

The Arts as Cultural Diplomacy

“Without art, the crudeness of reality would make the world unbearable”

“Cultural diplomacy has the potential to create a unique atmosphere of openness, often through a shared experience of a cultural event.”
(Cynthia Schneider, Best Practice)

1. Definition of Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural Diplomacy as a form of soft power amongst both countries and people is considered to engage “The exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects [...] in order to foster mutual understanding.” (Cummings 2003, p. 1) Cultural Diplomacy is therefore understood to create trust and dialogue among all those involved. Political groups from different regions or countries can then build their policy ideas based on these new boundaries and are supported peacefully by their own people. The target audience of Cultural Diplomacy includes all people in the different countries involved: all ages, professions, races, social and cultural groups.

The concept of contact between people is very important in Cultural Diplomacy as it facilitates access to intercultural dialogue and talks, thus allowing people to learn more about one another, other cultures and different ways of life. This not only allows for prejudices to be broken down, but also informs in a casual and informal way. Furthermore, the aim of Cultural Diplomacy and its various projects is to support openness and tolerance in order to strengthen civil society.

2. Introduction

The Origins of Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War

It is argued that travellers going from one land to another centuries ago were the first cultural diplomats, but cultural diplomacy, as we know it today, first arose during the days of the Cold War. The Cold War was more than a simple military confrontation and economic wrangling between two world superpowers. It was also a battle of world-views and civilizations. (Ludlow, lecturer) Hence, the role of culture in the East-West conflict was ultimately a struggle to prove each side's life was superior to the other. Cultural diplomacy took place primarily in Europe between the USA and the USSR. The rivalry to protect or foster their contributions in spheres such as literature, music and art resulted in great efforts to promote the arts as a form of cultural diplomacy.

Popular culture, cited by Cynthia Schneider as the "greatest untapped resource in the cultural diplomacy arsenal" was the arena in which the West gained a very decisive advantage in the East-West conflict and it was very important to the outcome of the Cold War. The American success with Hollywood, jazz and the marketing of daily life was intrinsic to the attractiveness of the United States. Then, as today, it was used to demonstrate that "Western" ordinary life was richer, happier and more fulfilled than the other and it was this that was arguably the most significant role cultural diplomacy played in its opening stages.

Art as a form of cultural diplomacy was employed during the Cold War largely because "both Soviet and American policymakers realized that to 'win the minds of men' in Europe, they needed to appeal more to their cultural than to their political identity". (Gienow-Hecht 2010, p. 401) For the Soviet Union, its giant contemporary culture - which included Shostakovich, the greatest living composer at the time, the Bolshoi Ballet and the legacy of Pushkin, Tolstoy and Tchaikovsky - was widely recognised and appreciated across Europe and particularly relished by Germans.

With Art as a form of cultural diplomacy, America sought to win over the not insignificant segment of Europe's intelligentsia by promoting US culture. The United States Information Agency (USIA) and 'Amerikahäuser' would organise cultural events for German conurbations and the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) funnelled covert moneys to influential and anti-communist individuals and organisations such as Raymond Aron and Radio Free Europe. (von Eschen 2003, p. 163) The CCF, established in Berlin June 1950 "developed an extremely strong anti-communist ideological agenda". (von Eschen 2000, p 179) Anti-communist magazines such as 'Encounter' (sponsored by the CIA) and 'Der Monat' were increasingly circulated in Europe (Gienow-Hecht 2010, p 410) in efforts to promote transatlantic relations. Soviet intelligence officers, on the other hand, "developed a tight system of overt and covert activities and tried to mobilize art for the defeat of capitalism and fascism". (Gienow-Hecht 2010, p. 403)

When talking about power, today's scholars differentiate between two kinds. The first is hard power, which is considered to involve the use of force and coercion. Soft power is the second type, of which Cultural diplomacy is one example. (cf. Nye 2003)

Soft power is a term that has been coined by University

professor Joseph Nye as 'the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals'. (Nye 2003 p. 228) In this sense, soft power can be applied to

the work of a wide range of a country's governmental and non-governmental institutions engaged in bilateral and multilateral cultural relations with other countries. However, the ability to attract and persuade heavily depends on credibility.

Credibility often depends on how closely a country's cultural diplomacy is can be associated to its government and therefore considered to be propaganda.

