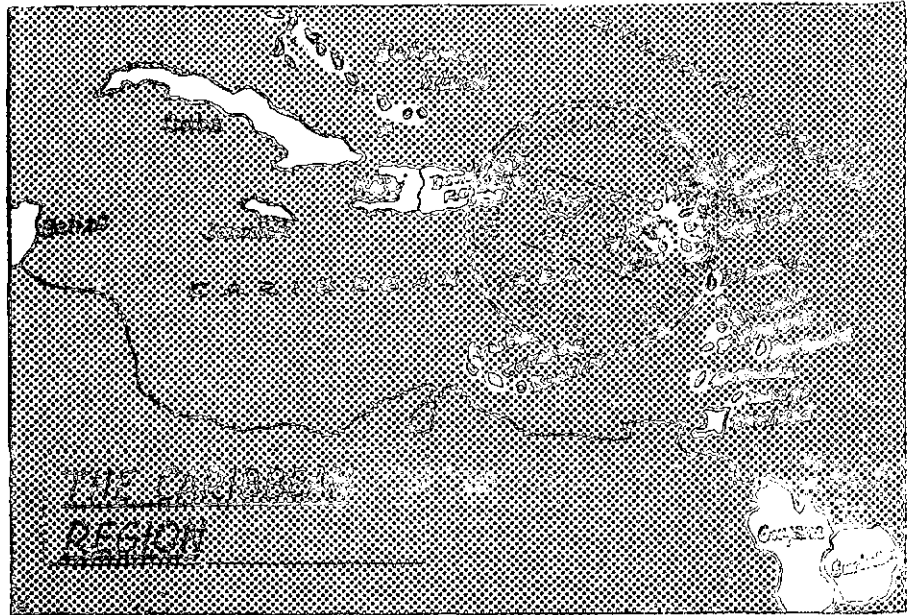


CARIBBEAN
DEVELOPMENT
AND
CO-OPERATION
COMMITTEE



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SECTION 1: CARIBBEAN ART BIENNIAL

Submitted by the Dominican Republic
Delegation to the Second Session of
the CDCC, Santo Domingo,
16 - 22 March, 1977

SECTION 2: NOTE BY CDCC SECRETARIAT
ON THE PROPOSAL

20 JAN 1978



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean



SECTION 1

CARIBBEAN ART BIENNIAL

As a contribution to sections F (Education and Culture) and G (Tourism) of annex 3 of the Work Programme of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, the Gallery of Modern Art proposes the creation of a Caribbean Art Biennial.

Our proposal is based on the Gallery of Modern Art located in the Plaza de la Cultura Juan Pablo Duarte, with a wall display area of about three thousand square metres, and the experience of our montage experts in the plastic arts.

The creation of a Caribbean Art Biennial, to be based in Santo Domingo for the First Biennial, and whenever another Caribbean nation does not ask to host the Biennial, could be a step forward in co-operation and development in the fields of education, culture and tourism.

The Gallery of Modern Art believes that in much of the Caribbean Region a proper education in the classic arts is lacking at the primary and secondary school level, and is only given in vocational schools and sometimes at the university level, where a certain amount of art is taught.

We therefore believe that the creation of the Caribbean Art Biennial will necessarily help to make good this ignorance of the art being produced in our region; this should contribute to the artistic education of our peoples and arouse tourist interest in the nations of this region which we wish to bring together in an effort of co-operation for development.

Besides the creation of the Caribbean Art Biennial could initiate an exchange of cultural resources in the art field (slides, art monographs, cards of representative painters,

sculptors, sketchers and engravers).

The Gallery of Modern Art also believes that through this form of co-operation and development it might be possible to arrive at multinational agreements on vocational training in the plastic arts; as a result, the artistic knowledge of the countries of the region would be brought closer together, and it would be the work of the Caribbean Art Biennial to see that in the different nations of the region courses are established on the artistic achievements of our peoples.

FORM OF OPERATION

The Gallery of Modern Art offers itself as the seat of the Caribbean Art Biennial. In order to carry into practice this instrument of co-operation in the field of development (in accordance with the above-mentioned sections F and G) the necessary financial means will have to be obtained.

SECTION 2

NOTE BY CDCC SECRETARIAT

Status of the Initiative

1. The proposal constitutes up to now an initiative to be studied by the Secretariat for its inclusion in the work programme in case it is considered compatible with the mandates and objectives of the Committee and receives the sufficient backing from the member Governments.
2. The secretariat has not received up to now an official confirmation of the interest of the Dominican Republic Government in its immediate implementation. Nevertheless, the first consultation has shown that such interest does exist and that the Gallery of Contemporary Art is ready to accept responsibility for the organization of the first biennial festival. The Secretary of State Director of the Gallery, Mr. Antonio Fernández Spencer, has reiterated the proposal and has expressed the deep interest of the Government that the Biennial Festival of Art be included in the permanent activities of the CDCC and that the first presentation be held in Santo Domingo, organized by the Gallery in the role of executive organization with the assistance of advisory services of the CDCC Secretariat and UNESCO. He also expressed that the Gallery will take steps in order to ensure that the Dominican Republic Foreign Affairs Ministry officially reiterates the interest of the Government.

Compatibility with the mandates and objectives of the CDCC

3. In its broad objectives the proposal is related with the efforts the countries of the Caribbean have committed themselves to undertake in the field of cultural promotion, mutual knowledge and strengthening of local cultures in the framework of the CDCC work programme. In its immediate objectives the proposal fits clearly into Article 13 of the Constituent Declaration which refers to co-operation "in the strengthening of relations among our countries and peoples by establishing programmes of cultural exchange." ^{1/}

4. In relation to its compatibility with the Work Programme, the proposal fits easily into Chapter F. on Education and Culture^{2/} in relation to "the strengthening and preservation of Caribbean cultures" since the plastic arts constitute one of the most representative and important cultural values.

The Project and its objectives

5. It deals basically with the organization of a display of plastic arts (painting, sculpture, engraving, etc.) in which the countries of the sub-region will be officially and voluntarily represented. The exhibition could remain in exhibition in the host country for approximately three months and then presented successively in other countries according to the interest of the respective governments and it should originate a series of complementary cultural fora and manifestations as well as the preparation and dissemination of reproductions, illustrative texts, and audio-visual materials for educational and dissemination purposes aiming at propagating the display among the specialists of the popular sectors in the Caribbean as well as Latin America and other regions.

^{1/} See Report of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee E/CEPAL/CDCC/8/Rev.1, 27 February 1973, page 15.

^{2/} See, Ibidem, page 52.

6. At the sub-regional level the principal objectives would be:

- a) To initiate a process of identification and retrieval of the principal manifestations in plastic arts of the Caribbean countries;
- b) To disseminate these national manifestations within the sub-region for purposes of socio-cultural rapprochement, strengthening of Caribbean cultures and stimulating local values in search of identity and the upsurge of self-evidence in the populations;
- c) To stimulate and support artistic activities and to facilitate the upsurge and discovery of new individual values in the field of plastic arts;
- d) To promote the formation of a market of art in the Caribbean with national, sub-regional and international perspectives; and
- e) To strengthen on occasion of the biennials of art brotherhood and solidarity between the Governments and people of the sub-region in the framework of the objectives and mandates of the CDCC.

7. Parallel and simultaneous objectives could be pursued at a national level such as:

- a) To stimulate and support national activities in the field of plastic arts, through the organization of contests and national displays previous and as a part of the biennial festival;
- b) To facilitate the identification of local plastic expressions and the discovery of new artists and new manifestations of national art;
- c) To facilitate professional organization of national artists and to strengthen national art markets; and
- d) To facilitate the teaching of plastic arts in the countries of the Caribbean.

8. Complementary objectives could also be established. One of them could be the progressive formation of a Caribbean Arts Museum in each country, resulting from the successive displays of the biennial. Another, the organization of a wide programme of national and international diffusion of educational material on the art of the sub-region, which includes albums of

reproductions, slide collections, posters, postal cards, illustrative texts, films and video-tapes, informative cassettes, etc. Another objective could be the transformation of the plastic arts into instruments for the formation of new values, individual and collective attitudes and motivations implicit in the objectives of the CDCC with regard to integration and development.

