VÄSTRA GÖTALANDSREGIONEN | Kultur i Väst

AUDIENCE

An Anthology on Art, Culture and Development

Kultur i Väst

Kultur i Väst is one of the cultural administrations of Region Västra Götaland. Our aim is to achieve a broad and inclusive cultural scene accessible and relevant to the inhabitants of Västra Götaland. The foundation of our work is to reinforce culture and its role in society. In order to achieve this, we are collaborating with various operators in the cultural sector, both on a regional, national, and international level. At Kultur i Väst, we are working with all various fields of art, but also with audience development, societal development, diversity, equality and accessibility in arts and culture.
Read more about us on **kulturivast.se/in-English**.

ISBN: 978-91-87229-22-0
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kulturivast.se
RePublik / Audiences Sweden (Kultur i Väst's Centre for Audience Development)
repub.se
Graphic design: Gullers Grupp AB
Illustrations: VV2 Illustrations
Translators: Chapters by Ninos Josef and Niels Righolt translated by the authors. All other chapters and texts translated from Scandinavian to English by Ian Giles.

Published with support from the Swedish Arts Council

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Introduction

The term ‘audience development’ gives rise to many questions, but there are also many answers. In this volume comprising thirteen texts, multiple perspectives are offered on the opportunities, issues and challenges relating to focusing on the audience. It is about the conditions for doing so, how to do it, which consequences this may have and what happens when you don’t do it. The angles of approach are in some cases very much fixed, concrete or fact-based, while in other cases it may be a matter of criticism and questioning or reflections on cultural policy as part of the bigger picture. The approach transcends all art forms and cultural sectors, and the aim is to nuance and strengthen the work on broadening participation in public art and cultural life.

In the autumn of 2015, Kultur i Väst decided to establish RePublik – a national centre for audience development in Sweden. This was on the basis of several years of preparatory work that demonstrated the need for and expectations of a centre of this kind in Sweden – something that already existed in Norway and Denmark, as well as in several other European countries. There is extensive experience in the area in Sweden, and many strong cultural institutions and organisations have been working purposefully on the issue for a long time. There are lots of good examples of activities and exciting projects. On the other hand, there is relatively little Swedish research in the area, as well as significant conceptual confusion and a lack of collective knowledge.

The backbone of RePublik's activities and area of focus are to be found in a number of observations that we have made.

The task of trying to broaden audiences has existed for decades, but despite this, it is difficult to discern any major general changes in audience participation or in cultural institutions' organisational- and working-processes. There are plenty of successful projects, but little in the way of long-term impact. Why this inertia? Is it a result of ambiguities in ambition or is it because aims and goals are unclear? Is it related to conceptual issues or financial resources?

Another observation is that in many places there is little basis for knowledge-based, systematic audience development work. There is also insufficient knowledge about existing and potential audience groups, as well as their needs and behaviours.

A third observation is that the prevailing view on audience development remains far too restrictive: most consider it a form of culturally adapted marketing that belongs in the toolkits of marketing or communications departments. In this regard, we can see a great need to inspire new ways of thinking amongst leaders in the cultural sector and offer the insight that audience development is a process that involves developing an organisation with the audience at its heart.

These observations also form part of the background to this very book. Audience development is about the concepts, methods and

issues that one must engage with when striving for a bigger and wider audience – it is about increasing understanding and enriching the experience. This fundamental vision has existed for a long time and is ultimately about art being accessible – in every sense – to all. The issue at the very core of cultural policy.

The idea of creating a national centre focusing on audience development had been on our minds here at Kultur i Väst for a number of years. Audiences Norway was founded almost ten years ago and quickly took the initiative when it established Arts & Audiences, an annual Nordic conference series (2011-2016). Both Audiences Norway as an organisation and the conference became sources of inspiration for the creation of a Swedish counterpart. As part of the work on the music project RNM (Resource New Music), there was an aim to design the conditions for a Swedish centre for audience development. This saw the initiation of a close partnership between Kultur i Väst and Producentbyrån, which consists of a team of producers and project managers. There followed a collaboration on a number of projects including the Gothenburg-based conferences Publikutveckling från A till Ö [Audience Development from A to Z] (2014) and Kultur för alla? [Culture For All?] (2015), as well as Arts & Audiences in Reykjavik (2014), Copenhagen (2015) and Gothenburg (2016). Consequently and fortunately, it was also possible to collaborate on this anthology.

We consider this anthology to be an important step in strengthening the relationship between public culture and its audience. In our view, this is best done through presenting differing perspectives on what this work may involve and what impact it may have – both positive and negative. The contributors' texts are based on their personal reflections and professional challenges, are forward-looking and visionary, or reflect specific lessons taken from projects and activities. Our ambition is also to place audience development in a cultural policy context, since it is cultural policy specifically that focuses both on increasing diversity and creating a varied cultural

offering. Doing so strengthens everyone's right to participate in cultural life.

We will leave it up to you to determine whether these texts, taken together, provide answers to any of these questions. What is certain is that this book contains reflections, views, provocations and analyses of what working with art and culture, widened participation, norms, change and audience development involves.

We hope reading this inspires you!

Johanna Hagerius, Nils Wiklander.
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To achieve that relevance, we need to be outward looking, curious about our audiences and the communities we serve, curious about what happens before, during and after that moment of creative engagement. And we have to be willing to change in response.

Heather Maitland

Heather Maitland
– Arts consultant
and writer

Who is Developing Who?

"It's a tricky thing, 'audience'. What is it actually? People waiting in their seats for a show to begin? Or the crowd that performers imagine while preparing to get on the stage? Is it me when I am enjoying a performance or is it just other people around me? Are audiences those people that reporters say were 'thrilled' last night? And what about those who wouldn't agree? When the play is over what happens to the people who were part of the audience a minute ago – are they audiences no more? Is being an audience one's own choice, or is it a tag that we hang on each other? Is talking about audiences saying more about the audiences or about those who speak of them?"

Goran Tomka, *'Audience Explorations. Guidebook for Hopefully Seeking the Audience'*

At the moment, I'm working as audience development advisor to three projects co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. I love my job. I'm inspired by so many professionals from across Europe, all passionate about the arts – 33 different countries at my last count. But it's not easy. What's the problem? Well, it's audience development …

The partners in a project almost without exception share the same vision of what they want it to achieve: loads of people being inspired by their involvement with artists. But when we get to talking about how we want to develop those audiences, we find ourselves at odds. Everyone has a different idea of what audience development actually is. Six months later, we can still be focusing on the differences rather than our common vision.

Audience development is often defined as anything that deepens engagement, widens audiences by reaching more people similar to existing audiences or diversifies audiences by reaching people different to existing audiences.[1] It's not a fixed set of projects and schemes but a process that involves everyone in an organisation understanding what they are all trying to achieve, finding out about the people who do and don't engage and identifying the best way of bringing the two together.

If we define it like this, audience development comes naturally to most cultural organisations. Bringing art and audiences together is what they do.

Most beat themselves up because they are not doing it enough. Along with their funders and stakeholders, they assume that they need to spend more time and energy getting new people involved with what they do. But most are already really good at it. For example, out of the 270,000 households that bought tickets at 21 theatres and arts centres in Wales in 2016/17, 37 percent were doing so for the first time. In the Republic of Ireland, 41 percent of ticket buyers across 52 festivals, theatres and arts centres were new audiences.

So, why the big differences? Each cultural organisation has different goals, works within different cultures and communities and creates different art so of course the ways they bring art and audience together are different. There are differences within organisations too with people in different roles having very different views of how to widen, diversify or deepen – and different views of whether those are appropriate things for their organisation to do.

The most powerful factor, though, is the organisation's values. I work with two theatres that couldn't be more different. One is a fairly new, bespoke building in a highly rural area funded by the regional government to serve the entire region. The other is a converted warehouse run by an actors' co-operative in an ethnically diverse, inner-city neighbourhood. But their attitudes to audiences are similar because they have a similar philosophy about how art can relate to society.

These values and philosophies often mean that the people I work with object to the label "audience development". For many, "audiences" excludes participants, readers, listeners, viewers and visitors. It implies a passive relationship with the art; audiences just sit and listen, don't they? And "development" suggests that people need developing because someone else has decided they don't understand or appreciate the arts enough. It implies a defined path to achieving audience-hood (we even talk about an audience development "ladder" with predefined steps from non-attender to loyal enthusiast and beyond).

Dublin's Culture Connects was set up by Dublin City Council in 2016 to connect Dubliners to their city through making and taking part in arts and culture. Since then, the team has brought together 154 artists, 28 cultural producers and 508 community groups in 51 neighbourhoods across Dublin in 1,750 activities, events, performances and interventions. But they do not call it "audience development". Its director, Iseult Byrne, says,

"To me, audience development stops once you have got them in the room. Audience engagement is also about what happens in the room and continues after everyone has left."

Like Iseult, many prefer the term public engagement, believing that it better reflects a democratic process in which both citizens and artists are involved in an exchange of ideas, opinions and skills.

Some of this problematic language around audience development reflects its roots in arts marketing. I wrote the first ever guide to audience development for Arts Council England in 1997. It came out of a decade's work by its Touring Department to maximise impact of the touring productions it funded by increasing the number of people who saw them. Its marketing officer managed a team of regional marketing advisors who helped the touring companies increase audiences in their area. Together they coined the term audience development to try and get audiences onto the agenda in other departments, too. This team eventually evolved into a network of regional audience development agencies.

Although some now see audience development as a short-term fix, back then, it was regarded as a long term process to build relationships with individuals. The *Guide to Audience Development's* final step of audience development planning was working out how to sustain the new relationship. What prevented that – and still does – was the short term nature of public funding agreements. You can't develop an audience in three years. If you take an objective look at the data, most European arts organisations are great at developing new audiences and rubbish at keeping them. We've already seen that well over a third of ticket buyers at Welsh and Irish theatres and arts centres were new audiences in 2016/17. But on average more than half of all the ticket buyers in the previous year never bought another ticket at those venues ever again.

At this time, the remnants of what had been a strong, politically-motivated community arts sector still survived in the UK. Many of these organisations were vehemently opposed to the public funding infrastructure. They were rooted in their local communities and focused on remaining relevant to them. Their goal was cultural democracy. Community arts organisations felt audience development was irrelevant because their audiences and participants already reflected

the diversity of their communities and were already deeply engaged. They talked about audiences being developed as "cannon fodder" for state-sponsored art (yes, really).

Around this time, I was involved in a committee of the Theatrical Management Association looking for evidence to prove the impact of the performing arts. We worked out that amateur arts organisations each year attracted nine million attendances – so audience development was redundant there, too.

Why did audience development catch on? The motivation was to build audiences in the long term for publicly funded activity by well-established producing companies. That's an economic not democratic driver. But there was a social driver. Arts Council England had participated in a large-scale population survey since the 1980s which showed that people with higher incomes and more education were most likely to attend arts events. It therefore encouraged its funded organisations to diversify audiences in order to justify the investment of public money.

So something that seemed common sense to those of us involved in it was already contentious because of its origins in cultural policy and its foundations in arts marketing. Is this still the case? Is audience development the exclusive domain of publicly-funded organisations?

My assumptions have been challenged by how many large-scale commercial theatres engage in audience development activity: captioned, sign language interpreted and audio-described performances; educational activities for schools; social events for groups; front of house staff trained to make people feel welcome; ambassadors going out to engage directly with communities; creative workshops for children. But they would never dream of calling it audience development or public engagement. It's just good business. The only difference is that their ultimate goal is financial sustainability although there are lots of cultural and social goals entwined.

Like good business, the process of audience development involves logical thinking. There is a big overlap with both business and

marketing planning. Audience development should focus on achieving the same goals and it uses some of the same approaches. It's different because it looks at everything from the point of view of existing and potential audiences. It involves every aspect of audiences' experiences so includes so much more than business and marketing. Essentially, it gets all of an organisation's different functions to work together with the audience in mind.

But it's still about setting clear, agreed objectives, using evidence, testing assumptions and evaluating whether it would be worth taking a particular approach again. It's so left-brained. And many creative people are not at all left-brained. Their response to helpful checklists is to feel that the creative process is being squeezed into a very small box. Art is too complicated for logic.

But surely we need some logic regardless of whether we call what we do audience development or public engagement.

Many don't like the logic of dividing people into groups, especially if those groups are called "target markets". I can see their point. It's too simplistic to divide people into groups by age, ethnicity or gender. You would never talk about dance in the same way to a 16 year old boy who is a member of a youth dance group and a 16 year old boy who is mad about football but has never danced before. Unfortunately, we rarely have the resources to have individual conversations with every single person we want to engage with. We have to take short cuts. One such short cut is based on the idea that groups of people with similar attitudes and experiences (forget about demographics) are likely to have similar needs, like the same sorts of things and act in the same sorts of ways.

Arts organisations often focus on the people who already deeply engaged. Sometimes that's a logical decision. The people who already love us, the thinking goes, are most likely to engage with our next project. Unfortunately, that usually means that we continually nag the people who engage most to engage even more. We ignore the vast majority of people who come into contact with us only occasionally. They are so many that encouraging them to dip in one more time is much more productive. We need to do the maths.

I'm always surprised that many of the organisations I work with, including those that invest the most time and money in public engagement, don't know if what they do works. They feel that simply doing performances in schools or workshops in the community or producing an online magazine is enough. Of course they deepen or widen engagement – that's what they are for. But do they?

What about the growing body of academic research that suggests theatre performances in schools put children off theatre in later life? They connect it with formal education rather than their own cultural life – to them, theatre is compulsory "cultural spinach"[2]. Is that really what we want to achieve?

We are passionate about the arts so we can be led by our hearts. And that means we make assumptions. Talking to colleagues and partners, I wonder if sometimes we prefer to focus on the people who most engage rather than those who dip in because they look and think like us. And perhaps our attempts to diversify audiences sometimes fail because we project ourselves onto them, assuming they share our attitudes and beliefs. We need a logical, evidence-based process to make sure we stand in other people's shoes, seeing the world as they see it. We need to set clear objectives to make us think deeply about what we really want to achieve and why. We need to evaluate what we do so we are not just doing things to people because it's good for them but really engaging. Wouldn't it be a good idea to stand in children's shoes and work out how we can create theatrical experiences in schools that don't taste like spinach?

