

Globe-trotting Hughes to visit West Germany

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What do classical music and economic development have in common?

Maybe a lot.

At least, that's the hope of the Maryland officials who spend their time devising ways to lure more businesses into the state. And they're willing to bet \$56,000 and 13 days of Governor Hughes's time that they're right.

Phase one of their plan began Thursday when the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra left for a 12-concert, 22-day tour of East and West Germany. It is the orchestra's first trip outside North America, and the first time an American orchestra has visited East Germany.

Phase two begins Tuesday, when Governor Hughes and a party of five, including top officials of the Department of Economic and Community Development, head for Germany in search of new foreign in-

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GOVERNOR HUGHES

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vestment for Maryland.

The timing of the two trips is anything but a coincidence. The state's business recruiters hope that the symphony concerts and lobbying by the governor will be an irresistible attraction to European business leaders.

"When we heard that the symphony was going, we said this would be a good thing to tie into," said Gerald L. McDonald, state director of business and industrial development.

"We would want to take the governor to this area anyway, and without this, we

would have tried to find a tie-in with something else," Mr. McDonald continued. "But this is such a good cultural tie-in. It's a good selling point."

And the selling of Maryland to European business interests is what the governor's trip is supposed to be all about.

"This trip offers a great opportunity to promote Maryland, not only in economic development terms, but also in cultural terms," said Joseph M. Coale III, a gubernatorial aide who is also making the trip.

"One of the primary things these firms are looking for is the quality of life that a certain location offers to their employees, because the employees demand it. It's not just what kind of a tax break the companies will get or how close they would be to an interstate highway that's important," Mr. Coale said.

The trips of the orchestra and governor technically are separate. The orchestra's travels are being financed privately, except for a small federal grant, while Maryland taxpayers are paying \$36,000 to cover the travel and entertainment expenses of Governor Hughes and his wife; a State Police bodyguard; Mr. Coale; Mr. McDonald, and James O. Roberson, state Secretary of Economic and Community Development.

The governor will join the orchestra in three West German cities—Dusseldorf, Bonn and Munich. Before the concert in each city, he will host 12 to 15 German business leaders and their spouses at a reception designed to sell Maryland.

"These are people who are called key prospects by our representatives in Europe," Mr. Coale explained. "We know that they are looking over here, but we may not know the degree of intensity of their search or what their objectives are."

To help get the state's message across, BSO record albums will be given to the reception guests, along with pictures of various Maryland scenes.

Sometime after the governor returns home, the state's European trade office in Brussels will explore in detail the possible interest each of the business executives might have in Maryland.

But with full-time business recruiters already spreading Maryland's message throughout Europe, why is it necessary for the governor to lend a hand? What can he do that they can't?

"The governor can open doors to some of the very top decision-makers by the very nature of his office, and the acceptance of our invitations to the receptions clearly shows that. He will be meeting some of the top leaders in Germany," Mr. McDonald said.

"It's salesmanship and marketing—as simple as that," Mr. Coale said. "You market the governor because he is the leader of Maryland and he is an attractive person. He is a great salesman for the product, which is Maryland."

After leaving Germany May 26, the governor will spend the next two days in Lille, France, capital of Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France's northernmost province and Maryland's newest foreign "sister state."

Mr. Hughes will meet with government and business leaders there and discuss ways to expand economic and cultural ties with the French province. He also will visit a nuclear power plant, a coal gasification plant and a subway construction site, and tour the import coal facility at the port of Dunkirk, which already receives substantial quantities of Maryland coal.

His official duties end there, but Mr. Hughes will fly to London May 31 for a couple of days of vacation, returning to Maryland June 3.

This is the second overseas economic mission for the governor, who promised in his 1978 election campaign to step up the state's efforts to attract new business. His first foray was to China and Japan in 1979.

There is little tangible economic benefit to show from that trip so far, although state officials stress that the overtures to the Chinese were made with the idea of long-range results. Mr. McDonald also says the state is now "fairly close" to a commitment from a high-technology Japanese firm to build a plant somewhere in the Baltimore-Washington corridor.

High-technology industry—computers, electronics, precision tools—is what Maryland is seeking in West Germany, as well. But Mr. McDonald says any results of this trip probably will not be seen soon.

"This is not an overnight thing. The governor is not going to come back from this trip—unless we are very lucky—and say, 'I talked to someone who is going to build a plant in Maryland,'" he said.