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Krabill, James R., general editor, and Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, and Brian Schrag, editors. *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. 2013. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library. xxviii, 581 pp. + DVD. ISBN 978-0-87808-493-7.

Schrag, Brian. *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*. James R. Krabill, general editor. 2013. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library. xxxiv, 282 pp. ISBN 978-0-87808-494-4.

When my family and I were preparing for our first return to the United States after nearly five years on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, we were counseled by friends about the coming “culture shock” we would have as we settled back into urban USA. The standard example of this “shock”: stepping into a supermarket and experiencing the overwhelming variety of options: shelf after shelf, sometimes aisle after aisle, of _____ (you fill in the blank: diapers, toilet paper, cereal, canned soup). Truth be told, we *were* overwhelmed as we struggled to “fit back in” with the culture we were returning to. This feeling of being overwhelmed by abundance has returned again in the past few weeks as I have had the great pleasure of preparing this review of the two-volume magnum opus *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*; its companion manual *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*; and a DVD of additional resources including articles, journals, books, images, and audio and video examples. [Note: the term “ethnodoxology” may not yet be in your day-to-day lexicon, but since it appears with regularity in these volumes, a brief explanation might be useful. Robin Harris, in her article in Section One of the *Handbook*, explains that the term was coined by Dave Hall in the late 1990s by “combining three Greek terms—*ethne* (peoples), *doxa* (glory), and *logos* (word). . . . Hall defined ethnodoxology as ‘the study of the worship of God among diverse cultures’” (86).] In total, the two bound volumes (each with accompanying companion website) total nearly 800 pages, while the DVD includes the PDF files of six additional books, the accumulated series publications of three journals, and more than 30 articles, bringing the total number of printed pages into the neighborhood of 1,750! There are also numerous image files and more than 20 videos—truly an impressive collection of materials designed to educate, encourage, and assist in the development of local arts for worship and witness on a global scale.



General Editor James R. Krabill, with assisting editors Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, and Brian Schrag, present in the first volume (the *Handbook*) the collected wisdom of over 100 authors from 20 countries, spanning many decades of fieldwork and service. They tell their stories, share their insights, and invite the reader to look deeply at the challenges, struggles, and successes in encouraging the incorporation of culturally appropriate arts in the life of the global church. The volume comprises three sections: “Foundations” (providing biblical and theological perspectives), “Stories” (comprised of 80 fascinating case studies from around the world), and “Tools” (a collection of essays detailing the practical application of many of the ideas and insights discussed in earlier sections).

Section One, “Foundations,” is divided into two parts. The first part, “Encountering God: Worship and Body Life,” presents a series of 18 foundation-building essays from six broad perspectives (Biblical, Cultural, Historical, Missiological, Liturgical, and Personal). The second part of the “Foundations” section, “Engaging God’s World: Witness and Community-Based Ministry,” presents an additional 18 essays with an emphasis on practical application, from the same six perspectives. The essays in both parts of Section One are brief (none longer than 10 pages), informative, and accessible to the general reader. Some of the essays are classics in the field of ethnomusicology and missions—for example, Vida Chenoweth’s “Spare Them Western Music,” originally published in 1984 in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*; a few employ terminology and concepts that warrant a second or third reading—including Harold Best’s pithy essay “God’s Creation and Human Creativity: Seven Affirmations,” Brian Schrag’s honest and thoughtful “Ethnoartistic Cocreation in the Kingdom of God,” and Sooi Ling Tan’s “Transformative Worship in a Malaysian Context”; but all 36 of the essays in Section One of the *Handbook* are well-written, engaging, and perspective-expanding.

While it might seem likely that one would find substantial overlap and repetition among these essays (Chapters 24 and 29, for example, both focus on encouraging and incorporating the use of various arts in short-term mission encounters), in fact there is a surprising degree of variety in subject matter and context: from ethnodramatology in South Asia, to the arts in early Christian worship; from hymns in Chinese house-churches, to the use of arts in trauma healing. The essays present a breadth and depth of combined experience and insight that are sure to leave the reader more fully informed and deeply invested in the task of encouraging and supporting the use of local arts in global Christian worship and witness.

