

Fourth Annual Youth Bios-Olympiad in St. Petersburg



The Fourth Annual Youth Bios Olympiad took place in St. Petersburg, Russia, September 7-10, 1999. The Youth Bios Olympiads are an initiative launched jointly by the B.I.O. President and by Professor Alexander Shishkin of the St. Petersburg State Technological University for Plant Polymers. The aim is to inspire a love of bios to young people and to encourage incentives in environmental protection and appreciation.

During the Olympiad, young participants from Russia and other European countries

presented posters and projects on nature conservation. They were greeted by the B.I.O. President and by a delegation of B.I.O. members, including the President of the UNESCO Centre for Women and Peace in the Balkans Kety Tzitzikostas, the Executive Director of the Albanian Civil Society Foundation Dr. Rolanda Dhimitri, Professor Ivana Djujic from the University of Belgrade, Dr. Vitalyi Gulca from the Moldova State Forestry Association, and Mirza Agic from the GEA Association in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

BioKids Special from Slovenia

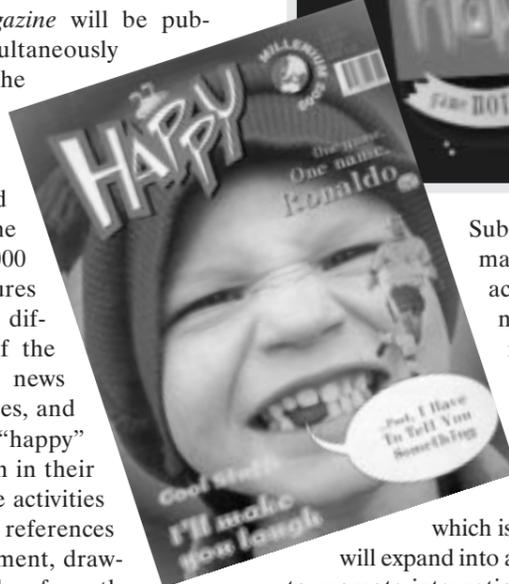
Biopolitics supports the *Happy* global media project, an initiative for children set up to encourage communication between children from different cultures and countries. During a visit to Slovenia in November 1999, the B.I.O. President was introduced to the *Happy Foundation* by Mr. Saso Krumpak and took part in a press conference launching the project.

With globalisation, the world is becoming one big village and the human race one large chattering family. Although we all belong to the same village, we do not all live in the same colour house. The *Happy* global media project for children encourages the retention of our special differences through sharing and highlighting them.

Happy Magazine will be published simultaneously throughout the world in over 20 languages and will be written for and by children. The Millennium 2000 edition features children from different parts of the world sharing news and experiences, and writing about "happy" things going on in their lives. There are activities to join, special references to the environment, drawings and sketches from the children themselves and many projects encouraging international co-operation and cultural exchange.

A strange looking visitor from We-Forgot-Which planet came by and made a wish. "There are lots of things to worry about. Let's make something that we can be happy about!"

"You're right," we said and we gave him a name. "Be Happy!" we said.



Subscribers to the magazine also have access to a pen-pal network that tries to match children with similar interests.

In addition, the *Happy Foundation*, which is based in Slovenia, will expand into a variety of activities to promote international understanding and communication between children. The development of a *Happy* television programme is also under discussion.

Colombian youth committed to protecting the environment

The future belongs to the young, and our society may one day become biocentric if the young grasp the urgency of the need to protect bios on our planet.

The Youth Conference held in Colombia, in October 1999, was a source of joy for Biopolitics and a message of hope for the world. The young participants had an increased awareness of environmental issues and of our responsibility to protect nature and all its precious resources.

During her visit to Colombia last October,

the B.I.O. President lectured at Rosario University in Bogota, following an invitation by Dean Eduardo Barajas. The students responded very positively to the proposals for global co-operation and action and were most enthusiastic about the implementation of a World Referendum for bios.

This positive response is proof that the environment can provide the unifying dimensions necessary for a society that respects bios and co-operates in the preservation of the environment and life on our planet.



Bio-architecture Bio-materials

Bamboo – environmental solution

Photo right—Bamboo's physical properties and elasticity allow this unique biomaterial to be used in a variety of construction and agricultural practices, as an alternative to lumber. It is tremendously resilient and earthquake-proof. In Colombia, bamboo was used in architecture long before the European colonisation period, when the inhabitants lived in harmony with nature. Currently, it has been "rediscovered" and its use is being promoted for a variety of projects. Hopefully, bamboo's availability in many countries around the world and its sustainable management will lead to a multitude of new applications for this multifaceted construction material.

Bio-architecture in Colombia

Photo far right—The Governor of Pereira (left) and the Chairman of the Manizales Chamber of Commerce (far right) admiring a model of the Pavilion in the city of Manizales. This model of the bamboo construction will be exhibited in the Hanover 2000 World Fair in Germany.



