



Americans for International Arts and Cultural Exchange

an initiative sponsored by COLEAD and the Center for Arts and Culture

September 12, 2005

The Honorable Karen Hughes
Under Secretary
Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Under Secretary Hughes:

We wish to express our warm congratulations on your nomination and confirmation as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Americans for International Arts and Cultural Exchange, an initiative of the Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (COLEAD) and the Center for Arts and Culture, is a coalition of over fifty organizations representing the arts, cultural and foreign affairs communities dedicated to supporting the cultural aspects of our country's public diplomacy efforts. We view the arts, and cultural and educational exchanges, as an important way to reach out and engage the world and thus address national security through mutual understanding. We believe that America has many cultural capabilities and talents that remain underutilized in the international arena. We were pleased to work with Under Secretary Margaret Tutwiler and Assistant Secretary Pat Harrison on these issues, and supported their efforts to make our activities in this area more effective.

Our coalition was happy to read in your testimony before Congress that exchanges are the second "E" in your "four strategic pillars." We are also pleased by your mention of the studies in public diplomacy that have preceded you and your own commitment to action and implementation. President Bush's appointment of you and Dina Powell, and Secretary Rice's own stated commitment, shows that the Administration wants to move forward now. Our coalition stands ready to help.

A recent Heritage Foundation study found that, "Books and culture clearly remain valid ways to build bridges in foreign lands where some people are unreachable by broadcasting or are unlikely to participate in academic exchanges." Your own recognition of the powerful impressions created by artists and entertainers, is welcome, as is your wish to fully engage the private sector. Our coalition is committed to remaining a resource for your department and our country abroad.



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In the past few years, we have been working to increase understanding of cultural exchange. Last May, over 400 individuals, including your predecessor Margaret Tutwiler, representing the worlds of art, culture and public policy, assembled at the Department of State to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Department's ART in Embassies Program. In 2003, the Center for Arts & Culture co-sponsored two major conferences on cultural diplomacy – one at Columbia University entitled *Arts and Minds: Cultural Diplomacy amid Global Tensions* and the other hosted at Georgetown University aimed at engaging members of the foreign service community. Additionally, in June 2003 the Center organized a convening of 33 American, European, and Latin American experts on current issues affecting cultural industries at the University of Texas at Austin. The conference was co-sponsored by UT Austin, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, and UNESCO.

Each of these events illustrated how importantly other countries take American culture, as well as how important it is to the United States to use its full arsenal to gain mutual understanding and respect, as an integral part of a broader diplomatic strategy. From these experiences, the Center for Arts & Culture published *Cultural Diplomacy, Recommendations and Research*, a booklet that summarizes five research papers that the Center commissioned in 2003, along with recommendations and a timeline of highlights in U.S. cultural diplomacy.

Our coalition has been an active voice in support of the State Department on Capitol Hill. We have urged and will continue to urge the Congress to increase funds for these State Department programs. We will also continue our work to demonstrate the importance and effectiveness of the Department's public diplomacy programs, especially in these difficult budgetary times. You will be pleased to know that our meetings on Capitol Hill have indicated a strong bipartisan base of support for public diplomacy that includes a robust cultural exchange program.

We welcome you again to your new position and stand squarely behind you in the effort to strengthen American public diplomacy. Our respective organizations are ready and willing to contribute our support, resources and expertise to further cultural initiatives and exchanges in support of overarching American public diplomacy goals.

We have been in touch with your deputy, Dina Powell, who has agreed to meet with us. Perhaps, after that, it might also be appropriate to meet with you as well – to join more strongly our non-governmental activities with your own efforts. Should you or your staff wish to contact us directly, they can do so through Aimee Fullman at the Center for Arts & Culture at 703-248-0430 or afullman@culturalpolicy.org.



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Sincerely,

Harry Blaney
Co-Chair AIACE
President, Coalition for American Leadership Abroad

Frank Hodsoll
Co-Chair AIACE
Chair, Center for Arts & Culture

In partnership with:

American Arts Alliance
American Association of Museums
American Federation of Musicians
Americans for the Arts
American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works
American Symphony Orchestra League
Association of Art Museum Directors
Association of Performing Arts Presenters
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Literary Network
MENC: The National Association for Music Education
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
OPERA America
Public Diplomacy Council
Theatre Communications Group
United States Information Agency Alumni Association
VSA arts

CC. Hon. Dina Habib Powell, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs