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**INTERNATIONAL CIOFF* FORUM ON TRADITIONAL ARTS, CALI, COLOMBIA, 2023
1st World Meeting of Popular Cultures**

PROCEEDINGS

***International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Traditional Arts**

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PRESENTATION

In November 2021, in Budapest, Hungary, within the framework of the World Assembly of CIOFF - International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Traditional Arts, we had the opportunity, as representatives of the National Section of Colombia, to engage in dialogue with important managers and organizations from many countries about the progress in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and the importance of promoting regional and international encounters to address different related topics, all within the guidelines of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee.

The representative of the municipal administration of Cali, Colombia, attended the Budapest meeting on behalf of the city. The director of the Popular Culture Institute of Cali represented the incumbent mayor, Dr. Jorge Iván Ospina Gómez, who expressed his interest, through his delegate, in hosting a world-class event on popular cultures in the Colombian city. He offered full institutional support for such an initiative if necessary.

Thus, the project emerged to plan, manage, and realize the First Festival of Popular Cultures and, within this, the CIOFF International Forum on Traditional Arts in Cali, Colombia, in 2023.

The first event, the meeting of popular cultures, included the participation of about 60 local, regional, national, and international groups, attracting a large audience to high-level artistic exhibitions held in different theaters and open spaces of the capital city of Valle del Cauca. During the same event, the annual meeting of the CIOFF World Executive Committee took place.

The CIOFF International Forum on Traditional Arts welcomed delegates from countries such as Ecuador, Australia, Switzerland, Chile, Hungary, Mexico, Russia, and Colombia, among others. They presented exhibitions, delivered lectures, and participated in discussions and workshops, among other events, addressing topics of interest to folklore and popular arts festival organizations related to artistic transformation processes, the incorporation of new technologies, projection processes and impacts on communities and territories, festival coordination through the implementation of associative and collaborative alliances, and interaction with other organizations, networks, and social sectors, especially the education sector at all levels.

This publication includes the reports of the events held and the presentations of national and international guests, serving as a memoir of the Meeting and the Forum. We hope that reading it will be of interest and utility to managers and organizations of folklore and traditional arts festivals, as well as the general public. And we kindly ask you, dear reader, to contribute to its dissemination by expanding the circulation of this document through social networks and direct communication within your personal, social, institutional, and corporate environment.

MARIA CLAUDIA BERROCAL DURAN

President
CIOFF National Section of Colombia
International Council of Folklore and Traditional Arts



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TRADITIONAL AND POPULAR ARTS FESTIVALS AS DRIVERS OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ARTISTIC, AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, TRANSMISSION, AND DISSEMINATION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE.

Cesar Moreno-Triana

Coordinator of the cultural sector before UNESCO in Quito.

UNESCO firmly believes that popular cultures are fundamental to the identity, well-being, and social cohesion of individuals and communities. Popular cultures connect us to our history, our ancestors, our values, and our traditions. Through them, we learn about life and the world around us, and we share our experiences and knowledge with others.

However, we also know, from our organization, that popular cultures face broad challenges in an increasingly globalized and conflicted world. External cultural influences, cultural homogenization, commercialization, and lack of government support can endanger the survival and diversity of popular cultures.

Popular cultures are the essence of communities, of peoples; they belong to historically forgotten and subjugated ones, so making them visible means ensuring our existence as cultural subjects and guaranteeing an equitable, broad, diverse world.

That is why UNESCO also actively works to promote and protect popular cultures worldwide, through pioneering initiatives such as the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2023. This is an effort by the international community aimed at ensuring the continuity and vitality of practices stemming from traditional cultures.

Today, when it is more imperative than ever to develop educational and research programs, including documentation and frameworks for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO is making sustained efforts to ensure that popular cultures and their expressions receive the respect and attention they deserve.



5. Intercultural Understanding and Tolerance

Finally, by promoting and raising awareness of the intangible cultural heritage of communities, festivals contribute to raising general awareness about the importance of its safeguarding. This translates into tangible support for policies and initiatives that protect it, and even the convening of spaces for reflection to analyze how states and institutions are working hand in hand with communities to implement actions that eliminate or reduce any form of discrimination and intolerance, positioning traditional knowledge in the collective imagination

6. Intercultural Understanding and Tolerance

However, it is essential to recognize that festivals can also pose a challenge to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. When commercial interests prevail over cultural values, festivals can become a threat to the representativeness and integrity of cultural expressions. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that festivals are developed and managed in a sustainable and environmentally respectful manner in order to preserve the integrity of the cultural expressions they promote.

In the planning and implementation phases of festivals, an important challenge is undoubtedly finding innovative mechanisms to ensure the full participation of communities, aiming for the most participatory management possible.

Furthermore, it is fundamental to bear in mind that festivals provide conducive spaces to focus on knowledge, bearers, contexts, and the admirable way in which men and women create culture, above tangible products.

Conclusion

In this International Forum of Folk Arts, we have the opportunity to share experiences and reflect on the challenges and opportunities facing popular cultures in the current context. We will also be able to identify strategies and actions to promote cultural diversity and community participation in the preservation and promotion of their cultures.

We are convinced that this forum will constitute a platform for constructive dialogue and collaboration among participants, and will further strengthen national and international action in commitment and efforts towards the safeguarding and promotion of popular cultures. We are also confident that this important event will be an opportunity to continue learning from the diverse cultures that surround us, to share our own experiences and knowledge, and to build cultural bridges among communities.

