



MOBILITY OF ARTISTS

Artists have always crossed national boundaries and in a sense they anticipated all the migratory movements that have so enriched the European experience.

Both the Renaissance and the Enlightenment saw an explosion in both artistic and scientific movement. In the 17th and 18th centuries culture became, for the first time, an area for public intervention, a period which saw civic life gradually endowed with institutions dedicated to the dissemination of art, such as theatres, opera houses and conservatories.

Trans-frontier relationships developed thereafter, creating the dense tissue of European culture that we know today. Today, in spite of the intensification of the globalising process since the end of the Second World War and the waves of migration and free movement of people preached by the European Union, the mobility of artists still runs into numerous obstacles, both legal and practical. As a result, freeing up mobility is increasingly one of the priority demands of the European cultural sector.

In 2006 the European Union celebrated the European Year of workers' mobility. In this context, the mobility of artists has also been considered in projects such as Mobile.Home (<http://www.pearle.ws/mobilehome/>) run by ITEM and Pearle, amongst others (both members of Culture Action Europe).

For an artist, mobility is often an intrinsic part of the creative process and the dissemination of the work. Mobility offers the chance of a larger public, an opening unto the world and the development of different artistic techniques. Mobility allows the artist to experience diversity and to integrate it into the creative process.

The main obstacles to the mobility of artists are fiscal, the visa regime, work permits or right of residence, social security and intellectual property issues. An exhaustive study into obstacles to mobility has been carried out within the Mobile.Home project and the study suggests a number of possible solutions, including:

- the setting up of networks geared to the exchange of ideas, projects and people
- support for artists residences
- the use of new media as an artistic toolkit
- training to acquaint artists with the administrative jargon
- increased transparency in procedure and rules
- the setting up of a data base of national rules and regulations
- a European manual bringing together all useful information, links and contacts.

Member states also have to start coordinating their tax and legal regimes (social security, visas etc) in order to encourage and not limit artistic mobility even further.

Since 2006 the Union has retained this aim to encourage artist mobility and the free movement of art works as a priority for the culture programme. The Union also supports the movement of artists in external relations through programmes such as Euromed Youth or EuroMed heritage. Numerous European action in the audiovisual sector also encourage such mobility, through for example the MEDIA programme.

The mobility of artists and others professionals in culture is also one of the aims of

the Communication on Culture published by the Commission in May 2007 and adopted by the Council in November 2007 in the European Agenda for Culture. Mobility, considered as part of 'the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue' is thus one of the Council of European Cultural Ministers priorities for the period 2008 – 2010 and a working group in the Open method of Coordination (LINK <http://www.cultureactioneurope.org/advocate/glossary?p=the-open-method-of-coordination>) is dedicated to this very subject.

The European Parliament voted at the end of 2007 to launch a 1.5 million euro pilot project to support structures facilitating the mobility of artists, especially where the structures already exist in the heart of civil society or the public sector. The project is being set up by the Commission, which is preparing a feasibility study for a system of information on European mobility as well as how best to network these structures at the European level. This pilot project is seen as a first step towards a fully-fledged support program for European artists' mobility, which might be part of the Culture Programme in its mid-term review.

MOBILITY OF ARTISTS - REPORTS AND STUDIES

Reports and studies

- Study on impediments to mobility in the EU Live Performance sector and possible solutions, Richard Polacek, Mobile.Home, 2007

(<http://www.cultureactioneurope.org/images/stories/polacekstudy-impedimentstomobility-2007-en.pdf>)

- Tax and social security, a basic guide for artists and cultural operators, Judith Staines for IETM, mars 2004, 2nd edition August 2007
- Global roaming, mobility beyond Europe for professional artists and arts managers, Judith Staines for IETM, April 2004, 2nd edition August 2007

(http://www.cultureactioneurope.org/images/stories/ietmstudy-mobilityglobalroaming-08_07-en.pdf)

- Mobilité des artistes et sécurité sociale, Ericarts for the European Parliament, November 2006

(http://www.cultureactioneurope.org/images/stories/ericartsstudy-mobilitésécurité sociale-11_06-en.pdf)

Useful links

On the move - www.on-the-move.org

Resartis - www.resartis.org

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