St. Petersburg – hope for environmental peace

For society to achieve a New Renaissance, globalisation must proceed based on a vision of peace and environmental harmony for the entire planet. Time spanning ideals and the Olympic spirit can infuse humanity with the strength necessary to face the challenges of the new millennium. The current crisis in values which has resulted in severe environmental deterioration, can be countered if we all acknowledge that the future lies in a global appreciation of bios - life on our planet. This is the B.I.O. goal and challenge for the 21st century.

To promote this vision, leaders from the fields of science, politics, business and the arts from all over the world met in St. Petersburg, in September 1999, to attend a B.I.O. Forum on "Culture and the Environment," and to honour the Bios Prize winners. Bios Prizes were awarded to *Mstislav Rostropovich*, *Kitty Kyriacopoulos*, *Anton Rupert* and *Jakob von Uexkull*, people from different walks of life who share a common vision - to endow future generations with a living and liveable planet.

The city of St. Petersburg was chosen because of its undisputed cultural heritage and contribution. In this crucial period of transition, this heritage can serve as model for growth and restructure. In the spirit of bio-culture, a harmonious future must be based on the co-operation of both technology and the arts, which can promote a global appreciation of bios.

Honorary Committee

This timely initiative was organised and chaired by B.I.O. President *Dr. Agni Vlavianos-Arvanitis*, and placed under the auspices of the Vice President of the Government of the Russian Federation *Valentina Matvienko*. Other members of the Honorary Committee included: *Vladimir Jakovlev*, Governor of St. Petersburg; *Yuri Antonov* and *Vladimir Grisanov*, Deputy Governors of St. Petersburg; Academician *Michael Piatrovsky*, Hermitage Director; Professor *Pavel Sarkisov*, Rector of Mendeleev University Moscow; Professor *Otto Terentjev*, Rector of St. Petersburg State Technological University for Plant Polymers; Professor *Michael Fedorov*, Vice President of St. Petersburg Technical University; Professor *Victor Rogalev*, President of the International Academy of Ecology, Human and Nature Protection Sciences; *Michael Bodchamikov*, Ambassador of Russia to Greece; *Dimitris Kypraios*, Ambassador of Greece to Russia; *George Dimitriades*, Consul General of Greece in St. Petersburg. The event was co-organised by Professor *Alexander Shishkin*, Head of the Ecological Standardisation Laboratory at the St. Petersburg State Technological University for Plant Polymers.

Events

The four-day Forum, sponsored by the *Nicos J. Vardinoyannis Foundation*, comprised cultural activities, concerts, guided tours of the city of St. Petersburg, the Hermitage Museum and the Summer Palace, a cruise on the Neva river, roundtable discussions at the House of Science, Yussupovsky Palace and Fontanka Palace, and the Fourth Annual Youth Bios Olympiad. The Forum opened at Marinskyi Palace - the St. Petersburg Parliament building - and the participants were greeted by members of the local parliament and other government officials.

Bios Prizes

The Bios Prizes were awarded at the Hermitage, under the auspices of its Director, Academician *Michael Piatrovsky*. Following a private tour of the Museum, the award ceremony was held at Catherine the Great's Theatre, which is seldom open to the public. Amidst a standing ovation, the recipients were honoured for their unparalleled contribution to the promotion of biocentric values, the protection of biodiversity, the enhancement of peace, and the acknowledgement of the interdependence among all forms of life.

The famous Russian cellist and humanitar-



Mstislav Rostropovich receives the Bios Prize at the Hermitage. The Award Ceremony was organised by B.I.O. President, Dr. Agni Vlavianos-Arvanitis, under the auspices of the Director of the State Hermitage Museum, Academician Michael Piatrovsky.



The Bios Prize Award Ceremony was held at Catherine the Great's Theatre, exclusively allotted to the B.I.O. for this purpose.

ian *Mstislav Rostropovich* received the Bios Prize for offering us wings to enjoy the rhythm and harmony of life. *Kitty Kyriacopoulos*, noted business woman and philanthropist, was honoured for her clarity of vision and a generous contribution to future generations. *Anton Rupert*, Founder of The Peace Parks Foundation, an initiative uniting more than five African countries in wildlife conservation, received the Bios Prize for his enlightened leadership in safeguarding biodiversity and in promoting bio-diplomacy, the B.I.O. vision for global co-operation in environmental protection. *Jakob von Uexkull*, the Founder of the Right Livelihood Award, received the Bios Prize for providing recognition to dedicated safekeepers of our planet.

