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Second World Summit on the Arts and Culture concludes

The Second World Summit on the Arts and Culture, which concluded yesterday, saw 152 delegates from 48 countries gather in Singapore to discuss and debate issues about supporting art and culture.

An international array of 20 speakers, from countries ranging from France and Palau to Chile and South Africa joined keynote speakers Ho Kwon Ping (Singapore), Marian Pastor Roces (Philippines) and Margaret Wyszomirski (USA) in discussing the theme *Creating Connections: Trends in Government Support for Artistic Creativity*. Over three days, their exchanges covered a range of contemporary issues in arts policy such as balancing objectives in cultural policy, the place of the arts in cultural development, finding new sources of support for the arts, and developing alternatives to grant making.

‘This has been a very exciting and successful three days,’ said Sarah Gardner, Executive Director of IFACCA. ‘The Summit was designed to explore issues and share experiences, and the discussions have been frank, practical and productive. Participants have been invigorated by a sense of commonality in purpose and informed by the variety of ways in which the arts are expressed and supported in different countries. Speeches will be published on the Summit website and a report published early next year.

‘There was a strong sense, for example, that arts agencies need strong, well-informed advocacy arguments to assist them in engendering greater understanding of the value of the arts among governments, communities and businesses. IFACCA could assist in documenting case studies and research to underpin such advocacy’, she said. Other initiatives such as staff exchanges, mini-summits and possible research projects were also discussed.

IFACCA will review the ideas and proposals that arose during the event and plan a course of action for the next two years. The host of the third World Summit, planned for 2005, will be announced next year.

At the Federation’s inaugural General Assembly, held immediately prior to the Summit, the members voted unanimously to endorse the founding constitution and elect the first board. 29 of the 42 founding members signed the Founding Charter. In concluding the meeting, Sarah Gardner said that the General Assembly was a watershed in IFACCA’s development. ‘In less than three years, the organisation has established itself as an invaluable resource for anyone interested in nurturing and encouraging the arts. The commitment and solidarity expressed at the General Assembly, and symbolised in the signing of the founding charter, will take the Federation into the future with a strong sense of purpose and vision,’ she said.

IFACCA, the world’s first global network of arts funding bodies, was inaugurated at the First World Summit in Ottawa in December 2003. IFACCA thanks the financial supporters of the Summit, in particular the hosts, the National Arts Council of Singapore.

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Relevant websites: Second World Summit on the Arts and Culture: www.artsummit.org

IFACCA: www.ifacca.org and National Arts Council of Singapore: www.nac.gov.sg.

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