

WINTER 2007



PADNOS
INTERNATIONAL
CENTER

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Photo courtesy Tim Penning

Ruminations from South Africa
Community Encounters in Jordan
Marketing in Japan
Teaching in France
Grant and Scholarship Programs
Education and Performance
The Pleasures of China

Photo courtesy Marion Siebert



Events

January 21, 2:30

Chiascuro's West Michigan Film Series:
Intercultural Relations

Flowers From Another World (Spanish)

Round-table discussion follows

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

February 4, 2:30

Chiascuro's West Michigan Film Series:
Intercultural Relations

East/West (Russian film, French Director)

Round-table discussion follows

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

February 7

An Arctic Journey dance performance

Spectrum Theater, Grand Rapids Community
College

February 8

An Arctic Journey dance performance

Spectrum Theater, Grand Rapids Community
College

February 9

An Arctic Journey dance performance

Spectrum Theater, Grand Rapids Community
College

February 10

An Arctic Journey dance performance

Spectrum Theater, Grand Rapids Community
College

February 15, 10 - 4

Study Abroad Fair, Henry Hall Atrium

February 18, 2:30

Chiascuro's West Michigan Film Series:
Intercultural Relations

The Syrian Bride (Israeli, Palestinian)

Round-table discussion follows

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

March 18, 2:30

Chiascuro's West Michigan Film Series:

Ruminations from Cape Town, South Africa

Jacques Mangala, Assistant Professor of Political Science and African/
African American Studies, Director, African and African American
Studies Program

Last spring, I attended, under an Intercultural Studies Faculty Development grant, the Ethics and Africa Conference conjointly organized by the University of Cape Town and Georgia State University's Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics. This was my second visit to South Africa. I first visited the country in 1998, and witnessed the euphoria of the post-Apartheid area. Besides intellectual exchanges and networking, international conferences offer a great opportunity to learn more about a place and its people. While on my long flight to Cape Town, I decided to focus my attention, this time around, on social dynamics and interactions between different racial groups which make up this rainbow nation. How do they interact and engage each other? The impressions that follow capture these interactions as expressed in three public spaces (university campus, street and restaurant). Before going further, I have to caution that what follows is not the result of any systematic study. South Africa is such a diverse country. I have just been in two cities – Cape Town and Pretoria- and might well have been at the wrong place at the wrong time. Please bear these limitations in mind as I share with you my travel notes.

A society in transition

Twelve years after the end of the Apartheid regime, there is no doubt that South Africa has made progress toward redressing the social, political and economic inequalities of this somber era. The alienation of the black majority by the white minority was such that many were expecting the country's implosion with the end of the apartheid regime. South Africa's transition toward a stable democracy has been celebrated, since then, as a "miracle" and a model of reconciliatory politics to the rest of the world. To Apartheid's paradigm of "separate and unequal", today's South Africa has responded with a new axiom based on unity and equality for all, which has redefined all aspects of the society.

These political advancements are, however, overshadowed by widespread poverty, which remains the key issue for South Africa today. South Africa has a population of approximately 44 million of which 45%, nearly 20 million, live below the poverty line. The Black Economic Empowerment is one of the key tools of the South African government's policy of poverty alleviation and of redressing the inequalities of the past. Through voluntary and compulsory measures, it aims at ensuring that private sector ownership and decision-making power be shared with the previously excluded black majority. I was interested to look beyond these statistics and take the exact measure of the new South Africa as revealed in everyday interracial relations. Race was at the heart of the Apartheid regime. What has fundamentally changed with this battery of new policies?

Still deeply racially divided

While visiting the campus of the University of Cape Town, I was encouraged by the growing presence of black and Asian students in an environment traditionally dominated by the white minority. The numerical change was certainly there. But, as I observed more closely and immersed myself into different spaces of student socialization, I saw little sign of interaction, if any, between different groups. Students sat, talked, studied, ate, and played essentially along racial lines. It looked like different racial groups were only sharing the same physical space but not engaging and enriching each other. I made the same observation when visiting the campus of the University of Pretoria later in my trip.

