

Minutes: Tuesday, November 4, 2003

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Present: Giovanni Carmosino (chair), Isabelle Schürch (minutes), Sripriya Sitaraman, Ron Abegglen, Simone Ingold, Simon D. Hicks, Prof. Werner Senn.

Absent: --.

Agenda

1. Previous Minutes (March 4, 2003)
2. Project Proposal The Vagina Monologues
3. Future of the Arts Council
4. AOB

1. Previous Minutes (March 4, 2003)

7. AOB: "a) following one act evenings should not be too long and should be in this sense more complex" => new version: "(...) should not be too long."

According to the last minutes, Simone should contact Nicole Kretz concerning the cellar problem.

Thanks to Isabel.

2. Project Proposal The Vagina Monologues

Werner Senn (via Email):

I would like to say (...) that I am not very favourably disposed towards the project submitted. For one thing, I find the name singularly unattractive and doubt that it will mobilize large audiences. However, my reservations are mainly about what is said under point 7. Much as I am in favour of preventing violence against women I think that the restraints imposed on us (and/or Instinctive Acts) cannot be accepted and might not exactly tie in with our Statutes. I would not vote for the project unless I could be convinced that it does have a certain artistic value und is of cultural interest to the members of the English Department (I am freely translating the "[Richtlinien](#)").

Priya:

says that The Vagina Monologues are definitely a cultural event and have artistic value. Moreover, she is convinced that large audiences will be attracted by the play.

Giovanni:

is critical of the fact that the international "VDay" Organisation imposes restrictions on any

drama group which would like to perform the "V-monologues". He thinks that this restricts artistic freedom.

Priya:

admits that there are certain restrictions imposed concerning the date (it has to be some time in February - the play will be performed the 12, 13, 14 February at the Käfigturm Theater) and the selection of monologues. On the other hand, if you accept these restrictions, you do not have to pay royalties. Moreover, she argues that the restrictions do not concern artistic aspects such as staging, etc.

Simon:

argues that the AC should not sponsor organisations outside the English department. The AC turned down a corresponding project proposal, which intended to support a charity initiative outside ED, some years ago. Thus, the AC cannot give money that will eventually go to an external organisation.

Ronald:

adds that according to the Richtlinien (IV.2), the AC cannot sponsor charity initiatives: "Wenn ein Projekt Gewinne einbringt, kommt dieser Gewinn dem 'Arts Council' zu." This prohibits the AC from supporting the "VDay"-Project as it is proposed.

Simon:

is also concerned about the possible 'lack of talent' within the ED. The V-monologues make up a highly complex play and he wonders whether there are enough 'talented' actresses at the English Department for such a huge project. Moreover, he is convinced that this production will become a highly public event. Thus, an unsatisfactory production (if there is a 'lack of talent') could potentially damage the English department's reputation. Lastly, he wonders whether the AC is not going beyond its mandate if the production consists of members of the cast who are not in the ED.

Priya:

argues that the heads of the productions want to cast mainly actresses from the department. They have already found several good actresses from the ED. Moreover, she is convinced that the V-monologues make up a great play and will be a benefit for the department.

DECISION (unanimous)

A) the AC loans CHF 3000 to the production team to pay the venue. If there is a profit, the production team must pay back the loan.

B) the AC will decide whether the production is allowed to use the label "instinctive acts" and "arts council" as well as the AC's mailing list at the next meeting. There must be a majority of members of the department involved in the project. Priya is asked to hand in a cast list as soon as possible.

3. Future of the Arts Council

The problem of the current situation is that there is a lack of interest of the AC body. The last general assembly was a disaster, since no one from outside the board turned up.

Moreover, as an association (Verein) the AC must hold these assemblies, since the members must re-elect the board and approve the finances. Otherwise, the AC is not legitimate.

The situation is even more problematic because of the amount of money on the AC's account.

Ronald:

has researched whether there is another legal body that would be more convenient and would give the AC legitimacy without general assemblies. He found out that a foundation is not possible, since you need at least CHF 50'000 and must fulfill several other conditions.

He will seek legal advice from a friend who is a law student.

Priya

thinks that the combination of the general assembly with a cultural event might raise the interest of the members of department. All members of the board support this idea.

DECISION

The board will meet again in order to discuss the future of the AC. The members are asked to think about ways of making the GA more attractive (e.g. which kind of cultural event, etc.)

The board proposes the following two dates for a meeting:

Tuesday, 18 November 2003, 5 p.m.

or

Wednesday, 26 November 2003, 6 p.m.

4. AOB

Franz' Request

"Before the summer term break I had a South African poet in my creative writing class (Roshira Nair). I would like to pay her about CHF 250 if the Arts Council would support this reading."

The AC REJECTS this request because:

- Franz did not inform the board beforehand*
- The reading was not publicly announced at the department. Thus, the reading was restricted to the people attending the Creative Writing Workshop.*

Minutes: Berne, 8 November 2003, Ron.