



Developing An Effective System for the Commissioning and Touring of International Work

A Report to The Rockefeller Foundation

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Introduction

In 1998, the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) received a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to conduct a study examining current U.S. based systems for commissioning and touring work involving international artists. The goal of this study has been to identify the full range of system functions necessary to effectively support international work, examine current work to analyze capacity and successful practices, and to develop a set of recommendations for linking and strengthening current practices, as well as identifying remaining gaps that should be addressed.

The underlying assumption of NEFA's research has been that there is a systemic set of relationships that affect U.S.-based presenters' and producers' ability to identify, import, commission, produce, and distribute the work of international artists within this country. Through this examination of current and recent historical work, NEFA hoped to identify key elements in that system and identify the structural roles that each plays.

This study is a companion to the work currently undertaken by Arts International to examine global conditions for international commissioning and touring, and should provide a complementary set of information to the AI study.

This study has attempted to provide an overview of the place of commissioning and touring activity within the U.S. ecology for presenting and producing work by non-U.S. artists. It takes into account presenting and producing activity within three interrelated spheres: commercial activity on a national and regional scale; activity supported primarily through a network of non-profit organizations; and commercial/informal activity within local communities and ethnic networks. The emphasis of the study has been on commissioning and touring within the non-profit environment. The key findings and recommendations of the study are oriented toward enabling this sector to expand and enhance its role within the larger U.S. and global ecology.

During the period examined in this study, rapid advances in telecommunication, developments in trade and political-economic alliances, and increasing migration—from east to west, as well as south to north—have created a climate of global economic interdependence that would have been unimaginable little more than two decades ago. With the end of the Cold War, break-up of the Soviet Union, and launch of the European Union alone, the borders of one continent's nations have become permeable relics of the past. Within the borders of the United States, globalization has been reflected in the increasing ethnic, language, and cultural diversity of the population.

In this context, the cultural community in this country has struggled to define and implement its own vision of global culture. The process of aligning artistic imagination and impulse with funding priorities, government policy, presenter capacity, and audience interest has proved

challenging, raising complex issues of funding equity, artistic quality, cultural preservation, audience education, and structural barriers to international exchange.

Recent Developments in the Field

In part, this study was motivated by a series of recent developments that have both expanded the field of international commissioning and touring and revealed several key issues. In particular, recent shifts in the funding environment for U.S. based international work have shifted the emphases of both presenters and producers as they have responded to new opportunities or retreated from existing practice. Among the key funding developments for the non-profit community have been the decrease in support for international work from the National Endowment for the Arts, the expansion of support through the Ford Foundation initiative “Internationalizing New Works in the Performing Arts,” and the decline in support available through the Suitcase Fund.

A series of studies, reports, meetings, and initiatives throughout the last decade have attempted to address both shifts in funding climate and the increasing globalization of culture. In 1994, NEFA issued a report commissioned by the Ford Foundation, which focused attention on the process of artistic collaboration, particularly between artists based in the United States and those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Fitzgibbon, 1994). The report found that there was a growing interest among artists and organizations of all sizes in investigating the diversity of cultures in this country and the roots of those cultures abroad.

The Ford report acknowledged that the idea of internationally-based artistic collaboration was relatively new, and it sounded some recurring themes in the field. In particular, the report noted, (1) through research, travel, and experience, presenters need to become more informed about international work; (2) developing an appropriate context for the presentation of international work, including audience education, is critical to its success; (3) the development and presentation of international work is resource and labor intensive; and (4) immigration and union practices and regulations raise barriers to cultural exchange.

In its recommendations, the report made a strong case for professional development among presenters to strengthen their understanding and tools for presenting international work. It recognized that some networks were already in place to facilitate this process and could be strengthened further, using existing service organizations, the resources of universities and scholars, information exchange at conferences and forums, and improved funding for international artistic collaboration. As a result of the 1994 study, the Ford Foundation created its “Internationalizing New Work in the Performing Arts” initiative, which supports key organizations that are developing sustained, deep collaborative work by artists in the United States, Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Soon after the completion of the Ford study, a report prepared for The Pew Charitable Trusts by the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center and Strategic Grantmaker Services

offered another assessment of the field of international presenting (Yoshitoma, 1995). This report echoed some of the Ford themes, identifying needs for (1) access to and dissemination of information, (2) better “contextualization” of international work for U.S. presentation, (3) solutions to logistical problems posed by government and union policies, and (4) more funding.

In contrast to Ford, however, the Pew report focused particularly on the role of presenters, recognizing the influence of a limited number of “leadership presenters” who were taking risks in exploring and presenting international work. It identified the need for these presenters to be recognized and rewarded for their work, to act as mentors for other presenters, and to have a coordinated policy and advocacy voice that could influence funding, policy, and priorities in the field.

The Pew report led to the creation of the International Presenters Forum to be that voice, with the IPF composed of many of the leadership presenters noted in the report. The IPF, in a series of meetings from 1996-1999, outlined a series of key goals to advance the field:

- Develop increased capacity, knowledge, and information among U.S. presenters, managers, and artists to support the creation and presentation of international work.
- Identify and remove the barriers to creating and presenting that work successfully.
- Make the domestic market more understandable and available to artists from abroad.
- Identify and increase the financial resources necessary for these goals to be realized.

Between 1994 and 1998, as the shifts in the support for non-profit-based international commissioning and touring noted above were taking place, these studies found a common set of intransigent issues that had yet to be satisfactorily addressed:

- Obstacles to presenter knowledge about international work
- Obstacles to the successful contextualization of international work for audiences
- Obstacles to conducting the set of logistical and financial transactions necessary to import international work to the U.S.
- Gaps in U.S. based support for international work

A Systems Approach to International Commissioning and Touring

NEFA's approach to this research project and the resulting recommendations has been informed by its own experiences during the recent past in developing networks to enhance existing systems for the creation and distribution of new artistic work in this country. These networks have been based on multi-level partnerships among artists, producers, presenters, and others. NEFA recognized that such partnerships had the potential to support the presentation, not only of domestically generated work, but the full range of international performing arts as well.

The barriers to realizing that potential that had been identified in the previous studies were still present, although shifts in the resource environment have altered the non-profit environment since 1994 in ways that have impinged both positively and negatively on the ability of the non-profit community to address these issues. Although increasing global communication through the Internet offered the possibility of facilitating cultural exchange more easily, the structural impediments of policy and regulation persisted; funding was still uneven and limited, and for the most part tended to focus on projects, not process; and proposed solutions were still too narrowly drawn to have a significant, permanent impact on the field.

NEFA's proposal to The Rockefeller Foundation was based on the premise that a broader, more holistic view was necessary. The key assumption of this study is that these specific issues are points of stress within a set of inter-related systemic relationships, and that further examination of those relationships is necessary to inform effective action by key stakeholders within the system. International activity is not just generated by a small group of leadership presenters, and initiatives to change the field cannot only be presenter driven. A broader universe of organizations and individuals, including artists, presenters, funders, managers, scholars, and policy makers all play (or could play) significant roles in addressing the following systemic functions:

THE WORK:	Research, Residencies, Commissions, and Touring
EXTENSIONS:	Humanities, Marketing, Media
SERVICES:	Convening, Policy, Facilitation, Information Services, Documentation, Evaluation, Professional Development
RESOURCES:	Resource Development, Administration

The focus of NEFA's study therefore has been on the *system* of relationships involved in commissioning and touring international work, and the set of players involved in those relationships. The study looks to identify where the gaps in capacity might be, and how to fill those gaps, not just with money, but with the knowledge, experience, and influence that a network of individuals and organizations can offer. Based on its own experience, NEFA has

become convinced that the design of any component intended to address an individual function must take into account the role of that component in the larger set of systemic relationships.

Methodology

In order to provide an overview of the components of current domestic systems for commissioning and touring international work, NEFA has relied on a set of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Qualitative methods have been aimed at providing core samples that could illuminate practices and beliefs among a range of players and in relation to a set of illustrative examples. Quantitative methods have been used to provide an overview of the range and characteristics of international work presented in the U.S., trends in distribution of international work, current levels of engagement with international work among different types of presenters, and types and levels of financial support affecting current systems.

In relation to the systemic functions outlined above, the study has sought to define current activity and capacity in each of these areas, identify what is working and what is not, and recommend how strategies that *are* working in a local or project-based context might be “brought to scale” to benefit the entire field.

The three major methodological elements of the study: focus group meetings, case studies, and database development and analysis are detailed below:

Focus Groups

Four focus groups were convened to elicit information about specific regional conditions within the U.S. and to examine the environment for each of the major partners—artists, presenters, and managers—engaged in international work in this country (see Appendix A for lists of focus group participants). Two of these focus groups have aimed to examine distinct regional conditions for international commissioning and touring by pulling together a range of players within each region:

- A meeting in Miami in May 1999 brought together that area’s university presenters, managers, independent producers, culturally specific organizations, and presenters of music, theater, and dance.
- A meeting in New Haven in June brought together a similar group from the New England region.

Two of the focus groups looked at the roles of specific types of players in the national environment:

- A July meeting in San Francisco gathered a group of major western regional presenters and booking agents. Because of the emphasis of the 1995 Pew report on “leadership presenters,” this focus group sought to examine the systemic role of such presenters.
- Based on information from the three previous focus groups and from case study interviews, the role of artist management in U.S. based international presenting had emerged as a crucial one. A November focus group meeting was convened in New York City in collaboration with Arts International to bring for profit and nonprofit managers, tour organizers, and other key players together to discuss that aspect of the system.

Case Studies

Twenty-two case studies were conducted, selected to exemplify the range of international work and approaches to its development. It was clear from the previous studies that there was an existing body of very good international work taking place throughout the U.S. The purpose of the case studies was to identify that work, examine how it came about and what resources were used to develop it, understand the context for the work, and use the information to fashion recommendations based on real experience.

The projects were chosen to reflect a range of activity across the country within the last six years in terms of scale, discipline, the region of origin of artists, and the type of international engagement—i.e., research, creative residencies, performances, touring, and/or production.

The projects selected for case studies were the following:

Project	Description
Atlantic Crossings	An international tour of traditional musicians from England, New England, Quebec, and Brittany.
Berliner Ensemble	Cal Performances presentation of the U.S. debut of Germany’s legendary Berliner Ensemble from East Berlin. These and subsequent performances in Los Angeles marked the final performances of this 50-year old ensemble, founded by Bertolt Brecht which disbanded in August 1999.
Cambodian Artists Project	A coalition of Cambodian master dancers and musicians working with scholars and arts administrators, who are dedicated to the conservation, documentation, and perpetuation of Cambodian performing arts. These goals are achieved through workshops, artistic exchanges, public performances, and related programs.

Charles Ives Project	A trilogy of dances created by Dutch choreographer Beppie Blankert that celebrate the music of Charles Ives. The project involves a multi-year relationship between the choreographer and The Danspace Project in New York City, which has presented each edition.
Destiny Project	A multi-year international collaboration between a U.S. choreographer (Ron Brown) and a choreographer from Cote d'Ivoire (Rokiya Kone) and their respective companies (Brown's Evidence and Kone's Jeune Ballet d'Afrique Noire). The project consisted of research and exchange in each country, the creation and presentation of a new dance collaboration performed by both artists' companies, as well as the presentation of each artist's own work on a shared program. The project was produced by the companies themselves with support from Aaron Davis Hall in New York City where the performances were presented.
Dos Alas/Two Wings Project	A multi year project, produced by City Lore in NYC, focused on cultural exchange, audience development, artist education and national touring featuring Los Hermanos Cepeda (bomba ensemble from Puerto Rico) and Grupo AfroCuba de Matanzas (rumba ensemble from Cuba). Although these groups share a common tradition and heritage they had never before met. The project involved extended residencies, the creation of new collaborative work, and a 2-1/2 month tour to university, non-profit, and community based presenters.
The Dybbuk	A multi-year collaboration between U.S. theater director and festival presenter, Michael Griggs, and Polish theater company, Wierszalen Teatr Company. The project involved presentations at the Portland International festival and the Puppetry on the Edge Festival of several works by the company over the course of several years, the development of a major new work for the company directed by Griggs, and long-term residencies by the artists in each other's countries.
East of Eden Festival	A dance festival presented for two weeks at Dance Theater Workshop and the Danspace Project in NYC featuring seven choreographers who are part of an emerging generation of contemporary choreographers from East/Central Europe. The festival developed organically out of a long-term program of DTW involving choreographer and producer residencies and exchanges in East/Central Europe and the U.S.

Festival of Korea	A year long festival produced by the Asia Society that included touring museum exhibitions and an extensive performing arts program. The performing arts component included four programs that each toured to several U.S. cities. Classical, contemporary and spiritually based works were featured. Tour engagements often also involved significant participation from the local Korean populations.
Fla/Bra Festival	An annual festival featuring performances, films, visual arts exhibitions, and community residencies by Brazilian and U.S. artists. The festival is produced by Tigertail Productions in Miami, and presented in Florida. A related component of the festival involves residencies in Brazil by U.S. artists.
Geography	A dance theater work choreographed and directed by Ralph Lemon and created for a cast of 9 dancers and musicians from the Ivory Coast, Guinea and the U.S. The work was a co-production of Cross Performance Inc and Yale Repertory Theatre. It was created in U.S.-based residencies over the course of 12 weeks, was premiered at Yale Repertory Theatre, and subsequently toured to four cities.
Gypsy Caravan Tour	A national tour focusing attention on performing arts traditions and practices of gypsy communities across Europe. The project featured six ensembles from Romania, Spain, Russia, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The tour traveled to sixteen U.S. venues, and one Canadian venue, and was produced by the World Music Institute (WMI).
Henson Festival of International Puppetry – On Tour Program	The touring program of a biannual New York City-based festival that presents a broad spectrum of contemporary puppet theater productions by U.S. and international artists from all world regions. The project is a collaboration between the Henson Foundation, which produces the New York City festival, and Lisa Booth Management, which produces the national tours.
International Hispanic Theater Festival	An annual festival in Miami presenting 12-18 theater and dance productions from 10-16 countries throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and the U.S. The mission of the festival is to preserve and enhance Hispanic culture in the U.S. and abroad, in addition to bringing Hispanic culture to non-Spanish speakers.

Los Muñequitos de Matanzas Tours	Successive tours by Los Muñequitos de Matanzas, a Cuban percussion, vocal and dance ensemble composed of the leading practitioners of Afro-Cuban spiritual and rumba music and dance. Since their debut U.S. tour in 1992, the company and its traditions have attracted a wide range of American audiences for public performances, lecture demonstrations, and workshops. These tours were pioneering ventures in building a bridge of musical relations between the U.S. and Cuba.
Phokwane	A collaborative work created by South African choreographer Vincent Mantsoe and African American composer and vocal artist Philip Hamilton. The work was developed and presented at the Bates Dance Festival. The artists developed plans for the work after meeting while both were in residence at Bates Dance Festival the previous year.
Sonidos de Los Americas: Cuba	The 6 th edition of an annual New York based festival produced by American Composers Orchestra. The festival highlights new music of the Americas and focuses on a particular country each year. The Cuba edition involved 20 Cuban and Cuban-born composers and performers and included performances of orchestral, chamber, jazz, and folkloric music along with master classes, composer forums, public symposia and professional meetings.
Survival Arts Project	A multi-year program produced by Seven Stages supporting interaction between Atlanta-based artists and artists from various Central and Eastern European countries. The initial purpose of this project was to focus local artist and community attention on issues of survival and to deepen the level of discourse surrounding these issues. The project involved extensive research in Eastern/Central Europe, a broad range of residency programs and public performances in Atlanta, and some touring to other U.S. cities.
Things Fall Apart	Re-mounting and U.S. tour of the stage adaptation of Nigerian author Chinua Achebe's acclaimed 1958 novel <i>Things Fall Apart</i> . The play features a Nigerian cast and was directed by Chuck Mike. A consortium of presenters—spearheaded by the Kennedy Center—brought the new version of the work to the U.S. for a month-long tour with extensive humanities programs.

