



association internationale des critiques d'art
international association of art critics
asociación internacional de críticos de arte
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lettre d'information

December 1986
(english version)

INFORMATION LETTER

The year 1986 has been difficult. We have had to confront a fragile economic situation.

Our aims have been threefold :

- 1) carry on the activities of the Association ;
- 2) curb the current crisis through temporary measures ;
- 3) examine long-term measures so as to resume a normal life in spite of the appreciable reduction of the UNESCO grant, combined with the fall of the dollar.

The reports submitted by the president, the general secretary and the general treasurer to the Board of Directors of our Association on August 30th, 1986 and to the General Assembly on September 2nd have given an account of a period where causes for concern are many, but where the final assessment is positive.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors met in Lisbon, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, on Sunday August 31st 1986.

First session : Attended :

Harry-Paul Aletrino (Netherlands)
Nora Aradi (Hungary)
Fernando de Azevedo (Portugal)
Mario Barata (Free Section) .
Alexander Bassin (Yugoslavia)
René Berger (Switzerland)
Valérie Brière (France)
Campbell Bruce (Eire)
Christian Chambert (Sweden)
Silvia Chico (Portugal)
Axinia Djourova (Bulgaria)
Fernande Duchateau-Meuris (Free Section)
José-Augusto França (Portugal)
Jorge Glusberg (Argentina)

Rui-Mario Gonçalves (Portugal)
Vladimir Gorianov (USSR)
Dan Haulica (Rumania)
Virgil Hammock (Canada)
Hans-Jörg Heusser (Switzerland)
Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (Iraq)
Georg Jappe (FRG)
Wladislawa Jaworska (Poland)
Liam Kelly (Eire)
Hélène Lassalle (France)
Julie Lawson (United Kingdom)
Jacques Leenhardt (France)
José Marin Medina (Spain)
Jacques Meuris (Belgium)
Nicolai Ponomarev (USSR)
Roberto Pontual (Brazil)
Hermann Raum (GDR)
Belgica Rodriguez (Venezuela)
Bente Scavenius (Denmark)
Olga Schmedling (Norway)
Gertrud Sutton (Denmark)
Victor Teixeira (Angola)
Marcel Van Jole (Belgium)
Guy Weelen (France)
Alexandre Xydis (Greece)

and Palmina d'Ascoli (administrative secretary)

I. Presentation of the different reports

I.1 President's report

See annexed text.

Among other points, the president recalled the inquiries undertaken last year, and his request for proposals in view of statutory reforms as a response to his own suggestions.

I.2 General treasurer's report
See annexed document.

The treasurer recommended an increase of the yearly due, suggesting to rise it from \$ 8 to \$ 10 for ordinary members and from \$ 10 to \$ 12 for full members.

I.3 Debate on the reports

Responding to president José-Augusto França's call, the members of the Board of Directors agreed that it was necessary to create a Commission of Statutes. However, René Berger remarked that current statutes will still be valid on the occasion of the next presidential election ; proposals for changes should be submitted to the next General Assembly, in 1987. René Berger recalled that these statutes had enabled regular elections to be held up to now, and that they could still allow a proper functioning of the Association. Jacques Leenhardt added that it was more a question of making clearer certain points of the Rules. René Berger summarized the situation. The Commission will have to come to a decision on four proposals and six comments. Logically, it should be made up of the persons who have thought about this issue and who made their views known to the Bureau, that is to say :

René Berger
Christian Chambert
José-Augusto França
Giuseppe Gatt
Vladimir Gorianov
Georg Jappe
Jacques Meuris
Slavka Sverakova
Guy Weelen
Alexandre Xydis

Following a proposal by the Board of Directors, René Berger was appointed as chairman of the Commission and Hélène Lassalle, in her capacity of general secretary, as secretary. The Commission was asked to make as much progress as possible with its work while the Congress was taking place.

Responding to the general treasurer's call, after a debate on his proposal, the Board of Directors agreed on the increase of dues. Jacques Leenhardt underlined the fact that paying a decent due so as to ensure the survival of AICA was, as well as a necessary financial aid, a proof of "moral conscience", showing our sense of responsibility. By paying his/her due, each member shows that he/she is attached to the Association and concerned by its survival. The issue is of a moral as well as of an economical nature : how can one reawaken the members' interest for the Association ?

