

**Conference "Creative Entrepreneurship and Education in Cultural Life"
Chicago, 15–18 of July 2009**

Opening speech, Wednesday, July 15

Dear Colleagues, Dear New and Old friends,

It is with great pleasure that we at the European Network for Cultural Administration Training Centres – or the more easier: Encatc – see this conference come true in Chicago. Encatc is a network of 131 members from 34 different countries. The questions addressed in the programme are issues high on the agenda of Encatc. We organize several events, workshops and an Annual Conference each year. We have a working group that matches the topic of this event. But this is the first event co-organised by Encatc outside of Europe.

Thanks to the initiative and efforts taken by Dennis Rich and Columbia College Chicago, an active member of Encatc, we see this conference come true. Dennis proposed about a year ago to hold a conference with professionals from Encatc to meet with colleagues in USA here in Chicago. Some of us were carefully optimistic, knowing that the time for the event is in middle of European vacation – vacation is sacred in Europe – and the price to travel to Chicago was relatively high. It might be difficult for European colleagues to attend, we thought. I must admit, I felt worried. But Dennis was persistent. And – he was right.

To be in the city of Chicago for discussions like the topic of this conference seems very adequate. Not only for the fact that Columbia College Chicago and the Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Department is a very suitable host.

But also for the fact of being in the USA, and specifically Chicago. You elected a President last year that in mere presence of who he is brings hope to the world. The fact that he also has – what it seems so far – an agenda of cooperation, sustainability and change is, for us Europeans, important.

Also the setting here in Chicago is interesting and hopeful. Since I had the opportunity to come a few days earlier, I have had time to see a bit of the city. I have seen the film Sunset Boulevard under the skyline of Chicago, I have listened to music of Dennis DeYoung, I have

been reached by the classical music walking along Michigan Avenue, I have tried the coffee shop at Millennium Park, and I have visited House of Blues to listen to gospel and – I must admit – I am overwhelmed. Walking in Millennium Park and see the beautiful green gardens, the magnificent concert hall of Frank Gehry, the outstanding "Bean" of Anish Kapoor, spectacular art works of Chinese artists combined with a public open space, free for anyone to visit, is impressive. It is an interesting example of creative solutions to city planning – underneath is parking spaces and the old railway tracks, I understand – of environmental improvements with an enormous "green roof", combined with art and public open spaces.

The Green garden-projects around the city shows an attitude of meeting the future. After the City Hall green rooftop-project, I heard around 400 hundreds green rooftops exist in the city, raising the quality of air and increasing quality of the working environment. As I understand 300.000 trees were planted, only on City Hall roof you find 20.000 different species.

So, the setting for this conference is perfect. Discussing art, creativity and entrepreneurship in the very heart of a city where art, culture and sustainability have a key role for city planning and transformation couldn't be better and goes well with the agenda.

I also have a few words on the topic of our meeting. In Europe, the EU-Commission has designated 2009 to "European Year of Creativity and Innovation". It's in the cultural field where new jobs will be created. Creative industries, including everything from art to design and media, is important to economy, a study assigned by the Commission in 2006 showed (KEA Cultural Affairs 2006). Creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, culture are important processes in Europe. The American organization the American for the Arts have put forward figures showing that there are 100.000 non-profit arts organizations in the USA, that support 5,7 million jobs and return 30 billion dollars in Government revenues every year.

At the same time other studies shows, for example one done by National Endowment of the Arts in USA last year, that artists earn less than inhabitants in general with the equivalent educational years and are more likely than inhabitants as a whole to be self-employed and run their own legal entities. In USA as much as 3,5 times more likely (NEA, USA 2008).

Now, you need always to be careful with figures and what they are actually measuring. But there are two clear tendencies: The first, being that art and culture play an important role for

the economy, and secondly, artists are likely to be self-employed and earn less than the rest of society. Artists are already entrepreneurs, so what skills are they lacking? What should educations of the 21st century be teaching and how? How can the complexity, the different processes and layers of the cultural field described above be handled in policymaking and education? And are there trade-offs or not for the artists?

These issues and many more will be discussed in this event, as I said, the first event co-organized by Encatc outside of Europe.

Our deepest thanks go to Dennis Rich for this initiative and all the hard work of planning and organizing. I also would like to thank Anna Bernadska and all others that have been part in planning and organizing. You have done an excellent job!

I am very much looking forward to this!

Lotta Lekvall

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