Section Two of the *Handbook*, “Stories,” is a collection of 80 case studies illustrating the myriad ways that the arts are a part of the life of the church around the globe. These brief and often anecdotal accounts provide the reader with an array of samplings organized geographically: Africa (subdivided General, Central, East, North, Southern, and West); America (Latin and North); Asia (East, South, and Southeast); the Caribbean and Australia; Europe and Eurasia; the Middle East; and “Worldwide” (a set of six general essays and reflections). These essays are brief (from several paragraphs to several pages) and quite personal. About a third of them are gathered from previously published materials—a valuable feature of this sizeable anthology. These stories offer glimpses into the daily life and work of those on the field, recounting some of the challenges, struggles, and successes, as well as capturing something of the perseverance, determination, and service-oriented focus that mark those who have crossed cultures and left the familiar comforts of home in order to invest in the rich

diversity of the Kingdom of God around the world. These case studies are rich and widely varied. Where else would you find, within one binding, stories about Japanese black gospel choirs, rubbing shoulders with stories of opera and rockabilly fusions in Nagaland, North India? The authors ask deep, probing questions, and the lack of easy answers makes the articles valuable reading—and an excellent source for generating questions and ideas for further exploration, class or small group discussion, reflection, and insight. A number of these stories contain links in the footnotes to websites that provide additional information (such as audio and visual examples of some of the arts discussed in the case study), links to organizations, further reading, biographical sketches, and bibliographic references.

The Africa and Asia sections have the greatest number of contributions (33 and 22, respectively), reflecting perhaps the long history of mission work on these continents, the tremendous energy in recent years given to understanding, exploring, and encouraging the inclusion of local arts for worship and witness, and the rich variety of cultural traditions that exists in these two major regions of the world. The 80 narratives in Section Two range from the deeply profound and enlightening to a very few that seem disconnected from the book's purpose and thus faintly gratuitous (an example might be Fortunato's narrative "Equipment" which seems more about pulling the wool over the eyes of a customs agent than about equipment, music, worship, or witness). The section concludes with a beautifully written summarizing essay from Brian Schrag, describing the powerful, heart-rending effect of worship in his own language and music tradition on him as he stepped back into his familiar Dallas church after several years in other settings. He concludes: "there's something profound about being home. About the peculiarities and particularities of a culture that is somehow mine. My heart language. Heart worship. Heart music. And it is this depth and fullness of communion with God that I want all people in the world to be able to experience" (355).

Section Three of the *Handbook*, "Tools," takes a significant turn toward practical application. Here are the nuts and bolts, often taking the form of charts, graphs, diagrams, and tables that are helpful visual components of the models and modules explained in the 32 chapters of this section. The section is divided into four broad subsections: "Arts Advocacy" (promoting arts awareness and dealing with opposition to the use of local arts in worship); "Teaching" (arts workshop design and implementation, arts curriculum development in higher education, and the development of mentoring relationships with local artists); "Worship" (with chapters covering the development of culturally appropriate worship, the discipleship of worship leaders, and the integration of arts and proclamation); and "Research and Cocreation" (increasing the effectiveness of local arts, as well as evaluating, improving and commissioning new works of local art for worship and witness). Each of these subsections contains chapters that are designed to inform and encourage the reader-practitioner as he or she prepares for, and then makes use of, the wide array of tools discussed in this section. The fourth section concludes with a very thorough summary (30 pages) of the seven-step process described in detail in the second volume in this series: *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*, by Brian Schrag.

Attached to the inside back cover of the *Handbook* is a valuable DVD of additional resources, compiled by Cory Cummins, Paul Neeley, and Brad Keating. The contents of the DVD are handily organized into six sections,

accessible through the easy-to-follow instructions found in the startup file. The six sections of additional resources include: Articles, Books, Journals, Images, Audio, and Video files intended to expand upon the already rich trove of information contained within the *Handbook* itself. This DVD is the quintessential “But wait, there’s *more!*” of late-night TV infomercials, and in fact there is *so much more*.

Included in the Articles section are 31 full-length (PDF) articles covering a wide range of ethnodoxology and missions-related topics in multiple languages. The Books section contains the full text (in PDF) of six additional books on the general topics of worship, evangelism, and the arts from a global perspective. In total there are more than 900 pages of additional reading in these six books alone.

The Journals section contains hundreds of pages of issues from three journals:

- a 60-page PDF file of a special publication edition of *The Creative Spirit* (Belhaven College) titled “Redeeming the Arts,” originally published following the 2004 Lausanne Forum for World Evangelization;
- the entire nine-year run of *EM News*, a quarterly publication of the ethnomusicology department of SIL International in Dallas, Texas;
- and four years of the quarterly publication *EthnoDoxology*, published by Artists in Christian Testimony.