Christian Chambert spoke of the bio-bibliographical dictionary mentioned by president França, and later by the general secretary : the publication of this document has been delayed. Several members would like the data thus collected to be processed on a computer. No concrete solution has been found. The project is still under study. Constructive proposals are welcome.

Second session :

I.4 General secretary's report

See annexed document.

I.5 Vote

All three reports were voted unanimously.

2. Report on AICARC-Bulletin

Hans-Jörg Heusser, editor of the Bulletin, summarized his programme :

- Automation takes command, the first issue about computerized documentation in art history, is still available, and should be widely distributed.
- The same applies to the issue about Belgium, published in Belgium with the assistance of the Belgian section, so that its cost has been kept low .
- The issue about Portugal is soon to come out, with Fernando de Azevedo as its editor.
- A second double issue about computerized documentation will be published in January 1987, as the second 1986 issue and the first 1987 issue.
- The second 1987 issue will be devoted to Spain with the assistance of the Spanish section, and especially of its general secretary José Marin Medina.
- Financial circumstances : highly aware of AICA's difficult situation, Hans-Jörg Heusser has set up a "maintenance plan" for the next two years, at a minimum cost, according to the axiom "the longer it lasts the less it costs".

3. Next congresses

- The invitation by the Spanish section for 1987, which had been voted in Brussels, has been confirmed. José Marin Medina distributed among the members of the Board of Directors the draft programme for this manifestation, to be held from September 13th to September 19th on the theme Architecture and the Art of Today.

- The invitation by the Argentinian section, having been maintained, is submitted to the vote of the General Assembly.

4. Setting-up of the Audit Commission

Valérie Brière has been maintained as auditor. In Lorenza Trucchi's absence, Marcel Jole was appointed to replace her.

5. Setting-up of the Elections Commission

Belgica Rodriguez and José Marin Medina have been appointed.

6. Setting-up of the Full Membership Commission

Olga Schmedling, Georg Jappe and Jorge Glusberg have been appointed.

7. Voting modes for the next election

Postal vote is legal and explicitly allowed by the Statutes (Art.XVI of the Statutes). Full members who have paid their dues have the right to vote. An electoral roll will be drawn up by the Bureau listing all full members who have paid their dues, according to the lists which will be provided to the general secretariat by every national section.

There is a problem concerning those full members who have been accepted on principle without having been controlled by the Full Membership Commission elected yearly by the Board of Directors. Such is the case for the Canadian section : its full members have been accepted as a whole by the Board of Directors a few years ago. This is not a statutory process : from now on, every section is to submit its full members to the control of the Commission. However, for the sake of convenience, past decisions of the Board of Directors are ratified, and Canadian full members who have been accepted up to 1986 are con-

firmed in their status, provided that in the future the Canadian section abides by the common rule.

Candidacies to the September 1987 presidential election are to be sent to the international secretariat by national sections before March 1987, the names of candidates being then dispatched to all the sections.

8. Open Forum

The principle of an Open Forum had been accepted in September 1985 at the Brussels General Assembly. This proposal having aroused a strong interest among members of the Association, several participants wished this Forum to be organized within the context of international CONgresses. However, Dan Haulica asked that the decision be left to the persons organizing the Congresses. Plans for the Open Forum are maintained for the next conference in Madrid.

9. The agenda for the General Assembly is voted unanimously.

The session is closed.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 39th General Assembly of the International Association of Art Critics took place in Lisbon on September 2nd and 4th, 1986.

1. Reports by president José-Augusto França, general treasurer Jacques Meuris and general secretary Hélène Lassalle were read.

2. Debate and vote

The debate which followed first bore on the statutes. René Berger stated once again his opinion that the statutes are neither vague nor imprecise. He added that any association must be able to adapt itself and stressed the part played by the Commission of Statutes appointed by the Board of Directors.

The question of the increase of dues initiated a debate which remained uncompleted until the second meeting of the General Assembly.

Dan Haulica remarked that the Bureau had not put enough emphasis on the value of its work. He highlighted the huge amount of work achieved under difficult conditions. All prospects remain open, he concluded.