We are also very confident that the results and recommendations of this significant forum will provide high-quality inputs that will allow all of us to continue acting from our respective fields to ensure that popular cultures remain a fundamental pillar of our identity, contributing through this action to strengthening a culture of peace at a global level.

On behalf of UNESCO, I wish you a successful and fruitful meeting

“QUERÉTARO TIERRA VIVA” FOLK DANCE THOUGHT FROM THE AUDIOVISUAL LANGUAGE

Héctor Córdoba,
Autonomous University of Querétaro - Mexico

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic transformed social dynamics and, of course, cultural ones. Society and different sectors had to rethink their practices, concepts, and objectives. The art scene experienced an undeniable crisis as art is a cultural phenomenon thanks to the audience, and confinement eliminated the possibility of gatherings and, therefore, in-person events. In such a situation, new technologies became the support for the dynamics of virtuality and remote presence. Society could not do without art, and in this crisis, technological leverage became the only option to cope with the adverse situations that now constituted everyday life.

Artists began to cope with confinement by creating videos with trends and mixes of recorded performances, but these tools quickly became exhausted, and the artistic sector faced another creative crisis. In this critical moment, the Dance Group of the Autonomous University of Querétaro (UAQ) took the initiative to produce audiovisual content that generates new means of showcasing Querétaro’s folk and popular traditions. Initially, there was a complete choreographic montage with numerous dance couples, but through collaborative efforts with the Coordinator of Cinematography at UAQ, all this work underwent an artistic transformation, resulting in the short film titled “Querétaro Tierra Viva.” In this film, dance integrates with audiovisual language to consolidate an artistic product that represents Querétaro’s tradition beyond the dance itself.

The case of the documentary “Querétaro Tierra Viva” is evidence that new technologies, today more than ever, provide great support for art and for the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. The impact on the community and the territory is undeniable: a high-quality artistic and technologically advanced product adapted to the modern language, suitable for participating in film awards, becomes a window to the world to showcase the tradition and the immense cultural value of a region, in this case, Mexico. Thus, traditional expressions go beyond the mere connotation of craftsmanship to become a much more universal communicative product.



The development of initiatives like this also serves as a scenario for self-management and self-sustainability. Universities like UAO, with their visionary and mission-oriented perspective and their interest in creating scientific, artistic, and audiovisual products, can contribute to the project by providing quality work and commitment that can go a long way. The self-management and self-sustainability processes between the dance group, the cinematography team at UAO, and the support of other sponsoring institutions generated a result that, as a visual production, was awarded in countries such as Bulgaria and Spain.

In our view, this is a good example of how culture, tradition, and art as fundamental elements of society are affected or influenced by changes in social dynamics resulting from industrial, scientific, technological advancements, and even public health issues such as the pandemic. It also shows that in critical situations like these, such events can be seen as an opportunity, as a set of initially adverse circumstances that offer possibilities for innovation, exploring new options, and envisioning new horizons. All of this aims to enhance our management in the face of the challenge of strengthening the promotion and safeguarding of intangible and tangible cultural heritage, making the best possible use of new tools to maintain and disseminate living traditions, in Mexico and any country in the world.



INTERNATIONAL FOLK CIRCUIT OF THE CARIBBEAN: GOOD PRACTICES OF ASSOCIATION FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF FOLK FESTIVALS

**María Claudia Berrocal, Rafael Lascarro,
ván Cisneros, Dixon Pérez, Alberto Arias**
Colombia

The International Folk Circuit of the Caribbean “Enrique Jatib Thome” is a traveling circuit that takes place on the Caribbean coast of Colombia, incorporating festivals from Barranquilla, Cartagena, El Carmen de Bolívar, San Juan de Nepomuceno, Sincelejo, and Ciénaga. During two weeks, these cities host festivals that include the performance of regional, national, and international groups, generating an interesting circulation dynamic with high impact and massive audience attendance.

This initiative arises thanks to the vision of maestro Enrique Jatib Thome (may he rest in peace), who aimed to promote and position a broad space for the visibility of the diverse cultural expressions of the Colombian Caribbean. The International Folk Circuit of the Caribbean plays a direct role in the sociocultural development of the communities and territories involved. To achieve this, maestro Enrique wisely considered that promoting, establishing, and strengthening collaborative and associative alliances with municipal authorities, organizations, and various sectors in each municipality was necessary for the successful development of the Circuit. He encouraged and supported management and financing processes, seeking to diversify the sources of funding so that the festivals—and therefore the circuit—would not depend solely on resources allocated by municipal and regional governments, considering the instability in support decisions, which, as traditionally seen in the country, depend on political factors derived from changes in respective public administrations.

The sense of association present in the Circuit is evident even from the design of its corporate image, a set of visual products that result from the contributions of different individuals, friends, and organizations. This highlights the fact that good associative practices should be reflected in all the details and spaces of the festival, which, in this case, has been manifested in a collective construction and consolidation of the Circuit’s identity.

This is a good example for the construction of collaborative and associative partnerships, as mentioned earlier, in which broad and inclusive participation of all interested public and private actors and organizations is promoted. This way, each community and territory can achieve high management standards, allowing each festival and participating location in the Circuit to fulfill their mission objectives, generating broad and significant impacts.