Audience development involves a logical process. But it's complex. I look back twenty years at the *Guide to Audience Development* and wince slightly. Back then, we believed that the primary goal of audience development was to remove the physical, geographic, social and psychological barriers to the arts. If we removed them, people would engage. We now know it's a lot more complicated than that. We need to understand and respond to what motivates people and how they make decisions as well.

Asking people why they don't engage with the arts is soul destroying. Everyone says much the same thing: they are not interested, they

don't have time and it costs too much. Dig a bit deeper and the picture changes. They are not interested because they haven't come across art that reflects their history, interests and cultural identity. It's not relevant to them. They don't have time because there are more relevant things to do with their time. They think it's too expensive because there are more relevant ways to spend their money. [3] Art is for other people.

Dublin's Culture Connects is all about relevance. The starting point of every relationship is Tea and a Chat. Everything in Dublin happens over a cup of tea, so why not art? Team members visit community groups in their own environment and listen to what really matters to them and their communities. The group provides the tea and the team provides the biscuits. The themes that keep coming up become the starting point for a project involving the group with an artist. And that leads to involvement in other projects in partnership with Dublin's cultural institutions, all with relevance at their heart.

Maybe this is how audience development has changed over the past twenty years. It has embraced the philosophies of the community arts organisations who objected so much to the concept of audience development. It's no longer just about enhancing people's understanding and appreciation of the arts. It's about finding relevance through dialogue, through a two-way exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills.

To achieve that relevance, we need to be outward looking, curious about our audiences and the communities we serve, curious about what happens before, during and after that moment of creative engagement. And we have to be willing to change in response.

Audience development, public engagement – whatever we want to call it – isn't easy. But it makes a difference. A partner in one of the Creative Europe projects I'm involved in talked about their theatre as "an elite island of white, middle class people visiting a theatre space set in the heart of a disadvantaged multicultural community". The project's often uncomfortable mismatch of attitudes towards audience development has sparked a discussion among the team at the theatre. From the start they involved local families in creative

activities, encouraging community members to take charge of sessions. They learned so much simply by listening. But these activities have been separate from and taken a poor second place to the slog of staging production after production every season. The team are now rethinking the relationship between theatre and society, asking who they want their audience to be. How can they place their neighbours, the community in which they are based, at the heart of what they do? How can the theatre company find a new purpose? How can they find relevance and how can they bring it onto the studio floor?

The audience has developed the theatre.

> **Paradoxically, if we realise our limitations in dealing with difference and what this involves, we get better at taking advantage of this tricky but necessary contemporary diversity.**
>
> Qaisar Mahmood

Qaisar Mahmood
– Author and debater

The Price of Diversity?

The autumn term hadn't really even got started. The sun was still warm and yellow, and it didn't feel quite right to change my chinos and t-shirt for the white shirt and jacket that come with working life.

My footsteps echoed amongst the empty desks in the open plan office as I sauntered from my seat to the break room. Most people hadn't yet returned from their summer holidays.

Despite the coffee machine being no more than a few steps away, it felt burdensome to move. I felt drained of energy and hoped the coffee would rouse my spirits. I'm convinced that you have seen a similar coffee machine if you have ever visited any state authority or sat in the waiting room while your car has its MOT. A machine that serves twenty different types of coffee that all taste the same.

I had spent an entire year working intensively on planning and establishing the foundations for a comprehensive reorganisation. On a theoretical level, I was aware that change requires patience and careful planning. I'd heard the change coaches say so in the more than fifty YouTube videos I had watched and in the books I had read as part of my preparations. But the emotionalist within me had difficulty coming to terms with the fact that it could take almost thirteen months of planning and foundation work to gain acceptance for the change I wanted to implement.

I was sick of all the conflicts that had arisen at every step along the road towards change. Criticism of the decision to divide the department into smaller units. Criticism of the skills profile I wanted for the new unit managers. Instead of experts in cultural history, I wanted a management team, characterised by diversity in terms of educational background. Criticism of new titles for unit employees. I wanted everyone within a unit to have the same title – one that reflected the unit's task rather than the educational background of each individual and whether they were senior or junior.

I had tried to follow to the letter the advice in all the books about change management that I had borrowed and bought over the past year. Make the change step by step. Offer plenty of opportunities to provide views on the proposals – anonymously, individually, collectively, orally, in writing. I even assembled a working group to prepare the proposal for reorganisation including one leading critic – a group I considered neutral and that truly wanted change. Everyone was going to be involved and feel that they were included.

But nothing seemed to help.

Despite my attempts to open up dialogue, I struggled to gain a hearing and acceptance for the changes I was trying to implement.

Everything I touched turned to rust.

It was frustrating since my perception was that I was doing everything in my power to create participation, but I was met only with opposition. In short, I was tired of being in conflict with the individuals who set the tone in the department and were seen as informal leaders.

Later, I came to understand that I had failed to live up to one of the most important dictates when heading up a work group characterised by its differences – not to treat others the way I would like to be treated. I had appealed to the intellect of others but not their emotions.

On paper, the reorganisation was simple and logical. I had introduced new goals for the department and new unit names. But in practice, I had challenged the most existential requirements of my employees – their self-image, their sense of security and predictability and their sense of feeling needed and being important...?

In hindsight, I also came to understand that, at the time, I had failed to understand the extent of the journey I was embarking upon together with the sixty or so employees in the department. I had triggered instincts that have been instilled into humankind over the course of millennia in order to protect us from threats and unexpected dangers. This journey of change would last for more than five years, rather than a few months as I had initially naively believed. Had I known how long and drawn out the journey of change would be, I would probably have fled. After the fact, I'm grateful that I was ignorant of the complexity. I wouldn't surrender all the experiences I gained through necessity for anything in the world, but ignorance truly is bliss.

But back to the break room where this all began. As I stood beside the coffee machine waiting for the final drops to fall into the black coffee cup, I heard two talented, experienced colleagues sitting

opposite each other, deeply absorbed in a confidential conversation. It appeared they had not noticed that I was also in the room. I made myself as small as possible. Curiosity trumped the feeling of shame brought on by eavesdropping on a conversation not intended for my ears.

'He's in the process of running this prestigious organisation into the ground.'

'Absolutely.'

'It's inconceivable that for the first time in almost 400 years of existence, we're going to appoint a unit manager with no understanding of cultural history.'

'A lawyer, for god's sake. A LAWYER…'

'Completely incredible. It's as if competence no longer matters in this workplace.'

In order for you, the reader, to understand the context, you should know that I had just concluded the recruitment of a new unit manager for the unit in which both the concerned colleagues had been deployed, following the reorganisation.

The incoming unit head in question had a background in law and had spent the past four years working in university management. When we came to taking up references, the referees had sworn we were in the process of recruiting someone with a fine track record.

I had been focused on recruiting a competent and experienced manager but was on my way to neglecting the employees' need to be mirrored and affirmed. Who could be better suited to supporting colleagues exercising public authority than a manager who knew the Administrative Procedure Act like the back of his hand and was confident when it came to the rule of law?

I was in low spirits when I went home that evening and I began to question the path I had chosen; the decision to recruit a leadership group characterised by diversity in terms of professional experience, educational background and distribution of different personality types. Perhaps it would be better to continue recruiting more of the same in order to avoid the risk of draining the organisation's core competence – something my colleagues feared would happen. Even

though no one could quite put their finger on what exactly was meant by core competence.

Unfortunately, I chose to interpret the critics and their attitudes as being divorced from reality and hostile to change. In retrospect, I understand that I ought to have shown more gratitude to employees expressing scepticism during the journey. Reading between the lines of their criticism, there was a valuable lesson that I hadn't quite been able to take on board since I was far too focused on the criticism itself. It is true that, like the Buddha says, those you perceive as your critics are in fact your greatest teachers. If, that is, you can bear to accept the criticism. Something which, looking in the rear view mirror, it transpired I was pretty rubbish at.

Looking back, it is also clear to me that the reaction amongst my sceptical and critical colleagues in the break room was quite human and something I would have also felt and expressed had I been in their shoes.

It is natural for individuals faced with an uncertain future – even if they dislike the present – to react with scepticism and fear. Not only that, but that individuals who are about to be forced to associate with the unknown and the different – in this case in the shape of a department head who was a lawyer – feel increased stress. It is a case of employees being accustomed to everyone around them having the same background as they do, and these are often people one has studied and worked together with throughout one's entire professional life. Will their prospective boss – who is something else – be able to understand them, or will the way ahead be paved with misunderstandings and insecurity?

There is nothing that causes more stress to people than being subject to change they didn't ask for or being forced to associate with people they consider strangers.

The purpose of this text isn't to argue that you should increase diversity in your workplace. But it also isn't to argue for less diversity. Nor is the purpose to demonstrate that diversity leads to increased profitability and efficiency. Much of the research that looks into

whether diversity leads to efficiency actually shows that the results are ambiguous. The most efficient and least efficient work groups are those that are diverse. Groups characterised by a high degree of homogeneity are the most satisfied and harmonious.

However strange it may sound; one purpose of this text is to provide you with the support you need to not surround yourself with more diversity than your organisation needs.

Modern evolution and behavioural psychology clearly show that humankind is not cognitively equipped to handle diversity. Our brains perceive interactions with differences as something stressful because they demand a lot of energy from us. We get stressed and worried when others don't behave like us or in a way we recognise. This is why we thrive amongst like-minded people, even if we happily click 'like' on anything paying homage to diversity and difference.

My first piece of advice: if you are not facing revolutionary change in your surroundings or don't feel that you need to produce new things in a new way, I recommend that you play it safe and opt for more of what you already have. Keep doing what you have always done. Per definition, change is not something that we should strive for – it is something that is forced onto us. Certain tasks are performed more efficiently if colleagues share more similarities than dissimilarities – in fact, introducing differences can make the work inefficient.

However, it is my conviction that regardless of whether you work in the public or private sector, or in political life, we will in the future need to surround ourselves with more diversity than at present. Our hyperglobal society has changed the conditions for most of us when it comes to dealing with our complex and constantly changing daily lives. There are very few people who can continue in the same way as before. To those of you who can, I offer my congratulations.

This text is aimed at those of you who encounter new expectations from the world around you and where you and your organisation must respond to new circumstances to achieve your goals,

which is the case for the vast majority of us alive today. The term used by researchers to describe this is the 'VUCA world': an acronym of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity.

On one level, humanity has always faced these revolutionary forces. But the rate and extent of change at present is unique in human history. Today, we are unable to escape or create order in amongst the chaos – we must all wallow in the volatility, the uncertainty, the complexity, the ambiguity that life in the VUCA world entails. One way to deal with this is to surround yourself with difference and diversity.

But diversity comes with a price tag. Because our brains perceive change and difference as stressful, you won't want to expose yourself and your colleagues to unnecessary psychological strain. This is why you need the right kind of diversity rather than an abundance of diversity: diversity costs and you don't want to pay more than you have to.

We all carry psychological and social mechanisms around that unconsciously transform differences into similarities because the latter are easier to deal with. You should consider that both your brain and those of your colleagues still think you are cavemen traversing the dangerous savannah, even though in practice you are in an office wearing a suit or bow blouse.

There is a quote from the Russian author Anton Chekhov that I have often returned to in recent years: 'Man will become better when you show him what he is like.'

Paradoxically, if we realise our limitations in dealing with difference and what this involves, we get better at taking advantage of this tricky but necessary contemporary diversity.

I have personally made many mistakes during the journey of change that I have been responsible for implementing over the last five years, but I have also done a lot right. There are efficient ways to lead groups defined by diversity. But diversity comes with a (costly) price tag. Because the more difference there is in a group, the more will be

demanded of you as a leader and team-mate to do an efficient job that is also fun. And there are a number of tools that you can make use of to ensure the negative downsides of diversity don't take over or that the pursuit of diversity becomes a fool's errand. You just have to be prepared to pay the price of diversity.

Democratising access to the arts is often less about popularising the universal appeal of art, and more a concession to the idea that different audiences essentially relate to different art niches.

Tiffany Jenkins

Dr Tiffany Jenkins
– Writer and
consultant

The Tyranny of Relevance

On March 12, 1901, the East End Art Gallery, now the Whitechapel Gallery in London, opened its doors to the local public. The founders, Canon and Henrietta Barnett were Victorian reformers who sought to bring great art to the people. Their scheme for a 'permanent Picture Gallery' was built on the popularity of the temporary art exhibitions they had hosted in the St. Jude's Parish, for over 20 years, which had attracted an increasing number of visitors.

For the Christian socialist Barnetts, art and education were important tools to aid the advancement of working class people. Locating the gallery in the East End of London was part of this mission. The streets were dirty and filth-strewn, the neighbourhood, run-down and crime ridden.

Indeed, during 1888 Whitechapel had become infamous when it served as the main location for a serial killer of prostitutes known as Jack the Ripper.

The population of the area was pooled from the very poor English swelled by immigrants from all over, particularly Irish and Jewish: by the time of the gallery opening, Whitechapel was one of the Jewish capitals of Europe. Writing at the end of the nineteenth century the Yiddish theatre actor Jacob Adler described what it was like to live and work there: "The further we penetrated into this Whitechapel, the more our hearts sank. Was this London? Never in Russia, never later in the worst slums of New York, were we to see such poverty as in the London of the 1880s."[1]

Here, in Whitechapel, the Barnetts maintained, art could serve a worthy function. In their first report, the Trustees stated the aim of the Gallery was:

To open to the people of East London a larger world than that in which they usually work. To draw them to a pleasure recreating their minds, and to stir in them a human curiosity.[2]

There was a sense in which art and attention to it would encourage self-improvement in those with few opportunities in life. It would pull people away from the pub and the demon drink. Canon Barnett maintained that:

A greater love of beauty means, for instance, greater care for cleanliness, a better choice of pleasures, and increased self-respect. The use of the powers of admiration reveals new interests which are not satisfied in a public house, but drives their possessors to do something both in their work and their play which adds to the joy of the earth.[3]

The aspiration of the East London gallery was to bring great art to the people – art that would transform their lives. The founders wished to lift people out of their ordinary lives, so that they can partake

in the universal culture which would deepen and broaden their understanding of the world. The cultural historian Juliet Steyn puts it like this: the idea was "to inculcate in the population a higher subjectivity which could transcend nature by offering experiences, feelings and pleasures that were beyond what were perceived as the mindless routines of the working classes."[4]

For all the limitations of the Barnett's outlook: perhaps a slight condescension; regarding culture as a pacifier rather than trying to improve the desperate material conditions which confronted the poor, they had a inspiringly firm belief in the power of art and the possibility of people to be transformed by it. It was in many ways an egalitarian view of the masses, based on the belief that anyone – regardless of their ethnicity or social background – could visit and be moved by a work of art. And it was an outlook that fuelled the incredible boom in the numbers of museums, galleries and libraries that were built in Britain during the Victorian period.

