and mitigate the social and psychological impact of cultural prejudice.

In spite of these conditions, West Africans and African Americans produced remarkable and quite similar modes of expression in the visual and performing arts rarely acknowledged until the emergence of Black Nationalism in the 1960s. During this time, both groups re-established and strengthened the historic and cultural associations between the arts and cultures of West Africans and African Americans. The success of the Civil Rights movement in the United States and the collapse of colonial rule in West Africa gave rise to a new sense of Black identity for Africans and those of African descent, and a new body of art that embodied and expressed that newfound identity.
With that historical background, my project involved a transnational curricular venture between The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana, and the Federal University of Technology in Akure, Nigeria. The collaboration designed a course in which students study and interpret major works of visual art produced by Africans and African Americans against a backdrop of cultural, social and political conditions that influenced the creation of these works.

The goal of the course is to increase the ability of students to understand and appreciate cultural differences and similarities through an examination of the West African and African-American arts and culture. The course, to be delivered online simultaneously through the use of computers and Internet access, allows students in Africa and the United States to participate as members of the same class in discussions and joint class projects. Progress will be evaluated through participation in weekly online discussions, objective mid-term and final exams, a two-page position paper on a course related subject, and the successful completion of a collaborative online project developed by students in both countries.

There are three major units of study covered in the course:

**Black Art and Black Power** covers the emergence of a “Black Aesthetic” and the importance of art in the social and political struggles for independence in both Africa and the United States in the 1960s.

**A Message to the People** explores the diversity of individual and community-based artworks created in Africa and the United States that lie outside of the fine art traditions of gallery and concert exhibition.

**Art as Politics and Politics as Art** examines the continuing role of art as an important means of social and political expression in African and African American culture.

Each of the three major units of study includes weekly topics that explore and detail specific aspects of that unit. Following each topic there are required weeklong online discussions to advance transnational communication, pursue ideas and develop concepts associated with that topic.

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**Grace Hampton is a Professor in the College of Arts and Architecture at Pennsylvania State University. She can be reached at ghb2@psu.edu.**
A Collaboration between Indiana University Pennsylvania and the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia and the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Zagreb, Croatia: Producing Workshops for Transnational Course Integration

Indiana University of Pennsylvania’s (IUP) International Exchange Program has three facets. The first is to coordinate international student exchange. We began our program in 1998 with written agreements between the Art and Music Academies in Ljubljana, Slovenia and Zagreb, Croatia in regard to a semester-long credit transfer program. This program kept student costs to a minimum and exposed our students to a conservatory atmosphere in a richly different cultural milieu. It allowed students from Central Europe to experience American style liberal arts based education where artistic standards remain high, but teaching, learning, and work methods differ from those encountered in their native countries.

This initial agreement continues to prosper. One distinct advantage of the exchange program is the low cost to the students. Tuition, housing and meals are free for students at the European institutions with which we are collaborating. To make the exchanges work effectively, participating IUP students pay IUP all of their tuition, housing, meal charges and fees (exchange fees of $500), as if they would be attending on campus that semester. These funds are then “banked” and used to pay the expenses of the European students when they attend IUP. The same, in turn, happens for the IUP student. The European institution pays tuition, housing and meal expenses, plus the exchange fee at the Croatian and Slovenia Academies. The only additional cost of the exchange for all students is the price of the airplane ticket.

Forty students have participated in the exchange program. Securing dorm space or living quarters for our students in Ljubljana, although a charming quaint city, presents difficulties for our European colleagues. The housing concern for our students, and the attendant high cost that must be borne by their students wishing housing here, in lieu of a straight trade, becomes financially difficult and has slowed our efforts.

The exchange with Croatia has flourished with the greatest student traffic happening in visual art at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Music also continues to be a viable partnership. Recently, two students from Croatia studied in our music department and the future possibility of a faculty exchange within the year exists. New this year, a cross-cultural program in stage direction is a reality. Our first IUP theatre student is currently enrolled in the Academy of Drama, University of Zagreb. He will direct two student projects and be part of an internship experience with a professional company in Croatia.