In the case of the International Folk Circuit of the Caribbean “Enrique Jatib Thome,” alliances have been established with the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, regional governments, municipal authorities, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and educational institutions at the primary, secondary, and higher levels. The Circuit has a mixed funding model, and its self-management capacity enables it to provide participating artists with a pleasant stay and attention during their visit to the regions. Furthermore, it successfully offers the community a high-quality program with significant audience appeal, all of which materializes as a significant contribution to the promotion and safeguarding of traditional arts in their various forms.

The municipalities and festivals that integrate and associate around the Circuit provide good examples of positive and tangible results in different areas. The artistic showcases are decentralized, not limited to central venues in each municipality, but extending to unconventional spaces such as public and private educational institutions, organizations, and shelters for the elderly, among others. This allows for greater community participation in the various events promoted by the Circuit, local administrations, and organizations. This becomes a significant contribution to cultural and social development in the territories and the fulfillment of the mission objectives of the project’s promoting entities.

Special mention should be made of the activities of “Tradition, games, and rounds,” which allow for the recreation, reclamation, and enjoyment of traditional games as one of the most representative expressions of our intangible cultural heritage.

With this scope, the International Folk Circuit of the Caribbean “Enrique Jatib Thome” also consolidates itself as an ideal space for artistic transformation and qualification. Given its itinerant nature and proper coordination among the various associated festivals, it can guarantee both local and national as well as international groups an enriching experience through direct contact with organizations, artists, practitioners, communities, and the general public in a territory rich in culture, folklore, and tradition. This is highly attractive for international artists, especially since they can make the most of their stay in Colombia.

Such an opportunity for artistic transformation directly impacts communities and territories, as it allows for greater visibility of Colombia, the Montes de María and Sabana de Bolívar regions, and their traditional expressions to the world. All of this occurs within a dynamic that also contributes to the tourism, social, and economic development in these territories.

In summary, the design, management, development, dimension, impact, and socio-geographic scope of the International Folk Circuit of the Caribbean “Enrique Jatib Thome” constitute a tangible and measurable example of the positive results of an associativity process and the enhancement of festivals as platforms for artistic qualification and positive impacts on communities and territories. It showcases the benefits of good associativity practices, suitable self-management and financing processes, as well as the building of brotherhood ties between artists and communities around art and culture.

MUNICIPAL CONCERT OF LIGHT: A COMMITMENT TO THE PERMANENCE IN TIME OF THE POPULAR HOUSE OF CULTURE OF TULUÁ, COLOMBIA.

Jorge Adrián Rubio Sánchez - Colombia

The Popular House of Culture of Tuluá, in the department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia, is born under the Cortazarian concept of a taken house, being this analogy of the famous work of the father of famas and cronopios, in reality, an initiative conceived with the objective of channeling art as a means to transform the bellicose image of the municipality into a territory of art and culture, coexistence, and peace. Thus, the idea of transforming abandoned buildings into centers for creativity and community engagement was born, to the point of having 12 cultural houses in the municipality today. This has achieved the decentralization of art, bringing it from the cloister to the neighborhood, turning cultural venues into spaces for education, especially for children and young people. It promotes new senses of territory, identity, and peaceful coexistence, which is a significant achievement in a city and region traditionally affected by various forms of violence and material and spiritual poverty. It is an achievement with a high and positive impact on communities and generations.

The consolidation of the popular houses of culture in Tuluá is a realized achievement thanks to the support of the municipal government, other governmental organizations, and civil society. This alliance provides economic resources for operation and maintenance, but in no way interferes with the nature and scope of the different training and outreach activities carried out there. Ultimately, they are cultural spaces of and for the community. The constant work with the community has been the main form of association that has allowed this cultural and social initiative to endure over time. The people of Tuluá, from all generations and social backgrounds, have taken care of the cultural houses and supported their construction, as well as the development of various cultural and artistic events and processes.



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A good example of the tangible results of the dynamics generated by the cultural houses is the Municipal Concert of Light, which takes place during the festivities known as “noches de las velitas” (nights of the candles) celebrated in Colombia between December 7th and 8th of each year. The Municipal Concert of Light, as one of the main expressions of the cultural houses of Tuluá, has become a stage for artistic transformation. It has managed to become a traditional space that brings together a large number of local artists who enthusiastically participate in this celebration, with a broad impact on the communities. Ultimately, it is an event of art, by art, and for art, generating enthusiasm in local artists and creators who attend with a spirit that is far removed from consumerism and imbued with a genuine civic and cultural interest, beyond considerations of economic remuneration or the “commercialism” so common in the Colombian music industry.

Additionally, the Municipal Concert of Light activates tourism, especially at the regional level, as numerous visitors from neighboring municipalities are attracted by the commercial offerings of artisans and local gastronomy that surround the central programming. This significantly contributes to the social and economic development of the municipality.

Finally, this cultural project has fostered alliances with other sectors and organizations in the region and the country, resulting in renewed suitable spaces for dialogue, collaborative work, the enhancement of artists and creators’ skills, and active community participation. All of this has had a positive impact on the construction of environments of peace and coexistence.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN IN FOLK AND POPULAR ARTS

Jozsef Szigetvari, Hungria

Since 2010, CIOFF® has considered the involvement of children in the processes of safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and has been actively promoting the participation of children in cultural festivals designed for them. Therefore, we can confidently state that managing, organizing, and directing a children's festival, considering the invaluable and fundamental relationship between childhood and cultural processes, is the best way to preserve tradition and initiate essential dialogues to keep traditions alive.