Triangle Arts Project	A multilateral cultural exchange for dance artists and organizers between the U.S., Indonesia and Japan. Through intensive residencies in each country, the project addresses artistic creativity, cross-cultural exploration, arts management and presentation systems, criticism and education as carried out in various cultures.
U.S. / Portugal Dance Exchange	A multi-year project designed to introduce U.S. producers to Portuguese contemporary dance, and to stimulate and support interaction between U.S. and Portuguese dance communities. The program includes curatorial research trips, as well as choreographic, creative and teaching residencies in both countries. It also includes U.S. tour and commissioning of new work by Portuguese dance companies.
Visible Religion	A music-theater collaboration featuring Indonesian and American composers, directors, puppeteers and musicians. The work was performed by Gamelan Pacifica in Seattle and was commissioned and presented by a consortium of three U.S. presenters based in Seattle, Minneapolis and Chicago.

Rather than examine each case in isolation, these examples were also selected to allow them to be purposely grouped according to some common components or goals they shared. In this way, it was possible to develop a deeper analysis of how the projects behaved and grew, and how they attained or did not attain their original goals. The groupings offered insights into the system of factors at play in each project, an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the system, and how project outcomes varied in responses to various factors and available resources.

Case Study Pairs	Common Characteristics
Geography / Destiny Project	New dance productions based on intercultural collaborations, intended to result in tours
Dos Alas/Two Wings Project / Gypsy Caravan Tour	Tours that each involved multiple artist companies from multiple countries and a strong contextual foundation.
Things Fall Apart Project / Berliner Ensemble	Tours of theatrical work involving large-scale presenting organizations.
East of Eden Festival / Triangle Arts Project	Long-term exchange projects between the U.S. and particular world regions involving research and residencies

U.S.-Portugal Dance Exchange / Fla/Bra Festival	Presentations of non-U.S. work built from investment in long-term relationships between U.S. producers and counterparts in particular countries
International Hispanic Theater Festival / Sonidos de Los Americas: Cuba	Festival based presenting activity focusing on a specific non-U.S. region
Charles Ives Project / The Dybbuk	Projects involving long-term relationship between lead presenter and artist
Visible Religion / Phokwane	New commissions of intercultural work
Survival Arts Project / Atlantic Crossings	Tours involving multiple artist groups from a particular region
Cambodian Artists Project / Festival of Korea	International residencies with diasporic communities
International Hispanic Theater Festival / Henson Fest. of Int'l Puppetry – On Tour	Attempts to expand local festival activity to national exposure
Los Muñequitos de Matanzas Tours / Charles Ives Project	Repeated and expanded relationships with particular artist ensembles over several years

For each of these case studies, the principal investigator and research assistant conducted a series of open-ended interviews utilizing a core interview guide (Appendix B) which focused on the following areas:

- The history of the project's development, including successful strategies, problems encountered, resources developed.
- Perceived short- and long-term impacts of the project, including artistic development and establishment of organizational partnerships.

Detailed summaries of each project are included as Appendix C to this report.

Data Collection and Database Development

In order to develop more general information on the role of international commissioning and touring within the larger ecology of U.S. based presentation and production of non-U.S. work, data from a variety of sources was compiled to provide information on two areas of activity-- non-profit organization activity involving non-U.S. artists, and presenting activity of all types involving non-U.S. artists. The two databases produced were used to analyze patterns of funding and distribution of work.

For the non-profit database, information on 834 grants was collected for the period between 1993 and 1999. The database was designed to allow for the correlation of grants, artists, organizations, and projects. A total of 487 grant-supported U.S. based projects involving international work were identified for this period. Analysis of these grants has indicated patterns and conditions of support for the multiple aspects of the international presenting system.

For the presenting database, information on the current presenting season (November 1999 - May 2000) was collected from as many sources as could be reasonably surveyed. These included online sources such as Ticketmaster, TicketWeb, and CultureFinder, as well as individual presenter websites and publications. The goal was to collect a representative sample that could provide a reasonable portrait of contemporary presenting of non-U.S. work that encompassed both the commercial and non-profit sectors. Information was collected for 2,379 performances during this seventh-month period, involving 539 different individual artists and artist groups. Analysis of this activity provides useful information on the role of grant-supported activity in the flow of cultural work to the U.S. Appendix D contains detailed descriptions of the databases and the data collected.

Input from the Field

An advisory committee of five presenters, artists, and managers from different disciplines and organizations of varying types and sizes was formed at the outset of the project. The group included a number of smaller organizations and individuals whose voices had not been heard in earlier studies (see Appendix A for a list of committee members). The committee convened twice—once in March 1999 to refine the direction and methodology of the study and offer an initial context for research, and once in August 1999 to review research results and preliminary recommendations. The committee has reviewed this report, as well, and their comments are reflected herein.

Profile of International Work in the U.S.

The profile of current presenting, commissioning, and touring activity of non-U.S. performing arts that follows is based upon the non-profit and presenting data collected for this study, as outlined above. It is meant to give a general context for the findings and recommendations that have emerged from this study.

Although an attempt was made to make this data collection as comprehensive as possible, a number of limitations should be cited. In the case of grant supported activity, data was collected primarily from funder publications, nonprofit information clearinghouses, and case study interviews. For this reason, this profile is necessarily biased toward larger funders whose activity is national in scope. Our case study research revealed that international presenting and commissioning projects rely in many cases on a mixture of funding that includes local as well as national resources. In every case we have documented, however, projects that have moved beyond the local area have depended on funding from national sources. For this reason, the database provides a reasonable overview of activity on the national level.

In the case of general presenting activity, it was not feasible to collect historical data over the same period examined in the nonprofit database. Information is restricted to the current presenting season for the months of November 1999 through May 2000. Because of this it is impossible to track trends in presenting activity. Most seriously, the data under-represents presenting activity in a festival context, which largely takes place during the summer months. It should also be noted that audience size, which would be the most accurate measure of relative importance, cannot be estimated with the information available. Even with these limitations, the presenting data provides a rough measure of national presenting activity to allow some useful comparison between grant-supported work in the non-profit sector with general presenting activity.

Current International Performing Arts Presenting in the U.S.

If the current presenting season is representative, presentation of non-U.S. artists to general U.S. audiences remains dominated by western Europe. *Figure 1* shows the breakdown of performances by world region, with 49% of the total number of performances by artists from Western European countries, followed by Canadian and Asian artists (9% each), artists from Russia and the former Soviet Union and the Caribbean (8% each), and artists from Africa and Eastern Europe (5% each).

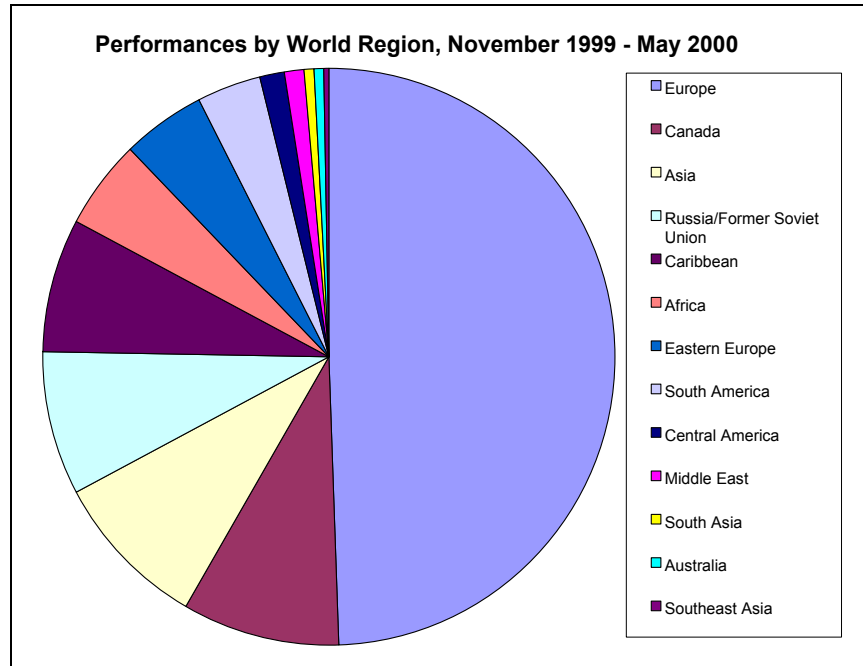


Figure 1: Performances by World Region, November 1999 - May 2000

Among the art forms presented, performances of traditional and world music forms--expressions representing a national or ethnic identity--are the most common (54%), followed by performances rooted in Western European classical music and dance (33%), contemporary forms of new artistic expression (5%), and forms of popular entertainment such as pop singers and acrobatic troupes (5%). Figure 2 depicts this breakdown.

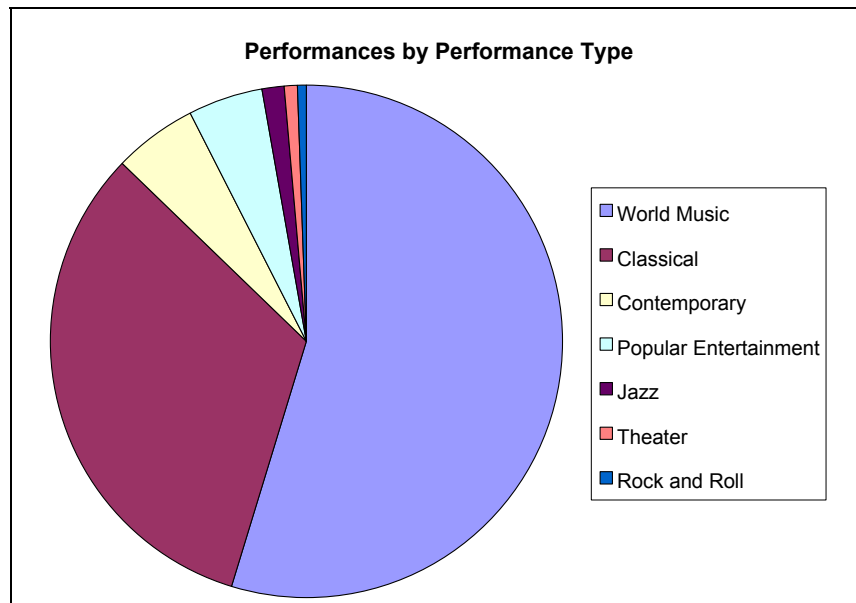


Figure 2 - Performances by Type, November 1999 - May 2000

The two types of performance genres that dominate contemporary presenting are themselves dominated by Western European artists. The maps in *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* show the

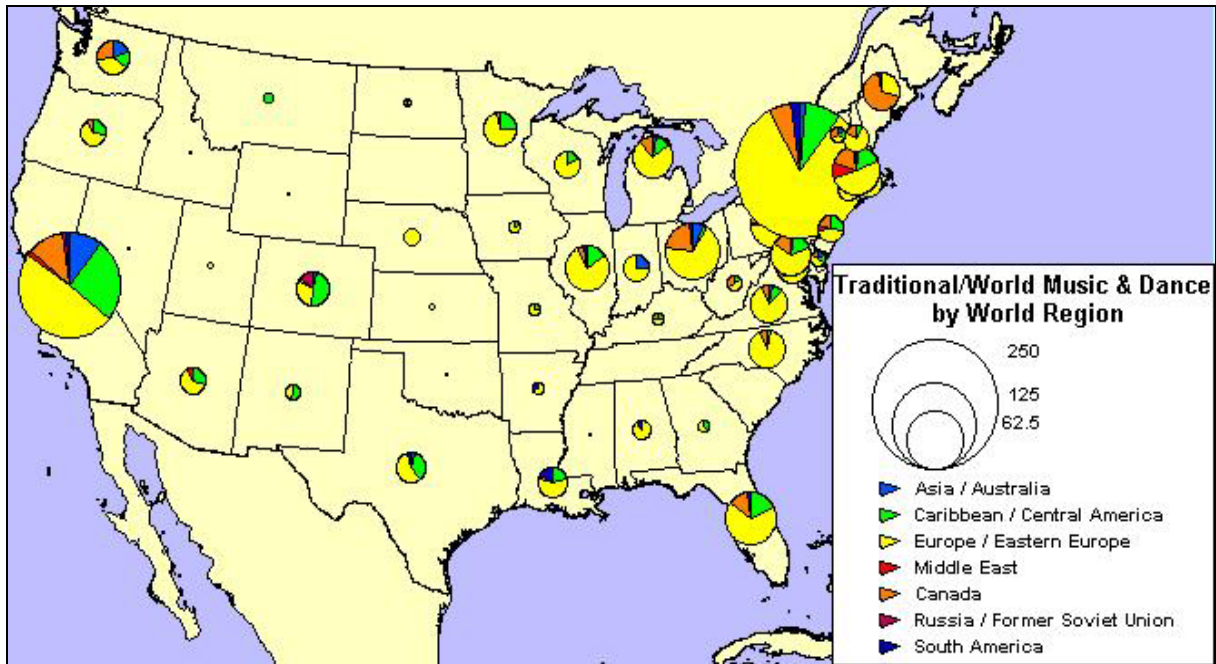


Figure 3 - Traditional/World Music & Dance by World Region

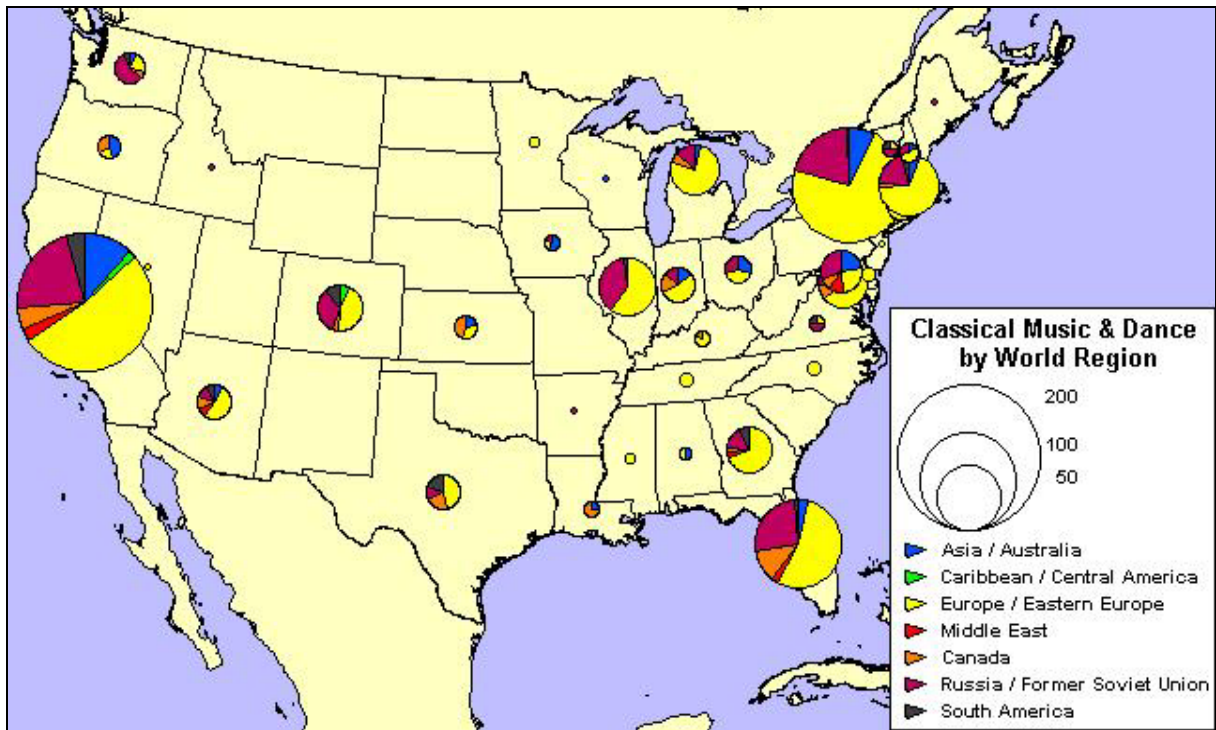


Figure 4 - Classical Music & Dance by World Region

distribution of performances nationally for classical and world music respectively with breakdowns by artists' world region. Some variation is evident in different parts of the U.S., with greater representation of Western European artists in the east.

