

Artistic Production and Cultural Identity in U.S. Immigrant and Diasporic Communities

This report is the result of a research project commissioned
by the Asia Society's Cultural Programs and Performing Arts Department
and made possible by a grant from The Ford Foundation.

© December 2005 by Asia Society
All rights reserved.

Artistic Production and Cultural Identity in U.S. Immigrant and Diasporic Communities

Table of Contents

Introduction: Considerations for Support Strategies.....	2
<i>Vanessa Whang with Rachel Cooper and San San Wong</i>	
Overview of the Case Studies.....	14
<i>Seemin Qayum</i>	
Executive Summaries of the Case Studies*	
Corridos and Community in Southern Arizona: Dynamics of Folk, Commercial, and Nonprofit Cultural Production.....	27
<i>Maribel Alvarez</i>	
FESTI-Andes and Beyond: Performing Identity in a Trans-Local (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut) Andean Immigrant Community.....	31
<i>Cristian Amigo</i>	
Natya Dance Theatre: A Bharatanatyam Dance Company within the Indian Community of the Greater Chicago Area.....	34
<i>Uttara Coorlawala</i>	
Preserving Traditions, Creating Traditions: South Asian Performing Art Organizations in New York City.....	37
<i>Madhulika Khandelwal</i>	
Cultural Intersections in Seattle, Washington: A Geographic Case Study.....	40
<i>Susan Kunimatsu</i>	
Creative Process/Creative Interchange: An Exploration of Senegalese Dance in Washington, D.C.....	45
<i>Hallie Stone</i>	
Arts, Identity, and Healing in a Community in Transition: Cultural Production in the Cambodian American Community in Long Beach.....	48
<i>Khatharya Um</i>	
Development and Support of Taiko in the United States.....	52
<i>Paul Yoon</i>	
Additional Essays	
Immigrant Arts Training and Transmission: A View from California	56
<i>Amy Kitchener</i>	
Cultural Intermediaries: Conversations with Ron Chew, Joel Jacinto, and Francis Wong	71
<i>Betsy Peterson</i>	
Case Studies Framework.....	81
Biographies of Project Staff.....	84

* The full case studies are available at <http://www.asiasociety.org>

INTRODUCTION: CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Vanessa Whang with Rachel Cooper and San San Wong

There are unprecedented demographic shifts taking place with respect to race and ethnicity, age, economics, education, and geographic population densities in areas throughout the U.S. These shifts, in turn, are resulting in cultural changes that are impacting societal values, practices, and policies at every level—from neighborhoods to governmental institutions and from transnational communities to globalized enterprises.

By the middle of this century, there will no longer be a single racial majority in the United States. This growth is attributed to a combination of immigration and U.S. birth rates, including a rise in (and documentation of) multi-race populations. If current growth trajectories continue, the non-White Hispanic and the Asian/Pacific Islander populations will both triple by 2050. In addition, the total number of foreign-born individuals will more than double, increasing from 26 million to nearly 54 million.

Patterns of rising immigration have already begun to take shape. Today, approximately eleven percent of the total U.S. population is foreign born. Immigrants no longer concentrate only in traditional gateway states such as California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois and New Jersey. As many as twenty-two other states with relatively low immigrant numbers prior to 1990 saw foreign-born populations grow by more than 90 percent in the past decade. Of these states, nineteen had their foreign-born populations more than double during this period. The ten states with the fastest growing immigrant populations were: North Carolina (274%), Georgia (233%), Nevada (202%), Arkansas (196%), Utah (171%), Tennessee (169%), Nebraska (165%), Colorado (160%), Arizona (136%), and Kentucky (135%).¹ As these statistics indicate, the immigration growth phenomenon is pervasive throughout the nation.

Also, many Americans are living transnational lives, with feet firmly planted in two or more countries. How immigrants, and Americans in general, identify themselves culturally is becoming a much more complex issue. The discussion has moved from encompassing monolithic assignments and definitions of cultural identity and identity development processes, to a diverse, complex matrix of definitions. As Peggy Levitt notes:

There is no monolithic American culture that immigrants assimilate into. Migrants adopt some values and practices but not others, and they do so at different rates. They gain access to some social and economic institutions and are blocked from integrating into others. They may exhibit structural assimilation without cultural... assimilation, or they may assimilate into different segments of U.S. society. They often use their identities symbolically or instrumentally, tailoring them to fit particular settings.²

¹ Figures from The Urban Institute, *The New Neighbors: A Users Guide to Data on Immigrants in U.S. Communities*. Baltimore: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003.

² Levitt, Peggy, *The Transnational Village*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

The current demographic dynamics only serve to underscore what has long been a reality in North America: since pre-Columbian times, the population has been one of many peoples, values, languages, cultures, and ways of life. The ease of transnational movement, immigrant populations reaching critical mass, and today's communications tools have made it more imperative than ever for us to do a better job of understanding the great breadth of who we are. Culture, and the arts realized within it, is a vital portal for beginning to gain access to this understanding.

Given this inexorable social transformation we are both witness to and a part of, how might we expect the role of arts and culture in society to shift as a consequence? It is through cultural expressions that we maintain, create, and recreate our identity. How will these expressions, and therefore the creation of cultural identity, change as the world continues to shrink through the innovations in communications technology and the globalization of systems and individuals? Beyond aesthetic expression, what is the significance of artistic production within larger social structures? What is the value of art making activities that thrive within particular communities—outside of established systems of arts presentation, marketing, funding, and audience development? What is the nature of the interaction between these distinct communities—be they communities of age, gender, ethnicity, class—and what are considered “mainstream” institutions? These are some of the thought-provoking questions that underlie this study.

This project was led by Rachel Cooper, Director of Cultural Programs and Performing Arts for the Asia Society, together with consultants Vanessa Whang and San San Wong, and a team of advisors and researchers. Many thanks go to The Ford Foundation and Roberta Uno, Program Officer for Arts and Culture, for their leadership and for making this report possible.

The Project

The Asia Society and its team of collaborators undertook this project to investigate evolving trends in art making and arts presenting within communities that historically have not been well understood or acknowledged within the non-profit arts sector. Commissioning circumscribed field research on a small, but diverse set of artistic forms and practices, Asia Society sought to uncover, and to initiate a broader dialogue on, the creative and cultural realities of artists in communities that are often considered on the margins of the cultural mainstream in the United States.

These eight case studies and two articles dealing with cross-cutting issues bring to light such key—and complex—concepts as tradition, community, innovation, identity, and cultural transmission, and how they are understood and used within specific communities. They also examined how artistic activities are supported and sustained, who inside and outside of specific communities facilitates this, and how networks are built that inform the ongoing development of these artistic practices in the United States.

Methodology

To begin, the Asia Society chose ethnography as the research methodology. We assembled an advisory committee of practitioners and academics from the arts, philanthropy, cultural studies, anthropology, history, and political science. They assisted the project team by helping to identify the art forms and communities to be investigated, providing input on a framework to guide the case study research, and identifying potential researchers with preexisting knowledge of targeted communities, given the relatively short timeframe for completing the research. The committee also served as reviewers of and commentators on the research itself: they gave the principal researchers feedback on their drafts, identified project through-lines and themes, and gave the project team comments on the final versions of the case studies.

The principal researchers, for the most part, were academy-trained ethnographers, though one was a non-profit arts administrator and another was an arts administrator turned academic. Not all had arts backgrounds—some came from the social sciences with deep knowledge of the characteristics or history of a particular people or community.

The advisory committee was convened twice during the course of the project: once, at its inception to identify key questions and subject matter, and comment on the framework draft; and later, in conjunction with all the principal researchers once the first drafts of the case studies were complete and had been reviewed by all. Both meetings proved quite fruitful—particularly the second meeting with all the researchers and advisors at the table. The level of discourse at that meeting was exceptionally high; questions were posed and critiques were given and received by all in a truly collaborative spirit. We received feedback from the researchers in particular on how productive it was to hear about their colleagues' preliminary findings and challenges, and that these observations served to inform the final versions of the case studies.

The Framework

As mentioned above, the Asia Society project leaders, with the assistance of the advisory committee, developed a general framework for the case studies to help the researchers navigate through some of the complexities of their subject matter and focus their investigations. The main topic areas of the framework were:

- Context and Characteristics of the Examined Community
- Description of Artistic Form(s) Under Consideration
- Activities Surrounding the Artistic Form/Group/Artist – such as performances, training, social functions, rituals, etc.
- Support Systems Inside and Outside of the Examined Community
- Intersection with Other Sectors/Communities

Each of these topics included a number of possible parameters for the researchers to consider. The case studies, taken as an aggregate, begin to sketch out the enormous complexity and diversity of circumstances in which the arts are created and sustained. We believe that the

framework was not only a helpful tool for this project, but could also be of use as a format for future studies of this kind as we build knowledge about these subject areas.

The Case Studies

In order to get preliminary information quickly, the team identified researchers who could “hit the ground running” with regard to the topic or community under investigation. The team also sought geographic spread for the studies, as well as a range of timeframes in which different communities had been established in the U.S.—from recent immigrants to groups who have been here for multiple generations. Given the diverse backgrounds and orientations of the researchers and communities, the various case studies inevitably emphasized different things and took a range of approaches to the subject matter. We have two case studies that take a particular art form as a starting point (i.e., corridos and taiko); three that put a particular immigrant community at the center of the study (i.e., Andean, Cambodian, and South Asian); two that look at intersections of different communities (i.e. Senegalese and African Americans in D.C., and multiple ethnicities in Seattle); and one that focuses on a particular artist company (i.e., Natya Dance).

As a preface to the case studies, there is a summary overview of them that, despite the variety in approaches and subjects, points to a number of issues they have in common. Some these include the constant search for appropriate space for activities, how art forms evolve because of transgenerational dynamics, the challenges of continuity in the face of leadership transitions or lost expertise, and the importance of systematic documentation and preservation of material and intangible culture.

The Asia Society team found two topics that were particularly relevant to the overall research, but were only mentioned briefly within the case studies themselves, i.e., the different forms and mechanisms for artistic training and cultural transmission, and the role of cultural intermediaries to support artistic work within their communities. The team identified two professionals from the folk arts field, Amy Kitchener and Betsy Peterson, with broad knowledge of community-based art making practices and long-term experience in providing technical and funding assistance, and commissioned essays from them on the above topics.

The team also believed that it was important to have an artist voice included in the project. A companion piece to the case study on taiko was commissioned to bring this valuable perspective to the project from a key artistic company.

Findings

The following findings point out some issues that emerged in the process of bringing the project to fruition, and serve as a complement to those highlighted in the case studies overview. Included as well are some recommendations for consideration with respect to possible support strategies.

Before laying out the broad thematic areas of the findings, it is important to note the complexity inherent in each concept, community, and context examined. The distinct attributes of each case colored anew the choices the Asia Society team, advisors, and researchers had to make. Common assumptions about inter-generational, inter-communal, and inter-societal dynamics as they affect artistic practices had to be reexamined and rethought in light of the specificity of each case. The history of immigration for a particular community (including the multiple migrations of its members), the political or economic forces driving different waves of immigration, the evolving role of cultural practices in new contexts and for different generations, the gains and losses entailed in dislocation, the need for linguistic and inter-cultural translation (within families, between communities)—all of this and much more became points of consideration and differentiation for these studies.

Popular notions of immigrants and foreigners muddy the conceptual waters and challenge these efforts to make clear and nuanced distinctions. Immigrants, in the minds of many, are equated with those (despite being U.S. natives) who are, for instance, Asian or Latino. The “Where are you from really?” question is rarely asked of European Americans, though they, as much as anyone who isn’t Native American, have immigrant histories. The growing need and the growing challenge to create and engage more precise distinctions and language are clear and present in these studies. In the process of bringing them to fruition, we uncovered useful tools and terminology, but also the void that needs to be filled.

Immigration/Generation and the Role of the Arts

The studies took into consideration that communities incorporate multiple immigrant experiences. Communities of the same ethnicity, viewed from a distance, can look homogeneous, while the on-the-ground reality is quite the contrary. The numbers of new immigrants from home countries, or ones from a previously adopted country, or from a different part of this country all can experience their arrival in distinct ways, as well as their needs for finding cultural affinities.

In the case of a newcomer group, the question also arises of the impulse for immigrating: Are they refugees (in the case of Cambodians) or willing transplants (such as middle class Indians)? Do those historical or economic circumstances make a difference to what role artistic production (and cultural preservation) has within their community? Do they make a difference to how an art form evolves in its new context?

For those born in America, the question is of what generation: second, third, fourth, fifth? Issues commonly faced by the children of immigrants around identity, values, and negotiating cultural environments with different expectations and pressures can carry over into successive generations, but with variations on those themes. With each generation come different questions. When do language retention and inter-generational communication stop being a factor in family dynamics? When do families perceive artistic training as, e.g., a rite of passage, a way to instill traditional values, to retain cultural memory or perhaps just as a way of focusing adolescent energy?

With the facility of global movement, we have become increasingly aware of those of the 1.5 generation, i.e., people who were born and spent only part of their childhood or youth in their country of origin. Their experience of immigration and ability to adapt to the U.S. cultural context is neither like the newcomer adult nor the American-born.

In order to do justice to the real circumstances of art making across communities, support strategies must recognize the multiplicity of immigrant experiences and art-making practices. For example:

- Rigorous arts activities can exist as part of a broader cultural practice or can be found in organizations that embrace a variety of purposes because of community needs, so limiting funding eligibility to those typically thought of as arts organizations may disqualify vital locations of artistic activity;
- Cultural transmission is not necessarily just about preservation of tradition and may involve generational issues that include how art forms evolve within new contexts and the value of innovation in keeping traditional forms alive;
- Performance can have different purposes if those witnessing it are of or outside of a particular community, so a presenter or cultural facilitator may be appropriate for one context, but not another.

Language and Values

When entering this sector of the arts field, one immediately runs up against the limits of our current language. We are all familiar with the prevalent practice of misclassifying all non-European-based art forms as “folk arts” (regardless of their being considered “classical” or court forms in their home country) or as “ethnic arts” despite the fact that no art is without roots in particular cultures and ethnicities. In addition to a brand of Eurocentrism being the definitional default position of the arts in the U.S., many terms used in the field also have aspects of class bias encoded within them. For example, the terms “classical arts,” “fine arts,” and “serious music” refer to highly stylized and structured court-derived or academy-based forms. One need only consider what might be the opposite of these terms to see the status they confer.

The distinctions usually made between “contemporary art” and “traditional art” also reflect the play of cultural capital within our society. For example, modern dance and minimalism in music are typically classified as “contemporary.” But taiko music, more often than not, is classified as a “folk art.” Yet its most well-known performance manifestation (kumidaiko, ensemble playing) is a post-WWII creation.

The hegemony of the Eurocentric point of reference for contemporary art is evident even in its more generous manifestation—that is, one that countenances the existence of non-European-based contemporary art, but only when it incorporates European contemporary references. For example, the work of someone whose practice is rooted in classical Chinese dance might be considered “contemporary” because it incorporates references to Pina Bausch; whereas the same person’s work that breaks with tradition but in a way that does not reference European or American modern forms might not be considered “contemporary” by someone unfamiliar with the tradition being challenged.

Although certain kinds of innovation are inherent within traditional art forms, the popular connotation of them is as static cultures, devoid of form invention or contemporary content. This misapprehension of the nature of living traditional arts is another reason to examine the underlying value system that persists in pitting the concepts of what is traditional and what is contemporary against each other.

Aside from producing misguided thinking about the arts and specific art forms, the above-mentioned terminology has practical resource implications because of funding program categories, hierarchies based on these distinctions, and a lack of understanding about training outside of academic or conservatory settings. Therefore, when designing a resource intervention, it is worth examining commonly used terminology in the field to see if the language may exclude or prioritize certain art forms because of encoded class, culture, gender, scale, or genre biases.

As the complexity of arts in diverse communities continues to be recognized and investigated, the issue of the creation of culture-appropriate language and the redefinition of language appropriated by mainstream or dominant institutions will need to be addressed.

Art and Its Context

It is clear from the case studies that consideration of the context in which art forms are grown, developed, and continue to be maintained is vital to an understanding of their significance and meaning. Though the title of the project links artistic production to cultural identity, this was a shorthand way of naming a broad set of related issues. Artistic production, in this case in communities striving to maintain and adapt aspects of their cultural traditions, is not only about issues of “performing identity” in relation to those outside the community. The maintenance of these traditions and practices is often about retaining the embodiment of certain values and life philosophies of a culture; about the continuity of meaning of rites of passage; about gender and generational roles within established social structures; about mental, emotional, and spiritual well being as well as community cohesion.

Professionals in the non-profit arts field are becoming increasingly accustomed to seeking and providing context for art forms that might be unfamiliar to audiences, participants, or themselves. One might assume that the belief that underlies this practice is that one needs to know something about the context of an art form in order to understand the meaning encoded in it. However, this generalized belief is often not extended to one’s own culture. The context that each one of us grows up and exists in is our default position, the ground of our experience. So, within our context, we can be fooled into thinking that art stands by itself, that it needs no explanation, and that its quality will be apparent to anyone who looks. But that is because it’s *our* art, from *our* context (whoever *we* happen to be). If we are already on familiar ground, we’ll know something about the particular history and values that inform the art—for example, in Christian-based society, what it signifies for a figure to have wings and a halo or for a young woman to be dressed in all white. However, it is important to understand that what we take for granted as given could be interpreted in a radically different way for someone from a different cultural milieu—that is, that same young woman in white might be seen by a Korean as someone mourning a death rather than a symbol of chastity or purity. (Joann Kealiinohomoku wrote a

thought-provoking article on this topic in 1980: “An Anthropologist Looks at Ballet as a Form of Ethnic Dance.”)

One of the things that this research project reminds us of is the complexity and richness of the circumstances in which all art is conceived. The inequitable schism between dominant culture art forms and everything else can begin to be bridged by fostering critical discussions that recontextualize art forms that have been decontextualized—that is, making explicit the values and history that are implicit in the art forms that are taken to be familiar to the U.S. mainstream. Questions of authenticity and cultural appropriation, respectful borrowing and stereotypic exoticizing can only be understood through a deeper examination of the specific cultural and social values that inhere within artistic practices—all artistic practices. Such an approach must be taken to begin to move the field to a position that recognizes an increasingly diverse society with multiple centers and points of reference.

The current demographic changes in the U.S. act as an insistent reminder of the need for those in the arts to maintain a culture of curiosity and to not take for granted that those who participate in cultural programs all come from the same context or background—be it one of ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, etc.

Political affiliation, religion, class, gender, marital status, age, history of migration, and many other aspects besides came into play with the unfolding of each of the case studies. The extent to which serious artistic endeavors are intertwined with social status, rituals, cultural transmission, and community cohesion—that is, how you know your culture and who you are in it—made analyzing the activities and support systems that surround an art form a complex affair. One might ask: When an art form is transplanted into a foreign environment, can practicing that art form ever just be about the art? As one sees from the studies, regardless of the art form being practiced or its being in or out of its country of origin, it is never just about the art. The context determines the critical world that the art lives in.

Preserving and Evolving Forms and Traditions

Many immigrant artists and communities in the U.S. feel the urgency for preserving and sharing their traditions as a means to transmit and maintain their culture in sometimes hostile or pro-assimilation environments. Often in early immigration waves to this country, this gave rise to art forms that became “frozen in time” because traditions were fiercely conserved and often cut off from home country interchange. Such preservationist impulses are valid and can be vital to maintaining family or community cohesion. However, being “frozen” must always be understood as a metaphor, as no living tradition can survive without being influenced by its changing environment. It is important to note that such impulses are at play in home countries as well as in diaspora, since rapid economic development, often coupled with environmental degradation, poses challenges to traditional culture on its home turf.

For some artists, relocating to the U.S. provides opportunities to innovate, for example: casting a ritual practice into a concert setting; using traditional forms to tell a contemporary story or make social commentary; or drawing from or combining multiple traditional forms. We also see innovation by necessity, as when native materials become unavailable or too costly; or training methodologies need to be adapted to accommodate the scarcity of master teachers or students; or

when the languages art forms are taught in become threatened or generational dynamics present needs for translation.

Traditions, whether propelled by preservationist impulse or artists' urge to innovate, are constantly evolving because they are lived and are inherently permeable. As traditions are carried with their bearers into new circumstances, they are pushed and pulled by new influences and values, and the needs and desires of new generations. And as arts forms have different class, gender, and functional aspects built into them, these aspects must also be taken into account as they are imported into and changed by their new U.S. context.

Artistic forms in home countries are evolving in ways that are distinct from how forms change in diaspora, and there is a growing dialogue among these disparate but related manifestations. There are also circumstances in which home country artists might seek artists in diaspora to revisit an older manifestation of an art form.

The many different cases of transplanted art forms evolving in new environments here makes the U.S. not only a fascinating laboratory of artistic cross-fertilization and experimentation, but a significant location in a redefinition of contemporary art within the context of a plurality of cultures. Movement vocabularies, musical tonalities and instrumentation, and color palettes and choices of medium are all shifting at different rates, in different directions, driven by different historical, economic, social, and cultural influences. The old paradigm of binary cultural interchange between the Euro-American and “the other” is giving way to a multi-centered system of influences.

When developing strategies of support for artistic traditions and forms that are evolving within a context of preservation or experimentation, these dynamics and the forms that emerge from them must all be viewed as legitimate for consideration and support.

Some things to consider include:

- It is important to be open to hearing multiple voices within a community and not privileging one “authentic” voice over all others when considering support strategies;
- The line between what is respectful borrowing or experimentation and what is unacceptable appropriation or degradation as cultures come in contact with one another can be difficult to discern and may require expert review;
- The language typically used to discuss or critique evolving traditions and forms is often inadequate in reflecting subtleties of meaning. It is vital to examine how artists represent their work and what informs it in order to develop new language that is self-determined;
- One way of better understanding the complexity of evolving forms and traditions could be to create a matrix of form, content, context, and impetus for change;
- Both preservationist and experimental impulses animate cultural activity within communities—support should be viewed as both/and as opposed to either/or propositions.

Cultural Transmission

Artistic training and cultural transmission are a key element of the activities examined within the scope of this research project. As cited above, more than just about artistic technique and skill building, training and the environments in which it takes place are often at the heart of maintaining cultural continuity, evolving cultural identity, and grounding social cohesion. As the think piece on cultural transmission emphasizes, there is no one best way or venue in which artistic training can take place. Different art forms have different physical needs; different cultures dictate different learning environments, commitments of time, and relationships between students and teachers; and different communities may have artistic resources that need to be complemented by resources in other communities, states, and countries.

Arts training inculcates the deeper knowledge of what it is to be, e.g., Cambodian or Mexican American or Croatian, so taking a broad view on the manner in which training happens is important (inclusive of seemingly unrelated but critical activities that instill broader cultural values and philosophy).

Often a full complement of training may require study abroad or support for bringing master artists, instruments, and costumes from overseas. This kind of learning continues to be of vital importance, though improved telecommunications and transportation technologies have given rise to a new more bi- or multilateral dynamic in which artists inside and outside of home countries are in dialogue about the continuity and evolution of tradition.

In designing a program of support for training and cultural transmission, it is important to keep in mind the range of needs within different contexts. For example:

- Length of Commitment: the ties that bind teachers to students can be short-term to lifelong, therefore, the sustainability of programs can play a critical role to an art form's viability;
- Transnational Dynamics: Home countries are often a source for deeper understanding of forms being practiced in the U.S., and evolving forms in diaspora are a fertile source of innovation for home country artists—so transmission can be a multilateral affair;
- Recognizing a Range of Expertise: it is important to recognize the existence of different styles, schools, and methods and the teachers who specialize in them. This can be tricky terrain to navigate because formal “certification” of expertise is often non-existent, so the help of knowledgeable experts or intermediaries can be invaluable.

Cultural Intermediaries

Issues of cultural intermediaries are raised throughout the case studies and think pieces of this project. Intermediaries can take on many different kinds of roles—some more organic to community needs than others. However, one crucial feature of intermediaries is their ability to connect with and serve individuals, groups, and associations that do not have non-profit status and therefore cannot access the resources open to those who understand the system well enough to reap its benefits. There is a huge range of cultural activities taking place outside of the non-profit realm (and without commercial viability) that are of critical value to communities.

The limited definition of intermediaries as pass-through entities that take an administrative fee for services or simply as regranteeing organizations that are closer to the ground than a state or national funder or agency is giving way to a broader evolving definition, or set of characteristics and functions.

Intermediaries of many sorts and of different scales—e.g., culturally-specific arts or social service agencies, community leaders, knowledgeable advocates—can provide different points of entry for both specific communities and those wishing to provide resources to them.