As I walked in downtown Cape Town and Pretoria, I was struck by the fact the white population had literally deserted the streets. This desertion has been commonly attributed to the high level of crimes, but it is also the reflection of deep economic and racial inequalities within South African society. At traffic lights, I quickly came to notice the racial divide between pedestrians and drivers. The same impression was confirmed in restaurants where I felt, most of the time, like a minority and received special attention from black waiters, eager to engage the conversation in Zulu: "Kundjani, baba!"; to which I would respond: "Kundjani". My inability to go beyond these simple civilities would usually expose my not being from there, which would lead to even more interest and questions. In English this time.

Which needs a liberation of the minds

The day before returning to the USA, I visited Robben Island, 12 kilometers off the coast of Cape Town. A world heritage site, Robben Island served as a maximum security prison during Apartheid. Nelson Mandela, its most famous prisoner, spent 27 years on the island, which now receives millions of visitors each year. Although I have read Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, and knew about the inhuman treatment of Robben Island's detainees; this visit added a visual and emotional dimension which helped me not only fully comprehend both the horror and the sanctity of the place, but also make sense of my observations of racial interactions. I was guided in this journey by a former detainee named Modise Phekonyame. Mr. Modise was sent to Robben Island at the age of seventeen because he refused to be educated under the Bantu Education System, which advocated a second-class education for blacks. After the end of Apartheid and the subsequent liberation of political prisoners, he decided – as did some of the other prisoners as well as some prison guards – to stay on the island as a living memory of the place, which has come to symbolize, for the entire world, the triumph of the human spirit over enormous hardship and adversity. Mr. Modise's personal account included not only the detention conditions on Robben Island, but also the profound social trauma of the South African society during Apartheid. All South Africans, said Modise, were imprisoned by the apartheid regime. Both blacks and whites were

Intercultural Relations

A Fond Kiss (Irish, Pakistani)

Round-table discussion follows

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

March 25, 2:30

Chiascuro's West Michigan Film Series:

Intercultural Relations

Fear and Trembling (Japanese, French)

Round-table discussion follows

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

Upcoming Deadlines

January 15

study abroad applications for Spring/Summer 2007, Fall 2007, and Year 2007-8.

January 30

NSEP Boren Fellowship

February 1

Faculty/Staff Exchange Grants

February 1

Intercultural Studies Faculty Development Grants

February 9

Barbara Padnos International Scholarship

February 13

NSEP Boren Scholarship

February 15

Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Grant

March 7

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia for Spring/Summer 2007

April 3

Gilman International Scholarship for Fall 2007 and Academic Year 2007-8

April 4

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia for Fall 2007 and Academic Year 2007-8

not free. If he and others, like Nelson Mandela, faced a physical imprisonment, those outside – mainly the white population—lived in a mental and spiritual jail, locked up in fears, myths and prejudices.

In concluding the tour, Modise expressed mixed feelings about South Africa's current situation and future prospects. As a liberation movement, he said, the ANC (African National Congress) has achieved a great deal on the political front. However, the political liberation, he added, won't free South Africa's full potential as long as the people, especially the white minority, remains locked up in fears, myths and prejudices. More than a decade after the end of the Apartheid regime, South Africa needs, above all, a liberation of the minds. I could not agree more. South Africa's rich and diverse ethnic and racial make-up represents something unique in Africa. Here lies the country's greatness; not in diamonds, gold or other natural resources with which the country has been blessed. But for this rainbow nation to shine, South Africa needs to become a "mongrel nation" – to use an expression by G. Pascal Zachary, *The Global Me* (2000) - where people will have both "roots and wings" that allow them to fully embrace and celebrate differences; where identity will be "flexible" enough to allow a true expression of the self without fear and free from myths and prejudices; and beyond racial, social and economic lines. This is what Modise meant by liberation of the minds, a task much harder than political liberation. The same is true everywhere in our shrinking world.

