

The Role of Art Festivals in The Development of International Cultural Relations (About The International Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture)

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the study of the importance of festivals in the development of culture and art in the International arena. The author considers the role and tasks of festivals in the modern world as a wide space of diverse creative opportunities for participants and the audience. As an example, the paper provides information about the International Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture, which was organized as part of the international program "Kazan - the youth capital of the OIC 2022". The purpose of this project is to develop multilateral cultural cooperation between the youth of Russia and the OIC countries, to identify and support the creativity of original authors, performers and creative teams in such areas of art as: theater and original genre, choreography, music, visual arts, cinema. The festival was distinguished by its wide geographical coverage from 11 countries, including the Russian Federation, Bangladesh, Gambia, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This project, which includes various master classes, networking, trainings and a Gala concert, is one of the forms of organizing intercultural creative exchange and plays a significant role in the development of international cultural ties.

Keywords: festival, International Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture, OIC, Kazan – youth capital, culture, art, music, Gala-concert.

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The festival is a kind of school of excellence, in which, in addition to the main function of demonstrating the best artistic achievements, various forms of activities are carried out to improve the creative process, such as seminars, master classes, trainings, etc. Such events contribute to the emergence of new talents, the revival of forgotten genres, as well as the promotion of national art forms.

Touching upon the theme of the festival—the direct object of our article, we found it appropriate to turn to the etymology of the word festival, which comes from the Latin word ‘festivus’, which means ‘cheerful’. In the Musical Encyclopedia, this word is explained as follows: ‘Festivals are musical celebrations consisting of a cycle of concerts and performances, united by a common name, a single program and held in a particularly solemn atmosphere’ [3]. Being a mass holiday, the festival is usually dedicated to a certain kind of art or accumulates several types of artistic creativity. These events have a different scale – from regional to International - and can be held indoors or outdoors (open-air), which attracts a significant number of spectators. Varieties of festive culture - family celebrations, mass celebrations - have become the prototype of the modern festival.

The festival is interpreted as a unique opportunity for cultural exchange, expanding the artistic horizons of participants and the audience. Each art festival plays a significant role in the content of national cultures, establishing mutual enrichment, and in the modern world this event can be considered as a dialogue of cultures. "The phenomenon of the festival is closely related to socio-cultural processes and reflects all the diversity and specificity of social relations inherent in modernity. We are talking about a kind of dialogue, during which a unique cultural unity is created" [2, p. 289].

One of the bright and large-scale projects is the Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture, which was held from October 26 to 30, 2022 in Kazan. This event is part of the international program "Kazan - the youth Capital of the OIC 2022", organized by the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan, the OIC Youth Forum (Organization of Islamic Cooperation), the Ministry of Youth Affairs of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Academy of Youth Diplomacy, the Tatarstan Republican Youth Public Fund "Selet". The program was implemented with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh). The main aim of the project is to develop multilateral cooperation between the youth of Russia and the OIC countries, to identify and support the creativity of original authors, performers and creative teams of regions of Russia and foreign countries that are members of the OIC at the age of 18-35.

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Pic.1. The organizers, volunteers and participants of International Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture. After the networking.

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The festival is intended to become a space of creative opportunities, where participants will receive unique knowledge and recommendations from experts within the framework of creative master classes, as well as they will be able to express themselves in the cultural program. A number of activities within the framework of the project allowed creating a favorable perception of Islamic culture and creating a positive environment for the development of multilateral cooperation of creative teams. In addition, the overall significance of this event is multidirectional, has an impact not only on the sphere of intercultural contacts, but also on the level of development of individual fields of art, thus confirming the idea that "the art festival is designed to strengthen cultural differences, to consider the specifics of the development of art in different countries" [4].

Of undoubted interest was the work of the festival, built on various areas of art: theater and original genre, choreography, music, fine art, cinema. The youth festival of modern Muslim culture is distinguished by a wide scale: more than 1300 people from 54 countries of the world took part in the bid company. The selection stage for the portfolio and creative achievements was held by 100 delegates - original authors, performers and creative teams from the regions of Russia and the OIC countries (60 from the regions of Russia, 40 from the OIC countries). The geography of the event covered 11 countries, including the Russian Federation, Bangladesh, Gambia, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The program of the five-day project included master classes in the following areas, meetings with artists and cultural figures, networking and cultural exchange between participants, as well as preparation and holding of the final Gala concert. The participants were divided into five creative directions, in which educational

events were held: theater and original genre, choreography, music, fine arts, cinema. Each of the participants took with them unique knowledge about stage movement, improvisation, acting, academic and pop-jazz music, and Shamail was created as part of an artistic master class.



Pic.2 Some participants of the direction of fine art (master-class).

In addition, there were held a lot of auditions, selection, rehearsals of numbers and preparation for the final Gala concert - the quintessence of the entire festival. I would like to note the creativity of this large-scale event held at the Kazan State Institute of Culture. The festive evening began with an interactive performance in the large hall near the hall, where all guests could interact with the works of the participants: draw a joint picture, become part of a theatrical production, as well as see and listen to musical performance. The Gala concert featured the best performances and creative collaborations of participants from

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different directions and countries. There delivered a welcoming speech with congratulating all participants Timur Javdetovich Suleymanov, Minister of Youth Affairs of the Republic of Tatarstan, Yunus Senmez, Chief of Staff of the Youth Forum of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Rosa Shaikhaidarovna Akhmadieva, Rector of the Kazan State Institute of Culture. The gala concert was held as a true celebration for all guests and the audience, remaining the main component of the entire project.



Pic.3. Gala-concert of the International Youth Festival of Modern Muslim Culture. Barhama and Ansumana (Gambia).

In addition to the main program, additional components of the festival were organized: entertainment outside of educational events, areas for informal communication and interactive games, food courts, joint excursions, etc. Speaking about the festival, it is important to note the colossal work of the entire team of organizers and volunteers who worked actively day and night in order to create a favorable atmosphere and comfort for all participants. I would like to mention the

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thoughtfulness of the space of this grandiose event – all components – design solutions, visual series, necessary tools and equipment, convenient zoning – created a favorable atmosphere for creative communication and work on collaborations. Immersion in a single art space and this whole creative process contributes to the unification and cultural interchange of participants. As M. Bakhtin noted, during the holiday, "an individual feels like an inseparable part of the collective, a member of the mass national body" [1, p. 258].



Pic.4. Gala-concert / Graduation ceremony in the direction of Music.

To sum up, the festival is one of the forms of organization of intercultural creative exchange, meeting the needs of the audience in various activities and play a significant role in the development of international cultural relations. In the modern world, events of this kind combining music and various types of art attract the attention of an advanced audience and are a space for self-development and communication with like-minded people.

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