The following are some important features to look for when trying to identify intermediaries who can be effective in connecting communities with specific resources:

- Cultural Competence: deep knowledge of a community’s history, values, class and power dynamics, etc. as well as of cultural practices and the needs of artists—or at minimum, the knowledge of where to find the needed expertise (panelists, community organizations or leaders, etc.);
- “Authorized” Representation: finding an individual or group that a community (or sector thereof) authorizes to represent it and/or to advocate on its behalf—being careful to remember that communities are not homogenous and no one person or organization can claim to know the will or needs of everyone;
- Systems/Resource Knowledge: broad knowledge of the resources that communities can access and skill in connecting communities to them, as well as the ability to advocate for changing those systems if they exclude possible beneficiaries;
- Translation Skills: the ability to mutually “translate” the needs, desires, and priorities of those seeking resources and those providing them;
- Capacity and Accountability: the capacity not only to administrate funds responsibly to the satisfaction of all involved parties, but also to provide the technical assistance that is necessary to build the capacity of the involved partners.

It may not be possible to find all the features one needs in a single intermediary; therefore, partnerships among intermediaries with different skills and access to artists at different developmental levels might be in order. This could prove administratively complicated, but may be the best solution given the state of the field, and could encourage learning and productive collaboration between disparate partners.

Conclusion

America's culture has changed, is changing, and will continue to change. This is a reality that needs to be reflected in our definition of what constitutes "American art." It is a challenge that reminds us yet again that our culture is dynamic, complex and multi-faceted; and that we have the responsibility of continually looking at it anew and at who we are in this evolving world we live in.

OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDIES

Seemin Qayum

This research project has examined evolving trends in art making and arts presenting in immigrant or culturally-specific communities, against the backdrop of the significant demographic and socioeconomic changes in the United States. Through field research on artists and art forms in several immigrant or culturally-specific communities and an examination of cultural intersections in one city, the project sought to understand better the dynamic relationship between artistic practice and cultural identity. It also explored the contexts and challenges for sustaining artistic production, including systems of support internal and external to the communities studied, as well as interactions among immigrant and culturally-specific communities and the wider transformed cultural landscape of the United States.

The case studies were not intended to be in any way comprehensive. They constitute only a sample of the extraordinary richness and vibrancy of artistic and cultural life in the United States. In the same way, there has been no attempt to standardize the usage of terms such as *immigrant*, *community*, *identity*, *art practice*, *tradition*, and so on across the case studies. In this initial ethnographic foray, the principal investigators have used these and other terms and concepts very much in a manner that reflects the communities and art forms that they have studied.

Case Studies and Principal Investigators

Maribel Alvarez	<i>Corridos</i> and Community in Southern Arizona: Dynamics of Folk, Commercial, and Nonprofit Cultural Production
Cristian Amigo	FESTI-Andes and Beyond: Performing Identity in a Trans-Local (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut) Andean Immigrant Community
Uttara Coorlawala	Natya Dance Theatre: A Bharatanatyam Dance Company within the Indian Community of the Greater Chicago Area
Madhulika Khandelwal	Preserving Traditions, Creating Traditions: South Asian Performing Art Organizations in New York City
Susan Kunimatsu	Cultural Intersections in Seattle, Washington: A Geographic Case Study
Hallie Stone	Creative Process/Creative Interchange: An Exploration of Senegalese Dance in Washington, D.C.
Khatharya Um	Arts, Identity, and Healing in a Community in Transition: Cultural Production in the Cambodian American Community in Long Beach
Paul Yoon	Development and Support of Taiko in the United States

Communities are Heterogeneous

Several of the studies emphasized the importance of recognizing that immigrant and culturally-specific communities, like most communities, are not homogenous and, indeed, are internally differentiated along multiple vectors, among them class, cultural capital, formal education, occupation, and generation. For example, in her study of the Cambodian refugee community in Long Beach, California, Khatharya Um noted that “It is a complex community in terms of its socioeconomic composition...[with] the early resettlement of the more skilled and educated refugees...[and] the small but influential core of former professionals, politicians and intellectuals. Alongside, there is a larger segment of the population for whom poverty, social and linguistic isolation, and impeded educational access continue to thwart successful incorporation.”

In Maribel Alvarez’s study of corrido ballads in southwestern Arizona, the Mexican and Mexican American community that is involved in their composition, performance, and appreciation is a transnational one that has spanned the Mexican-U.S. border for the past 150 years. That very capacious community is one that has in some cases been divided by discord over the evolution of the corrido in recent decades, a development which reflects both the travails of immigration, poverty, and racism as well as drug-trafficking and its seduction of extravagant wealth.

Parts of communities also redefine themselves over time. Madhulika Khandelwal describes the South Asian community in New York as having undergone a number of generational, leadership, and representational transitions in the past decades. In the 1960s through the 1980s, national origin was the primary identity for immigrants from India, and Indian communities sought to transplant and preserve Indian arts and culture in the U.S and to inculcate them in the next generation. These efforts were typically confined to middle- and upper-middle class Indian immigrants who saw little commonality with either Pakistani or Bangladeshi immigrants or with the working class immigrant Indian population, and, moreover, virtually no shared agenda with other American immigrant or Native or African American groups. Starting around 1990, these community representations were contested from within by the younger generation. National and religious affiliations were no longer as fundamental for these young people as for their parents, and “South Asian” became an increasingly viable and recognizable identity. At the same time, their spaces of artistic and cultural creation and performance began to shift spatially to Manhattan from the immigrant neighborhoods in Queens.

There are also complex linkages among communities, ones that question the very categories of “immigrant” or “culturally-specific.” Hallie Stone writes of the mutuality between the African and African American communities in Washington, D.C. with respect to forms of African dance and drumming. In Seattle, a myriad of multicultural arts programming encompasses a broad array of immigrant and other culturally-specific artists and art forms along with those of Native American and African American communities in the area, and encourages cross-cultural artistic production and performance.

Preservationist Impulses

An overarching feature of these case studies is the desire that is expressed in many immigrant and culturally-specific settings to preserve the culture and art forms that were brought from countries of origin and that symbolize historical national, regional, and local identities. The lived practice and preservation of art forms are the visible sign and demonstration of the resilience of community identity despite the often erosive effects of immigration, dislocation, and time, and, in some cases, the destruction and erasure wrought by war, genocide, and exile.

However, this does not mean that traditions do not evolve nor that authenticity is not reconfigured in new circumstances produced by dislocation and resettlement. Immigrant and culturally-specific communities in the United States find themselves in increasingly transnational and culturally pluralistic situations, and artistic and cultural production within them is not unaffected. Yet, across the case studies, the promise offered by the preservation of art forms and conservation of cultural practices is critical for establishing self and community in new settings.

For example, in Madhulika Khandelwal's research in Queens, New York, the Rajkumari Cultural Center's Cultural Director, Karna Singh, "elaborated that their goal is to preserve the 'art forms and the fabric of knowledge which informs art' practiced by Indo-Caribbeans, and to 'restore the self-esteem and integrity of Indo-Caribbean artists damaged by second migration' to North America."

In another context, Maribel Alvarez's Tucson, a corrido singer explains that corridos are the vehicle of collective memory: "Corridos have a prominent role in the music of the Southwest because they bring with them elements of history and a window into a culture at a time and place."

Efforts towards cultural and artistic preservation are at times undermined by the dispersal of trained teachers and artists who are, in effect, the living repositories of knowledge, technique, and aesthetics, as well as eroding linguistic skills and historical and cultural memory, and minimal resources and organizational support. Khatharya Um reveals the poignant urgency of the case of Cambodian refugees:

Emerging from a history of devastation and loss, the struggle to remember and preserve is, for many Cambodians, an integral part of the larger struggle to survive as a people. The compulsion to honor and preserve Khmer cultural traditions grew in intensity in the face of the loss and rupture of the post-genocide years. Most of the master artists and artisans had perished under the Khmer Rouge and along with them dance and musical traditions that had been passed down through generations. Given that much of Khmer traditions are based on orality, the death of one-seventh of the population essentially meant cultural rupture. Once known for their high civilization, embodied in the ancient monuments of Angkor, surviving Cambodians are now groping through their collective memory to retrieve dying arts.

Generational Tensions over Tradition and Training

The discussion of preservation in most of the case studies revolves around the generational transmission of art forms, and hence the sustained involvement and training of children and young people. Training young people in the art forms of their or their parents' country of origin is sometimes also seen as a way of protecting them from the perceived negative influences beyond the community. Paradoxically, the ambition of cultural preservation is challenged by both wider social and cultural influences as well as the tendency of young people to explore new directions and create new forms.

Maribel Alvarez describes a school project in Tucson that encourages children to compose corridos reflecting their particular family histories. One Mexican American boy wrote a corrido in Spanish to honor his father:

<i>Este es el corrido de Francisco Moraga;</i>	This is the corrido of Francisco Moraga;
<i>es un heroe y muy trabajador.</i>	He is a hero and a hard-working man.
<i>Es un hombre honesto y noble;</i>	He is honest and noble,
<i>Un hombre inteligente y encantador.</i>	Intelligent, and with a great deal of charm.

However fine this corrido, with its echoes of the classic corrido themes of valor, honor, and masculinity, it is the narcocorrido—which celebrates the exploits, riches, and violence of drug traffickers—that is overwhelmingly popular with the younger generations on both sides of the Mexican-U.S. border. There is heightened debate over what many community leaders and social analysts would deem the dubious merits and rather more obvious demerits of the narcocorrido, as well as the desire to protect children such as this young composer from its supposed pernicious influence. Yet the contested cultural terrain of the corrido demonstrates that the art form is able to encompass widely divergent uses and expressions.

A dance instructor with the Cambodian organization, Arts of Apsara, in Long Beach reflected on the challenges of attracting young people to heritage arts activities: “They [the new generation Cambodian Americans] have to realize for themselves what Cambodia is to them. It can’t come just through the family or the parents because then it is just a lecture. But if they hear it through the media and through the press, then they realize how important Cambodian culture is.” Even when students are able to learn dance techniques, because the training is often unavoidably divorced from linguistic, historical, and ritual context, cultural preservation becomes a challenging, if not daunting, enterprise. Children are more readily involved, but adolescents tend to lose interest in Cambodian dance and music. Girls form the majority by far of most dance classes, but because of reasons of modesty and privacy, their participation is often discouraged after puberty and many parents are reluctant to allow their daughters to perform in public.

Uttara Coorlawala also considered the limitations of teaching bharatanatyam dance in the U.S.:

Performing texts, making them come alive through one’s own person, involves acculturation layered intimately on one’s own body, stance, and glance. The younger dancers growing up in America have to be re-educated into Indianness.

Although the dance is an excellent medium for that, epistemological differences are so profound, that the depth of understanding of alternate modalities of being and thought cannot be accessed by just a few years of study, and require some kind of total immersive experience.

Indeed, in the case of bharatanatyam, taiko, Andean music, and many of the other art forms considered in this research project, the possibility of study, training, and ongoing exchange with artists and teachers in and from the countries of origin is fundamental.

Fusion, Innovation, and Hip Hop

The artistic and cultural forms that have migrated along with their practitioners—bhangra, bharatanatyam, taiko, to name a few—have been influenced, perhaps inevitably, by the art forms and currents existing with them in new settings. It goes without saying that art forms and cultural practices everywhere evolve, and that innovation occurs even in ancient, formal traditions—such is the history of human creativity after all. In some cases the development of immigrant art forms has been integral; in others where innovation and fusion have been actively pursued, questions of tradition, authenticity, and community come to the fore.

Last year's FESTI-Andes, the Andean music and culture festival in New Jersey that is the centerpiece of Cristian Amigo's study, "barely included the participation of younger musicians who employ technology such as electronic drums and synthesizers... In the Andes, chicha or techno-cumbia, a style sonically reliant upon the sounds of electric guitars, synthesizers and drum machines, and musically based upon the Colombian cumbia rhythm, has been extremely popular since the 1960s. The director of FESTI-Andes, Pepe Santana, does not consider this music either traditional or authentic." This hybrid urban music is considered too commercially popular to be included in the same category as "unplugged" performance with Andean percussion, wind, and string instruments that has roots in rural areas of the Andes. Pepe Santana and other festival participants interviewed believe that traditional Andean art forms in both the U.S. and the Andes are threatened by the forces of commercialization and modernization.

In contrast, bhangra, which has roots in the music and dance forms of rural Punjab, has been variously described by its practitioners and participants, cited in Madhulika Khandelwal's study, as rural Punjabi, diasporic Punjabi fusion sound, Indian hip-hop, British, dancehall, etc. Its well-known proponent in New York City, DJ Rekha, positions it as an art form created by the South Asian diaspora: "Bhangra doesn't come out of India anymore. Actually I think of bhangra as British music... Bhangra is one of the many genres produced by Asians in the diaspora."

In the world of taiko that Paul Yoon analyzes, some practitioners believe that the growing popularity of taiko among the younger generation of Asian Americans as well as other sectors of the U.S. population presents a dilemma. Taiko's seemingly universal appeal means more groups and players, thus a greater profile for the art form; however, an increasing detachment from taiko's community base and a potential loss of artistry have also been detected. Many contend that removing taiko from its roots in *obon* festivals (Buddhist ancestor celebrations) and traditional Japanese drumming practices can only dilute the art form. Others are engaged in

taking taiko in new directions, influenced by jazz improvisation, rock and other popular music, and the potential of nontraditional instruments. Kenny Endo describes his taiko ensemble playing to Paul Yoon as fusing “traditional Japanese drumming techniques, world musical rhythms, and western jazz percussion styles.” Shoji Kameda, a student and collaborator of Endo’s, makes a claim for authenticity derived both from the artist’s training and experience of improvisation:

Composing standard taiko songs is something that comes very easily for me. I’ve been around it a long time...that’s where a lot of my training is. I feel like it’s legitimate to create this standard taiko stuff...This other music [for an Ensemble] is also legitimate, this other blending, and incorporating electric guitar, or drum kit, or turntable, or anything. That is also legitimate because it’s speaking to my influences as an artist, and in that way it’s legitimate.

While many Cambodian American young people continue to study traditional dance and music as a means of recovering and preserving Cambodian arts and identity, many others have been swept up in popular culture currents, above all hip hop. Khatharya Um quotes Cambodian rapper Prach Ly: “Hip hop is the voice of the youth—not all black, not all white. It is a movement. It’s what they can relate to. It’s about everyday struggles.” He often raps in Khmer accompanied by traditional instruments, and differentiates his performance from the gangster-style Cambodian rappers who extol sex, drugs, and violence. Because the work of Prach Ly and other Cambodian hip hop artists draws upon the historical experience of war and exile and the alienation and dislocation of many young people in the U.S., it has an audience that spans generations and musical and performance traditions.

Asian American young people in Seattle are also deeply involved in hip hop, as Susan Kunimatsu reveals in her exploration of the city’s unique hip hop culture. Hip hop pioneer Nestor Rodriguez asserts: “Whether you are Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc., we all have stuck together and looked out for each other. There is a lot of hip hop unity in the Seattle area with Asians.” Again, in Seattle, like in Long Beach—and paralleling developments in the arena of corridos/narcocorridos—socially-conscious and more grassroots hip hop is contrasted with the violence, homophobia and misogyny of commercial “gangsta rap.”

Community-based Nonprofit versus Commercial Initiatives

The activities of most of the groups and organizations covered by the case studies come down quite firmly on the side of community-based nonprofit initiative rather than commercial for profit enterprise. Most groups and artists generally perform in local community centers and events or in venues and programs sponsored by public or private nonprofit entities, such as the Seattle Theater Group, Ethnic Heritage Council, and Rainer Valley Cultural Center, three cultural intersections in Seattle analyzed by Susan Kunimatsu; or the Tucson Meet Yourself folklife festival in Tucson, studied by Maribel Alvarez; or FESTI-Andes in New Jersey, observed by Cristian Amigo. Hip hop artists, such as Cambodians Prach Ly and two-woman ViceVersa in Long Beach or George Quibuyen and the Blue Scholars and Jerome Aparis and the Massive Monkees in Seattle, are linked with both the nonprofit and commercial music worlds;

but even so, because of the socially-aware and politically-critical nature of much of their work, their audiences tend to be community based and Asian American although their appeal is growing beyond these borders.

Similarly, DJ Rekha, through her production company Sangament, started some of the first bhangra parties in rented spaces in New York City as well as the popular monthly Basement Bhangra at S.O.B.'s, a club in lower Manhattan. She is concerned about the rapid commercialization of bhangra and recognizes the tension between her identity as an artist and activist and her business. Sangament is not a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization yet it may face some of the same quandaries as nonprofit arts organizations:

South Asian performing art organizations such as mine are products of different times and represent rapidly changing cultural identities. I have received some support from American cultural institutions but it is more sporadic and not consistent. I would like them to establish channels where they dialogue with artists on a regular basis and help us strategically place and plan our performing arts.

Khatharya Um observes that while some Cambodian groups in Long Beach will participate out of economic necessity in paid public engagements, such as weddings and cultural festivals, other groups shun such situations. A dance instructor from the Arts of Apsara articulated the principle that commerce violated the ritual and spiritual purpose of the arts: “The dances lose their sacredness if we charge for them. They are not entertainment. We don’t want to perform when people are eating and clinking their forks and spoons.”

Cultural Intermediaries, Nonprofit Arts Programming, and Cross-Cultural Audiences

Susan Kunimatsu has studied a number of cultural intersections in Seattle—multicultural umbrella organizations, centers, and venues that can provide necessary sustaining support and space for immigrant and culturally-specific arts. Some, such as the Ethnic Heritage Council, emphasize preservation of art forms and conservation of cultural heritage, with a focus on folk and court-based traditional arts. The Council’s director, Alma Plancich, insists on the necessity of reaching out to new immigrants before their artistry starts to slip away, given the exigencies of economic and social survival. She believes that early support and encouragement are necessary for preserving artistic and cultural authenticity.

Some of these intersections have a defined cross-cultural mission: to bring different cultural communities together for training and performance. The Seattle Theater Group’s Dance this... program brings together five to seven dance companies working in different cultural traditions (African, Asian, European, Latino and Native American; urban American forms such as tap, jazz, hip hop, and drill teams) for an intensive two-week summer workshop. There are more than one hundred dancers involved, mostly students from Seattle area high schools. In the workshop, each group demonstrates and teaches dance from its own repertoire to the other companies. Vicky Lee, the Director of Education and Performance Programs, aims to “expand the cultural horizons of dancers and audiences...to illustrate historical and aesthetic parallels within the field of dance by pairing genres such as tap and step dancing on the same program.”

The culmination of the workshop is two performances at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Seattle, which includes a professionally choreographed new work that draws on the different dance forms represented and is executed by a group of dancers from all the companies.

This sort of cross-cultural work is quite challenging, for presenters, choreographers, performers, and audiences alike. In another context, Uttara Coorlawala reflects on the daunting task of cross-cultural performance when the sensibilities and expectations of audiences have been shaped by “cultural demands...masquerading as universal aesthetic principles, say for example temporal expectations. What is too long, or too short, too slow, or too fast? Should narratives progress in chronological sequences? Why are structures of memory privileged over realism? How can Krishna be a baby and an adult in the same song, and be both human and trans-human? In cross-cultural performance, spectacle prevails over historic intertexts, accessibility over complexity... Thus traditional narrative structures tend to be marginalized in the service of transnational communication.”

Susan Kunimatsu stresses the vital functions the Seattle cultural intersections serve as communities of learning for artists and performers who would like to present outside their own communities. As cultural intermediaries, they “advocate for the dissemination of cultural art forms, in order to gain legitimacy, validation, and respect...from people of other cultures.” She concludes that the Seattle cultural intersections help artists to improve their technical skills and to adapt their work for multicultural audiences while maintaining the authenticity of their arts practice. The cultural intersections successfully reach out every year to numerous new groups that have not performed outside of their communities, and provide financial support which allows the groups to participate and perform before broader audiences. Their multicultural formats permit groups to connect with one another and to make work that is both culturally authentic and accessible. However, she notes that it remains an open question whether this sort of “professionalization” helps to preserve cultural arts “or if the loss of traditional contexts irreparably alters their integrity.”

Cristian Amigo remarks that organizations that serve as cultural intermediaries are often significant in facilitating intergenerational cultural transmission. However, sometimes these intermediaries, by selecting and supporting particular master artists or elders as teachers and trainers of young people, are actually setting the agenda of what constitutes an authentic tradition or form that is worth preserving. For example, some funding organizations require the reference to “traditional” to characterize what FESTI-Andes’ organizers might simply call “typical dances and music.”

Maribel Alvarez has critiqued the tendency of some nonprofit arts programming to objectify and sanitize cultural art forms to make them more accessible in a multicultural setting:

These programs use strategies of public presentation that insist on the folklorization of corridos and, as such, extract them from the lived social contexts in which corridos are most fun, meaningful, and culturally relevant. By folklorization I mean the process of turning living practices into artifacts, and hence into static products dislodged from the communicative communities that render folk practices legible and meaningful in the first place...One has to

wonder...to what extent these deliberately willed moments of cultural community-building and multicultural understanding are not in fact also stifling something about the way that corridos function as a living tradition that is adaptable and contestatory in its own contradictory way among working-class immigrants...Does using the corrido as a pedagogical tool turn it into a sanitized, tamed form quite different from a musical expression that, for as long as we know, has always been contemporary and restless?

Similarly, Uttara Coorlawala stresses that the Chicago Natya Dance Theater strives to have bharatanatyam recognized as an art in this country, “beyond the ghettos of folklorized community expression...[not] as an ethnographic specimen [but] rather an art with a history longer than classical ballet in Europe.” In such cases, despite the benevolent ambitions of cultural programmers, putting immigrant and cultural art forms in a multicultural ethnic or folkloric package tends to serve the contradictory purpose of erasing difference and diversity and masking the richness of their multivalent registers.

Strategies of Support: Financial Sustainability, Space, Training, Documentation

Systems of support and financial sustainability

Very few of the artists and performers in these case studies can support themselves through their art, regardless of their professionalism or virtuosity. As Paul Yoon remarked in his study of taiko playing, many taiko groups perform at a professional level, but few of their members can make a living from taiko. The fact of having to support art-making through unrelated means is common to both immigrant and cultural arts and to the nonprofits arts sector as a whole. This is true for the Andean musicians whom Cristian Amigo observed in New Jersey, and even for the hip hop artists interviewed by Susan Kunimatsu in Seattle, most of whom must have day jobs despite the potential commercial appeal of their art form. These artists and musicians end up supporting their art themselves, and performers’ fees, if any, are inevitably used to cover expenses.

In many immigrant and cultural communities, being an artist or dancer or musician is not considered a profession or a source of livelihood, but rather an integral part of communal spiritual and social life. As such, arts are performed by and for the community, and rarely for external consumption. Compensation per se is not at stake; rather performers and performances are sustained through community support and reciprocity. In bringing these arts to the public stage, artists’ fees or payment for services rendered may not always be appropriate: When Native American Makah dancers performed in a cultural center in Seattle, they would only accept compensation in the form of a gift. Yet as Khatharya Um emphasizes for the Cambodian community in Long Beach—which has a formidable tradition of courtly arts handed down in families, albeit not one of professionalization and public performance—“the lack of financial resources is one of the greatest impediments to cultural preservation in diaspora.”

Many artists who practice within traditions that have been customarily supported by families and communities may be reluctant to request financial and other support from private or public arts

agencies or are unaware of these possibilities. For some, like Hema and Krithika Rajagopalan, the accomplished bharatanatyam performer in Chicago and her daughter who are subjects of Uttara Coorlawala's study, it is an inherited way of life: "Hema's grandmother organized her performances in India, just as now Hema's mother supports Krithika's performances in Chennai! Unlike many post-Independence dancers, Hema's study and performance of dance were supported by deep rooted familial participation, which could in part explain why Hema is comfortable within this system and its cultural network of associations." For others, the very process of formal grant writing and grant administration may be quite alien. For example, Assane Konte of the Kankouran West African Dance Company in Washington, D.C., interviewed by Hallie Stone, believes it is his lack of understanding of U.S. nonprofit funding systems that has inhibited his ability to secure grants.

In each case study, only a small handful of nonprofit arts organization that have access to public or private funding are able to provide livelihoods, but few can employ more than two or three full-time staff. Some trained and experienced artists are able to make a living as art teachers, usually through nonprofit arts programming, which does have the collateral benefit of allowing them to practice their art form on a regular basis as well as contributing to its transmission to the younger generation. Nevertheless, the exigencies of economic survival for most immigrant communities coupled with scarce resources for arts that are deemed folk or traditional arts, mean that support systems and organizations that do exist to sustain artists are in an increasingly precarious state and a number of art forms at risk.

Cultural intermediaries, especially if they serve as umbrella organizations or sponsors, can accommodate community-based groups that may not have 501(c)(3) status, and that may not feel that it is appropriate or relevant for them to attain it. As Susan Kunimatsu pithily put it in her study of cultural intersections in Seattle: "Nonprofit incorporation is a legal process that is not native to any arts practice."