Community Encounters in Northern Jordan, Summer 2006

Dr. Bethany Walker, Associate Professor of Middle Eastern History, Director of the Northern Jordan Project

Looking back with the hindsight that several months' distance gives you, one of the most remarkable aspects of our whirlwind summer in the Middle East, which culminated in an archaeological excavation in Jordan, were the very special, and rather unexpected, encounters we had with the residents of the villages of Sahm and Hubras in northern Jordan. Most of the members of our 22-strong team were expecting a bit of the unexpected, given our staffing and unorthodox project design. The excavations of a medieval mosque and historical farmhouse were directed and staffed by a group of women – even our Representative from the Department of Antiquities was a woman – and we were a young team, at an average age of 23 years. Fieldwork consisted of intensive surveying and excavation in the middle of two villages, which meant dodging soccer balls, greeting bird hunters, and answering questions from the steady stream of curious adults who came by the site, all while measuring, digging, doing oral interviews (in Arabic), painstakingly keeping field notes, and climbing in and out of trenches. Archaeologists generally try to avoid working in "live" settlements; the fact that we did just this made for one of the richest summers I have had in nearly 20 years of fieldwork in the region and the adventure of a lifetime for the rest of the team.

The villagers initially greeted us with some suspicion. The arrival of our four-car caravan (with the bright red "clown car" limping along) each morning at 6:30 certainly disrupted the calm of these normally quiet villages. After a week of silence, the women of Sahm came out of their houses and started hanging out with us: the visits started with tea and coffee and continued with house visitation, food, and general gossip. Normally groups of boys gather around foreigners excavating a site; in our case it was the girls – of all ages, wanting to help, to spend time with us. One of these encounters ended with a mansef-style dinner with the family of our Yarmouk University assistant. Our field days went from silence to laughter and company!

I was overwhelmed by the engagement of the Municipalities in our work. From the day we arrived at Sahm to the day we said our farewells in Hubras, we were showered with all forms of assistance. When we arrived at the mosque site,



Photo of municipality officials in Sahm taken by Bethany Walker.

the people of the village volunteered their time to clean and prepare it in advance, so that we could get right to work. People volunteered their time and skills in all sorts of ways. When the “clown car” had a flat, the local mechanic fixed it for nothing. At one point we needed some re-bar (metal stakes); a resident builder lent us a box-full, no questions asked. Policemen showed up to help with the walking survey in Sahm and talk to villagers on our behalf; the municipal architect brought us blueprints; everything we asked for (ladders, brooms, storage facilities, introductions to elderly residents for the ethnographic study), and didn’t ask for, we were given. The mayor visited the site every other day to make sure things were running smoothly. When I complained about road debris, a bulldozer appeared to help clear it! (I nearly had a heart attack.) My cell phone was constantly ringing as local families and government employ-

ees wished us well. As soon as the village learned of our interest in restoring the mosque, people came to the site to give us information about the way the building used to be and how much it meant to them. At the conclusion of our first phase of fieldwork, the Municipality threw us a party. I have never witnessed a community extend itself like this.

In archaeology, you can’t separate the research from the human encounters. Doing fieldwork means working with people, and that can be an intense, and exhausting, cultural and personal experience. It is those encounters that make travelling and living abroad most worthwhile.

Marketing Universities in Japan

During a staff exchange program at International Christian University (ICU) in Japan, Rhonda Lubberts studied how Japanese universities use marketing strategies to compete for students.

Lubberts, assistant vice president for Institutional Marketing, said until now, Japanese students were bound for a certain university based on their test scores; Japanese universities didn’t have to distinguish themselves to prospective students. She said next year, however, because of the declining population, there will be as many 18-year-olds in Japan as there are seats in Japanese universities. Given that not every student attends college, this makes for a very competitive situation. “As a result of this competition, Japanese universities must rely on marketing their distinctions to obtain the students they need,” she said. Because ICU hasn’t had much experience doing this, Lubberts acted as a consultant to them, helping them to identify marketing goals, messages, and tactics based on research she conducted while there.

