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April 27, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR: Philip Breeden, BCOA
 FROM: Rex Moser, E/D, Arts America
 SUBJECT: Istanbul Biennial

Centro Cultural de la Raza curator Patricia Chavez paid a day-long visit to Arts America last Friday, April 24. We discussed in detail the exhibition's requirements and explained what we could expect from Arts America and from the post.

Many questions arose that we could not answer. Some will require Mr. Chavez's own evaluation of the site and discussions with Vasif Kortun. However, I want to set out some of those questions to alert the post to the needs of the project. Any responses post can provide prior to Mr. Chavez's visit will be passed on to him.

First of all, we asked Mr. Chavez for a complete inventory of materials needed for the installations. In many cases, we suspect they can be obtained locally, thus sparing us shipping expense, electrical voltage and customs complications. For this, we will need to ask the post's assistance and patience. We have already faxed you to find out if automatic playback video equipment can be obtained locally. We would need to know the video format used by any machinery that you would obtain -- whether PAL, NTSC or SEC. The "Entrance..." piece also requires two carousel slide projectors with auto-timer function, and wide-angle lenses. Pedestals, walls and doors are also required.

The "Miscegenation" piece requires 18 bales of hay. I suspect that American-style rectangular bales are not available locally. We also assume that importing bales or any hay (or agricultural materials) would complicate the customs process. We are considering fabricating the bales in Istanbul, constructed as wooden boxes and then surfaced with locally-obtained straw. Would that be possible? A few modest pedestals are also required.

Like "Entrance...", Ms. Tsininajinnie's work requires a darkened space (i.e. surrounded by walls), and a platform in which to install a video monitor.

Amalia Mesa-Baines' piece will include furnishings that will be shipped from the U.S., combined with some locally-obtained materials that will resonate with the American imagery. Like the other three installations, hers will contain video. We are currently contacting USIA's TV service to determine whether they can dub or caption the videos. Do you think Turkish audiences would prefer one format over the other, i.e. captioned or dubbed?

For those materials shipped from the states, what lead time should we budget for the customs clearance process?

One of the things that Mr. Chavez will want to discuss with Mr. Kortun is to what extent the Biennial is willing to provide special walls, pedestals and platforms to accommodate the installations. Mr. Kortun's specifications sheet says they can be provided, but we want to know if we will be charged for them, and if so, how much.

We are considering a modest 24-page, bilingual publication with illustrations, a modest essay, and bios on the artists. At the present time, we don't have a per-unit cost. But when we do, we will need to know how many copies the post thinks should be printed. We also need to know what the Biennial will require of Mr. Chavez for its catalog.

Mr Chavez indicated that the best time for him to visit Istanbul would be the week of May 18. He could also come the week of May 11. The only week in June he is available would be the week of June 15. He is also available in July. Given the Biennial's June 1 deadline for installation specifications, we hope that you and Vasif have time in May. Just let us know.

To summarize the AV requirements: two slide projectors and three video players and monitors are required for "Entrance...". The other three installations require one video player and monitor each for a total of six. If you are unable to obtain them in Turkey, we are willing to ask USIS Bonn to assist us. Just let us know.