Across the case studies, artists and communities are constantly weighing the benefits and risks of external support. There are questions about how funding programs are organized, who chooses what should be supported, and how the selection is undertaken. There is the impression that all too often, nonprofit cultural programmers and funding agencies make decisions without the optimal participation of community members and artists. Yet there is also the confidence and commitment that the different actors and institutions can be brought together in the interest of improved cultural arts programming and support.

Space

"A building or place can become part of a cultural community's identity...A space that is available over time can become a sort of incubator, a safe place for a cultural community to develop or reestablish its arts practice...Artists must feel ownership of a space to thrive there," reflects Susan Kunimatsu in her study of Seattle cultural intersections and community-based organizations.

Immigrant and cultural artists and groups have relied on access to space provided by community-based organizations for training, rehearsals, production, and performances—community centers,

temples, churches, university and college student clubs, etc. However important this space is for the maintenance and development of the art forms and practices in question, quite often it is makeshift, unsuitable, and access to it cannot be guaranteed.

For example, taiko requires a great deal of space for practice, storage, and performance. Lack of appropriate space affects both established and nascent groups; there are considerations of size, security, and accessibility, as well as of taiko's booming sound disturbing neighbors. Taiko has been able to rely on the network of Japanese Buddhist temples for space and other support over much of its development, but as groups grow and diversify, they must obtain appropriate spaces of their own.

Most performance venues pose obstacles for art forms that were once performed with no separation between performers and audience. Artists at the Rajkumari Cultural Center, interviewed by Madhulika Khandelwal, commented that since there is no Indo-Caribbean community center in Richmond Hill, they have to perform in rented spaces. It is often difficult to secure space for festivals that take place on consecutive weekends, and the lay-out of the space that is available is rarely conducive to performances. Ideally, they would like to perform on an open stage, surrounded by the audience, which would allow for a different quality of communication with the audience, one that would be integral to their performance. Uttara Coorlawala has also "proposed that Indian music and dance performance needs to be discussed simultaneously as it is being received; this greatly enriches perception, and performers, with instantaneous feedback, are able to perform better. This calls for re-envisioning audiences in social clusters rather than in a block of individually marked off seats that make for an isolated viewing experience."

Yet Alma Plancich, the Seattle Ethnic Heritage Council's Executive Director, interviewed by Susan Kunimatsu, cautions that, "A facility is great, but it can be a financial strain." If this is the case for established cultural institutions such as the Council, the burden would be enormous for most of the small community-based organizations and groups treated in the case studies, many of which have no financial base or stability. The key issue seems to be regular, secure access to appropriate space for administration, storage, rehearsals, and performances, rather than the acquisition and ownership of a space, along with the burden of mortgage and maintenance costs.

Training

Training, especially for the next generation of artists and performers, is critical if immigrant and cultural arts are to survive. The case studies have all made reference to this fundamental task. Khatharya Um and Paul Yoon point to the problem of the dispersal of master teachers and artists in diaspora; Uttara Coorlawala and Hallie Stone in their studies of Indian and West African dance companies, respectively, emphasize the desirability of immersion in instruction over a period of years, whether in the U.S., India, or Africa; Khatharya Um and Susan Kunimatsu refer to the challenge of maintaining the interest of young people through adolescence and the early twenties; Maribel Alvarez and Madhulika Khandelwal emphasize the importance of outreach through school and university programs; Cristian Amigo and Paul Yoon locate a potential crisis in the succession of master artists, teachers, and cultural organizers.

The situation of taiko, as presented by Paul Yoon, is illustrative: As in the case of most of the other art forms considered here, most taiko teachers are recognized as such because of years of performing, leading groups, and giving workshops and classes. Many groups that are beginning have had to use ingenious means to acquire training, especially those at a distance from established taiko centers. University music departments and faculties have provided training and support for some collegiate taiko groups. Succession of leaders and retention of members both depend on developing long-term interest in taiko, and are linked to training. For people to continue playing in a group for five, ten, or more years requires support for artistic development, and creating programs to educate members, audiences, presenters, and funders about the artistry and evolution of American taiko.

Documentation, Networking, and Learning Communities

Perhaps because of the very nature of immigrant and cultural arts—complex, dispersed, under-resourced and overlooked by the mainstream arts establishment—there is very little in the way of coordination or networking, and even less of documentation and archiving of, in some cases, vanishing virtuosity, knowledge, and expertise.

Khatharya Um suggests that what is needed for the Cambodian community is a systematically compiled, comprehensive, and centralized database of arts, artists, and arts resources in diaspora, housed in an established institution chosen by consensus that would to ensure unimpeded community access to the information.

Paul Yoon points out that most of the leading figures in American taiko are still active, but groups need to document their histories and compositions before these are irretrievably lost. As for networking and creating learning communities, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) hosted the North American Taiko Conference in 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2005—an essential resource for the development of taiko—but will probably not be able to do so in the future, thus jeopardizing this process.

Most principal investigators emphasized the need for systematic collection and preservation of archival and other materials, including recorded interviews, audiovisual documentation, costumes, and instruments. Maribel Alvarez's recommendation at the end of her study of corridos and community in Tucson connects documentation with the creation of a learning community, employing the sort of ethnographic approach that this research project has advocated:

Alternatively, one can imagine a programmatic approach in which children are brought into the traditional and commercial debates about corridos, are asked to listen to the radio, are taught to interview their parents, older brothers and sisters, and neighbors about corridos. (Which ones do they know? Which ones do they like? Why do they like some corridos more than others? Where did they first learn about corridos? Are there any corridos that have special significance in their families? And so on.) This approach, more in tune with the practices of public folklore and action-research, emphasizes learning by observation and imitation, and shifts the moral mandate of the project from the classroom to the

parents and the community. It allows for critical reflection about corridos in everyday contexts—where inevitably the children will encounter them—without precluding the use of historical materials and archival sources.

While this proposal refers to schoolchildren, it could be easily extended to high school and university students, community groups, and nonprofit cultural programmers.

Finally, as these case studies amply demonstrate, the broader cultural life of the country as a whole has undergone dramatic changes in response to demographic and economic transformations, and thus what some may have come to accept as “the mainstream” can no longer be so considered. To give “legitimacy of voice” in reference to the evolving artistic trends in immigrant and culturally specific communities and beyond, Alaka Wali, an advisor to this research project, recommends the elaboration of a white paper on cultural arts as generative of creativity in America.

**CORRIDOS AND COMMUNITY IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA:
DYNAMICS OF FOLK, COMMERCIAL, AND NONPROFIT CULTURAL PRODUCTION**

Maribel Alvarez

Executive Summary

Description of Research

The subject of this case study is the production and performance of corridos in Southern Arizona today. The corrido is an art form that has a history of at least a hundred and fifty years among Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and others, immigrants as well as those who have lived in this transnational space for generations. A Mexican ballad of eight-syllable lines arranged in four- or six-line stanzas sung to a simple tune, usually on fast waltz time, polka rhythm, or duple meter, the corrido tells a story about both ordinary and extraordinary happenings. Corridos sing of struggle, strife, heroic acts, miraculous incidents, and the actual events of everyday life; they are emblematic of the resistance of the poor and disenfranchised historically, and have been used to express the struggles and achievements of the Chicano civil rights and cultural movements.

As a musico-poetic art form that is profoundly rooted in a culture of orality, the corrido is relatively easy to compose and sing, and is therefore readily deployed in a variety of social contexts. The study uses ethnographic methods to analyze the production and performance of the corrido in three different contexts: 1) as a living folkloric tradition produced and reproduced in community settings; 2) as a mass-disseminated commercial product that generates new meanings and communities of interest; and 3) as an artistic and educational device employed by nonprofit cultural programmers in a multicultural framework. In this last sense, the study documents and critiques three corrido cultural programs in Tucson—a corrido after-school workshop at Davis Bilingual Magnet School, a corrido-composing contest for high school students sponsored by the University of Arizona Poetry Center, and a corrido-singing contest staged at the local folklife festival, Tucson Meet Yourself or TMY.

Principal Findings

As a musical art form that is actively listened to and incorporated into community life, the corrido can serve as, among other things, historical memory, entertainment, and education. Mexican and Mexican American musicians may describe the corrido simply as what people play and listen to, while educators and other community members may emphasize the corrido's utility for multicultural education, social and personal empowerment, and the strengthening of identity-based social movements (e.g., Chicano or Mexican pride).

Since the corrido's melody and lyrics are simple, it is performance that makes it come alive. Being part of the moment of a corrido experience is the best way to understand a corrido; it is through this participatory act that the meanings of the song and of the performance are produced. The corrido is, therefore, eminently suitable for both community-based and nonprofit cultural

programming and educational activities because it allows people to make art and not simply consume it.

The study demonstrates that corridos function as contested arenas of social meaning. The emergence of *narcocorridos* or drug ballads since the 1970s—songs that praise drug-dealers or recount drug-smuggling exploits—has polarized the Mexican American and Mexican migrant communities. While narcocorridos are immensely popular among many working-class Mexican migrants and some first- and second-generation Chicanos, others believe that they are fundamentally detrimental to community wellbeing and self-respect. In the case of Tucson, narcocorridos did not become popular until the late 1990s because of a tacit boycott by Mexican American community leaders and radio broadcasters; today, narcocorridos can be heard on local radio stations and are top sellers in local music stores. Some argue that corridos are commercially successful precisely because they appeal to the genuine sensibilities, aspirations, desires, and tastes of ordinary people.

Narcocorridos and the corridos sung by community-based musicians may seem to be incompatible; the first are considered by many to harm community-building efforts and the second are assumed to nurture community life. Yet both form part of vital and ongoing processes of cultural negotiation and cultural agency among different sectors of the Mexican and Mexican American communities at different historical moments.

While cross-cultural respect among Mexican, Chicano, Anglo, Native, and other communities in Southern Arizona does exist, cultural products such as the corrido find their most fertile soil within their communities of origin. Given that social and political conflicts have shaped both those communities and their corridos, the efforts of nonprofit and educational organizations involving the corrido present a paradox: the pursuit of inter-ethnic collaboration via a folk form steeped in histories of inter-ethnic conflict. Nonprofit and grassroots cultural producers aim to resolve this situation by collectively creating the social spaces in which corridos acquire new meanings and serve new functions of cross-cultural solidarity. Corridos succeed as cross-cultural expressive experiences to the extent that they create “communities of meaning” through music, song, folklore, and collective self-awareness.

As a cultural practice the corrido is quintessentially democratic—it allows almost anyone (musically talented or not) to compose and sing and partake of the social webs of meaning that are enacted through its performance. Corridos are a participatory art, where being a creator is almost as easy as being an audience, therefore they lend themselves well to different forms of popular and community use.

The case study found that nonprofit cultural programming interventions in the greater Tucson area form a kind of alternative network to the commercial corrido, one that builds on the historic community-based corrido. In fact, the three cultural programs studied can all be considered successful. Yet because these sorts of interventions imply the harnessing or disciplining of cultural forms such as the corrido, their capacity to provide socially-engaged and critically-oriented art experiences, while important, is limited. Two of the programs, Davis School and the Poetry Center, use corridos in part to teach literacy and encourage students to tap into familiar history. Literacy goals, while laudable, tend to eclipse a focus on corridos as a platform for art

making and art presenting. Moreover, by eliminating references to narcocorridos from the teaching materials about corridos, these programs may align themselves with a communitarian vision popular among Mexican American civic leaders, but they also shrink the terms of the discussion and activate reductive meanings for folklore, art, and community.

As a cultural event, the TMY folklife festival corrido contest is close to the heart of community life; it is simply structured, homegrown, and accessible. Yet the TMY misses a number of possibilities for enhanced cultural work in the local community. By setting itself up as a single program once a year, the opportunities for ongoing study, documentation, and discussion of the corrido as a hybrid folk/commercial practice are forfeited. Furthermore, there are few connections between one corrido project and another in the greater Southern Arizona area, thus diminishing the potential for a deeper and sustainable creation of a community of learners and practitioners engaged with this genre.

Nevertheless, the critical question emerging from this case study is not *whether or not* nonprofit cultural entities should engage in programming centered around cultural practices such as the corrido, but *how* they should do it. The essay concludes by making a number of recommendations for extending the reach of corrido programs: Cultural programs could support the formation of groups of students to research corrido practices, interview corrido composers and performers, and document the social contexts that from year to year inform the production of the corrido contests. They could organize scholars and students to seek opportunities to be guests at local radio stations around the time of the corrido contests to encourage discussion and learning about folklore and its relevance to questions of social inequality and expressive culture. Programs could also develop residencies in the schools by artists and folklorists to extend and deepen corrido composition and performance among students and the wider community. One of the objectives should be a greater understanding of how corridos circulate and function in the actual everyday lives of the children's and young people's homes and neighborhoods—the actual folk context of corridos *in situ*.

Strategic Support Issues

Financial sustainability

The cultural programs analyzed point to a serious undercapitalization of community arts in Tucson. In the case of the Davis School corrido after-school workshop, the grant that funded the project was extremely small (\$1,500). The TMY folklife festival costs approximately \$60,000 to produce every year; the grant from the local arts council was for \$1,000, and so the festival has to depend on the voluntary but limited resources of community members to continue.

Research and documentation

In the case of the TMY folklife festival corrido contest, there is no organized and accessible archive or systematic audio/video documentation of the rich body of work of twenty-five years of participatory arts represented by this project. The quality of existing documentation of the contest winners and award ceremonies is uneven and poor. Production of an audio anthology of

past winners and better video material of award ceremonies would help to set in motion a critical evaluation of the project to date and serve as an impetus for future enhancements.

A critical missing element in the nonprofit initiatives studied is an ethnographic approach to the corrido phenomenon. There are few opportunities or resources for teaching and empowering students to do folklife documentation and oral histories of corridos among families in Arizona. These investigations can potentially help to affirm the cultural identity and resistance values of the art form and, because students in high schools are likely to be in contact with the commercial corridos, to engage them in more deliberate models of critical thinking. This gap could be potentially addressed by refashioning, for example, the Poetry Center intervention less as a contest and more an action-research approach to corridos in everyday life.

**FESTI-ANDES AND BEYOND:
PERFORMING IDENTITY IN A TRANS-LOCAL (NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY, CONNECTICUT)
ANDEAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY**

Cristian Amigo

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This case study explores the artistic practices and cultural networks of Andean immigrants in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region. The centerpiece of this study is FESTI-Andes, a one-day cultural and educational event held each summer in Waterloo, New Jersey. FESTI-Andes celebrates the cultural expressions (art, music, dance, crafts, and food) of the peoples of the Andean countries of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela and Argentina. Over thirty music and dance groups from across the tri-state area participated in the fourth annual FESTI-Andes in August 2004, sponsored by the Waterloo Foundation for the Arts with assistance from the New York City-based Center for Traditional Music and Dance (CTMD).

Most of the interviews and ethnographic observation and analysis (covering musicians, dancers, sponsoring institutions, promoters, organizers, and participants) were conducted at the festival. FESTI-Andes serves as the site where community and identity are negotiated and made through performance and participation, and as the wellspring for a larger cultural community or network of affiliations extending beyond the festival itself.

Principal Findings

FESTI-Andes is synonymous with its director, Pepe Santana, a self-described Quechua from Ecuador, an architect, and the founder and leader of the musical group Inkhay. He has been a leading figure in the Andean arts scene since the 1970s, when he was a member of Peruvian musician Guillermo Guerrero's group Tahuantinsuyo, one of the very first Andean music groups in New York City and which is still performing. Guerrero, an engineer by trade and active as an educator, musician, and cultural consultant, enjoys the same kind of renown as does Santana. Pepe Santana's vision, cultural knowledge, contacts, and energy make FESTI-Andes work.

FESTI-Andes 2004 has six formal (Areas 1-6) and two open stages, all of which operate simultaneously all day. The festival program lists over sixty-three events including musical instrument and dance workshops, concerts, lecture-demonstrations, parades, mask making, and storytelling. Performances include over twenty-three music groups, nine dance troupes, and a host of individual artists presenting their work. Area 1 is the main stage (Music and Dance) where, during the day, Ayazamana, Araucaria, Julia Garcia, Taki-Llacta, and Los Pampas present dances from Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina, respectively. Dance performances and workshops run all day from the opening of FESTI-Andes at 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. when all the stages close except this one. At that point, this main stage becomes the focus of feature performances that last into the evening.

FESTI-Andes allows people from different Andean nations to perform and negotiate, and reconstitute and remember the Andean part of themselves and their respective national cultures; at the festival, they perform a part of themselves that is usually in the background in their everyday lives. In the larger context of immigration to the U.S., FESTI-Andes and other similar events serve as a catalyst and stage for a display of collective national pride and ethnic power for both performers and observers.

The Andean arts community is a loosely structured network enabled through personal relationships between music and dance group leaders from various Andean countries. Their association is mutually beneficial in that it gives them and their groups a collective voice through events such as FESTI-Andes without which individuals and groups might be isolated and marginalized, not having the critical mass required for cultural visibility.

Community elders or masters such as Pepe Santana and Guillermo Guerrero are primarily concerned with preservation, dissemination, and management of what they consider authentic and real tradition. For example, Santana does not approve of technology-enhanced music. This year's FESTI-Andes, for example, barely included the participation of younger musicians who employ technology such as electronic drums and synthesizers as central parts of their music-making activity.

For Santana and Guerrero, Andean traditional forms in the U.S. and South America are threatened by commercialization and acculturation. When represented as authentic and Andean, experimental approaches to tradition are dismissed, as are the hybrid musics played in restaurants, gatherings, and public spaces by professional or semi-professional musicians and groups that seek to earn their living from music and who, out of necessity, mix up all sorts of elements in order to please or entertain popular audiences with Andean music. However, when musicians who are considered skillful mix Andean and elements from other musics, their art may be considered acceptable if the hybrid nature of the experiment is acknowledged by the artists and explained to audiences. While this process may constitute the ground of innovation in the U.S., creating new Andean genres is beyond traditional cultural bounds as mediated by Santana and Guerrero.

Pepe Santana and Guillermo Guerrero are well-respected artists in the community, and their talent is a known quantity. However, among younger artists there is not necessarily a consensus about whether these elders have the cultural authority they assume. Yet they do have cultural power, and there are pressures for young musicians to conform in order to be welcomed by the maestros into authority to create new genres are restricted by ideologies of authenticity. In this light, Andean immigrant artists do not always grant themselves the authority to formally innovate within the tradition.

The Center for Traditional Music and Dance (CTMD) and the Westchester Council for the Arts are currently a couple of the most active nonprofit organizations working with Andean arts and artists. Their advocacy and support of particular artists is significant, and helps artists to become recognized within their own communities and beyond. CTMD's approach is focused on the preservation of traditional art forms. CTMD supports volunteers, programs, funds, publications,

performance and recording, organizational support, and development of cultural councils. In 2004 CTMD helped support both the Peruvian Festival in Flushing Queens and FESTI-Andes, and the Westchester Council for the Arts produced Fiesta Andina.

In 2004-2005, CTMD, in association with an arts council it sponsored, Pachamama Peruvian Arts, put together a series of Peruvian music and dance workshops at PS 212 in Jackson Heights, Queens. Younger students (120 per week) were taught how to dance and play instruments related to their cultural heritage. Andean workshops included the building and playing of instruments such as sikus (double-row panpipes) and antaras (single-row panpipes).

In the case of CTMD, a cultural intermediary not based in the Andean community, gatekeeping with respect to the preservation of authentic tradition is also at issue.

Strategic Support Issues

Cultural transmission, training, and leadership succession

Cultural transmission is an open question. Although programs such as Pachamama Peruvian Arts train youngsters, elders such as Pepe Santana and Guillermo Guerrero are not actively recruiting or training successors. They are depending on and hoping for a natural solution while tacitly acknowledging that a solution has not presented itself. Successors are hard to find, especially since many young people were born in the U.S. or came to the U.S. very early, thus having American identities and experiences that often eclipse other axes of identification.

Andean arts training is mostly informal, on the job, and most of the artists involved in FESTI-Andes and the wider Andean arts community are amateurs or semi-professionals. Moreover, many artists have taken up artistic practice only while residing in the U.S. In this context, it could be productive to solicit program and/or funding recommendations from a wide pool of artists in the community, and to facilitate a self-generated set of community values around art making. University and colleges could be encouraged to support local masters as intellectual resources, and to facilitate workshops and master classes. Support for artist residencies for master artists from home countries would also be beneficial for preserving and transmitting Andean art forms.

**NATYA DANCE THEATRE: A BHARATANATYAM DANCE COMPANY
WITHIN THE INDIAN COMMUNITY OF THE GREATER CHICAGO AREA**

Uttara Asha Coorlawala

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This case study explores the career of Hema Rajagopalan, founder of the Natya Dance Theatre, and performer and teacher of the *bharatanatyam* classical Indian dance form. The Natya Dance Theatre started nearly twenty-five years ago as a school of classical Indian dance in Chicago. It has grown to be a center of Indian dance arts, with a school and performing company, and has presented Indian dancers not only in Chicago but on tours across the U.S. Hema Rajagopalan and her daughter Krithika are involved with studying and transmitting the classical aspects of the form as perceived at the source in Tamil Nadu, India, as well as with creating new work.

Principal Findings

Hema Rajagopalan's early training occurred in a significant transitional moment in Tamil Nadu—the years when the traditional inheritors of the classic dance form were teaching in institutions to the lay public, sharing details of their art training. Hema's first public performance was in 1957 at the age of six, under the tutelage of a former dancer of a community of hereditary dancers. Her training involved performing an interpretation of historical poetic songs in a way that would be appropriate to their social contexts, in addition to mastering a physically demanding dance technique. She continued her studies in New Delhi under teachers of long hereditary association with the practice and performance of *bharatanatyam*.

Upon arriving in Illinois, Hema gave a few performances and decided to start a dance school in her small apartment, initially with a handful of students. The story of how Natya developed is integrally linked with the ways in which Indian institutions in Chicago evolved, as Hema and her husband Parthasarthy were actively involved in founding and supporting Hindu religious, cultural, and secular institutions in the city. Families would drive considerable distances on weekends to bring their children to the Rajagopalan home for dance classes, thus the school was an integral part of the immigrant community, providing a meeting place for families as well. This was a multicultural community of professional persons from India who did not necessarily speak Tamil, nor share an interest in Carnatic music and its stylized dance form with its encoded gestures and conventions of representation. Yet parents felt that Hema's dance classes instilled a sense of Indian culture, the Hindu deities and languages, and, above all a sense of the spiritual in aesthetic endeavor.

Hema began to present visiting artists, at a time when it was unusual for Indian dance artists to tour the United States. In 1980 she was able to bring over musicians from India and produce about thirty-five performances with them across the U.S., presented by small Indian

organizations in small community centers and school stages. With her students, also in the 1980s, Hema staged dance-dramas about the exploits of the deities enshrined in the Chicago temples, where performances were presented during special festivals. For each of these events she would research the rituals and historic texts to create an appropriate dance. By the end of the 1980s, Hema and the dance company were performing in the wider Chicago community and beyond.

Hema and Natya had relied on family and community support to sustain their artistic activities, but by the end of the 1990s this way of operating had reached its limits, and Natya incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization. Since nonprofit incorporation, the income from the tuition of committed ongoing students have been the financial and organizational mainstay of Natya. Hema no longer teaches in her home, and currently meets with her regular students in dance studios in downtown Chicago. Moving dance classes out of her home to more public dance spaces has made bharatanatyam accessible to a more diverse group of young dancers, some not of Indian origin. Most recently, Hema and Krithika have been teaching bharatanatyam at Columbia College on a regular basis. This has provided Hema with the opportunity to work in the environment of a community of dance professionals, and with students who might never visit the Hindu temples or attend events organized by Indian cultural organizations.

Throughout Hema's and subsequently Krithika's performing and teaching careers, the constant dialogue with dance in India has served many functions. Visits to India enabled each to refresh her studies of the new developments in technique and choreography. They studied repertory, recorded music, attended dance and music performances, and acquired costumes. During these visits Hema and Krithika also have performed in different venues all over India. Although Hema's dancing was highly regarded in India, her choreography had at times in the past disturbed dance conservatives. Living bi-culturally, both Hema and Krithika are sensitive to contexts and to the way that readings can differ, hence their desire to explain not only via program notes, but with narrations within the performance itself. While this works for audiences in Chicago, in Chennai, however, the tendency to explain was once severely critiqued by the conservatives, because explanations were deemed gratuitous in the indigenous context, and also because a dancer ought not to be speaking about her art but only through her art. However, in India today, this kind of work would no longer be seen as heretical but rather as the current trend.