In this regard, when designing festivals for children, it is crucial to have highly trained personnel who work with children so that children's artistic activities can be shaped by pedagogical components that provide a solid education on heritage, tradition, and the interconnectedness of culture and society. Consequently, the capacity for collaboration in children's festivals must be strong and effective enough to establish partnerships with organizations and professionals who have the ability to work with expertise and knowledge of children's needs and competencies according to their age.

It should be noted that a festival featuring child artists is naturally intended for an audience of children. Therefore, communication processes should be oriented towards recognizing and understanding the particular interests, expectations, and needs of this audience. Additionally, it is essential to develop actions that allow artistic groups to share their achievements, management strategies, and approaches to strengthen spaces for children's cultural work. We believe that this is an ongoing and evolving topic that requires continuous feedback.

It is also important to consider that establishing a connection between children's groups, children in general, and CIOFF® becomes a purpose and a special opportunity for the preservation and dissemination of cultural expressions through organized and interconnected work that begins to develop with future citizens.

Finally, the artistic community and society as a whole must recognize that the best way to preserve and maintain living traditions is by taking advantage of opportunities to work with children, encouraging their arts education, and instilling in them seeds of cultural recognition, appreciation, heritage preservation, and the promotion of living traditions. It is crucial to understand that when we encourage children's participation in cultural spaces provided by festivals designed for them, we are generating a direct and enduring impact on the community, representing one of the greatest achievements of involving children in the cultural spaces we build and the festivals we design, manage, and organize with them in mind. Cultural work with children and providing these opportunities have highly significant contributions to the preservation of traditions and intercultural and intergenerational dialogues.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR FESTIVALS AND CULTURAL ENTITIES

Laurianne Zosso - Suiza

The purpose of this exhibition is to share ideas and concepts about how to maintain assertive and efficient communication when developing festivals, considering it as a fundamental process for the development of cultural events, with a human aspect, in relation to the participating members: the artists, the sponsors, and the community. All of this takes into account that the festival is a scenario of cultural, artistic, and human interrelation that influences the cultural, social, and artistic dynamics of the actors involved.

When we talk about communication in a festival, we refer to the process of interaction in which, first, there is a constant human component in the development of the event, and second, the possibility that the festival itself becomes a space for artistic transformation, associativity, community-territory impact, and the development of economic processes, specifically self-management and financing.

In the exercise of designing and producing a festival, communication is a fundamental process that must be taken into account from the planning stage to after the actual execution of the festival. This process should be primarily from internal to external, meaning that communication should first exist with the organizing committee, the volunteer sponsors, the government, suppliers, and artists. It is important to consider that internal communication largely ensures the organizational sustainability of the festival. For example, making the volunteer sponsors feel like a fundamental part of the event generates satisfaction, engagement, and a sense of importance beyond their sponsorship.

This should be maintained considering that “it is more cost-effective to retain a customer than to gain another one,” meaning that it is more favorable for the festival to sustain its organizing team over time than constantly seek new members to replace departing sponsors.

Likewise, constant communication with the artistic groups ensures their participation in the event. It is important to note that the festival cannot behave solely as an event that seeks the groups for their artistic services, but rather as a space that intends to positively impact the artistic transformation of its participants. That's why such communication cannot be limited to the times close to the festival; it should be maintained throughout the year. The festival needs to show the groups the importance and value they hold and how much they contribute to the event's success.

On the other hand, external communication refers to the interaction between the festival and the local community, which includes the general public, the media, cultural organizations, and, of course, CIOFF®. This means that communication here enables associativity within the framework of festival development. When we mention the need for communication with the community, we are referring to the fact that only by interacting with individuals and understanding the context in which the event takes place can the community be engaged. This is how the festival becomes a space for impact on the territory: you cannot influence a community-territory that you do not know.

Now, how should communication be carried out in the context of a festival? Regarding the artistic groups, sponsors, and the organizing committee, communication can be done via email and WhatsApp. As for the community, it is important to consider two moments of communication: first, the characterization phase, and second, the invitation phase. Characterization refers to identifying the target audience. To do this, it is important to consider not only what the regional folklore authorities suggest but also to clearly recognize the audience that the festival wants to attract.



Identifying the target audience can be achieved through surveys shared through various mediums (virtual or physical) in order to develop a sociodemographic analysis that includes information about the ages of potential attendees, family sizes, gender, location, race, income, and education. This information serves as a starting point for designing the programming, setting ticket prices (if applicable), and determining the most appropriate form of communication (invitation) that allows for effective engagement with the attending community.

Regarding communication during the invitation process, it is suggested to consider the use of the following tools (listed in order of importance): videos and any type of visual information, always ensuring good content quality and resolution. After that, social media should be considered, which will be fed with the selected visual information. Next, public relations should be taken into account (dialogue with politicians, sponsors, and cultural institutions to formally invite them to the event). Finally, physical decoration comes into play, utilizing the city's physical spaces to display flags, banners, posters, and billboards at least every 500 meters (it is important to consider that advertising in public spaces.



EXPERIENCES FROM GOVERNMENT ENTITIES IN FESTIVAL ORGANIZATION AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Speakers: Dey Escobar, Carolina Romero, Diana Ledesma y Brayan Hurtado / Colombia

Festival organization should go beyond what happens on stage. Festivals represent an opportunity for societal construction through art and culture. Therefore, festivals should have a presence and impact throughout the year and in as many spaces as possible within the territory. The festival should involve constant collaboration with the community and artists, extending beyond the scheduled events. It should stimulate artists and the community, promoting audience development as a factor that, in turn, stimulates the work of creators and active social participation in the recognition, appreciation, and enjoyment of artists' work. The goal is to encourage a more proactive involvement of the social environment in artistic formation and projection, the development of various activities around art, and the construction and sustainability of physical spaces for cultural development in the territory.