There is one school of thought that concerns itself with the relationship between cultural diplomacy and propaganda, seeing cultural diplomacy as first and foremost "an instrument of state policy" lacking the participation of private individuals. (Donfried/Gienow-Hecht 2010, p. 9) Contrary to this opinion, another school of thought looks at cultural diplomacy as a way to act aside of politics. A third group of scholars defines cultural diplomacy apart from the state, between propaganda and information, between governmental and nongovernmental institutions. (Donfried/Gienow-Hecht 2010, p. 10)

Launching a project in the sense of Cultural Diplomacy is not that easy. The exact circumstances play maybe the most important role. When should the project be set? Are there riots, wars or other politically precarious situations? As well as the time, the location for the project is considered to be a crucial factor for the project's success. Other important factors to be considered are the agents and the targets, and what local or global measures can be taken to run the project. "If we consider time and location to be critical variables in the carrying out of cultural policies, then two avenues remain through which to consider the significance of cultural diplomacy: concept and structure." (Donfried/Gienow-Hecht 2010, p.16) Concept here is understood as the motivation the agents, therefore governments, policy makers or individuals, have. Why are they doing these projects? What is their goal? Structure on the other side is meant to be the total setup for the projects and the correlation to politics. Who are the agents mentioned before? What do they need Cultural Diplomacy for? Time and location are therefore very essential while having a project on Cultural Diplomacy.

"... culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

(UNESCO, 2002)

3. Art as Cultural Diplomacy

For the purpose of this paper, we have created a working definition where 'art' includes any product of human creativity and imagination which can be experienced and appreciated for its intrinsic merit by others. This encompasses music, literature, performance and visual art among others, or any combination of relevant elements.

Art is perfect for cultural diplomacy. From the beginning of human history, there has been an ever-increasing range of mediums designed exclusively for expression, communication and knowledge exchange - the very linchpins of soft power – which have shaped the communities, cultures and societies in which we now live, for better and worse. There is support for the idea that all art is of value to those exposed to it, with its power to 'broaden horizons, stimulate new thinking, provide pleasure and raise aspirations' (ACE, 2011), and certainly unlike some other popular activities, (sport, for example) it is a positive sum – there are winners but no losers. In terms of seeking to address a purpose beyond the enjoyment of the art form itself and make a diplomatic impact, some claim that 'the nature and sustainability of such [activities] are debatable on a case by case basis' (Pwono, 2009) but this implies that it is the strategic implementation rather than the innate value of art which has power. Later, we will assess the benefits which have come from specific practice, but it is also possible to identify a number of more general factors and explore the theory behind the success these have had.

Many artists create their work in order to make some kind of statement to those around them, and in doing so choose to attempt change through peaceful means – they are already cultural diplomats, in a way that politicians never can be, as art is for them not 'merely a tool, or worse, a weapon' of soft power but a way to 'be influenced rather than to influence'. (Channick, 2005) Nevertheless, the strength and clarity of the ideology beyond some artists' work is impossible to dismiss, and over time many prominent figures have been censored or imprisoned by executive institutions with whom they disagreed. Art is 'always a vehicle for change' and therefore produces panic among those who cannot accept their authority being challenged. This is why art 'is always stamped down hardest upon by dictatorial regimes and for this reason also that its freedom is defended so vociferously'. (Guardian, 2007) Orwell wrote about 'thoughtcrime' and, indeed, through art dissent can be exercised without physical action, making it a benchmark for measuring freedom of expression in a society.

The idea of art as communication is not simply metaphorical. Augusto Boal, Estela Linares and the ALFIN project in Peru used photography and theatre as common languages, and as a way of teaching literacy to the inhabitants. In a country with literally hundreds of different languages and dialects, there was social tension about the possibility of imposing Spanish on the population as a condition of education, but through arts activities everyone was able to understand each other while developing each region's native tongue alongside Spanish. The theatrical techniques used in the project were varied but always participatory in nature, in an attempt to make the audience active. They created scenarios about their everyday problems and through devising and improvising made decisions they put into practice in real life – the idea being not to find the 'correct path, but only to offer the means for all possible paths to be examined'. In many cases, from minor disputes to discontent with the authorities, violent solutions were rejected having been proven less effective than soft-

power approaches. The complicated practicalities of violent protest were exposed, as while

'theatre itself may not be revolutionary...these theatrical forms are without doubt

rehearsal for revolution' (Boal), allowing the spectator to step back and see the difficulties and ramifications of coordinating hard power initiatives – for a disorganised group of civilians they would be almost impossible to implement and control.