The experience of Natya Dance Theatre in the United States and in India intersects with several broader issues of contact between source and Euro-American notions of art—of making knowledge, of creativity, and of acculturation. Performing texts, making them come alive through one's own person, involves acculturation layered intimately on one's own body, stance, and glance. The younger dancers growing up in America have to be re-educated into Indianness. Although the dance is an excellent medium for that, epistemological differences are so profound, that the depth of understanding of alternate modalities of being and thought cannot be accessed by just a few years of study, and require some kind of total immersive experience. Hema has ensured that Krithika has such experiences, but cannot guarantee it for all her students.

Within the United States, Natya seeks to establish bharatanatyam as art, beyond the ghettos of folklorized community expression. There is a sense that the space allowed by multicultural policies to this genre—as an ethnographic specimen rather than as an art with a history longer

than classical ballet in Europe, with texts, artifacts, and sophisticated royal sponsors—diminishes the form. Cross-cultural performance is a daunting task when the sensibilities and expectations of audiences have been shaped by cultural demands that masquerade as universal aesthetic principles, say for example temporal expectations. What is too long, or too short, too slow, or too fast? Should narratives progress in chronological sequences? Why are structures of memory privileged over realism? How can Krishna be a baby and an adult in the same song, and be both human and trans-human? In cross-cultural performance, spectacle prevails over historic intertexts, accessibility over complexity. Thus traditional narrative structures tend to be marginalized in the service of transnational communication.

Strategic Support Issues

Expertise of funders

Grant review panels have a variety of criteria by which selections are made. Multicultural representation and wider distribution of resources are among these. In the recent past, award panels, uninformed about the histories and socio-aesthetic concepts that constitute bharatanatyam, have been unprepared to evaluate claims to originality. Funding selects performances and thereby preferred criteria are re-inscribed until the more subtle layers of Indianness are erased.

Appropriate venues and spaces

In a proscenium theatre, the performer is separated from the audience, whereas in Indian aesthetic theory, this relationship between performer and audience needs to be intimate. Indian music and dance need to be discussed simultaneously as they are being received, greatly enriching perception. Performers with instantaneous feedback are able to perform better. This calls for re-envisioning audiences in social clusters rather than in a block of individually marked-off seats that make for an isolated viewing experience. Pre-performance announcements and post-performance discussions serve similar needs.

**PRESERVING TRADITIONS, CREATING TRADITIONS:
SOUTH ASIAN PERFORMING ART ORGANIZATIONS IN NEW YORK CITY**

Madhulika Khandelwal

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This case study looks at two South Asian performing arts organizations in New York City. The first is the Rajkumari Cultural Center, an organization located in the borough of Queens amidst large immigrant communities of diverse cultures, whose mission is to define a distinct Indo-Caribbean identity by sponsoring cultural practices that were taken by migrant ancestors from India to the Caribbean starting in the early nineteenth century. Second is Sangament, a cultural production company that presents the work of DJ Rekha, a young South Asian woman who played a crucial role in establishing *bhangra* as a signature art form of South Asian culture in the United States. The two organizations are quite different from each other, and they have been selected to portray distinct processes of identity formation among South Asians.

Principal Findings

The Rajkumari Cultural Center (RCC) was founded in 1995 in Richmond Hill, Queens, the site of a growing concentration of Indo-Caribbeans, by a family of Guyanese artists who wanted to maintain and develop Indo-Caribbean culture and identity in the United States. RCC's cultural and artistic work is focused on immigrants of Indian descent from countries such as Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Surinam who struggled to preserve their cultures, first in the Caribbean and now in the United States. It is noteworthy that RCC's preservation efforts in New York City include a diasporic history of migration and cultural preservation in the Caribbean which has shaped a distinct Indo-Caribbean identity. It is also evident that Indo-Caribbean artists view migration in terms of the disruption of culture which necessitates conscious struggle to reclaim their roots.

Though not bound by any particular faith, RCC's work is closely connected with Hindu ritualistic traditions preserved in the Caribbean and brought with recent immigrants to New York City. A key RCC performance is *Lila*, a popular folk Indian theater form which depicts the life of epic Hindu heroes. However, while maintaining the folk tradition of *Lila*, RCC wove themes and characters from the Indo-Caribbean diaspora into the epic stories. Here the Indo-Caribbean migrant, exploited and suppressed by colonial rulers, is presented as a hero who struggles to preserve his/her cultural traditions and through them his/her identity. Although recently some networking has been attempted between Hindu immigrants from the Caribbean and India, RCC's focus on Hindu rituals has an entirely different historical nature from the recent political development of Hindu fundamentalism in India. RCC artists are engaged in developing a Caribbean cultural identity with Indian ancestral roots. Thus they maintain extensive contacts with not only various Indo-Caribbean practices such as chutney (a form of popular/folk music of

Indians in the Caribbean), and the local organizations that sponsor them, but also with hip-hop and reggae. RCC tries to carve an overarching Indo-Caribbean identity that reflects both the diversity of the communities from Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Surinam, as well as the intersections with other Caribbean art forms and the historical ties with India.

Until the 1990s, South Asian performing arts in New York City were represented by multiple organizations founded by immigrants to maintain their traditional cultures in the United States. Although various art forms, old and new, reflecting the cultural diversity of the South Asian region were included, heavy emphasis was placed on the “authenticity” of traditions through which “Indian Culture” could be defined. This began to change in the 1990s with the emergence of a young generation of South Asians who broke away from more typical immigrant-led practices and set out to create cultural spaces of their own. These initiatives were primarily based in Manhattan, with many artists establishing residences in Brooklyn, at a distance from Queens where the immigrant concentrations were located. This spatial pattern pointed to the creation of a new community and audience, comprising young South Asians and other Americans, who represented a different ethnic South Asian culture in the United States. And bhangra, a dance and music art form that was DJ’ed in parties by young South Asian artists, became the signature of this youth culture.

As a dance and music practice, bhangra’s roots are in the folk traditions of rural Punjab (a region spanning the India-Pakistan border) which traveled along with Punjabi immigrants to England in the second half of the twentieth century. During the 1970s, young immigrant musicians started mixing traditional bhangra with contemporary music styles, and their recorded music began to make its way through the local and global networks of the South Asian diaspora. In the context of the rapidly changing South Asian communities of the mid-1990s onwards, DJ Rekha’s production company Sangament played a major role in introducing bhangra to the United States, making the art form an essential part of multicultural New York.

The primary motivation for South Asian performing art is based in the need of artists to affirm and communicate their cultural identities in a multicultural society and globalized world. RCC wants to reclaim the distinct cultural identity of an invisible community in the United States whose struggle to preserve traditions had started in the Caribbean in the early nineteenth century. Although RCC’s work is aimed primarily to the local Indo-Caribbean community, it seeks support and recognition from American art institutions and empathetic scholars and public officials. DJ Rekha, on the other hand, represents the needs of a new generation of South Asians in the United States who want to shape their identity differently from the parent-generation of immigrants and to connect with art forms that have developed in urban South Asian diasporic communities worldwide. DJ Rekha found little support from the local immigrant South Asian community and locates major sources of support in other cultural institutions. It is important to note that both RCC and DJ Rekha, while engaged in defining ethnic cultures, make conscious choices of interacting with and sharing art forms such as hip-hop. While they dialogue with mainstream American art and cultural institutions, they are also active in building relationships with minority American cultures.

Strategic Support Issues

Financial sustainability

DJ Rekha is concerned about the rapid commercialization of bhangra and fears that the art form may succumb to business interests that do not value artistic talents. Thus she sees tension between her artist self and the business interests of her production company. Sangament is not a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization and does not fit the profile of a classic non-profit organization, which means Rekha cannot apply for funding from philanthropic organizations that have traditionally funded 501(c)(3)s.

Space

Since there is no Indo-Caribbean community center in Richmond Hill, RCC artists have to perform in rented spaces. It is often difficult to secure space for events that take place over consecutive weekends, and the lay-out of the space that is available is rarely conducive to RCC performances. Pritha Singh, RCC's Executive Director, spoke about her wish to perform on an open stage where she is surrounded by the audience; that, she felt, would allow for a different quality of communication with the audience, one that would be integral to their performance.

Cultural transmission

For both RCC and DJ Rekha, a major aspect of their activities is engaging youth. While RCC is active in transmitting their art and knowledge to younger generations, DJ Rekha also considers education an important part of her work. Thus she is deeply interested in talking about bhangra and South Asian art to both young Americans and young South Asians. The focus on transmission of cultural art forms cannot be overemphasized in performing art organizations of immigrant populations.

CULTURAL INTERSECTIONS IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON: A GEOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

Susan Kunimatsu

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This case study examines the interactions among some culturally specific communities within the geographically defined, multicultural setting that is Seattle. It focuses on four organizations that promote cultural intersections where performing artists of diverse cultures come together:

- DANCE this..., a dance education and presenting program of the Seattle Theatre Group (STG)
- Ethnic Heritage Council, a cultural community service organization
- Rainier Valley Cultural Center, a community arts venue operated by SouthEast Effective Development (SEED), a community development corporation
- HipHop, a culturally-specific, multidisciplinary, performing arts genre, as practiced in Seattle

Based on over thirty-five interviews with artists, students, arts administrators, and community members, as well as an extensive review of secondary materials, this study analyzes the cultural intersections in terms of: community demographics and geographic locations; cultural systems varying in size, structure, programs, purpose, and resources; arts practitioners and modes of participation; key elements around which the intersections coalesce; and degrees of interaction between artists and audiences from different cultural communities.

Principal Findings

Over the past six years, DANCE this... has brought together thirty dance companies working in various cultural traditions. Five to seven groups are recruited each year for an intensive two-week summer workshop and two performances at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Seattle. The 100-plus dancers are mostly youth from Seattle area high schools. Over the program's history, half the companies practiced traditional dance from African, Asian, European, Latino and Native American cultures; the rest specialized in urban American forms such as tap, jazz, HipHop, and drill teams. During the summer workshop, each group demonstrates and teaches dance from its own repertoire to the other companies. A professional choreographer creates a new work drawing on the diverse dance forms represented. A group of dancers selected from the participating companies presents the work at the Paramount.

DANCE this... participants are community-based, non-profit dance training organizations. Organizational and educational structures vary widely, shaped by each group's cultural affiliation. Some are traditional, with elders sharing and passing on knowledge to youth through

multiple generations dancing together. Others are studios with professional teachers and students segregated by age. Still others combine elements of traditional ethnic and contemporary American dance training. Initially conceived as a youth-only program, DANCE this... now includes dance traditions that are inherently intergenerational. In many cultural dance forms, musicians are integral members of the company, with adults having the required mastery of an instrument.

An outgrowth of the program is a company of DANCE this... alumni who want to pursue dance training beyond their own community. Selected by audition, they attend performances and master classes throughout the year given by professional artists. In 2004, DANCE this... added two weeks of intensive training in ballet and modern dance technique to the two weeks of cross-cultural dance. Participation in the core cross-cultural training program is free for the performing groups. The additional two-week session is open to the DANCE this... company and summer program participants for a modest fee.

Every DANCE this... participant interviewed described their experience in positive terms, citing the opportunity for artistic growth, performing before new audiences, learning other cultural dance forms, and achieving a broader perspective on one's own dance form. Young dancers who come from performance-oriented dance programs appear to benefit most from DANCE this..., but few young people from the cultural groups continue with the program beyond the core two weeks in the summer. Getting on a public stage is not the goal of every dance group; some exist to nurture a tradition within their community, and to shelter their youth from or offer alternatives to the negative influences of mainstream culture. A question arising from the Dance this... experience would be whether professionalizing traditional cultural arts helps to preserve them in the context of mainstream Western culture, or if the loss of traditional contexts irreparably alters their integrity.

Founded in 1980, the Ethnic Heritage Council is a network and clearinghouse of information for cultural groups representing and serving immigrants. The Council's two annual arts festivals, Worldfest at Seattle Center and Cultural Crossroads at Crossroads Mall in Bellevue, offer performance opportunities for the Council's 400 dues-paying members and motivate other immigrant groups to preserve and pass on their traditional art forms. By paying artists' fees and providing administrative assistance and personal encouragement, the Council has been instrumental in the formation of many cultural arts groups and giving them the opportunity to perform and share their cultural heritage and art forms.

The Ethnic Heritage Council's programming emphasizes the importance of reaching out to new immigrants before their artistry starts to slip away, to encourage them to preserve their art forms through practice, and to convince them to share them. Some artists are comfortable performing within their own community, but need to be convinced to perform in public. At the same time, immigrants need a level of material and personal stability before they can commit resources to their art. Cultural art forms integrating music, dance, and costume are technically complex; it is largely the commitment of the artists that sustains them. Of the artists interviewed, only a few, usually teachers or leaders of organizations, make a living practicing their art. The Council pays the performers at its events and the artists receive payment at other venues, but most reported

that those funds went toward expenses. Most rank-and-file members of cultural arts groups, however skilled, perform for free, out of their own passion for the art form.

The multicultural format of Worldfest and Cultural Crossroads has influenced artists to improve their technical skills and concentrate on the authenticity of their arts practice. Many reported that their adherence to traditional practice increased rather than decreased over time. The Council's proactive outreach and its ability to pay artists and give administrative support to new groups encouraged artists who might not have come to these opportunities on their own. The Council has persuaded artists to perform outside of their communities, and to expand the knowledge and gain the respect of a broader audience. The Council's emphasis on cultural preservation inhibits artistic exchange to some degree. Artists who participate in the Council's programs do not come expecting to change their arts practice in response to that of other groups. Yet among the artists interviewed, the exposure engendered respect for other cultures and a desire for authenticity in their own art practice.

The Rainier Valley Cultural Center's parent organization, SouthEast Effective Development (SEED), is a non-profit community development corporation founded in 1975 to strengthen and revitalize the Rainier Valley and southeast Seattle. According to the 2000 U.S. census, over 71 percent of Rainier Valley residents are non-white or mixed-race compared to less than 30 percent citywide. SEED operates arts presentation and education programs at the Rainier Valley Cultural Center and rents it out as a community arts venue to non-profit arts and community groups at very accessible rates. SEED employs artistic staff, contracts with professional artists, and trains students in on-site programs. To strengthen the Rainier Valley arts community, SEED sponsors a number of small start-up arts groups, offering them expert advice, rent-free use of the Cultural Center, and the fiscal advantages of SEED's non-profit status. The renovation of the Center was completed in late 2004, so it still needs time to establish itself as a fully functioning arts venue.

The Rainier Valley Cultural Center constitutes a geographic nexus for multicultural audiences and artists in a neighborhood where there are few established arts groups. Its location alone positions the Center to serve an underserved audience. Most of Seattle's performing arts presenters, both institutional and fringe, are downtown or in the more prosperous, less ethnically diverse neighborhoods of Capitol Hill, Queen Anne, and around the University of Washington, all north of downtown. The potential cultural diversity of the Center's audience is attractive to artists, particularly artists of color. Given the distance of the Rainier Valley from other arts venues, self-producing artists make a conscious decision to work there. All the artists interviewed expected to return to the Center and most seemed to consider this a relationship, not just a venue or a job.

HipHop is now a thirty-year-old American art form that has had a huge cultural and economic impact worldwide. It is the most popular music genre among people under thirty, a mainstay of the commercial recording industry, and is still practiced as a grassroots art form. Seattle's HipHop culture is rooted in the national genre, but has branched in a unique direction, shaped by the city's immigrant and ethnic community history.

HipHop originated in the 1970s in the urban street culture of African American and Puerto Rican communities on the East Coast. HipHop artistic practice encompasses four disciplines: DJs who mix recorded sounds to make new work; MCs who write and perform spoken word, backed by DJs; b-boys or break dancers; and the visual art form of graffiti. Starting in 1980, HipHop pioneer Nestor Rodriguez gave the art form an Asian face in Seattle. Today, over half of Seattle's non-white population is Asian/Pacific Islander (API), and API artists are a major component of the city's HipHop scene.

Strategic Support Issues

Sources of support for cultural artists

Cultural arts resemble the mainstream non-profit arts sector in that performance fees alone rarely support the artists. In this case study, the intersections and venues that are non-profit organizations each employ two or three full-time paid staff. Among the artists interviewed, those who both practice and teach are most likely to make a living through their art. A majority of the traditional and emerging artists have non-arts "day jobs" or are supported by family members. Performance fees go toward expenses and most artists pay out of their own pockets to practice their art. HipHop has the most income potential due to its popularity and access to commercial media distribution, but the emerging HipHop artists hold other jobs as well. While many cultural artists accept the necessity of a day job, it interferes with their ability to sustain their art form through practice and transmission to the next generation.

To overcome some of the cultural barriers described above and make funding more accessible to immigrant and culturally-specific artists, funding criteria need to be flexible. For example, funding restricted to a single discipline may not accommodate the integrated multidisciplinary practice typical of traditional arts.

Space for cultural arts

The availability of space for training, rehearsal, and performance had a significant impact on the cultural intersections and many of the arts groups in this case study. Space supports the practice of art and can increase its perceived value for both cultural and mainstream artists. A space that is available over time can become a sort of incubator, a safe place for a cultural community to develop or reestablish its arts practice.

Documentation, preservation, and transmission

Cultures that practice their arts in intergenerational groups are more successful in passing on their traditions. Art forms that are not intergenerational are more likely to see immigrant artists die without grooming the next generation or documenting their work. Documentation and training are necessary for the preservation of traditional arts. Recording, interpreting, and publicizing a traditional art form—adding cultural value—can increase both people's appreciation and the value it has in the public sphere.

This case study found very little organized effort to document traditional art forms, despite increasingly accessible technology. The Seattle Theatre Group documents the two weeks of training and performances that DANCE this... conducts annually. The Ethnic Heritage Council collects photographs and clippings on its own events, but is only beginning to consider video and audio recordings made informally by their member groups.

Successful documentation projects require a great deal of fieldwork to identify and reach artists, to bring them into the recording studio, or to send technicians and equipment to record artists in their own communities. The completed recordings give artists access to radio and television air play, materials they can use to promote their work, and a tangible product to sell. Yet seeing or hearing the record of an art form is to experience it out of context, returning to the question of how artists can sustain both vitality and tradition in a new world.

Art forms are in danger of extinction when their traditional function is lost. Specific songs and dances are part of social rituals such as courtship, marriage, and harvest; they record history and legends for future generations. Traditional arts must acquire some new function or value in order to motivate immigrants and subsequent generations to preserve them. Cultural intersections can increase the perceived value of traditional or cultural art forms in and outside their communities or origin by offering recognition, financial support, and new venues for presenting the art forms. For artists actively seeking to present their art outside their own communities, the four cultural intersections in this case study function as communities of learning.

**CREATIVE PROCESS/CREATIVE INTERCHANGE:
AN EXPLORATION OF SENEGALESE DANCE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Hallie Stone

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This ethnographic case study examines the dynamics of Senegalese dance in Washington D.C. with particular focus on the Kankouran West African Dance Company. The study explores the dynamics between Kankouran West African Dance Company, the Senegalese community of recent immigrants, and the African American community in D.C. In order to understand the role of Kankouran and its founder and director, Assane Konte, as well as how Senegalese dance is practiced and shared within the U.S., the study situates the goals, history, and activities of the company within the context of the African American community. The lively informal dance events within the Senegalese immigrant community at times inform the work of the company and at times stand in stark contrast to it.

Principal Findings

Founded in 1983 by Artistic Director Assane Konte and former Director of Music Abdou Kounta, both from Senegal, the Kankouran West African Dance Company is central to the District of Columbia's thriving African dance scene. Dedicated to preserving and sharing the culture of Africa, the company now performs under the musical direction of Medoune ("Dame") Yacine Gueye. Kankouran has established itself as a vital organization, offering a wide range of educational and cultural programs. The company is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and serves to "contribute to the extension of the arts by introducing the essence of African dancing and drumming to audiences in the United States in order to promote intercultural understanding through education and the performing arts." Assane Konte, Kankouran's founder, has had a significant impact on African dance in the Washington, D.C. area as an educator, performer, and promoter of African culture for over 25 years.

Konte teaches African ballet, one of two major dance forms practiced by the Senegalese community in the United States. The other, sabar, is a more community-based social dance style. Ballet dances, introduced to American audiences in the early 1970s, are quite popular and are performed in dance theaters across the country by Senegalese, Guinean, African American, and sometimes mixed dance troupes. African ballet in the U.S. is practiced in much the same way that it is in Africa with staged choreography which draws on African legends, ceremonies, or rites. The number of dancers varies from company to company, and some companies may boast forty to fifty dancers. They usually consist of a drum ensemble and accompanying dancers.

Washington has always been a major center for African dance, including both African ballet and sabar. Sabar is a modern, urban phenomenon in Africa, and has evolved from traditional dances that are usually not seen in public performance. It fuses multiple styles of music and dance, and instrumentation, including a mix of traditional drums and electric guitar. The term “sabar” is generally used to describe the event, the musical ensemble, the drums, and the dance. The exact chronology of the origins of sabar is disputed among ethnomusicologists, but by the 1950s it had become a popular form, using mostly traditional instruments and fusing multiple styles of music and dance. The dances generally occur within the context of events such as naming ceremonies, weddings, birthdays, and New Year’s Eve parties.

Traditionally, the dances out of which sabar emerged were never attended by men. In Washington, D.C. sabars typically take place in a community center and are not staged in front of an audience the way Konte’s performances are. Members of the Senegalese community are both the primary performers and audience. Children of both sexes also attend, and learn by watching the adults. Sabars are often sponsored by prominent community business women who are braiders and boutique proprietors. They also encourage competitive dances in which the women compete with one other in dress as well as in dance. The dance movements of sabar are athletic, intricate, and precise. In this community context, women participants may be celebrated for their dance skills, but they rarely look upon themselves as artists.

In contrast, the African ballet is generally considered a wholly modern artistic endeavor dating from 1957, when Les Ballets Africaines were organized. Like European dance it is distilled and highly stylized, though based on traditional aesthetics. It is choreographed and produced for performance purposes rather than for participation by the community as a whole. The ballet is both urban and cosmopolitan, and consists of a formal presentation created by choreographers who have tailored traditional dances for the concert stage. The presentation is without audience participation.

Whereas sabar is specifically by and for the Senegalese community and represents an element of African heritage, the African ballet is more the primary focus for African Americans and Americans in general. The African ballet, created from traditional forms for an audience presentation, has attracted African Americans for various reasons. The ballet does represent an African legacy which African Americans are eager to embrace; it introduces the African American audience to an indigenous property of African culture. The African ballet performances also serve as a cultural bridge between African Americans and the African continent, often through recruitment of dancers and musicians as students and performers.

The Kankouran dance troupe in Washington satisfies some African Americans’ thirst for African culture as well as African immigrants’ need to maintain a connection with their homeland. It is a sanctuary for dozens of African Americans of all ages who desire a space for self-discovery. For Senegalese immigrants, the dance troupe is something that they know about, they are proud of it, and they may invite members of the troupe to dance at sabar events; however, most do not participate in Kankouran as performers or attend its concerts.

Strategic Support Issues

Funding challenges

For the Kankouran West African Dance Company, public funding and grants have been difficult to attain. Kankouran is supported by student fees and performance ticket sales, and Konte also teaches classes at Howard University. He thinks that it is his lack of knowledge about the arts funding system that has prevented him from taking advantage of many of the sources of grants and other support. The company cannot support an administrative staff and this means, among other things, missing out on grant opportunities and applications.

The funding problems facing Kankouran and African dance are shared with other groups and art forms that are characterized as “folkloric” or “ethnic.” In the dance world, support for modern dance seems to have been increasing while that for ethnic or folkloric dance has been declining. In a recent survey of the D.C. dance community it was noted that while African dance companies and forms are deeply rooted in Washington, D.C. and involve large segments of the African American community, the companies do not receive the recognition and support they deserve.

Studio space

In the last ten years Kankouran has had to change studio locations three times. This lack of a permanent home has taken a heavy toll on the company’s capacity and progress. In order to achieve the next level of growth, Kankouran must secure a facility to house the dance studio. Although the company’s performances will help to support this effort, the company has also launched a capital campaign to purchase a suitable space.

ARTS, IDENTITY, AND HEALING IN A COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION: CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE CAMBODIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN LONG BEACH

Khatharya Um

Executive Summary

Description of Research

Cambodian American artistic endeavors rooted in cultural preservation and in the new forms that have emerged among first-generation refugees and American-born youths are the focus of this case study. In locating the research in Long Beach, California, the study captures the cultural dynamism of the largest and one of the oldest Cambodian American communities. The study looks at cultural heritage programs run by two significant community-based organizations in Long Beach, the Cambodian Association of America (CAA) and the United Cambodian Community (UCC), and their institutional offshoots, as well as a new generation of hip hop artists. Through conversations with critical stakeholders, artists, and residents, the study also addresses the patterns and shifts along class, generational, and gender lines that affect cultural development in the Cambodian American community. The study considers the importance of the arts in promoting community cohesion, empowerment, and healing, and analyzes emerging themes and concerns related to community arts and the larger socioeconomic and political contexts in which artistic production is necessarily situated.