The creation of a Commission of Statutes, made up of persons appointed by the Board of Directors, was voted unanimously.

3. Obituaries

The year 1986 was unfortunately darkened by the decease of several major members of our Association.

Canada :

Andrée Paradis

A decision was made to pay a special tribute to Andrée Paradis at the close of the Congress. Faithful supporter of our Congresses, vice-president of our Association, Andrée Paradis always took an active part in AICA manifestations. She had the gift of building up with everyone a personal and friendly relationship, and her death has deeply affected all of us. Through her magazine Vie des Arts, she played a cardinal part in making contemporary art known not only in Canada but on the international scene too.

The text of the tribute paid by Virgil Hammock is enclosed as an annex.

France :

Jean Cassou : honorary head curator of the "Musée National d'Art Moderne" which he opened in Paris in 1947.

Georges Henri Rivière : counsellor to UNESCO, co-founder of the "Musée de l'Homme", he created ICOM, the magazine MUSEUM, and the "éco-musées" (museums dealing with human environment in a given place or region) and revived the whole concept of museums by establishing the "Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires" in Paris.

Greece :

Adelis Prevelakis

Beatrice Spiliadis

Tony Spiteris : former general secretary of AICA, archeologist, writer.

United Kingdom :

Jeffery Daniels

United States of America :

James Johnson Sweeney, honorary president of Aica.

4. Report on AICARC

Hans-Jörg Heusser, editor of AICARC, submitted to the General Assembly the report which he had set out to the members of the Board of Directors. He particularly insisted on the necessity of finding other sources of funds beside the UNESCO grant : through private support, such as was given by the Gulbenkian Foundation for the issue about Portugal, and also by developing the system of subscriptions. He would like soon to computerize the invoicing : this would be a realistic measure towards turning ^{AICARC} into a proper commercial venture.

Although the AICA budget for AICARC has been cut by 60% for the year 1987-1988, Hans-Jörg Heusser will continue his activity. Distribution might be improved by including the AICARC subscription in the yearly dues. The problem would then be how to carry out the mailing.

Madeleine Gobeil offered to make the mailing system of UNESCO available to AICA. Hans-Jörg Heusser recalled the cost of dispatching the copies to Paris.

Jacques Leenhardt emphasized the link which would be created between AICA members by a systematic distribution of the bulletin. In his opinion, it was absolutely necessary to continue publication.

5. Speech by Madeleine Gobeil

Madeleine Gobeil, UNESCO director of artistic creation, wished to comment herself before our General Assembly on the relations between UNESCO and the NGO's, and specifically its relations with AICA.

Madeleine Gobeil explained that departures of member nations have dramatically reduced the budget. The cut amounts to \$ 91 millions for the USA, \$ 18 millions for the United Kingdom and \$ 364000 for Singapore, i.e. a total reduction of about \$ 110 millions. Her own programme has been drastically shrunk. Funds for the NGO's are cut down to \$ 33 millions. 2/3 of the UNESCO budget for artistic creation are devoted to the "Culture and Future" programme (dance, theatre, music, art criticism, etc.).

The conflict between A-category NGO's and B-category NGO's (less well endowed) is groundless. Madeleine Gobeil mentioned for instance the PEN-Club, which is in the B-category and is the most active of all NGO's. In the A-category, one only finds AIAP, the International Theatre Association and the International Music Association.

An increase in the grant is not to be hoped for. As for an office in the UNESCO building, it could only be obtained by sharing it with another NGO, which is what "Dance" does with "Music" (and two years have been needed for them to achieve this !). Most NGO's have cramped accommodation. Thus, there is scarce hope of obtaining anything in this way.

Madeleine Gobeil recommended using participation programmes and making appeals for the payment of dues. The PEN-Club collects \$ 60000 in dues every year. The cut in the AICA grant is only \$ 10000. AICA must raise its own funds.

6. Next congresses

The 1987 Congress, to take place in Madrid from September 13th to 19th on the theme Architecture and the Art of Today, was presented by José Marin Medina.

Jorge Glusberg renewed his invitation on behalf of the Argentinian section for 1988. After long years of repression it is desirable to open the doors to international communication by associating to the Argentine congress such neighbouring countries as Colombia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru. The theme would be : New Technologies.