Award Ceremony

In a jubilant and moving ambience, several eminent personalities congratulated the recipients and expressed their support of the B.I.O. goals and ideals: Hermitage Director *Michael Piatrovsky*; Ambassador *Kai Falkman* of Sweden; Professor *Chee Seong Tham* from the University of Singapore; Professor *Rusen Keles*, Director of Environmental Studies at Ankara University; *Pyrros Vardinoyannis*; *Ioanna Vardinoyannis-Fournier*; *Ursula Schleicher*; Member of the European Parliament; *Dr. John Hanks*, Peace Parks Director; *Constantine Kanonis*, Alternate General Manager for the Commercial Bank of Greece; Professor *Udo Simonis*, Science Centre Berlin; and *George Kremlis*, Head of the Judicial and Legislative Affairs for the European Commission DG XI.

Millennium of Peace

The award ceremony concluded with the world premiere of a composition based on the poem "Millennium of Peace" by *Dr. Agni Vlavianos-Arvanitis*. The music was written for the occasion by Greek composer, *Iakovos*

Dakoutros, and performed by the Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of St. Petersburg.

Discussions

The main theme of the Forum was that scientific, technological and cultural forces must be joined together in order to face the enormous challenge of the 21st century: saving the environment. The participants focused on the issue of a renewed creativity in finding solutions, along with new ethics and philosophies. New models were discussed, and the need for a biocentric vision in globalisation was stressed.

Roundtable discussions were held at the House of Science, Yussupovsky Palace and Fontanka Palace. Speakers included: f. Chairman of the Hellenic Foreign Trade Board *John Tzen*, the Director of the International Programme at the Finnish Ministry of Environment *Jaako Henttonen*, Chief *Femi Kila* from Nigeria, the President of Golding Properties South Africa *Pam Golding*, Professor *Eero Paloheimo* of the University of Helsinki, Professor *Inna Parkhomenko* of Moscow State University, *Dr. Alexander Lonski* and *Dr. Vladimir Tchemodanov* of Energoproject Institute Moscow, and WFUNA Honorary President *Hilka Pietila* from Finland.

Bio-Culture

Bio-culture reflects the spirit of bios as a powerful unifying factor for the future co-evolution of humanity with the bio-environment and the harmonious co-existence of all forms of life. More than just a simple orientation towards biocentric principles, bio-culture is a manifestation of life. In St. Petersburg, a city renowned for its rich cultural heritage, the Forum participants were surrounded and inspired by some of the world's most outstanding achievements in art, architecture and music. Two unique concerts highlighted the Forum: a

performance by the "Klassika" Symphony Orchestra at the Yussupovsky Palace Theatre, exclusively allotted to the B.I.O. for this purpose, and a performance by the St. Petersburg Male Chorus in St. Peter and Paul's Cathedral.

World Referendum - Olympic Truce

In the spirit of global co-operation in environmental protection, B.I.O. has launched a long-term campaign, inspired by the ancient Olympiads to utilise the world's positively focused attention, at the time of the Olympic Games, to demand world cease-fire and to celebrate outstanding general, intellectual, as well as physical achievements. Regarding the Olympic Truce, B.I.O. worked in the late 1980's and 90's to have a UN resolution passed in support of world cease-fire during the period of the Olympic games. This resolution was signed by 75 UN member states.

To mark the new millennium, B.I.O. is proposing a World Referendum in which all of humanity is invited to vote together for the first time. As propounded by *Dr. Vlavianos-Arvanitis*, "Humanity is wasting time. Every single person on our planet can cast a vote to say "Yes, we want to save the environment. Yes, we want to save life on our planet." This creative B.I.O. initiative already has enormous support from different countries. Indicatively, 50 million people in India cast their vote.

Bios Olympiads Bios Prizes

With "globalisation" defining the shape and structure of future society, the need for a new vision becomes more urgent. Globalisation is taking place without goals and ideals, when it should be based on values that have a meaning for the continuity of bios on our planet and for the understanding of our dependence on all forms of life. Without this vision, globalisation will not only fail, but will also pose serious threats to the world. As environmental deterioration is becoming a compelling issue of unprecedented importance, international co-operation in the preservation of the bio-environment can provide the necessary unifying dimensions to face the challenges ahead.

The current crisis of values is a great threat, not only to the environment but also to peace. This is why there is a pressing need to use the diachronic ideals of the past to motivate every member of society towards the conservation of the environment. The Olympic Spirit can play a leading role in uniting the forces of culture and technology to instill the appreciation of the aesthetic value of life on our planet. At present, international competitions take place in various fields, but represent a fragmented view of human achievement. An overall recognition and award of achievement in environmental protection can help to re-establish the harmony and unity behind every initiative and action. Bios Prizes for each speciality, celebrating positive contributions to the preservation of life on our planet, can serve as incentives for a global appreciation of bios and as a guiding light for the future.

It is the goal of the Bios Prizes initiative to inspire society with a vision of hope and harmony. Through a truly international mobilisation to promote environmental appreciation, everyone can contribute to the spiritual renaissance of humanity. This constitutes the hope and the vision of the Biopolitics International Organisation for the generations to come.

(A video of the Bios Olympiad in St. Petersburg is available for public showing. For further information contact B.I.O.)