Artist and philosopher, Antonin Artaud, described the possible cathartic power of art as an alternative to real violence or anti social behaviour. He believed that society has the constant potential for breakdown into anarchy and primitive behaviour, but through enacting or even merely observing others performing the desired savage

activities, tension could be dissolved and a crisis prevented.

Experiencing art, as a participant or spectator, requires empathy to some degree; 'As an actor struggles to find depth in a character they must consider how human beings react to the world around them and force themselves to be in another's shoes, to consider a different point of view' (Guardian, 2007). Through an attempt at self-expression, an artist is forced to examine themselves and that which they want to convey, which can lead to dramatic changes in self-perception and progressive self-discovery. Deciding on personal taste and appreciation of art, seeing how creativity manifests inter and intra-personally and defining the identity of an artist allows honest exchange of ideas and debate.

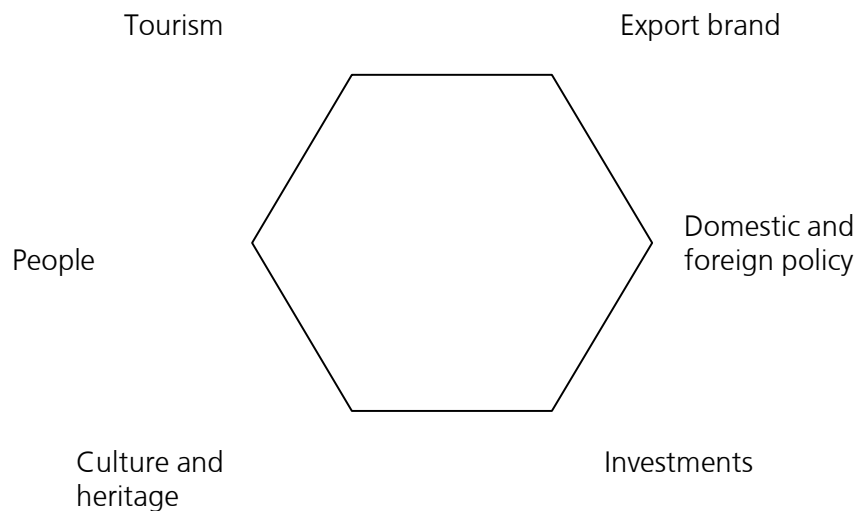
This phenomenon also works on a national scale. Nation branding through art can also increase the potential for cultural diplomacy, partly because it is arguably less biased than other types of brand – selecting the best examples to present abroad is not misleading in an area which is fundamentally meritocratic. Seeing an artistic representation of a country begins to allow the observer to 'truly understand' it, and 'pursuing an interest in the arts will not only allow one to better represent their own culture, but can also lead to greater understanding and appreciation of other cultures, which are great assets for any political position'. (Korean Times, 2011)

Art is an integral part of a country's culture, which as UNESCO observe reaches far beyond simple issues of taste to 'distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features...ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs' (UNESCO, 2002). Inhabitants can be proud of their artistic output and take ownership of it as citizens, not disparate individuals. Increased social cohesion and patriotism can give a society the confidence and ability to interact peacefully on a global level. When ordinary people are encouraged to use their creativity, they have a product that is profoundly theirs. They can take ownership of something, even if they have nothing else, which can help to redress an imbalance from a small scale between the authorities and a group of civilians engaging in arts activities, or on a larger scale when a nation can present themselves as owners of the diverse culture which intrigues those in other parts of the world. There is a sense of achievement, of empowerment, which can counteract the fear that some are helpless and disenfranchised. And more importantly, there is a sense of power. Dorothy Heathcote became a pioneer of drama in education based on her 'Mantle of the Expert' technique, where through allowing the children in her classes (who were normally found to be

unteachable) to play the role of exciting, dominant characters, they were suddenly willing and able to work together and continue with their studies. When participants get older, the difference is the outcome if they are not given a feeling of potency through a medium such as art. Many have picked up weapons to gain control instead.

In seeing how much potential lies in the arts, countries recognize that showing their cultural heritage provides them with an opportunity of displaying who they are, creating a positive image and thus helping to achieve their political aims. (M. Ryniejska, 2009, p.

