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June 28, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Romanian Cultural Institute of New York and its current leadership. There are very few institutions that look at the world from a global perspective, connecting cultures in meaningful ways and creating an open platform to discuss ideas about democracy, human rights and economic development. The Romanian Cultural Institute does just that, and, with limited resources, has produced extraordinary exchange opportunities and outcomes.

We at the Lark have been involved in international play development and translation programs for 12 years and have worked closely with Romanian artists and institutions since 2006. RCINY has been a partner from the very start. Together, we have implemented an extensive series of innovative collaborations in the areas of playwriting and translation that highlight Romanian and American playwrights and theater artists. My experience has convinced me that this work opens up the minds of participants from many backgrounds and promotes a deeper understanding of what it takes to build a civil society that will thrive culturally as well as economically.

Our focus has been on introducing voices from Romania that are new to U.S. audiences, and, reciprocally, making Romanian audiences more aware of American writers they do not yet know. We have also made a commitment to support, on a long-term basis, artists who prove to be of significant interest to communities in both countries. We have led exchange activities in Bucharest at the Odeon Theater, in Targu Mures at the Ariel Theater and the Theater University, and elsewhere in Romania. Outcomes have included translations that have gone on to production in both countries and into school curricula, the establishment of a graduate program in playwriting, and community-based projects with at-risk youth in Roma communities. We have supported many writers through these programs, including Romanians Gianina Carbutariu, Mihaela Michailov, Saviana Stanesco, Peca Stefan and Andrea Valean and Americans Tanya Barfield, David Henry Hwang, Theresa Rebeck, and Doug Wright.

Our joint successes were made possible because of the consistent leadership of Corina Suteu and her staff at RCINY. They are careful listeners and smart strategists who have created a platform for mutual understanding and shared ideas. It would be a grave setback to change leadership at this critical moment.

Sincerely,


John Clinton Eisner
Artistic Director

cc: Corina Suteu, Director, RCINY
Victor Ponta, Romanian Prime Minister
General Secretariat of the Government of Romania
Vasile Blaga, Speaker of the Senate of Romania
Permanent Bureau of the Senate of Romania

LARK
PLAY DEVELOPMENT CENTER
311 West 43rd Street, Suite 406, New York, NY 10036
TEL 212 • 246 • 2676
FAX 212 • 246 • 2609
www.larktheatre.org