Today, I wonder if such a thing would be possible. Fast-forward to 2018 and very different ideas are expressed about the role of the arts and the people. Nowhere is this more obvious that in the idea of relevance, much in vogue in arts policy circles, which differs from the outlook of the Barnetts in two ways. Firstly, the popular and contemporary concept of relevance speaks to a view of art that no longer sees it as holding authority or transformative, but something protean and shifting: effectively a point of view that anything can be art – including food, knitting and clothing, according to Arts Council policy. Secondly, rather than a universal culture that anyone can appreciate regardless of their identity, as was the outlook of the Victorians, the contemporary sensibility views people as bounded and separate, defined by their class and ethnic background, confined to their own limited experiences. This sees people more as types: black or white, gay or straight, rather than as a public.

Take Whitechapel today and the arts offer from contemporary cultural professionals, which offers a microcosm of a broader cultural landscape and the trends I critique.

In the 2000s, around the corner from the Whitechapel Gallery, the Rich Mix Centre opened, a venue that describes itself online as "62,000 square feet of activity and innovation, designed to bridge cultures and disciplines to create an entirely new kind of arts centre." There is no collection, but a cultural offer that is changeable, vague almost, always shifting. As for the audience, the website states "Our aim is to be a place where the communities of the world, who are the citizens of East London and beyond, can come together to experience and make world class art and feel that it's a place where they belong." There is no talk of the curiosity or the widening of the world, as it was for the Barnetts; instead inclusion and belonging is the goal.

New audiences are the holy grail for arts centres today. Museum and gallery professionals are desperate to get them in. For Sharon Heal, the Museums Association 's director, a diversity of audience types is needed because: "We live in a complex and divided world and it is more crucial than ever that a wide range of people can have access to the cultural riches that our museum collections hold."[5]

This approach has had a marked effect on the way arts institutions go about attracting new audiences. Despite all the egalitarian rhetoric by today's cultural mandarins, they seem to believe that beautiful paintings and orchestral masterpieces will deter people from hanging out in their institutions. Galleries today therefore offer little hope of art transcending social background or appealing to everyone regardless of class or culture and instead try to offer that which they already know. Democratising access to the arts is often less about popularising the universal appeal of art, and more a concession to the idea that different audiences essentially relate to different art niches. The sum of its various parts can be passed off as art for all. Arts institutions put on forms of art deemed likely to attract these different 'ghettos'.

There were limitations to the way the Victorian cultural elite ran museums and galleries, and the way they conceptualized the public – they saw culture as a tool in conserving the social and political status quo. But I would argue that today, for all the talk of "access,"

"audiences," and "relevance" – for all the discussion of opening up museums and galleries to the public, apparently making them more democratic and relevant – contemporary trends in cultural policy reflect a diminished concept of culture and a diminished idea of the public.

Today, contemporary cultural policy discourse often expresses ambivalence about ideas like cultural authority and expertise, and tends towards the celebration of different identities, diversity, and consumer choice. Whereas the Victorian elites believed that the arts were great expressions of truth, beauty, and human creativity, in the present period there is a limited endorsement of such an outlook. The notion that certain art forms cannot embrace everybody has become an article of faith. Culture with a capital "C" has given way to cultures, and any claim to authority or special status is treated with derision. Aspiration to excellence and high standards is dismissed as impossible, presumptuous and elitist.

The outcome of this defensive turn is a retreat from expertise driven exhibitions and a replacement of them with celebration of the ordinary and the banal – the obviously popular topics which challenge no one. It is commonplace to presume that certain art forms and institutions are too exclusive and should be made more inclusive.

The public is no longer encouraged to reach up and embrace the best or the difficult. Instead they are spoon-fed easy and relevant art work. This celebration of the ordinary is promoted as a democratic, anti-elitist affirmation of the people. But what it truly reveals is the contemptuous assumptions of an elite who no longer think the public is smart enough to encounter something alien to their own experience. The Victorians supposed that the most uncouth could be lifted out of their immediate circumstances and be transformed by art. Our own contemporary cultural professionals don't think people are really up to it and that culture isn't that good anyway.

The individual was once presumed to be able to transcend difference, but today he or she is presumed to be defined by a standpoint that

rejects the universal character of the subject as transformative and self-creating, in favor of "identity," which values the particular, fragmented nature of the subject. For advocates of identity politics, people's differences are no longer to be overcome, but are something that only they and others like them can understand and relate to.

As a consequence of the collapse of culture with a capital "C" and the tendency to see people as particular identity types that have to be reflected in particular kinds of exhibitions, cultural policy demands less of the public and delivers less. Museums and galleries change their collections so they will appeal to "non-traditional" visitors. Theaters put on plays that will attract local, diverse, or particular communities. The assumption behind these demands is that the public has very limited tastes and cannot be expected to transcend what people are already familiar with. Native Americans are the authors of their own exhibitions; trans people need a certain kind of art; white working-class women, the same.

The policy concepts of "access," "relevance" "diversity," and "inclusion," as they are put into practice, are not really about opening up the arts, so much as closing them down. Although advocates of new cultural policy suggest that making art relevant makes culture more inclusive and democratic, it may even militate against these ideals, in that relevance and access can confine people to their identity boxes, rather then be lifted up into a universal culture that all can be part of.

In the future, we need to expect more of the public and stop treating them like children, or particular identity types, but rather as a common, capable public. We should demand more of our cultural institutions and ask that they play a role that researches and presents the best of arts and culture, for everyone.

Fresh thinking is needed to design an entirely new breed of arts venues that blend together social, artistic, and creative possibilities, both live and digital.

Alan Brown

All the World's a Stage

Alan Brown
– Researcher
and consultant

Among the subtlest but most important shifts in patterns of cultural participation is the increased importance and meaning that consumers attach to the settings in which they engage in creative activities. The implications for arts presenters and the venues, spaces and facilities they use are significant. Future generations will not ascribe the same importance to permanent venues with fixed seating and fixed staging. In order to remain relevant, arts presenters and producers must radically re-conceptualize the relationships between their programs and their spaces in order to reach younger and more diverse audiences.

Moreover, entirely new types of facilities are needed to breathe new life into the art forms. Arts presenters who learn how to carefully match setting with artistic content, both live and digital, including the use of unusual or dispersed performance locations, will earn the patronage of a new audience.

"Theatres are the best way to keep people from the arts." – Simon Dove, Utrecht Festival, Dance/USA Forum, January 2011

Why will some people engage with art in one setting, but not another? For example, why will someone watch great drama on television at home, but never darken the door of a theater? Why will someone listen to classical music in a place of worship, but not a concert hall?

This paper explores the important role that 'setting' plays in arts experiences, and challenges artists and arts organizations to think more broadly and more creatively about where audiences encounter art.

All arts activities occur in the context of a physical or virtual setting, whether an automobile, a concert hall, or Facebook.[1] Different settings have different economic, social, behavioral and symbolic connotations (Conner, 2008). Consider, for example, the differences between seeing a great work of art in a museum versus seeing a reproduction of the same work of art on the kitchen wall every day for 10 or 20 years. Surely both experiences create meaning for the viewer, although the settings hold radically different value and legitimacy to society.

The term 'setting' refers to the many spaces, venues, and locations where arts experiences take place, and is used intentionally to broaden the discussion beyond conventional arts facilities. Settings may be formal or informal, temporary or permanent, public or private, and physical or virtual. In the broadest sense, 'setting' is a sort of meeting ground between artist and audience – a place both parties occupy for a finite period of time to exchange ideas and create meaning.

Two underlying hypotheses compel this paper. First is that setting plays an increasingly important role as a decision factor amongst cultural consumers, and therefore is a subtle, if not profound, driver of arts participation. The second is based on a wealth of anecdotal evidence: artists and arts organizations are choosing to create and present art in a wider range of settings that both animate the art and capture the imagination of audiences in new ways.

The need to more fully understand the inter-relationships between setting and art is long overdue. In 2008, a group of Australian researchers set out to answer a similar set of questions, 'based on a strong impression that the relationship between place and performance is shifting substantially' (Lancaster et al, 2010). With this notable exception and several others , the arts sector lacks a strong body of critical thinking about the changing nature of venues and settings for contemporary arts experiences, and, specifically, how different settings amplify, or detract from, participation.

Outside the arts, a wealth of related literature delves into placemaking, the psychology of architecture, and the role of public art in civic identity (see, for example, Green 2011). Much of this work suggests that setting plays a much larger and more significant role than that of an empty vessel for art. On the contrary, setting influences both the art itself, and the audience response. As a determinant of impact, it is thereby worthy of much more attention than has been accorded.

Theaters, concert halls, and museums are conducive to certain kinds of exchanges between art and people. These are, and will always be, critically important spaces for public participation in the arts. But meaningful exchange occurs with greater frequency in many other settings, from old breweries to planetariums, abandoned subway platforms, barges, cinemas, and community bookstores. With the proliferation of virtual spaces for arts programs, it seems now that all the world's a stage.

The new emphasis on setting is evident in the rise of site-specific festivals, growing experimentation with temporary or 'pop-up' spaces, a new pattern of use of cinemas for high quality digital arts programs,

and increased use of outdoor urban spaces for video presentation. It is also evident in the work of young artists who choose to curate the settings for their work as an integral part of the work itself.

Inviting audiences to spaces they do not want to visit is a losing proposition, especially when they do show up and feel out of place. Without a clearer perspective on the dynamics between audience, artist and setting, the arts sector will not develop the capacity it needs to engage the next generation of art lovers.

The Problem with Fixed Arts Facilities

Historically, venues and the art that appears in them have enjoyed a close relationship: sacred music composed specifically for reverberant cathedrals, Viennese opera houses, Parisian cabarets, and the American jazz clubs of the 1930s all had unique and idiosyncratic connections to their respective art forms. The proliferation of multi-purpose theatres, high school auditoriums, and performing arts centers in the second half of the twentieth century began to deconstruct important historical relationships. Over the years, audiences in many cities and towns have grown accustomed to using the same venue for a wide array of live events, from poetry slams to chamber music concerts. While multi-purpose venues can expand access to the arts, important connections between art and setting have been lost.

For all the billions of dollars invested in arts facilities over the past decades, little critical analysis can be found except for architecture criticism and news accounts of the trials and tribulations of planning and development.[3] In his 2010 TED talk, The True Power of the Performing Arts, Ben Cameron, program director for the arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, acknowledged that many purpose-built arts venues "…were designed to ossify the ideal relationship between artist and audience most appropriate to the 19th century" (Cameron 2010). Facility planning consultant Duncan Webb echoes this sentiment in his paper, *Theaters for*

Audiences, arguing that arts facilities have not evolved or adapted to the changing expectations and needs of contemporary audiences and local communities, nor to the needs of artists whose work demands alternative settings. Even as new performing arts centers open in places like Kansas City and Las Vegas, industry leaders are talking about the need to adapt and repurpose these types of facilities to accommodate programs and activities that serve a larger public (Bruner Loeb forum 2010).

First-class, purpose-built arts venues tend to be found in larger cities and towns with a strong philanthropic base. As the American population continues to diversify both ethnically and geographically, an inevitable shift in policy towards 'democratizing culture' will almost certainly result in a re-allocation of resources to organizations, programs and venues outside of the major cultural centers.[4]

A 2008 study of patterns of arts participation in California's inland regions (Brown, Novak, and Kitchener 2008) found that people of color use purpose-built arts facilities at a fraction of the rate that white people use them. For example, the study found that whites are seventy-six percent more likely than African Americans to engage in music activities at 'theaters or concert facilities'. In contrast, African Americans reported using places of worship for music, dance and theatre at two to three times the rate of whites. A significant difference was observed between English-speakers and Spanish-speakers in their use of theaters: thirty-eight percent of English-speakers reported using theatres, compared to just six percent of Spanish-speakers. Again, it is difficult to know the extent to which negative attitudes and perceptions are a barrier as opposed to other factors such as location or lack of culturally relevant programming.

The larger problem with the infrastructure of arts facilities is that it is fixed and slow to change, while culture is changing more and more rapidly. With an average age of roughly 50 years, purpose-built theatres lag behind current day cultural norms by many years. The problem is exacerbated when new facilities are modeled on old ones, perpetuating a long line of derivative thinking by architects, theatre

consultants, and their clients who seldom take the time to consider what future generations of artists and audiences will require. Once built, arts groups grow comfortable and efficient in their spaces, which can be a boon to artists and audiences alike. When keeping the lights on as often as possible becomes a financial imperative, however, there is little incentive to think about moving the art to alternative settings.

Monuments to culture are important symbolic vessels of community pride, much as sports arenas and stadiums have taken on the symbolic weight of urban vitality. But since culture is always changing, so, too, should its monuments. Facilities built to preserve the divide between artists and audiences are not going away any time soon, and many people will continue to idealize the experience they offer. But as consumers grow to appreciate unusual, quirky, and more comfortable settings for art, they will become less tolerant of uninteresting and restrictive spaces.

A sea change is underway in the relationship between the public and the settings where it engages with culture, both live and digital. To say that the professionalized arts sector has been caught off-guard would be an understatement. "It almost makes you think the arts have been in hiding all these years, playing it safe in their own cultural caves instead of venturing out to where life is really going on," says Peter Linett of Slover Linett Strategies, a leading research firm (Linett 2011).

Symbolic Identification and Behavior Change

Just as certain sounds and scents evoke memories, setting plays a key role in stimulating and reinforcing human behavior. People associate settings with specific behaviors, such as eating, learning, worshiping, and creating. Much like a young dog learns to associate her crate with safety and contentment, so too can humans be conditioned to associate certain settings with desirable behaviors. Behavioral psychologists identify setting as a trigger for both constructive and destructive behaviors. Removing someone from a setting associated with an undesirable behavior is a form of stimulus control, the first stage in a process of change to modify a 'problem behavior' or acquire a 'positive behavior' (Prochaska & DiClemente 1986).