Principal Findings

Emerging from a history of devastation and loss, the struggle to remember and preserve is, for many Cambodians, an integral part of the larger struggle to survive as a people. The compulsion to honor and preserve Khmer cultural traditions grew in intensity in the face of the loss and rupture of the post-genocide years. Most of the master artists and artisans had perished under the Khmer Rouge and along with them dance and musical traditions that had been passed down through generations. Given that much of Khmer traditions are based on orality, the death of one-seventh of the population essentially meant cultural rupture. Once known for their high civilization, embodied in the ancient monuments of Angkor, surviving Cambodians are now groping through their collective memory to retrieve dying arts.

War, genocide, and exile have bequeathed deep and lasting imprints on the refugee population in the U.S. Of Cambodian households in California, close to twenty-five percent are female-headed, the men killed or disappeared during the Khmer Rouge period. Over twenty-seven percent of Cambodian American households live below the poverty line, of which population forty-four percent are children under fifteen.

As a city where the few surviving artists have made their homes and struggled to rebuild their artistic lives, and where latent talents can find a nurturing environment, Long Beach is well

known for its quality cultural programs. Over the years, community-based organizations and volunteer groups have successfully trained a whole generation of Cambodian youth in traditional dance and music, hosted national pageants, and organized the annual Khmer New Year celebrations attended by thousands.

Long Beach is home to the oldest and one of the most structured Cambodian American mutual assistance agencies, the Cambodian Association of America (CAA) and, until its decline starting in the 1990s, to an ambitious and promising community-based organization, the United Cambodian Community (UCC). Yet the progress and development of Long Beach Cambodian community organizations have been undermined by internal conflicts and by new exigencies, not the least of which is leadership succession as a new generation of American-born Cambodians comes of age and the older, first-generation refugees slowly fade from the scene. The UCC had developed and sustained a cultural heritage program over fifteen years, the Arts of Apsara. In 2002, the Arts of Apsara fractured into three splinter groups: the Khmer Arts Academy, the Praloeung Khmer Angkor (the Spirit of Khmer Angkor) that affiliated with the CAA, and a third comprised of surviving members of the Arts of Apsara.

The Khmer Arts Academy is envisioned as the first private Khmer dance academy in the U.S. Its leadership is drawn from the post-war generation of artists, professionally trained in Cambodia, and its programmatic scope extends beyond teaching to include production of new works and touring. In this sense, the Academy differs from other cultural heritage programs that are embedded within the institutional structure of community-based organizations and are regarded as an extension of the youth empowerment program. In contrast to the Academy, the goal of the Arts of Apsara is not to produce professional dancers but to instill cultural pride, self-esteem, and confidence in its students.

For younger Cambodian Americans, many of whom were born in refugee camps in Thailand and have grown up in the U.S., the possibility of reconnecting to the history and traditions of the ancestral homeland is one of the more compelling reasons for enrollment in cultural heritage programs. Being truly bilingual and bicultural is becoming a valued asset among many second generation Cambodians. Some note that involvement in traditional dance and music programs imparts a certain sense of identity, confidence, and achievement.

Those involved in community arts programs have pointed to the generational factor as key to program sustainability. Recruitment is most successful among younger Cambodian Americans as there are fewer constraints on their time and interests. By the time they enter high school, they may have less interest in traditional dance and music because of increased peer and academic pressures, as well as other extracurricular distractions. Moreover, upon reaching puberty, young Cambodian women are subject to certain cultural restrictions involving modesty and public performance. Traditional dance teachers have noted that some parents may allow their daughters to continue to practice the art after the girls reach a certain age, but not to participate in performances.

While traditional dance and music may appeal to a segment of Cambodian American youth, many are more attuned to the popular culture that surrounds them. For artists such as Prach Ly and ViceVersa, hip hop is simply a different and more accessible forum for engaging the same

issues—identity, trauma, place and belonging—that their peers are grappling with through cultural heritage programs. Prach Ly, who often raps in Khmer to the accompaniment of traditional instruments, appeals to a relatively older crowd, with a following in the U.S. as well as in Cambodia. ViceVersa is an all female, Cambodian-Lao band that writes and raps in English, peppered with Lao and Khmer, and has more pan-Asian and multicultural audiences.

Since the political opening of the early 1990s, increased access to Cambodia has strengthened transnational links between Cambodia and the diaspora, with new possibilities for the arts and culture. In the early years, interaction was largely confined to the purchase of musical instruments and dance costumes, but now community-based organizations can enrich their heritage programs by engaging teachers and artists from Cambodia. In addition, cutting-edge artists such as Prach Ly have also been able to tour Cambodia.

Strategic Support Issues

Financial sustainability

The strength of Cambodian cultural projects in diaspora may not ultimately depend upon cultural pride or commitment to the arts. In the face of poverty, educational struggles, and family obligations, participation in the arts may be a luxury that few can afford. As in Cambodia, lack of financial resources is one of the greatest impediments to cultural preservation in diaspora. Because of the limitations and precariousness of funding, many programs are unable to guarantee even part-time employment for artists, many of whom are thus forced to set aside their art for economic survival.

Older students in cultural heritage programs who are from poor backgrounds need to contribute financially to their families' economic welfare. Without compensation, many of them, like the professional artists, cannot afford to continue to invest the time in artistic pursuits, regardless of their dedication to the arts.

Some cultural programs are unable to sustain students' interest once they have achieved a degree of mastery because classes can only be offered at a certain level due to limited funding. Those seeking to advance further would need private tutoring, which depends not only on the financial capacity of the family, but also on the availability of instructors, many of whom are occupied with multiple jobs.

Training

With regard to cultural preservation, the dispersal of trained teachers and artists is a critical impediment to the development of community-based programs. The ability of the community to gain access to their knowledge and mastery is further constrained by the lack of funds and institutional support.

Though student participants in many cultural heritage programs are taught the techniques of traditional dances, for example, they are not sufficiently exposed to the history and even the

rituals involved. Linguistic challenges, coupled with the limited training of the instructors themselves, often mean that these heritage lessons are imparted devoid of their cultural and historical contexts. Moreover, given the scarcity of teachers, many programs must resort to videotapes to supplement the dance instruction.

Collaboration and networks

Despite the proliferation of cultural projects in the Cambodian American community, there is relatively little coordination and collaboration among them. The competition over scarce resources, contested leadership, program rivalry, and lack of funding for networking have resulted in these initiatives remaining in isolation of each other. Moreover, there is little continuity among projects.

Documentation and secure and accessible repositories

There is a great need for a centralized and comprehensive database of artists and arts resources in diaspora, housed in an established institution that will guarantee access to all. This should be coupled with the systematic collection and preservation of archival materials, including interviews, video documentation, and original works by refugee artists, many of whom are now deceased. Much of the material is currently in private possession or stored at various community organizations. With funding cuts and phasing out of many community-based programs, these archival resources are at risk of being lost or discarded. For example, the fracturing of the Arts of Apsara into three separate groups raised the question of the ownership of the sizeable collection of costumes and instruments that had been amassed over the years.

Given space and resource constraints, preservation and dissemination efforts can make use of digital archiving. Online multimedia libraries can be useful venues for gathering and disseminating information that would otherwise be difficult to access. However, equitable access must be assured, in Cambodia as well as in the diaspora. Towards this objective, links with institutions, especially those of higher education, are important because of the technical expertise and infrastructure that are needed for this enterprise.

DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF TAIKO IN THE UNITED STATES

Paul J. Yoon

Executive Summary

Description of Research

This case study examines the practice of taiko playing in the United States generally, and in Japanese American and Asian American communities, specifically. The taiko—a drum originating in Japan and historically used variously to mark community borders, scare away crop pests, inspire warriors in battle, and accompany dancers during obon (Buddhist ancestor commemoration)—has become, for many of its practitioners in the U.S., an instrument emblematic of Japanese American or Asian American identity. This study is primarily focused on taiko groups in California (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Jose), and secondarily on regional and national networks.

This study traces taiko from its transformation into an art form involving choreographed ensemble drumming performance with a variety of drums and sometimes other instruments in post-World War II Japan and the formation of the first taiko groups in California in the late 1960s to its contemporary nationwide expansion in the U.S. The study looks in depth at three of the first and most influential U.S. taiko groups: San Francisco Taiko Dojo (SFTD), Kinnara Taiko in Los Angeles, and San Jose Taiko (SJT). It considers each of these foundational community-based groups as providing a different model for the organization, training, performance, and promotion of taiko in this country. The study also looks at collegiate taiko groups at UCLA, UC Riverside, and Stanford, as well as a number of smaller more conceptual, fusion, or avant-garde taiko ensembles on the West Coast. Finally, it examines the local, national, and global networks that support taiko, and covers concerns and debates within the larger North American taiko community.

Principal Findings

Taiko in the U.S. has grown from two groups in 1968 to over 200 in 2005. For many years a California phenomenon, taiko has spread on the West Coast and across the country.

The three foundational taiko groups represent distinctive models that have been emulated by other groups. San Francisco Taiko Dojo (SFTD) began in 1967 as the idea of one Japanese immigrant, Seiichi Tanaka, to teach a positive and accessible Japanese art form, and grew into a school, now housed in a warehouse space, which offers classes to the public. SFTD emphasizes accomplished performance after years of rigorous training, and tends to use more traditional Japanese rhythms. Seiichi Tanaka is the only person in the U.S. to have been named a taiko sensei (teacher) by the Nippon Taiko Foundation in Japan, and was awarded the National Heritage Fellowship by the NEA in 2001; he has been an influential teacher and helped to train

new groups. SFTD performs widely and aims to make taiko available to all, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

Kinnara Taiko was formed in the late 1960s in the Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles as an outgrowth of playing for festivals and an extension of other temple activities. The emphasis here is not necessarily on rigor and performance; the organization is non-hierarchical and training methods are quite flexible. All are welcome to join if they fulfill communal responsibilities and attend practices; temple membership is not a prerequisite. Kinnara's "Buddhist Taiko" has spread to other Japanese American communities through the network of Japanese American Buddhist temples. Kinnara performs at community events in Los Angeles and throughout the country.

San Jose Taiko (SJT) emerged from the Asian American political and cultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and is informed by a collective ethos. SJT consciously aimed to create an Asian American art form, and has incorporated jazz, rock, soul, and other popular music forms in addition to the traditional Japanese rhythms. Anyone may audition, but membership implies recognition of the link between SJT and the Asian American movement. SJT is organized as a 501(c)(3) entity and receives grants, and is also supported by workshop and touring fees, annual concert ticket sales, and their Junior Taiko Program which has 80 students. SJT is committed to community-building efforts and participates in Japanese American obon festivals and Day of Remembrance events, as well as school outreach programs.

American taiko is characterized by collaboration and cooperation among groups. Information, techniques, resources, instruments, and compositions are widely shared through established as well as incipient networks.

Japanese American Buddhist temples have been a vital resource for taiko. Most taiko groups have relied on temples for practice and storage space, as well as using national temple networks to promote and disseminate taiko performance.

The design and construction of a Japanese American drum has been key to the expansion of taiko. The relatively inexpensive wine-barrel taiko that can be built by the players themselves, in lieu of the expensive, hand-crafted drums imported from Japan, has been a critical factor in taiko's expansion in the U.S. Members of Kinnara Taiko built the first wine-barrel taiko; the technology and method spread from there and were developed by other groups, yielding a distinctive American drum and sound. The wine-barrel taiko has in some ways become emblematic of Asian American taiko.

Taiko requires physically strenuous training and disciplined practice, but it appeals to and involves people of different ages and backgrounds, and both men and women. Today there are more women than men taiko players in the U.S., and Japanese and Asian American women have established groups and performed taiko from the beginning. Many women consider taiko empowering and a counter to prevailing gender stereotypes about Asian women.

Cross-fertilization between Japan and the U.S. has been significant in the history of the art form. American taiko groups perform and study in Japan, and Japanese groups have been influenced

by U.S. performance styles. The significant role of women in American taiko may have contributed to more women playing taiko in Japan.

Differences among university, ensemble, and community-based groups revolve around questions of culture and identity. Members of collegiate groups tend to shy away from the identity politics seen in some taiko groups during the 1980s and 1990s. This may signal a widespread movement away from overt political action among certain sectors of the younger Asian American population. At the same time, others look to historical developments in jazz as a blueprint for the advancement of taiko in the U.S. As such, they strive to position taiko a part of the American land/soundscape over and above its ascription as an “ethnic” art form.

Community-based pioneers, such as SFTD’s Seiichi Tanaka, believe that the growing popularity of taiko presents a dilemma: its seemingly universal appeal means more groups but also a greater detachment from its community base and a decline in taiko performance quality and a potential loss of artistry. Many contend that removing taiko from its roots in obon celebrations and traditional Japanese drumming practices would dilute the art form. SJT leaders think that the connection to taiko’s social and musical history and community-building efforts could be lost.

Tanaka favors establishing a U.S. taiko federation with strong ties to Japan to help address these challenges. While SJT leaders recognize that one benefit of a U.S. taiko federation could be a platform to publicize taiko’s roots in the Asian American movement, they are reluctant to institutionalize taiko and are concerned that a federation might mean that select individuals could exert control over other taiko groups.

Strategic Support Issues

Financial sustainability

Many taiko groups perform at a professional level, but few of their members can make a living from taiko. Even established groups such as SFTD and SJT have only three or four full-time staff, and the eligible California groups suffer from declining state resources for arts production. Taiko groups across the country face the incomprehension of funders who are often unfamiliar with the development of taiko as an art form and its importance to the Asian American community. Instead, taiko groups rely on local support networks, based on volunteers and donations, to provide resources and space as well as logistical arrangements and accommodations for touring groups.

Practice space

Taiko requires a great deal of space for practice, storage, and performance. Lack of suitable space affects both established and nascent groups; there are considerations of size, security, and accessibility, as well as of taiko’s booming sound disturbing neighbors.

Training

In the absence of an accrediting body, most teachers are recognized as being teachers or instructors because of years of giving workshops and classes. Public taiko lessons per se are a relatively new development; typically learning to play meant joining a group and performing. Many beginning groups have had to use ingenious means to acquire training, especially those not in the established centers on the West Coast.

Succession of leaders and retention of members

Leadership succession and membership retention depend on developing long-term interest in taiko, and are linked to training. For people to continue playing in a group for five, ten, or more years requires support for artistic development, and creating programs to educate members, audiences, presenters, and funders about the artistry and evolution of American taiko.

National organization/conference

The Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) hosted the North American Taiko Conference in 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2005—an essential resource for the development of taiko—but will probably not be able to do so in the future. This leaves the future of the Taiko Conference in jeopardy.

Documentation and archives

Most of the leading figures in American taiko are still active, but groups need to document their histories and compositions before these are irretrievably lost.

IMMIGRANT ARTS TRAINING AND TRANSMISSION: A VIEW FROM CALIFORNIA

Amy Kitchener

More than a quarter of the United States immigrant population now makes California its home, creating a rich environment for training and transmission of artistic expressions that have been brought, maintained, and, in some cases, institutionalized by artists and practitioners from other countries. Among reverse appliqué embroidery; Mexican *corridos* (ballads) and mariachi music; African Senegalese dance and percussion; Persian *santur* music; Japanese bonsai; South Indian *bharatanatyam* dance; Chinese *qin* instrumental music; Portuguese *fado* singing; and Filipino *rondalla* music ensembles are but a few of the many hundreds of distinctive expressions of cultural heritage that are nurtured and taught within families, schools, community-based organizations, and other settings in California.³

The Alliance of California Traditional Arts (ACTA) covers a huge service area of 1,000 miles from north to south, with a population of 36 million people. While the Alliance is broadly dedicated to the well-being and continuity of all folk and traditional arts, over three-quarters of its grantees are immigrant artists or organizations involved with immigrant communities and their children. Reviewing the kinds of cultural and artistic training and transmission practiced by current and past ACTA grantees provides a wealth of primary information from which to discern patterns and identify models. Drawing from my experience as ACTA's executive director, I will identify a range of contexts for arts training and transmission, discuss some of the challenges inherent in this work, and indicate fertile ground for funding interventions.⁴

Additionally, interviews with four artists and administrators engaged in training work provide greater insight and depth to the sample:

- Juan Morales from Sonora, Mexico, a professional mariachi music instructor in the San Joaquin Valley who teaches in schools, community non-profits, and through his own ensembles in Mexican farm worker communities;
- Danongan Kalanduyan, a Muslim Maguindanao *kulintang* (tuned gongs) master from the southern Philippines, who is principally responsible for the introduction and subsequent adoption of the art form in Filipino American communities in the United States;
- Chitresh Das of Calcutta, India who first came to the United States on a Whitney Fellowship to teach North Indian *kathak* classical dance to University of Maryland students in the 1970s and has since established his own dance schools in the San Francisco Bay Area and India; and

³ The author wishes to thank Daniel Sheehy, PhD., ethnomusicologist and CEO Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, for his comments and suggestions on this paper.

⁴ This paper focuses on California. As such, it does not aim to provide a comprehensive view or to cover the much broader range of training and transmission activity nationally or the new forms of artistic expression by immigrant artists.

- Wang Wei, a conservatory-trained Chinese percussionist who has introduced his art form in California through school- and community-based classes and a newly formed ensemble.

In each case, regardless of their particular cultural community, the artists reported that sustaining their artistic practice at master-level standards is a consuming effort requiring tremendous energy and resources. The few grants and fellowships they receive are incommensurate with the hours of time they contribute along with the other resources, such as costumes, instruments, space, and travel, that are necessary to accomplish their ambitious goals to perpetuate and grow their traditions in the new communities they create and connect to in the United States.⁵

The students who seek to study with immigrant artists are diverse and have varied objectives. Sometimes the learners are other immigrants who share a similar cultural background, as in the case of Nhia Vang Chua Yang who teaches Hmong wedding and funeral ritual singing in Fresno to other Hmong refugees who wish to become traditional marriage and funeral officiators. The children of immigrants represent a large group engaged in learning the culture and heritage of their parents. For example, 92% of the students in Chitresh Das' Chhandam School of Kathak Dance are the children of South Asian immigrants who have settled in the Bay Area, many of whom came to work in the engineering and computer industries. Sometimes an interest in cultural ancestry may spur a second- or third-generation immigrant to actively seek out and create a meaningful connection to her ancestry and to thus become engaged in learning a related art form. Another group of students involves those "outside" the culture of origin; for example, as the Santería religion has become one of the fastest growing world religions, many new practitioners from outside the African diaspora that brought Nigerian Yoruba religion to the New World seek to participate as sacred arts practitioners of Lucumí music, dance, and beadwork production.

Staying or becoming connected to one's cultural heritage is a strong motivation for many learners to engage in a traditional art form, and can also provide an important sense of identity and well-being. For some, this could involve reclaiming an identity that may have become dormant during their own or their parents' assimilation into U.S. cultures, or it could be manifested in finding ways to stay connected to their home communities through the music, foodways, rituals, dance, or other cultural practices that are links to their past life experiences.

Learning traditional arts does not only involve training in the skills and techniques of an art form, but requires experience in the deeper cultural aspects of values, protocol, and spirituality. Those who learn in a traditional mode can begin to understand how their art form intersects with other cultural values and practices. The eminent folklorist Barre Toelken wrote about hosting a residency in Native California Hupa basket-making with master artist Mrs. Elvira Matt. She first taught her students to sing a number of Native songs, which were sung during the gathering of native plant materials and the arduous preparation of weaving materials. When she finally began teaching the weaving, one of her students asked why so much time was spent on learning songs, rather than on making baskets. She replied: "Well, after all, you know, a basket is a song that's

⁵ The author conducted interviews with mariachi musician Juan Morales on May 13, 2005; with the Executive Director of Chitresh Das Dance Company and Chhandam School of Kathak Dance, Celine Schein, on May 14, 2005; with Maguindinaon kulintang musician Danongan Kalanduyan on May 18, 2005; and with Chinese percussionist Wang Wei on May 18, 2005.

become visible.”⁶ Students in a traditional context learn how to learn and also how to teach in a traditional manner, both of which are critical for the future practice of the art form.

Different cultures engage in distinctive transmission processes that are at the core of artistic tradition. In some parts of South India, a young person may be sent to the home of a master musician to learn the tradition. For the first several years the student may be asked to do nothing but sweep the courtyard and run errands for the teacher. The rationale for such training lies in the belief that the student absorbs the sound of the teacher playing and the teaching of the more advanced students, and that this serves as the best foundation for the new pupil.⁷ Teaching models for different traditional art forms vary according to culture and may involve formal group classes, one-on-one pairings, or informal learning settings. While immigrant artists use some of these models for teaching their traditions in the United States, many have adapted new methods, or developed special modifications to keep their traditions alive and healthy.

Modes and Locations of Training and Transmission

Family

One of the most common and natural contexts for the transmission of folk and traditional arts is the family, offering one of the most stable, one-on-one, long-term training opportunities available for on-going sequential learning. Another benefit of learning an art form within a familial setting is the simultaneous immersion in the cultural context from which it arises. For example, master Liberian Kru dancer Naomi Gedo Diouf of Oakland has been dancing since she was five years old when she began learning from her mother and grandmother. Now she is raising her children, who were born in California, to follow many of the customs of her ancestors through dance. She taught her daughter, Kine Marcella Diouf, the Klakan dance, a traditional component of a Liberian Kru girl’s transition to womanhood. Naomi Diouf and her husband, Zak Diouf, are directors of Diamano Coura West African Dance Company. All of their children have grown up immersed in the world of their parents’ music and dance careers in the United States and are now skilled dancers and musicians. As the children have attained new skills, they gradually gain even greater confidence and performance abilities as their parents invite them to make stage appearances with the ensemble.

Some artists prefer to keep their traditions in the family rather than teaching non-relatives. Some traditional art forms are reserved only for family transmission by the dictates of the tradition. For example, among the Chopi people of Mozambique and the Shona people of Zimbabwe, only men from traditional musicians’ families were allowed to learn music.⁸ By keeping the most valued skills or repertoire within the family, members carry greater responsibility to maintain the standards and continue the lineage.

⁶ Barre Toelken, *The Anguish of Snails: Native American Folklore in the West* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2003), 51.

⁷ Robert Garfias, *Music: The Cultural Context*, Senri Ethnological Reports 47 (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2004), 217.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 218.

Master and Apprentice

The level of investment needed for a master artist to accept an apprentice—someone who is ready to receive advanced training during a period of one-on-one intensive skills development—not only involves a great deal of time, but also the belief by the master that the apprentice has the talent and commitment to go forward to a point of representing the tradition, and by extension, that master’s style or hallmark. However, when a master artist decides to invest the required time, energy, and commitment, there is a certain risk that the chosen protégé will not succeed or maintain the expected respect to the master and his tradition. Danongan Kalanduyan, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) National Heritage Fellow in Filipino Maguindanao kulintang music, conveyed his disappointment about the relationships with more than one non-family-related apprentice having gone awry. For example, an advanced student with whom he had helped found a kulintang ensemble in another city applied for grants using Kalanduyan’s name as a workshop leader, but never involved him once the funding was approved. In contrast, Chitresh Das, who was trained in the guru-disciple tradition in India, went to live with his *guruji* during winter and summer school breaks starting at age nine. After thirty years of teaching in the United States, Das has “tied strings” only six times in the traditional ceremony that binds the commitment between guru and disciple. In India, the ceremony happens at the beginning of the relationship, but here in the U.S., Das has instituted a twelve-year waiting period during which his disciple must demonstrate commitment to the dance. The relationship between guru and disciple is a lifelong commitment; Das says he would clothe and house his disciples if necessary.

