

REPORT ON ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON EUROPEAN CO-PRODUCTIONS IN DANCE

By Piia Ahonen
Finnish Dance Information Centre

DATES	October 8 th – 9 th 2004
VENUE	Le Musée Malraux, 2 Boulevard Clémenceau, 76600 LE HAVRE, France
ORGANIZED BY	Octobre en Normandie and Tero Saarinen Company in collaboration with Kuopio Dance Festival, Finnish Dance Information Centre and Dansens Hus

Friday October 8th

Culture 2000 programme: objectives, practice, future

Marie Salomé-Daugeron (*Relais Culture Europe in Paris*)

Marie Salomé-Daugeron presented the basic structure and features of the European Union's Culture 2000 programme. Since most of the info can be found in detail on the website http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/index_en.html both in English and French, this report will only list the main points of the programme.

The objective of Culture 2000 is to promote a common cultural area characterised by its cultural diversity and shared cultural heritage. It seeks to encourage cultural creation and mobility, access to culture for all, the dissemination of art and culture, intercultural dialogue and knowledge of the history of the European peoples. It also accords culture a social integration and socio-economic development role. The more specific objectives of the programme can be found on the specifications for each year's applications

The Culture 2000 programme consists of three types of actions:

- 1) Annual Co-operation Projects
- 2) Multi-Annual Co-operation Agreements
- 3) Special Cultural Events

The two first ones are the more relevant for the topic of the seminar. In both cases it is important to realize that the EU funding can only be 50% (annual projects) or 60% (multi-annual co-operations) of the total budget. Since the cycle of the decision making is quite slow, taking at least 6 months, it is important that the applicant of the project is a steady organization with a good basic funding of its own.

Both annual and multi-annual actions have to have a) a project leader/applicant and b) co-organisers. Both of these have to provide funding as well as active involvement in the implementation of the project. In addition, the project can also involve associate partners. These associate partners can be both artistic and financial.

The Annual Co-operation Projects have to involve participants (including the applicant) from at least three countries participating in the Culture 2000 programme. However, for the last two years of the programme (2005 and 2006), it is plausible that there will have to be at least four participants. The annual projects last for one year. The maximum amount of Culture 2000 funding is 150 000 euros. These projects can also have partners in countries not participating in the Culture 2000 programme. Therefore, this is a possibility to have co-operation projects e.g. with countries from Latin America.

The Multi-Annual Co-operation Agreements have to involve participants from at least five participating countries. However, for the last two years of the programme (2005 and 2006), it is plausible that there will have to be at least eight partners. The multi-annual projects last for two or three years, and the maximum funding from the EU is 300 000 euros a year.

Both **Mme Salomé-Daugeron** and **M Claude Veron** gave some very practical advice about applying and about the applications. First of all, it is important not to rely on the Culture 2000 funding for the whole project. As stated earlier, the decision making process is very long and consists of many phases. Therefore, it is quite common that projects have to be started without a full certainty of the EU funding. For the same reasons it is important to know the partners well.

The applications should be as realistic and detailed as possible. The Culture 2000 decisions are made based on the budget presented on the application, so it is important to make the budget as realistic as possible. It is also sensible to make the application at least in English and in French, and possibly in some other European languages as well. The projects also have better changes to be accepted if at least some of the partners are well known in the European context. However, a long list of referees is not a necessary feature, neither are videos.

If the project has an educational aspect, it is sensible to present this aspect in a strong light, but not to overestimate its importance in the project. However, any educational projects should clearly differ from the education already provided by universities and other professional education schools. A good and successful example of such a project is the danceWEB-Europe scholarship and training programme.

The timetables of the decisions were discussed. **M Veron** pointed out that since the decision making process is linked to the structure of the EU decision making in general, it is quite impossible to make any radical improvements to it. Therefore, it is wise to plan the Culture 2000 applications well in advance, e.g. if a project is taking place in the beginning of 2006, the applications should have already been made this autumn (2004). Planning in advance is possible since the year to year changes in the requirements are quite small, mainly technical details involving the budgeting.

M Veron also reminded every one of the fact that all the countries participating in the Culture 2000 programme have a Cultural Contact Point. The CCP's provide help and advice, so anyone planning on applying to the programme is welcome to use their services.

Mme Salomé-Daugeron also made a short presentation about the plans for the new culture programme for the years 2007 – 2013. The plan is to make the programme more accessible in terms of the applications process etc. There are only three specific objectives in the new programme: 1) supporting the transnational mobility of people working in the cultural section, 2) encouraging the transnational circulation of works of art and artistic and cultural products and 3) promoting intercultural dialogue. The plan is to have three main strands: support for 1) cultural actions, 2) European organisations active in the field of culture and 3) analyses, collection and dissemination of information in the field of cultural co-operation. However, the plan as well as the budget for the new programme is still to be decided on. Therefore, **M Veron** was quite sceptical about the programme being active and in operation already in 2007.

At the end of the session, **M Veron** pointed out that the Culture 2000 programme is not the only EU programme where to apply funding for cultural projects. He specifically wanted to mention the INTERREG programme, which is a programme for co-operation projects that happen over borders of e.g. two areas in neighbouring countries. Danse à Lille and a Belgian festival have for example had a successful project that was funded from the INTERREG funds.

ROUNDTABLE 1: European and international co-productions: advantages, challenges, experiences

*Moderator: **Claude Veron** (Norev Company, France)*

Key Speakers:

Kristien De Coster (Ultima Vez, Belgium)

Audronis Imbrasas (Lithuanian Dance Information Centre, Lithuania)

Louise Seibæk (Dansescenen, Denmark)

Alistair Spalding (Sadler's Wells, UK)

Jorma Uotinen (Kuopio Dance Festival, Finland)

M Veron started the first roundtable by listing some success stories of dance projects that have received Culture 2000 funding. These include e.g. the aforementioned danceWEB-Europe scholarship programme, the residency programme and network Pépinierès, TransDanse Europe -project as well as a project by IXKIZIT Compagnie Joel Borges and three partners. Since dance is a part of the performing arts in the Culture 2000 programme, it is difficult to say how many dance projects have received funding from the programme.

The first key speaker, **Audronis Imbrasas**, gave a short description of his experiences of using Culture 2000 funds for organising the festival New Baltic Dance. His story revealed all the problems with the timetables concerning the decision making process, the signing of the actual contract and the receiving of the funding. In other words, it underlined most of the points made in the first session about applying: long timetables in the planning, the necessity of having other additional funds, etc.

Kristien De Coster from the company Ultima Vez said that they have had good experiences with EU funding, but so far they have only been partners, not applicants. They have been especially happy with a part of the

danceWEB programme called CoDaCo, the Contemporary Dance Co-production Programme, which has enabled them to support the work of some young choreographers of Wim Vandekeybus' choice.

Louise Seibæk from Denmark was asked about the Nordic funding structures that could be used for international co-productions, in addition to EU funding. **Ms. Seibæk** told that there have not really been any specifically Nordic co-operation projects that have had EU funding. As for the Nordic funding, there are some funds that can be applied for e.g. touring in the Nordic countries, by Nordic companies.

However, **Ms. Seibæk** also pointed out that the word Nordic or the concept of "Nordic Identity" is not a simple one. In fact, the term Nordic identity and its relevance was under discussion in the end of September 2004 at the Nordic Dance Meeting organised in Oslo, Norway. The main dilemma in this issue seems to be the fact that inside the Nordic countries - that means in the traditional sense Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden - the Nordic identity is not a relevant concept, whereas from the viewpoint of central Europe the "Great North" is one (market) area, and it also includes the Baltic countries Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. As it happens, the latter outlook is the more sensible one when planning on applying for EU funding. In the future, those applications that include partners from the new EU member states will probably have better chances of being accepted.

Talking of "old" EU members, **Alistair Spalding** made the observation that there are very few Culture 2000 projects that have been led from the UK. The situation is not certainly getting any better either: the UK funding for culture is getting smaller, which also makes it more difficult to get EU funding. **Mr Spalding** also noted that all the EU co-operation projects will have to have a very strong artistic substance in order to be successful.

Jorma Uotinen from Finland agreed with this point and said that this is the very reason why Kuopio Dance Festival is involved in the Borrowed Light project by Tero Saarinen Company. The roundtable as well as the first day of the seminar was concluded by agreeing on the priority of the art in any co-operation projects at the European and international level.

Saturday October 9th

ROUNDTABLE 2: Collaboration between dance and TV

*Moderator: **Paulina Ahokas** (Music Export Finland)*

Key Speakers:

Leslie F. Grunberg (*Les Films Penelope, France*)

Alex Poots (*English National Opera, UK*)

Kristien De Coster (*Ultima Vez, Belgium*)

Kenneth Kvanström (*Dansens Hus, Sweden*)

The second day of the seminar consisted of two roundtable discussions. The first one was provoked by questions such as: Is there too little dance on TV? And: Could dance companies and venues benefit more from TV, and TV from us?