2) Furthermore, art can ease official talks and negotiations. This greatly simplifies the work on mutual relations, and thus is the reason for the conclusion of many contracts which are based on cultural cooperation. Moreover, the promotion of art and culture of a specific country is part of creating the country's image abroad. One cannot deny the fact that, despite the presence of cultural diplomacy, states still compete with each other at every step. S. Anholt noted that every country focuses on six areas in their marketing. He created the so-called hexagon of communication. (Anholt 2007, p. 137) One of the key points in this Hexagon is the culture and heritage concept, which proves the importance of culture in the field of international relations.



4. Method of Investigation

In order to approach our research into examples of art as cultural diplomacy in a methodical way, we decided to establish some criteria that would help structure our search and also determine which examples were of a greater merit and success than others. We established our criteria partly as a result of group discussion but also through investigation into the texts of leading academics that had also carried out research in a similar field using criteria. Schneider's "Diplomacy that works: Best Practices in Cultural Diplomacy" helped us greatly in our investigation into criteria, and the work of Atkinson ("Does Soft Power Matter? A Comparative Analysis of Student Exchange Programs, 1980-2006") and Donfried and Gienow-Hecht's "Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy" also aided our research.

The criteria that we decided upon in order to assess the positive characteristics of a cultural diplomacy program and the reasons for these choices are as follows:

4.1 A two-way process or interaction between two or more actors offering an arts program that provides information or expertise in the spirit of exchange and mutual respect

Our focus on a *two-way* process or interaction stems from the modern focus on Cultural Diplomacy as an exchange, rather than the more negative view of Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War period as a one-way form of propaganda.

4.2 Sharing a sense of community or common identity between participants and their hosts

We decided that this "sense of community" or "common identity" was important in order to ensure that a Cultural Diplomacy initiative was not just a demonstration of two individual cultures, but also involved a coming together and mixing of cultures.

4.3 Cater to the interests of the host country or region

All states have individual interests and cultural diplomacy works best when each side's interests are being addressed. To achieve this, the creators of the arts program must understand the environment. For instance an American symphony orchestra would be received successfully in Germany or Russia but it would fail to reach its desired effect in the Middle-East region.

Artea Pop-up Tearoom

Project Details

Country: Birmingham, UK

Telephone: +44 121 236 1669

Email: info@hybridconsulting.org.uk

Website: <http://www.hybridconsulting.org.uk/projects/birmingham-inhabited>

Project Description

Artea, run/organised by the consultancy company *Hybrid* and heavily backed by the Department for Communities and Local Government, is an arts' project based in Birmingham, UK. The principle aims of the project are the use and revival of empty stores in the city centres by transforming them into temporary luxury tea shops. The temporary or "pop-up" tea shops create a forum in which art can be discussed and appreciated by the local community whilst also enjoying a cup of tea.

Aim of Project

The aim of this project is to bring together artists, children and members of the Birmingham community to temporary tea shops in order to discuss and create artwork, as well as contributing to a stronger and more united society.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

Artea is an excellent example of the role that Art plays in cultural diplomacy as it provides a public and relaxed environment in which Birmingham's multinational and ethnic community can come together, connect and engage in conversation through an activities that all communities and cultures share; tea drinking and art. The tea shop attracts a variety of people from different backgrounds and facilitates the exchange of cultures and opinions, as well as the fostering of long term relationships within the community.

Arts in Action

Project Details

Country: Trinidad and Tobago

Telephone: +1 868 663 0327

Email: arts.inaction@sta.uwi.edu

Website: <http://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dcfa/aia.asp>

Project Description

The Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) is part of the Faculty of Humanities and Education at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. The original Creative Arts Centre was established in 1986 through the initiatives of the late Dr. Pat Ismond, then Head of Literatures in English, with Rawle Gibbons as its Founding Director.

Since 1994, the DCFA has embarked upon a program of public education, entitled Arts-in-Action. Essentially, this program seeks to extend the work and mission of the DCFA into communities and institutions throughout, in the first instance, Trinidad and Tobago, and subsequently throughout the Caribbean region.

