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SOMALIA

Assistance to Member States
for Cultural Development

Establishment of a School of Fine Arts, Music and Drama

Douglas Schwalbe

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S O M A L I A

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS,
MUSIC AND DRAMA

by Douglas Schwalbe

Report prepared for the Government
of Somalia by the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization (Unesco)

U N E S C O

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of the mission

The purpose of the mission, which took place from 21 November to 8 December 1976, was to advise the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture of the Somali Democratic Republic on the establishment of a School for Fine Arts, Music and Drama, and to that effect:

1. Make a survey of the various branches of the traditional arts which have to be revived and developed, of existing relevant courses to be consolidated, of new ones to be set up, of supporting institutions and of specialists available for teaching purposes;
2. Help in selecting a suitable location;
3. Draw up a tentative organization chart, showing links with supporting institutions;
4. Outline curricula, including core subjects for all students, minimum courses in each of the various branches and optional subjects;
5. Work out a provisional time-table and plan of operations for the establishment of the School, making due provision for feedback and built-in evaluation;
6. Draw up a costed list of requirements regarding facilities, equipment, supplies, and staff;
7. If practicable, discuss space requirements and layout with the expert in school buildings who is to undertake a mission for that purpose at a later date;
8. Prepare budget estimates including:
 - a. cost estimates for the establishment of the School,
 - b. estimated operating expenditures.

B. Initial survey

The single most salient factor in discussing the establishment of an Academy of Fine Arts, Music and Drama in the Somali Democratic Republic is that beginnings have been made. There exist both a philosophical commitment on the part of the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture, as expressed by the Minister, Mr. Omar Arteh, and a practical, tangible programme, already begun, supported by the Ministry, and ably directed, taught and promoted by Mr. Ali Omar. Mr. Omar is a trained artist and educator, having received his B.A. degree from Arizona State University, in the United States of America in 1971. As a trained creative artist, a teacher and organizer of this activity, he and the programme are realistic bases upon which to build.

In addition, the Ministry of Education, within the context of Teacher Training and Halane, provides a two-year intensive programme (IFTN) combining, for prospective elementary and intermediate school music teachers, not only a general education but training first in music and theory and then in performance on an instrument. The IFTN programme is particularly comprehensive in music but includes, informally, workshops in drama, dance and fine arts.

As laid out by the Minister of Higher Education and Culture, Mr. Omar Arteh; Ministry officials including Yussuf Abdi, Director, Department of Culture; Osman Jama, Director of the National Library; Dakir Ali, Assistant Director, Department of Culture; Hashi Abdi, Acting Director-General, Department of Higher Education and Culture; Ahmed Omar, Director of Planning; Ali Omar, Artist, Designer and Director of the Student Training Programme, and verified by empirical observation of the work being done, the course's objective and therefore the Ministry's objective is to:

Expand the artistic horizons of the students to include knowledge of the arts of all people, as well as the techniques and skills that produce that art;

Develop in the students the technical and design skills necessary to make the most of the natural creativity of the Somali people who heretofore have lacked scientific knowledge of and technical training in the arts, in order that these skills, techniques and knowledge may be put to practical use in the society and meet the demands of developing taste and the new technology of the society.

At present few introductory courses in fine arts, music, drama or crafts are offered in the elementary, secondary or high schools of Somalia, and therefore the students come to the arts with enthusiasm, dedication, industry and ability, but with only natural technical competence and a limited perspective on the arts.

II. THE ARTS TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Arts Training Programme started its first class - a class of 40 chosen from over 110 applicants - in July 1976. The programme was conceived as being of one year's duration, divided academically into four quarters and, because of the limited availability of trained and certified personnel, deals almost exclusively with fine arts. The classes meet five nights a week from 7 to 9 p.m. and the syllabus for the first eleven-week quarter consists of the following subjects:

Drawing, including:

Lettering	Perspective
Horizontal Lines	Composition
Vertical Lines	The Mixing of Colour
Free Hand	Life Drawing

An introduction to African Art using the resources of the National Museum.