The benefit of having ready access, in one location, to all of these journal issues (many of which are linked to essays found in the *Handbook*) is tremendous.

The Images section contains dozens of images from Africa, the Americas, and Eurasia. The photos are primarily focused on Global Day of Prayer celebrations, spanning several years, in a variety of locales.

The Audio section of the DVD contains 16 audio selections of Christian worship songs and scripture songs representing Africa, the Americas, and Eurasia, as well as multicultural selections. These are a mixture of field recordings and studio-produced recordings by Heart Sounds International (from the CD *Sounds of Global Worship II*), Proskuneo Ministries (in the Multicultural section) and IziBongo and Friends (a group of musicians and ethnomusicologists primarily affiliated with Wycliffe Bible Translators). In addition to the recordings, there are also helpful “descriptive notes” files for each of the songs included in this section.

The final area of this bountiful DVD is the Video section. Here are more than 20 video clips produced in connection with Heart Sounds International, AiM, Pioneers, and SIL International. The video section begins with a nicely produced illustration of the kinds of analytical tools that an arts consultant might use in order to accomplish some of the activities associated with researching and formulating an understanding of a local arts performance. This video is produced by the SIL Ethnomusicology and Arts Group and made available here in four languages. There are also a number of videos illustrating Christian songs from parts of Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, Central America, and the Middle East. Like the audio examples mentioned above, each of the videos here includes its own “descriptive notes” file.

Returning now to the American supermarket of my opening vignette: imagine suddenly coming to a long aisle of nothing but cookbooks, filled with page after page of delicious recipes. Each book contains long lists of ingredients, detailed descriptions of all the correct proportions, measurements, temperatures, cooking times, cuts, chops, and siftings necessary to produce gourmet feasts. That's what it's like looking through the second volume in this series: *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*. This 282-page manual was compiled, written, and edited by Brian Schrag, International Arts Coordinator for SIL International. The *Manual* is designed primarily to encourage and equip all advocates for the arts: especially the arts as used to worship, praise, proclaim, and in every other way bear witness to the grace of God in human history. As Schrag states in the introductory chapter, the purpose of the *Manual* is to

guide your involvement in working toward a new reality, one in which *all* cultures are using *all* of their gifts to worship, obey, and enjoy God with *all* of their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In other words, it will help you work alongside local musicians, dancers, actors, painters, sculptors, storytellers, and other artists to spark the creation of new songs, dances, dramas, paintings, sculptures, and stories that help people usher God's kingdom into their community. (xv)

The *Creating Local Arts Together* (CLAT) manual represents a thoroughly detailed, thoughtfully conceived, and carefully constructed seven-step method designed to lead the reader (the arts advocate) and the community through “a continuous process of researching and creating together, resulting in more signs of the kingdom” (xxiv). Schrag suggests three categories of arts advocates who will likely benefit the most from this method: “those who have some secondary or university education using the arts in cross-cultural Christian work and want a guide to beginning and planning their work in a new context. . . . [a person who] has significant experience in this kind of work, but who wants to make their impact deeper and more long-lasting”—these two types of arts advocates represent those who are prepared to invest significant time and energy in their advocacy work and will likely be crossing cultures in order to do so. Additionally, Schrag suggests the *Manual* may also be helpful to those who are able to devote only “a short amount of time or energy to strengthening artists in a community. . . . [as well as to those] people hoping to make a difference in their own communities” (xxiii–xxiv).

Briefly, the seven steps that make up the CLAT method are:

1. **Meeting** a community and its arts: getting to know basic information about a community, building relationships with people in the community, learning about the different kinds of arts present in the community—drawing upon research methods from anthropology, ethnography, performance studies, and other disciplines.
2. Working with members of the community to **specify** “kingdom goals” (signs of the kingdom of God) within the community: among the many signs of God's kingdom are those of Shalom, Justice, Scripture, Identity and Sustainability, Church Life.
3. **Selecting** effects, content, genre, and events: deciding together with the community which art forms and what content would likely move toward fulfillment of that goal.
4. **Analyze** an event containing the chosen genre: getting to know the details of the art forms and their meanings for the community so that together you can identify the components that will most clearly speak to the community toward the kingdom goal.