Moving someone into a new setting re-contextualizes the behavior in question and resets the relationship between space and behavior. Old sights, smells, and symbolic cues are no longer present, thus removing a barrier to the desired behavior. This is as true of smoking cessation as it is of arts attendance.

While the physical attributes of a space can trigger conditioned behaviors, memories associated with past experiences in certain settings also play a role in framing expectations. In other words, the totality of one's past experience in a certain theater or museum, as well as its historical significance and meaning to the community, shapes one's expectations for what is appropriate and possible in that space. A museum assumes the character of its art much as an old pair of shoes assumes the personality of its wearer.

The architecture and design of arts venues influence the behaviors that occur within them. Winifred Gallagher asserts that 'people feel best in settings that, like parks and cars, foster a sense of control, impose few constraints, and offer multiple choices' (1999, p. 74). Studies in the fields of architecture and environmental psychology point to the profound role that environment plays in driving behavior. Speaking at the American Institute of Architects annual convention, Fred Gage, the Salk Institute neuroscientist, explained:

As neuroscientists, we believe that the brain is the organ that controls behavior, that genes control the blueprint, the design, and the structure of the brain, but the environment can modulate the function of genes, and our behavior. Architectural design changes our brain and our behavior (as quoted in Zeisel 2006).

Re-contextualizing art in a different setting, therefore, is a form of stimulus control that can trigger new behavior (that is, attendance) and free the art from negative associations and other barriers. Evidence abounds. The phenomenal success of la Folle Journée, France's largest classical music festival, may be ascribed in large part to creative uses of setting and alternative formats (for instance, no concert lasts more than 45 minutes).[5] When the Boston Lyric Opera offered two free outdoor performances of *Carmen* in the Boston Common in the summer of 2002, roughly 120,000 people showed up, according to official estimates. Nearly two-thirds were under age 35, and 30 percent were at their very first opera.[6] More recently, the San Francisco Opera attracted over 30,000 people to its September 2011 live digital broadcast of Puccini's *Turandot* at AT&T ballpark.

Audiences and visitors have deeply-seated emotional feelings about arts spaces, often characterizing them as 'friendly', 'welcoming', 'cold', or 'intimidating' – attributes often ascribed to people. Why will some people attend an arts event in one venue but not another? The reasons are complex, often relating to cost, mobility, accessibility, convenience, cultural relevance, and expected social norms. It is difficult to isolate the degree to which the setting itself is the problem.

Venues also take on symbolic meanings, either based on actual experience or transmitted through social networks. Some young people reject theaters and concert halls as settings for their parents' and grandparents' generations. Others feel that formal arts venues impose stifling social norms or elicit what Bourdieu described in his research on museum visitors as "a profound feeling of unworthiness and incompetence" (Bourdieu 1991). In a recent focus group discussion, one young man put it this way: "Sitting in a dark room for two hours and not being able to talk to my girlfriend is not my idea of an enjoyable evening."

Arts groups' efforts to attract younger audiences, even when successful, are sometimes thwarted by the actual experience that young people have when they show up and do not see their peer group

in attendance. When the setting is changed, however, the positive experience can be reinforced, such as when the London Sinfonietta performed Steve Reich's music in the Oskar Schindler factory in Krakow, Poland (Bujic 2009). Other variables, such as curtain time, can also be adjusted to attract different audiences, such as Paul Winter's popular solstice celebrations at New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, which begin at 4:30 a.m.

It seems that younger adults attach greater importance to both setting and format than their older counterparts, although this assertion is based on anecdotal evidence and bits of quantitative findings from audience segmentation studies. Or, it may be that younger adults simply enjoy different kinds of settings than their older counterparts. The New World Symphony's late-night Pulse concerts in Miami Beach attract hundreds of fashionably dressed young adults. These events feature a live DJ playing electronic dance music in alternating sets with the orchestra. The concert hall itself is barely recognizable, transformed dramatically into a domed club-like setting with high-definition video projections and ambient lighting. In altering the setting, artists and curators can invoke cultural norms not typically associated with arts attendance and begin to address some of the underlying barriers.

Audience Sovereignty

Consumers increasingly expect, and more often than not are given, a high degree of interactivity and engagement in their leisure pursuits, from gaming to reality TV and theme parks. Everywhere one looks, consumers are being offered choices to make that were not previously available. Instead of buying a doll, a young girl can go online and design her own. The crowdsourcing ethos is a manifestation of this shift, along with the pervasive assumption that consumers are entitled to provide feedback on every product, service or webpage they use.

There is much talk in the arts sector about allowing audiences and visitors to 'co-author' meaning, but still a good deal of skepticism about what this really means, and how to do it. Lynne Conner, currently Chair and Professor, Department of Theatre, University of North Carolina, uses the term 'sovereignty' to characterize the authority that audiences want over their arts experiences (2008, p. 6). Of course, many people profoundly enjoy sitting quietly and taking in a live performance, or viewing art that is not interactive at all, without feeling under-engaged or disempowered. Nonetheless, static experiences of all sorts will grow increasingly problematic, especially those that do not offer audience members any choices to make, such as when to get up, when to get a drink, when to talk – all of which are available in the theatre of the home. At a focus group discussion several years ago, young adults were asked to narrate an 'imaginary tour' of a hypothetical jazz venue. With the aid of a glass of wine, they designed the next generation of concert facilities defined largely around choice-making. During the day, the venue would be open as a coffee house/music lounge, where anyone can come to hear, share, and acquire music. At night, it would transition to a venue for live concerts where patrons can move fluidly between different spaces designed for intensive listening, 'partial-attention' listening, and socializing while watching the concert on a large screen.

The need to offer consumers more opportunities to personalize their experiences has implications for both the art itself, in terms of a diminishing audience for what some consider 'passive' experiences, and most likely foreshadows waning interest in the more restrictive settings in which professionalized art is offered. In the realm of participatory arts, recent studies have uncovered a rich tapestry of activity in a wide range of informal and non-traditional community settings such as coffee houses, neighborhood art centers, commercial stores and parks (see Alvarez 2005; and Wali, Severson, & Longoni 2002). Perhaps this high level of accessibility is one reason why participation in arts creation has not declined as much as attendance-based participation (Novak-Leonard & Brown 2008).

Settings and Socialization

In his seminal text *Art as Experience,* John Dewey wrote that music, dance, drama, painting, and sculpture and the buildings that housed them served an inherently social purpose over the centuries (Dewey 1934). Eating, drinking, socializing, flirting, and more serious discourse were always central to arts experiences. Only in the last few hundred years have the arts been restricted to 'sacred place[s] where there is no touching and no talking' (Conner, 2008).

Settings for arts programs are distinguished by the types of social interactions that they permit both inside and outside of the audience chamber or gallery spaces. What does it signal to arriving audience members, for example, when they see other patrons sitting in intimate seating areas socializing before a concert – or lingering afterwards?

Settings are important because, for a finite period of time, they create 'community'. But, what kind of 'community' do they really create, and for whom? Sociologist Elijah Anderson suggests that public spaces can serve as 'cosmopolitan canopies' where people from different walks of life converge (Anderson 2004). Under these 'canopies', race, class, and other conventions of social hierarchy matter less. Everyone has an opportunity to 'belong'. Not everyone, of course, wants to be under Anderson's umbrella. But I find the concept useful. Arts facilities can serve not only as meeting places for like-minded art lovers, but as canopies for our increasingly diverse communities.

Creating 'community' is not dependent on interpersonal contact alone, since most people who visit arts facilities speak directly with only a few other people. The larger meaning of 'community' relates more to what French sociologist Émile Durkheim described as the 'collective effervescence' – when the 'act of congregating' becomes a 'powerful stimulant' – and the outcome cannot be predicted by individual responses alone (Durkheim 1912).

Subtle design features can have a profound impact. What is the effect on theatregoers, for example, when they can see the faces of other audience members during a performance, as opposed to when they can only see the backs of heads? As humans, we instinctually mimic one another, thereby negotiating meaning and constructing bonds that sustain and protect us (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson 1994). It is difficult to absorb the emotional reactions of other audience members in a totally darkened auditorium, except by hearing them. Seating configurations that allow for more visual interaction amongst audience members, aided by sufficient lighting, can positively affect the audience experience.

The need to offer more sociable, intimate, informal, and comfortable environments for arts programs has become an urgent priority.[7] Diane Paulus, the visionary artistic director of American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, Massachusetts, refers to herself as 'a crusader for expanding the ways and the places where people can come to the theatre'. Speaking to a group of opera administrators at the 2011 Opera America conference in Boston, Paulus described Oberon, ART's club-like second space, as 'a way of thinking about art and theatre and nightlife in an intertwined relationship'. The higher premium attached to the social aspect of arts attendance can be seen in facility projects ranging from Arena Stage's $130 million transformation (devoted to improving the audience experience outside of its theatres, in large part) to New York's Le Poisson Rouge, a hybrid social/performance space 'serving art and alcohol' – undoubtedly one of the most talked-about facilities in recent memory.

As audiences become more assertive about shaping their own cultural experiences, it's little wonder they are turning to a broader array of venues and settings. It's a natural progression in the evolution of taste. Consumers who reject one setting in favor of another are merely enacting a form of sovereignty they are regularly given, and have come to expect, from other entertainment experiences.

Settings for Digitized Art

The proliferation of settings extends to virtual spaces and physical spaces designed for the enjoyment of digital content. Once digitized, art can be experienced anywhere – on a computer screen at work, on a mobile device at the gym, or on a large screen in a movie theatre. Digitized art is also largely a sunk cost; the incremental expense of showing it again is a fraction of the cost of its original production. This is a momentous paradigm shift, but one that has yet to impress the arts sector, with a few notable exceptions.

In 2011, over 2 million people worldwide attended the Metropolitan Opera's high-definition broadcasts in local movie theaters. The Met's cinema patrons enjoy a good social dynamic – they applaud together and mingle – and often comment about the excellent visual experience: "The close-ups were so tight you could see a tear slowly trickling down the tenor's face – and that the soprano's fingernail polish didn't match the color on her toes, though she did nail the high C" (Associated Press 2010). Other arts groups such as the National Theatre of Great Britain and the Los Angeles Philharmonic have also entered the digital marketplace with high quality programs.

Amid the clamor about live versus digital arts experiences, no one seems to have taken notice that the omnipresent movie theater is quickly becoming a valued setting for arts programs. With their reclining seats, cup holders, and individual arm rests, movie theaters set the standard by which other venues are judged. Have you been to a luxury cinema lately?

Digital experiences, as they gain in quality and selection, will be seen as an inexpensive and attractive alternative to live performance, especially when the setting affords more social benefits and creature comforts than are available in theaters and concert halls. In 20 or 30 years, it is quite possible that millions of people around the globe will be going to movie theaters to watch high quality digital broadcasts of the best opera, dance, classical music, stage plays, and musicals in the world, for a fraction of the price of a ticket to a live performance.

While this would be a fantastic outcome in terms of increasing public participation in the arts, it could also divert demand away from live programs. The opposite may also be true – broadcasting arts programs into cinemas may, in fact, fuel demand for live programs. Regardless, arts groups have a limited window of time to integrate digital content into their programs and facilities, or risk foregoing significant opportunities to develop new audiences and regenerate interest in their art forms.

The Role of Arts Facilities in Placemaking

A new focus on the arts' role in urban revitalization, neighborhood development, and civic dialogue speaks to a shift in priority from art as a disembodied commodity for those who can afford it, to art as a fully integrated element of community life (Markusen & Gadwa 2011). Two well-funded examples are the ArtPlace grant initiative,[8] supported by a consortium of foundations, and the National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town Initiative,[9] both designed to support a variety of projects that integrate art with civic priorities such as livability and neighborhood renewal.

This signals a new chapter in the central narrative of the public value of the arts. More often, investments in art must generate not only 'excellent' art but also art that connects people with their communities in tangible, practical ways – a ratcheting-up of desired outcomes born out of a desire to gain a more central role for the arts in civic life. A growing body of research linking arts and cultural assets with neighborhood vitality (See Nowak 2007; and Stern & Seifert 2008) supports this important shift in cultural policy.

As a consequence, cultural facilities will be expected to play a more integral and intentional role in civic life. The decades-old value system underlying centrally-located stand-alone cultural facilities that are disconnected from the urban fabric is giving way to an ethos that supports more decentralized networks of smaller, re-purposed

and re-used facilities that have more intimate and immediate relationships with their surroundings. In large metropolitan areas like Atlanta and Detroit, this is largely a function of suburban sprawl and the fact that the center of gravity of arts-inclined households is moving farther and farther away from the urban core. Many suburban municipalities have built their own cultural facilities. It is also a function of the decreased willingness of time-starved arts lovers to fight traffic or drive more than 20 or 30 minutes when attractive alternatives are closer to home – or at home.

What do communities need from their cultural facilities? Cultural policy in the United States has not addressed this question with much clarity, although recent cultural planning efforts, such as the one completed by the City of San Jose in 2010, tend to prioritize smaller-scale venues scattered throughout a community, 'both downtown and in neighborhood business districts' (Plettner & Saunders 2011). A new breed of spaces for arts-based creative exchange has emerged, such as the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago and Taller Puertorriqueño in Philadelphia, often combining libraries, exhibition spaces, performance spaces, classrooms, media labs, retail spaces, cafés, and technology-rich meeting spaces. These spaces are distinguished not only by the mix of functionalities they accommodate, but in the blending of participation modalities they foster – both in terms of producing vs. consuming, as well as valuing the work of both amateur and professional artists in a holistic experience of creativity.

Between 2005 and 2008, a consortium of public agencies in Canada sought to better understand the existing cultural infrastructure in order to anticipate future needs.[10] Scholars articulated a need for four types of arts, cultural, and creative spaces:

1. Multi-use hubs that bring together arts, culture, heritage, and library facilities;
2. Incubator spaces that support creative exchange between and amongst artists, entrepreneurs, and the public;
3. Multi-sector "convergence spaces" that foster networking and "random collision" between creative workers; and
4. Long-term artist live/work spaces (Duxbury 2008).

