

## Press release

NewcastleGateshead Embargoed until 18 June 2006

### **World Summit on Arts and Culture sets record**

The third World Summit on Arts and Culture, which concluded today in NewcastleGateshead, England, brought together a record number of delegates from around the world. Co-hosted by IFACCA, the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, and Arts Council England, the Summit attracted over 500 delegates from over 80 countries to discuss the role of culture in regeneration under the theme *transforming places, transforming lives*.

Across the Summit's four days, delegates enjoyed presentations by prestigious speakers and engaged in stimulating debate. The Summit explored the ways in which culture and the arts can play a role in regeneration.

Risto Ruohonen, Chair of IFACCA and Director of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Education, Finland, said, 'The growing interest in cultural policies creates challenges for arts and cultural decision-makers – to do more, and to do better, often with the same resources. This wider recognition tests artistic and cultural principles and demands the delicate balancing of many different objectives.'

This balancing act featured prominently throughout discussions at the Summit.

Sarah Gardner, Executive Director of IFACCA, said, 'Despite a busy five days, the board and members of IFACCA have been reinvigorated by the Summit. Just before the Summit, I was inspired by the words of Gulumbu Yunupingu, an Indigenous Australian artist whose work is being featured at the opening of Paris's Musée du quai Branly next week. She said, "Here we are; we come together. I am part of you and you are part of me and we need each other." These words describe perfectly the spirit of sharing, exchange and openness witnessed at the Summit. It is a philosophy such as this that sustains the Federation and the work we do.'

Mark Robinson, Executive Director of Arts Council England, North East said, 'As the Summit closes we reflect on the new contacts made, the conversations and debates shared, the projects dreamt up and the joint resolve to put the arts at the heart of regeneration. More than 500 people from over 80 countries have had a fantastic week in North East England and been inspired both by the region and by what they've learnt from each other. We are keen to offer help and support to the next host city in 2009.'

The announcement about the host of IFACCA's next World Summit, scheduled for 2009, will be made within the next six months.

At the Summit, IFACCA also held its second General Assembly, where members voted for IFACCA's new board and considered future plans. IFACCA members expressed their gratitude to Arts Council England, and especially the North East office, for ensuring the

Summit's success and for its support in securing attendance by delegates from developing countries. Members also thanked Andrew Dixon of the NewcatleGateshead Initiative for his role in programming the Summit.

The Summit received support from many UK sponsors. International assistance provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Institute of International Education helped ensure that diversity of voices were heard at the Summit.

## **Ends**

### **For more information contact:**

Marie Nixon  
Officer, Communications, Arts Council England, North East  
Direct dial: (0)191 255 8573  
Mobile: 07726 660 550  
[marie.nixon@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:marie.nixon@artscouncil.org.uk)  
or

Christopher Madden  
IFACCA  
Direct dial: (0) 61 2 9215 9097  
Fax: (0) 61 2 9215 9111  
[info@ifacca.org](mailto:info@ifacca.org)