Considering the incorporation of new technologies into cultural practices during the pandemic, this discussion explores how art can leverage new tools and mediums to enhance artistic creations, expand community outreach, and positively impact communities. Dey Escobar (Bogotá), Carolina Romero, and Diana Ledesma (Cali), with the mediation of Brayan Hurtado (Cali), share their experiences and insights on working within the community, neighborhoods, and cultural spaces, and the effects of confinement and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on their respective cities.

The conversation emphasizes the importance of ensuring citizens' enjoyment of cultural expressions as a fundamental right. By guaranteeing this, individuals indirectly become consumers, defenders, and part of the artistic manifestation, strengthening their cultural identity and ownership of heritage. This impact on the community-territory is achieved through a pedagogical component that intertwines artistic and civic education with the festival's staging. Artists become educators and mentors for the community, going beyond their role as creators.



To achieve this impact and artistic transformation in the community-territory, the Secretary of Culture in Cali highlights the need to promote interventions in open spaces, not just closed venues. The motto “Cali is popular culture,” under which the First World Meeting of Popular Cultures takes place, exemplifies this institutional perspective.

The festival, as a space for education and influence in the community, positions art as a fundamental tool for social development. In the case of Cali, culture has been recently understood as a means to return to “normalcy” after the pandemic-induced crisis and confinement. This is accomplished through opening up and democratizing artistic offerings, reaching territories in a similar way that health brigades reached them during the crisis. The use of ICTs, which had already become a significant part of people’s daily lives, was promoted to ensure the continuity of cultural processes and life itself.

In line with these actions, the City Government of Cali initiated a social training process for the proper use of ICTs in festivals, involving event coordinators, logistics teams, artists, and the general public. Art, culture, and society are interconnected concepts that engage, interact, and dialogue with each other.



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CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC TAKEOVER FOR INTEGRATION IN THE CITY OF CÚCUTA, COLOMBIA

Ángela Bedoya

Ángela Bedoya, the activist, researcher, and director of the program “The Right to Disobey” (which refers to the thesis of the philosopher Fernando González from Envigado, Colombia, titled “The Right to Disobey,” and emphasizes the right to challenge laws that violate fundamental rights without evading the consequences of disobedience), presents a dialogue about the event called “Cultural and Artistic Takeover for Integration” taking place in a Colombian municipality located on the Colombian-Venezuelan northern border. She explains that this event involves occupying various public spaces with artistic installations aimed at transforming social perceptions in Colombia, reducing xenophobia, narrating the stories of migrants, particularly those from Venezuela, and fostering empathy. This takeover has been carried out in cities such as Bogotá, Medellín, and Cúcuta, with a focus on the exhibition held at the International CIOFF Forum of Traditional Arts in Cúcuta.

Cúcuta has been one of the Colombian cities most affected by armed conflict and xenophobia due to the large number of migrants from Venezuela, a transnational phenomenon resulting from its location on the border of the Norte de Santander department.

In 2020, there was a widespread rejection of migrants driven by collective fear of COVID-19 transmission, leading to a negative perception of those entering the country as potential sources of contagion.

The presenter explains that the cultural and artistic takeover is showcased in its pre-pandemic, during-pandemic, and post-pandemic phases, with consistent underlying sentiments. The changes lie in the strategies, which can be described as more than symbolic actions or “excuses.” Since 2019, public spaces in Cúcuta have been used to capture portraits of migrants, accompanied by their stories. In 2020, during the social isolation prompted by the risk of contagion, the virtual activity “Better if You Dance” was developed. In 2021, migrants were encouraged to write letters sharing their stories, which were then hung on clotheslines or trees. This methodology was so successful that it resulted in the creation of a “traveling book” comprising the writings and stories of migrants, now in its second edition.



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CIOFF® COLOMBIA

THE ART AND CULTURE FESTIVAL “ZAQUESAZIPA” IN FUNZA, COLOMBIA.

The Bachelor of Arts Education, teacher Juan David Barbosa, presents this Colombian festival, which takes place under the guidelines of the Bacará Cultural Center. It has a trajectory of years and is one of the largest in the Department of Cundinamarca to which it belongs. Its duration, the number of activities, and the high number of participating artists contribute to its recognition.

According to Barbosa, this festival is considered by different instances and government entities as an example of good practices due to its organization, management, and high artistic quality. Theater and dance are the most representative genres.

The National and International Children’s Dance Festival, the International Poetry Festival, the National Symposium of Creative Writings, the Heritage Vigil Encounter, as well as workshops on various topics, concerts, and parades, are events that have stimulated artistic transformation processes over the years. They have also contributed to the construction of new infrastructure for art and culture, and the consolidation of schools and art training academies, among other topics.

The festival’s recognized dimension and scope have been made possible thanks to the management of associative alliances and support from other organizations and sectors, especially the education sector. An aggressive communication and dissemination strategy has generated recognition and appreciation in institutions, media, companies, private organizations, specific interest groups, and the community in general.

The festival’s spirit embodies a permanent and attentive focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in specific areas such as ensuring quality education in the educational processes of the Bacará Cultural Center and the different Cultural and Artistic Schools in the municipality. It also generates added value to the economic dimension in the territory through activities that promote commerce of services and products and massive mobility of people over two weeks. Moreover, it works towards reducing inequalities by promoting the active participation of communities and generational groups, including ethnic communities such as indigenous groups, without discrimination. Lastly, it contributes to a culture of teamwork and alliances with other entities, sectors, and organizations within the community.

