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Festivals

Open doors. Open minds.
Build societies!

Open The Door to Arts and Culture Open The Door for Dialogue Asian-European festivals

First AAPAF-EFA meeting in Shanghai, 25-29 September 2010

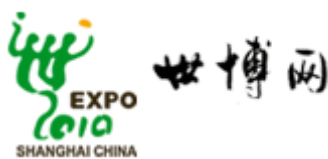
Report

by Naima Delaere, EFA Administration Manager

From 25 to 29 September 2010, a delegation of 15 EFA members had the opportunity as representatives of the European Festivals Association (EFA) to be in Shanghai for a first direct exchange with Asian festivals in the framework of the International Festival Conference. This conference was organised by the China Shanghai International Arts Festival (CSIAF), with the possibility to attend the World Expo in Shanghai in 2010.

The first joint AAPAF-EFA meeting offered a platform for getting to know festivals' activities and challenges better in both regions, for enhancing joint communication activities as well as for committing to "Open Doors" for closer collaboration in the future. More than 100 festivals from Asia and Europe were represented during these intense five days.

Day 1 and 2 (25/26 September 2010): Getting inspired at the World Expo



Following the performance of the Hong Kong Drama Group in the Shanghai Grand Theater on 25 September, the delegation visited the [World Expo](#) on 26 September.

EFA President Darko Brlek attended the opening ceremony of the [Shanghai Performing Arts Fair](#) (SPAF) in the Shanghai Grand Theater that received 400 visitors this year.



Day 3 (27 September): Commitment to close collaboration is expressed

On 27 September, members of AAPAF and EFA participated in an exclusive round table; they had the chance to introduce their festivals and exchange on how they envision future collaborations between their festivals. In detail, the first AAPAF-EFA meeting aimed to:

- provide networking and exchange opportunities on issues at stake in Asian and European festivals in various disciplines and countries;
- provide a platform to establish contacts between AAPAF and EFA members for artistic co-operation and co-production as well as an ongoing exchange of knowhow and knowledge on arts and cultural life through appropriate online tools;
- identify collective interests and devise activities and tools that serve the purposes of closer collaboration;
- provide a platform for members and non-members to meet and to introduce non-members to the networks' services and activities.



Main conclusions:

- All festivals present expressed their interest in collaborating artistically and in general networking. Fields tackled include:
 - Sponsoring
 - Outreach activities
 - Cultural tourism and related issues
 - Cultural heritage (tangible and intangible)
 - City development (concert halls etc.)
 - Development projects
 - Training and education of audiences through festivals
 - Creations and co-productions

There is a clear need and added value in exchanging in these areas, and invest more in the provision of data and best practices in different parts of the world.

- A discussion about the values of festivals showed joined ambitions for festivals' development:
 - freedom of expression
 - development through arts
 - intercultural dialogue
 - cultural diversity:
- A need for further networking was identified. It was agreed to:
 - set up meetings at a regular basis
 - enhance political advocacy work
 - exchange on studies: expertise, know-how, facts and figures



To underline the networks' ambitions for the future, AAPAF and EFA invite their members as a result of the meeting to commit to "Open The Door" to Asia-Europe collaboration and ask for a broader recognition of artistic collaboration between Asia and Europe.

Have a look at the in-depth [follow-up report of Marie Gouy](#) (Réseau Européen de Musique Ancienne) on the future collaboration in the field of contemporary music. [Find out more](#) about all represented festivals in the reader on page 11.



In addition Valentina Riccardi presented the online platform [culture360.org](#) and Brett Pyper introduced the [Arterial Network](#) that is in the process of setting up an African Festivals Association based on the EFA model.

culture360.org is a portal initiated by [Asia-Europe Meeting](#) (ASEM) managed by the Cultural



Exchange Department at the [Asia-Europe Foundation](#) (ASEF). It aims to stimulate cultural engagement between Asia and Europe and enhance greater understanding between the two regions.

Created for and fuelled by artists, cultural practitioners and policy makers, culture360.org is the platform to inform, collaborate, interact and exchange ideas with the arts and cultural communities across Asia and Europe.

How to engage? Use the [blog](#), download the [power point presentation](#), read more about ASEF [here](#).

The [Arterial Network](#) started as a dynamic African network of non-government

THE ARTERIAL NETWORK

organisations, creative industry companies, festivals and individual artists engaged in the African creative sector at a conference – Revitalising Africa's Cultural Assets - on Goree Island, March 2007. The network envisions to develop a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable, creative African civil society sector engaged in qualitative practice in the arts in their own right, as well as in a manner that contributes to development, to human rights and democracy, and to the eradication of poverty on the African continent. One of the many goals of the Arterial Network for 2012 is to found a network of African arts festivals (read the report about the latest conference in Zanzibar [here](#) and find out more about the Arterial Network [here](#)).

