

InSEA President's Report

2003-2005

During my term as president InSEA celebrated its 50th anniversary. Much changed in the world during that half century but InSEA has maintained stability and focus often in the face of terrifying international events. InSEA remains steady and continues to develop its strength through international activity and the development of productive relationships. The true strength of InSEA lies in the commitment of its members to the mission of our organization, and the tremendously hard work of InSEA affiliates to host significant regional congresses.

In the summer of 2003 a quite remarkable experience was afforded the InSEA delegates who attended the marvelous InSEA on Sea Congress. This unique event took its members from Sweden via Finland to Estonia on an extraordinary cultural tour. The co-directors of this educational extravaganza, Britt-Marie Kühlnhorn and Liisa Piironen, demonstrated the kind of vision, hospitality, and stamina that characterizes the individuals whose commitment constitutes the foundation of this organization.

In 2004 InSEA's 50th year was celebrated twice at two regional congresses. The first of these was held in July, 2004 in Istanbul. This was a wonderful European regional Congress in Turkey brought to life by a farsighted and determined member of our organization Olcay Kirişoğlu. Delegates enjoyed an excellent program, a cultural feast of visual experiences in the city of Istanbul, and the opportunity to visit the historic underground cities in Cappadoçia.

A second celebration was held in Beijing in December, 2004 representing a rare opportunity for InSEA to establish a footprint on mainland China. This conference was a joint

celebration with the Capital Normal University in Beijing which was celebrating its 50th year since inauguration and served as host for the conference. Over 300 delegates attended, with more than 100 new InSEA and members joining the organization at that meeting. A significant outcome of the congress was the establishment of an *Asian Center for Research and Development in Art Education* at the Beijing Capital Normal University.

Other significant InSEA activities included most notably the launching of the new *International Journal of Art Education*. At last InSEA is able to boast a fully refereed journal reflecting content derived from a wide variety of international sources including most particularly our regional and international congresses. We are deeply indebted to the journal's foundation editor Rachel Mason who is largely responsible for bringing this project to life. John Steers has also played a key role in facilitating publication and financial matters. InSEA news has, for the moment, been replaced by the journal but there is much still to do in developing communication avenues for our members.

InSEA web sites have been redeveloped with the addition of InSEA Latin America and a new look InSEA Europe site. The European council has been very active under the leadership of Angelica Plank who deserves much praise for her work in building membership and developing initiatives in the European region

The future for InSEA is exciting with proposals approved at this meeting for regional congresses in Korea, 2007; Heidelberg, 2007; and excellent progress is being made in the planning of a world Congress in Japan in 2008. In addition we have also approved an application for affiliation from Russia, and are discussing a proposal for a European regional Congress in

Saint Petersburg. We are also holding discussions about a potential regional congress in Finland in 2011.

I have been excited by the enormous enthusiasm for the ideals promoted by InSEA held by those professionals I have met in the many countries which I have had the privilege of visiting during my term as President. I am particularly encouraged by the tremendous growth of activity in Asia largely due to the opening of China. At this time there are very active art education groups in the region including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Shanghai, Beijing, Korea, and Macao each with regular or episodic conference agendas. InSEA in Japan also has a very long history of activity and successful conferences. Planning for future InSEA conferences in the Asian region needs to be carefully articulated so that the best resources of all interested communities are engaged, activities are coordinated and the best interests of all parties are served. I recommend strongly that the idea of an Asian Regional Council be seriously discussed as a way forward in the future development of international art education in Asia.

No world Congress was held last year, given the difficulties in finding a host for such an event. Under normal circumstances a world Congress is held each three years at which time the old World Council hands over responsibility to the incoming Council. Because we had no venue and therefore no possibility to hold a General Assembly as required by the constitution, the executive determined that an decision of extraordinary circumstance was required to extend the term of the existing council by two months into 2006 until this International Congress in Portugal.

The lifeblood of InSEA is its membership, and membership is sustained by regular congresses. We have suffered a particularly difficult term due to the loss of major congresses in

the past. The past three years has been spent to large degree in consolidating membership numbers. The future following this conference looks much more positive given the wonderful attendance we have here.

It has been a great honor for me to serve as president for the past three years. One of the true joys of working for InSEA, in addition to professional sustenance, is the quality of the friendships one makes in the course of working for a common goal. I have had the privilege of working with two enormously capable past presidents in John Steers and Diederik Schönau. John has provided an invaluable service to InSEA through one of the most difficult of all jobs which is that of treasurer/membership officer. Diederik in his role as Past President has performed an enormously valuable service to the institution through his UNESCO liaison role, management of the election process, and support to me through the provision of advice and historical information.

The institutional wisdom held by these two individuals is profound. John has worked in every executive position over some 25 years, and Diederik has been a world counselor and executive member for as long as I can remember. Both are departing the world council this year and they will be sorely missed. Without their advice and absolutely reliable support my job would have been far more difficult.

Other longtime and hardworking members of the council are also departing. We will miss Adele Flood representative from the SE Asia/Pacific region who served multiple terms as newsletter editor, Fernando Hernandez representative from Europe who served as chair of the research board, Luis Errazuriz and Jose Ramon Gonzalez representatives from South America,

Kodwo Edusei and Seidu Peligah Yakubu representatives from Africa/Middle East, and Don Krug representative from North America.

I also wish to acknowledge the help and support of our General Secretary Debbie Smith-Shank. She has been efficient, careful, energetic, enthusiastic and tremendously supportive. While she is not departing the council she is vacating the position of Secretary. Mary Stokrocki is also leaving her position as Vice-President, but remains on the World Council to continue her enthusiastic support of InSEA. Finally thanks are due to Peter Hermans who is no longer a world council member, but continues to make a valuable contribution to InSEA through his work on the InSEA web site.

I look forward to working through my final term as Vice President supporting Ann Kuo our new President. I have great hopes for institutional growth as a consequence of the experience, resources insights that Ann brings to the organization. I extend my best wishes and full support to the new council.