THE FESTIVAL OF MARIMBA MUSIC AND TRADITIONAL SONGS OF THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.

Wisman Tenorio, Colombia.

Master Wisman Tenorio, cultural promoter, community leader, researcher in traditional music, director of the “Changó” Foundation and the Festival of Marimba and Traditional Songs, which has been held since 2011 in recognition of the UNESCO declaration of these musical expressions as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, states:

“This festival showcases the ethnic territorial expressions and spirituality of our Afro-descendant ancestors, with stage productions based on rigorous research, training, and creative processes that circulate in different contexts and events within the country and abroad. For example, out of the total resources received by the project, 30% are allocated to incentives for the artists, and the remaining percentage is dedicated to circulation, strengthening, and social cohesion of the communities. ‘Living with flavor and tranquility,’ referring to the expression of Afro leader and Vice President Francia Márquez, is a concept deeply ingrained in the spirit of the festival, which takes place in the coastal city of Tumaco, in the department of Nariño. It aims to reclaim ‘...the religiosity characteristic of the culture in the territories as a contribution to the safeguarding of intangible heritage, which in turn becomes a driver of peaceful environments in our homes and a culture of peace in communities and their territories,’ expresses Master Tenorio.

In conclusion, it is summarized that this type of artistic and cultural projects allow:

1. Promoting values such as respect, understanding, and tolerance, among others.
2. Embracing the arts as facilitating strategies for open dialogue that stimulate connection, mutual understanding, appreciation of each other’s ideas, and communication between generations.
3. Preserving tradition and history through folklore as a channel that promotes dialogue and the exchange of experiences and knowledge between generations.
4. Strengthening the sense of identity and bridging the gap between generations by recognizing and valuing shared history and heritage.
5. Using the arts as strategies to create inclusive and welcoming spaces that foster active participation and the exchange of ideas between generations.
6. Eliciting emotion and empathy among people of different ages.”

FESTIVALS IN AUSTRALIA AND COLOMBIA: SPACES FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE, DIVERSITY, AND INTEGRATION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE.

Raphael Ramíres, New Beginnings Festival - Australia;
Alexander Tenorio, Noches del Pacífico Festival -Colombia.

Producer and manager Raphael Ramires presents the New Beginnings Festival (NBF) held in Australia, which aims to showcase the art and culture of native communities, refugees, and migrants living in the country. The festival creates a significant impact in two sociocultural aspects. Firstly, it promotes the interconnection between traditional and modern cultures through events and spaces dedicated to artistic expressions such as dance, music, theater, culinary arts, and storytelling workshops. Secondly, it focuses on creating a sustainable cultural ecosystem that fosters the identity of individuals practicing and engaging in various skills related to different themes. For example, the festival hosts artistic workshops centered around traditional gastronomy as an expression of identity, with a multiethnic approach and broad community participation.

Dance instructor Francisco Alexander Tenorio presents the Noches del Pacífico Festival, organized by the TUMAC Foundation since 2012 in Medellín, Colombia. This festival serves as a significant ethno-educational space for the research, creation, and dissemination of the vast cultural diversity of the Colombian Pacific region. The festival showcases a wide variety of artistic performances complemented by academic spaces that attract a large audience interested in recognizing, appreciating, and enjoying the cultural expressions of Afro-Colombian communities.

According to the presenter, the Noches del Pacífico Festival includes the following components:

- 1.** It promotes community processes to enhance and showcase the traditional expressions of Afro and indigenous cultures, including their spirituality and worldview.
- 2.** It encourages community training initiatives to promote various entrepreneurial activities, such as the manufacturing and commercialization of musical instruments.

3. It promotes and supports the circulation of artists and groups, both locally and internationally, who perform folkloric shows representing traditional expressions as well as contemporary fusions. The festival showcases around 150 artists, along with an international group or guest from another country with a Pacific coastline.

4. It fosters collaborative work by implementing strategies to build alliances between groups, encouraging the exchange of experiences and knowledge, for example, in project formulation and management to ensure long-term sustainability.

From another perspective, Maestro Tenorio emphasizes the intergenerational, interdisciplinary, and intercultural nature of the festival, which fosters a sense of identity appreciation and self-valorization as mitigating factors for the challenging conditions experienced by communities in the context of armed conflict in their territories. The festival serves as an opportunity for communities, accustomed to staying at home due to fear of armed actors, to attend the different showcases and events with renewed enthusiasm. Municipalities like Quibdó, Guapi, and Tumaco particularly experience this cultural revitalization, as “living the culture” becomes a way to confront fear and violence, and promotes peace through cultural identity.

In conclusion, both festivals, the one in Australia and the one in the Colombian Pacific region, share common elements such as the exchange of experiences and knowledge, the promotion of facilitative dynamics for the dissemination and social appropriation of cultural heritage, and the contribution to processes that ensure their continuity over time. These festivals create spaces of harmony and embrace values like empathy, respect, tolerance, and resilience.



