

December 2014

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Twenty-five years ago, something magical happened—one passionate young artist put together an innovative exhibition and artist exchange project between Chicago and Vienna. From that project, an international arts organization was born. The person who conjured up this magic was someone many of you know and love—Mary Sherman, the Executive Director of TransCultural Exchange. I was a participating artist in the show, and as I walked around the gallery on opening night I was struck with an epiphany—I realized I wasn't just another nameless artist fresh out of grad school, but rather an artist in the world, part of something much larger—a **circle of artists across cultural boundaries and timelines, all of us united in our shared belief that art matters and that the power of art knows no bounds.**

Mary had a dream back then—to build an organization that crosses all boundaries: artistic, cultural, political and geographical. The dream Mary had in 1989 is still the same: **to invest in you, dear artist and friend of the arts, and to connect you with artists from all over the world,** all of us who believe that art is worth making, no matter what. I think that you believe, as I do and as Mary does, in the power of art. In the words of Lewis Hyde, “Neither money nor machines can create. They shuttle tokens of energy, but they do not transform.” Mary and the rest of us at TransCultural Exchange believe that **ART does have the ability to transform. I am inviting you to help us continue to have a transformative impact.**

Here are just a couple examples of the many amazing things TransCultural Exchange has done:

1. Created the only biennial conference series for artists—one that brings together people from all over the world to exchange ideas, inspire each other, and present opportunities for artists of all disciplines.
2. Produced cutting-edge global projects and collaborations, such as *The Coaster Project*, *The Tile Project* and, most recently, a laser shot through the Boston skyline (Florian Dombois' *uboc No. 1 and StuVi2*), during the *2013 Conference on international Opportunities in the Arts*, to highlight the exact spot where people gathered from around the world to celebrate the power of art.
3. Developed a free, online resource for finding grants, residencies, jobs and other useful information for those in the arts.

Up until now, we have relied largely on institutional support. But as we all know, times have changed. I am contacting you because **you are our greatest asset.** You are why TransCultural Exchange exists and continues to dream the impossible. **I invite you to be a stakeholder in this insanely optimistic thing we do. I believe together we can keep TransCultural Exchange sustainable and thriving.**

Here's what we plan to do with the money we raise with this 25th Anniversary Appeal—in 2015, your support will allow us to keep investing in you by:

1. Offering travel stipends and accommodations for conference speakers from developing countries, as well as financially strapped arts organizations.
2. Building on our website's resource pages, which catalogue artist opportunities.
3. Creating a travel stipend program for artists accepted to residency programs.
4. Providing more full and partial scholarships for students, younger artists and artists in need to attend the *2016 International Conference on Opportunities in the Arts: Expanding Worlds*.

Please become part of our new circle of supporters of artists, art lovers, educators, and others who believe that **art is important to life, even though we live in an era when everything argues against this. Art does transform and you are a part of that transformative power.**

We are deeply grateful to you, for you are what makes TransCultural Exchange a living and breathing organization that crosses all boundaries. Mary, the rest of the board and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mira Bartók', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mira Bartók

p.s. Your **tax-deductible gift**, no matter what size—\$10 or \$10,000—makes our programs possible, which means we can keep investing in you as an artist on into the bright and glorious future. You can also multiply your support by spreading the word to at least one other person. Contributions can be made by credit card or paypal using the button above or with a check payable to TransCultural Exchange (and mailed to 516 E. 2nd Street, #30, Boston, MA 02127).