U.S. audiences' exposure to types of performance genres varies from world region to region as well. As *Figure 5* indicates, certain regions of the world such as Africa, the Caribbean, Central America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, are represented to U.S. audiences primarily through performances of traditional forms. In the data from the current presenting season, contemporary forms have the greatest representation in performances from Asia. We strongly suspect that

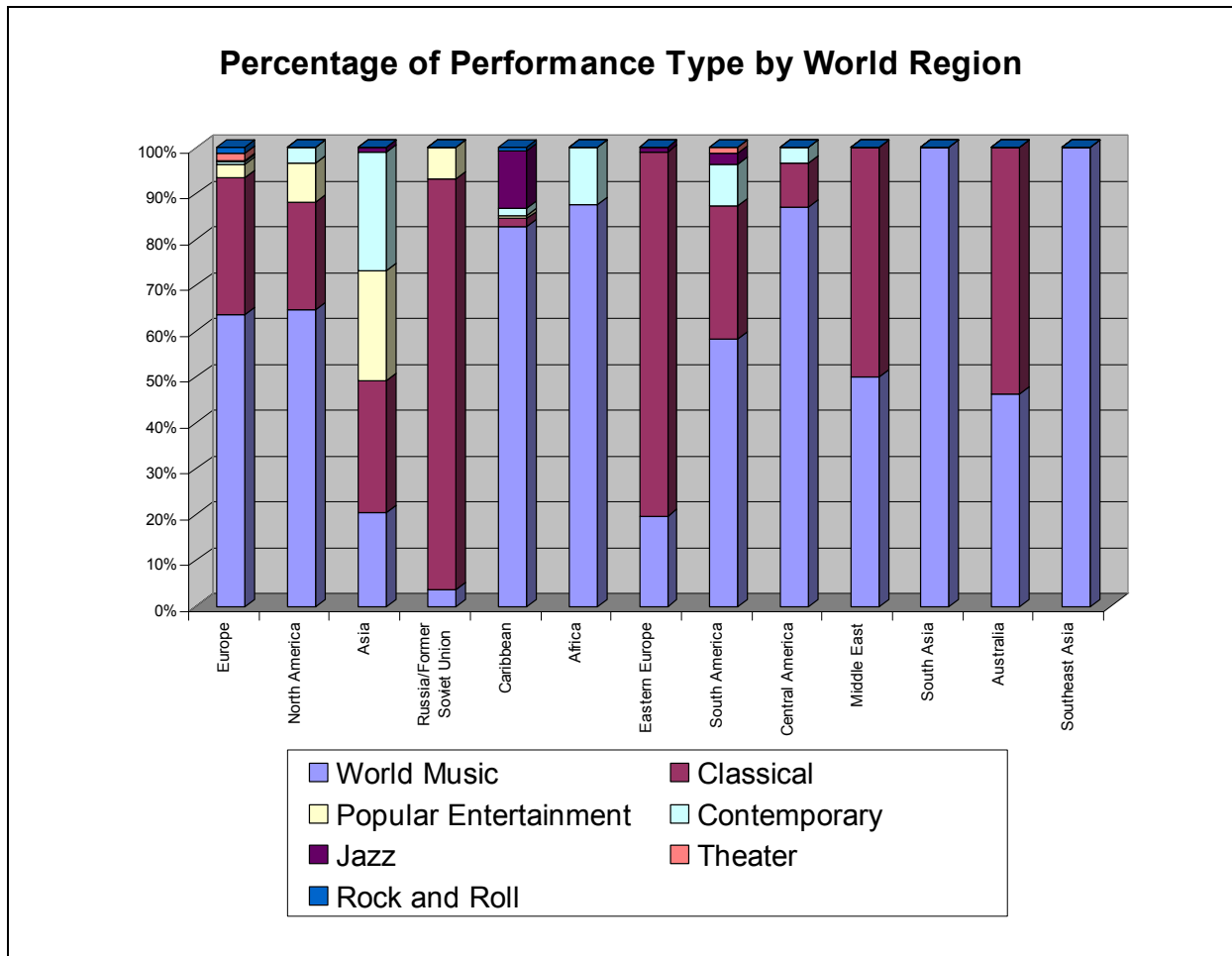


Figure 5 - Percentage of Performance Type by World Region, November 1999 - May 2000

this is an aberration either due to the time period examined (November-May) or the particular characteristics of this presenting season. Based on qualitative evidence, we would expect the representation of contemporary work from Europe to be much higher.

International presenting in the U.S., as depicted in the map in *Figure 6*, is most frequent in the northeast and the upper midwest, California, and Florida, with secondary centers of activity in the northwest, Arizona, Colorado, Texas, and Georgia. These may correspond to two influences: 1) the effect of transportation routes and historic origins of resident populations, and 2) stimulus by non-profit based presenters and funding activity, as discussed below.

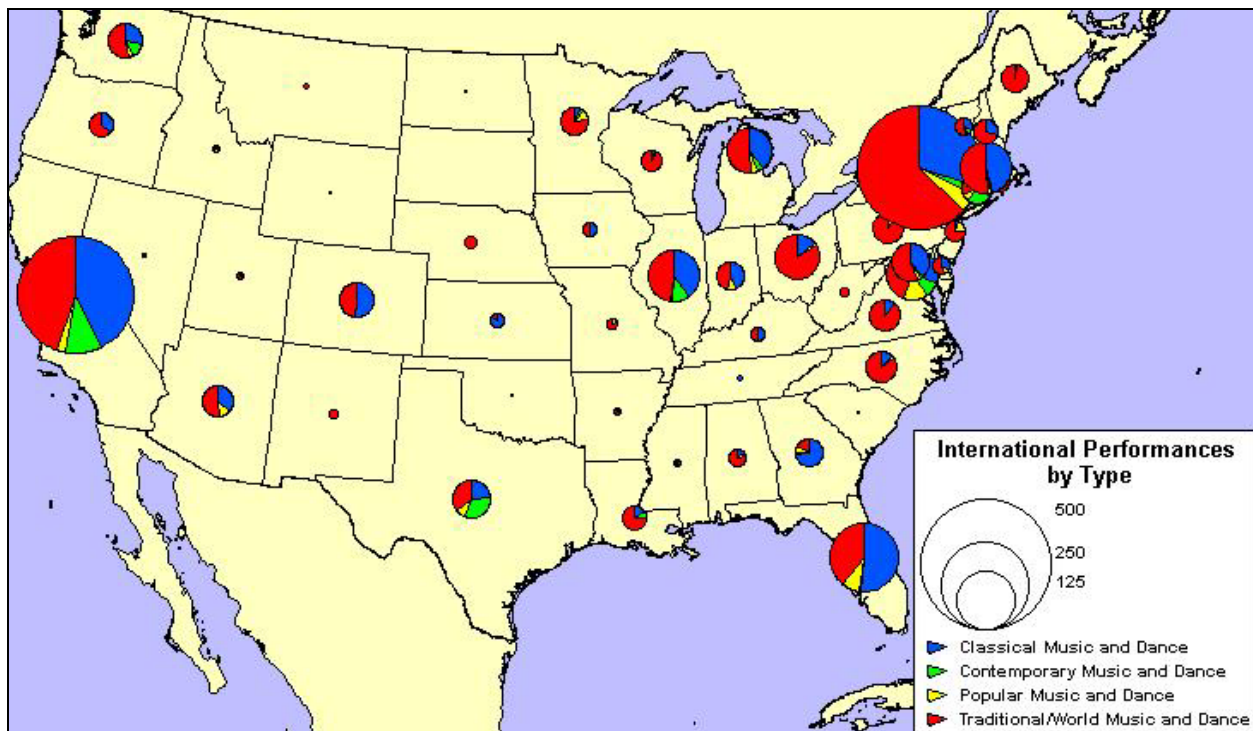


Figure 6 - Distribution of International Presenting in the U.S.

A further set of variations is visible in the types of venue in which international presenting takes places. Classical and world music appear to be presented in the widest range of venues, from churches to concert halls to civic centers. Other performance genres--particularly theater and contemporary forms--have a more restricted range of venue opportunities. In the case of theater, technical restrictions appear to be a major factor, while universities play a particularly important role in the presenting of contemporary work. (See *Figure 7*.) In part, the versatility of classical and world music performance may be attributable to the numbers of artists involved. In the case of classical performance, 46% of the performances by non-U.S. artists in the current season are soloists performing either alone or with U.S. artist groups.

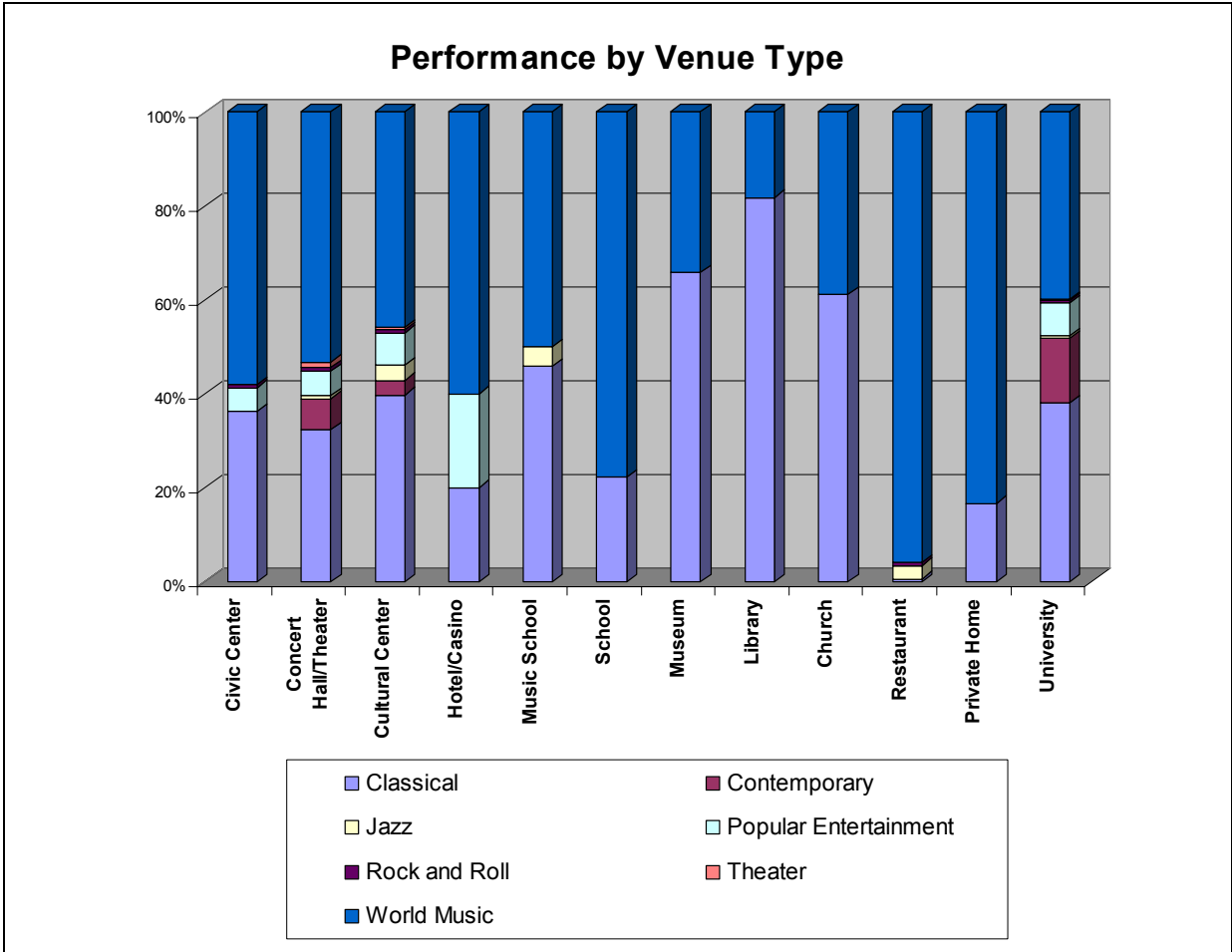


Figure 7: Performances by Venue Type

Influence and Trends in U.S. Funding for International Work

Against this backdrop of general international presenting activity in the U.S., the non-profit sector plays a distinctive role. *Figure 8* contrasts the distribution of presenting activity by world region with the distribution of grant-supported work. Where Western European work is dominant in the general presenting field, U.S. funded projects have favored work from Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe in recent years.