Lubberts spent a week at ICU in late May. As a result of her visit, Yoshikazu Sakogawa, who works in fund development at ICU, will visit Grand Valley in August “to learn about how we raise friends and funds,” she said. “By experiencing the Japanese university culture at ICU, I can now better understand why Japanese students choose ICU and can translate that knowledge to aspects of our marketing communications for Grand Valley,” she said.

During her trip, Lubberts also visited other institutions with connections to Grand Valley, including East China Normal University, China-Japan Friendship Hospital and Japan Center for Michigan Universities.



Scenes from Angers, France. Photos courtesy Tim Penning.

Learning Group Learning While Teaching in France

Tim Penning, Assistant Professor of Communications

I had been warned.

My colleague, Betty Pritchard, who had gone before me, gave me a heads up. An apologetic comment was also made by my contact at the French college where I taught for an intense week in November 2005. They were both correct. But I was unprepared, in more ways than one.

On my first day teaching at ESSCA (Ecole Supérieure des Sciences Commerciales D'Angers)—an institution with which Grand Valley has an exchange agreement—the warnings came to fruition. These students talk a lot—during class, with each other, and in a language I do not know well.

What to do?

I feel I normally have a good classroom dynamic here at Grand Valley. I encourage dialogue in the classroom to be sure. But the students speak one at a time, usually following a question from me, and the entire class listens and participates in turn one at a time. But in my classroom in France, I would scarcely begin discussing a concept or lesson and the sixteen students would spontaneously break into excited chatter in numerous dyads or small groups. I wondered if it was because I was new and temporary, a one-week visitor during their electives week who need not be respected. I didn't know. But I had been warned, and so I didn't take this constant chatter personally. Nevertheless, I had to teach! I had to re-gather their attention.

Now, I was teaching in English. Students are required to speak English in order to be accepted at ESSCA, because English is such a global business language. That was to my advantage in some respects. However, the fact that the students oscillated fluidly between English and French put me at a disadvantage. When they broke into their frequent chat sessions, it was in French. I can speak passable Spanish and German, and even picked up snatches of Japanese and Tagalog when I traveled to Japan and the Philippines for a previous job. But my French was limited to the few phrases I had learned from a set of CDs purchased at a Muskegon Sam's Club the summer before my overseas teaching.

So I resorted to one of the French phrases I had learned from that set of CDs. *"Écoutez, s'il vous plaît!"* (Listen please!). It proved to be more useful than the emergency expressions I memorized, such as "Where is the bathroom?" or "Take me to the hospital." I found myself thinking, well, it's like I was warned. They talk a lot. But it's only a week. I can get through this.

Then on about the third day, one of the students talked to me about this after class. He essentially apologized for all the talking the students do and that it might seem frustrating to me. He was a sensitive young man. He also gave me an important insight: When they talk, they are talking about what I have just said, testing out their understanding on their peers, seeing if they received it the same way. This may have been particularly useful since they were learning a new subject area in their second language, and to repeat concepts in French may have aided their understanding considerably.

The next day I used a different expression: *“Comprenez-vous?”* (Understand?) Periodically, I asked them to explain their comprehension of concepts to the whole class, and I asked the class if they agreed. While I had planned group exercises when I prepared for this one-week intensive course before I left the United States, I was more confident in implementing them. The students responded very well. I wished I had changed my approach sooner than the fourth day of my one-week visit. Apparently, I was a slow learner on this point.

“As has happened to me before, a reality I had overlooked in my home culture was made obvious to me by experience in another context.”

me before, a reality I had overlooked in my home culture was made obvious to me by experience in another context. That is of course the value of studying and teaching abroad.

I encourage you to try listening more to you students, if you don't already. Allow more discussion in class. You may be positively surprised at what your students talk about. Don't say I didn't warn you.

My sixteen French students were not. Judging from the assignments they turned in and the final exams I graded at the airport, it was obvious that they had heard me, and they had learned. So had I. This group learning thing, while hard to get used to, could be an opportunity for improved pedagogy and not a sign of disrespect or a bizarre French cultural variable.