When the siting and design of arts facilities reflect their communities and mesh with their surroundings in novel ways, the results can foster community engagement in the arts and add immeasurably to a community's sense of place. Consider, for example, the Mart Theatre[11] in Skipton, a small agricultural town in the Yorkshire region of the U.K. where city planners identified an underutilized livestock market as a site for live performing arts programs. The Mart Theatre opened in 2005 with an 'artistic programme designed to address local cultural and economic needs', including weekend art fairs ('Art in the Pen') and theatrical productions on weekend nights exploring, among other things, intersections between art and agriculture. Arlene Goldbard, an influential writer and champion of community arts, goes so far as to suggest that local governments should impose a 'cultural impact assessment' permitting requirement on all new public construction (including cultural facilities), identifying negative impacts on cultural and social infrastructure, and denying permits to projects that will destroy valued cultural fabric (Goldbard 2006).

Arts and cultural facilities must play a far more central role in the intellectual, creative, social, and entrepreneurial lives of their communities than they do now, and must be guided by a far more nuanced understanding of the types of settings that artists, audiences, and community members will need over the next 50 years. It is also clear that community needs will be increasingly satisfied by temporary, movable, and low-cost 'semi-permanent' venues that can respond more flexibly to a community's unique and changing needs. This can be seen in the growing number of 'pop-up' arts programs and facilities around the world, such as Chicago's Pop-Up Art Loop™ project[12] and the CHANEL Mobile Art Pavilion,[13] to the expanding realm of 'urban ephemera' – parades, festivals and other short-lived or spontaneous events that transform urban areas and inject an element of surprise into life's routines (Shuster 2001).[14]

Artists as Curators of Setting

While some artists prefer to perform and exhibit in prestigious venues with first-class technical capacities, good acoustics and comfortable dressing rooms, other artists, such as choreographers Elizabeth Streb and Emily Johnson, are decidedly moving beyond conventional spaces and asserting a license to design the settings in which their art is experienced, as well as the art itself. Streb's Lab for Action Mechanics (or SLAM) in Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood was designed specifically to allow and encourage audience members to play an active role in their experiences, and embodies Streb's desire to embed her work in a community context. Minneapolis-based Emily Johnson's work blurs many lines, including the lines between artist, audience, and setting. Her pieces often take the form of installations that engage audiences in architectural spaces and environments – such as vacant office spaces and IMAX theatres – that are part and parcel of her artistic impulse.

Sometimes artists draw inspiration from the setting itself, either making thematic connections or incorporating physical elements of the space into their artistic concepts. One of the more imaginative examples in recent memory was Gotham Chamber Opera's 2010 production of *Il mondo della luna* (The World on the Moon), an obscure Haydn opera staged in the Hayden Planetarium of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, under the direction of Diane Paulus.[15] Another notable example of the blending of setting and art is *Sleep No More*, a roving theatrical production by Punchdrunk, the British immersive theatre troupe, in which 'Lines between space, performer and spectator are constantly shifting'.[16] Billed as an 'indoor promenade performance' at a converted warehouse space in New York City, audience members wander around the venue charting their own course and encountering scenes along the way.

Several arts groups have built an identity around the unique settings in which their work is experienced. Woodshed Collective, a New York-based group of theatre artists, creates installation theater

presented free of charge to the public. By setting its work in unusual locations, the group rejects the traditional performer/spectator relationship and encourages its audiences 'to activate their senses and become participants in the world of the play'.[17] Similarly, the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles has built a distinct identity by carefully matching chamber music artists with historic sites, including architecturally significant homes, ornate ballrooms, cathedrals, and even the RMS Queen Mary, the retired ocean liner moored in Long Beach, California.[18]

Site-specific work is nothing new. What seems to be changing, though, is an increased desire among artists (whatever their medium) to control the settings in which their work is experienced, and to afford audiences greater purview over their experiences. Artists' motivations to work in settings of their own design can be understood both in economic terms, as a means of accessing more affordable spaces, and on artistic terms, as a means of bypassing cultural gatekeepers and gaining more creative control over the entirety of the arts experience, if only to relinquish it back to the audience. This presents a challenge to curators and artistic planners who must think anew about existing and alternative spaces that will accommodate the work of ambitious, untethered artists whose work aims to explore the combustion of art and setting.

Creating more intimate, interactive, and direct connections with audiences is an over-riding need for talented but discontented young artists like violist Charith Premawardhana, founder of Classical Revolution,[19] a musician-driven, multi-city movement to bring chamber music to a wider audience. "It's *our* experience to enjoy the way *we* want to," explained Premawardhana in an interview, noting that many young musicians are frustrated with the system of agents, unions, venues, and institutions that stand between art and people. "I think younger musicians have a different attitude. We need to make our own work happen on our own terms."

Working with artists to find a broader array of settings that enrich the art and capture the imagination of the public is necessary for

securing the future of the art forms themselves. As Howard Becker noted in his 2004 essay "Jazz Places", artists' work is shaped by the many settings in which they work (Becker 2004). It is essential, therefore, to think of setting not only as a variable in the audience experience but also as a critical aspect of the aesthetic development of artists. "To free the art," Diane Ragsdale reflects, "... we need spaces, both live and virtual, that support artists, support socializing, and that enable a more dynamic interaction between patrons and artists" (Ragsdale 2010).

Conclusion

Demographic and technological shifts, along with shifts in patterns of cultural engagement, are slowly cracking the conceptual foundation of the cultural facility infrastructure, calling into question underlying assumptions about the role that permanent cultural facilities play in society, and what types of cultural facilities are needed to animate a community and accommodate artists.

Settings are imbued with meaning, much as art has different meanings to different people. In the economy of meaning, setting is a currency, just as art is a currency (Sharpe 2011). As consumers grow increasingly facile with editing, organizing, and remixing the art in their lives, so too are they increasingly comfortable curating the settings where they interact with art. In doing so, they form likes and dislikes for certain settings, which, in turn, reshapes patterns of arts participation.

All of this suggests a need for modern-day curators and artistic directors to canvass their communities for indigenous settings for art, much like an archaeologist scours the earth for clues to human history. Where, amongst the architectural detritus of a once-bustling Midwestern town, might jazz take on a new life? Where along the streetscape can visual art find a new audience? Where are the unexpected stages in your community, waiting to be animated? Effective

artistic leaders will need to know their communities as well as their art forms, and will need to take artistic cues not only from art and artists, but from settings as well. An orchestra, for example, might identify a space of historic significance to its community, and then curate a musical program particularly suited for that space, and for the audience that will be drawn to it.

Many artists and arts groups prefer not to perform or exhibit in unconventional settings. There are financial obstacles, artistic limitations, technical barriers, and a host of other legitimate reasons for keeping art in purpose-built venues. Nonetheless, the fact remains that setting is an under-leveraged variable in the stubborn calculus of audience development.

Arts groups with fixed spaces have tough choices to make. How to balance the need for operating efficiencies with the longer-term need to replenish audiences through programming in new or different spaces? Much can be done to transform existing spaces. Lobbies can be made more conducive to social exchange and informal, spontaneous programming. Seating plans can be adjusted to increase the comfort level of patrons and offer them more choices to make. Black boxes, lobbies, rehearsal halls, and donor lounges can be converted into cabarets, jazz lounges, and digital venues. Stages can be made into intimate performance spaces where audience members surround the artist. Exterior walls can be converted into giant screens for video art[20] and outdoor plazas can be redesigned to accommodate public dances, drumming circles, and spoken word competitions, as the Music Center of Los Angeles County has done with its Active Arts® program, a series of participatory art-making opportunities at The Music Center campus in downtown Los Angeles.

Adapting old spaces and using found spaces are two approaches to re-contextualizing art, but a third approach is necessary. Fresh thinking is needed to design an entirely new breed of arts venues that blend together social, artistic, and creative possibilities, both live and digital. The New World Center in Miami Beach is a laboratory for exploring new presentation formats and represents a significant step

forward in the re-thinking of arts venues. But a great deal more experimentation is needed. Until the chain of derivative thinking about settings for art can be broken, the infrastructure will grow obsolete on an ever-shortening timeline.

The public has already asserted sovereignty over where it engages with art. Now the arts sector must apply its creative energies to discovering the settings where art will resonate with different communities, especially those without museums and theaters. In order to gain the higher levels of public support and funding that they seek, arts groups will need to become more facile in locating their work in settings that re-contextualize art and make their programs relevant to a broader public.

Setting is a critical backdrop to arts participation. In a marketplace haunted by uncertainty, setting is one of the few variables that artists and curators can, and must, use imaginatively. The time has come to reconsider the trade-offs of presenting art in a broader range of settings that engage communities in new and exciting ways. As our forbears discovered centuries ago, the marriage of art and setting can be divine.

If we are to take the audience seriously, we believe we must measure the value of culture to a greater extent on the basis of the impact it has on the individual. This will require those of us in the cultural world to increasingly begin to ask our audience about their experiences rather than how often they go to the theatre.

Allan Klie and Signe Ravn

Allan Klie
– Creative producer,
the Askov Foundation

Signe Ravn
– Journalist and
communications consultant

Participation is the Road to Relevance

'Part of the reason why there are empty seats is that there is nothing on at the major theatres that my friends and my generation want to go and see… I don't see the dilemmas of our lives being shown on the big stages. And I don't see them being dealt with at all by stage performers of our own age in any sort of framework that we, as the audience, are able to see ourselves in.'

These are the words of Anna Malzer, a young student of theatre direction at the Danish National School of Performing Arts. Her statement bears testament to the fact that it is high time to find new pathways, if we are to succeed in inviting young people into theatres and ensuring in the long-term that we secure the theatre audiences and theatres of the future.

Copenhagen receives an influx of 10,000 new inhabitants every year – primarily students and other young people – and the average resident of Copenhagen is under 36 years old. In contrast, the average theatre goer is over 50.

This is a challenge that requires action.

In years gone by, the majority of people in Denmark did not question the perceived importance or value of the theatre. But things have changed. Art and culture have now become political bargaining chips, with taxpayer-funded support that was once considered untouchable now first in line whenever resources are to be redistributed or saved. Art is under pressure, and everyone wants *value for money*. The idea that the theatre is about more than just decoration – that it is a valuable space for reflection on our own lives and contemporary situation – has been pushed into the background.

But why has this shift occurred? Has Denmark become a nation of 'cultural non-users' and ignoramuses? How exactly can we measure and assess the value of culture?

'In order to get more out of cultural funding, I propose that the cultural sector allows itself to be measured,' said Ulla Tofte, Director of the M/S Maritime Museum of Denmark in Elsinore, at a cultural meeting in 2016, when the then Minister of Culture had invited cultural figures and opinion formers to discuss how we could get more culture for less money. 'It wasn't universally popular in the cultural world,' she later wrote on her Facebook page.

We believe that the explanation for the reluctance to allow this kind of measurement is related to the fact that politicians and the cultural sector often measure the value of culture in very different ways. While politicians often have an instrumental approach, where value is measured by the size of the audience and whether the culture generates economic growth or not, theatres often measure their own value based on professional parameters: artistic quality, good reviews, prizes awarded.

We recently saw this in the case of one theatre in Copenhagen, which was criticised by politicians for having insufficient audience

numbers. The theatre manager's response was that the theatre was delivering a high level of artistic quality. They had won a Reumert Prize, made their international breakthrough and one reviewer had even described one of the theatre's productions as 'the most significant work to appear on stage in Denmark for many years'.

Although theatres would like to have large audiences come to see their performances – and although politicians also attach great importance to international recognition – the parameters for success are fundamentally different. This means that the cultural sector often feels misunderstood, while politicians feel they are not getting enough for their taxpayer-funding and that the cultural sector is not listening to what is being said.

While politicians and the cultural world talk at cross purposes, both sides lose focus on what the main purpose of art really is – to stimulate reflection. We believe that what culture means to the ordinary citizen and what impact it has on the audience should both be taken into account to a far greater extent when assessing the value of culture.

The Third Way – The Audience's Way

When cultural consumers go to the theatre or a museum, they do so primarily for internal reasons. They want to have an exciting experience; they would like to get to know themselves better; they want to hear a good story that resonates with them; they want to be wiser, and some want to be provoked. All in all, it is predominantly for existential reasons that people seek out cultural experiences. It may also simply be the case that they want to have a good time with their friends and family, experience something outside of the ordinary or see and experience something that everyone is talking about.

If we are to take the audience seriously, we believe we must measure the value of culture to a greater extent on the basis of the impact it has on the individual. This will require those of us in the cultural world to increasingly begin to ask our audience about their

experiences, rather than how often they go to the theatre. This will not only contribute to the creation of a new discourse for how we measure the value of culture, but it will also help the cultural sector to better understand who our audience is, how they think and what matters to them. Not just in the theatre, but in their everyday lives as citizens in a complex, global world.

The 'Oslo Atlas' survey conducted by Audiences Norway showed that active cultural consumers were also active citizens. However, it also demonstrated that citizens in a modern society are highly selective in their choices. This makes the task of clarifying the value of theatre a matter of collaboration between citizens, the political sphere and the cultural world.

This will enable us to become more relevant to our users and therefore to society.

In order to get better acquainted with the younger generation, in 2011 Allan Klie and Københavns Musikteater (the Copenhagen Music Theatre) initiated a major partnership between researchers and upper secondary schools, using the production of *'Drømmenes Labyrint'* [Labyrinth of Dreams] as a case study. The project, which was supported by interregional funds earmarked for collaborations across Oresund, was documented in the anthology, *'Publik i perspektiv'* [Audience in Perspective] (eds. Malena Forsare and Anja Mølle Lindelof). The art and theatre experiences of 120 young Swedes and Danes formed the basis of our work. In the dialogue that followed, we got some crucial pointers in the shape of the young people's immediate reactions. 'The theatre is only for rich, old people.', 'The theatre is a sinking ship – just like the book.' and, 'Why should I go to the theatre if they just pretend that I'm not there?' were just some of the responses.

The young people's statements heavily underlined that both form and language can seem alienating to many. Theatre must work in the present day and with the people to whom you want to tell something. The most important thing we learned was that the opportunity to use the theatre as a space for reflection requires a mirror to be held up to the audience.