For the second quarter, which commenced in October 1976, the syllabus consisted of the following subjects:

Drawing, including:

Geometric Figures	Two-Point Perspective
Pictorial	Brush with Ink
One-Point Perspective	Watercolours
Use of Charcoal	Contrast of Light and Shadow

Introduction to World Art through the use of film, objects and reproductions as available.

A second group commenced in October, so I had the opportunity to visit a first-quarter group as well as the group in the second-quarter section. It should be noted that the second entering group consisted of 19 students held over from the July (first quarter) group and 30 new candidates selected from a pool of over 600 applicants aged 11 to 20. As this is a night course, it should be emphasized that both students and applicants concurrently attend their regular high school and therefore the additional work involved in this course is witness to the desire and dedication of these students to the arts.

A. Comments on the programme

The following comments make reference to the actual classes I attended and participated in during my visit.

The work is being carried out at night in a badly lighted elementary school using chairs and desks too small for the adult bodies involved. In addition, drawing materials are in very short supply - 11 colouring kits for 50 students and films for the Introduction to World Art virtually non-existent.

Through the good offices of the United States Information Service we were able to show three films one evening that dealt with the artist's craft - Oriental Brushwork; Glass Making; and Donn Kingman - an Artist at work. These films enabled us to test the relevance of the subject-matter to the students, the methodology and the reaction on the part of the students to the presentation. On a second evening we showed NIK - a film of the Alwin Nickolais Dance Company which, as an introduction to dance other than Somali, was most appreciated by the students, widening both their perspective on dance and on colour and images.

The present programme is in need of basic school equipment, art supplies, teaching aids and personnel if it is to achieve its limited objectives in fine arts introduction and instruction. Expansion into the fields of drama, music and the crafts is as of this moment impossible even on a rudimentary basis. An examination of supporting organizations and craftsmen reveal a lack of trained and certified personnel at the National Theatre, which includes drama, music and dance, and in the crafts, including jewellery, carving - wood as well as meerscham - basketry, leather and weaving. Although natural ability abounds, trained personnel in the fine arts, drama or crafts are difficult to locate.

B. Recommendations

As the present Arts Training Programme should form the foundation of an Academy of Fine Arts, Music and Drama, it should continue to function as it does now, both to introduce skills to, and expand the artistic vision of, the Somali young. It should continue to supply its students with the minimum level of competence needed to take advantage of advanced instruction. In order to do this for the fine arts, its present field, the following recommendations are in order:

1. Immediate steps be taken to provide the basic and elementary drawing materials needed, such as crayons, paper, paint brushes, etc.
2. Immediate steps be taken to locate appropriate films dealing with art, music, theatre and dance. In addition to a search of the Unesco film catalogues, an investigation of the various foreign national information services in Mogadishu could, based on my own field work, produce immediate results.

Recommendations 1 and 2 are necessary in order to enhance, protect and fulfil the promise of the present programme and maximize the educational return to the presently enrolled students.

3. Additional facilities be located as soon as possible for the presently planned expansion of the programme.
4. Two additional teaching assistants be recruited and a special training course for the present teaching assistant and the two new ones be instituted by the director of the programme.
5. The present Arts Training Programme course lasts one year, composed of two semesters, and be limited to four groups of 20 students, each requiring three assistants along with the director of the school. Certification should be issued by the Ministry to the successful candidates.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS: THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, MUSIC AND DRAMA

Based on the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture's experience to date with the Arts Training Programme, I should like to make the following recommendations:

A. Establishment, goals and curricula outline

1. That an Academy of Fine Arts, Music and Drama be established at the post-high school level and that it also include crafts. The objective of the school should be to:
 - (a) Expand the artistic horizons of its students to include knowledge of and familiarity with the arts of all people as well as the techniques and skills that produce that art.
 - (b) Develop in its students the technical and design skills and expertise necessary to make the most of the natural creativity of the Somali people, who have heretofore lacked scientific knowledge of, and technical training in, the arts, in order that they may, adapting this training to Somalia's cultural heritage, build for the future and develop the past.
2. That certification be offered to the student after two years of study at the Academy, and that that certification be according to the satisfactory achievement of standards set by the faculty and the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture.
3. That for certain qualified students who have received their certificate further instruction abroad be offered so that those students may receive training comparable to those of other international artists, musicians and craftsmen.
4. That a core curriculum be offered in the first year, the purpose of which is to serve as an introduction to all branches of the arts and the skills involved in those arts.
5. That the core curriculum in the first year consist of the following subjects:

Fine Arts
Drama
Music
Crafts
English - written and spoken
Somali - written

The objective of the first year is to introduce skills, expand the students' field of vision, and supply them with the minimum level of competence needed to take advantage of advanced instruction. In the Somali language course, it is to be expected that short stories and one-act plays will be written.

6. That the second year curriculum allow a student to specialize along two separate tracks pursuing either Drama/Music or Fine Arts/Crafts. In addition training in Cultural Animation would be required of all second year students along with the continuation of English and Somali. The curriculum for the second year might thus look as follows:

Option 1

Drama
Music
Cultural Animation
English - written and spoken
Somali - written

Option 2

Fine Arts
Crafts
Cultural Animation
English - written and spoken
Somali - written

The objective of the second year curriculum would be building upon the first year skills to provide advanced instruction that would allow the student:

To enter directly into useful artistic service;

Become cultural animateurs helping communities and districts develop artistic and cultural consciousness;

Continue part-time practice under instruction with a particular instrument or study in a particular subject;

Take further training abroad.

7. That separate funds be earmarked for study abroad by students in:

Fine Arts
Music
Drama
Dance
Crafts
Art Education
Cultural Animation.

8. That the size of the school be limited to 60 students per year with a total of 120 in the school at any one time, and that the number of students receiving instruction in any one classroom at any one time be set at between 15 and 20.
9. That the Academy, through its facilities and its instructors, serve as a centre for the practising professional artists who are currently so ably enriching the life in Somalia.

Craftsmen, musicians, dancers and actors should look to the Academy as a place where they can also develop their skills and expand their horizons through regular interchanges with not only the staff but with artists and groups of artists specially brought in for periods up to three months to both perform and interact. These visiting artists, under such circumstances, would enrich the offerings of the two year certificate programme, give added value to the Academy as a performance centre for professionals, and ensure that the Academy remains in the mainstream of international art trends while serving its community.

B. Facilities

In order for these recommendations to be carried out a special facility should be built on the site already selected by the authorities. It should set a design standard to be emulated by all buildings in Somalia both residential and institutional, and should include:

1. A fully-equipped and supplied fine arts studio making provision not only for drawing, oil and watercolours, but also silkscreen, wood blocks, etc.
2. A fully equipped music studio, including recording equipment and musical instruments.
3. A properly installed drama studio for the instructor.
4. A fully equipped and supplied crafts studio with emphasis on carving, jewellery making and weaving.

It is important at this point to emphasize that these studios will be working studios and offices for the instructors and as such must serve the instructor's needs as an artist, serve as a model for the student, and as a meeting place where Somali professionals may interact with the instructors and visiting artists as fellows and peers.

5. A film library and projection room which should include films on drama, dance, music and crafts. Film will be relied upon heavily in the curriculum to expand the students' artistic horizons including their knowledge of, and familiarity with, the arts of all people as well as the techniques and skills that produce that art.
6. An art library including books and slides. This library will be relied upon as a basic element of instruction.
7. A music library including tapes and recordings. Again this library serves the same purpose as the fine arts and film library.
8. An English language laboratory. Since the language of instruction is to be English and the most efficient system for teaching a second language is through the use of tape decks, this installation will serve to do the

teaching job most efficiently. As English language study is proposed as a daily class for each student, the laboratory should have a daily capacity for 120 students, which probably means 30 learning stations.