In the early 1980s, the NEA piloted the funding model of state apprenticeship programs as a strategy to foster advanced level training to perpetuate community-based traditional art forms. The model purposefully simulates the intense one-on-one, natural transmission that occurs in familial contexts or in formal master-apprentice crafts-guild or guru-disciple training structures. Many state programs support master-apprentice teams within families, as well as outside bloodlines, because program coordinators have found that in either case, the formal participation in the program allows the partners to focus and stay committed to their goals. In the apprenticeship model, the learning goes beyond the context of a class and may extend to other settings or learning opportunities. For example, Ian Whitelaw, a master Scottish bagpiper from Los Angeles, recently covered the expenses to take his apprentice, David Mock, with him to spend a week with Whitelaw’s master teacher, Andrew Wright, president of the Highland Society of Piobaireachd from Edinburgh, Scotland. Apprenticeships aim beyond technical competence to cultural competence—knowledge of the beliefs, lore, and practices of a cultural group. For example, Hmong apprentices in Fresno have learned the elaborate protocol of funeral officiating and ceremonial song by studying the repertoire and practicing as assistants during traditional funerals. As their skills develop, their master *Chee Sai*, or sacred funeral singer, Chai Pao Xiong, gives them greater responsibilities in the ceremonies which often last several days. The longevity and popularity of traditional arts state apprenticeship programs is testimony to their effectiveness. A 1996 study commissioned by the NEA to evaluate the state apprenticeship model since its inception in 1983 noted that:

Apprenticeships have their greatest impact on artists, giving them the time and incentive to teach or learn a traditional art systematically and to work on a long-term project together. While building skills and confidence, apprenticeships open the door to new recognition, opportunities, and economic gain. Programs also benefit communities with the positive attention they bring to little known, often languishing traditions and the promise they offer to reconnect the generations through cultural heritage...Apprenticeship programs may well be the most potent tool folk arts program have for cultural conservation—the systematic preservation and encouragement of cultural heritage.⁹

For ACTA, the program continues as a vital strategy for many of these reasons, but also because the model is flexible in the way it allows diverse cultural expressions to be taught according to their own requirements, standards, and values, and accommodates different artists' temperaments and teaching styles. Other types of organizations have successfully adapted this model to further advance intensive one-on-one training. The Durfee Foundation's Master Musician's Fellowship in Santa Monica supports perhaps the most well-financed program in offering two or three years of master-apprentice training with a master artist honorarium of \$15,000 per year. One of the main challenges for state apprenticeship programs has been in leveraging adequate funding to pay masters at a professional level for a sustained time period.

On-Going Private Lessons and Classes

Another type of one-on-one arts transmission involves private lessons taught by advanced or master level artists. Many immigrant artists cobble together a living by offering private or semi-private classes, sometimes out of their own homes, or by visiting students' residences. For artists who may not be connected to private or public arts education structures, creating an independent business is a viable model. Private lessons range on average between \$35-\$85/hour, making this option a realistic one for mostly middle- and upper-income students. Wang Wei, the conservatory-trained Chinese percussionist, has only a few private students, a situation he feels is due to his relatively short residence of four years in the United States. Wang teaches in two other programs, one at the Alice Fong Yu School, a Chinese immersion school in San Francisco, and the other with Oakland's Purple Silk Foundation, where some parents want their children to receive more accelerated learning and hire him for private lessons. Teaching what he calls "the real Chinese culture" is his passion, so much so that he admits that sometimes he gives free lessons if "the parents don't have money," explaining that "musicians have good hearts."

Participation in on-going classes is another prevalent training model, taking place in community-based cultural centers, social service organizations, private genre-specific academies, and in curriculum-based and after-school programs from elementary to post-secondary levels. The effectiveness of programs to train students to a high level of artistic competence depends on their sustainability over time, whether sequential classes are available, and, most importantly, instruction and leadership by master artists who are gifted teachers. The challenge lies in sustaining on-going programs since typically they are funded by sporadic soft grants.

⁹ Susan Auerbach, *In Good Hands: A Portrait of State Apprenticeship Programs in the Folk & Traditional Arts, 1983-1995* (National Endowment for the Arts, 1996), 1-2.

Many community-based non-profit organizations offer classes to serve their communities; these are usually subsidized by grants and are offered for free or low-cost to students. Some organizations have developed multidisciplinary training programs, like the Hmong Association of Long Beach's *Qeej Not Gangs*, a weekly cultural arts program in which Hmong master artists instruct youth and adults in various art forms, including *qeej* (bamboo mouth organ), *kvv thxiaj* (improvised sung poetry), dance, *pan dau* (needle work), and *Mekong* ritual (marriage negotiations). Others, like the Purple Silk Foundation of Oakland, focus exclusively on one arts genre, in this case Chinese orchestral music. The Purple Silk Foundation offers classes in the instruments that form the complete orchestra from beginning to advanced levels for youth ages nine to sixteen. In both cases, the training is based in organizations rooted in the cultural communities they serve and controlled by community leaders. Such situations foster a high level of commitment and understanding to support the students and artist-teachers who participate in contrast to what may be a short-term outreach effort by a mainstream institution. However, since the programs require constant fundraising, they are difficult to sustain and are sometimes suspended or cut when funding is scarce.

Social Service Agencies

Immigrant and refugee social service organizations are another type of sponsoring entity for arts learning activities. Administrators are increasingly acting on recent research findings that show the link between immigrants staying connected to their cultures and languages and maintaining good mental health.¹⁰ Classes in social service agencies are directed towards target populations; for example, the American Bosnia and Herzegovina Organization in Sacramento has instituted weekly community traditional Bosnian dance classes for youth and adults. The organization has supported the purchase of costumes and musical instruments, and a series of performances for both the Bosnian community and the broader Sacramento public. This type of model provides much-needed infrastructure to newcomer communities who may not have the language and administrative skills to practice and sustain a cultural heritage program. Participation in an activity like this dance group can be a symbolic way for refugees or immigrants to reconstitute community, and make themselves visible amongst the plethora of ethnicities in their new home.

Public Schools

Public education has a significant role in immigrant arts training, both in curriculum-based programs as well as after school. Some proactive school districts have instituted programs in the artistic genres relevant to the large immigrant communities they serve. Juan Morales, a professional mariachi musician and teacher, says he is "forced to make a living" by teaching and explains that he must accept most opportunities he is offered. Yet of all his current teaching activities, he prefers working at Delano High School because his mariachi class is part of the school curriculum. The students are required to attend and perform under the pressure of grades, which gives them more discipline and focus for learning the music. Delano, located along Highway 99 in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley, was the birthplace of the farm

¹⁰ W.A. Vega, B. Lolody, and S.A. Aguilar-Gaxiola, "Lifetime prevalence of DSM-III-R psychiatric disorders among urban and rural Mexican Americans in California," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 55: 771-778, 1998. The authors find that assimilation causes the rate of mental illness to double among the children of Mexicans who immigrate to the United States.

workers' movement led by César Chávez. Here, the high school pays for mariachi *trajes* (costumes) and instruments, and provides other institutional support. Morales points out that: "Instead of spreading limited energy on parent meetings, fundraisers, and gigs, we can concentrate on teaching. If you don't have the type of support [that the school offers], the kids can't concentrate exclusively on learning the music."

In contrast, Juan Morales also teaches in an after-school program in Richgrove, a small farm worker community north of Delano of about a thousand people, where, he explains, "It's hard to keep the students' attention, especially when they realize they are going to have to work hard. And we are competing with soccer and baseball." Wang Wei teaches Chinese percussion at Alice Fong Yu School in San Francisco both during school and after school and notes a similar pattern: "During school the kids feel more disciplined. After school, they still feel like they are in school, but they feel a little bit different—that the work is not as important." Nevertheless, after-school programs offer an important opportunity for teaching and learning, especially given the scarcity of curriculum-based training in arts genres relevant to immigrant communities.

Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities offer another venue for arts teaching by immigrant artists. Danongan Kalanduyan first introduced American students to Mindinaoan kulintang music through a teaching residency in the Ethnomusicology Department at the University of Washington in 1976. Kalanduyan was hired to teach full-time while he earned an advanced degree in the Music Department. Since then he has been involved with the development of nearly every kulintang group in the United States. Today he teaches a class every semester at San Francisco State University, jointly sponsored by the Ethnic Studies, Music, and Dance Departments. Interestingly, none of his students share his indigenous Muslim Maguindanao heritage, but a large percentage is Filipino American, children of Christian Tagalog-speaking immigrants. This year budget cuts would have eliminated the class, but student protests, petitions, and the involvement of the international Philippine press caused university administrators to reverse the decision and the class continues.

Academies

Genre-specific arts academies, often founded by a master artist, offer another type of training infrastructure in which several instructors teach fee-based, sequential on-going classes. Chitresh Das founded such an institution, the Chhandam School of Kathak Dance in 1980, which has grown to six San Francisco Bay Area locations, in addition to branches in Boston, Toronto, and Calcutta, India. In the Bay Area, the school offers forty classes per week taught by thirteen teachers with twenty teacher-assistants to 250 students. Chitresh Das, who checks all of the classes periodically, focuses on teaching the advanced intensive classes three to four times a year in addition to retreats modeled on the *gurukul* system in which a disciple comes to study under a guru. When Das first came to the United States to teach at the University of Maryland in 1970, none of his students shared his Indian ancestry. This trend continued into the 1980s, but since then a big shift has occurred and now 92% of his students are South Asian. Executive Director Celine Schein attributes this to the following: "In the '70s and '80s, the Indian immigrants were immersed in their careers, and then when they had children, it was important for them to connect

to culture—that’s when he got Indians as his students.” Two years ago, the school developed a new component: a youth company whose members are recommended for audition by their teachers. Those selected pay \$765 twice a year, which covers a costume and photo shoot, plus the necessary training and rehearsals. The introduction of the youth company has countered the high dropout rate of students who previously continued up to age fifteen, but often quit due to SAT test preparation demands and other competing interests. Although the school has grown tremendously in recent years, requiring the services of a nearly full-time administrator, a challenge lies in leveraging enough funding to adequately pay teachers, who now earn \$8 to \$16 per hour.

The Chhandam School of Kathak Dance is but one example of such a training structure. Similar, but smaller scale, models include the Khmer Arts Academy in Long Beach; Miyagi Hon Ryu Ohtori No Kai USA, the Okinawan Dance Academy in Hayward; the Chinese Performing Artists of America in Cupertino; and the Capoeira Institute in Berkeley. Since most of the genre-specific arts academies depend on student tuition in lieu of grants subsidies or supplements, the academy appears to be a relatively sustainable model. Since master artists either run or are founders of such schools, there is also a strong imprint of an artist in the administrative direction, which is a marked difference from the other models. Some artists are able to create smaller versions of academies through independent classes. Juan Morales started two student mariachi ensembles, Mestizo and Real de la Viña, for which parents pay tuition (\$55/month) for a weekly two-hour class. The groups also accept performance engagements that sometimes involve compensation or a donation, which helps offset expenses and allows Morales to offer scholarships to low-income students.

Master Classes and Workshops

Master classes and workshops represent another type of training opportunity. Local groups will host visiting artists from abroad or another state in order to offer advanced instruction or fill a gap in the existing training infrastructure. Khaley Nguewel, a Senegalese traditional music and dance ensemble based in Los Angeles, annually hosts a Senegalese dance and drum conference at the Dance Arts Academy. Recognizing a gap, Director Aziz Faye invites Marie Basse-Wiles, who founded Maimouna Keita, an African dance school in Brooklyn, to provide training in Senegalese women’s dance. These are important learning opportunities for students to experience another teacher’s style, perspective, and repertoire.

Similarly, regional workshops and gatherings can serve to bolster genre-specific arts movements by offering new repertoire development and the opportunity to network with others engaged in similar activities. The model of mariachi festivals coupled with instructional workshops has taken hold in several locales. The San Antonio International Mariachi Conference was the first such event in 1979, followed by festivals in Fresno and Tucson in 1983. Today, San Jose and Santa Barbara in California and Albuquerque and Las Cruces in New Mexico, among others, have instituted similar programs. Usually one or two days of instructional workshops are offered at multiple levels taught by world-class mariachis; the mariachis then headline the festival concert. In Fresno, over 341 participants attended the workshops in 2005, forcing closure of registration before the event began. Nati Cano, a National Heritage Fellow, and his Mariachi Los Camperos have been central figures in the development of mariachi workshops around the

country due to a combination of Cano's inspirational teaching style, high artistic standards, and passion for teaching. In Fresno, three levels of musical instruction are taught—beginning, intermediate, and advanced—in addition to a lecture on the history of mariachi music. On the following day, the festival provides five hours of music with a line-up including local youth groups and international acts such as Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán. A highlight for the participants is the opportunity to perform on stage during the festival concert with their instructors.

A new development over the past two years is a “mariachi jam,” in which organized youth groups, such as Juan Morales' ensembles, may sign up to perform three songs on stage at a local shopping mall; the performances are broadcast live across Radio Bilingüe's satellite network of international radio stations. Juan Morales articulates the value of attending these kinds of workshops: “It's a great benefit because it offers the chance to see others play, to receive instruction by professional musicians, to see other students their age who are performing, and there's so much sharing and growing involved. The students in my groups are ages nine to fifteen, so it's important to have fun and opportunities to socialize in environments other than classes.” Morales received music training at a private academy in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, the *Escuela de Disciplinas Musicales* where the curriculum focused on comprehensive music training. When he showed an interest in Mexican folkloric music, he was reprimanded and pushed to study classical guitar. He did not become interested in mariachi music until he came to the United States as a student at Arizona State University, and signed up for a mariachi music class as a music major and attended the Tucson International Mariachi Conference in 1986. At the conference, he was so moved by a performance by Mariachi Los Camperos during a mariachi mass at church that he knew he wanted to pursue mariachi training and performance. Years later, he became a member of Los Camperos, playing harp and touring with the group for several years. Similar types of genre-specific workshops and gatherings have developed around such forms as Mexican *ballet folklórico*, Japanese *taiko*, and classical Indian dance.

Artist Residencies

Artist residencies by immigrant artists are prevalent among various types of institutions as means of promoting multicultural understanding and exchange. Schools, museums, libraries, non-profit organizations, national parks, corporations, and hospitals have found value in hosting artists to engage communities in the production of diverse artistic expressions. While the participation and exposure elements of such programs are often greater than their contribution to on-going advanced instruction in an art form, these programs can significantly enhance the career development of the resident artists. Danongan Kalanduyan first came to the United States to serve as an artist-in-residence at the University of Washington, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation. Kalanduyan's introduction of the kulintang to American college students effectively launched his career as a performer, teacher, and ethnomusicologist in the United States. Since then, he has participated in dozens of residencies; a Creative Work Fund grant in 2001-2003 allowed him to collaborate with Professor Dan Begonia of the Ethnic Studies Department at San Francisco State University and the Ating Tao Drum Circle, a Filipino American student performing group. This two-year residency led to performances of new works based on traditional kulintang music and dance from the southern Philippines, combining Kalanduyan's

traditional repertoire and technique with the contemporary Filipino American sensibilities of the Ating Tao Drum Circle.

Documentation

Lastly, the documentation and recording of immigrant artistic expressions can be a vital component in perpetuating community cultural traditions. The Kalingas-North American Network is a traditional arts organization based in Los Angeles whose members are from the Kalinga hill tribe from the Gran Cordillera Mountains of the northern Philippines. The organization has gathered Kalinga families to record the traditional native songs and chants, as well as instrumental music using brass gongs and bamboo flutes. Marshalfield A. Wandag, Executive Director of the organization, explains:

The recordings have established an authentic and original reference of our native music and it will serve as an important tool in our planned cultural education projects directed to our Kalinga youth. With increasing globalization and integration of various ethnic communities, traditional arts and culture are slowly fading into possible early extinction. With this project and other future related cultural education projects, we are confident that our indigenous arts can be passed on to [future] generations.

Challenges

Each of the models discussed above plays a significant role in the arts learning ecology in immigrant communities in the United States. Specific structures are suited to different types of goals and community contexts. For example, some programs are focused on social issues like youth empowerment as opposed to others that may be geared for training professional artists. One model may facilitate cross-cultural dialogue and exchange, while another provides deep cultural training for the children of immigrants. Some are short-term periodic classes while others provide on-going sequential learning. The artists who work as teachers, as well as most of their students, are engaged in multiple types of training models. Distinctive challenges cut across all of the models, involving artistic, cultural, and organizational issues.

Several kinds of cultural challenges arise for immigrant artists engaged in teaching their art forms in the United States. First of all, their art forms must exist in a different cultural milieu than in their home countries, even when there are large immigrant communities from their countries to help support artistic practice. For example, many classical Indian dancers, who have founded their own schools and companies, complain that in the United States their students' parents do not encourage their sons and daughters to become professional dancers. Rather, once a certain level of competence is reached, as with the South Indian bharatanatyam formal debut, or *arangetram*, their commitment ends. Ramaa Bharadvaj, Director of the Angahara Ensemble, calls the phenomenon, "dance in a doggie-bag."¹¹ Sophiline Cheam Shapiro, a master classical

¹¹ Ramaa Bharadvaj, "The Arangetram Scene: Transmission through Translation," published on the website <http://www.boloji.com/dances/00124.htm>, December 30, 2001.

Cambodian dancer in Long Beach, has shared her difficulty in developing and maintaining a professional level troupe; most of her advanced students move away to go to college or pursue other careers. The question arises: How many masters have been able to train protégés to a master level and how many of them have become professional or made lifelong commitments as practitioners? Danongan Kalanduyan expressed disappointment in several of his advanced students who did not meet his expectations in their attitudes, integrity, or ways in which they represented his tradition. Kalanduyan's situation is somewhat more complex since there is no indigenous Muslim Mindanao Filipino community in the United States that could help him maintain the community standard as it does in his village in the Philippines. He says, "Here, my role is to correct them." He does have one protégé whom he values highly and who has formed his own group and has done extensive research, both in training with Kalanduyan and through travel and study to Mindanao with Kalanduyan's brothers who are also master kulintang players.

Sometimes cultural challenges—like a limited student capacity for specialization due to competing interests, or the complex training infrastructure required for some certain art forms—result in a lowering of artistic standards in the United States. For example, at least two California youth training programs for *kunqu* opera, a 600-year-old form of traditional Chinese opera, include only training in movement and costuming and forgo the actual singing, which is lip-synched to recorded music. Mentioning this example is not meant as criticism, but only to point out how difficult and complex nurturing traditional arts expressions in immigrant communities can be, and the sacrifices that are sometimes made.

Another challenge for artist-teachers is language since many of their students, even when they are the children of immigrants, are not fluent in their parents' mother tongue. Wang Wei articulates his particular challenge in this area: "English is my fourth language. So it's difficult to teach the students. I have to learn the right words. I have to know also the culture." When immigrant artists are not fluent in English, it is nearly impossible for them to work in mainstream arts teaching environments where "English only" is spoken, such as in the public school system in California.

Not all the significant traditional art forms from immigrants' home countries continue in the United States, nor do all artists continue practicing once they arrive. Since many craft traditions depend on native materials, such as plants, which may not be available in the United States, it may be difficult for practitioners to sustain them. Sometimes ingenious adaptations are made, like the substitution of plastic strapping for bamboo in the production of sturdy Laotian Hmong baskets, which are now considered traditional as they follow old basket shapes and functions using new materials in the United States. Production of hand-made musical instruments, like the Hmong qeej (the reed mouth organ, pronounced "gheng"), has posed greater challenges, since native bamboo with extra long spaces between nodes, which grows only in Southeast Asia, is required. One Fresno social service agency, Stone Soup, located a source in Laos and purchased a surplus for their qeej-making workshops. The continuity of musical and other performing traditions can be affected when an ensemble uses several different instruments requiring many years of training for proficiency, as in the case of Mikko Haggot-Hensen's quest to develop and maintain a traditional Japanese Hayashi ensemble in Los Angeles that provides the percussion and flute accompaniment to Japanese classical Kabuki music and dance.

Strategic Interventions

In evaluating the relative merits of the various modes and locations of training and transmission, the most effective examples are the ones where cultural needs in the community are matched with strategic funding interventions. Each cultural community has distinct needs and there can be no effective “one-size-fits-all” model. For funders creating the architecture for a program to stimulate arts training and transmission in immigrant communities in the United States, a primary recommendation would be to design for flexibility allowing for unique cultural needs to be addressed. Daniel Sheehy commented on the example of the mariachi movement, which he felt could benefit most from musical skills development because it has achieved a “critical mass and participants with a high level of cultural confidence—the system is healthy.”¹² In another community, funding master artists to teach may not be culturally appropriate, as in the case of some Native Alaskan communities, but there may be other types of support that could stimulate cultural transmission. “Bricks and mortar” could be a strategic solution; building a culturally appropriate structure could facilitate a nexus of cultural expression and continuity, as in the case of the reconstruction of a Native California Indian ceremonial roundhouse which provides the sacred space for traditional dance and music, among other cultural practices. Flexibility in funding could also support groups and organizations that do not have 501(c)(3) status, but are engaged in viable cultural work.

Determining funding priorities for such a flexible model would require adequate cultural expertise on a case-by-case basis. This would mean working with master cultural practitioners and with specialists who work closely and deeply within a specific community. Appropriate cultural expertise could also help identify training and transmission opportunities for funding that are situated within a cultural context, so that not just the repertoire or techniques are taught, but the manners, values, and larger social dimensions are shared.

In thinking about existing models, funding, and future directions, the importance of placing master level artists at the center of training programs and in decision-making positions is paramount. Developing programs that provide high quality instruction are dependent on national and transnational networks of practitioners who stay connected to the aesthetic standards of their cultural communities, regardless of their location. Many master immigrant artist-teachers are able to convey and translate their art forms to students living and working in contexts very different from their own. The leadership of master-level artists is critical because they are uniquely qualified to navigate the complex terrain involved in culture maintenance and change. Another leadership responsibility of those working to instill their artistic traditions in new community contexts in the United States involves maintaining cultural integrity. Master artists have the experience to decide which parts of the tradition to keep and which to discard in the process of transmission or adapting to new settings and learners. Investment in master artists as the central ingredient in successful arts training programs is critical, for they are the ones who are uniquely qualified to share not only the skills and techniques, but also the deeper cultural values, standards, and protocol intrinsic to their art forms. Funding interventions could reinforce the key role of artists in training by investing in programs that provide adequate pay for teachers. Such practice would also serve to educate the field and give artists some backing for advocating

¹² Personal communication. Sheehy is the author of the forthcoming book, *Mariachi Music in America* (Oxford University Press).

for better wages. For example, Juan Morales recently stopped teaching for a non-profit organization that had amassed substantial funding for buying a building and was continuing to fundraise, but was not willing to pay his instruction fees.

Creating stable and effective training programs for the arts of immigrant communities involves addressing sustainability issues in the organizations that host and organize them. As noted earlier, many programs have difficulty continuing year after year on soft funding, and when funding cuts require prioritizing programs, the arts are often the first to go. In California, we are painfully aware of the fragility of arts funding with the decimation of the state arts council, which was cut by 95% two years ago. In its heyday, the California Arts Council supported the largest artist-in-residence program in the nation, and many immigrant artists earned a substantial part of their modest incomes through it. The demise of this program highlights the need for organizations engaged in arts training in immigrant communities to be committed to paying teachers a living wage at minimum, since the participation and well-being of artist-teachers are the key to the whole endeavor.

Funding and planning assistance to develop sustainable models would enable more organizations to develop the type of rigorous programs that offer on-going sequential learning coupled with cultural immersion. In many cases, a class or a workshop is a “one shot deal”—once the grant ends, so does the program. Funding to support one-on-one intensive training for advanced students in the form of apprenticeships is a proven model, especially when a sustained period of time is supported (such as two or three years) and adequate funding is available to compensate the master artist.

Supporting cultural intermediaries to provide technical assistance to master artists who are not connected to arts learning structures could help the artists to find jobs as teachers. Such technical assistance is vital in preparing newcomer master artists to negotiate the terrain of school systems, manage standards of discipline in the classroom, provide teacher training, and other necessary skills development. Funding to support artist-teachers to develop curriculum and teaching aids, such as instructional videos, would strengthen individual teaching practices and help build models that are replicable.

Succession planning for arts academies established around artist/director/founders is another need. Chitresh Das at age sixty asks his staff about what will happen when he is gone, and has begun pushing them to become more independent in their teaching and performing roles. The organization is now involved in strategic planning that addresses how the school and company will continue his legacy in the future.

Funding could also help bridge the far flung geography of diasporic communities to allow artists travel “back home” to perform or stay engaged in artistic development in their countries of origin, to support the travel of apprentices to study and practice cultural immersion, as well as to encourage visiting artists to offer workshops and master classes in the United States. Travel between immigrant communities within the United States is also important since many artists travel to wherever their communities call them to share their skills. Providing support to rent space for classes or rehearsals as well as for the purchase of materials, instruments, and costumes would help cover some of the basic needs.

This paper has surveyed a range of training and transmission structures, identified challenges, and suggested fertile areas for funding interventions, as a starting point to stimulate greater thought, discussion, and study. It is clear that additional research is merited in a number of areas: to look more deeply into culturally-specific modes of training and transmission; to engage artists, who are at the core of this work, in a dialogue about best practices; and to identify strategies for sustainability, and other types of needs and strategic solutions. What is clear is that the practice of arts training and transmission in immigrant communities represents a huge realm of active engagement and will continue and intensify with the influx of immigrants and the growing organizational capacity of community-based groups. In California, projections show the population growing from 36 million to 51 million by the year 2040, with the Latino population growing to 50.4% of the total. The population of Asian and Pacific Islanders is estimated to grow from 10% to 13%, while the Caucasian population is estimated to decrease from 59% to 26% by the year 2040.¹³ This forecast only affirms the pressing need for strategic funding to support immigrant arts training and transmission. It is fitting to close this piece with the words of master Chinese percussionist, Wang Wei who reminds us: “It’s very important for the Asian students to learn because it’s their parents’ culture and their parents’ parents’ culture. Because in this country, if you are Chinese American and you just learn from American culture, it is not enough. Now they can learn both ways.”