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THE WORLD FOLKLORIADA CIOFF AND THE “PETRONIO ALVAREZ” AND TRADITIONAL TAMBOURINE FESTIVALS IN COLOMBIA

**Zarina Khasanova - Rusia,
Ana Copete – Colombia,
Juan José Cantillo – Colombia.**

Zarina Khasanova, a linguist in foreign languages, cultural manager, journalist, and director of the Department of Interregional and International Relations at the Republican Center of Popular Arts of Bashkortostan, Russia, presents the World Folkloriada CIOFF 2021 held in the city of Ufa, the capital of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The event brought together delegations from countries on five continents and included, as part of its extensive program, artistic dance and music performances, parades of groups and troupes in open spaces, craft fairs and exhibitions, conferences, and workshops, all aimed at promoting and disseminating intangible cultural heritage expressions related to the objectives of COFF - International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Traditional Arts.

The World Folkloriada, held every four years, is the most important event organized by CIOFF on a global scale and has become, over the years, a great opportunity for numerous participating countries and delegations to strengthen bonds of brotherhood and friendship, exchange knowledge and experiences, promote the circulation of artists, and showcase their intangible cultural heritage. All of this is made possible through a tremendous effort in production and logistics, increasingly incorporating the use of new technologies and the contributions of hundreds of individuals and allied institutions, in addition to the presence of numerous media outlets.

In terms of management and self-sustainability, the World Folkloriada CIOFF had the support of the Ministry of Culture of Russia, in addition to member countries, achieving a significant social impact and making a significant contribution to the preservation of traditions by keeping popular cultures and traditional arts alive, strengthening cultural identities, community inclusion, and the economy.



EL FESTIVAL DE MÚSICAS DEL PACÍFICO “PETRONIO ÁLVAREZ”

Ana Copete, lawyer, master’s degree in public management, and director of the Pacific Music Festival “Petronio Álvarez,” gives an interesting presentation about this enormous event, which brings together music and dance artists from diverse and remote areas of the Pacific coast of Colombia, both from the north and the south. Over the course of the 27 editions held, they have contributed to establishing the festival as one of the most representative and populous gatherings of traditional and popular cultures in Latin America. In addition to music and dance performances, the “Petronio Álvarez” Festival (named in honor of the memory of one of the most representative practitioners of the traditional culture of the coast, a poet and composer of the memorable work “Mi Buenaventura” in currulao version, among other remarkable creations) also offers other important attractions: tasting the delights of the popular cuisine of the coastal region and traditional liquors (some of which, in addition to the popular viche, are considered aphrodisiacs by popular tradition, with suggestive names like arrechón and tumbacatre), craft exhibitions, and Afro fashion shows, among others.

In what has been called the “Ciudadela Petronio” over the years, tens of thousands of people gather with overwhelming enthusiasm around a central stage equipped with state-of-the-art sound and lighting resources, including a rotating platform, in a setup that has turned the festival into one of the largest events in the Colombian and continental scene.

Currently, the Pacific Music Festival “Petronio Álvarez” in Colombia is considered one of the most important and populous artistic and cultural events in the country, with a high social, economic, and tourism impact, in addition to its enormous contribution to the preservation of traditional arts in the region that hosts it and the high number of creators and managers who participate in it. All of this, according to the speaker, has been made possible through partnerships with national and international institutions and organizations, including countries such as Ivory Coast in Africa, Spain, and Brazil.

The festival is made possible thanks to the support of the Mayor’s Office of Cali, particularly, in addition to other national and international sources of funding, including private companies and the Ministry of Culture of Colombia.



TRADITIONAL TAMBOURINE FESTIVAL IN GAMARRA, COLOMBIA.

Master Juan José Cantillo, a traditional music dancer and member of the focus group seeking to declare this important festival and the traditional tambourine as a percussion instrument that inspires it as Cultural Heritage of the Nation, gives a presentation highlighting that “...in the Traditional Tambourine Festival, the feeling of the people is conveyed through social media, since the tambourine is not just an instrument, but it is also considered the soul of the river that, in its dance, is a way of life, it is a connection with nature that has a traditional symbiosis and the unique factor is that the feet do not leave the ground, they are massaged.”

The tambourine dance, continues Master Cantillo, has four styles: guacherna, chandé, berroche, and tambora-tambora, which are showcased in the festival for the enjoyment of the audience and their identification and appreciation as an expression of Colombian intangible heritage. Parallel to the artistic displays, a beauty pageant is held, where the participating candidates perform traditional dances related to the tambourine, which also contributes to the preservation goals of the event.

The Tambourine Festival carries out publicity campaigns before, during, and after (“Hello drummers: thanks to you, we did well”), through traditional and digital media, with the aim of ensuring the physical and virtual presence of the public, as well as paying attention to comments and suggestions that numerous people make through social media as important promotion channels. As part of the festival’s program, events such as conferences, discussions, and workshops are also promoted and developed through traditional and internet channels, all of which significantly contribute to expanding the reach and audiences of the great Colombian traditional tambourine event, concludes Master Cantillo.

In conclusion, the incorporation of new information and communication technologies in the pre-production, production, and post-production phases of folk and traditional arts festivals has become a strategic axis of special relevance for the management of these artistic, cultural, and social projects, as it greatly contributes to the achievement of the objectives of conservation, dissemination, promotion, and appropriation of intangible heritage, attracting audiences, reaching wider audiences, integrating practitioners and organizations, promoting our popular cultures, and ensuring that our folklore continues to be alive and vibrant in the digital world.

UNIVERSITIES AND THE SAFEGUARDING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM.

Cristian Jaque, Antumapu Folk Ballet of the University of Chile.