Aim of Project

Arts-in-Action has successfully transferred this methodology to other media, e.g. radio and television, with the production of entertaining and educational programmes such as "YouToO!" – a tourism education video for children which was produced by Tourism and Industrial Development Company (TIDCO), and "The Rough Season" – a Caribbean audio soap opera on hurricane disaster preparedness produced for Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), American Cancer Society (ACS) to name but two.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

Arts-in-Action has also spent the last 15 years honing this methodology and developing, thereby, a distinctly Caribbean style, using the arts in education and development. To date the outreach program has completed well over 3,000 interactive performance workshops across the country, the Caribbean, the USA and the UK, dealing with pertinent societal issues with over half a million participants

Art in Africa

Project Details

Country: African Countries

Telephone: +49 (0) 228 60497 0

Email: info@art-in-africa.de

Website: www.art-in-africa.de

Project Description

Art in Africa is a continent-wide art program to support African culture and art projects in Africa, but also in Europe. The program sponsors six projects in six different African countries to encourage locals in their art culture and to foster a dialogue among them. The projects are initialized by the German UNESCO commission e.V.

Aims of Project

These projects want to promote African culture internally and externally to create an African dialogue. They include: 'Sustaining Musicians' in Burkina Faso, 'Music Crossroads', which is pan-African, book fairs, an international short film contest, the art project 'Hors les Mures2", the art gallery 'K Factory' in Cameroon and the 'Dance for All' project for South Africa.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

The Art in Africa Project is relevant for Cultural Diplomacy because it strengthens the African culture in Africa itself and provides access to an intercultural dialogue among Africans and Africans and people from all over the world. The projects fund young people and young artists to promote their abilities throughout the continent and to Europe.

China Shanghai International Performing Arts Fair

Project Details

Country: China

Telephone: +86 21 627 204 81

Email: -

Website: <http://www.artsbird.com/newweb10en/artsnews.php?idx=6&thisid=3806>

Project Description

The China Shanghai International Arts Festival (CSIAF) is a state-level international arts festival hosted by the Ministry of Culture of China and undertaken by the Shanghai Municipal People's Government.

Aims of Project

The SPAF aims to construct an international platform for the exchange of outstanding programs and artists, promoting the cooperation among the Chinese and international performing arts institutions and pushing forward the sound development of the Chinese performing arts market. The Fair focuses on recommending excellent programs with distinct Chinese features to the global stage. So far, many international performing companies have successfully found their way into the Chinese performing arts market through the platform of SPAF.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

It not only provides a great opportunity for the people to enjoy the performances from across China, but also provides a warm and comfortable environment for international counterparts to communicate.

The Fair plays an "intermediate" part and pushes forward the forging of the productive chain of artistic programs and the prosperity of the performing market. Foreign culture is exposed to domestic colleagues in the promotional performances given by foreign artistic companies. The promotional showcase is the best stage for the art groups to show themselves, and the hall where it takes place is often crowded with the delegates and visitors.

Executive Programme of Cultural Exchange and Cooperation Mauritius-China

Project Details

Country: Republic of Mauritius

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Email: infserv@intnet.mu

Website:

<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/mac/menuitem.2e897c43082bca7ea6597adaa0208a0c/>

Project Description

On October 26th, 2009, the Republic of Mauritius and the People's Republic of China signed an Executive Program of cultural exchange and cooperation for the years 2010-2012, under the Cultural Agreement between the two countries. The program was inaugurated in October 2009 by the exhibition "China in the Brush works of African Artists", held at the IBL Arts Gallery in Port Louis, capital of the Republic of Mauritius. The artwork exhibited was created by artists from ten African countries during their visit to China in the context of the project "Creativity of African Artists visiting China" organized by the Chinese Ministry of Culture.

The most important event within the program has been the arrival of the Dragon Boat Festival to Port Louis. The Festival (Duanwu Festival) is a traditional and statutory holiday originating in China and associated with a number of East Asian and Southeast Asian societies. It occurs on the 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar calendar on which the Chinese calendar is based. The celebrations include eating the rice dumpling zings, drinking realgar wine xionghuangjiu, and racing dragon boats.

Aims of Project

The Executive program has been signed in order to facilitate artistic exchanges as well as exchanges between institutions such as the national museums, libraries and the archives and covers the following areas: arts and culture, Libraries, Museums and Archives, Cultural Heritage and Cinema.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

For decades China has been a closed state, which did not allow visit inside its territory. For this reason, Chinese culture has been idealized but not really known by recent generations. This agreement, signed with the Republic of Mauritius, includes a large program of bilateral culture relation with countries of the Indian Ocean area has exactly the aim of spread Chinese culture through Soft Power.

