



MEDIA RELEASE

SOUTH AFRICA WINS BID TO HOST WORLD SUMMIT ON ARTS AND CULTURE

The eyes of the culture world will be on South Africa as the country prepares to host the fourth World Summit on Arts and Culture in 2009.

The International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) announced today that Johannesburg has won the bid to host one of the most significant events in the international arts calendar.

The Summit, which will be held on 21-25 September 2009, will focus on the role of public arts policies in meeting the wider challenges facing the world - economic, social and cultural. South Africa is a world-leading example of achieving intercultural dialogue through the arts and IFACCA has chosen it as a stage to explore the issue in depth.

The event will see key people in arts policy drawn from arts funding agencies and cultural organizations around the world to discuss the impact of arts and culture policies with a special focus on the developing world. The Summit will also provide opportunities for networking between cultural organizations within Africa. Best practices will be explored and opportunities provided for delegates to create new connections and collaborations.

The first World Summit, hosted by the Canada Council for the Arts, was held in Ottawa in 2000. Delegates there voted unanimously to establish IFACCA – the first global network of national arts funding agencies. The second Summit was held in Singapore in 2003 (co-hosted by the Singapore National Arts Council) and the third Summit was held in NewcastleGateshead in 2006 (co-hosted by Arts Council England).

The IFACCA board was impressed by the South African proposal, which put emphasis on issues affecting public support for the arts in developing countries and the role of the arts in achieving cultural diversity.

The Chair of IFACCA, Risto Ruohonen, (Director of the Finnish National Gallery and former Chair of the Finnish Arts Council), and South Africa's Chair of the National Arts Council, Nicholas Motsatse, signed the MOU today, in Johannesburg. The signing

ceremony was also attended by IFACCA's Executive Director, Sarah Gardner from Australia, and officials from the Department of Arts and Culture.

The IFACCA team's visit to Johannesburg also provided an opportunity to meet local arts and culture stakeholders and leaders, inspect proposed venues and review budgets and programming.

Ruohonen says the way in which South Africa has addressed its past, and sought to bring together its diverse people with the involvement of the community, especially the artistic community, will be of great international interest. "The significance of Johannesburg is that it is both cosmopolitan and truly a melting pot of cultures. This will provide a stimulating backdrop to the World Summit," said Ruohonen.

Motsatse emphasized the magnificent support that the National Arts Council had received from the National Department, Gauteng province and – in particular – the City of Johannesburg. "It was a team effort which shows just what we can achieve when all branches of government and the cultural sector work together." Motstatse pledged the Arts Council to work to make the summit an event that all South Africa and all of Africa could take pride in. An announcement of the approach to be taken to the Summit will be made on Africa Day (May 25th).

The IFACCA board will discuss the Summit theme and program at its meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on 15th March.

South Africa regularly hosts major international events, and since 1994 has successfully managed some of the biggest events including the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the 2003 Cricket World Cup, the Women's World Cup of Golf in 2005 and 2006 and, in January 2006 & February 2007, the only street race in the inaugural A1 GP World Cup of Motorsport.

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