

Our Mission and Goals are based on a broad interpretation and understanding of "folk culture," as one where commonly shared ideas, perceptions, norms, values, skills, practices and behavioral models are passed from generation to generation by the mechanisms of tradition. The unique character of families, communities and societies is evidence of the powerful influence of tradition and folk art.

The collective skills and knowledge of a group - its intangible *cultural heritage* - give direction and meaning to lives, foster a sense of self-worth and wholeness and equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to survive in communities and societies.

Folk art, including language, visual arts, music and dance, accompanies individual lives from birth to death. The history and destiny of a people find expression through folk art and tradition. Folk art exemplifies human creativity, strengthens community ties and bridges generations.



MEMBERSHIP

IOV is a membership organization open to organizations and individuals regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, physical impairment, national or ethnic origin, or age. Upon submission of a membership application and the first year's fees, provisional membership is granted. Full membership is conferred following the annual meeting of the board of directors. Members of IOV are automatically enrolled in their IOV National Sections.



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Photos courtesy of Ben Brown (USA) and Mohammed Kazuo (Algeria)

MEMBER BENEFITS

All members of IOV receive:

- Access to information on the IOV website at www.iovworld.org;
- Opportunities to apply to serve as a consultant with UNESCO and other international cultural bodies and commissions;
- A membership directory, updated annually;
- Opportunities to attend and participate in international events, festivals and conferences either free of charge or at substantially reduced rates;
- Access to an interactive web site and blog for publishing research, posting questions and comments and interacting with others around the globe;
- A membership card and certificate;
- Opportunities to publish research and scholarly papers, and
- Reduced rates on IOV and some UNESCO publications.

Membership in IOV's worldwide network provides:

- Contact with people and organizations with common interests and professional pursuits, thus providing opportunities for exchanges of information;
- Increased access to resources and expertise as a member of an international NGO in official relations with UNESCO;
- Opportunities to participate in IOV and UNESCO sanctioned conferences and other events where IOV members and colleagues present their work, and
- Access to the IOV web site where information about IOV activities and events is posted.

We welcome people of all nations
to join our work.

Membership and Fees

Membership forms and fee information can be found on our website at www.iovworld.org.



International Organization of Folk Art

*In Operational Relations with The United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*

IOV UNESCO



IOV WORLD



HISTORY & STRUCTURE

IOV is a worldwide organization of individuals and institutions working to document, preserve and promote all forms of folk art, both tangible and intangible. The organization was founded in Belgium in 1979 and is registered under the laws of Austria, where the Secretariat is located.

IOV sponsors national and international festivals, as well as cultural exchanges of performing and visual artists. Through its scientific and pedagogical symposia and workshops, IOV encourages scholarly research, documentation and publication on topics related to folk art and traditions. Recent conferences have explored aspects of storytelling, children's games, legends, crafts, folk tales, dance, weaving and textiles, tool making, religious practices, costuming, architecture, social practices and seasonal celebrations.

The UNESCO *Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, with its emphasis on research and documentation, provides the framework for many IOV programs and projects.

All IOV members participate in the **General Assembly**, which meets every fourth year. The **General Assembly** approves revisions to bylaws, elects officers and approves budgets and financial expenditures. The **Executive Board** is comprised of the officers, commission chairs and regional leaders and is responsible for the overall success of IOV's programs and projects. The **Presidential Council**, which consists of the officers and **Secretary General**, oversees the Secretariat, sets strategy, implements policy and develops membership programs and benefits.

The IOV Secretariat is staffed by the Secretary General, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization.

MISSION

We recognize cultural diversity, as expressed through folk art, as a positive force that unites people and promotes peace. Folk art transcends religious, political and economic barriers. To ensure that folk art survives to benefit present and future generations, it is OUR MISSION:

- To increase worldwide understanding and appreciation of all forms of folk art;
- To provide opportunities for folk artists and practitioners to share their knowledge and skills, and
- To preserve and promote all aspects of folk art through research and documentation.



GOALS AND STRATEGIES

To accomplish our mission, regional and national offices are charged with implementing IOV goals and strategies. Projects and programs are designed to:

- Document all forms of folk and traditional art, including, but not limited to dance, music, rituals, narratives, food ways, traditional medicine and healing, vernacular architecture, traditional craftsmanship, as well as the traditional knowledge and practices that are the basis of human civilization;
- Encourage greater respect for the cultures and traditions of others through educational programs, classes, seminars, symposia, exhibits, folk art markets, culinary events and demonstrations;
- Build a strong network of people and resources to support those who are inspired by traditional and folk art and who wish to share their talent and abilities with others;
- Identify and partner with organizations sharing common objectives and programs in order to conserve resources, avoid duplication and reduce waste;
- Present folk art in live performances, exhibitions, workshops and at other public events;
- Publish and disseminate newsletters, research papers, articles and educational materials on all aspects of folk art and folk culture, both in print and on the Internet;
- Produce "how to" guides for festival organizers and performing groups;
- Encourage authenticity in the presentation of folk art;
- Print a calendar of folk festivals and events for the public;
- To provide opportunities for elders to transmit traditional knowledge and skills to younger generations;
- To create a supportive and respectful environment for the presentation of folk art, both tangible and intangible;
- Encourage intercultural dialogue and promote activities which foster cooperation among culturally diverse communities, and
- Provide assistance to smaller or less effective NGOs with similar missions to improve their overall effectiveness.