French Art and Film Festival Malaysia

Project Details

Country: Malaysia

Telephone:-

Email: -

Website: <http://www.faff.com.my/>

Project Description

The French Art and Film Festival, jointly organized by Alliance Francaise de Kuala Lumpur and the French Embassy in Malaysia, is held every year in a different location in Malaysia. It offers a showcase of French art and culture, such as dance, film and various other performances.

Aims of the Project

It aims "To offer French culture on your doorstep" while also displaying Indonesian culture to French expatriates and other performers. The organizers present a wide range of fine art to the audience to represent diverse French and Malaysian culture.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

This yearly project does not just promote French culture in Malaysia – there is also a very important intercultural exchange of ideas. For example, the festival in 2010 focused on intercultural dance and poetry recital, featuring both French and Indonesian performers such as Didik Nini Thowok dancing and Elizabeth D Inandiak, a French author, doing a poetry recital. The festival is a valuable source of information about each country's particular culture, which is enjoyable and interesting for both performers and visitors.

I, Culture Orchestra

Project Details:

Country: Poland

Telephone: +48 22 44 76 100

Email: istachurska@iam.pl

Website: <http://www.iam.pl/en/activities/i-culture-orchestra.html>

Project Description

I, Culture Orchestra is one of the most important cultural projects of the Polish presidency in the EU. The main organizer is the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, based in Warsaw. Continuing activity of the institute includes the promotion of Polish culture and active participation in cultural events in the world. Since 2001, the institute has organized projects in 26 countries all over the world. In 2011 it is focused on Polish leadership in the European Union.

Aims of the Project

One of the aims of the project is to gather most talented young musicians from Eastern Europe and give them the opportunity to work with some of the most eminent teachers from the leading orchestras in Western Europe. In addition, Western countries can be reminded of the richness of culture of the countries which are not in Schengen Zone.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

On the occasion of Polish Presidency of the EU Council, it needs to be underlined that both the East and the West part of Europe have a strong influence on European cultural identity. Moreover, Poland is geographically located in the centre of Europe and can function as a bridge between European Union countries and non-European Union members. It plays a significant role in European relations and its connection.

“I was born Greek in Zrenjanin”

Project Details

Country: Serbia

Phone: +381 11 36 25 206

Email: info@hfc-belgrade.com

Website: <http://www.hfcbelgrade.com/wmt/webpages/index.php?lid=1&pid=61&apprec=66>

Project Description

Held by the Hellenic Foundation for Culture in Belgrade, the exhibition “I was born Greek in Zrenjanin” is about the Greek actress, singer and politician Melina Mercouri's life. Due to its success in Belgrade, and thanks to the initiative of the Greek Embassy in Montenegro, the exhibition is currently held in Montenegro as well.

Aims of the Project

Melina Mercouri is of utmost importance to the Greek people. Apart from her success as an actress and singer, producing movies and songs that are considered classics of the Greek cinema and music industry, she was active in the Hellenic Parliament as well. As a politician she played a significant role in the field of culture. Thus, the aim of this exhibition is to introduce her artistic, cultural and political life career to the Serbian people, with whom the Greeks have much in common.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

When Melina Mercouri became the first female Minister of Culture in 1981, she introduced the notion of the “European Capital of Culture”. Four years later, this was officially established by the European Union and continues until today, with a different city being the Capital of Culture every year. In this context, the exhibition is of relevance for Cultural Diplomacy as it introduces and promotes the ideas and ideals behind Mercouri's initiative, bringing her life and herself as a figure of Greek origin closer to other nations.

Jakarta Berlin Arts Festival

Project Details

Country: Germany

Telephone: +49 (0) 30 53 15 59 63

Email: info@jakarta-berlin.de

Website: <http://www.jakarta-berlin.de/de/index.php?p=projekt>

Project Description

Jakarta and Berlin have been twinned cities since 1993. This week-long festival held in Berlin includes a showcase of theatre, dance and music from Jakarta during the day and then an evening program involving Indonesian- German co-productions.

Aims of Project

To bring the culture of Jakarta to Berlin and promote Indo-German relations through arts.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

This festival promotes intercultural dialogue and artistic production between Germany and Indonesia as well as being an enjoyable and interactive experience. Over one hundred artists in music, theatre and literature were brought over from Indonesia to be part of this project thus making the program unique and valuable for both participants and the audience and visitors.