¹³Demographic Research Unit of the California Department of Finance.

The Alliance of California Traditional Arts

The Alliance for California Traditional Arts is a non-profit organization, co-founded by artists, curators, and public folklorists in 1997, that supports folk and traditional artists and the practice of artistic expressions that are deeply rooted in and reflective of a community's shared standards of beauty, values, or life experiences.

With the challenges of covering such a large service area (1,000 miles from north to south), population (36 million), and culturally- and genre-specific needs, the Alliance has focused on developing re-granting programs to offer direct resources to stimulate cultural conservation and growth, convening, research and fieldwork, and information and communications services. ACTA works in partnership with the state arts council and NEA, private foundations, and other statewide and local discipline- and community-specific organizations. Three distinct programs offer grants and contracts, ranging from \$1,500-\$10,000, and services to individual artists and non-profit organizations (incorporated and not). Supporting the transmission of folk and traditional arts is a core value for the Alliance and each of its programs supports different types of training, including occasional workshops, on-going classes, school-based residencies, and one-on-one intensive apprenticeships. The longest running program is the Apprenticeship Program, offering \$2,500 contracts to master artists to work with an experienced apprentice for six months to one year. Over five cycles, seventy-eight master-apprentice pairs have participated, and the ACTA staff has worked closely with them to document their work and offer assistance. The newest program, the Living Cultures Grants Program, in partnership with the Fund for Folk Culture, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the James Irvine Foundation, is designed for flexibility to support the broadest range of traditional arts needs across the state with grants up to \$7,500.

**CULTURAL INTERMEDIARIES:
CONVERSATIONS WITH RON CHEW, JOEL JACINTO, AND FRANCIS WONG**

Betsy Peterson

As the director of a national non-profit cultural organization serving folk and traditional artists, communities, and organizations, I see a steady stream of foundation reports, magazines, and newsletters that focus on arts and cultural organizations and philanthropy. The topics are varied, but much of the work examines issues such as cultural participation, capacity building, building a case for the arts, arts in community life, arts infrastructure—the list goes on.

While arts and culture programming and producing institutions, service organizations, community-based organizations, and local and state arts agencies are frequently addressed and profiled, I rarely run across discussions of “cultural intermediaries” in arts philanthropy publications. The articles that do exist on this theme are usually written from the perspective of foundations or public agencies—that is, what does the cultural intermediary do to further or enhance the work of our foundation or agency? In other instances, the emphasis is placed on understanding the structure of support systems for the arts: Where does the intermediary organization fit in a national hierarchy of arts support or services?

In this sense, most arts literature to date has tended to see national arts service or field of interest organizations and cultural intermediaries as synonymous. Yet where do the vast network of local community-based cultural organizations—many of which were founded in the past two decades to serve the needs of culturally-specific communities throughout the United States—fit in this description?

Cultural intermediaries fulfill roles and functions that are dynamic and apparent at local, regional, and national levels. If the term is taken literally, cultural intermediaries stand between two groups and their value is derived from their ability to connect and translate the needs and interests of one group to the other. Cultural intermediaries come in all shapes and sizes. They may be organizations or individuals (consider Malcolm Gladwell’s description of connectors in *The Tipping Point* or the work of anthropologists George Foster, Eric Wolf, or Robert Redfield, all of whom have written about cultural brokers). They may operate within the for-profit or non-profit arenas. They may grow into these roles over time or they may see themselves as intermediaries from the outset. By equating cultural intermediaries with national arts service organizations, however, we have limited our understanding of these roles and functions by focusing on the structural elements of a national non-profit arts system. Another view is warranted.

For this article, I asked three individuals—Ron Chew, Executive Director of the Wing Luke Asian Museum in Seattle; Joel Jacinto, Executive Director of Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) in Los Angeles; and Francis Wong, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Asian Improv aRts (AIR) in San Francisco—to talk about their work as cultural intermediaries and activists within their respective communities.

All three men have participated in the social and cultural activism of the past twenty to thirty years and their stories reflect the passion of many who were inspired by an ideology of community empowerment, self-determination, and social and cultural equity expressed through the exploration and assertion of cultural identity. Their individual backgrounds and organizations are quite diverse: Ron Chew, trained as a journalist and community organizer, runs a cultural museum which was founded in 1967 as a tribute to Seattle's first Asian American city council member Wing Luke; Francis Wong, trained as a musician and composer, directs an Asian American presenting organization in the Bay Area that is also home to an independent record label and an annual Asian arts festival; and Joel Jacinto, trained as an anthropologist and dancer, leads a community development organization which was founded in 1972 to provide health and community development services to the Filipino community (both established and recently arrived) in Los Angeles. Chew and Jacinto are responsible for the operation and maintenance of large facilities and the management of sizable staffs, while Wong's organization is a two-person operation that presents programs through various venues and networks in the Bay Area and beyond.

Yet each individual has a similar vision for his organization. All three are committed to building organizations that are responsive to and engage the communities they serve; that integrate arts and cultural programs and services within a holistic context of community interest and concern; and that connect with multiple voices and perspectives within their communities and beyond to neighbors and allies. For Jacinto, this means the development of cultural programs and the addition of a theater space to an established community development organization, while Chew and Wong are engaged in broadening the received notions of what a museum or presenting organization can contribute.

In a related vein, the three cultural activists also describe approaches to work that emphasize networking and building relationships. Such approaches befit an intermediary organization, but they also reflect organizational practices indicative of an era of decentralization, increased internet communication, changing demographics, and global movements. Unlike the community-based arts and cultural organizations of an earlier generation whose sense of cultural identity, programming, and community boundaries were more clearly defined, the directors of Wing Luke, SIPA, and AIR place networking and collaboration at the center of their cultural and artistic work and see their communities as more fluid and porous. In some instances, they are working with multiple ethnic groups and languages, newly-arrived populations as well as more established communities, and contexts where generational tensions and class differences also arise.

In the conversations with Ron Chew, Joel Jacinto, and Francis Wong that follow, these and other key characteristics of their experiences as cultural intermediaries emerge. The comments below are excerpted from two interviews—one with Wong and Jacinto and an earlier one with Chew—but they are presented here as one conversation.¹⁴

¹⁴ The author wishes to thank Ron Chew, Joel Jacinto, and Francis Wong for sharing their observations and insights regarding their work. The interview with Chew was conducted on April 15, 2005. The interview with Jacinto and Wong was conducted on April 21, 2005.

Defining Intermediary Roles and Attributes

It is sometimes easier to begin to understand the attributes of something by describing what it is not. For this, let us return briefly to the earlier discussion of national arts service organizations. Over the past several decades, a handful of non-profit organizations have emerged that provide services and technical assistance to support and/or promote artists and arts organizations, but do not themselves produce or present the arts. Some are genre-based while others are sector oriented. Many, though not all, are membership organizations. Some will provide grants to their constituents, but all try to fulfill a spokesperson or advocate function by representing the value, needs, or interests of their field or constituency to others (e.g., to federal agencies, foundations, corporate funders, and policy makers). Examples of national arts service organizations include the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Dance/USA, the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, and Meet the Composer.¹⁵

In contrast, the organizations represented by Chew, Jacinto, and Wong operate within a different sort of ecology. Of course, all three mix programming and service functions—indeed, the Wing Luke Museum’s primary function *is* programmatic. Moreover, by working in very close proximity to their communities, they tend to view themselves as being in the midst of their communities at all times, rather than speaking on behalf of them at a distance. The way in which each man describes his work brings to life Richard Kurin’s comments about cultural brokers:

Cultural brokers coordinate horizontally in webs of relationships, rather than vertically and hierarchically through chains of command. For culture brokers, cultural representations do not just happen, nor are they commanded to happen. They are negotiated and emergent, the result of strong knowledge, respect, a bedrock of good practice and a lot of luck.¹⁶

In the following conversation, it is precisely this brokering—the horizontal networking and connecting of individuals and organizations—that emerges as perhaps the most important defining characteristic of their work.

Betsy Peterson (BP): Do you consider yourself or your organizations to be intermediaries? Do you feel comfortable using that term?

Ron Chew (RC): I don’t know that I necessarily think of the Wing Luke Museum in those terms. We *do* walk a tightrope and I know that complexity is a part of the life. We move among various sectors, interests, and neighborhoods in Seattle, and we are constantly thinking about how to bring the different dimensions of community life to play.

Joel Jacinto (JJ): At SIPA, I play different roles. I am a cultural facilitator, a nexus, a cultural hub. We represent what is going on in the Filipino community through advocacy, technical

¹⁵ The Boston Foundation, *Arts Service Organizations: A Study of Impact and Capacity* (2005), 9. See also Roberto Bedoya, “The Dynamism of Arts-service Organizations,” http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/01/dynamism_of_art.php (18 August 2005).

¹⁶ Richard Kurin, *Reflections of a Culture Broker: A View from the Smithsonian* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 23.

assistance, and providing space for artists, but we also are a networker. We link people. It's a very fluid process, but we try to embody values of being community-based and collaborative.

Francis Wong (FW): I make a distinction between “intermediate” and “intermediary.” “Intermediate” connotes a vertical structure, a position in the middle of something. “Intermediary” is about facilitating collaboration and connection, about the process, but they are both part of the same thing.

JJ: I agree with Francis. Sometimes the term “intermediary” implies you are set apart from your own community, in that you don't play a part in the community.

BP: Yes, it's like being betwixt and between. But you are talking about connecting as an important part of the role.

JJ: The connective role is critical. At SIPA, as a community development center, we were able to access some state government dollars, working with other organizations, for a Filipino cultural community center. But it was not SIPA stepping out of the community to do so. It wasn't SIPA standing in between our community and the government. We played a role in a collaborative endeavor involving many organizations.

BP: Sometimes, intermediaries get a bad name. They are described as gatekeepers, excluding or speaking for a community.

FW: Well, in the past, I think funders have supported people they could talk to, people who were often not steeped in a community or served the core culture of the community. The Yu Mien community in the East Bay is an example. Classic intermediaries might say, “Support the social services.” But the community said, “Well, what we need is a cultural center in a temple so we can practice our healing arts and culture.” Sixty per cent of this community is on public assistance. Social service agencies might push poverty reduction programs, but the Yu Mien community felt, “if we can't continue our healing practices, our community will be decimated through crime, drugs, gangs.” In this instance, they needed to strengthen their own community council and governance, but they had to find a way to interface with funders. We [the Wildflowers Institute] worked with them to create a leadership lab, so people could step forward to begin representing themselves.¹⁷

JJ: This core cultural knowledge is critical.

FW: At Asian Improv Arts, we also provide artistic direction. We were founded by artists, and we help artists and work with them to develop their artistic vision. That's usually not thought of as technical assistance (TA). We usually associate TA with organizational development, which is why it has limited impact sometimes. If you don't have the ability to speak in the language of the artist, it is very difficult to move forward...For example, I work with an *erhu* teacher, who is

¹⁷ The Yu Mien are an ethnic community, settled in the San Francisco Bay Area and originally from the Mekong region of southwest China, Viet Nam, and Laos, with whom Wong worked in his capacity as senior fellow with the Wildflowers Institute.

trying to commission work for the erhu.¹⁸ So I help her to identify composers, to talk with composers and artistic directors at orchestras.

I am also working with two sisters, whose father is a master in the *kunqu* opera tradition.¹⁹ I talk with them about how they can develop a school, how they can do a production, design the artistic work that they want to do. If artists don't have that basic vision, then grant-writing assistance won't really help. In part, because I'm a composer and I know a lot of the music, I can work with the artists. It's a combination of working on the ground with artists in terms of TA or career stuff, but also knowing the art and culture and finding the right artistic resources that they need.

AIR fulfills multiple functions: part producer, community organizer, artistic director, fundraiser, and administrator. We helped Jon Jang with a collaboration with some traditional Chinese musicians in Beijing, which resulted in performances in the United States and Paris. We raised funds from Creative Capital and Arts International. We helped get gigs and navigated a lot of the international technical issues that would be difficult for an individual artist to manage. The project might have crashed and burned if AIR didn't step in. This is a good example of a small organization that knows the artist, the artistic tradition, and has the expertise to make a project happen.

RC: The Wing Luke Museum was non-Asian run from 1967 to 1991. Being the first Asian director was important, being from the community. And being local was also important. I am from Seattle, I went to college at the University of Washington and I know the history and the politics. My background in journalism and community organizing also helped.

BP: It sounds like different kinds of knowledge are being described: deep local cultural knowledge—the nuanced, second-nature kind of knowledge that comes from being of or from a community—and technical or specialized knowledge that is of specific value to the community you serve.

Acquiring Credible Authority through Principled Community Building

RC: Partnerships and collaboration are key for us. For me, the challenge has been to make the museum a credible authority, to make it a real community institution. When I came to the museum, it had a budget of \$130,000. The board and staff were not from the community. I told everyone, "I am not a museum guy, I am not a history guy, I am not a subject expert." In my role as the executive director, I have tried to use my authority to transform the museum, to develop a more participatory notion of process. To do that, you have to reach different segments of the community. The question is, "How do you bring a people in who don't have a history of participation and ownership?" You need partnership and collaboration to do that...and negotiating skills, stamina, credibility, and respect. And now, our budget is over a million. We shouldn't be afraid to use our authority.

¹⁸ The erhu is a popular two string bowed instrument used in Chinese music.

¹⁹ Kunqu is an ancient form of Chinese opera, recently listed by UNESCO as one of nineteen world masterpieces of verbal and non-material heritage.

JJ: Issues of power, authority, access, representation, who is at the table, who is not, are always there. I think it almost comes down to individual leadership. At SIPA, we are always being bombarded. [People say] we aren't doing this or we aren't doing that. Part of that is answered by collaboration. We don't want to do it alone, we *can't* do it alone. We look for opportunities to partner with arts organizations and social service agencies, to enlarge the pie for everyone.

It's an hourly, a minute-by-minute thing that challenges an individual [laughter from everyone]. How do you speak of this organization or that artist? It has got to be driven by principled community building and that is the major challenge. That is the ideal model. I'm sure we all fall short of it to a certain degree. But when there is a partnership that needs to happen, or an artist who needs help, or a group that's doing good work that needs play, then it's up to the people that are able to make it happen, to *help* it happen, as opposed to acting out of self interest—then it is not community building. It is gatekeeping, hoarding, resulting in a funnel effect, a sense that “everything has to go through me,” or through SIPA.

L.A. County has the largest concentration of Filipinos outside of the Philippines, but there are only a handful of organizations that have the community-wide focus and professional capacity to transcend their own organizational agenda to serve others, to be a cultural steward, to bring value to other cultural organizations. Sometimes it's such a struggle for volunteer organizations. You don't have the time or inclination to work beyond your own organizational agenda...but people gravitate to us.

BP: Are you the only one doing what you do?

JJ: Well, we work with others, but we have our niche. SIPA's particular niche is in youth and family services, building affordable housing, and, increasingly, developing community and cultural assets. We helped to incubate FilAmArts, an arts organization that grew out of a public/private partnership. We collaborate with them a lot.

FW: Other people and organizations are doing what we do, but they do it differently. So collaboration is key. Kularts [a Filipino arts organization in San Francisco] does very similar work and we team up sometimes. But Asian Improv brings certain resources that Kularts may not have. The reverse is true, too. We were able to facilitate a collaboration with Kularts and the Filipino American Development Association.

Telling Multiple Stories

A question initially posed to Chew provoked rich responses from Jacinto and Wong.

BP: How do you reach a Pan Asian American community (which doesn't exist in reality)? With the waves of recent immigration, how do you reach new communities? Or more established communities? Different generations or classes?

RC: We try to be responsive and we know that we have to try different things to reach different communities. It is not just reaching different ethnic groups; it's also reaching different generations—young and old—or new immigrants, and second or third generations. We have tried especially hard to reach young people and we do that through our programming and through the staff. Over half of our staff is under the age of thirty. We have done exhibits on hip hop and graffiti. We also focus on the here and now, and try to deal with issues that resonate with the community, bringing the outside into the museum.

With newer immigrant communities, it goes back to something I said earlier. How do you bring people into the museum who do not have a history of participation? We have found one way to build the relationships or reach the community is through kids. Every parent wants the best for their kids. Some may never have been in a museum, but they want their kids to have different experiences...I think it really is about telling multiple stories. That's what we do.

JJ: At SIPA, we provide the opportunity for things to be explored, for art and culture to be acquired. It's also an issue of young people not knowing their own culture, whether immigrant born or American raised. Immigrants are not just first generation...it's also an issue of second, third, and fourth. Like me, for instance, I learned the arts and traditions of other cultures—like hula—before I learned my own. That's a common experience. Immigrant communities are multi-generational; they are not monolithic. You have to segment different eras, when you think about involvement with the arts. Community intermediary or hub organizations really play an important role in exposure and in linkages, in starting the process of cultural identification and heritage building. They can play a part in the holistic development of a young person. Arts and culture are an important part of that.

Francis was talking earlier about dealing with artists who see art as a large part of what they do and who they are, whether they do it full time or part time. There is also participatory art, the informal arts, the art that happens in communities—that's participatory and very prevalent, and yet is not seen as art and culture. I see a continuum between the two.

Conclusion

As the discussion involving Chew, Jacinto, and Wong reminds us, the value of cultural intermediaries resides not only in *who* they are and *whom* they know, but also *what* they know and *how* they share their knowledge. Being of or from the communities they serve (however they define them) is important and each one embodies a powerful commitment to community and self-empowerment in their daily work. Yet simply being of or from the community is not enough—particularly in a local context. Each organization also brings to bear a deep cultural knowledge and a specialized understanding of the needs and assets of their community and the historical moment.

Ultimately, however, their hard-won credibility derives from “the principled community building” that Jacinto so eloquently described earlier. Wong echoes those sentiments when he articulates the values of AIR as “being present in the community, respect for tradition, respect for bilingualism and a cross cultural exchange of ideas, and building collective long-term

vision.” Ron Chew expressed similar thoughts in a keynote speech he gave at the 48th Annual British Columbia Museums Association Conference in 2004:

How long does it take to develop trust? Usually a long time. Museums are notorious for creating token community advisory committees that lack real power, that serve to rubberstamp internal decisions that had already been made...It usually takes more than a few encounters, in different settings, to get to know someone well enough to open up and establish a mutually beneficial relationship...The point is that relationships are built, one encounter after another, a piece at a time, as people get to know one another in a power-sharing relationship.²⁰

As we enter the 21st century, where knowledge is the most important currency and culture is contested and negotiated repeatedly, intermediaries like SIPA, Wing Luke, and Asian ImprovArts will play increasingly important roles in the cultural life of their communities. With their boundary crossing and networked styles of work, they are challenging the accepted hierarchies of the institutionalized arts world and divided sectors of municipal life. In the language of foundation and corporate evaluation, their greatest “added value” may be unquantifiable, residing in the cracks and spaces between organizations, communities, and cultures. Yet to discount that value would be shortsighted and all of us—artists, cultural organizations, civic institutions, and community residents—would be the poorer for it.

Background on the Organizations

Wing Luke Asian Museum, Seattle, Washington

The Wing Luke Asian Museum, founded in 1967 to honor Seattle’s first Asian American city council member Wing Luke, engages the Asian Pacific American communities and the public in exploring issues related to the culture, art, and history of Asian Pacific Americans. The museum offers permanent and special exhibitions and a range of monthly public programs. The museum also undertakes special community-based initiatives, including the development of a Community Heritage Center and the New Dialogue Initiative, designed to address issues of concern to the Asian Pacific American community.

The Wing Luke Asian Museum has become a national model for community-based exhibition processes and oral history gathering projects. In 1995, the Museum received the Institute for Museum and Library Services National Award for Museum Service on the strength of its cutting-edge work in fostering broad-based participation in the development of exhibitions and programs. Ron Chew joined the Museum as director in 1991, and was honored with a 2004 fellowship from the Ford Foundation’s Leadership for a Changing World program, which recognizes outstanding public service and community leadership around the country.

²⁰ Ron Chew, “Five Keys to Growing a Healthy Community-connected Museum,” http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2005/02/five_keys_to_gr.php (29 August 2005).

Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA), Los Angeles, California

Founded in 1972 in the historic Filipinotown district of Los Angeles, SIPA enhances the quality of life of Filipino Americans and other communities through youth development and health, economic, and social services. SIPA also develops family housing projects and other projects that promote cultural identity, economic stability, self-sufficiency, and civic participation. SIPA's innovative programs and services are facilitated through community-based, collaborative relationships. SIPA's development of the Temple Gateway Youth and Community Center, a multipurpose community cultural center, has allowed the organization to develop after-school youth and sports programs, computer classes, dance classes, and most recently, a theater which opened in 2004 with the Los Angeles premiere of Jessica Hagedorn's play *Dogeaters* (produced with TDRZ Productions, Inc. in association with Playwrights' Arena).

Joel Jacinto has been the executive director of SIPA for fourteen years and is also the co-founder and Program Director of Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts, an organization dedicated to the preservation, presentation, and promotion of Philippine culture through dance and music, and is actively involved in statewide arts advocacy efforts.

Asian Improv aRts (AIR), San Francisco, California

Asian Improv aRts (AIR) was co-founded by musicians Jon Jang and Francis Wong in 1987 to support the career development of Asian American composers and musicians. Since then, AIR has grown to be the largest San Francisco-based presenter dedicated to multidisciplinary work expressing the Asian American experience. AIR has developed a record label, produced 18 concert seasons in the San Francisco Bay Area, and created collaborative arts events and residencies with schools and organizations including the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the San Francisco Unified School District, and the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California. Asian Improv also provides technical assistance and production support to the Asian American and multicultural artist community, producing collaborations with musicians such as Jiebing Chen, Anthony Brown, Max Roach; performance ensembles Melody of China, Eth-Noh-Tec, and Kulintang Dance Theater; writer Genny Lim; and the late filmmaker Kayo Hatta.

Wong is also an accomplished jazz saxophonist and prolific recording artist, and has performed throughout North America, Asia, and Europe. He has taught at San Francisco State University, New College, and the University of California at Santa Cruz. He has received artist resident grants and fellowships from the California Arts Council and Meet the Composer. In 2000, Wong was awarded a Rockefeller Next Generational Leadership Fellowship. Since 1999 he has also been a Senior Fellow at the innovative Wildflowers Institute, a non-profit organization that uses a network of scholars, community leaders, and activists to focus on leadership development and community building in the United States and abroad.

Fund for Folk Culture

Based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Fund for Folk Culture (FFC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the dynamic practice and conservation of folk and traditional arts and culture throughout the United States. In partnership with donors and colleagues, the FFC supports the work of folk and traditional artists and strengthens local, regional and national organizations in its field. We do so through the combined services of grantmaking, convening, and research and publications. Since 1992, the FFC has awarded over 5 million dollars in over 530 grants to more than 335 organizations in 46 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and several island areas in the Pacific.

Through grantmaking programs, the FFC provides financial resources and technical assistance for individuals, organizations and projects that make possible the presentation and preservation of folk arts and traditional culture in community life.

Through convening on selected topics of interest to the field, the FFC provides networking resources and opportunities that connect traditional artists, community practitioners, professionals and service providers to each other, to allied fields, and to broad issues of public concern.

Through research and publications, the FFC provides publicly accessible information resources, by directing and sponsoring work in selected research areas that advance the knowledge, practice and understanding of the field.

CASE STUDIES FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this framework was to outline the main topic areas to be covered by each of the case studies for the Asia Society project. In order to provide a level of comparability across the case studies, the researchers were requested to address these broad topics areas:

1. Context and Characteristics of the Examined Community
2. Description of Artistic Form(s)
3. Activities Surrounding the Artistic Form / Group / Artist
4. Support Systems Inside and Outside of the Examined Community
5. Intersection with Other Sectors/Communities

The various points within each topic area (listed in the following pages) may or may not have been relevant to a particular study, but rather served as research prompts. The topics needn't have been covered exactly in the order presented, and other issues not listed in the framework may have arisen from the research. The framework was to serve as a general guide that raised questions or issues that might reasonably have been considered by each study.