Building upon our experiences in Croatia and Slovenia, we have begun an exchange program with Opole University in Poland. This new program is fully operational with student participation on both sides, and we are currently discussing exchange possibilities with another Polish institution, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan.
As our programs have matured, and as a direct result of the ICFAD Transnational Initiatives Project, we produced a handbook and policy guide for our exchange programs. We also wrote and implemented an outcomes assessment tool used by the European academies as well as our College of Fine Arts. Based upon this assessment tool, the quality of the exchange program can be measured and the future focus of the expanded programs can be directed to best meet the needs of the students. Another outcome is the formation of an effective alliance with our Office of International Studies and with the Office of University Advancement.

The second facet of our program is to encourage and support the exchange of university professors and administrators for workshops, performances, and classes. Faculty members on both sides of the Atlantic and in all three of our major disciplines have benefited from short and long term residencies. Recently, Assistant Dean Marjorie Arnett taught a painting workshop with sixteen Croatian students and exhibited nine new paintings in the Academy Gallery in Zagreb. Immediately thereafter, Zagreb Art Academy Professor Duje Juric, came to IUP in July to teach a workshop and exhibit his paintings. Polish artist and Professor Ola Janik, from the Academy of Art at Opole University, started our fall semester teaching a three-week workshop in bookmaking, and several IUP professors have participated in faculty exchanges in Opole.

The third and newest facet of our international activity has been the development of short-term summer study-abroad classes. Our first was offered in partnership with the University of Akron in Viterbo, Italy this past summer.

Our faculty and student exchanges have produced related projects that provide excitement and unending possibilities for us. In 1999, our initial exchange agreements were dramatically underscored in Indiana when our University Museum mounted its highly successful New Works: New Europe exhibit, featuring work from the Fine Art Academies in Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The exhibit traveled to Pittsburgh, then on to shows in Cleveland, Terre Haute, Chicago and Washington, DC. In 2003, the Museum mounted Plakat!, an exhibit of 150 Polish art posters. The posters remain at IUP and many of them are on display in our main administrative building, Sutton Hall. In spring 2004, Marko Sržen, head of the Croatian Drama Academy's directing program, spent two months in residence directing Grižula, a play by Croatian national playwright Marin Držić. The production, billed as a co-production of the Drama Academy and the IUP Department of Theatre and Dance, was invited to play at the world famous Dubrovnik Festival. Traveling as a team, seventeen students, the chair of our Theatre Department and Dean Michael Hood, spent an unforgettable week of cultural immersion in the city that George Bernard Shaw referred to as "paradise."

During Professor Ola Janik's faculty exchange, Professor Janik exhibited her photographic work within our college art gallery. Her work was presented in conjunction with ArtQuiltArt, an international invitational exhibit in our University Museum. Quilt artists from Sweden, Poland, Australian, and Spain joined Ola in a panel presentation and, simultaneously, students who have participated in our international program exhibited their work in our student gallery.

Dreams for quality international credit bearing academic experience for our best students have become reality. Because of our exchange programs, our educational environment has become immeasurably enriched.

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Michael J. Hood is Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He can be reached at mhood@iup.edu.
The College of Charleston’s School of the Arts was honored to be the recipient of one of the Transnational Initiatives Projects grants from the International Council of Fine Arts Deans’ International Initiatives Committee. Through this grant, the School of the Arts’ Music Department supported a program to send students and faculty to France for a series of Performances of early music.

The Charleston Pro Musica is an early music ensemble based within the School of the Arts’ Music Department. Comprised of students and faculty from the Music Department, the Charleston Pro Musica performs under my direction as chair of the department. In 1997 I initiated a study abroad program in Peyresc, France, through which students and faculty would travel to the Alpes de Haute Provence about 100 miles north of Nice. The goal of the program was to involve students and faculty in performing medieval and renaissance music in its indigenous setting. These performances would be the basis of a unique international cultural exchange.

In 1999 the Foundation des Pays de Peyresc presented the College of Charleston with a grant for producing public concerts in various villages in the surrounding area. Most of the performance venues were medieval churches that reflected the rich architectural heritage of the area. Through this program, the members of the Charleston Pro Musica performed each summer until 2004.

With the help of the Foundation des Pays de Peyresc, I organized approximately eight concerts every August. The concerts elicited positive response from the communities in which they took place. The members of the group followed a schedule that provided them with ample rehearsal time, as well as numerous opportunities for significant interaction with other students, faculty and members of the local communities. The group had accommodations in a unique medieval mountain village that enhanced their experience of the area.