Feasibility

9. It appears that the organization of a "Biennial Festival of Caribbean Art" constitutes a feasible project whose implementation is relatively easy. Four requisites are indispensable:

- a) The effective support of the Governments at a national level to ensure the undertaking of national display and the corresponding selection of the samples of art which will participate in the biennial festival with the representation of each country;
- b) The operational capacity of the respective host countries especially in relation to local and supporting services for the exhibition, preservation, security, internal transportation, packing and unpacking, Secretariat and meeting and other rooms; and
- c) Technical assistance for the organization, selection, presentation and preservation and transportation of the displays and for their reproduction through lithography, filming and television;
- d) Financial resources to bear the cost of prizes, international transport, insurance and technical services as well as the corresponding national expenses.

10. The first requisite would be met as soon as the Governments express to the Secretariat their interest in the project and take the respective internal provisions to participate. The second will depend specifically on each host country and requires a previous study. In relation to the first Biennial Festival, the project is feasible because the Dominican Republic Government has offered the Gallery of Contemporary Art as host. This Gallery possesses a magnificent building, functionally designed and built with all the necessary installed capacity for the activities of

the festival as evidenced by the undersigned adviser on his recent visit of assessment of these installations. At the same time the Dominican Republic Government has suggested that it can offer the same host facilities as an alternative whenever the country assigned lacked the necessary facilities. The third requisite - technical assistance - should be obtained through international co-operation particularly from UNESCO. Besides its wide experience in this field this organization has expressed its interest and willingness to collaborate closely with the activities of the CDCC and is presently co-operating successfully in various projects and activities within this context. One may assume that in this case such assistance can be obtained. As for the financial requisite the project could be viable if various resources are combined. For example, all necessary national expenses to organize the various displays and selection of the representative samples should be paid by the respective Governments; the host country could bear the cost of the General Co-ordinator of the festival and its national team of collaborators, the provision and functioning of the local headquarters and other related national expenses. UNESCO could be responsible for the technical advisers and propaganda material at international level, packing, transporting, international insurance and other international expenses. Several public international sub-regional and national entities interested in economic and cultural integration such as C.D.B. and CARICOM could contribute voluntarily to the expenses of prizes, reproduction, dissemination and other related aspects. The UWI could play an important role in the co-ordination and operation of some key aspects of the project. Finally, the possibility of obtaining some resources from the selling (albums, posters, postal cards, slides, video-tapes, texts, etc.) could be studied. This activity could

be used as a basis for the operation of a proposed Caribbean multi-national enterprise for production and dissemination of educational and cultural materials in the framework of the CDCC.

11. The date initially proposed, October 1978, seems reasonable if work starts immediately and if the host country is already in possession of the operational installed capacity as is the case of the Dominican Republic and if the Government assumes the commitment.

Initial operative Aspects

12. If the interest of the Governments is confirmed and the host country determined, the operational process should start with the designation of a General Co-ordinator by the respective host Government. This co-ordinator who will be the executive of the first biennial - would be responsible for launching all the operational process in close collaboration with the Secretariat. The second step would consist in the nomination of a National Co-ordinator in each country responsible for the initiation of the process at national level. All these national co-ordinators under the directorship of the Co-ordinator from the host country would constitute the Advisory Committee of the Secretariat for the execution of the project.

13. Another important step in the initiation of the project would be the realization of consultations with UNESCO in order to obtain its collaboration and immediate participation of an adviser to help the General Co-ordinator of the first host country from the beginning of his activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. This proposal of the Dominican Republic Government to establish: a "Biennial Festival of Caribbean Arts" constitutes a positive initiative, politically viable and with immediate and direct integrative effects, relatively easy to implement and in full accordance with the objectives and mandates of the CDCC.

In consequence, the Secretariat should consider them seriously and initiate immediate consultations with the Governments. If the initiative obtained the backing of the said Governments it should be included in the work programme as a priority action.





