

Course Arts Resource Fund

University of Chicago
Chicago, IL 60637

November 17, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

I am a lecturer in South Slavic and Balkan Literatures in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and a faculty affiliate of the Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies (CEERES) at the University of Chicago.

I am writing to request support for two events I am planning for my Winter 2009 Balkan Folklore class SOSL 26800. The leader of the Chicago-based ensemble Balkan Dances (Balkanski Igri), John Kuo, who also happens to be a University of Chicago alumnus, has agreed to bring one of the ensemble's rehearsals to campus, so that my students can participate and try to learn some of the dances. In addition, he has agreed to come to the previous class session and give a talk about the dances to the students.

Founded in 1964, the Ensemble Balkanske Igre was an outgrowth of the University of Chicago Folk Dancers and is dedicated to the research, teaching, and performance of the folk music and dance of all regions of the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The ensemble also produces concerts and provides logistical and community outreach support for concerts of such major artists as Esma Redžepova the "Queen of Romani ('Gypsy') Music", Boban Marković "Golden Trumpet of the Guča Festival", Goran Bregović, Ivo Papazov, Orchestra "Kal," and others. The Ensemble co-sponsors an annual Spring Festival (March 28-30, 2008) in conjunction with at the International House at the University of Chicago.

Thanks to support from UChicago Arts, I was able to have John Kuo give a lecture to the class last year, and it was a tremendous success. He brought rare folk instruments from his own collection, instruments that were made by masters in the Balkans who are no longer working. He even allowed some students to try to play on these precious instruments. He demonstrated the unique musical rhythms of different areas in the Balkans and taught the students how to recognize and understand them. For those who participated, John had prepared special CD gifts.

The ensemble rehearsal was likewise very popular. A number of students from other classes and departments wandered in our gathering as well. The ensemble took an hour before rehearsal to teach the students the steps of the most popular dances. Each of these dances was introduced by a brief explanation of the specific area from which it comes, as well as the contexts in which it is performed. The instruction was very successful and by the end of the hour, most students were comfortable dancing alongside the ensemble.

In addition to the students from the Balkan Folklore class, I expect that students from my literature course, as well as those from the Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Language courses taught by Nada Petkovi and the Bulgarian language taught by Petya Alexieva have expressed interest in attending. I hope that the Course Arts Resource Fund will make it possible to repeat the success from last year.

- (1) SOSL 26500 (Ilieva)
- (2) SOSL 26800 Folklore from the Balkans (Ilieva)
- (3) BCSN 10200 Elementary Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (Nada Petkovi_)
- (4) BCSN 20200 Intermediate Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (Nada Petkovi_)
- (5) SOSL 10200 Elementary Bulgarian (Petya Alexieva)

I have also approached CEERES and the International House for support.

Our estimated **budget** is as follows:

Ida Noyes space rent: \$220

John Kuo Honorarium for class visit: \$150 Thank-

you reception after the rehearsal: \$200 Total: \$570

Requested from the Course Arts Resource Fund: \$370