The Charleston Pro Musica recorded four compact discs over the course of the project. In 2001, videographers from South Carolina Educational Television traveled with the group to create a video that aired on the state’s network and in several other states.

As the program developed, the College of Charleston explored the establishment of a more permanent presence at Peyresc. This program involved the College’s Department of French and focused on the village of Annot. The College has discontinued the program because of funding issues, resulting in the summer program for the Charleston Pro Musica being placed “on hold” for 2004. I am currently negotiating the resumption of the summer concert program.
The program surpassed my original expectations, leading me to assert that the appearances in the various communities led the Charleston Pro Musica to realize a higher professional level of performance. I think the contact with the local inhabitants was rewarding for the musicians and led to the development of a large, local audience and faithful following of the ensemble. Through the series of performances, the Charleston Pro Music reached more than 2,000 people in the region each summer. (Audience size grew from 100 to 250 people per performance in the first year to as many as 450 per concert in 2003.)

In a few years the program fostered greater international understanding by exhibiting a positive aspect of the American spirit. The question now facing us is “Where do we go from here?” Personnel have changed. The students who were originally involved have graduated and moved on to careers or further study at the graduate level. The main singer, Jose Lemos, is on the brink of a major career in the operatic world, but he returns to Charleston regularly for the annual Piccolo Spoleto Festival and throughout the academic year to perform with the group.

Given the success the project realized in a few short years, the Music Department is seeking funding that will allow the program to continue into the future. To do so will allow new combinations of students and faculty to share similar experiences and continue the work of establishing international contacts.

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The 2003 conference (PS9), an experimental “field station” model of collaborative practice, was held from April 7 through April 12, 2003, with the announced theme of creating and exploring performance processes linking issues of environment, history and culture, and performance practice. As described by the conference organizers in the call for proposals and the printed conference program, PS9 was designed as an experiment in collaborative fieldwork presentation and performance. The event was organized and hosted by Te Puna Toi (an international performance research center established in 2001 to link avant-garde and Maori and Pacific Island performance and film art) and the Department of Theatre and Film Studies at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. PS9 brought together 37 artists/scholars from around the world (Europe, North America, the Middle East, Asia, New Zealand and Australia) for a week of intensive study, travel, and artistic experimentation. Five field station teams were organized, with artistic goals as diverse as experimental sonic composition within the New Zealand landscape, the investigation of Maori performance conventions in contemporary practice, the documentation of issues of touristic performance and cultural consumption reflected in “revisiting” locales used in filming *Lord of the Rings*, and site-specific performance based on the history and landscape of Antarctic exploration.

An Approach to Transnational Arts Collaboration: A Report from PS9, Field Station New Zealand

Efforts to support artistic collaboration within American higher education have historically focused on shared instructional assignments or resources, primarily through faculty/artist exchange programs. This essay presents a report of an alternate model for transnational arts collaboration, an approach that bridges the desires of individual arts faculty for international collaboration with the ambitions of a professional society for international membership and exchange. As a founding member and past-officer of Performance Studies International (PSi), I have supported the efforts of that organization to promote original and fruitful ways to bridge artistic practice and academic pursuits. Indeed, the various conferences staged by PSi during the past decade have promoted international participation and created a site for dialogue and interaction among artists and academics from a variety of disciplines. Participation at these conferences attracts individuals whose interests converge around the nexus of performance research and practice.

My case study report documents my participation as part of the site specific collaborative. To do so narrates the goals and processes of my working group to create a truly collaborative exchange, before, during, and after the week of artistic exploration and practice. In short, the working hypothesis for this case study report is as follows: What were the benefits and shortcoming of using the field station model for transnational artistic exchange?
The process of using the field station model demands adequate time for preparation before the event. In this case, Professor Michael Pearson (from the University of Wales) established the common reading list of materials about the links between New Zealand and specific incidents in Antarctic exploration focusing on narratives of heroism, masculinity, touristic simulations of polar exploration, and the experience of ice for creative inspiration. He also established the itinerary for travel to various sites across the south island of New Zealand associated with these themes, including the Antarctic Research Centre, the Franz Josef Glacier, and various museums on the Antarctic Heritage Trail. All participants in the group took these preliminary readings very seriously and came well equipped to converse with each other and with those Antarctic exploration specialists consulted during the Field Station tours.