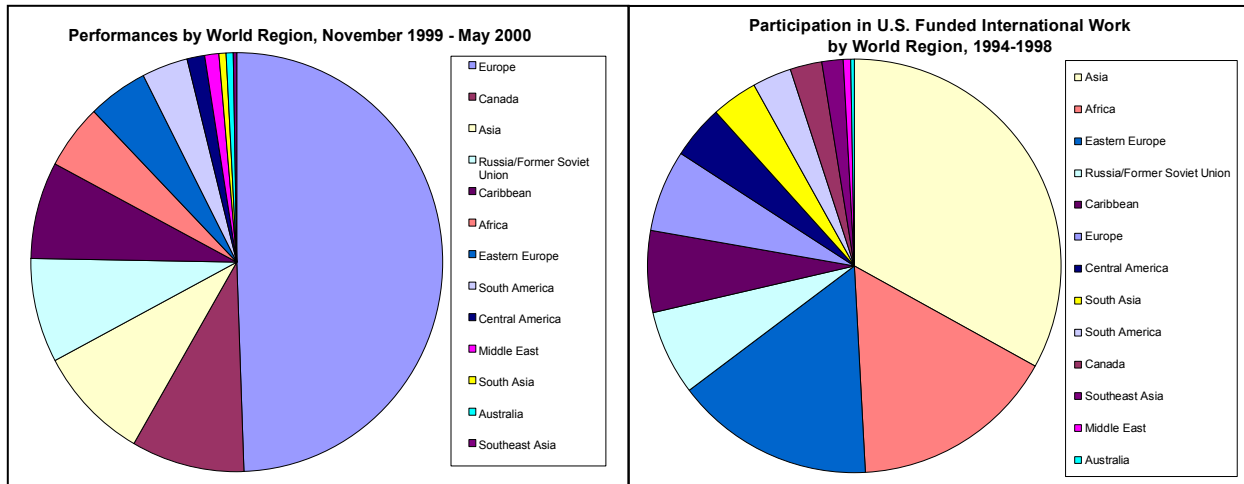


Figure 8 - Contrast in activity by world region

A similar contrast is visible in the types of work supported (*Figure 9*). Where classical and world music performances predominate in the general presenting field, grant-supported projects favor activity involving contemporary art forms, followed by world music and theater. The contrast also reveals that U.S funders play a crucial role in bringing the work of theater artists to

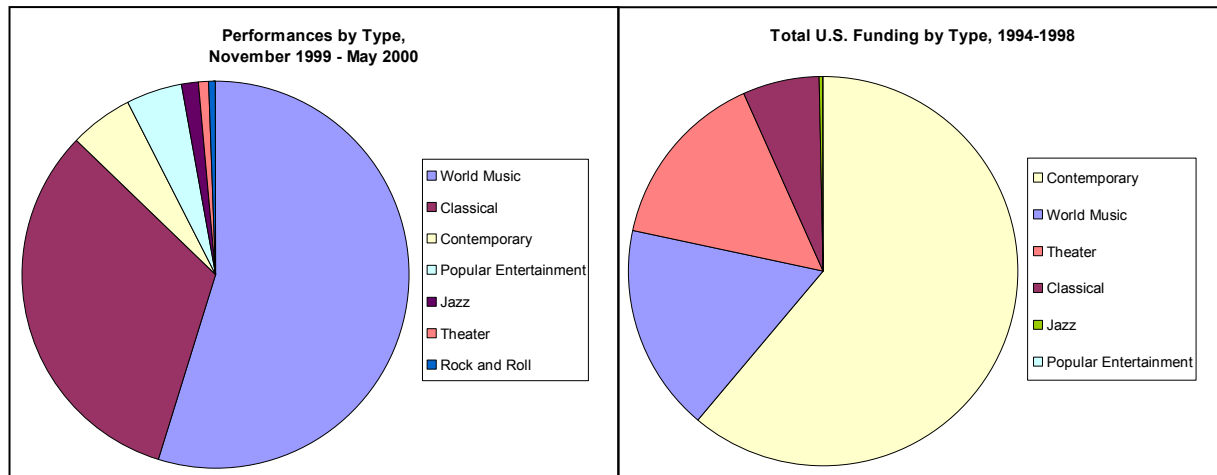


Figure 9 - Contrast in activity by performance type

the U.S. *Figure 10* provides a breakdown of total U.S. funding support by year for categories of international performance.

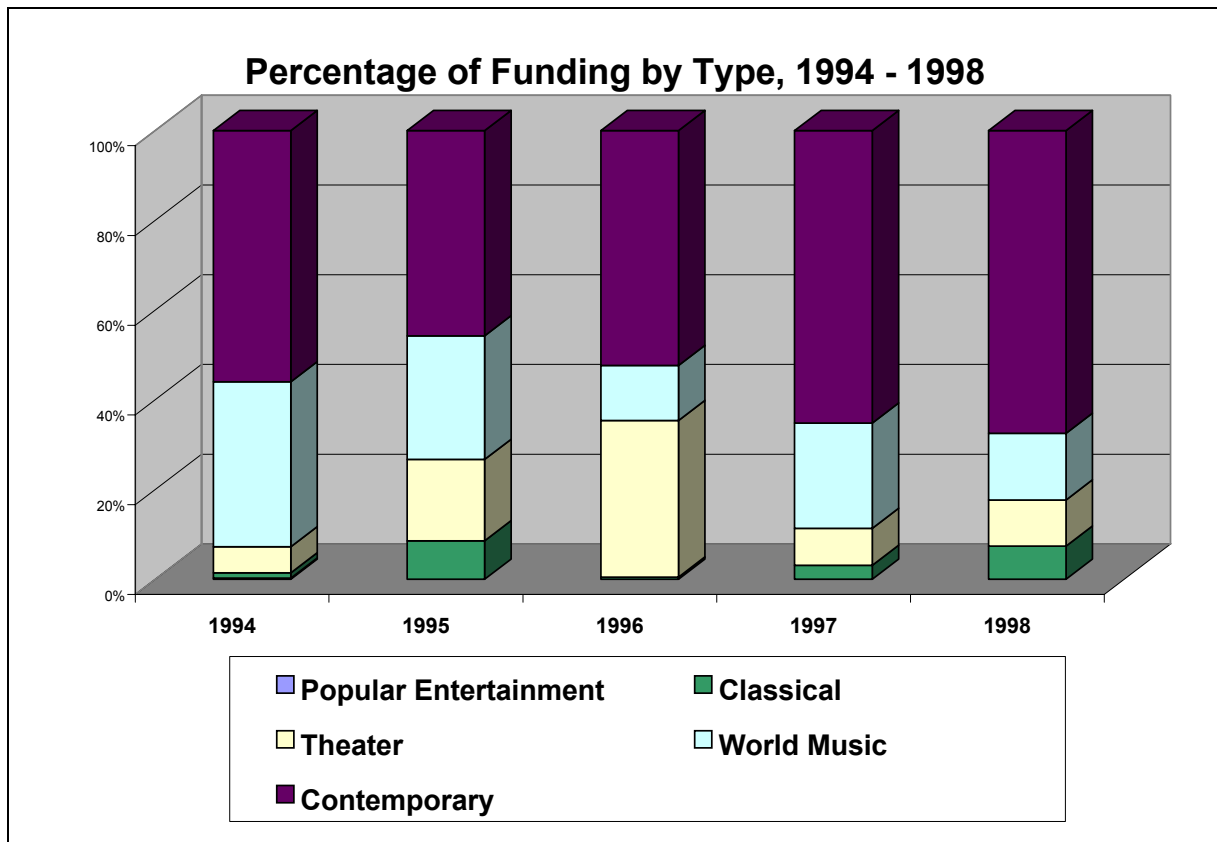


Figure 10 - Percentage of funding by type, 1994-1998

In general, support for international work has a relatively minor role among U.S. funders, as a proportion of all grantmaking. As shown in *Figure 11*, a few national funders have played an inordinate role in supporting international work, and their influence on the types of work supported are correspondingly high. The Ford Foundation’s funding for international work far exceeds all other U.S. funders, attributable in large part to its recent initiative to support new intercultural work, with the Asian Cultural Council and the Rockefeller Foundation having the next largest impacts.

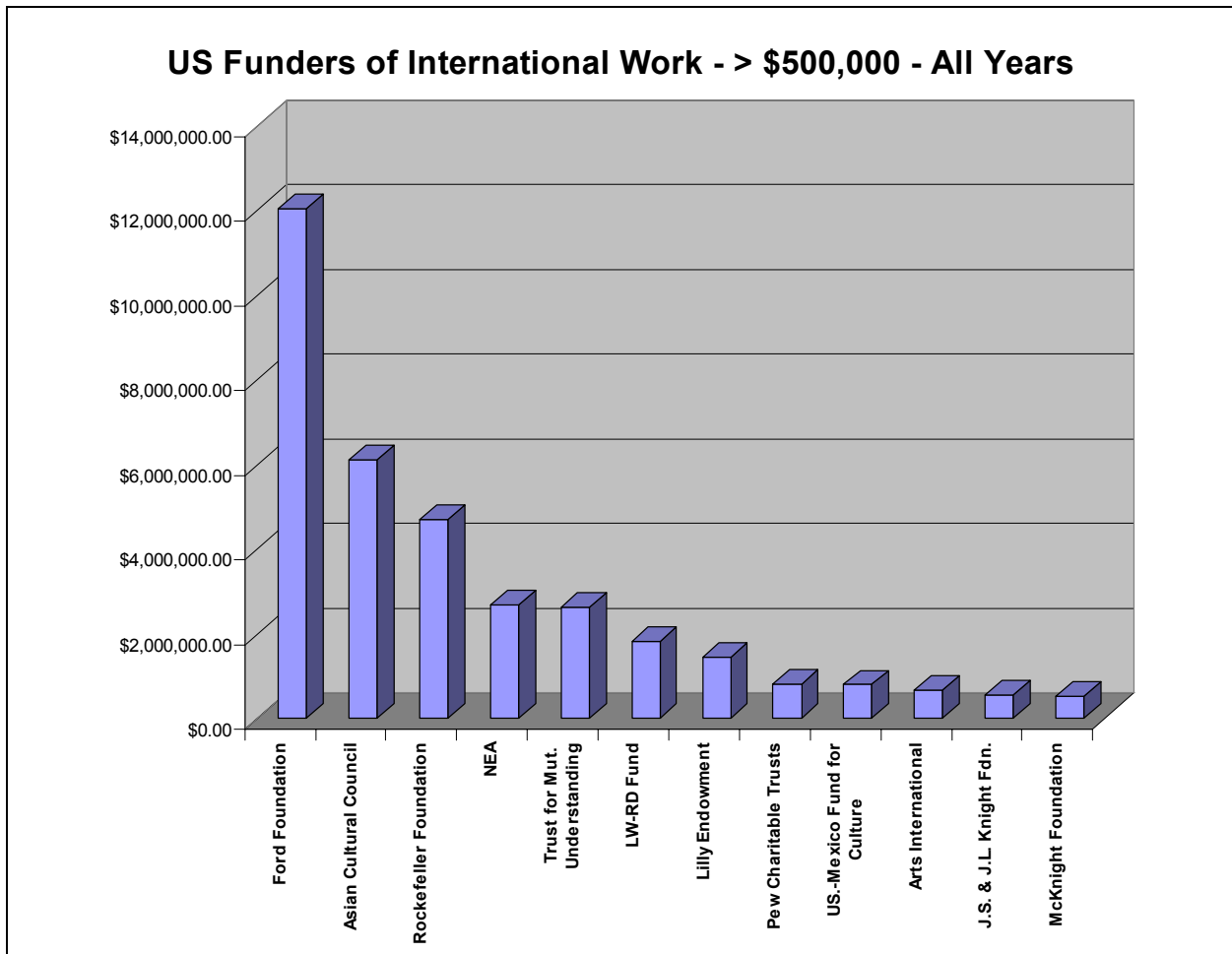


Figure 11 - Largest U.S. Funders of International Work, 1994-1998

When these figures are adjusted to show support for the following stages of project development: general presenting of existing non-U.S. work, research by individual artists and artist groups to develop new artistic work; production of new work, and touring of work, the impact of particular funders is clear (Figure 12). The major funders of general presentation are the Rockefeller Foundation, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, the Lila-Wallace Readers Digest Fund, and the Lilly Endowment. Major funders of research in recent years have been the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Asian Cultural Council, and Arts International (through the Ford initiative). Catalysts for the production of new work have been the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Meet The Composer (through the Ford initiative). In proportion to other types of funding, support for touring has been minor.

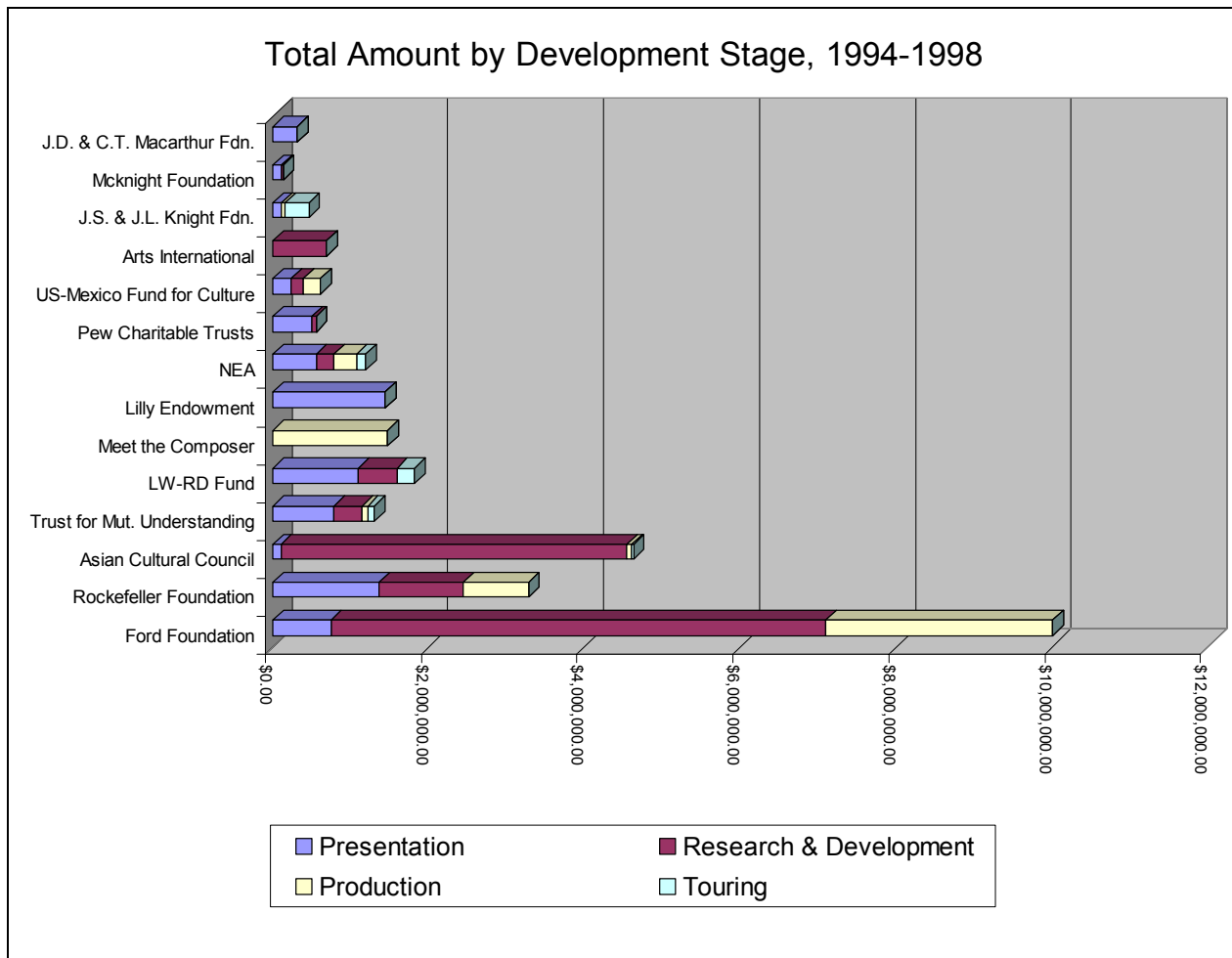


Figure 12 - Largest U.S. Funders - Total Amount by Development Stage

Figure 13 shows overall trends in U.S. funding in relation to presenting, research, production, and touring. The impact of Ford’s initiative is evident in the sharp increase in research and production activity beginning in 1996. When Ford’s funding is subtracted from the total (Figure 14), the amount of production and research support by U.S. funders in general is considerably less. When funding by the three largest funders is subtracted (Figure 15), trends in U.S. philanthropy appear closer to general presenting activity, with presentation of existing work dominating. Among the three largest funders, touring of non-U.S. work is the least funded component, and has not changed noticeably over the years studied.