5. **Spark** creativity: bringing new works of local art to the community and ensuring that all of those with an interest in, or with a degree of control over, how new creations are integrated into the community are present and involved.
6. **Improve** new works: evaluating is a crucial component of the cocreative (CLAT) process as it provides opportunities for the ongoing development and integration of local arts into the life of the community.
7. **Integrate** and celebrate for continuity: providing opportunities for teaching newly created works to others (small groups initially) as a way to encourage ongoing creativity. (xxv–xxviii)

At the core of the CLAT method are research and relationship building. As Schrag states, “Learning to know someone else deeply is a fundamental act of love and necessary for success in everything else you do. So whenever you’re not sure what to do, go ask a question, practice a dance, observe an event—anything that helps you learn. Research=learning=love” (xxx). The *Manual* offers thorough guidelines and models for research methods and data gathering. There are suggestions for identifying the people with whom to build relationships (the “gatekeepers” of local arts), as well as detailed models for keeping records, organizing information, and structuring the flow of that information in order to plan and implement the next steps. Much of this gathered data is to be organized using a tool known as the Community Arts Profile (CAP). The profile serves as a place to describe and capture the information gathered through research and relationship building about the community and its arts—insights into how a type of artistic activity functions, its meanings, its place in society, and so forth. As Schrag points out, “this information will prove invaluable when planning cocreative activities, sparking creativity, evaluating artistic output, and integrating the arts into the community” (3). The *Manual* includes a sample of the CAP rubric, a link to a web-based RTF file of the CAP, as well as detailed examples (often based on Schrag’s years of experience working among the Mono community in the Democratic Republic of Congo) illustrating ways to link the information gleaned through following the CLAT method to the development of a Community Arts Profile. (One of the intentions of the editors of the *Manual* is the establishment of a growing database of CAPs maintained on, and accessible through, the *Handbook* website.)

The value of the *Creating Local Arts Together* manual cannot be overstated. Even a cursory browse through its pages makes evident the depth of information contained within. The degree of detail, the level of care given to anticipating and responding to questions that might arise, and the thoughtfulness of the tone all speak volumes to the deep undercurrent of love and passion flowing through each page. I wish that this type of resource (as well as the readings contained in the *Handbook*) had been available when my family and I were first preparing to head to the Indonesian island of Sumatra in the late 1980s. I had been a graduate student (along with Brian Schrag) in the ethnomusicology program at Wheaton College, studying with Vida Chenoweth. While I was wholeheartedly committed to the vision of working to encourage local arts for worship and witness in North Sumatra, the vagaries of local church and seminary leadership tended to muddy the waters and obscure what I believed was the way forward. For example, because I had earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in cello performance, I was initially encouraged by the seminary leadership to devise and implement a plan for beginning a string orchestra on the campus, where no Western string instruments other than the guitar had been played before. By God’s great mercy, that plan quickly fell through the cracks and I seized the opportunity to begin learning to play a local instrument from local

musicians, building relationships and establishing connections along the way. As it happened, our school had a student ensemble of the local music genre I was learning and so I took the opportunity to work with the leader of that group. The ensemble played on occasion for church festivals and other social events, providing me with an expanding understanding of the functions and rubrics of the ensemble and its music in the local church society.

As things turned out, it seems my interest in local music genres and my feeble efforts at participation ultimately spoke much more clearly and loudly to the church and seminary leadership than did my advanced degrees in Western music, and the doors leading to the possibility of inviting local arts and artisans inside the church began to swing open. By God's grace, over time, and through deep and loving relationships within the community, my efforts at encouraging the integration of local arts into God's kingdom purposes in North Sumatra produced evidence of fruit. Thanks be to God for whatever signs of the Kingdom are now a part of the lives and witness of the church in North Sumatra, and thanks be to God for this ethnodoxology *Handbook* and *Manual*. I stand in awe as I realize that present and future generations of arts advocates will be able to drink deeply and repeatedly from these pages. Food and feasting is a recurring theme among those commenting on the value of these resources (see the Foreword and Introduction to the *Handbook*). I close then, with the words of James Krabill, General Editor of the *Handbook* and *Manual*: "The bountiful banquet set before the reader in the following pages can be accessed in a variety of ways—in bite-sized portions, appetizer samplers, multicourse meals, weekly specials, or full-menu buffets. In the meantime, welcome to the feast! You're in the divine company of God's people. The table is set. Eat heartily. Drink deeply. And enjoy!" (xxvii).