Cristian Jaque, an agronomist and member of the Antumapu Folk Ballet of the University of Chile, as well as a member of CIOFF Chile, presents the paper titled "Universities and Safeguarding Outside the Classroom". In this presentation, he discusses the various activities carried out by the group as part of their objectives to promote folklore in the education sector and in unconventional spaces.

These activities are part of the university's outreach program and are directed by teachers and students through the implementation of six strategies:

- Promoting the writing of documents that relate artistic creation to educational programs in schools.
- Conducting workshops with children and adolescents under the name "Antumapitos", in which the children of Ballet members participate. These workshops address different topics from a cultural perspective.
- Producing the radio program "Chile, its land and its people", created by a multidisciplinary team of teachers, managers, and researchers to disseminate all dimensions and expressions of intangible cultural heritage.



- Producing documentaries as a result of research and collected material, which are widely disseminated in communities.
- Providing training for teachers, directors, and instructors of artistic groups, or individuals working in the fields of creation and projection. This is a means to develop and improve the technical skills of the participants.
- Implementing a cultural mediation project and audiovisual capsules related to the creation of the work “Selk’nam, time to be reborn”. This project contributes to raising awareness about the recognition, protection, and social value of the Selk’nam people as a living heritage of intangible culture in Chile and their place in the universe of indigenous peoples.

The communication strategy through the radio program and extensive dissemination on social networks, as well as the establishment of associative links with other organizations and sectors, becomes an effective support for management and financing processes. The central axis of the project is the recognition and preservation of intangible heritage, which includes traditional festivals of Chile’s indigenous peoples, among other identity expressions.



INTERNATIONAL CIOFF FORUM ON TRADITIONAL ARTS, CALI, COLOMBIA, 2023

During the I World Encounter of Popular Cultures held in Cali, Colombia from April 23 to May 6, 2023, the International Forum on Popular Arts was organized with the aim of providing educational components to cultural sector professionals in Cali, allowing them to strengthen their knowledge and management skills by listening to national and international references.

The Forum, led by the Colombian Section of the International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Traditional Arts (CIOFF®), focused its programming on highlighting the role of folklore festivals in the social, economic, and artistic transformation of their environments. The programming aimed to showcase national and international examples that demonstrate these transformations within three thematic lines: Intercultural Dialogue, Intergenerational Dialogue, and New Technologies.

These thematic lines were selected based on the social contexts in which most of these events take place and the demands that audiences may have due to the daily changes we face. The goal was to offer attendees new perspectives and examples that allow them to explore different approaches and possibilities in organizing their festivals, with the aim of strengthening the discussion on the importance of these events and how to improve them every day. The Forum sought to deepen the idea among attendees that folklore festivals are not just entertainment events but have a social function and an important role in safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. They are also accountable to their audience and the characteristics of the artistic and cultural environment.

Over the course of the 3-day program, speakers presented their initiatives within the indicated themes, and the dialogue with the audience allowed for the exchange of important ideas and conclusions that will be useful for the organization and festival directors who attended. In total, 15 spaces were developed, including panels, conversations, and conferences, with the participation of 24 festival directors from national and international levels who shared their ideas and perspectives on the current execution of folklore festivals.

Among the conclusions drawn from the discussions, it is important to highlight the significance of festivals as meeting spaces that facilitate the development of strategies to keep living cultural expressions in circulation, while establishing bridges for exchange, research, and convergence of customs among different communities. Festivals are a platform that promotes the safeguarding of Intangible Heritage by keeping it alive, and they have a significant social impact on the environments and audiences that embrace them. Festivals should play a leading role in intergenerational dialogue as they bring together diverse audiences, and through their programming, they can foster generational connections that enable the preservation of heritage in the present and future. In this sense, families, as the primary audience of folklore festivals, are called upon to carry the message of what they have learned at the festival and replicate its importance within the community.

Furthermore, festivals, as expressions of cultural diversity, have the capacity to contribute to a culture of peace and dialogue in societies experiencing conflict, and they are called to be examples of reconciliation. Through their activities, festivals can connect with the audience and raise awareness about socially relevant topics, thus expanding their impact. By targeting specific objectives of this nature, alternative sources of funding can be explored since the event transcends the artistic and entertainment aspects to engage in critical discussions within the community and contribute to its improvement.

The challenges faced in the development of these events are shared and seemingly global. The lack of funding is one of the main challenges, as well as the lack of suitable teams to support the effective mobilization of resources outside the government sphere. Festival organizers must constantly question and update themselves in response to the dynamics of the sector, the demands of the audience, and the changes in our societies. The use of new technologies and media dissemination is essential to ensure better reach of events, promote the contributions made, and raise awareness among new audiences.



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Spaces such as the Folklore Festival Directors Forum are crucial for strengthening the positioning of these events as platforms for social, artistic, and economic transformation. Additionally, they allow for encounters and learning from the experiences of others, and the establishment of connections that can be fundamental in exploring new alternatives for programming, dissemination, and funding.

We would like to express our gratitude to the 60-plus CIOFF® festival directors who joined us, as well as the general public who participated in listening to the management experiences of various national and international events. We hope that the Forum, held in its three editions in Colombia, will establish itself as a permanent initiative that enables festival directors to learn, share, and increase the impact of the events they organize. We invite you to explore the discussions of the event through this report, compiled by members of the CIOFF® Colombia Youth Commission, to have the shared experiences at your fingertips.

Laura Viviana López Cristancho
Ivonne Quiroga García
Coordinators CIOFF® International
Forum of Popular Arts 2023



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