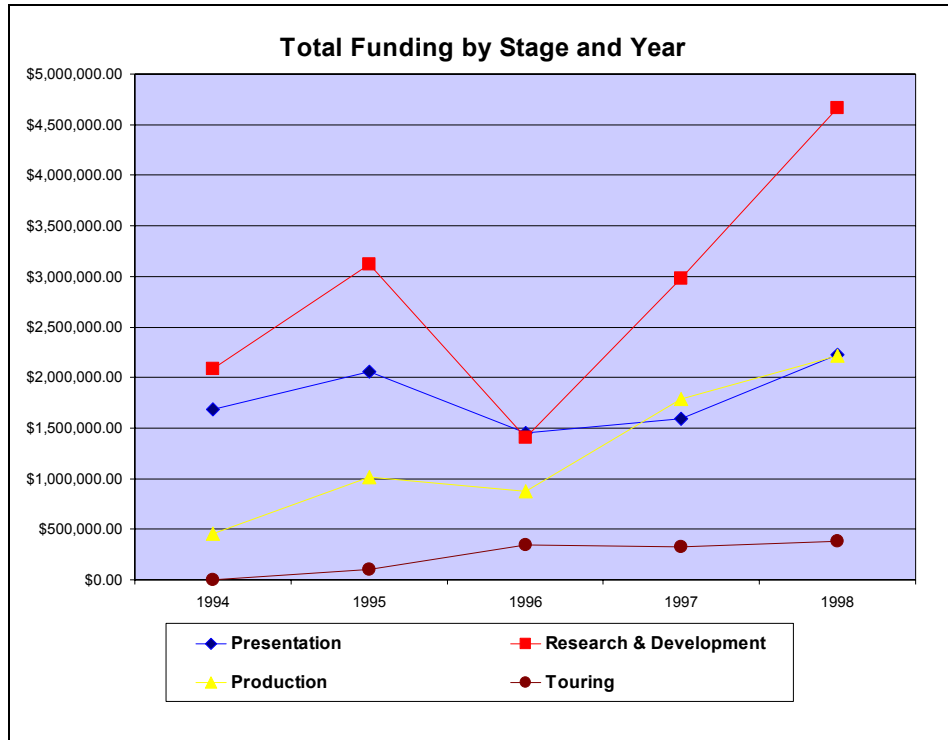


Figure 13 - Total U.S. Funding by Development Stage, 1994-1998

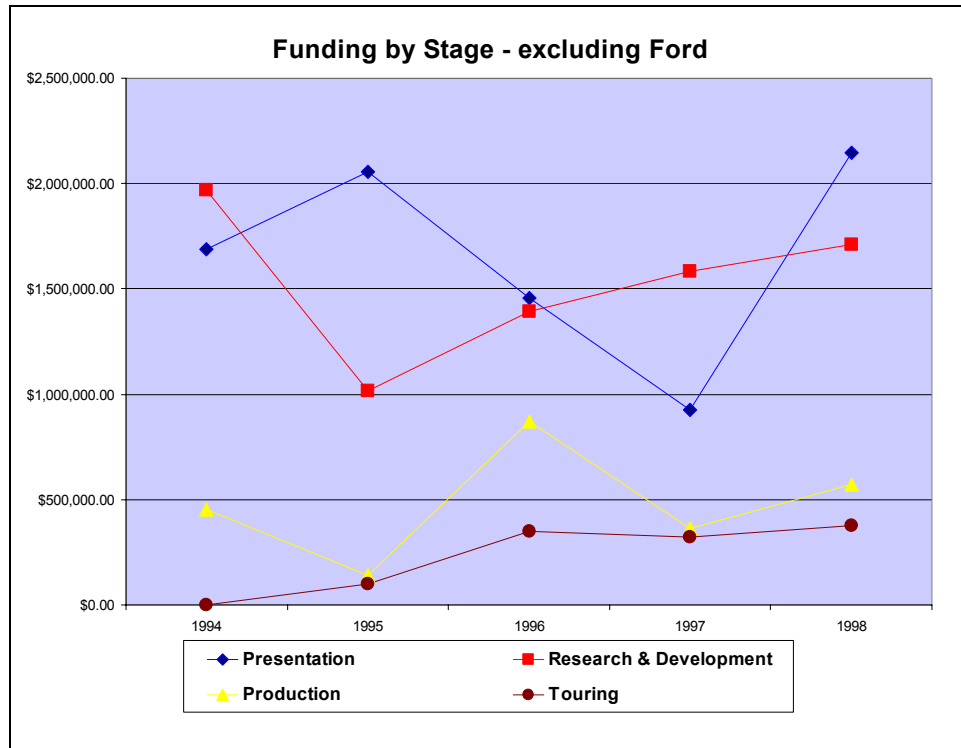


Figure 14 - Total U.S. Funding by Development Stage, 1994-1998 (excluding Ford)

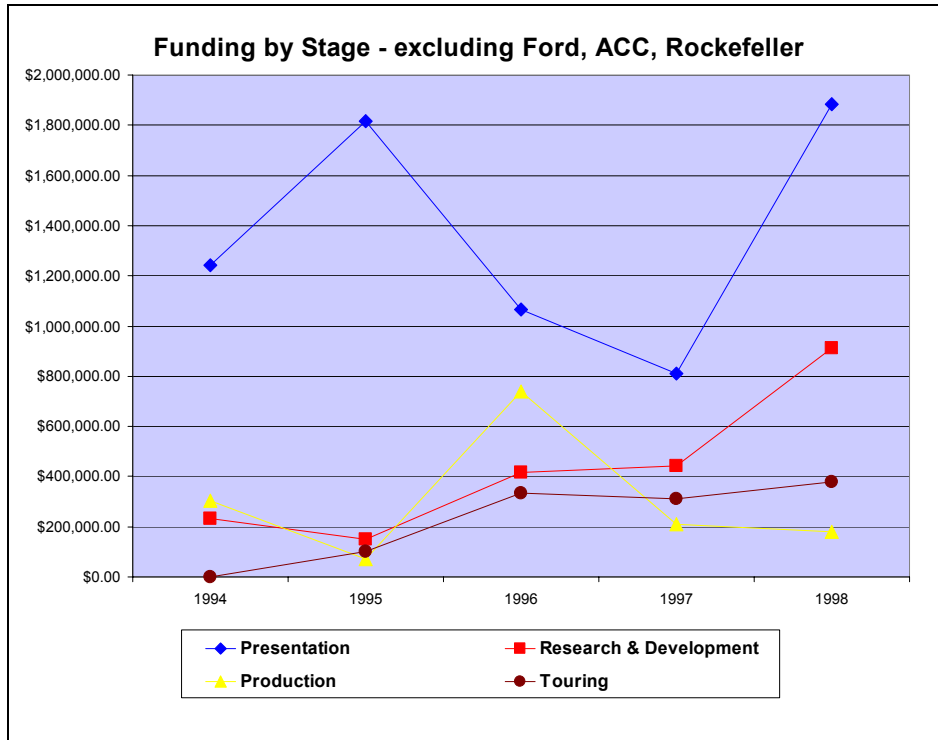


Figure 15 - Total U.S. Funding by Development Stage, 1994-1998 (excluding Ford, ACC, Rockefeller)

The distribution of U.S. funders that support international work appears to have a geographic impact as well. Figure 16 indicates the sources of funding by geographic location relative to total funding (with Ford funding removed).

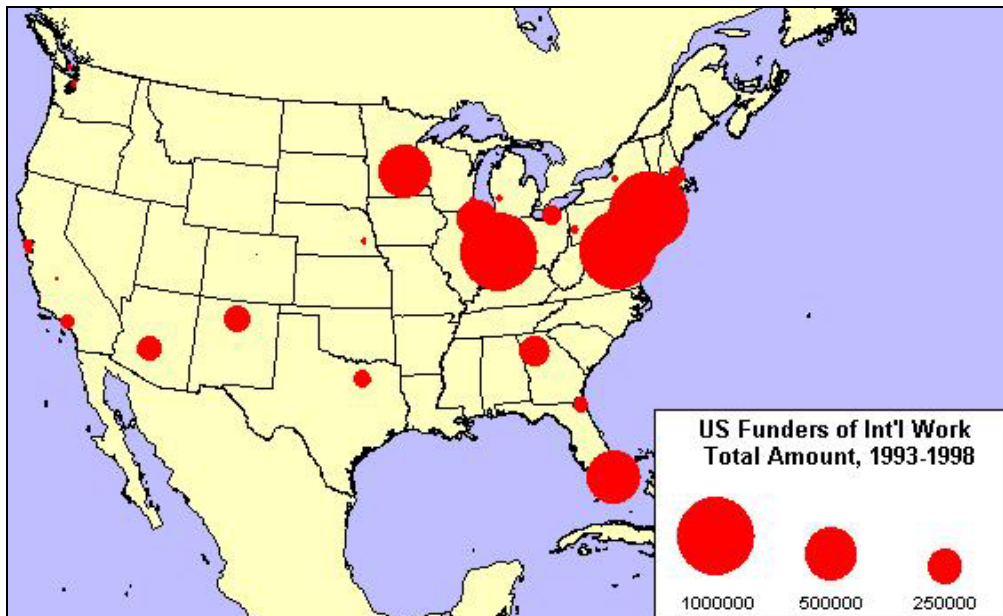


Figure 16 - U.S. Funders of International Work

When compared with the location of grantees (Figure 17), proximity to funding sources for international work appears to be a factor. The location of the grantees

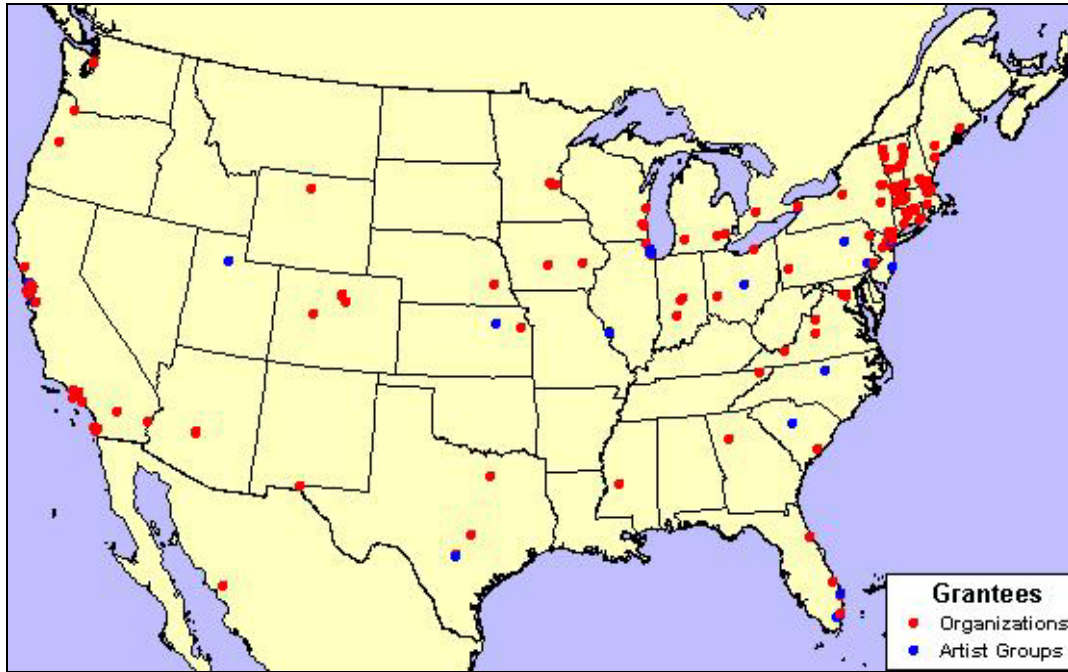


Figure 17 - International Project Grantees

of the five largest U.S. funders of international work (Figure 18), provides the best indication of key centers of international activity in the non-profit sector.

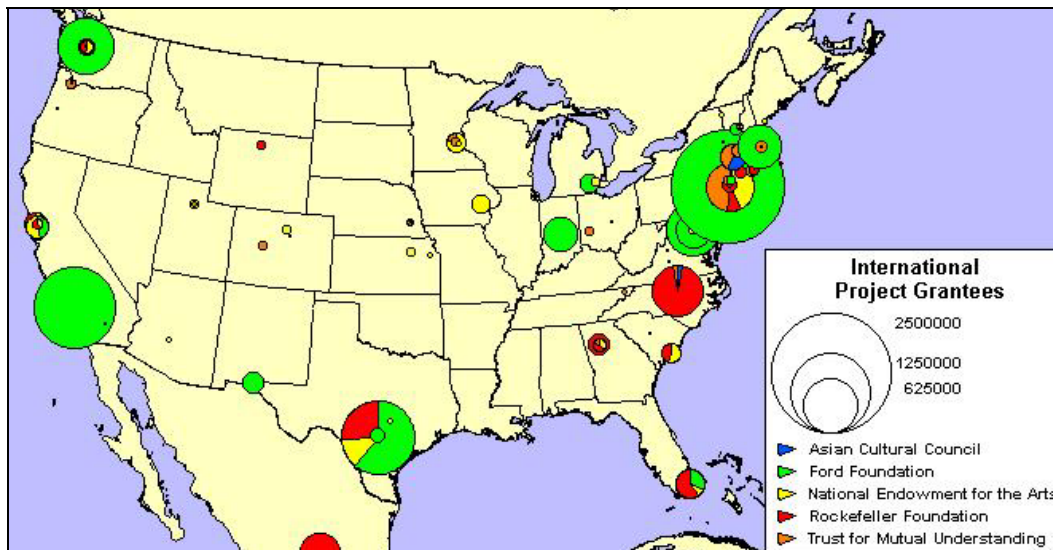


Figure 18 - International Project Grantees of Largest U.S. Funders

Key Findings

The series of meeting discussions, case profiles, and database development and analysis has informed a series of key findings. These relate to four areas that have emerged as critical within the larger set of relationships within the U.S. system of international presenting and production. The findings are presented here, with supporting evidence developed by the research.

Network Development

Finding 1: The ecology of presenting in the United States is multi-layered—there are large, medium, and small presenters; independent and institutionally-based presenters; local and regional presenters; culturally specific and discipline-specific presenters. Each of these layers has access to different networks, funding, and other resources, resulting in uneven information, support, and recognition across the system.

The world of international presenting seems to exist in many different slices, with no broadly available mechanisms to make visible the full range of existing and potential activity to the full range of participants in the field, or to support that activity consistently. In Miami, of the eleven organizations represented at the focus group meeting, only two reported being members of networks that brought them into contact with people outside of the area. Many of the participants in that meeting felt geographically isolated: they were able to present the work of the Americas successfully in Miami, but could not develop the resources and networks to secure non-Miami venues and support.