Now, in classrooms back at Grand Valley, when my American students are talking before, during and after class, I hear my conscience exhorting me: *“Ecoutez, s'il vous plaît!”* (Listen, please!). And I do. I listen to my students talking. They are engaging in the topic of the course. They are internalizing, applying, teaching each other, learning. It's a beautiful thing. As has happened to

Scenes from Angers, France. Photos courtesy Tim Penning.



Faculty/Staff Exchange Program

Are you a faculty or staff member at Grand Valley? Would you like to participate in a short-term exchange program at a partner institution in Australia, China, England, France, Ghana, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Poland, or Turkey?

The Padnos International Center offers travel grants of up to \$2500 to support activities at partner institutions. Sample activities include establishing contacts, visiting classes, conducting joint research, exploring possibilities for collaboration, examining course and/or degree equivalencies, exploring processes and procedures, and assessing program compatibility. Other projects may be proposed.

Successful applications propose projects which strengthen academic and/or administrative relationships between Grand Valley State University and its partner institutions; involve projects of mutual benefit to both institutions; and ultimately result in more Grand Valley students studying abroad. Application deadlines are October 1, February 1, and June 1. For more information and an application, visit www.gvsu.edu/pic > Faculty/Staff > Grants for GVSU Faculty and Staff > Faculty/Staff Exchange Program.

Faculty/Staff Exchange Grant Recipients

Fall 2006

Steeve Buckridge, Norway
Ellen Schendel, United Kingdom, Turkey
James Goode, Australia

Intercultural Studies Faculty Development Grant Recipients

Fall 2006

Anne Caillaud, Italy
John Farris and Paul Lane, Nicaragua
Roger Gilles, India
John Kilbourne, Grand Rapids Public Schools
Mike Ott, Ukraine
Vandana Pednekar-Maga, India
Kate Remlinger, India
Carol Sanchez, Uruguay

NSEP Boren Scholarship

Created in 1991, NSEP awards undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships to American students for study of world regions critical to U.S. interests (including Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East). Boren Scholarships provide up to \$20,000 for an academic year's study abroad. Boren fellowships provide up to \$30,000 for language study and international research. Information and an online application are available on the Institute of International Education's website: www.iie.org/nsep. The application deadline for the Boren fellowship is January 30, and the deadline for the Boren Scholarship is February 13.

Freeman-ASIA Award Program

Freeman-ASIA Awards of up to \$7,000 are available for students studying abroad in East and Southeast Asia. The primary goal of the Freeman Awards for Study in Asia (Freeman-ASIA), an IIE-administered program generously supported by the Freeman Foundation, is to increase the number of American undergraduates who study in East and Southeast Asia, by providing students with the information and the financial assistance they will need. Since its inception, Freeman-ASIA has supported over 2,900 U.S. students to study abroad in East and Southeast Asia. For more information on eligibility criteria and an application, please visit the Freeman-ASIA website at: www.iie.org/freeman-asia. Application deadlines are March 7, 2007 (summer programs) and April 4, 2007 (fall semester and academic year programs).

Padnos International Scholarship

The Barbara H. Padnos International Scholars Program provides financial support for undergraduates studying abroad for at least 8 months in one location. Average scholarship amounts range from \$5,000 - \$15,000, depending on the program cost, other sources of financial aid, the integrity of the applicant, and the location of study. While students in all majors are encouraged to apply, applicants in the Arts and Humanities will be given preference. For more information and an application, visit the Padnos International Center. The deadline is February 9, 2007.

Gilman International Scholarship

The Gilman International Scholarship Program offers grants for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad. Such international study is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world. The program aims to encourage students to choose non-traditional study abroad destinations, especially those outside of Western Europe and Australia. The Gilman scholarship aims to support students who have been traditionally under-represented in study abroad, including but not limited to, students with high financial need, community college students, students in under-represented fields such as the sciences and engineering, students with diverse ethnic backgrounds, and students with disabilities. The program seeks to assist students from a diverse range and type of public and private institutions from all 50 states.