The discussion mainly revolved around two intertwined problems: 1) what is the motivation for making TV productions and what should these productions be like, 2) how to make sure that these productions get a lifespan? The discussion about the first set of questions quite soon also evolved into containing dance films, DVD's etc.

As a producer, **Leslie F. Grunberg** was not really concerned about the amount of dance productions on TV. Instead, he was worried about poor programming, which places more and more dance films to be shown in the middle of the night. Also the fact that some broadcasting companies, such as BBC 4, have cancelled their dance slots altogether, is making things difficult. In his view, another question is how to make sure that all the important stage productions get recorded on film.

Alex Poots from the English National Opera wanted to start with the question of what is the choreographer's motivation for doing TV productions. He felt that if TV seems to be losing interest in showing dance films and productions, it is perhaps also a question of the products' characteristics. He felt that when producing art works for TV, one should take into account the special characteristics of TV as a medium. One should consider what works on TV and what does not. In his opinion, TV productions should give the viewers an experience as strong as an experience evoked by a stage production. **Mr Poots** also felt that because of this, translations from stage to TV or film can sometimes be quite problematic.

Many people agreed with **Mr Poots**, at least partly, in thinking that a filmed dance production should be a completely new piece of art. This brought up the question whether a choreographer can be a good director too, or whether choreographers should do more collaboration with directors, dramaturges et al. **Julia Carruthers** pointed out that one of the reasons for the lack of this kind of collaboration might be the fact that younger, interesting directors and choreographers don't know each others' work and rarely get to meet.

Kristien De Coster from Ultima Vez dance company works with a choreographer who is very interested in images and making filmed dance works. She says that for Wim Vandekeybus, it is obvious that films are completely new works, even though they might be made by using materials from stage productions. **Kenneth Kvarnström**, choreographer and director of Dansens Hus in Stockholm, also brought up his experience in making a dance film, where the choreography was actually created on the editing table.

This production was also interesting in other aspects. The form of the production was especially created for TV showings. It consisted of three ten-minute-long sections that could be shown either separately or as one programme. They have been shown both separately and together by the Swedish TV. **Kvarnström** has also had other good experiences in collaborating with the Swedish Broadcasting company as a venue director. He has been able to synchronise certain dance document showings with upcoming stage performances.

Both **Ms De Coster** and **Alistair Spalding** from the Sadler's Wells in London pointed out that from a company's or a venue's point of view, collaborations like this could benefit both them and the broadcasting companies. **Mr Poots**, however, expressed that in his view marketing for stage productions is not the right motivation for doing TV productions. This point was accepted and agreed on also by company representatives.

Despite the view that art always comes first, **M Grunberg** brought up the money issue: when talking about dance and TV, it is a major part of the equation. It is one of the reasons why it is more and more difficult to do TV productions. It is also an aspect when talking about why TV productions and dance films do not get shown. As for the first point, **M Grunberg** said that during the last five years it has become almost impossible to do reasonable contracts with the dancers. He feels that situation has started to resemble the one in classical music, where the artists have almost priced themselves out the market.

Money comes in also when talking about the programming done by TV companies. At the times when viewer statistics are the measure of success, dance productions are the underdog. As **Ella Baff** from the Jacob's Pillow festival pointed out, dance has never had such distribution channels as popular music or films. It is not big enough a business.

Despite the momentarily gloomy perspectives, **Mr Poots** was quite confident in saying that good ideas always have a market. He wanted to speak for productions that will work on different media, but he was also very persistent in stating that perhaps dance makers have not fully taken into account the special features of TV. But then it is another question should everyone do TV productions. As **M Grunberg** said, TV should not be a goal as such. Slightly contradicting this thought is the one important thing about TV that was mentioned throughout the discussion, most explicitly by **Karim Maatoug** from Tunis: in many parts of the globe TV is the only way to get to see dance.

Therefore, it is still important to get the TV companies interested in dance. **Julia Carruthers** from South Bank Centre in London said that she is constantly trying to get people responsible for programming in the BBC to come and see new interesting choreographers. She said that this is a time-consuming task since for TV a safe choice like a classical ballet production is often more tempting than contemporary dance. Dance agent **Gillian Newson** was in the same lines as **Ms Carruthers** in saying that it takes a lot of time to get TV representatives interested in new artists. She has however found out that there are places where one can make the right contacts, if one has the time. One useful channel for making contacts is the International Music + Media Centre IMZ, which is an association of producers of cultural programmes.

As for money, still, **Mr Grunberg** noted that he has also made films without TV companies. As a matter of fact, he has always been able to find funding for these productions as well. When TV is not involved, there are funding sources which are not available otherwise. He also said that production companies should also take risks, and not wait for 100% certain funding.