Producers and presenters represented in the study reported participating in a variety of networks that they have been able to develop over the years—networks to aid in booking, to develop contextual information, to identify new work, to aid in programming decisions. These networks may be highly personal, and not generalized beyond specific project partnerships, geographic area, culturally specific groups, or project types.

Furthermore, scale of project may be critical in determining the extent of networks that will be available to aid in its development or dissemination, and in the nature of partners required. New England presenters noted that it is often easier to build a tour around smaller scale work that poses less of a financial risk. The Western focus group echoed this sentiment, maintaining that building a network to support large scale international projects is difficult. Even among the large presenters represented at that meeting, there was an expressed need for better infrastructure to support partnerships and collaborations of significant scale. Without such networks, these presenters find it difficult to forge equal partnerships with non-U.S. presenters, because they cannot bring equal resources to the table.

Study participants cited NEFA's existing National Dance Project as a model of the type of network building that can aid international presenting more generally. In the field of dance, the

NDP brings presenters of many sizes, as well as dance artists, into the process of commissioning and touring, and it enables U.S. presenters to leverage resources as they partner with foreign presenters. Presenters and artists would benefit from being part of multiple networks similar to the NDP, so that they can readily find various configurations of partners around which to build different projects. The critical point is that the NDP cuts across functional roles and distinct networks. Mechanisms for this type of linking are beneficial for amplifying the impact of existing successful practice.

Finding 2: Professional networks exist to support international work, but they are not functioning optimally.

As noted several times throughout this report, networks are critical to international presenting. They represent opportunities for presenters and artists to connect with one another, for experienced presenters to form collaborations, for less experienced presenters to benefit from the knowledge of their colleagues, for artist managers to develop effective tours, for presenters to connect with sources of scholarly and critical information, for funders to build their knowledge and understanding of the field, and so on.

International work, however, is often marginalized in the discussions of formal and informal networks, and treated as distinct from the existing systems for domestic production, presentation, and touring. The Western focus group meeting noted their own experience that regional gatherings of presenters seldom address international work.

Study participants also observed that the many existing networks are insufficiently linked; the systems that are created are only as strong as the linkages among their many elements. There is little networking across scale of organization and even less between ethnically or culturally specific organizations and other non-profit organizations. With the leaders in international presenting often functioning quite autonomously, there may be little impetus for existing networks to put international issues on their agendas.

The study Advisory Committee, in lengthy discussion, agreed that creating new systems—such as a proposed management consortium—is not the answer. Rather, it is better to work on linking existing networks of presenters and managers and to ensure that systems remain open and not exclusive. Where there are *ad hoc* consortia of presenters who have chosen to work together over a period of time or around certain projects, the committee suggested that these presenters need to act as links to the various networks they are involved with in order to broaden the partnerships. As discussions of international projects become included on the agendas of regional and national networks, linkage can be organically developed by those who are members of multiple networks. The committee also recommended that these networks and consortia include tour managers and producers who often function as bridge builders between presenter networks as they organize national tours.

In general, linkage between systems is a critical shortcoming for the field, but linkages can only be built in the context of particular work. Project-based initiatives that stimulate such linkages have the potential to improve the condition of the field in general.

Finding 3: The need for travel and research remains a serious issue for the field.

As noted in Finding 10 below, most presenters, lacking independent resources to travel and view work, will take advantage of foreign-government subsidized trips. They also often rely on agents to bring work to their attention. As presenters noted at the Western focus group, “money for research is extremely hard to find. How do we get the money to learn about the artists from other cultures? This research is essential.” Direct experience with the work in the artists’ home country is the key to developing the passion, commitment, and understanding of the work that will see a presenter or manager through the arduous process of bringing the artist to this country for an engagement, and potentially, a tour.

The case studies offer many examples of how direct experience of work led to an international exchange:

- The Atlantic Crossings project was the direct result of an exchange program with the North of England. The Director of Northern Arts in England visited the Center for Cultural Exchange in Maine. The visit was reciprocated, leading to the development of the tour.
- In the Survival Arts project, Seven Stages, in partnership with the Dance Theater Workshop/Suitcase Fund, and the Atlanta Arts Festival, sent delegations to various parts of the Balkans to conduct research in a variety of art forms. Several trips were made, resulting in three groups being invited to the U.S. for performance and residency activities.
- For the U.S.-Portugal Dance Exchange project, a 1994 trip to Portugal by a group of U.S. presenters to the Portuguese Dance Festival, catalyzed interest in the presentation of Portuguese dance in this country. The trip ultimately resulted in the festival, Nova Danca: Portugal '96, presented in its entirety at three venues in New York City with touring to Lincoln, Nebraska; Washington, DC; Providence, RI; and Seattle, WA.
- The 1998 East of Eden Festival was the culmination of a series of choreographer and producer exchanges between Eastern Europe and the United States that began in 1990 through the Dance Theater Workshop’s Suitcase Fund, and has been supported by a number of grants from the Trust for Mutual Understanding.
- The Florida/Brazil (Fla/Bra) Festival grew out of Tigertail Production’s long-standing relationship with artists in Brazil. This relationship grew out of Mary Luft’s 1986

research trip to South America to plan the New Music America event for Miami, and developed over time to include Brazilian artists living both in this country and abroad.

Finding 4: New technologies have great potential to build linkages that would enhance the development of international work, but are only beginning to be used in that way.

The existence of the Internet and its ability to build communities of interest around specific art forms was cited in several focus group discussions as a factor in the growth of interest in world music. As a vehicle for communication among practitioners themselves, use of the Internet is growing, but has not yet enabled significant linkages across the boundaries cited in this report.

Our case studies suggest that current use of the Internet as a tool for coordinating development work and dissemination remains somewhat *ad hoc* in nature. In regard to dissemination of information, larger presenters are using the Internet, in particular the World Wide Web, for serve existing marketing. New commercial ventures such as CultureFinder, TicketWeb, and Ticketmaster Online provide a marketing channel to smaller presenters, though attitudes appear mixed regarding the results. To a lesser degree, larger presenters, in particular the Kennedy Center, have also begun to use the Web to disseminate contextual information.

The case studies offer a number of examples of the use of the Internet to reach new markets for work in development.

- Email listservs helped to build national public interest in the Gypsy Caravan tour, as word got out through the listserv to the Gypsy community around the country. Otherwise, this community is largely invisible to presenters and it would have been impossible for presenters to reach them through more conventional publicity routes.
- Another example is the Afro-Cuba website and listserv which posts announcements about Cuban performing artists. Use of the listserv by the organizers of the Dos Alas and Muñequitos tours had two outcomes: 1) it enabled the tour organizers to reach community presenters that are not part of the usual Arts Presenters/NPN/NDP booking networks, but have strong interest in this genre of work and whose constituents are its prime audience; 2) it built informed, enthusiastic audiences for the work who may not have been on the mailing lists, etc. of tour presenters.

The use of the Internet to research, develop, and promote international projects generally appeared to be *ad hoc* and limited. Presenters noted that they would access internet databases for information and for developing partnerships for projects if it was easy to access and the information was current and useful.

Distribution Strategies and Services

Finding 5: The role of artist management in developing and implementing international projects has been misunderstood and often is overlooked. The role of managers in this field needs to be better defined and stronger links developed between presenters and managers.

The study's November meeting of managers in New York City confirmed that managers perform multiple critical roles in international commissioning and touring that serve presenters, artists, and the media. Their work intersects with many other players in the course of mounting international projects: they can identify and research artists and share information with presenters; they assess the viability of bringing work to the United States, in terms of possible presenter, audience, and funder interest; they have a key marketing role, developing materials and adapting photographic and video materials produced abroad so that they will work in this country; they are experienced in dealing with the INS.

Managers may invest many years in developing international projects without subsidy, but with the expectation that the investment will pay off in a successful tour. The artist manager producing a tour may be the only player with a truly national perspective and an understanding of national booking possibilities and marketing needs.

The Miami focus group echoed these observations, noting that most presenters don't have the capacity also to be tour managers. A presenter may work hard to develop a project to present at his or her venue, and the artists may then want to tour, but it is difficult for the local presenter to organize touring arrangements. The Miami group acknowledged the many missed opportunities where much is invested to get an artist to Miami, and then no other connections are developed for lack of an artist manager.

NEFA's National Dance Project has addressed this issue in the context of domestic dance touring by organizing a network of "hub site" presenters that can then work together and with other presenters to create tours. These presenters, however, cannot fulfill the multiple functions of artist managers. Indeed, presenters at the Western and New England focus group meetings underlined the importance of management involvement with international projects; they look to managers to shelter them from a lot of the complications and problems associated with bringing artists to the U.S. from abroad.

Observations from the field further confirm the benefits of having artist managers to oversee artist activities in international projects:

- Lisa Booth Management is a strong management company that works closely with The Henson International Festival of Puppet Theater in New York City to plan and execute tours beyond New York. This relationship enables a city-wide festival to gain national visibility. The partnership is ongoing and both management and presenter are involved in programming decisions. Each relies on the expertise of the other – Lisa Booth Management is able to assess the touring viability of particular projects; while the

Henson International Festival has deep experience in the art form, which brings credibility to touring.

- The contrast between the *Geography* and *Destiny* projects emphasizes the need for project managers to facilitate the many details of working with artists and organizing the productions; the lack of such assistance in *Destiny* put undo stress on the artist/producing organization, a situation which hampered ability to tour the work and continue the international collaboration.
- The Los Muñequitos tour is an example of a well-managed project, where a partnership between MultiArts Projects and Productions (management/production organization), Dance Theater Workshop/ Suitcase Fund (presenter and funder), and the Colorado Dance Festival (presenter) ensured that all aspects of the tour and residency were well organized and that each partner contributed its best expertise to the overall effort.

The Western focus group presenters want to see the ranks of experienced international artist managers expanded to handle the growing demand for such work among presenters and audiences. They proposed the development of mentoring and other manager development models to develop a cadre of international-savvy artist managers.

Finding 6: Working partnerships that include artists, artist management, and presenters are essential to the success of projects, and to moving the project from one stage of development to the next.

The above observations about the importance of the artist manager in the international presenting equation confirms the need to approach the development of international work through a system that brings together artists, presenters, and managers. Establishing good working relationships among those three players has proven to be a key to international project success. The case studies offer some examples:

- Ralph Lemon's *Geography* benefited from multiple partners. It was a co-production of the Yale Repertory Theatre and Cross Performance Inc. (Ralph Lemon's organization, managed by MultiArts Projects and Productions), which provided management and logistical support. Yale Rep had substantial connections and resources to support the project and 651 Arts also joined as partner. CPI played a crucial role, however, in artist-to-artist relations, building links between the theater producing and presenting communities, and in attracting additional funding and more national visibility to the project through touring.
- In the case of *Things Fall Apart*, an attempted partnership between a set of U.S. presenters and a British management agency revealed the strengths and weaknesses of such arrangements across international lines. The British management agency played a direct role in the U.K. production, and was able to work as a liaison between the U.S. presenters and the British and Nigerian artists. The British agency and the Kennedy

Center (as lead presenter) worked together to organize tour logistics. In this case, however, what “fell apart” was the potential local role of management. Because the management agency was in U.K. there was no one on the project experienced in dealing with U.S. presenter needs, timelines, etc. In this case, by default Kennedy Center took on some of that role; however neither the Kennedy Center nor the other presenters were entirely satisfied with this resolution.

The strong relationships between presenter Roberta Uno at New World Theater and the play’s director Chuck Mike and writer Chinua Achebe were instrumental in ensuring the success of the residency in Amherst. Uno invited Achebe to present a live reading of the work which proved to be a central component of the week-long residency and helped to ensure the financial participation of academic departments at UMass Amherst and local public schools. Uno also arranged for Chuck Mike to visit New World several months prior to the performances and present a case study about *Things Fall Apart* at the theater’s *Intersections* conference.

Contextualization

Finding 7: Audiences are growing for international work, but audience development will continue to be a challenge over the long term.

Focus groups and case studies confirmed a central dilemma of international presenting—that the audience can be a “moving target.” Identifying which markets to target and how to attract them to the theater for a variety of international performances is a difficult task. The task is complicated by the sense that each individual performance requires a discrete marketing strategy. As the project advisors noted in their initial meeting, the audiences for international work tend to be unstable—different audience segments may turn out for the work of a particular artist who represents one nationality, but not develop a general interest in international work as a category.

This lack of audience “crossover” was a repeated theme. The International Hispanic Theater Festival has not succeeded in making the festival appealing to the “Anglo audience,” who feel apprehension about unfamiliar language and culture. The contrasting example, The American Composers Orchestra, in their *Sonidos de las Americas: Cuba* project, found that they were able to attract many new audience members who came just for the Cuban music. The good response was the result of aggressive marketing, which included concerts in community venues, and the hiring of a Latino publicist and Spanish-speaking intern to work with the Latino press and community partners. Yet, the crossover effect was minimal, with few of the new audience members returning for other ACO concerts.

Nevertheless, the New England focus group cautioned against assuming that people from a culturally specific community will always be motivated to attend work from their native country. The ACO was discouraged from targeting certain Cuban communities because of their political objections to exchange with communist Cuba. The Flynn Theater, when it presented the Indian dancer, Chandralekah, reached out to the Indian community. But it also targeted the feminist

community, acknowledging that within the Indian community, Chandralekah's work represented a departure from accustomed forms.

Clearly, every presenter of international work faces short-term challenges of how to market particular artists and performances to both particular and general audiences, as well as the long-term challenge of building crossover and repeat audience potential. The exception that proves the rule was cited by Miami presenters in their focus group meeting—50 percent non-Jamaican attendance at an annual reggae festival. In this regard, as certain culturally specific forms such as reggae become more widely recognized and embraced by a popular audience, they may parallel the situation for classical music, where culturally specific forms are practiced in a variety of cultures.

Figuring out who the potential audiences are and how to reach them, and providing good marketing and contextual materials to educate audiences and make them feel more comfortable are strategies that study participants would like to see emphasized in every international project.

The experiences of some case study participants indicate that the more aggressive efforts may have a greater chance of broader appeal, especially if they build upon a larger community interest in a particular culture or area of the world. The Survival Arts Project, for example, brought a number of performing groups from Eastern Europe to cities in the United States. The project, which began in 1995, built upon a new American awareness of Eastern Europe as the Sarajevo conflict was coming to an end, and took the groups *to* the community through schools, churches, and community centers. The emphasis of the project was on developing cross-cultural understanding through face-to-face encounters.

All of these examples help confirm that laying a base for international cultural awareness in communities, and attracting diverse audiences to international performances, will likely continue to require special efforts, special materials, special strategies, and therefore, special resources. Successful international projects must build in the time, resources, and personnel to develop and carry out effective audience building.

<p>Finding 8: Presenters lack information about where to find expertise about specific cultural forms and the role of scholars in developing contextual knowledge and informing decision making is underdeveloped.</p>

Past studies described earlier established the need for good “contextual” information in international presenting. Such information is critical if presenters are to be sensitive to the expectations and requirements of international artists, to offer cogent and insightful explanations of the work to audiences in attendance, and to create effective and compelling educational, media, and community programs.