Award recipients are chosen by a competitive selection process and must use the award to defray eligible study abroad costs (program tuition, room and board, books, local transportation, insurance and international airfare.)

777 scholarships of up to \$5,000 will be awarded this academic year for U.S. citizen undergraduates to study abroad. Award amounts will vary depending on the length of study and student need with the average award being \$4,000. Undergraduate students who are receiving federal Pell Grant funding at 2-year or 4-year colleges or universities are eligible to apply.

Students who apply for and receive the Gilman Scholarship to study abroad are now eligible to receive an additional \$3,000 Critical Need Language Supplement from the Gilman Program for a total possible award of up to \$8,000. 25 Critical Need Language Supplements will be offered to Gilman Scholarship recipients during the 2006-2007 academic year. Critical Need Languages include: Arabic (all dialects); Chinese (all dialects); Turkic (Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish, Turkmen, Uzbek); Persian (Farsi, Dari, Kurdish, Pashto, Tajiki); Indic (Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Sinhala, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi); Korean; and Russian.

This congressionally funded program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and is administered by the Institute of International Education -- Southern Regional Center in Houston, Texas. For more information and an application, visit <http://www.iie.org//programs/gilman/index.html>. The application deadline is April 3, 2007, for study abroad during the Fall 2007 and Academic Year 2007-8.

Pineapple Awards

The Third Annual Pineapple and International Student Awards Ceremony will be held in March. International students nominate and then vote on a faculty member, staff member, and current student and community member that has been exceptionally helpful to them. The pineapple is an international symbol of hospitality and is given to a person in each category.

The Middle Kingdom: Visiting the Razor's Edge

The Mandarin name of China is Zhonguo, or Middle Kingdom. This linguistic homage to China's central place in the world highlights an ancient belief that can be felt in its streets today. Arriving in China through Shanghai, you can literally see the magnitude of the country's growth. In a canopy of cranes and construction one gets caught up among the rivulets of people and carried into the sea of modernization that is post-Mao China. This bubbling mass takes its energy from China's pace of development, the constant exchanges and the new sense of economic freedom that have taken root. The streets of Shanghai are a living testament to China's demand that it can perform a vital role in the global community.

A river separates the newly constructed skyscrapers casting shadows over the once dominant European concessions. Turning away from Western architecture, down Nanjing Road, bright streets designed with Las Vegas in mind pull you through name brands and familiar franchises. Foreign and Chinese tourists jostle amongst each other for views and deals. Pausing for one moment, it seems you've seen a million people. It truly feels like the center of the world.

In the center of Shanghai, among the towers and bustle, we studied one day at a Confucian temple. We talked about traditional Chinese values and their potential influence on the world. Upon leaving the quiet sanctuary, we noticed the vendors lingering in streets meant not for tourists but for residents of the neighborhood. We saw the conspicuous consumption of a capitalist world. This system of back alleys was set up to sell the nonsense trinkets of an industrial surge. But deep down, in the manner of lifestyle, the Chinese kept themselves alive. Under all this modernization is a sense of China, of Chinese values, and of a particular experience, a history.

It was on this street where we encountered a feeling of the unique manner in which China is coping with modernization. China has saved its own character, and the economic boom has released the tether of the Cultural Revolution, allowing for the past to come to bloom. Community is still strong, hospitality crucial, and tradition brings with it possibility; they continue to carry on with a Chinese way of life. Some complain about the listless youth, others the pollution, still others consider healthcare and unemployment, but no matter, their concern is one of a modern population, and it is focused through the lens of their history.

This place of modernization, this cutting edge, is thrilling and full of vitality. But China is not really about that. It's about going beyond modernization and fears of westernization; it's about the depth of the people and the strength of their heritage—a strength that allows them to face these modern trends in a distinct manner. On a personal level, it's about what you remember at the end of the day. What really affects you is the experience of being in China. It's not about museums and ruins, or intellectual property rights and industrial expansion. It's about walking down the streets, climbing sacred mountains, and trying to speak Mandarin. It's about stopping your bike in the back country of Guangxi, not because you are lost and need to pantomime for directions, but because the food smells too good to pass up. It's about China's approachable otherness, and the advance of a new world: one where we can all give and take with a little more respect, the least of hope that comes with a touch, with really connecting, perhaps creating a new sense of the center.

