



**Engaging communities through
international partnerships**

Mission and History

CEC ArtsLink is an international arts organization, whose programs encourage and support exchange among visual and performing artists and cultural managers in the U.S. and abroad. We believe that the arts are a society's most deliberate and complex means of communication, and that the work of artists and arts administrators can help nations overcome long histories of reciprocal distrust, insularity and conflict. With solid expertise and lasting partnerships in 37 countries and regions, CEC ArtsLink promotes communication and understanding through collaborative, innovative projects for mutual benefit.

The initials "CEC" in our name recognize 50 years of experience. CEC was founded in 1962 to enable citizens of the United States and the Soviet Union to accomplish what their governments would not do – open doors, share ideas and build mutual trust. It was known from 1965 as Citizen Exchange Corps and won support from the White House, the State Department and both Houses of Congress, as well as from leaders in business, religion, education and the press.

In the mid-1980's, CEC (then known as Citizen Exchange Council) was in the forefront of U.S. organizations working in the more liberal environment of glasnost and perestroika in the U.S.S.R. CEC developed exchange projects for college and high school students; and we produced two documentary film festivals, "Glasnost Film Festival" and "American Documentary Showcase" with support from the U.S.I.A. (1989-1990).

In the 1990's the organization adopted a new name, CEC International Partners, and began an evolution that matched the changes in our target region. We developed two new programs: ArtsLink and EcoBridge, an environmental education exchange for secondary school students, which received FREEDOM Support Act grants from the U.S.I.A. for several years.

ArtsLink, the first large-scale program of exchange in the U.S. for artists and arts managers from the former Soviet countries, began in 1992, with support from the Soros Foundation, the National Endowment of the Arts and the Trust for Mutual Understanding. Now called ArtsLink Awards, this program is in its twentieth year of exchanges. 1992 also marked the beginning of a decade-long collaboration with cultural organizations in St. Petersburg, Russia, to help prepare the city for its 300 year anniversary in 2003. CEC raised over \$1,200,000 from foundations and private donors to support the direct costs (not including administrative costs) of projects involving two-way exchange of cultural specialists and artists.

In 1998, CEC's Board of Directors decided to focus the organization wholly on the arts, and in 2003 the name was changed to CEC ArtsLink. In 2004-2005 we undertook new, exciting creative arts exchanges with the countries of Central Asia. In 2010 we opened our programming to Turkey and Afghanistan, followed in 2012 by Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories and Syria.

Our in-house expertise in the arts, national and international networks of artists and cultural specialists, and our repertory of residency host sites in the United States make CEC ArtsLink an unmatched resource for exchanges between the U.S. and 37 countries and regions overseas.

WWW.CECARTSLINK.ORG

**Afghanistan • Albania • Armenia • Azerbaijan • Belarus • Bosnia & Herzegovina • Bulgaria • Croatia
Czech Republic • Egypt • Estonia • Georgia • Hungary • Israel • Kazakhstan • Kosovo
Kyrgyzstan • Latvia • Lebanon • Lithuania • Macedonia • Moldova • Mongolia • Montenegro
Palestinian territories • Poland • Romania • Russia • Serbia • Slovak Republic • Slovenia • Syria
Tajikistan • Turkey • Turkmenistan • Ukraine • USA • Uzbekistan**