In 2013, on the basis of this experience, Allan Klie and Københavns Musikteater launched a major cultural-caravan project in which we dispatched performance artists away from the fixed framework of the institution. They went onto the streets of Copenhagen in caravans to engage in dialogue with the locals, to listen to their stories and transform them into art in the local community. We saw huge interest in the project, which collected more than 700 contemporary stories from people in the areas where the caravans were parked up.

In practice, we rediscovered the intensity of the live encounter between artist and audience – that some stories are best told in the place where they belong, and how storytelling can form a very strong social gathering point.

Several artists from the caravan project have since used contemporary stories as their artistic point of departure and have taken on board the participatory approach.

Allan Klie has subsequently worked artistically in all our productions with three parameters, of which there should always be two out of the three aimed at the audience you want to reach: the dramatic form of presentation, the experience and lastly and most importantly, the content.

Unfortunately, it is in this regard that he has encountered the greatest resistance in the established art world.

There is a widespread perception that the art is compromised if citizens are involved in its content and form.

But it is important to emphasise that the desire to ensure that the content hits home with a specific target audience is not a manoeuvre undertaken at the expense of the art. On the contrary, it can enhance the art. The moment when the audience has ownership and what it sees is considered to be relevant is when the theatre's finest qualities emerge. Space is created – there in the darkness of the theatre – in which the audience can learn something about themselves, each other and the time we live in. A good experience at the theatre makes people want more. The value of the theatre is measured in the meeting with the audience.

Denmark is internationally renowned for its children's and youth theatre. In this field, we are highly aware that there is a difference between telling a love story to a 4-year-old girl and to a 16-year-old boy. But the moment a teenager turns 18, they are transferred to the adult theatre, where it is insisted upon that the youth has the same contemporary understanding as a woman of 60. Naturally, this is not the case, meaning that the teenager goes elsewhere to hear their contemporary stories.

The artistic gaze should always guide the final product/work, but we should go back to the root of theatre – the one about stories told in a circle using the dramatic spoken word, understood by the desired target audience. This is how the theatre can become a valuable space for reflection.

What Do We Want to Mean to Our Audience?

Back to the cultural meeting in 2016. The discussion about how to measure the value of culture arose in response to another question posed by the then Minister of Culture: How do we get more culture for less money? The logic is straightforward. If we have no idea how to measure the value of what we are creating, how can we possibly discuss how to get better value for money? If we accept Allan Klie's proposal that we measure value based on what culture means to the audience, this in turn means that we will be getting better value for money if we become more relevant to the ordinary citizen. In our present encounters with audience, it would seem that we lack the tools to measure and grasp this value. Similarly, we are unable to embrace the immediately measurable quantity and less tangible quality and importance of the art itself. Theatre is not just a business like any other.

Given that culture is nowadays perceived by many as the trimmings, rather than the substance, this is the responsibility of neither

the audience nor the politicians – it is up to the cultural sector. One explanation is precisely that much of the cultural sector is focused on the critics' judgement rather than what they mean to the audience.

There are too many Danish theatres that stage productions simply because they are classics, offering interesting professional opportunities. Only as an afterthought might it be considered how to reinterpret the performance, so that it becomes relevant to the daily lives of the audience – while others only begin to think about this when they want to drum up media attention for the performance. Some never even make it to the point of thinking that the play should provide the audience with anything other than a good story of high artistic quality.

Let us turn this on its head so that a theatre first asks itself: what do we want to mean to our audience? What experience do we want to give them? What do we want them to be thinking about when they leave? For instance, it could be current social debates on how we are dealing with the biggest refugee crisis since World War II, but it could also easily be classic, existential questions on the meaning of life, infatuation, love, hate and death. Only after this can you consider which performance would give people new perspectives and get them thinking in new ways about the subject.

Perhaps, rather than using a bunch of models and measuring methods, it is better to just make the decision that theatre should simply not be separated from the rest of society. This has happened in the UK.

In London, for example, a rich cultural scene is flourishing thanks to the nourishment of cross-sector partnerships. The Arts Council now requires all cultural organisations in the city in receipt of more than one million pounds per annum to seek out collaborative partnerships with participants in the community, schools, NGOs, local organisations and so on. The purpose of these partnerships is to increase the understanding of art and broaden ownership of art to as many people as possible. This is an example to follow. At first glance, it may seem like an artistic straitjacket to many, but Allan

Klie believes that it should be seen as a way of helping art to get out of its comfort zone and daring to start a conversation about the position of theatre in society. There is value in saying that the theatre has something to say and can add value to every corner of society.

We must and should acknowledge that art should engage with the contemporary world, and that audience development – which focuses on content, which is really just artistic development – is not about pandering to the audience or just giving them what they want. Instead, it is about involving them in the process. Let their input become a guiding light without compromising the art, because art and artistic ambitions, visions and goals are what form the final performance that – by means of storytelling – touches, moves, challenges and changes its listeners, its audience.

In the aforementioned cultural meeting, Allan Klie was asked about his four recommendations to reach a younger, more diverse audience. His answer was: involve, involve, take the audience and their era seriously and INVOLVE.

Based on his practical experience, his final call is therefore that we should not isolate ourselves in art but should let ourselves be inspired by other industries and the surrounding community. We should be curious: opening doors to new experiences, looking people in the eye and placing the value of art where it can make a serious difference.

> In fact, if we consider the purpose of publicly subsidising culture to be to extend and deepen the experience of the arts for individuals (and more widely as a matter of social justice), then we may need to reconsider the very culture being democratised.
>
> Steven Hadley

Audience Development: Democratising Culture?

Steven Hadley
– Researcher
and writer

Why is audience development so important for arts and cultural organisations? From an arts management perspective there are two broad answers. Arts managers want more people to engage in culture because it benefits either the arts organisation (financially, socially and artistically) or the individual (and, by proxy, society at large). The logical corollary of this is to extend these benefits as widely as possible through both artistic and audience development.

One of the more obvious effects of developing a geographically dispersed model for arts development and delivery, as happened in England after the Second World War, is that over time this physical framework and its attendant bureaucratic infrastructure become resource intensive.

Put simply, the cultural sector now has a lot of buildings and administrative/management staff all over the country and they cost a lot of money. The development of this institutional infrastructure results in two things: the organisations develop a desire for self-preservation, and the funder wants to protect its investment. Left unchecked, this can lead at best to stasis, and at worst to ossification.

Simultaneously, in the period since 1945 the 'Patron State' model of public arts subsidy predominant in Western Europe has evidenced a desire to make available to all a culture that had previously been the preserve of elites. Inherent in the idea of public subsidy is a moral imperative to ensure democratic access to the arts and culture being funded by the taxpayer – a 'democratisation of culture'. There is, then, an implicit theoretical relationship between public cultural subsidy and the broadening, or democratising of access. Such a moral imperative is implicit in any system of public cultural subsidy operating in a modern liberal democracy given that, "A democratic state cannot be seen as simply indulging the aesthetic preferences of a few, however enlightened" (Mulcahy, 2006:323). This leads both arts management and cultural policy to ask questions about how publicly subsidised arts and culture must be both democratic and democratised.

From the vantage point of UK cultural policy, we can reflect on over 70 years of public subsidy for the arts. Although such perspectives rarely offer anything more than symbolic value, in this case it provides pause for thought about the long-term direction of travel and a moment at which to assess achievement in the light of the original ideological intent. State subsidy for art must be democratic in a democratic society, yet it is argued that governments want more people to go the arts because it is part of the "implicit support for the democratisation of a culture that does not necessarily fill its own capacity, generate a profit or reach a sufficiently diverse audience" (Bjornsen, 2011:1). Of course, governments in democratic liberal societies cannot force people to engage with subsidised culture, but

there are things that they can do to widen access to existing culture (the democratisation of culture) and/or to enable a more democratic cultural base (cultural democracy).

The Democratisation of Culture

The democratisation of culture refers to processes where the 'official' culture, typically represented by large and well-funded institutions, is made accessible to non-participating communities, often in the belief that it will do them good. It is "a plan of action based on the belief that cultural development proceeds from the improved distribution of the experiences and products of high culture" (Adams and Goldbard, 1981:55). This process is underpinned by a long-standing belief in the value of the civilising aspects of art and culture and thereby a concomitant desire to democratise access to it. In policy terms, this ideology has manifested itself in a number of documents, from Lee's (1965) *A Policy for the Arts – The First Steps to Arts Council England's Great Art and Culture for everyone* (ACE, 2013). In practice, this has meant many things, from touring national companies and building regional venues to funding for community arts and audience development. Most recently, the ideology of the democratisation of culture has appeared in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) (2016) *Culture White Paper* with its language of 'reaching out' and 'increasing access'.

Yet despite much laudable talk of availability and access, the true beneficiaries of public funding for culture still constitute only a small minority, such that "…the fact that so much of public money goes to art forms, the consumption of which is effectively still the preserve of the well-educated and the relatively wealthy (after over 50 years of "pro-access" policies) is undoubtedly a source of unease" (Belfiore, 2002:21). The Warwick Commission's[1] (Neelands et al, 2015) *Report on the Future of Cultural Value* offered a new segmentation

of cultural consumption based on DCMS data which showed that the two most highly culturally engaged groups accounted for only 15 percent of the general population and tended to be of higher socio-economic status. The wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8 percent of the population formed the most culturally active segment of all. Between 2012 and 2015 they accounted (in the most conservative estimate possible) for at least 28 percent of live attendance to theatre, thus benefiting directly from an estimated £85 per head of ACE funding per year. This, to quote the report, "suggests that low engagement is more the effect of a mismatch between the public's taste and the publicly funded cultural offer – posing a challenge of relevance as well as accessibility" (Neelands et al, 2015:34). As Hewison (2014:214) bluntly notes, "The majority of people are not taking part."

This situation asks a fundamental question about the culture which is supposedly being democratised. If art and culture are to matter to more people, they must provide them with value. Many aspects of the democratisation of culture, however, seek to provide people not with value but with *values*, because of the ideological basis upon which the democratisation of culture is predicated. In this view, the culture to be democratised is not a common, shared or popular culture but the culture of an elite. In other words, it is a culture that needs to be democratised in order to justify the subsidy that has led to its creation. For many who work in the cultural sector, these ideas can be difficult to entertain.

Gramsci and Common Sense

As a working hypothesis, Gramsci's (1971) idea of 'common sense' (*senso comune*) may be helpful here. Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Marxist politician and philosopher, who is best known for this theory of cultural hegemony. Gramsci suggested that capitalism maintained control not just through violence and political and economic coercion, but also through ideology. From a Gramscian

perspective, there are many forms that structural inequality can take (Crehan, 2016). Put simply, Gramsci argues that the bourgeoisie developed a hegemonic culture which propagated its own values and norms so that they became the "common sense" values of all. The working-class (and other classes) identified their own good with the good of the bourgeoisie, and helped to maintain the status quo rather than revolting or otherwise attempting to overthrow the system. For Gramsci, 'common sense' was the disparate set of ideas and beliefs held commonly within any given community. It is the result of institutions and producers of knowledge (Gramsci was thinking especially of churches and political parties, but we might think of the institutions of the cultural sector – galleries, concert halls, museums etc.) which, often in a progressive and sedimentary manner, promote a particular vision of the world.

These institutions and hierarchies (whether religious, political or cultural) expound a relatively coherent set of ideas about the world that can be disseminated ever more widely. As such, whether 'senso comune' is 'commonsensical' or not is beside the point. If we consider the democratisation of culture as the 'common sense' of cultural policy, then we begin both to understand its dominance and prevalence, and also to consider how alternatives might begin to be articulated.

Cultural Democracy and Audience Development

In asking why, and how, publicly subsidised arts and culture must be both democratic and democratised we might ask anew, 'what is the guiding purpose of public subsidy?' After all, "the task of an official body is not to teach or to censor, but to give courage, confidence and opportunity" (Keynes, 1945 from *The Arts Council: Its Policy and Hopes*). Questioning how public subsidy can best achieve socially democratic aims raises the issue of whether the current model of democratisation can retain legitimacy in the face of challenges to

ideas of cultural value, art form hierarchies and the predominance of what might be considered a cultural hegemony.

We might hypothesise that most arts organisations would agree that the purpose of their existence is to extend and deepen the experience of the arts for individuals, and that experience may be focussed on enabling individual expression, enrichment and, ultimately, social justice. So, let's consider this from a different perspective,

The basic premise of audience development, or access, or community outreach, or whatever we want to call it, is patronising and corrupt. It is predicated on the assumption that the public has got it wrong; that if only we could throw enough Lottery money at enough orchestras to put enough players into enough inner-city primary schools to play to enough black kids or, even worse, get enough black kids to copy classical composers and call it creativity – if only we could overcome the young people's stubborn refusal to go to concert halls – then we would save them from a life of cultural poverty and justify our salaries. Surely we must get more sophisticated in our thinking. Surely we have to realise that we, the white, university-educated, salaried autocrats, the cultural power brokers, the decision-makers, are the ones who need to change. We need to develop some respect for what young people want, some respect for their music. Then, if we are lucky, they will reach out to us, and do us the honour of enriching our lives and involving us in all that power and fun, and perhaps we would see the wonderful sight of teams of working-class youths being funded by the Lottery to run outreach programmes for middle-aged arts managers to encourage them to lighten up a bit and join the party (Baker, 2000:6).

The above quote is taken from a speech by Dave O'Donnell, Director of Community Music, at the *Reaching the Audience of the Future* conference, organised by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in June 1999. It's not clear whether O'Donnell was being deliberately provocative or wearing his heart on his sleeve. Baker (2000:6) says that though it is unlikely that many people will agree with him, the essence of what O'Donnell was saying, "is inescapable for anyone who is serious about developing more, new and different audiences... If we are to make music accessible and inviting to more people, we must start to think about the world from their perspective". Many in the cultural sector would agree with that comment, but it doesn't go far enough. We might consider the issue to be less about seeing 'our culture' from 'their perspective', but rather about what we mean by 'our culture. Indeed, 'our culture', the culture that needs to be democratised, is not a common, shared or (in many cases) popular culture. In fact, if we consider the purpose of publicly subsidising culture to be to extend and deepen the experience of the arts for individuals (and more widely as a matter of social justice), then we may need to reconsider the very culture being democratised.