Many study participants, however, often do not know where to turn for the information they need. The leadership presenters identified in the Pew study may have some of the contacts and

knowledge others seek, but they are overburdened with their own work, and find it difficult to also serve as information conduits to the rest of the field.

The identification of more scholars and artists who can provide a variety of services, including assistance with programming decisions, development of contextual material, and conducting engaging public presentations emerged as a high priority for the field. Again, individual presenters may have researched and compiled their own networks of such resources, but that knowledge is not widely disseminated. Moreover, contextual material and humanities components developed for projects often are generated just for local presentation, and tend not to travel with the project, diminishing their impact.

The Miami focus group participants pointed out that there are people in the field with vast knowledge in particular areas, who have investigated deeply. Those people need to be recognized and compensated for their contributions to projects, so that international projects may benefit from their expertise without taking advantage of them. Ideally, scholars, practitioners, and artists who can play a variety of roles in bringing an international project to fruition would be included in a database that would be well maintained and widely accessible.

The case studies offer many examples of projects that were significantly enriched at many levels by the participation of a variety of scholars and experts:

- The Gypsy Caravan Tour hired a folklorist to act as tour manager and to give pre-performance lectures. This individual also provided program notes and worked with local presenters to identify and reach out to local gypsy communities.
- In *Things Fall Apart*, the relationship of New World Theater director Roberta Uno with the author and her ability to collaborate with various university departments ensured that the work was presented in proper context, that audiences understood the work and had multiple opportunities to become better educated/prepared for what they were to see.
- Cal Performances engaged a number of experts in residency activities around the Berliner Ensemble appearance in Berkeley, including the artistic director of the Berkeley Repertory Theater hosting an extended on-stage conversation with Berliner Ensemble lead actor Martin Wuttke, and a colloquium on Bertold Brecht featuring professors from a number of area universities.
- In the Sonidos de las Americas Cuba project, a program book in Spanish and English was developed that contained scholarly articles on the history of Cuban music. The American Composers Orchestra also partnered with the Latin American Music Center of Indiana University which has become the repository and archive of scores, tapes, biographical and other materials from the project; these have also been made available on-line for students and scholars.

Finding 9: A definition of international work that excludes international artists based in the United States is inherently self-limiting and counter to the concept of international presenting as a complex system. These artists can be a key asset of the system that brings work to the U.S., as well as an underutilized source of knowledge and artistry.

One byproduct of increased globalization and the demographic shifts in the United States population is the availability of talented “international” artists who are residents of this country. They should be seen as a resource to international presenting. The Cambodian project in New England, draws on the population of Southeast Asian masters of dance and music, who are now more concentrated in New England than in Cambodia. Geography used artists from Abidjian, as well as a young African-American dancer from Virginia, and Moussa Diabate, a master percussionist and dancer from Guinea living in Brooklyn. In several cities that hosted the Asia Society’s Festival of Korea, the presentations from Korea were complemented by performances by locally based Korean artists – a context that helped the project have strong relevance to the local population.

It turns out, however, that definitions matter. Presenters in New England have found that it is more difficult to attract audiences to see U.S.-based Cambodian artists, because they are viewed as local. An artist coming to this country from far away spurs more media attention than a locally-based artist who performs frequently in the area. Some funders may limit their support to international work that follows a strict definition of being from abroad.

There are signs, however, that as our communities become more inherently “international” in nature, a more holistic view of what may be categorized as international is taking hold. One Los Angeles-based presenter at the study’s Western focus group noted that with many different cultures represented in LA, he can find international excellence at home. When he brings in work from other countries, he focuses on cultures and artists that would not otherwise be available locally, in order to present a broad cultural menu to his audiences.

Another participant in the meeting proposed thinking about “intercultural” work, that is, any work that crosses cultural lines, regardless of whether international boundaries are involved. Such a concept may avoid the false distinction between international work produced domestically and that produced abroad, and increase the visibility of U.S. based artists working in a variety of traditional and cross-cultural forms. The practice of Miami presenters is of particular interest. Perhaps due to the constant influx of new residents into this uniquely international U.S. city, presenters here quite comfortably include in their “international” festivals artists from many countries who live and work in South Florida.

Resource Development

Finding 10: Funding by foreign governments has a significant impact on the choice of international work to be presented in this country, and creates inequities around the promotion and visibility of a range of cultures.

The mismatch between the funding available to U.S. and foreign presenters derives from foreign governments' subsidies to their nations' cultural activities, especially the touring of their own artists. As the 1995 Pew report noted, in contrast to many countries, the United States has a more *ad hoc* approach to supporting international cultural exchange, featuring an uneven landscape of public-private partnerships that rely on multiple sources of funding.

The result is predictable. U.S. presenters may tend to focus their research travel on countries where the foreign government is subsidizing the trip, and when it comes time to book work, subsidized artists will have a definite advantage. But, not every country can afford to provide the same level of subsidy, and without sufficient funding from within the U.S. for international travel and booking (e.g., the impact of the decreasing resource of the Suitcase Fund on the ability of presenters and artists to do research in other countries and to support exchange), cultural inequities on U.S. stages are magnified.

Testimony of our focus group discussions indicates that a major factor for Western Europe remaining the largest contributor of international performances to the American stage is the significant level of subsidy available from European governments for international touring. The contrast depicted in *Figure 8* suggests that domestic foundations have succeeded to some extent in balancing the influence of foreign government subsidy, but the effect of non-U.S. resources is still disproportionate.

A number of the case study projects relied significantly on foreign support, and demonstrate the importance of such support in the landscape of international presenting:

- In *Things Fall Apart*, the Nigerian government and corporations provided significant support to allow this work, which had originated in London, to be remounted in Nigeria, before touring to the United States. In the U.S., the Kennedy Center was able to leverage that support to raise funds to bring the piece to this country; that enabled other U.S. presenters to come on board with tour fees.
- For the Berliner Ensemble's tour of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* to Berkeley and Los Angeles, the Goethe Institut (which has an office in San Francisco), provided sole external funding support.
- The U.S.-Portugal Dance Exchange project had support from the Portuguese Ministry of Culture, the Luso American Foundation, the Gulbenkian Foundation, and the Camões Institute.

- Although the Suitcase Fund had supported volumes I and II of Beppie Blankert's Charles Ives project, Blankert's ability to access funding in The Netherlands as well as support from the Netherlands consulate in New York City was critical to the presentation and touring of these works in the U.S.
- The Atlantic Crossings tour of young traditional musicians to Canada, the U.S., and England was made possible with support from the British Council, the Arts Council of England, Northern Arts (in the U.K.), and the Quebec Delegation. This project also had U.S. government support, however, in the form of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New England Foundation for the Arts.

Closer examination of these and other case studies reveals, however, that funding from foreign governments and other foreign sources doesn't just appear. It is more often the result of the same sort of networking and cultivation that leads to funding from domestic sources. In the case of the Berliner Ensemble, Cal Performances director Robert Cole had been developing his relationship with the Goethe Institut for 15 years. For *Things Fall Apart*, the Kennedy Center relied on its history of working with Nigerian artists and government through its African Odyssey program. The Atlantic Crossings project was the direct result of an ongoing exchange established by NEFA with Northern Arts in the North of England.

Assuring diversity of cultural representation in U.S. performing arts programming will require the development of increasingly widespread and sophisticated international networks and relationships that can leverage support both abroad and at home.

Finding 11: The production of new international work requires a different set of supports and a longer developmental period than is usually available in the current system.

The ideal of international collaboration to produce new work addressed in the Ford Foundation report places unusual demands on a system ill-suited to accommodate it. The Ford report notes the necessity of a "gestation" period in the development of such work—a time with no apparent public benefits, but yet critical to the process of melding two or more artistic visions into something new. Finding the resources, time, and place to bring artists together for a "research and development" phase of work remains difficult. And, even if a piece is created, the ability to present and tour it may be limited.

At the New England focus group, the director of the Bates Dance Festival described how the Festival has become a place for foreign artists to interface with the American dance and music community and share aesthetic perspectives. While at the Festival, the artists are focused on the process of working together, but the support doesn't exist to enable them to take the next steps.

The case studies confirm this observation:

- Vincent Mantsoe, a South African choreographer and dancer, met Philip Hamilton, a vocal artist from New York City, at the Bates Dance Festival. The two developed a strong connection with each other’s work and wanted an opportunity to work together. Bates secured support for Mantsoe to return to the Festival to create *Phokwane* with Philip Hamilton during the summer of 1998. The piece is complete, but no money or expertise is available to tour the project.

- The Kali project is a result of the Visible Religion collaboration. Kali built on the original Visible Religion work by bringing some of the artists back together, along with some new collaborators. However, while Visible Religion culminated in a tangible conclusion and project, the Ford Foundation’s Internationalizing New Works program allowed the Kali project to develop a creative residency without particular product expectations. However, Ford funding will make possible two upcoming performances as a result of the projects—performances that would not have had support from other sources.

Database analysis further confirms the anecdotal experience of study participants. *Figure 19* shows the breakdown of funding over the 1994-98 period by type of support provided. As noted

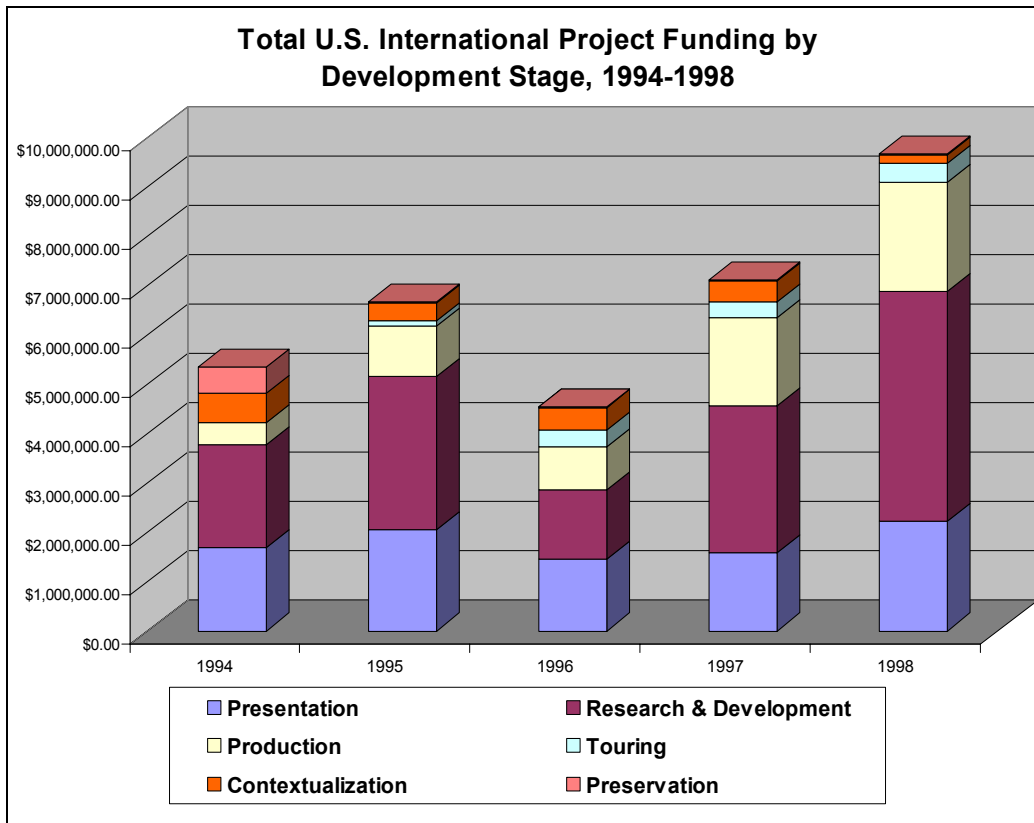


Figure 19 - Total U.S. Funding for International Work by Category, 1994-1998

above, funding for research and development of work, and its production and presentation, has dominated the grants made in international presenting. At the same time, funding for contextualization to support audience development and for disseminating work through touring has been extremely limited.

There is a need to view the development, presentation, and touring of international as a system, much as this report has urged looking at the artist/presenter/manager triangle as a system. Having the resources to realize only pieces of the system fails to make maximum use of the investment of people, time, and resources in international work.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of our research, the four areas outlined above--network development, distribution strategies and services, contextualization, and resource development--have emerged as spheres in which funders, existing networks, leadership presenting organizations, and service organizations can strategically work to advance current practice and alter present conditions. This report offers a number of recommendations oriented at addressing needs within these crucial areas.

Two additional areas were identified during our research: advocacy needs and governmental barriers. We do not offer recommendations in these areas because there is significant emerging activity aimed at addressing these areas. In the case of advocacy, the restructuring of Arts International promises an effective means of promoting advocacy through an independent national service organization. In the case of governmental barriers, the American Symphony Orchestra League recently published a guidebook to visa and tax requirements for foreign guest artists titled *Artists From Abroad*, which is being distributed through Arts Presenters.

Our summary of present needs and recommendations for each area follows:

Network Development

In the area of Network Development, the following needs emerged as the most pressing:

- a) International discussions need to become an integral part of domestic discussions at all levels;
- b) Presenters need the ability to network within regions, across regions and internationally and develop functional partnerships between organizations of all sizes;
- c) Project developers need an effective means to buy and sell projects and enlist partners at all stages;
- d) Presenters must have access to information about international work in development.

Recommendation 1: Encourage existing national networks to develop formal structural mechanisms that better serve their members' international activity.

Within the U.S., existing national networks such as Arts Presenters, the National Performance Network, and the National Dance Project have evolved to effectively serve the domestic presenting and producing needs of specific constituencies. In general, their structural frameworks are well-aligned to promote this work on the domestic side. The functions that they perform domestically can be internationalized only if they undertake organized action to identify existing *ad hoc* international linkages among their members and develop sets of formal international links on the network level that extend these to their full memberships within appropriate structures.

Each of the domestic national networks should undertake a formal process to examine the current and projected international interests of their members. This work should take place within the context of normal network activity. Each network should use its primary annual meeting as the setting to examine the structural requirements for supporting the international work of its members. An essential component of these meetings should be carefully considered invitations to appropriate representatives of peer networks in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa to participate and provide input.

Based on their findings, these national networks should each design a set of functional services linked to offshore networks that they can offer to their members.

U.S. funders committed to international activity can play a catalytic role by encouraging these networks to undertake such a process. In particular, as a supporter of both domestic and offshore networks in the arts, the Rockefeller Foundation might play a key role by brokering and supporting opportunities for these networks to develop linked international services.

<p>Recommendation 2: National and regional networks should provide their members with opportunities to learn effective means of building necessary partnerships for international work.</p>
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Our research suggests that international projects cannot be successfully produced and promoted on the domestic side if communication and activity takes place only within existing networks. Individuals and organizations that play different functional roles in the system that brings foreign work to the U.S.--managers, record companies, international artists resident in the U.S.--are essential elements in the mix of successful projects.

Network organizations within the non-profit sphere should be encouraged to provide formal programming that helps their members build and sustain linkages beyond their network peers. In addition to the national networks, regional networks that might serve this need include presenter consortia such as California Presenters, regional service organizations such as the Southern Arts Federation, or presenter conferences such as WAA. Again, these organizations can build from the *ad hoc* sets of relationships that have been built by their members in relation to specific projects.