In the afternoon, the EFA delegates attended the EFA Party at the Shanghai Performing Arts Fair when organisers and festivals signed Letters of Intention for future collaboration. Members exchanged with Asian artists and programmers and gave interviews for the Shanghai Television.

In the evening, the Shanghai Festival opened with a reception and Ballet "Marco Polo- The Final Mission" at the Shanghai Grand Theatre. Hundreds of invited guests attended this high-level event.



Day 4 (28 September): International Festival Conference (IFC)

The World Expo's theme is "Better City. Better Life." In this context many forums focus on new technology, economic development and cooperation, city development and upgrade of the quality of life. Along the same line, the International Festival Conference focused on "Cultural Events & Festival and City Development".

The Conference was opened by speeches of the leader of the Ministry of Culture of China, EFA President Darko Brlek and Executive Director of ASEF Dominique Girard. Under high media attention the "[Open The Door](#)" Commitment to was signed by the Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals (AAPAF), the European Festivals Association, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the China Shanghai International Arts Festival (CSIAF) to stimulate exchange between Asia and Europe.



In his [speech "Festivals: Open Doors. Open Minds. Build Societies!"](#) Darko Brlek lined out the role of festivals for a city: "Festivals are deeply rooted in the city or in the region they take place. The proliferation of festivals over the past decades – in all kinds of urban and rural contexts – clearly demonstrates how creativity in the arts has brought innovative trends to societies and their economic development. The presence of festivals in economically depressed areas has had revitalising effects on many local economies. Festivals are the expression of a community and its identity: the creativity of festival managers has brought about major changes in terms of bringing innovation to societies and breathing new economic and social impulse into them."

Following the introductions, [presentations](#) were delivered by :

- Junxin Dong , Director General of the Bureau for External Cultural relations, Ministry of Culture of China
- Hanmin Zhou , Vice President of Shanghai Municipal CPPCC, Deputy Director of Executive Committee of I Shanghai World Expo
- Steven Wood Schmader , President & CEO of International Festivals & Events Association
- Ping Zhou , Chief Commissioner of Zhabei District People's Government, Shanghai
- Bernard Faivre d'Arcier, Chairman of Board, Lyon Biennales, former CEO of Festival d'Avignon
- Shenglai Chen, President of China Shanghai International Arts Festival
- David R. Fay, President & CEO of Bushnell Arts Center
- Tisa Ho, Executive Director of Hong Kong Arts Festival
- Rudy Van-Dijck, Chairman of the Sarakasi Foundation
- Hugo De Greef, former Secretary General of European Festivals Association, Intendant of European Capital of Culture Bruges 2002

- Ulrich Roehm, President of Deutscher Berufsverband fuer Tanzpaedagogike.V.
- Johan Moerman, Managing Director of Rotterdam Festivals
- Tamasaburo Bando, Japanese Kabuki Master
- Patrick De Clerck, Director of ARS MUSICA Festival Brussels

The conference was concluded by a round table talk in which EFA Vice President Jan Briers and Wratistavia Cantans representative Piotr Turkiewicz participated, amongst others.



Day 5 (29 September): SPAF Conference – “New resources, tradition and innovation”



The last day in Shanghai was dedicated to the conference of the Shanghai Performing Arts Fair (SPAF) discussing “New resources, tradition and innovation”. EFA President Brlek delivered a [speech on “Festivals: Motors of Creativity, motors of development”](#). He stated that festivals should offer a platform to present contemporary creations and enhance societal development. Therefore, he also called upon politicians to create the needed conditions to fulfil this role.

Conclusion

The Shanghai AAPAF-EFA meeting paved the way for bilateral collaboration on the one hand, and structural relations between both networks on the other (see [Atelier for Young Festival Managers in Singapore](#) from 14 to 21 May 2011). All participants are looking forward to this new chapter in EFA’s Europe-Asia exchange.



Related links and documents:

- [“Open The Door” commitment Shanghai](#)
- [Conference Reader including background info AAPAF-EFA Meeting, speeches, participants list and contacts of Asian and European festivals](#)
- [News](#) on [culture360.org](#)
- [Report REMA with in-depth follow up, contacts and insight in particular in early music](#)
- EFA [Multimedia Gallery](#) and [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals](#)
- [Asia-Europe Foundation](#)
- [China Shanghai International Arts Festival](#)
- [www.Open-The-Door.eu](#)
- [Atelier for Young Festival Managers](#)
- Online platform [www.culture360.org](#)
- [Cultural venues and events in Shanghai](#)
- [World Expo 2010](#)
- [EFA Delegation to Shanghai 2009](#)