9. A classroom for written Somali language instruction. Two classrooms should be established with regulation classroom equipment and chalkboards to facilitate the teaching.
10. Classroom studio space must be provided for instruction in fine arts complete with easels, drawing boards, storage cabinets, etc. These studios should encompass large areas and have good lighting.
11. Studio space for drama/dance. For work in drama and dance it is important that special attention be given to the floor.
12. Music rehearsal rooms. Since music presents the problem that rehearsal and practice sounds destroy the concentration needed in all other instruction, the architect should be aware of this and every effort made to overcome the problem.
13. At the centre of the complex there should be a multi-use space that can serve as a small theatre, concert hall and exhibition area.
14. Studios for visiting artists/instructors. Since it is envisaged that the curriculum include visitors, studio space should be set aside for them.
15. The usual amenities including storage, utility rooms, etc., should be planned for.
16. A fully equipped photographic laboratory could be added but its inclusion would depend on the Government's policy.
17. As a centre for instruction and interchange, both formal and informal, the complex should include housing for the staff of instructors and for visitors and with that inclusion it is hoped that an atmosphere of a small campus will be created. In such an atmosphere the student can be encouraged to work beyond the scheduled classroom hours and the Somali professional to visit on an informal and artistically intimate basis.

C. Personnel

Since the survey of the various branches of the arts in Somalia and the training of Somali artists reveals, in addition to a plethora of talented, creative but untrained artists, a small but growing group of students with not only talent but with varying degrees and kinds of training, special note must be taken of the quality and the adaptability of the instructors and instruction.

In order that these young artists may grow and develop, I recommend, within the context of this plan:

1. An artist, musician and craftsman along with one English-language specialist, all internationally recruited, be hired in the first year to form the Faculty in addition to the Somali director of the Academy and the Somali language instructor. In the second year, this Faculty should be augmented by the addition of an instructor in cultural animation.

2. That such members of the Faculty be talented, trained artists and designers and teachers who will be able to do their own work alongside their students in addition to giving instruction.
3. That in order to recruit this type of instructor and have this type of instruction, they be given at the Academy studios where they can work, hold office hours and be visited by the practising artists who, currently enrich the culture of Somalia. These studios, the multi-use space and the housing will be important in recruiting the type of instructors sought.
4. That instructors should view the opportunity to come to Somalia as an opportunity to continue their own work in a new and different cultural environment - an environment that includes for them the challenge of new sounds, sights and sunlight. They should be excited by the opportunity to interact with Somali artists.
5. That their pay scale should recognize that they are experts and the peers of similar internationally recruited experts.
6. That they should be prepared to acknowledge that their teaching responsibilities come first.
7. That they should be able to adapt their teaching to the varying levels of competence that their students will have already achieved and the varying quality of that previous instruction.
8. That they should have sufficient experience to be able, within the limits of the instructional outline and after consultation with the director and other members of the Faculty, to devise and adopt a classroom schedule and lesson plan in their subject that will achieve the curriculum's objectives.
9. That, given the existing environment, they be married, and it would be ideal if their spouses were also qualified and certified in the arts and could contribute to the life of the Academy and the community as professional artists.
10. That the terms of contract should be for one year with the possibility of a one-year extension at the most.

D. Instruction

The best guide to the actual first year course content exists in the syllabus of the Arts Training Programme and IFTN, and I recommend:

1. That with this outline as a model, art education specialists outline a syllabus for each subject.
2. That this syllabus should, however, allow for flexibility. The individual approach of each instructor must be taken into account as well as the individual background of the student. Rigidity and academic formalism laid on from outside will not allow the Academy to develop and adapt to the variety of artistic experience and training that now exists in Somalia.