There is a longstanding and complex relationship between cultural democracy and cultural policy (Hadley and Belfiore, 2018). The idea of cultural democracy can be seen as presenting as valid the public's chosen forms of cultural expression and engagement, rather than promoting a prescribed definition of what is included in "the arts". Cultural democracy sees the role of the government as assuring, "that the will or preference of neither an overbearing majority nor a powerful minority" predominates within a climate in which the fullest possible opportunities for "pluralistic, artistic self-determination" exist (Adams and Goldbard, 1981:53). The fundamental premise of cultural democracy is free individual choice. The role of the state, via cultural policy, is thus one of non-interference. Encompassing both the will to participate and a broad interpretation of the concept of culture provides a good foundation for cultural democracy, as can be seen in the welfare state in Nordic countries (Waade, 1997).

In opposition to the model of democratisation of culture, this position proposes that government should implement a regulatory policy which administers the distribution of information or the structures of supply in order to support the cultural preferences and expressions of individuals and communities (Evrard, 1997) such as happens in other types of market in order to facilitate a pluralist concept of culture (Waade, 1997).

Audience development embodies the aspiration of cultural policy to deliver a different material reality in the consumption of the publicly funded arts. My recent work (Hadley, 2017a; 2017b) has shown that the relationship of audience development to discourses of democracy in cultural policy is significantly more complex than that reflected in the academic literature (Kawashima, 2000; 2006). A more meaningful understanding of audience development, and its relationship to discourses of democracy in cultural policy, has been obscured by a focus on defining the practice as a tool of arts marketing management. Previous methodological approaches have resulted in a process-based conceptualisation of audience development which simultaneously denies the ideological agency of practitioners whilst occluding significant features of the practice. In aligning audience development with both of the dominant democratic discourses of cultural policy – the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy – it is argued (Hadley, 2017a) that an understanding of the ideological base of audience development has significant implications for an understanding of how cultural democracy might be realised.

This is an urgent debate with significance in the EU cultural policy arena given recent calls (European Commission, 2017) to establish a European Agency and/or Observatory on Audience Development to act as a focus for future EU funded activity. Within this process, the practice of audience development should properly be considered as an ideological project situated within the wider cultural policy discourse of democratisation. As such, a much wider project, concerned with redefining audience development as a vehicle for

cultural democracy (alongside its role in the ongoing democratisation of culture) would be a fitting ambition for future European cultural policy. This presents a significant leadership challenge for the subsidised cultural sector. As recent work on meritocracy (Littler, 2018), race (Saha, 2017) and class (Brook et al, 2018) has shown, the arts sector (and wider cultural industries) has significant structural and intersectional issues to address. There is not a moment to lose.

> **Art can liberate a tremendous force in people. But this can never be its mission, because it is impossible to control the outcome. To believe in art is to believe in humans as independent, thinking beings without knowing where these thoughts will lead us.**
>
> Stina Oscarson

Stina Oscarson
- Director, playwright and freelance journalist

I Wish to Lodge a Protest

Audience development
is one of those terms that makes my entire body assume a defensive position. It demands that you listen and try to understand.

Again.

Audience development.
But despite all the explanations offered, the term speaks for itself. The audience needs developing.

And work on audience development is therefore included as part of all those political projects where art has been used throughout history to shape society, according to the wishes of its present rulers.

Projects of this kind have existed in every era and under every form of governance. And you might think that some of the goals and methods for these projects have been better, while others have been worse. But you should be aware that the very fact that we have public funding of art and culture is a facet of just such a project. I am, however, doubtful how effective this is for achieving the political goals that they are trying to achieve.

On the first day of rehearsals for my most recent play, I was asked to set aside one hour to go through the Swedish Performing Arts Association's and the Swedish Union for Theatre, Artists and Media's diversity and equality checks together with the ensemble. I reluctantly accepted since this is apparently a mandatory activity in the work of county theatres.

It features two brochures containing questions, such as how I perceive issues of equality and gender to be integrated into the activities of the theatre, and how sensitive situations are dealt with like changing costumes and fitting clothing. But I also have to indicate – through yes and no answers – whether my cast has been analysed from a gender perspective and whether I am aware of which perspective my play has, male or female, and what this means for the story as a whole.

I find it extremely difficult to deal with the whole situation, and as we check our way through the boxes I oscillate between loudly guffawing and being really angry.

'We have discussed whether the production helps to preserve or challenge the prevailing norms and notions of people, or whether it just shows things as they are. We thus avoid unconsciously reproducing stereotypes.' Yes or no?

I'm overcome by a childish desire to give the wrong answer to each and every question and from now on only do plays that reproduce stereotypes. Afterwards, I briefly mention to the theatre manager that I understand the purpose but that I think this is the wrong approach.

There is no doubt that identity politics has now begun to seep into the award of grants as well as into practical work taking place in our institutions. This lack of confidence in the arts, in us as artists and as professionals, is not something being experienced by the cultural industry alone. It is part of a larger social development that has primarily affected civil society and the public sector, where capitalism's demands for measurable results have unified with a political desire to create an equal and sustainable society without actually changing any of the fundamentals.

I regard this development with sorrow. And there are many who have begun to ask themselves whether it has gone too far. Whether it is threatening the freedom of art. Which is a highly relevant question.

I have worked professionally in theatre for more than two decades: in big institutions, in small independent groups, in public service and even in the purely commercial entertainment industry. And I would say that there are two major misconceptions relating to Swedish cultural policy.

The first is that public funding is crucial to quality and freedom – in fact, crucial to art and culture being created at all. I myself would have said the same thing had I been asked the question a decade or so ago. But I'm glad that I'm still enough of a free thinker that I'm able to acknowledge I have changed my mind.

As far as freedom is concerned, I would now say that it ultimately has very little to do with the type of funding and everything to do with the integrity of the individual artist. Sucking up to power in order to gain advantage is something you can do in either a commercial or publicly funded system. And the price you pay for not being somebody's tool – not even that of your own brand – is high, but equally so is the potential prize. Both for art itself and in the form of self-respect.

If you have made the choice to be free, you will probably not – to the horror of many – let what you do be influenced significantly by the guidelines for grants or diversity and equality box-ticking exercises.

Of course, this does not mean that as an artist I am uninterested in the audience. Without the audience there is no art. It is in the encounter between the two that the magic happens. This also does not mean that I deny that there is a problem when, year after year, publicly funded cultural life reaches the same groups. All it means is that I think the real problems are situated – and must be resolved – on a completely different level.

Apropos of art as a means of change, dreamt of both by those in power and artists, I want to tell you a story that taught me a great deal.

I have often been sceptical about whether I am meant to work with art given the state of the world, and on several occasions I have resolved to quit. But each time I have made this decision, I have been reminded of why I once upon a time chose this path.

This occurred most recently around a year ago, when I received a call from the CEO of an elevator company, who had read an article I had written for the cultural pages in the *Aftonbladet* newspaper.

The article was about the Almedalen Week, and I explained how, in the midst of the hubbub, two girls had approached me and asked: 'What would you say if everyone was listening?' What a question, I thought to myself. One that everyone seems to have forgotten to ask themselves before they left for Almedalen – where all the time and money is largely spent on getting people to listen. I went down to the sea to think for a moment and I began to contemplate an apple tree that I planted shortly before I left home. It was the first time I had really done any gardening. I remembered how I suddenly stopped mid-shovel as the self-evident fact that this apple tree would still be there long after I was gone dawned on me. That all the weeds I had spent days removing would one day gain the upper hand. And I remember thinking: how can I consider this mine? Everything is borrowed. I began to reflect on whether it is the reluctance to accept that one day we will be gone that means we struggle so much to get to grips with long-term problems, such as climate change. And suddenly I realised this was exactly what I would say if everyone was listening: everything is borrowed.

Kjell – that's his name – had spent his whole life working in the industry, with the goal of earning as much money as possible before selling the company and enjoying life. But those words knocked him down, and he began to question what he was doing, how his company manufactured its elevators and what his responsibilities were. Because they did exactly what everyone else does: anything to maximise short-term gains by making lifts that have to be scrapped after 20 years, even though the knowledge exists of how to build lifts that last far longer. He carried out a life-cycle analysis of the production, started studying circular economies and decided to move the company to sustainable production. And then he did it!

The interesting thing about this story is that Kjell already knew everything before. He had heard all the facts about climate change. Seen all the news broadcasts, read about all the emergency reports. But it was only when the words hit him – the words that spoke of our existential conditions here on Earth – that a seed of doubt was sown in the story that until then had always seemed obvious to Kjell.

The other interesting thing is that this was most definitely not the purpose of my article. I'm convinced that if my aim had been to persuade the CEO of an elevator company to carry out a life-cycle analysis of his production processes and to switch to a circular economy, I would probably have written something entirely different. And I probably would have failed miserably.

And this is important. Art can liberate a tremendous force in people. But this can never be its mission, because it is impossible to control the outcome. To believe in art is to believe in humans as independent, thinking beings without knowing where these thoughts will lead us.

This is the major challenge faced by cultural policy. And the challenge also facing us as artists, especially at times when society appears to be falling apart. This is when the will to politicise art is at its greatest. To use it to set right everything you think is wrong.

I often think about Sara Lidman, who throughout her artistry switched between writing fiction and opinion pieces and was the

subject of criticism for it. They said she should have stuck to novels. In a reply to one of her critics, she defined the difference between an opinion piece and a novel. She wrote: 'A novel contains rage, the anger that doesn't need to raise its voice. At best, there is also a love so deep that it doesn't need to glitter on the surface. The intended meaning of a novel grows over the course of a lifetime. The article, on the other hand,' she wrote, 'is an immediate knee-jerk reaction. It is written once a mass media image of an event has resulted in so much pent up rage within that there is no breathing space to work on the novel before you have lodged a protest.'

And yes, sometimes that's exactly what you have to do. Lodge a protest. But perhaps art isn't always the best method for this protest. Whether you are a politician or an artist. Personally, I think that the power of art is that it can speak to what is common to us all. The things we share with our opponents. Therein lies its great potential.

2018 is an election year in Sweden and the cultural sector is mobilising to make culture an electoral issue. When I ask what this means, practically everyone says that it is about 'getting culture onto the agenda', which in turn means that they want more money for culture. Preferably for their own activities.

This brings us to the second misconception: the illusion that it is the small segment of politics that we currently refer to as cultural policy that has the greatest impact on the conditions for art, culture and cultural creators. This is rarely the case. For the most part, it is circumstances or reforms in completely different policy areas that do. When I recently asked the artist, Makode Linde why he had chosen to work in Germany, he said there was far greater freedom there. 'What exactly do you mean?' I asked. 'You can find a space,' he said, 'and you can get by on working two days a week. That kind of thing gives a lot of people the chance to work on making their dreams reality.'

And this brings us towards the core of my reasoning. I believe that if politicians took responsibility for political issues within the areas in which they belong, rather than lumping them in with culture, no

artistic activity would need to devote itself to audience development. If we're to talk of cultural policy reform in order to increase freedom for art, perhaps we need instead to talk about basic income, shorter working hours or a massive investment in acquiring cheap premises. Like in Naples, where the mayor legalised the occupation of abandoned houses if the new occupants created activities that were open to all. If we are serious about dealing with unequal access to or representation in the cultural sector – of which work on so-called audience development is an example of – it would be better to invest in equal schooling, an economic policy that reduces the gaps and an integration policy based on human rights. At the very least, we need to lift our gazes from forms about how we work with diversity and equality that are irritating but in the long-term fairly harmless.

> **The big idea is that only when you understand an individual's beliefs about the benefits they receive from engaging with culture can you develop products and communications that truly resonate with them.**
>
> Andrew McIntyre and Joss Luckin

Andrew McIntyre and Joss Luckin
– Consultants, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre

A Complete Picture of the Swedish Culture Market

Concerted audience development requires an in-depth understanding of the whole market and not just those who already visit.

Traditional demographics and behavioural data – although useful – can only take you so far. A rich understanding of audience values and attitudes is essential to building deep, long term relationships with audiences.

These were the two guiding principles behind the creation of Audience Atlas Sweden: a joint project between Morris Hargreaves McIntyre and Stockholms Stad resulting in the most comprehensive study of Swedish culture audiences ever conducted.

Audience Atlas is a free-to-access report, open to anybody interested in learning more about the size, structure and profile of the market for arts and culture in Sweden. It is built from a large scale, representative survey of the Swedish population.

The study was originally conducted in late 2015 and can be accessed by contacting Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM). MHM has conducted Audience Atlas studies in 18 territories around the world, including Sweden.

Who Did We Ask?

- 3807 Swedes were surveyed using an online commercial research panel (a group of pre-screen survey respondents who have agreed to take part in surveys and/or other market research).
- This sample of 3807 was representative of the total market for arts and culture in the country – approximately 95 percent of the population aged between 16 and 75. The 5 percent who were excluded were not deemed to be in the market for arts and culture.
- The survey deliberately takes a broad definition of the market for arts and culture that stretches to 34 artforms; including pursuits such as cinema.[1]
- This market definition was originally based on a categorisation developed by the Department of Culture Media and Sport in the UK for its *'Taking Part'* survey, but has since been extended and bespoked by MHM on a region by region basis.
- Demographic representativeness was guaranteed through interlocking quotas on age, gender and educational attainment for each surveyed region.
- The research estimates the size and profile of the market for dozens of cultural organisations at the national and regional level. If you work for an arts organisation, there's a good chance that your organisation is named in it.

What Did We Ask?

For every organisation in the study, Audience Atlas Sweden explores market and brand awareness (who's heard of you); market penetration (who's visited you); and market potential (who's likely to engage with you in the future).

The same questions are asked on an artform by artform basis too; exploring crossover both between different artforms experiences, as well as the crossover between the organisations that actually deliver these experiences.

Respondents were also profiled on:

- Traditional demographics (age, household income, gender identity, employment status, educational attainment)
- Culture Segments – the international segmentation system for arts audiences developed by MHM over the past 15 years
- Informal cultural participation and hobbies
- Media consumption
- Barriers to further engagement with culture
- Spending habits on cultural pursuits
- Membership habits with cultural organisations
- Online engagement with culture

Culture Segments is Built in

Culture Segments is the only segmentation system that's specifically developed for and attuned to the needs of the international cultural sector. It is built into the Audience Atlas study and provides a powerful tool to understand and engage audiences by targeting them more accurately, engaging them more deeply and building mutually beneficial relationships.