Marcel Van Jole and Dan Haulica expressed the wish that special fares enable members from all countries to take part in the Congress. Jorge Glusberg answered that the Argentinian section would make every effort in this direction. The proposal of a congress in Argentina in 1988 was voted unanimously.

7. Commissions and prospects

Madeleine Gobeil announced an UNESCO meeting to be held in Prague from May 15th to 18th 1987 on the theme Art in the City with the participation of Dany Karavan, Soto, ^{Max Billy/} The meeting will take place under the auspices of the National Gallery of Prague. It will be chaired by Jiri Kotalik, head of the Gallery and president of the Czechoslovakian section of AICA. Dan Haulica, honorary president of AICA, will act as its adviser.

Vladimir Gorianov, vice-president of AICA and member of the Soviet section, gave a summary of the research project on the audience of contemporary art exhibitions in the Soviet Union which he has started in his section.

The Art and Environment commission under the presidency of Peter Feist stated that its work was being continued. A meeting is foreseen in 1987.

Jacques Leenhardt, president of the commission Art of Image, Image of Art, presented the programme of meetings and themes which will be investigated in the year 1987, especially concerning new technologies. (The list is joined as an annex. Critics interested in this research may contact the international secretariat.)

Asilah meetings

Pierre Gaudibert, member of the French section, whom the French ministry of culture has put in charge of promoting contemporary African art, presented a project which might come into being with the support of UNESCO. Following a symposium which was held during the summer 1986 in Asilah, thirty miles south of Tangiers, with three African ministers of culture, a proposal for a series of meetings in Asilah on artistic creation in Africa was agreed on. Within the context of those meetings which would start with a North-South symposium in 1988, a conference might be possible in 1990 with the participation of AICA. Pierre Gaudibert added that a Moroccan section of AICA was being formed under the responsibility of Mr. Brahim Allaoui, in charge of the contemporary art department of the "Institut du Monde Arabe" in Paris.

8. Results of the sittings of the commission of full membership

See annexed list.

9. Telegram from Mr. Amadou Mahtar M'bow, General director of UNESCO

"I have heard with great interest of the manifestations which are to take place at the Gulbenkian Foundation on the occasion of the 39th General Assembly of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), of its 20th Congress and of the AICA/UNESCO symposium on 'the crossing of cultures : the dilemma of modernities'.

"UNESCO rejoices in the fruitful cooperation which, for a quarter of a century, has been established between it and AICA, and salutes the dedication of its president José-Augusto França and of its general secretary Hélène Lassalle, who will, I hope, keep on with their task for a long time with as much energy and as much faith.

"Created forty years ago, UNESCO, according to the terms of its constitutive act, has especially made it its mission to 'raise the defence of peace high ... in the spirit of men'. To this end, it strives, among other things, to 'encourage cooperation between nations in every branch of intellectual activity, international circulation of representative people in education, science and culture, as well as of publications, works of art, laboratory equipment and all useful documentation'.

"Your association, created in 1950, contributed for its part in an exemplary way to the development of a permanent dialogue between its members, to the promotion of the most fruitful researches, studies and critical investigations, and thus, to a better mutual

understanding of cultures, values and works in the whole world. Clearly, the respective approaches of our two organizations are naturally linked.

Bringing the salute of UNESCO to all participants in your general assembly, I would also like to express my wishes that the fecund wind that blows on the Gulbenkian Foundation be an inspiration to you in your work, and ensure it the most total success."

10. Vote on the increase of dues

After the completion of the debate on the increase of dues, this measure was voted by the general assembly. From now on, dues will amount to \$ 10 for ordinary members and \$ 12 for full members.

11. Commission of Statutes

René Berger, president of the commission, gave an account of the work achieved during the two sessions of the commission, which resulted in the amending of eleven articles of the Statutes. The length of texts to be revised and the multiplicity of proposals did not enable the commission to take its work any further, as several members of the general assembly had hoped it would do. Other meetings will be held in the course of the current year. The version which the commission agreed on will be communicated to all members of AICA and the 1987 general assembly will vote either in favour of it or against it.