E. Organization and governance

The Academy will have a Somali director from its inception and will be under the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture. Policy will be set under rules established by that Ministry.

As to overview, evaluation and guidance, rather than propose a resident expatriate expert, I recommend:

1. That a Committee to Visit the Academy be established whose duty it will be to review and evaluate the programme and its objectives, to provide a sounding board for the Faculty, and to report to and advise the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture and the financing authorities as necessary.
2. That this committee be composed of two experts from outside Somalia and the responsible Minister or his designate. It is important that these committee appointments be for a sufficient period of time so that perspective may be gained, but not so long as to grow unresponsive.
3. That this committee convene in Mogadishu no more than twice each year and for a period of one week to ten days.
4. That even though Somaliization of the permanent faculty take place as soon as practical, the programme of visitation be considered an ongoing feature of its governance.

F. Time-table

In anticipation of the establishment of the Academy the following steps should be taken. This list should be used as a general guide only, for at the moment it is impossible to be more specific as to date and detail.

1. Ministry carry out the recommendations offered in Chapter II.
2. Unesco complete planned provision of a consulting architect and equipment specialist, so that detailed cost estimates may be developed.
3. (a) Engage curriculum experts for duties described in Chapter III;
(b) Seek funding for this Project;
(c) Send the Arts Training Programme director abroad so that he may earn a Master's degree in art with emphasis on art education, and appoint an interim director for the Arts Training Programme.
4. Send one of the assistant instructors abroad in order that he may receive training as a cultural animateur.
5. Begin construction.
6. Recruit artist-instructors.
7. Open Academy.

IV. CONCLUSION

This report is submitted in the belief that:

1. There is a solid base upon which to build the Academy.
 2. That the Academy fills a present need.
 3. That the recommendations herein contained are practical under the given conditions and, if followed, will achieve the objectives set forth by the Ministry.
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ANNEX I

BUDGET ESTIMATES

A. Capital costs

It is too early to estimate either the building construction budget or even to give a range figure. (Included in this report, however, is a programme for the architect - see Chapter III, B.)

Equipment estimates will also have to be provided at a later date.

Transport estimates should include the cost of 4 land-rovers at \$7,500 each, or \$30,000. ⁽¹⁾

B. Yearly operating expenses

1. Identifiable expenses ⁽¹⁾

	\$
(a) Artists/instructors 4/full year at \$50,000	200,000
(b) Visiting artists 4 years each at \$18,000	72,000
(c) Vehicle maintenance 4 at \$1,750	7,000
(d) Teaching equipment and supplies	10,000
(e) Depreciation and replacement	10,000
(f) Miscellaneous and contingent	15,000
(g) Reserve	10,000
(h) Visiting and Evaluation Committee (2 meetings, 4 trips, 4 visitors)	10,000
	<hr/> \$334,000

2. Other expenses ⁽²⁾

- (a) Director of the Academy
- (b) Instructor in Somali
- (c) Support staff
- (d) Meetings and conferences
- (e) Study abroad
- (f) Telephone and utilities
- (g) Maintenance
- (h) Miscellaneous

(1) UNDP estimates for January 1977.

(2) Somali Government expenses.

ANNEX II

PLACES VISITED

Ministry of Higher Education and Culture

The National Museum

The Jewellery Craftsmen

The Weavers' Plant

The Ivory Craftsmen

The Meerschaum Craftsmen

The Leather Craftsmen

The National Theatre

The Somali Film Agency

IFTIN

The National Library

The National Academy

The Arts Training Programme

The Health Personnel Training Institute

The University Printing Plant

Embroiderers

Woodcarvers

College of Education - Afgoi

College of Agriculture - Afgoi

College of Science - Mogadishu

College of Law - Mogadishu

College of Economics - Mogadishu

Technical Institute - site of proposed Adacemy

Trip to Merca and the surrounding farms and communities including Genale