These preliminary readings became the focus of our intense discussions in the van as our group moved to various locations across the island to rediscover the force of the ice on human events. Specific workshop activities were planned and guided by Pearson to connect our individual artistic interests to the common goal of devising group site-specific responses at several locations, including a collective performance at an Antarctic tourist site (a performance that took place within the confines of a refrigerated room designed to look like the Antarctic landscape), a site-specific performance created and presented at the base of the Franz Josef Glacier, and a final interactive public performance event on the streets of Christchurch, a performance designed to share the results of our field station work with other conference participants. Shahin Yazdani, an Iranian filmmaker and PS9 participant, who documented our work as well as the work of others at the conference, filmed our creative work at these locations.

Outcomes from this field station project, besides the transitory performance work conceived and presented there and the video documentation prepared by Shahin Yazdani, suggest the unique benefits as well as challenges of transnational work. First, all of the members of our collaborative were challenged to adjust to differing approaches to performance process, including differences in performance traditions, questions of ownership and authority in collaborative practice, as well as differences in performance aesthetics and values. (In fact these questions emerged within all of the groups at PS9 and shaped the final closing discussion among conference attendees.) Be that as it may, the artistic diversity within our working group quickly melded together around the idea of creating site specific work reflective of our individual interests and our common goal to surrender ourselves (individually and collectively) into the experience of performing the traces of the heroic era of Antarctic exploration as revealed and experienced at various locations. I think we were lucky in this regard. Without this individual level of dedication to task it would have been impossible to sustain the level of creative energy needed to take advantage of the intense field station experience.

What has become clear in the months following PS9 is the difficulty of sustaining these connections beyond the field experience itself (specifically, the problems associated with funding international travel and support for sustained creative activity). Future artistic collaborations have yet to emerge from my working group, although plans have been proposed for future site-specific work at various locations. What has emerged has been sustained dialogue and conversation among individuals about individual projects. In short, the intense experience of working in a field station environment has opened the door to continuing dialogue about artistic practice among a dedicated group of performance scholars and should be regarded as an important outcome of the Transnational Initiative Project.
In conclusion, it is generative to reflect on the nature of artistic collaboration in academic settings. Nearly a decade ago I wrote an introduction to a collection of essays describing how the intercollegiate performance festival has been used to promote disciplinary change.\(^1\) Historically specific and certainly products of particular times and concerns, festival practice during the early, middle, and closing decades of the last century reflected circulating disciplinary concerns and artistic forms. Coming out of this festival tradition, I find myself reflecting on the remarkable success of PS9 in light of my past participation at some of these traditional festivals in academic settings. During the past decade, PSI conferences have played out institutional status primarily through the presentation of scholarly panels and featured performances presented to promote disciplinary change and reflexive creative practice. The field station model at PS9 did even more. By adopting the field station model to promote transnational collaboration (a compressed research/performance practicum), the organizers prompted alternate forms of scholarship and artistic practice beyond the traditional research essay and festival presentation.\(^2\) PS9 worked to erase the borders between artistic practice as scholarship and cultural formations through the process of field station exploration and collaboration. For me it was the most exciting event of this kind in my entire professional career.

But what made Field Station New Zealand, PS9, so remarkable?

As a member of the study group composed of scholar/artists in dance, theatre, environmental and devised performance, performance art, and creative writing, we worked together to explore the traces of Antarctic exploration on the ice, the land, the museums and tourist sites of New Zealand. We blended the interests and energies of our collaborative group, a diverse group composed across generations, nationalities, dispositions and artistic interests. Traveling together we discussed our common readings on Antarctic exploration, conducted group improvisations designed to explicate the dynamics of site-specific performance, worked on our own artistic projects, and listened and learned from each other as we struggle to create collaborative work. Through it all we reflected on what it must have been like to explore the land of relative inaccessibility, the ice, and how these explorers structured a heroic narrative to serve culturally specific and personal needs.

As a collective we constantly worked to make sense of these explorations in light of our own journey across the landscape, through the contemporary sites of cultural memory, and up the glacier: the success of the group tied to the exigencies of collaboration (artistically as well as physically). We struggled with issues of documentation and the processes of artistic practice as part of a field station paradigm. In doing so, we exposed the flesh as well as the spirit to the explosive forces of collaboration—an exhilarating and defining process.

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