Musicians for Harmony

Project Details

Country: USA – worldwide

Telephone: +1 212 996 8010

Email: info@musicians4harmony.org

Website:

<http://www.musicians4harmony.org>

Project Description

A global collaboration of artists donating their time and talent for 'performances, educational activities, and cross cultural exchange', this non-profit organization was founded in response to the September 11th attacks. An annual world music concert on this date, featuring an international program of artists is the public face of their attempt to promote peace through music, while they also visit New York Schools for music workshops and have implemented a Mentorship Program between Iraqi Musicians and American Universities.

Aims of Project

To promote the value of music as the 'universal language of harmony' and bring people from all backgrounds together to achieve world peace.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

Not only do the organization's workshops and collaborations foster dialogue and increased understanding between participants (culturally and musically), but also the concerts raise awareness and money for international charities working to solve the problems created by hard power. Their links to the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra show how culture can transcend political tensions such as the 'War on Terror' and form lasting creative relationships.

Paintbrush Diplomacy

Project Details:

Country: USA/ worldwide

Telephone: -

Email: -

Website: <http://paintbrushdiplomacy.org/>

Project Description

Char and Rudy Pribuss travel around the world painting and collecting art work from children. They regularly present their work and the children's work in art galleries and support an exchange of the art among cities, countries and other children.

Aims of the Project

Paintbrush diplomacy wants to support the exchange of art done by children all around the world. It tries to show the importance of children's innocent creativity and the peaceful exchange of art work, and it connects children from all over the world through art. The art pieces done by the children but also by the founders Char, who was a professional artist, and Rudy Pribuss express their point of view about their city and the reality of their everyday life.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

Paintbrush Diplomacy shows the world through children eyes for children. With their collected art work they want to draw attention to children's issues and their place in the everyday life of diplomacy. Furthermore, the program advocates cross-cultural communication with the help of children, academics and politicians.

The Amazigh Festival of Film

Project Details

Country: Algeria

Telephone: +213 000 21 67 91 12

Email: contact@film-amazigh.org

Website: <http://film-amazigh.org>

Project Description

The Amazigh Festival of Film is an independent film festival organized by the Berber people, a local ethnic tribe which is under heavy threat of being dominated by French culture. Established in 2008, the festival aims to rescue and promote Amazigh (Berber) culture by showcasing movies that describe the lives of the Berber people. Those who have been neglected, suppressed, or ignored for last hundred years under French colonial rule are able to express themselves to the world by distributing their distinguished ways of life and language. Film is not the single art form for the Berber people in this new era, as other artists participate in this festival using poems, paintings, music, etc. The government has been financially supportive of this project. The Festival is composed by Seminars and films on specific topic, Conference to discuss general culture questions and Concert performances by invited groups.

Aims of Project

The aim of the project is to enrich the Amazigh language and culture to showcase the Amazigh perspective in the Algerian film industry to provide a platform for Amazigh culture on an international stage and to exchange the culture experiences of the Amazigh people with the rest of the world

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

The Festival is a great example of Cultural Diplomacy because supports the spread of information about the Berber culture which has been for centuries crushed by Arabic invasion of North Africa and colonial power.

A revaluation of the local ancient traditions helps to better understand the roots of each culture.

The Nara Declaration

Project Details:

Country: China, Japan, South Korea

Telephone: 400 660 83 80

Email: admissions@live.cn

Website: <http://www.admissions.cn/news/251096.shtml>

Project Description

In January 2011, South Korea, China and Japan formed a cultural pact agreeing for artists from each country to come together to create joint artworks to be entered in international festivals. They also set up joint sponsored arts based awards.

Aims of Project

To facilitate inter-cultural relationships and international diplomacy as well as to encourage communication through the arts.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

This is an example of a Cultural Diplomacy program which has been implemented at a governmental level in order to facilitate diplomacy through the arts.

The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra

Project Details

Country: Israel/Palestine

Telephone: +34 (0) 955 037 385

Email: info.fbs@juntadeandalucia.es

Website: <http://www.west-eastern-divan.org/the-orchestra/the-orchestra/>

Project Description

In 1999, Daniel Barenboim, together with the late Palestinian literary scholar Edward Said and by invitation of the Kunstfest Weimar, founded a forum for young musicians. Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said named the Orchestra and workshop after Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's collection of poems entitled "West-Eastern Divan", a central work for the evolution of the concept of world culture.