At the end of the discussion, **Mr Kvarnström** brought up the question of the new generations for whom digital video cameras and low budget documentaries are everyday life. Internet is also a media which most likely will be used more and more for showing dance films. However, he predicted that the question of copyrights will become even more essential in the future for the future of filmed dance productions.

ROUNDTABLE 3: Co-productions and touring – focus on agencies

*Moderator: **Julia Carruthers** (South Bank Centre, UK)*

Key Speakers:

Ella Baff (*Jacob's Pillow, USA*)

Francesca Zitoli (*ATER, Italy*)

Didier Le Besque (*DLB Performances, France*)

Gillian Newson (*Gillian Newson Associates, UK*)

The third and final roundtable discussion focused on the work of agencies in creating tours. However, the discussion started with **Ella Baff's** short account of the situation in the US. **Ms Baff** confirmed the general assumption that the US is a difficult market to enter, for many reasons. One of the reasons is that there is not that much money for the arts. Second reason is that the presenters are quite conservative and avoid taking risks. However, by getting into contact with the right people who are less than twenty in numbers, it is possible to enter the market. On the other hand, she wanted to point out that the situation has got almost unbearable during the past few years. For example, the new expedite fees have made presenters even more conservative in their programming than before.

Despite of this, **Ms Baff** wanted to stress the importance of innovative and open-minded programming. In her opinion every piece of choreography is understandable if it is placed in the right context. She was very much opposed to trendy or fashionable programming. Instead, she sees that the presenters' task is to present the artists' work in the best possible way.

Both **Didier Le Besque** and **Gillian Newson** agreed with **Ms Baff** on this last viewpoint. However, **M Le Besque** felt that for an agent to be able to do this, it is important to know each country's and each venue's trends or interest. Otherwise, it is not possible to give the right work to the right place at the right time. And this is what he sees to be the core of his work as an agent. In addition to knowing the context of each country or market, it is of utter importance to know what the choreographer wants, what his plans are for the future and where he is artistically headed. This is why he starts every project with a conversation with the choreographer.

M Le Besque and **Ms Newson** both stressed the importance of planning ahead. As **M Le Besque** pointed out, it takes two to three years to realise a project, most often a specific tour. One of the reasons for this is that some venues, the key cities as he calls them, have to be booked two years in advance. Working out the schedules for a tour is therefore difficult, since the gaps between the major venues can often be filled only a couple of months beforehand.

The importance of knowing each country's characteristics became evident when **Francesca Zitoli** described the situation in Italy and what their agency can offer companies wanting to tour Italy. **Ms Zitoli** told that in addition to the major festivals, Italy has to offer a wide selection of different venues. The problem is that you will have to have the right connections in order to make things happen. The agency she represents, ATER, offer the foreign companies a full service. This means that the agency takes full responsibility for the tour, from logistics to tour

managers and interpreters etc. In her view the most difficult part of the work is to balance the budget. Therefore, she felt that collaboration between the agencies could make the tours more effective and would probably save money.

Gillian Newson said that since she represents US companies in Europe, main part of her job is to be the representative of those companies towards the venues and festivals. She travels a lot and does all the time-consuming planning. She also said that even though some people think that agencies just take a lot of money from the companies, leaving them empty-handed, at least her work benefits the companies considerably. For example Bill T Jones's company had counted that 50% of the profits come from tours that her agency has arranged. **Ms Newson** also stressed again that her motivation first and foremost is to represent the artists in the best possible way.

At this point of the discussion, **Kenneth Kvarnström** wanted to raise the question of the small and younger companies who can't afford to use the agencies' services. For him these companies are the more interesting partners. Therefore, he wanted to know if the agencies feel any responsibility for the upcoming talents who have not yet been internationally "found". Both **Didier Le Besque** and **Gillian Newson** said that they also work with younger companies. **Ms Newson** said that she has made "pro bono" work with some younger companies, mostly sharing experiences and mentoring them.

Continuing with **Mr Kvarnström's** question "how young talents can be found", **Julia Carruthers** wanted to know whether company managers could also do work similar to the agencies. **Kristien De Coster** said that they have done exactly this with some young talents. This means that they have helped them to organise performances with some partners that also work with Wim Vandekebuys.

Audronis Imbrasas said that they sometimes combine bigger names with young talents in their festival's programming. The question of this kind of mixed programming was discussed and most presenters present were quite positive about the idea. **Ella Baff** for example said that as long as the mixture was artistically motivated and not a variety show, she has no problems with the idea.

