

Memo October 2007

A memo sent to correspondents, friends and acquaintances of the Budapest Observatory (BO) in October 2007

This edition of BO memo is being sent to nearly 2000 addresses, most of you genuine acquaintances. If not really, or not any longer, just click on the magic word unsubscribe.

C2000 under BO eyes

Exercise completed, the examination of the involvement of cultural operations from east and central Europe has now been extended to all seven years of the culture programme of the European Commission between 2000-2006. The full text of the analysis is downloadable. Wherever we go in the next few months, we will carry printed copies and distribute them to interested colleagues, friends and acquaintances.

The following drawings show the intensity of co-operation between west and east: how often did western project leaders choose partners from the new member states during the seven years (picture on the left), and whom did eastern winners co-opt into their projects (on the right).

The previous versions, based on six years, were attached to the memo of May 2006. The basic patterns changed little between the sixth and seventh years. Strangely, although the number of eastern project leaders grew quicker than western ones, the frequency of eastern organisations recruited into western projects increased faster than the other way round. In other words, the drawing on the left became even more crowded. All big countries produced increases, especially France; the bulk of the amplified attention in the final year was collected by Czechs and Romanians.

On the right, Estonia is the only country that profited visibly from the modest westbound growth of the seventh year.

Between the jungle and the desert

BO is member of the European festival research project (EFRP) consortium. Following two seminars in Leicester and Le Mans, done in conjunction with De Montfort University and France Festivals respectively, EFRP joined forces now with Circle, and the annual round table conference of this European network was dedicated to the festival policy of public authorities, entitled Festival Jungle - Policy Desert? The meeting was hosted by Interarts, Barcelona. BO contributed, among others, to the discussion on what to recommend to authorities.

The Saxonian way

One recommendation would be to watch whether the Saxonian way works. The Free State of Saxony called for a survey about music festivals in that province. But the authorities did not finish by reading the findings. They are using the researchers as change agents for identifying what needs to improve and how, in order that Saxonian music festivals could satisfy their stakeholders even better - as we learned in Barcelona.

Re-drawing Circle

Circle is the oldest network in European cultural policy research. Its members present at the Barcelona conference selected a small team to elaborate on how to adapt to the rapidly changing environment. Just like the conference, this process, too, takes place with Interarts patronage.

Drawing new circles

People from European music export agencies gathered in Budapest in October to discuss common matters. In principle one another's competitors, they soon established that they can be successful only if imports also thrive, which requires exchange and co-operation. So they departed with the intention to keep networking, especially in circles where at least as much concern is voiced about sales as about values. Tough partisans of the western rock scene showed genuine empathy towards their fledgling colleagues in east Europe - like their host MXH.

Capital for culture

At first sight misfits in the programme of the music export conference, nevertheless representatives of past and future European capitals of culture held a lively session among themselves. They could even surprise one another. Those naïve colleagues from Cork and Lille were astonished that incumbent east European cities had no definite financial resources years ahead, and that political influence is a recurrent concern.

Lux

The winner of Lux, the new film prize, is chosen by secret ballot of those members of the European Parliament who have seen all three short-listed films - BO wonders how this was tested: by cross-questioning randomly chosen MPs? For selecting the short-list, a panel of 17 people, mainly professional film critics had scanned hundreds of European feature films made in the scope of twelve months. The three films were from Germany, Portugal and Romania - this latter was the Cannes laureate "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days".

A nice thing about the prize is that the winning film - this year the German film "The Edge of Heaven" - will be subtitled in

the 23 languages of the Union.

Sarkozy re-edited

A friend of BO called our attention to a strange dialogue. President Sarkozy's open letter to the culture minister was published in August. A group of French citizens treated the text like a Wikipedia stub and set to collaborative editing. The first sentence in the original exalted about the desire for change manifested in the presidential campaign, while the re-editors lamented about the indifference towards cultural issues during the canvassing. The original text repeats the words *président* (and its derivatives) twice as often as the "counter-letter", which favours the use of *république* and *gouvernement*.

Sarko stresses the teaching of cultural values of France - and of Europe and the world, add his co-authors; the president calls for more determination in promoting French culture - those free citizens recall the obligations contained in the Unesco convention on diversity. Just to quote a few items.