12. Elections

José Marin Medina, who had been nominated as a candidate to the vice-presidency, was replaced by the Reverend Father Cornet as a member of the commission of elections. The other member of the

commission was Belgica Rodriguez, appointed by the Board of Directors.

Vice-presidents : Were elected as vice-presidents :

Dore Ashton (USA)

Liam Kelly (Eire)

José Marin Medina (Spain)

Members of the Board of Directors : Were elected :

Harry-Paul Aletrino (Netherlands)

Valentina Anker (Switzerland)

Valérie Brière (France)

Maria-José Corominas (Spain)

Rui-Mario Gonçalves (Portugal)

Giuseppe Gatt (Italy)

Hermann Raum (GDR)

Slavka Sverakova (United Kingdom)

Marcel Van Jole (Belgium)

Alexandre Xydis (Greece)

13.

Life of the sections

See annexed reports.

PROGRAMME OF THE CONGRESS

Theme : The crossing of cultures : the dilemmas of modernities

Official opening of the congress at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Speeches : President of the Republic of Portugal

Dr. Mario Soares

On behalf of the general director of UNESCO

Madeleine Gobeil

State secretary for Culture

Teresa Gouvía

President of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Dr. José de Azeredo Perdigão

President of AICA

Prof. José-Augusto França

President of the Portuguese section of AICA

Silvia Chico

Opening lecture of the congress

Gilbert Durand :

"Art, language of othernesses and song of the other"

Working session I

AFRICAN CULTURE AND WESTERN CULTURES

Chairman : Guy Weelen

Moderator : Belgica Rodriguez

Father Joseph Cornet (Zaire)

"European influence on modern African art"

Victor Teixeira (Angola)

"Influence of Negro art in Europe and cultural prospects for art in Africa"

James Houra (Ivory Coast)

"Conditions of creation in Africa today"

Pierre Gaudibert (France)

"The reception of contemporary African art in the West"

Roberto Pontual (Brazil)

"A mixed-blood art : Brazil"

Jacques Gourgue (Haïti)

"A bridge towards elsewhere"

Working session II

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EAST AND EUROPE

Chairman : Mario Barata

Moderator : Freddy de Vree

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (Iraq)

"Calligraphy and modern art in the Arabic world"

Dan Haulica (Rumania)

"Eastern influence in the Eastern Mediterranean countries"

Nicolas Dzhamberidze (USSR)

"Problem of the synthesis of Eastern and Western artistic traditions
in Georgian visual arts"

Aomi Okabe (Japan)

"The Japan of avant-gardes"

Working session III

EUROPES

Chairman : René Berger

Moderator : Hélène Lassalle

Nora Aradi (Hungary)

"Western influences on Central Europe countries"

Juan-Manuel Bonet (Spain)

"Foreign influences in Spain"

Reading of the text by Fernando Pernes (Portugal)

"Portuguese art today"

Pedro Vieira de Almeida (Portugal)

"Postmodernism without a modernism ?"

Working session IV

EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS

Chairman : José-Augusto França

Dore Ashton (USA)

"Europe - United States"

Reading of the text by Andrée Paradis (Canada)

"Canada between Europe and the United States"

Jorge Glusberg (Argentine)

"Contemporary architecture in Latin America"

Rui Mario Gonçalves (Portugal)

Final report

SIGHTSEEING AND EXHIBITIONS

LISBON

- * EMI - Valentim de Carvalho Gallery
Palacio das Alcaçovas
- * CAM (Centro de Arte Moderna)
Opening of the exhibition and presentation of the SEC-AICA Awards
Dinner offered by the CAM
- * Calouste Gulbenkian Museum ; show galleries of the Foundation
- * Opening at the Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes of an exhibition
organized by the Portuguese section of AICA under the patronage of
the Philae collections. Presentation of the awards granted by an
international jury formed by members of AICA.

Reception
- * Stroll in the Bairro Alto and visit to art galleries
- * "Installation" (set-up) by José Nuno de Camara Pereira in the
Forum Picoas
- * Museu do Trajo ; dinner in the Museum gardens
"Installation" by Ana Vieira and sculptures by Joao Cutileiro
- * Upstream sailing on the Tagus
Dinner in Castelo S. Jorge

SINTRA

- * Visit of Sintra
Palacio da Pena