1. Context and Characteristics of the Examined Community

- a. Diasporic History – e.g., if relevant, briefly describe the diasporic impulse of the community under examination (be it economic, social, political, voluntary/forced, etc. – this may vary for different waves of immigration/migration); the geographic origin of community (urban/suburban/rural); factors of age, class status, occupation, educational level, ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation, etc.
- b. Community History – e.g., dates of earliest settlement; patterns of community growth and development; size of population; characteristics of settled population (noting any changes between generations)
- c. Role/Relations within the Larger Community – e.g., within local labor structures, social, political, and cultural life; or for example, how a community from a particular Mexican region is situated within a larger Mexican American/Chicano, Latino, or multi-racial community in the geographic area under examination
- d. Current Community Trends – e.g., out-migration based on changes in economic status, job opportunities, generational shifts, etc.; in-migration based on economic opportunities, housing availability, personal relationships, culturally-specific resources

2. Description of Artistic Form(s)

- a. Historical Context of Form – e.g., court-based/folk/popular, secular/sacred, traditional/innovation-focused, performance context, characteristics of participants (e.g., gender, generation, class/status)
- b. Description of Form as it Exists in the U.S., noting differences from the practices of countries of origin, as relevant – e.g., instrumentation, movement vocabulary, costuming, characteristics of participants (e.g., gender, generation, class/status); consider aspects of change of place, generational shifts, acculturation, loss of context, etc. in how form evolves in the U.S.
- c. Functionality of Artistic Activity Internal to the Examined Community – e.g., regarding value systems, cultural identity, social status, rites of passage, religious practices, artistic practices, linguistic practices, etc. (if relevant, noting issues of loss of knowledge providers – e.g., due to migration, forced dislocation, exile, persecution, etc.); describe issues of authenticity and/or who are sanctioned participants, if relevant
- d. Functionality of Artistic Activity External to the Examined Community – e.g., how the community employs art to position itself with the broader community; how the community's art is perceived by others; what are influences of market forces and survival issues on artistic production; describe issues of authenticity and/or who are sanctioned participants, if relevant

3. Activities Surrounding the Artistic Form / Group / Artist

- a. Creative impulse – Narrative of the beginnings of group or company. Who was/were the founder(s) and initial participants? What were the impulses to make work or start a group or company and the continuing motivations for sustaining the practice?
- b. Training/apprenticeship – issues of who teaches and who learns, methods of selection of teachers and students, changes in training from home country, etc.
- c. Maintaining a skilled cadre/performance company – determination of mastery/standards, types of performance, touring
- d. Artists/Knowledge Exchanges – between home country and local artists, between local artists and artists in other parts of the U.S. or world, etc.
- e. Performing Within the Community – for what purposes, where, for whom, repertory choices, etc.
- f. Performing Outside the Community – for what purposes, where, for whom, repertory choices, etc.

4. Support Systems Inside and Outside of the Examined Community

(The provision of resources, funding, venues, performance/educational opportunities, markets for performance and products)

- a. Arts-Centered Networks: e.g., what networks exist at the local, regional, national, transnational, and global levels to support art making/presenting and touring/training/product development/etc.
- b. Supports Based in the Examined Community: e.g. connections, venues, producing/presenting, marketing, supplies, funding, markets for work, etc. from individuals, families, associations/clubs, faith-based organizations, social services organizations, businesses, etc.
- c. Supports Based Outside the Examined Community: e.g. connections, venues, producing/presenting, marketing, supplies, funding, markets for work, etc. from individuals, social services, schools/colleges, parks, libraries, funders, government agencies, etc.
- d. Modes of Communication: newspapers, radio, TV, internet, posters/fliers, word-of-mouth in places of worship, community meeting places, businesses, etc.

5. Intersection with Other Sectors/Communities

- a. Points of intersection with other sectors that may present opportunities for continuing the artistic activities – such as with the educational system, employment training, business development, other for-profit or non-profit arts entities
- b. Points of intersection with other sectors that may present barriers for continuing the artistic activities – such as with INS, law enforcement, commercial media and markets, etc.

BIOGRAPHIES OF PROJECT STAFF

Researchers

Maribel Alvarez

Maribel Alvarez holds a dual appointment as Assistant Research Professor in the English Department and Research Social Scientist at the Southwest Center, University of Arizona. She teaches courses on cultural studies and serves as the University's Public Folklorist, charged with interpreting the regional culture of Northern Mexico and the U.S. Southwest through research, exhibitions, symposia, and other public programs. She holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Arizona and a Masters Degree in Political Theory from California State University. She is currently writing a book on artisans, artisanal labor, and the marginal crafts or "tourist kitsch" of the U.S.-Mexico border.

From 1996 to 2002 she served as the Executive Director of Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana (MACLA), a multidisciplinary urban arts space in San Jose, California that she also co-founded. Under her leadership, MACLA became nationally recognized for its sophisticated innovation in community arts. In 2001, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts recognized MACLA as one of the 25 most effective alternative art spaces in the country. She was born in Cuba, grew up in Puerto Rico, has done ethnographic fieldwork in Northern Mexico, and has been involved in the Chicano arts movement for more than 20 years.

Cristian Amigo

Cristian Amigo is a composer, musician, and ethnomusicologist. His areas of interest include music technologies (new media), world music, international film music, Latin American music, orchestral music (experimental/new music) and popular music (soul, electronics, abstract, and jazz). He is a native of Chile, reared in Miami. He earned his bachelor's degree from California State University-Northridge, and his master's and Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from University of California, Los Angeles. He was a 2002 Latino Studies Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

Amigo has composed and produced music for film, theater, dance, radio, television and live performance. His music has been featured in films screened at both the 1997 Sundance Film Festival (*35 Miles From Normal*) and the 1998 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival (*Overstay*). In 1999 he was a Film Composition Fellow at the Sundance Institute's Filmmakers Labs in Utah where he worked with creative advisors Terence Blanchard, Mychael Danna, Carter Burwell, George S. Clinton, Shirley Walker, Peter Golub, and Adam Smalley. At Sundance, he also worked with filmmaker Debra Granik. Amigo was a Composition Fellow at the 2000 A.S.K. Theater Projects/Nautilus Music Theater Playwright-Composer Studio. Cristian has been a visiting artist at the Music Center of Los Angeles, Plaza de la Raza, and the HeArt Project. Recently, he performed live in choreographer Winifred Harris's *In Soul We Mate* at the John Anson Ford Theater in Hollywood, California.

Uttara Coorlawala

Uttara Asha Coorlawala, (Ph.D. New York University) has been teaching technique and theoretical dance courses at Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus; Barnard College at Columbia University; and Princeton University. She served as editor for the newsletter of the Congress Of Research in Dance for four years as a member of the Editorial and Executive Boards for *Dance Research Journal*. Her articles have been published in *Pulse*, *Animated*, *Sruti*, *Dance Chronicle*, *Dance Research Journal*, *Animated*, *Sangeet Natak Akademi Journal* and other anthologies.

Born in Hyderabad and educated in India and the U.S., Coorlawala studied hatha yoga, Siddha Yoga and BharataNatyam in the Kalakshetra style. She trained in modern dance at the Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham studios while running a dance program at The Spence School in New York. She has performed the works of choreographers as diverse as Talley Beatty, Alvin Ailey, Yvonne Rainer, Sun Ock Lee and Kei Takei.

As a dance researcher, Coorlawala received the Graduate Research Award from the Congress on Research in Dance (CORD); the Excellence In Research award from Kappa Delta Pi, the National Honor Society of Educators; the John D. Rockefeller III Fund Fellowship; the Homi Bhabha Fellowship in India; and the Dadabhai Naoroji Lifetime Achievement Award. Last year she received the AHRB Dance Research Fellowship for South Asian Dance Research awarded by The Universities of Surrey in the U.K. and the School of Oriental and Asian Studies in London.

Madhulika Khandelwal

Khandelwal is the Director of the Asian/American Center and the Women's Studies program at Queens College in New York and has been a Visiting Professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado. She has also taught Asian American Studies at Cornell University and Columbia University and Urban Studies at the New School for Social Research and Long Island University. Through her community-oriented research and teaching she highlights the intercultural dynamics of immigrant groups in diverse, urban neighborhoods with special attention to intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, class and culture as they shape the development of U.S. communities and diasporic trends among Asian groups. An immigrant from India herself, she is internationally recognized for her research on the changing dynamics of South Asians in the United States and their global diaspora.

Khandelwal has served on the boards of organizations such as the Association for Asian American Studies, the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, and Citylore: The Center for Urban Folk Culture. She is the author of the book *Becoming American, Being Indian: An Immigrant Community in New York City* (Cornell University, 2002).

Susan Kunimatsu

Susan Kunimatsu is a writer, artist and arts program administrator. Based in Seattle, she has broad knowledge of the Pacific Northwest cultural community from major institutions to emerging artist-driven cooperatives to individual artists. She has developed policy, procedures, educational materials and workshops for arts funding programs. She has also organized symposia and exhibitions, published artist profiles and reviewed exhibitions and books for numerous periodicals.

Ms. Kunimatsu has over ten years of experience administering arts grant programs encompassing Asian and Scandinavian communities for the city of Seattle. She managed an oral history project for the Wing Luke Asian Museum which included production of an exhibition and video, research and accessioning of artifacts, training volunteers and conducting tours. She is a jewelry and textile artist, knowledgeable in contemporary visual art and craft.

Hallie Stone

Hallie Stone is completing her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology at Indiana University. She was a 2002 Africanist Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars and was a researcher for the African Immigrant Project with the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington, D.C. She was a fellow of the South African Cultural Heritage Project at Michigan State University in 2000 and was a Fulbright-Hayes fellow in 1999. Her dissertation research is titled *Cultural Identity: Social Dance in Shebeens in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Her research interests include African and African American Culture, performance, and HIV/AIDS. She is currently a consultant with the World Bank African Society on the HIV Vaccine and AIDS Research Project.

Ms. Stone has published articles for the National Endowment for the Arts and *Intermission Arts* magazine. She has served on panels for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and on the Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching in Bloomington, Indiana.

Khatharya Um

Khatharya Um is a political scientist and Associate Professor of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She received her B.A. and M.A. in Political Science with a special emphasis on International Relations and Comparative Politics from the University of California, San Diego, and her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley. In the fields of Comparative Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies, her teaching and research interests center around international migration, with a special emphasis on refugee and diaspora studies; post-conflict societies and communities; politics and policies and that impact immigrant and refugee communities; and the theoretical and empirical intersections of local, national and transnational dynamics. Her current research is on post-genocide reconstruction, the politics of memory and rethinking security.

In addition to her academic work, Um is also actively involved in community advocacy, principally on issues of civil and educational rights. She is co-chairing the Publication Task Force of the Education Summit with former Congressman Robert Underwood. She is currently serving on the Executive Board of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS), a Boston-based consortium working to advance the educational rights of students and their families. She is the Chair Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Asian Resource and Action Center (SEARAC), a Washington D.C.-based organization that was formed in response to the Southeast Asian refugee crisis in 1979. Um received the Distinguished Award from the University of Massachusetts, Boston in 1999, an Award for Leadership and Academic Excellence in 1994, a Chancellor's Distinguished Post-Doctoral Fellowship from 1990-1992 and the MacArthur Fellowship for Studies in International Relations from 1988-90.

Paul Yoon

Paul Yoon received his Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology from Columbia University's Department of Music. His research generally addresses the politics and practices of race and ethnicity as encountered in Asian American expressive cultural domains, particularly in music and sound. His dissertation explored music making and prayer practices among 1.5 and second generation Korean American Christians. His previous work centered on issues of representation and identity in a Japanese/Asian American taiko group.

He has taught Music Humanities at Columbia University in New York and was the Senior Editor of *Current Musicology*. He has presented two papers for the Society for Ethnomusicology ("Negotiating Identity: Taiko in New York City" in 1999 and "Walking Up the Mountain to God's Place: Preliminary Investigations Into an Acoustemology of Korean Prayer Practices" in 2001), and one for the Society for American Music ("Asian American Politics and Taiko Drumming in New York City" in 2000).

Project Advisors

Joel Jacinto

As Cultural Program Director of Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts, Joel Jacinto has conducted over 17 years of research and study on cultural anthropology and Philippine dance ethnology. His Philippine commitment began while a student at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and eventually led him to study dance masters in Hawaii and the Philippines. Currently, he is a candidate for a Master of Arts degree in Applied Anthropology. Mr. Jacinto has worked with many organizations in the Pilipino American community as well as numerous mainstream arts organizations and institutions in California and the United States.

In 1994 Mr. Jacinto was a lecturer for the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. In 1981, he received a Humanities Fellowship grant award from the Asian Cultural Council to present a paper regarding the status of Philippine dance in America at the 1998 Philippine International

Dance Festival and Conference and to establish collaborative partnerships with Philippine-based cultural groups and institutions. He is currently working on a project funded by the California Arts Council Multicultural Entry Grant Program to facilitate the development of a statewide Philippine Dance Resource Network for community and school-based Philippine dance practitioners.

Diana Baird N'Diaye

Diana Baird N'Diaye earned a Ph.D. in anthropology and visual studies at The Union Institute. Since coming to the Smithsonian, she has directed collaborative research projects and curated festival programs and exhibitions on African, African diaspora, and transnational communities including Bermuda Connections, which won national awards for promoting cultural heritage on the island. She has authored several articles and presentations on participatory research and cultural representation. Before coming to the Smithsonian, she worked as program officer at the New York State Council on the Arts where she assisted in the development and interpretation of funding guidelines in the Folk Arts division. A recent executive board member of the American Folklore Society, she has served on review and advisory panels for numerous cultural projects including Africa Exchange, the Black Arts Festival of Atlanta, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Urban Institute's Arts and Culture Indicators project and the South African National Cultural Heritage Program (in partnership with cultural heritage professionals from Michigan State University, Chicago Historical Society and several South African museums and archives.) She holds an adjunct appointment with Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and is a Research Associate of Michigan State University Museum.

Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu

Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu is Assistant Professor in the History of Art Department and the Asian American Studies Program at Cornell University. She received her B.A. in English/African American Literature from Bates College, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in American Studies from New York University in 1999 and 2003, respectively. Her areas of research interest are Asian American popular culture; U.S. immigration and urbanization; critical race theory; cultural citizenship and cultural policy; social stratification (race, class, gender); new media; and digital culture. She holds a joint appointment through the History of Art Department and the Asian American Studies Program at Cornell University.

Seemin Qayum

Seemin Qayum is a consultant and independent scholar. She has over twenty years of experience working with diverse national and international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programs from 1992-2004, in the areas of environment, development, gender and culture. Her research interests include 19th and 20th century cultural and social history in Latin America; cultures of servitude in India, Bolivia and the U.S.; and indigenous peoples and sustainable development. She is currently finishing a book on cultural identity and nation-

formation in Bolivia, *Creole Imaginings: Space, Race, and Gender in the Making of Republican Bolivia*, and co-authoring another on employers and servants in Kolkata and New York, tentatively titled “*They Don’t Love Us Any More*”: *Cultures of Servitude in Post-colonial India and New York*. She has a doctorate in anthropology from University of London, an M.A. in Planning from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and a B.A. in Geography from the University of California, Berkeley.

Ben Rodriguez-Cubeñas

Ben Rodriguez-Cubeñas is Program Officer for the New York City portion of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund’s Pivotal Place program. He has over 13 years experience working for major national and international foundations. Prior to joining the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in early 1996, Mr. Rodriguez-Cubeñas was first program assistant and then program officer at the William Randolph Hearst Foundations, where he worked nationally in the areas of education, health, human services and culture. Mr. Rodriguez-Cubeñas served as chair of Hispanics in Philanthropy, an international organization dedicated to supporting Hispanic communities, and now serves as vice chair of the board of Casita Maria, the oldest Hispanic settlement house in New York. He is also Secretary of the New York Foundation for the Arts and an advisory board member of New Ventures in Philanthropy, a national organization developed to promote philanthropy. He served on the board of The Washington Center in Washington, D.C. for ten years. In 1998, Mr. Rodriguez-Cubeñas co-founded the Cuban Artists Fund, an organization dedicated to helping individual artists and for using the arts as a vehicle for mutual understanding and relationship building; he now serves as the chair of the Fund. He has a B.A. in political science from Seton Hall University and a Master’s Degree in international affairs from Drew University.

John Kuo Wei Tchen

John Kuo Wei Tchen is a historian and cultural activist. Since 1975 he has been studying inter-ethnic and interracial relations of Asians and Americans, helping to build cultural organizations, and exploring how inquiry in the humanities and society can help deepen the quality of public discourse and policy. Tchen is currently the founding director of the Asian/Pacific/American Studies Program and Institute at New York University (NYU). He is also Associate Professor of the Gallatin School for Individualized Study and the History Department of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences at NYU. Tchen’s most recent book is the award-winning *New York Before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776-1882* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999). He authored *Gentle’s Photographs of San Francisco’s Old Chinatown* (Dover Publications, 1984), which won an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation.

Tchen is the chair of the Advisory Committee of the Center for Folklife and Cultural Studies, and serves on the Blue Ribbon Commission, National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of the New York Historical Society and has just been appointed to the Editorial Board of the *Journal of American History*,

the publication of the Organization of American Historians. In addition to receiving an American Book Award, in 1991 Tchen was awarded the Charles S. Frankel Prize from the National Endowment for the Humanities (renamed the National Humanities Medal), and in 1993 he received the City of New York Mayor's Award of Honor for Arts and Culture. In 1980, Tchen and Charles Lai co-founded the New York Chinatown History Project, now known as Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

Alaka Wali

Alaka Wali is John Nuveen Curator in Anthropology and Director of the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) at The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. She was born in India and received her B.A. from Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Columbia University in New York. She was an American Anthropological Association Congressional Fellow from 1986-87. Between 1987-95, she served on the Faculty of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park. While at The Field, Wali has been involved in developing urban anthropology research approaches and internship programs.

She has received several awards including the President's Fellowship at Columbia University, the Inter-American Foundation Learning Fellowship, a Fulbright Award and a Lilly Foundation Teaching Fellowship. Wali also regularly teaches at both the University of Illinois at Chicago and Northwestern University.

As Director of the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change, Wali received major grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. She is the author of a book, several monographs and over 30 articles. Together with co-author Leith Mullings, she has written a book on the Harlem Research titled *Stress and Resilience: The Social Context of Reproduction in Central Harlem*. Her current research focuses on the changing nature of ethnic and class formations in the Urban United States.

George Yúdice

George Yúdice is Professor of Spanish and Portuguese and American Studies and Director of the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies at New York University. He received his Ph.D. in Romance Languages from Princeton University; his M.A. in Spanish from Illinois University; and his B.A. in Chemistry from Hunter College. His major field interests are Latin American Avant-garde, Cultural Studies and Cultural Policy Studies. Some of his publications include *The Expediency of Culture: The Uses of Culture in the Global Era* (Duke University Press, 2003); *Cultural Policy*, co-authored with Toby Miller (Sage Publications, 2002); *We Are Not the World: Identity and Representation in an Age of Global Restructuring* (Duke University Press, forthcoming); *On Edge: The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 1992); and *Vicente Huidobro y la motivación del lenguaje* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1978).

Yúdice has received a number of fellowships and honors including the Rockefeller Foundation Residency Fellowship Program in the Humanities, the U.S.-Mexico Fund (FIDEICOMISO) For Culture, the Professional Staff Congress-City University of New York Research Award, and the Fulbright Award.

Core Project Staff

Rachel Cooper

Director for Performing Arts and Public Programs, Asia Society

Rachel Cooper has been at the Asia Society since 1993 and is the Director for Performing Arts and Public Programs. She has extensive experience in the production and presentation of traditional and contemporary Asian and Asian-American performing arts and the development of interdisciplinary programs. Recently, as part of the programming at the Asia Society, she presented Parisa, Houmayun Sakhi and Almasbek Almatov. Working with the New England Foundation for the Arts and Lisa Booth Management, she co-produced a twelve-city tour *Dance: The Spirit of Cambodia*, and an eight-city tour by India's Chorus Repertory Theatre. As part of her work at the Asia Society, she commissioned, produced and presented several new works including *In What Language*, by composer Vijay Iyer and poet Mike Ladd; *The Floating Box: A Story of Chinatown* by Jason Hwang; *18 Songs of a Nomad Flute: The Story of Wenji* by Bun-Ching Lam and Xu Ying; *Forgiveness*, directed by Chen Shi-Zheng; and *Empty Tradition/City Of Peonies* with choreographer Yin Mei and composer Tony Prabowo.

Ms. Cooper was the Associate Director of the University of California, Los Angeles Center for Intercultural Performance where she assisted in establishing the Center and implemented phase one of the *Asia Pacific Performance Exchange* project. In this capacity, she worked with performing artists from Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Ms. Cooper is the co-founder, former director and current board president of the San Francisco-based Balinese music and dance company, *Gamelan Sekar Jaya*, which has been presenting the arts of Bali in the United States since 1979. She lived in Indonesia for six years from 1983-89. She was the recipient of an 'Izzy' Isadora Duncan award for the Festival of Indonesia, a Rockefeller MAP grant for choreography and the Clifton F. Webb award for film. Ms. Cooper is an advisor for the National Dance Project and was the co-chair of the Arts Presenters annual conference for 2005.

Vanessa Whang

Consultant

Vanessa Whang is a consultant with interest areas in interculturalism and cultural equity, arts philanthropy, multidisciplinary arts production, community cultural development, and cross-

sector partnerships. Her recent clients include Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Leveraging Investments in Creativity, and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

From 1999 through 2003, she served as Director of Multidisciplinary Arts and Presenting at the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, DC. As such, her portfolio included performing arts presenters; artists' communities; companies producing interdisciplinary work and new forms; culturally-specific, community-based organizations; multidisciplinary arts spaces; and a variety of arts service organizations. Before joining the Endowment, Ms Whang was director of Arts Partnerships for Educational Excellence, a youth-centered arts learning initiative of the East Bay Community Foundation in Oakland, CA. Before entering philanthropy, Ms Whang served for over seven years as a member of the staff collective of La Peña Cultural Center, a multidisciplinary/multifunctional community and arts center in Berkeley, CA presenting music, dance, theater, and interdisciplinary work by local, national, and international artists in venues throughout the Bay Area.

Ms Whang has served on boards and as an advisor to a number of arts organizations; has been an invited panelist and speaker at several conferences and universities; and has been a peer review panelist for a number of public and private arts funders. As a multi-instrumentalist and composer/arranger, Ms Whang toured nationally with the Latin American music ensemble *Altazor* and produced their two recordings for the Redwood Records label. Ms Whang currently serves on the board of the National Writing Project, a professional development network for teachers of writing.

Eleanor San San Wong

Consultant

San San Wong is a consultant in the non-profit arts arena, working with artist-centered companies, organizations of color, presenting entities, arts intermediaries and foundations in strategic planning, developing and managing special projects, and organizing and facilitating convenings. Some current and recent clients and projects include: New England Foundation for the Arts' Regional Dance Development Initiative; La Peña Cultural Center and The Ford Foundation's "Future Aesthetics: Hip Hop & Contemporary Performance"; strategic planning with Res Artis, an international network of artist residency centers; Leveraging Investments in Creativity; Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Melbourne International Arts Festival; and the development of an intra-Asia network for artistic mobility and exchange.

From 1998-2000, Ms. Wong was the Executive Director of the National Performance Network (NPN). Previous to joining NPN, she was Acting Executive Director, and has been both Director of Special Projects and Development Director of Theater Artaud in San Francisco, for a total of six years. Ms. Wong is currently on the board of directors at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. Her board service has included the National Performance Network, Asian American Arts Alliance and the Japan-United States Community Education and Exchange. Ms. Wong has served on policy and funding allocation panels for the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Arts International, Arts Partners Program (Lila Wallace-

Reader's Digest Fund and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation) and many other national, regional and local government agencies.

In 1994, Ms. Wong was honored by HT Dance Company for visionary leadership and long-term commitment to fostering innovation in Asian American dance and the performing arts field as a whole. She is also the recipient of two awards for travel and research from the Suitcase Fund of Dance Theater Workshop, and has been a Fellow in Arts Administration with the National Endowment for the Arts. Ms. Wong holds a Master's degree in Community Psychology from New York University and a B.A. in Clinical Psychology from Smith College.

Herb Tam

Project Coordinator, Asia Society

Mr. Tam was the Artist Services Associate for four years at Creative Capital Foundation, which funds artists from four artistic disciplines across the U.S. He is also a visual artist and curator. His work has been included in recent exhibitions at the D.U.M.B.O. Arts Center in Brooklyn, Amelie A. Wallace Gallery in Long Island, New York and Here Art in New York. In 2003 he was awarded a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship and Residency in Umbria, Italy. Recent curatorial projects include *Drawing Out Loud* and *Fake Rolex* at HDC Gallery in New York. In 2005, Mr. Tam will curate *Props for a Romantic Comedy* at the Longwood Arts Gallery in the Bronx, New York and *Products of Shared Differences* at the Natural History Museum in New York. In 2000, he founded Godzookie, a network of young Asian artists.