Such programming could profitably utilize existing convenings, or develop special programming in relation to regional centers of international activity such as the International Hispanic Theater Festival, Spoleto, the National Black Arts Festival, or the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival.

Recommendation 3: Networks should work collectively to build online capacity to move international project work forward.

The development of the Internet is the most promising means for breaking through traditional barriers to building knowledge, developing partnerships, and negotiating policy. On the national level, Arts International is working to build new online capacity to provide access to knowledge about international presenting activity and practices, which promises to provide significant new resources for building knowledge and negotiating policy.

A further strategic need is increased capacity of presenters and producers to use online networking to manage project work and extend its programming reach. Our research suggests that technologically proficient individuals and organizations in some cases have been able to share information about work-in-process in ways that cross traditional boundaries to reach presenters and audiences beyond their normal sphere. For work that involves international partnerships, increased capacity in online communication is an essential tool for communicating and coordinating action.

Some of the tools necessary for such communication are in common usage. But to fully realize the potential of the internet for transacting the business of international commissioning and touring, it will be necessary to create mechanisms for this purpose. As the Internet matures, such online business-to-business marketplaces are emerging as a strategic mechanism for linking vertical components of industries. As yet, no comparable mechanisms exist for the performing arts in the U.S.--for either domestic or international work. Many of the linkages that are necessary for developing international work--relationships between producers, managers, cultural communities, artists, and presenters--could be mediated online, as some have been in an *ad hoc* fashion.

Existing national networks provide an appropriate structure for building mechanisms that assist in the production of new work. These potentially include mechanisms for polling interest in projects in development; disseminating technical information about specific projects; creating online bulletin boards to facilitate communication between project partners; issuing RFP's for specific services; and, as discussed below, developing and disseminating contextual information.

With the surge of business-to-business online marketplaces in the commercial sector, it can be expected that existing U.S. performing arts networks will begin attempting to build their own online marketplaces. Because of the potential benefits of such developments to promoting international work, such efforts should be encouraged and supported. At the same time, a natural tendency would be for existing networks to build such enterprises as proprietary services for their members. Such a tendency would enhance domestic presenting to an extent, but because of the issues of cross-linking that have been cited throughout this report, these will not significantly support the extension of international work beyond its present state.

For this reason, such efforts should be encouraged and supported as they begin to emerge, and the networks that take the lead in this area should be encouraged to work in a consortium

approach to develop sets of protocols through which information can be propagated beyond their immediate sphere of influence.

Distribution Strategies and Services

In the area of distribution strategies and services, the following key needs were identified:

- a) Projects need significant logistical support in order to move beyond local audiences
- b) Excellent work produced in a culturally specific or regional contexts are unable to gain access to national markets
- c) Working relationships between artists, presenting and producing organizations, and tour managers need to be established early in the lifecycle of a project

Recommendation 4: Producers and lead presenters of international work should be actively encouraged and supported to treat management and tour production services as a built-in cost associated with project development.

One of the most significant findings from this study is the fact that most international work within the nonprofit sector fails to find distribution beyond the immediate sphere of the producer organization or lead presenter because artist management is either not involved at all, or only involved at the distribution phase. The case studies and focus group meetings indicate that the projects most successful in gaining distribution involve partnerships with management early in the production phase.

Working partnerships with artist managers are present to a greater extent in the commercial sector and to a limited degree in the non-profit sector among the largest presenters. In large part, this is because the cost of management services is associated with projected revenue rather than projected subsidy, acting as a disincentive to engage with management earlier in a project. Yet failure to engage management early in the process has two observed consequences: 1) in essence, projects without management involvement have proved to be projects without distribution; and 2) managers may be potential gateways to associated distribution services such as record company promotion, which are difficult to develop later in a production's lifecycle.

As we have noted, U.S. funding for touring has been relatively minor, while research and production funding have fluctuated in response to the interests of major funders of non-U.S. work. Because management has been associated with the costs of touring, there is a double disincentive for the non-profit sector to formally engage management services. In turn, managers are less inclined to develop partnerships in relation to work that is not commercially driven.

If distribution is essential to improving U.S.-based systems for international work, then U.S. funders must engage with the issue of management services and their role in international commissioning and touring. Where there are expectations for distribution, the resource provider

should provide positive influence on producing organizations through support for management services as part of development costs.

A further inhibiting factor for expanding the reach of international projects is the relatively small pool of U.S. management firms that work with non-U.S. artists. It is our belief that any funder actions that associate management services with project development more than distribution will have two beneficial outcomes in this regard. First, it will provide economic incentives for expanding the pool of managers involved with international work. Second, it will make engaged organizations and artists the drivers for this expansion, thereby helping to assure that managers with appropriate commitments are most successful.

Contextualization

In the area of contextualization, the following are key needs:

- a) The field lacks a consistent and accessible set of resources that can provide information on the cultural context of international work.
- b) Travel funds for U.S. presenter/manager research both within and outside the U.S. are lacking, or are channeled by specific cultural agendas.
- c) A systemic model for support of international work requires an expanded definition that acknowledges the roles and relationships of resident foreign artists and diasporic communities within the U.S.

Recommendation 5: Expanding contextual resource information--Level 1: Develop an online directory of knowledge providers with expertise in specific cultures and geographic regions.

At each of the meetings held for this study, this recommendation emerged with the greatest regularity. Clearly there is significant desire among practitioners for a resource that will assist in identifying appropriate expertise as they engage with international work beyond their immediate knowledge. The desire for such a resource goes beyond contextualization needs to include research and evaluation needs.

It also seems evident that the pool of individuals already identified by U.S. presenters is not likely to adequately meet potential demand. Identifying the group of individual scholars and other cultural experts--including artists born and trained outside the U.S.--who have worked successfully with producing/presenting organizations would be an extremely valuable resource to many prospective international projects. It is also essential to create a mechanism to identify individuals who could provide guidance and skills for cultural forms that go beyond existing presenting activity.

As the New England meeting revealed, record companies are a potential resource in this regard, because of their allied need to produce liner notes. It appears that some have compiled their own databases for this purpose. Another source of expertise are academic programs such folklore,

anthropology, and area studies departments. Within these disciplines, resource compilations already exist that would be useful. (see the Library of Congress website at lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/other.html for examples).

It would appear that the development of such a national resource would be within the mission and capacity of Arts International, and we recommend that they be supported for this purpose.

Recommendation 6: Expanding contextual resource information--Level 2: Leverage local development of contextual information for tours.

A common pattern that emerged from our research was the practice of university based presenters to utilize the resources of their institution to expand and enhance contextualization activities of existing tours for their own audiences. Often, successful and innovative activities and products have been the result. In many cases, these local contextual products could enhance the value of an international tour throughout its life span, but in most cases they do not travel with the tour.

Because these products and activities are particular to each production, they are not conducive to a general clearinghouse approach. What is required is the ability of tour producers to engage with presenters as a project develops to broker resources and leverage their more general use. The most effective means for allowing the development of such relationships would be the type of online marketplace outlined above in recommendation 3.

Recommendation 7: Expanding contextual resource information--Level 3: Develop online system of cultural/geographic contextual information on artistic forms.

At a more general level, there is a need for information that is not related to a specific artistic production, but provides more general background on artistic forms in their cultural/geographic context. As the Internet develops, a myriad of sites devoted to specific forms will increasingly proliferate. However, the issues of navigability, consistency, and reliability of information will continue to be a barrier to their use in international commissioning and touring.

In addition to contextual material for specific artists and productions, arts organizations in the U.S. have been engaged in producing more generally useful contextual information. The Kennedy Center's work in developing teacher education materials in the context of ArtsEdge is perhaps the most relevant example. Other institutions are developing the capacity for rich, multimedia contextual material, such as the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance.

U.S. funders should continue to support such activities, and should also stimulate efforts toward a coordinated system for access and use. Regional centers with a longer term commitment to certain kinds of geographic/cultural material should be invited to play a role in developing more general field resources. Existing consortia, such as the Dance Heritage Coalition, provide a

useful model for a set of relationships in which members play a set of distinct and coordinated information and archival functions. Coordination of regional efforts could be managed through an RFP process and a set of common protocols. Such an effort should bridge functionally different institutions, as well, to engage related knowledge builders such as record companies, cultural centers, and appropriate value-based commercial enterprises.

Recommendation 8: Strengthen opportunities for U.S. presenter/manager research.

While funding for research has increased dramatically because of the Ford initiative, the need for unstructured opportunities for U.S.-based organizations in general to explore unfamiliar work remains unmet. Within the non-profit funding system, manager research is best supported indirectly by the stimulation of management services outlined above. For non-profit organizations, the decline of support through mechanisms such as the Suitcase Fund has had a deleterious effect.

U.S. funders should explore ways either individually or in consortia to support need in this area.

Resource Development

In this area, the following emerged as primary needs:

- a) Project developers must take into account and be adequately supported to move from development to dissemination.
- b) Ad hoc and potential intersections between domestic and non-U.S. funding need to be examined and addressed to allow more strategic resource development linking compatible interests.
- c) Funders and practitioners alike would benefit from a better understanding of the linkages required to support international project development.
- d) Systems for evaluating, supporting, and developing international work need to be globalized.

Recommendation 9: Funding support at any level should take into account the full trajectory of project development and dissemination.

As we note throughout this report, if the goal of effective project development and dissemination is to be met, a set of linkages between the interests of artists, producers, managers, and audiences must be considered and strategically addressed. At each stage of development, resource allocation decisions will affect the eventual outcome.

It should be acknowledged that this report focuses on the production of new work through commissioning activity and on dissemination through touring. Not every international project has one or both of these goals, nor should it. However, it is clear that new commissions and

dissemination activities are an essential element of building international engagement in the performing arts field. For this work to succeed, an integrated plan of development is necessary.

The implication here is that a clear statement of goals should be articulated early in every international project. On the practitioner side, artists, arts organizations, and managers should develop their practice with this clearly in mind. On the funder side, evaluation of potential success in relation to stated goals at any stage of development should be made in relation to the planned trajectory of the entire project.

In concrete terms, network organizations can play a beneficial role by developing opportunities for their members to benefit from each other's experience through forums, mentoring opportunities, and by sharing the histories of work such as that detailed in this report's case study. Funders should review guidelines with the goal of encouraging responsible practice, and can also support opportunities for peer learning in the field.

Recommendation 10: U.S. funders committed to international work should examine structural issues involved in international public/private partnerships and work to develop international mechanisms for strategically linking compatible interests.

Our review of the recent funding history of international work in this country, together with case studies and feedback from focus group meetings, highlights a particular resource issue that impedes progress in this area. The effect of non-U.S. governmental funding in a resource mix that lacks equivalent U.S. government support creates a situation of regional imbalance and creates barriers to opportunities because of incompatibilities in the timing of project development.

In the present environment, private U.S. funding largely acts in a compensatory fashion to offset the effect of non-U.S. government support as noted above. Where international communication among resource providers is channeled along public to public and private to private lines, potential opportunities for strategic funding partnerships for international work are a lost.

Within the U.S. experience, at least three major roles in relation to capacity building can be identified for network organizations: convening, field development, and resource development. With regard to resource development, a strength of U.S. networks has been their ability to leverage public and private dollars. A considerable difficulty for U.S. networks in regard to international work has been the challenge of building connections between non-similar resource providers where functional public to public and private to private resource relationships are absent. At best, these can only be pursued on an *ad hoc* basis by individual presenting/producing institutions.

In essence, what is lacking is a consistent mechanism for revealing international cross-sectoral interest that can be translated into more sustainable commissioning and touring strategies. The

one exception that proves the viability of such a mechanism has been the U.S./Mexico Fund, linking the perspective of a private U.S. funder with a non-U.S. government.

Among the lead U.S. funders of international work, we believe that the Rockefeller Foundation is in a unique position to influence the development of such cross-sectoral international linkages. The Foundation should take a key role in analyzing implicit international public/private partnerships that have *ad hoc* expression in individual projects (see Appendix E for examples). As the primary U.S. based funder of both domestic and non-U.S. networks with current and potential international interest, the Rockefeller Foundation is in an advantageous position to convene appropriate networking organizations, funders, and key individuals to develop frameworks for converting implicit relationships into explicit ones.

Conclusions

This study reviewed the recent history and current state of international commissioning in the U.S. within the larger domestic system of presenting, producing, and disseminating work involving non-U.S. artists and cultural forms. Rather than focus on a single area, or identify an individual functional area, we have attempted to view the sets of interrelated relationships involved and to identify strategic actions that would have cascading benefits.

The recommendations outlined above should be viewed as a continuum of activity that can itself be arrayed in a development trajectory. The following table organizes our recommendation into short-, medium-, and long-term stages:

Short-Term	
Recommendation	Key Actors
National and regional networks should provide their members with opportunities to learn effective means of building necessary partnerships for international work. [Network Development]	Arts Presenters, National Performance Network, National Dance Project, other national performing arts networks; California Presenters, New England Presenters, other regional presenter consortia; WAA, NEPAC, Southern Arts Exchange, other regional presenter conferences.
Expand contextual resource information--Level 1: Develop an online directory of knowledge providers with expertise in specific cultures and geographic regions. [Contextualization]	Arts International
Strengthen opportunities for U.S. presenter/manager research. [Contextualization]	Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Trust for Mutual Understanding, Arts International, other lead U.S. funders with strong interest in international work.
Funding support at any level should take into account the full trajectory of project development and dissemination. [Resource Development]	Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Trust for Mutual Understanding, other lead U.S. funders with strong interest in international work; national performing arts network organizations.

Medium-Term	
Recommendation	Key Actors
Encourage existing national networks to develop formal structural mechanisms that better serve their members' international activity. [Network Development]	Arts Presenters, National Performance Network, National Dance Project, other national performing arts networks.
Networks should work collectively to build online capacity to move international project work forward. [Network Development]	Arts Presenters, National Performance Network, National Dance Project, Arts International, other national performing arts networks and service organizations.
Producers and lead presenters of international work should be actively encouraged and supported to treat management and tour production services as a built-in cost associated with project development. [Distribution Strategies and Services]	Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Trust for Mutual Understanding, other lead U.S. funders with strong interest in international work.
Expanding contextual resource information--Level 2: Leverage local development of contextual information for tours. [Contextualization]	National performing arts networks; presenter consortia
Long-Term	
Recommendation	Key Actors
Expanding contextual resource information--Level 3: Develop online system of cultural/geographic contextual information on artistic forms. [Contextualization]	Academic and regional centers, appropriate value-based non-profit and commercial enterprises (e.g., record companies)
U.S. funders committed to international work should examine structural issues involved in international public/private partnerships and work to develop international mechanisms for strategically linking compatible interests. [Resource Development]	Rockefeller Foundation; appropriate national and international performing arts networks; appropriate public/private U.S. and non-U.S. resource providers

NEFA's 1994 report concluded with the following observation: "the best partnerships in any international endeavor arise organically out of mutual interests and needs. They are forged with respect and clearly voiced expectations and understanding. . . they are grounded in the sense that

international means local, regional, and national.” Our recommendations here are intended to influence contemporary domestic systems in the U.S. in ways that will clear the path for such organic development.