1. Eating dumplings at the back gate.

2. Going to Café Simba for a break from Nescafé.

3. Learning how to read the subway map.

4. Walking down the Shanghai Bund at night.

5. Biking around rock formations in Guilin.

6. Experiencing cashiers trying to help you speak Mandarin.

7. Watching the skyline grow.

8. Strolling through the Great Mosque in Xi'an.

9. Taking a hike on the Great Wall.

10. Wandering the side streets aimlessly.

Building Bridges Using Education and Performance: The Canadian Arctic

John Kilbourne, Associate Professor of Movement Science

Launched in November 2005, the Building Bridges Using Education and Performance project is a partnership between Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, and Grand Rapids Public Schools which brings together sixth grade teachers and students to learn about Canada and Canada's Indigenous Inuit. Through interdisciplinary and multicultural learning, technology, and the arts, teachers and students explore the philosophical traditions underpinning Inuit traditional practices, including games, while gaining an appreciation of cultural difference. Approximately 600 students and 20 teachers from Grand Rapids Public Schools participated in 2005-6. The project was expanded in 2006-7 to include all Grade Six students (approximately 1400) in the Grand Rapids Public Schools.

In-Service Workshops

The project began with an in-service workshop where teams of sixth grade teachers were introduced to Canada and Canada's Indigenous Inuit and provided with lessons and curriculum materials. Following the in-service workshop, teachers returned to their classes and shared what they had learned with their students. The teams included teachers from English language arts, social studies, science, technology, music, and art. The opportunity for collaboration across content areas contributed to powerful team-building among staff and students in the schools.

Presentations

Follow-up presentations were provided for teachers and their students shared the Arctic life-world through a slide presentation, Inuit throat singing, and Inuit drum dancing.

Performance of *An Arctic Journey*

Supplementing the in-service and classroom experiences was an evening-length dance performance that explored the enduring spirit of survival embodied by Canada's Native Inuit. The actual storyline for the performance followed the events of a true-to-life account of Inuit survival.

The performance coincided with the educational outreach program so that teachers and students could experience first-hand the lessons from the curriculum and the performance. A celebrated team of accomplished choreographers and dancers brought a meaningful story of Arctic survival to life.

Last year's performance was witnessed by approximately 600 students, 40 teachers and staff, and 500 members of the Grand Rapids community. This year, performances will be held February 7, 8, 9 and 10, 2007, at the Spectrum Theater at Grand Rapids Community College. For more information, call John Kilbourne, Associate Professor of Movement Science at Grand Valley State University, at 616-331-8683.



Photo courtesy John Kilbourne.





GLOBAL CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

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PADNOS INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The mission of the Padnos International Center is to engage the community of Grand Valley State University in the development of meaningful international experiences which foster an appreciation and awareness of diverse cultures, people, and ideas.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Editor/Designer: Ela Rossmiller
Padnos International Center
Grand Valley State University
130 Lake Ontario Hall
1 Campus Drive
Allendale, MI 49401
Phone: (616) 331-3898
Fax: (616) 331-3899
Website: www.gvsu.edu/pic
Email: rossmile@gvsu.edu

SUBMISSIONS

The bulk of *Global Connections* content is unsolicited. We continually seek content for publication. We welcome submissions in any language, and request that non-English submissions be accompanied by an English translation for co-publication. Submissions can be sent via email (as an attachment) or post mail (as an electronic file on a floppy disk) to the editor, though email is preferred. Submissions are due June 30 for the Fall semester edition and October 31 for the Winter Semester edition.

EDITORIALS / LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Global Connections welcomes editorials and letters to the editor. Email or mail submissions to the editor. Submissions must include the author's name and email address or phone number.