As the last question for the roundtable, **Ms Carruthers** wanted to hear thoughts on the question of how to promote creative collaboration between venues, companies and agencies. As a response, **Kenneth Kvarnström** shortly presented the newly established network of eight European houses of dance. The network has applied for EU funding, but **Mr Kvarnström** said that the collaboration will start in any case. The main idea is to be able to do more co-productions and create tours for companies.

However, in this scheme the link between the artists and venues does not include agencies. Therefore, **Iiris Autio** from Tero Saarinen Company stated that in order to be able to organise larger tours, the companies do need the help of the agencies. She also wanted to point out that the collaboration between agencies and companies could be more varied by taking advantage of the agencies' special knowledge on different countries. For example, Tero Saarinen Company found their Italian co-producer for the Borrowed Light project through their Italian agency. As a reference to touring possibilities, **Mr Kvarnström** wanted to mention the new Swedish network called Dansnät Sverige (Dance Net Sweden). After **Alistair Spalding** brought up the two touring

networks in the UK, **Ms Newson** expressed the need for gathering and disseminating information of all the already existing structures and systems that could make things easier for all the three players mentioned.

Concluding remarks

After all of the roundtables concluded, the participants wanted to state what a good opportunity the seminar was to meet other European dance production professionals and to exchange views on such various issues concerning dance from the point of view European co-production. It was pointed out that in the field of dance international relations and networking are particularly important and that dance really has been successful in these both areas. This was seen to be due to the fact that people working with dance understand the importance of communication as well as trust, discovery and assistance in finding new things.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Tero Saarinen Company, Bulevardi 23-27, 00180 Helsinki, Finland
tel/fax +358 9 6813 1881, info@terosaarinen.com, www.terosaarinen.com

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Paulina Ahokas	Director	Music Export Finland	Helsinki	Finland
Ella Baff	Executive Director	Jacob's Pillow Dance	Becket	USA
Thérèse Barbanel	Artistic Consultant	Les Artscéniques	Charenton	France
Claudia Bauer	Director	Ecotopia Dance Production	Asperg	Germany
Julia Carruthers	Head of Dance & Performance	South Bank Centre	London	UK
Kristien De Coster	Company Manager	ULTIMA VEZ vzw	Brussels	Belgium
Leslie F. Grunberg	Manager	Les Films Penelope	Neuilly/Seine	France
Dominique Hallez	Administrator	C.C.N. - Ballet de Lorraine	Nancy	France
Audronis Imbrasas	Director	Lithuanian Dance Information Centre	Vilnius	Lithuania
Kenneth Kvarnström	Artistic and General Director	Dansens Hus	Stockholm	Sweden
Heli Lampi	Cultural Manager	The Finnish Institute in Japan	Tokyo	Japan
Didier Le Besque	Director	DLB Spectacles -Performing Arts	Paris	France
Karim Maatoug	Co-director	Rencontres Chorégraphiques de Carthage	Tunis	Tunisia
Yannick Marzin	Managing Director	Atelier de Paris- Carolyn Carlson	Paris	France
Pirjetta Mulari	Managing Director	Dance Arena	Helsinki	Finland
Gillian Newson	Director	Gillian Newson Associates	London	UK
Risto Nieminen	Director	Helsinki Festival	Helsinki	Finland
Alex Poots	Director of Contemporary Arts	English National Opera	London	UK
Pia Repo	Producer	Nomadi	Helsinki	Finland
Delphine Roux	Director	Conseil Général Seine-Maritime, Service Europe	Rouen	France
Marie Salomé-Daugeron	Project Manager	Relais Culture Europe	Paris	France
Gilberto Santini	Artistic Director	Festival Civitanova Danza	Ancona	Italy
Louise Seibaek	Director	Dansescenen	Copenhagen	Denmark
Alistair Spalding	Interim Artistic Director	Sadler's Wells	London	UK
Jorma Uotinen	Artistic Director	Kuopio Dance Festival	Kuopio	Finland
Claude Veron	Director	Norev Compagny	Bierbeek	France
Francesca Zitoli	Tour Programming Manager	ATER	Modena	Italy
Piia Ahonen	Communications Officer	Finnish Dance Information Centre	Helsinki	Finland
Benoît André	Administrator	Octobre en Normandie	Le Havre	France
Iiris Autio	Managing Director	Tero Saarinen Company	Helsinki	Finland
Clémentine Bellet	Project Assistant	Tero Saarinen Company	Helsinki	Finland
Hanna-Mari Kokkonen	Programming Manager	Kuopio Dance Festival	Kuopio	Finland