



## COMMISSION ON CULTURE

### ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2009 – SEPTEMBER 2011

**The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Working Session** was successfully realized by the City of Turku, department of Culture 22-25 September 2009 on the theme “The Cultural Dimension of Baltic cooperation – Developing Creative Industries” with 7 lecturers and speakers. The session gathered together 20 participants from 8 countries and from 10 cities.

**The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Working Session** was hosted by the City of Umeå 22-23 October 2010 on the theme “The Role of Culture in Cityplanning” with 9 lectures and speakers. The session gathered together 29 participants from 6 countries and from 15 cities.

**The Board of the Commission** met in Tallinn 22-24 April 2010, in Umeå on 22-23 October 2010 and in Vilnius 14-16 April 2011. In Tallinn the CoC board met programme director Jaanus Rohumaa and administrative director Elena Natale from SA Tallinn 2011 who gave an overview of Tallinn 2011 programme. In Umeå Artistic Director Fredrik Lindegren and planning officers from different departments of the city administration gave an overview of the plans for the year 2014 when Umeå is going to be the European Capital of Culture. In Vilnius the board reflected with the officers from the Vilnius City Culture and Art Division and International division the experience of the past the European Capital of Culture 2009. In the closed board meetings the board discussed among other things the rules of the next election of the CoC board, budget, project plans for the future and decided about the winner of the UBC Cultural Prize.

The UBC Executive board had a meeting in Lahti 11 March 2011, where The Activity Report October 2009 – September 2010 of COC was presented.

CoC supported “**The Day of Culture**”, which is deeply related to the Pact of Peace established by Nicholas Roerich in 1929 and held every year 15<sup>th</sup> April, by spreading information about it and giving the right to use the name of UBC Commission on Culture in this connection. The chairperson of CoC gave commission’s greetings in the opening ceremony of the Day of Culture in Lithuanian parliament Seimas 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

In connection to the Day of Culture 15-16 April 2011 an international conference “**M. K. Chiurlionis and the Spice of Culture**” was organized in Vilnius and Kaunas where the CoC board participated. CoC’s contribution was also asked in the seminar held in M. K. Chiurlionis museum in Kaunas. Contacts with the International Association Peace through Culture were made during the conference.

**The Festival of the Baltic Cities** was held in St. Petersburg 11-13 June 2010. The main focus of the festival was drama. The city of Turku hosted the festival 13-19 May 2011 when the performing arts month was going on.

In connection to the Festival of Baltic Cities in Turku an **idea café** on a theme of European Capital of Culture was held on 14th May in Turku City Theatre. The director of culture of Turku Minna Sartes, the general secretary of the regional arts council of South-West Finland Henri Terho and the director of Turku City Theatre gave an overview how planning process of the European Capital of Culture had been taken care of. The idea café gathered together 15 participants from Finland and Poland.

The UBC commission on culture has been given out **the UBC Cultural Prize** since 2006. The idea is that the board of CoC invites the cities to candidate for the prize once a year and that the prize has a special theme each year. This year's theme was "Multicultural dialog". There were ten applications from five countries; Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. When choosing the candidate for the prize, the board of the commission on culture wanted to stress especially the Baltic dimension of the cultural activity. The prize of the year 2010 was given to Liepaja City Culture Department. The Liepaja City Culture Department has together with Liepaja Municipality, Liepaja City Puppet Theatre, Liepaja City NGOs and artist Aivars Kleins organized the Maritime Festival. The festival consists of three different parts; International Street Theatre Festival, Artists' Plein Air and the Stage of NGOs. The award ceremony was held in conjunction with the annual working session in Umeå and it took place in the Umeå 2014 "Glass house".

**European Neighbours Day** was celebrated 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010. European Federation of Local Solidarity ([www.european-neighbours-day.eu](http://www.european-neighbours-day.eu)) contacted CoC in order to get the Neighbours Day more known in the UBC network. The board decided to support the idea by spreading information to the UBC member cities. CoC was successful in spreading information and some UBC member cities made some Neighbours Day events in their cities.

CoC decided to collaborate with Bridging Ages network as a partner. The Bridging Ages network organized 17-19 November 2010 in Kalmar a **conference "Applied Cultural Heritage, How telling past at historic site benefits society"**. CoC supported the participation of the representatives of UBC member cities. The conference participants from the UBC member cities could apply support for accommodation and participation fee up to maximum 400 euros. An application form was made and sent to the contact persons of UBC member cities. All together 4 participants from UBC cities in Estonia, Lithuania and Sweden applied for the support.

Bridging Ages conference **Using Time Travel to Explore the Turning Points in History** as a theme was organized 3-5 June in Tallinn. It gathered together 80 participants of which 29 were Estonians, mostly teacher and museum staff. Other participants came from Finland, Sweden and 7 other countries from all over the world.

**Les Rencontres de Tallinn** was held 9-12 June in Tallinn. The chairperson of CoC was asked to represent UBC in session 2: Cultural dynamism of Baltic Sea States. Involvement of regional networks and European Capitals of Culture.

The chairperson of CoC had 29<sup>th</sup> August some preliminary discussions with the Regional Council of Satakunta and Department of Culture of the City of Pori about collaboration in organizing **Mid-Nordic Culture Days 2014** in Satakunta region in Finland together with CoC, the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia and Mid Nordic Committée Culture Group.

CoC supported the international project of arts **“Muses of the Sea”** which was dedicated to the International Day of Music 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011. The project was initiated by the Klaipeda State Musical Theatre.

Ars Baltica network presented in June 2011 an idea of establishment of a **Cultural Hansa**. CoC considered the initiative positive.

A series of workshops and meetings for planning a **Baltic Creative Management project** were held in Umeå 1-4 September, In Tallinn 12-14 October and in Jyväskylä 30 November – 1 December. The UBC cities that showed some interest to the project were Umeå, Vaasa, Tukums, Bergen, Riga, Rostock, Gdansk and Jyväskylä. Umeå is the leading city of the project and responsible for planning process.

Contacts with Les Rencontres, Ars Baltica, AER (Assembly of European Regions) Culture for health working group, Bridging Ages, Mid Nordic Committee Culture Group, International Association Peace through Culture, European Federation of Local Solidarity and other **international networks on culture** were developed and kept alive.

**The Catalogue of Cultural Institutions** is available on [www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net). Since 2006 it has included a network of cultural institutions around the Lake Victoria, in order to stimulate contacts with and within the sister organisation of UBC: Lake Victoria Regional and Local Authorities Cooperation (LVRLAC).

### **ACTION PLAN 2012-2013 (DRAFT)**

The new board that will be elected during the general conference in Liepaja 6<sup>th</sup> October is responsible for completing and overseeing the draft of action plan 2012-2013 that the old board has prepared.

1. The UBC Cultural Prize will recognize extraordinary achievement by artistic groups or associations working in the field of cultural activity in UBC member cities. The idea is that the Board invites the cities to candidate for that prize once a year and that the prize has a special theme each year.

2. The traditional Annual Working Sessions initiated by the board or by the member cities will continue with focus on a special cultural field each year. The possibilities of organizing a working session 2012 in St. Petersburg are studied during autumn 2011. The city of Pori has also shown interest to host the session together with the Regional Council of Satakunta in 2014 in connection with the Mid Nordic Culture Days.

3. Co-operation with the Festival of Baltic Cities will be developed. St. Petersburg is in turn to host the festival in 2012. The host of the year 2013 is open.

4. CoC is supporting "The Day of Culture", which is deeply related to the Pact of Peace established by Nicholas Roerich in 1929 and held every year 15<sup>th</sup> April, by giving the right to use the name of UBC Commission on Culture in this connection.

5. Contacts and collaboration with Les Rencontres, Ars Baltica, AER (Assembly of European Regions) Culture for health working group, Bridging Ages, Mid Nordic Committee Culture Group, International Association Peace through Culture, European Federation of Local Solidarity and other international networks on culture will be developed and kept alive.

6. The board will meet 2-3 times every year in different UBC cities and the local contact persons of UBC will be invited to the meetings.

7. The Catalogue of Cultural Institutions will be available at [www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net).

Vaasa, September 2011

Tarja Hautamäki, Chairperson