Aims of Project

The founders created a workshop for young musicians from Israel, Palestine and various Arab countries of the Middle East seeking to enable intercultural dialogue and to promote the experience of collaborating on a matter of common interest.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra has proved time and again that music can break down barriers previously considered insurmountable. The only political aspect prevailing the West-Eastern Divan's work is the conviction that there will never be a military solution to the Middle East conflict, and that the destinies of the Israelis and Palestinians are inextricably linked. Through its work and existence, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra demonstrates that bridges can be built to encourage people to listen to one another. Music by itself can, of course, not resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Music grants the individual the right and obligation to express themselves fully while listening to his or her neighbour. Based on this notion of equality, cooperation and justice for all, the Orchestra represents an alternative model to the current situation in the Middle East.

United Buddy Bears

Project Details

Country: Germany - worldwide

Telephone: +49 (0) 30 88 77 2681

Email: info@buddy-baer.com

Website: <http://www.buddy-baer.com/en.html>

Project Description

The Buddy Bears are a collection of more than 140 life-size fibreglass bears, each one representing a different country recognised by the UN. After starting solely based and developed in Berlin, the project developed to an international level in 2002, where artists from every country were invited to paint their country's respective bear. These bears were then displayed all over the world, for example in Helsinki, Sofia, Montevideo, Buenos Aires and Pyongyang.

Aims of Project

To bring sculpture and art into urban environments and also project the message of peace, tolerance and unity between cultures, religions and countries all over the world.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

The United Buddy Bears project promotes peaceful cooperation between countries and also is a valuable tool for learning more about other cultures through the artwork on each bear. Additionally, each bear has their 'hands' raised, to give the impression that every bear is holding hands with the bear on either side, which creates a sense of unity and togetherness. The bears stand in alphabetical order according to the language of the country that they are being displayed in, which can lead to some interesting countries 'holding hands'. For example in 2005, the bears from North Korea and South Korea stood next to each other making it possible that both North and South Korea stood together 'hand in hand' for the first time, during an art exhibition.

Verminite Zone—Mined Zone—Champs de mine

Project Details

Country: Germany/France

Telephone: +49 (0) 30 28441 399

Email: lengers@deutschestheater.de

Website: http://www.deutschestheater.de/spielplan/verminte_zone/

Project Description

It is Play about two young women from Bosnia, a Muslim and a Serbian, former school friends. Their friendship was divided because of the Bosnian-Serbian war and their families became enemies. After a while, both women met again in Berlin and talked about their past, the happenings back home and their hostility because of political reasons.

The play was performed in German as well as in French, primarily to students in High Schools in Berlin, some other cities in France and in national theatres to show cultural differences in an artistic way to students from different cultural backgrounds.

The project was a cooperation between the Deutsche Theater and the Théâtre de l' Est Parisien within the "Young Europe – Young Creation and Education in Theatre" framework at the European Theatre Convention (ETC) with the support of the Institut Français.

Aims of Project

The project aims to bring together students to think about other cultures and systems without stereotypes. They can appreciate their own and other values and realise that there are more than superficial criteria in liking or not liking those from other places – or even from the same place but with another life style.

Relevance to Cultural Diplomacy

Verminite Zone – Mined Zone – Champs de mine functioned as art as cultural diplomacy because it presents the complexity of relations between different cultures, religions and political ideas.

Behind the superficial facts, it tries to show the importance of mutual respect and the power of friendship overcoming political and cultural stereotypes. This piece was produced for students in bigger cities where different cultures and life styles clash every day. After watching the piece, students had time to talk with each other and the actors about their personal experience of handling difficulties with cultural differences.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion this paper has investigated the relevance of cultural diplomacy. As the world becomes increasingly globalised the use of hard power becomes both economically and socially implausible and forms of soft power such as cultural diplomacy become vital. Art plays a significant role since it acts a platform in which political and social aims of actors can be achieved. A successful arts program is one that interacts between two or more actors providing information or expertise in the spirit of exchange and mutual respect (Schneider), caters to the interests of the host country or region (Schneider) and shares a sense of community or common identity between participants and their hosts.

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