On Networking

Nele Hertling, 03 June 2010

Some ideas about networking

You only get something out from a network if you are willing to put something into it.
Networking is about personal responsibility, about communication and trust.
Networking is about sharing knowledge and experience.

In the late 1970s in Europe grew a necessity – based on the needs of artists to find ways for the expression of their new ideas, not any more possible in the traditional structures – of international cooperation or co-production between cultural or artistic institutions, initiatives, artists or companies, including even international financial collaboration. This resulted in new and closer partnerships and led to the creation of "Networks".

Artists, producers and presenters benefited from the possibilities offered by the new non hierarchical meetings, the open exchange of information, knowledge and interest in professional artistic work and the creative processes.

Two important networks in the field of the performing arts where IETM[1] (Informal European Theatre Meeting) and THEOREM[2].

They became unique and flexible tools for cooperation at a European level. The members of these networks allowed for the continuation as well as the initiation of important programs and collaborative projects across Europe, based on the urgent needs of artists in different countries.

IETM is still active today with members from all over the world – for the coming meeting in Berlin April 2010 registered more than 700 persons! – the history – also from other networks – proves the significant impact of involvement in international artistic creation,

> *it not only provokes a profound change of mentality that allows one to overcome all kind of ingrained habits, professional attitudes and aesthetical obsessions at home,*
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> *but also stimulates the necessity to develop a sensitivity and sensibility to explore the backgrounds and rituals of one's partner's culture.*
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> (Steve Austen)

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[1]   See: http://www.ietm.org/, last accessed: 03 June 2010.
[2]   See: http://asso-theorem.com/englishversion/association.html, last accessed: 03 June 2010.

This seems to be more important today, where we can witness a tendency for "national values", against international cooperation.

Networking as a continuous flexible process can be one important answer.

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