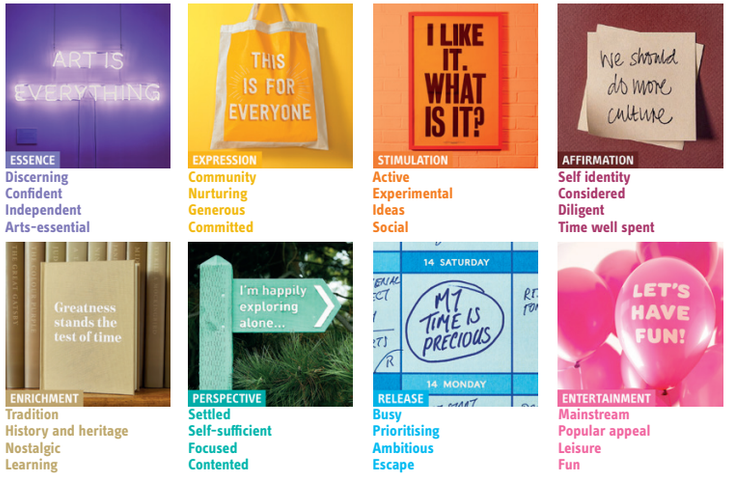
The big idea is that only when you understand an individual's beliefs about the benefits they receive from engaging with culture can you develop products and communications that truly resonate with them.

Culture Segments Helps to:

- Understand the motivations and core values of audiences
- Understand the sought outcomes of different audience segments and plan the most appropriate products and services to satisfy these
- Provide a common language for use across your entire organization, putting your audience at the core of everything you do
- Measure how each segment responds to marketing messages, and track effectiveness and conversion
- Gives insight into the visitor journey, from the moment they make a decision to visit through to what type of post-visit action they're likely to take
- Track which segments deliver the highest rate of return
- Map which segments are most likely to respond to specific parts of your offer and plan and prioritize audience growth accordingly
- Understand who is more likely to join, donate or volunteer

How It Works

There are eight segments in total, which are summarised in the graphic:



Culture Segments is powered by an algorithm which has been developed by MHM over the past 15 years. We insert a small number of Golden Questions into any research survey, including Audience Atlas, and the algorithm instantaneously establishes respondents' segments. You can see the Golden Questions and find out which segment you're in by visiting the MHM website.[2]

Audience Atlas can profile the current, lapsed and potential markets for dozens of artforms and venues by Culture Segment in order to identify opportunities for growth.

The example graphic on the following page breaks down the size of the market within Stockholm for a Stockholm based museum by Culture Segment, using Audience Atlas data. It shows which audiences are 'active' but also where the greatest opportunity for audience development lies for this venue. This might be through reactivating 'lapsed visitors', reaching out to interested 'potential' attenders or raising your profile to appeal to those who are 'unaware'. Understanding the segment distribution of these different markets will give strategies a greater chance of success.

In the example, Expression is the largest active segment in the example; the organisation's clearly doing well with this group. But that shouldn't lead to complacency since Expression also offer by far the greatest growth potential, being the largest group in the potential and unaware market.

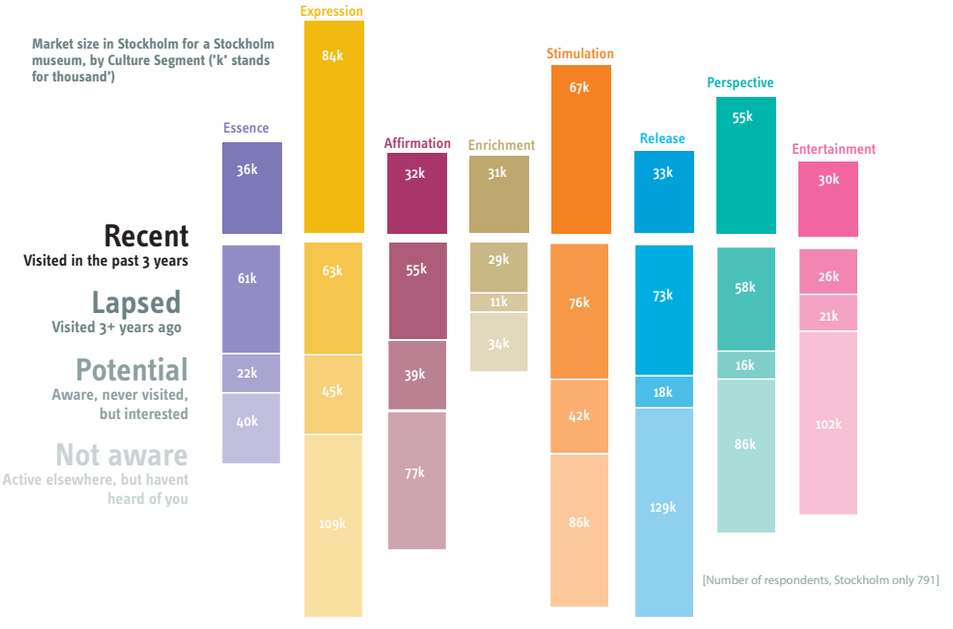
Expression are "people" people. They enjoy activities that help them connect with and share experiences with others. They are community minded. They like to be sure that everyone is welcome to enjoy the benefits of engaging and as such, put a high price on inclusivity.

Expression don't like being marketed to because they want to be inside, and part of the conversation. They don't want to be advertised to, it feels impersonal. They want emotional, personal connection with organisations – more like a friend.

The graphic also shows that Stimulation are the second largest active audience, but there are many more in the lapsed, potential

and unaware markets. They should also be a priority segment when considering audience development.

> Stimulation are an active group who love adventure and live for the moment. They seek out new experiences to live a varied life. Do something different is a maxim for life. They are all about big ideas and are looking for something 'out of the ordinary'. But they also attend cultural events for the social experience
>
> Stimulation are independently minded, but aware of how they are perceived by others. They are happy to stand out from the crowd if it shows them to be ahead of the curve. They don't need things to have a proven track record before they get involved. That is not to say they dislike popularity but they aren't drawn to the very mainstream as they like to be the one making the discoveries.



To give you a taster of what the full study covers, and the depth of the data gathered, here are five key insights to help understand Sweden's culture market:

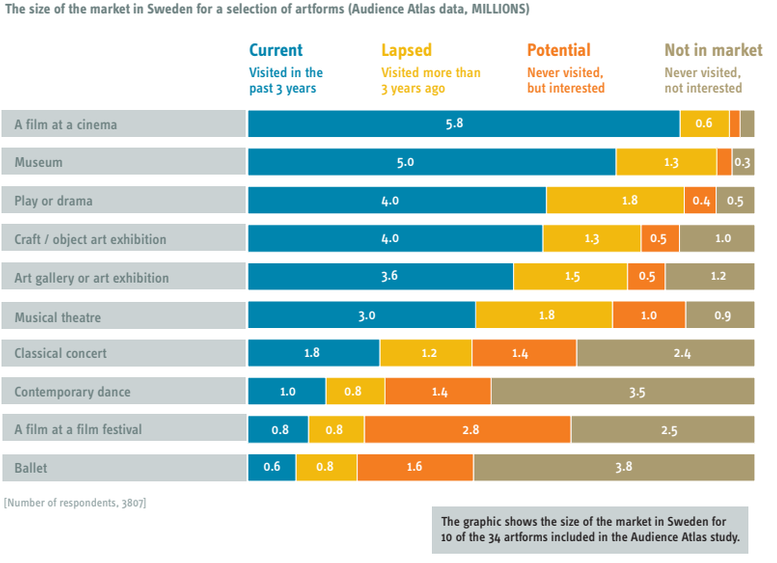
1. So Much Untapped Potential

The majority (95 percent) of the Swedish adult population are active in the culture market. To qualify, a person must have visited a cultural venue or event within the past three years.

As we know, Stockholm is home to the highest concentration of cultural attendees but Malmö and Gothenburg are also significant and growing cultural hubs.

The graphic below shows the size of the market for 10 of the 34 artforms included in the Audience Atlas study. Cinema and museums have the largest regular markets, but what is striking about the data is the size of the lapsed and potential markets across a range of artforms.

Even in the case of more 'challenging' artforms like ballet and contemporary dance there are hundreds of thousands with a latent interest who are open to attending.



2. High Spend Predicted to Grow

Members of the Swedish culture market spent an average of 245 SEK on, or related to, cultural activities in the past month.

Half of this spend (50 percent) was on admission or tickets to arts and cultural events, while transport to and from cultural events (22 percent) and food and drink while at cultural venues (21 percent) each account for around a fifth of total spend.

In total, this equates to 1.66 billion SEK spent on arts, culture and heritage each month, or an estimated 19.92 billion SEK each year.

When recent cultural spenders were asked about their predicted future spend, almost three-quarters (72 percent) thought they would spend a similar or greater amount on cultural activities in the year ahead than the previous twelve months. Less than one in eight predicted they would spend less.

3. Strong Levels of Membership and Advocacy

A fifth (20 percent) of those in the culture market are a current member or subscriber to an arts or cultural organisation.

- 18 percent are a member
- 9 percent are a subscriber

Almost one in ten (8 percent) of those in the culture market have volunteered at an arts, cultural or heritage organisation in the past twelve months.

Essence and Expression are the two segments most likely to connect with arts organisations as members.

Essence are arts advocates and strong believers in the benefits that arts and culture bring to society. They recognise the importance of supporting the arts at both a personal and a political level. More than a third hold a membership with at least one arts organisation.

Expression strongly believe in the benefits of the arts and see it as a 'cause'; they are more likely than average to be a current member, subscriber or friend. Their sense of community and willingness to help the greater good means they are also the most likely to have volunteered in the cultural sector.

4. Museums Lead the Way

Sweden's museum market is the largest of all artforms, behind cinema. 95 percent of the culture market – or 6,480,000 people – have visited a museum at some point in the past, or are interested in doing so in future, according to Audience Atlas. Three-quarters of the culture market recalled having visited a museum in the past three years according to Audience Atlas.

The current museum market has higher proportions of the more engaged Culture Segments like Essence and Expression, while the lapsed and potential markets are dominated by Release, Perspective and Enrichment.

Enrichment tend to be lovers of history with a respect for the past. They are strongly independently minded and exert their right to be cautious. They often have established tastes and habits and know what they will enjoy. Fad and fashion hold no seduction. It is not that new things hold no worth, but Enrichment will look for the thread that links them to what went before.

When it comes to art and culture Enrichment lean towards things they believe to be important, have stood the test of time and command respect. They like things that talk about our identity – who we are, where we're from.

Perspective are fulfilled, happy doing their own thing and driven by their own agenda. They are very focused on a limited number of interests they find satisfying and rewarding and have a low appetite for expanding this repertoire.

They are very self-sufficient and don't rely on others for fulfilment. They're unaffected by the views of others and tend to prioritise their own needs.

Perspective have a need to make their own discoveries, so it will be their desire to learn that provides a focus for any cultural engagement.

Release are a prominent segment in the potential markets for both museums and theatre – see more on this particular segment below.

5. A Huge Lapsed and Potential Theatre Market

Sweden's theatre market – those who have ever watched a play or drama or have never attended but are interested – includes 92 percent of the culture market; or 6,270,000 people.

However, just two-fifths (39 percent) have seen a play or drama in the past twelve months and a further fifth (19 percent) between one and three years ago. This means there is a significant lapsed theatre market: more than a quarter (27 percent) of the culture market have attended a play or drama before, but not in the past three years.

The Expression (20 percent) and Stimulation (18 percent) segments are the largest within the current theatre market. The Release, Perspective and Entertainment segments are all over-represented in the lapsed and potential markets; if they have ever been to the theatre before, their visits are more likely to be infrequent.

There is a significantly higher proportion of the Release segment in the potential market for theatre.

Release offer a particular opportunity for development here. They often use logistics to talk themselves out of organising outings but they aspire to go to more cultural attractions and enjoy the escape and relaxation this can provide. They need to be encouraged to see arts and culture as a social activity: a means of having fun and taking some well-deserved time out.

Release feel time-poor so organisations need to make things irresistibly easy for them. Reduce the effort, streamline the user journey, keep to low cognitive load. One-stop booking – food, drink, parking – everything in a package makes life that bit easier. The guaranteed easy option.

Maximising Potential

This article gives a glimpse of the breadth and depth of data contained within Audience Atlas. We hope it paints a positive picture, because the market for arts and culture in Sweden is significant and growing, with huge untapped potential across numerous artforms.

We would like to stress that a pro-active and creative approach is needed to really make the most of Audience Atlas and Culture Segments insight and capitalise on this market potential. The data will not do the work for you!

Those organisations that have leveraged Culture Segments most successfully have embraced the thinking and used it to inform cross-departmental strategies in curatorial, marketing, visitor experience, education and membership.

Audience Atlas is for many organisations just a starting point. The market data contained within it helps to prioritise audiences and set a direction, but an ongoing evaluation strategy – in which audience consultation is built-in to product and campaign development from the start – is needed to truly measure how successfully you are engaging audiences in the long term.

Sustainable placemaking that creates value must happen together with residents, businesses and others who share a relationship with the location in question. Only through participation can we understand people's experiences, needs, expectations and perceived identities.

Malin Zimm and Mathias Holmberg

Malin Zimm
– Architect and research strategist
Mathias Holmberg
– Social sustainability expert
at White Arkitekter

Placemaking For and With Culture

Cities are growing in both size and number. Given denser urbanisation and the paradigm of the experience economy, architecture and culture are not always perceived as something that is in itself necessary for residents as a basic human need with its own intrinsic value. On the other hand, current discourse does express the desire for architecture, design and culture to contribute to other values – economic and democratic – and to help create equality, integration and so on.

In some respects, culture is conditional on being useful for other aspects of society, which is becoming increasingly apparent to practitioners in the cultural sector. But what happens to culture and perspectives on culture when they do not take place on the terms of those creating them? Is it the case that it is only now that the understanding of culture's usefulness has become visible and prevalent?

It can be said that culture has always served a higher purpose and been connected to power, regardless of whether that power has been exercised by kings, politicians or civil servants. But what about culture's autonomy and its inherent ability to overthrow prevailing systems? Through our practice as architects, expertise in sustainability and as planners, we have become conscious of the relationship between the uses of culture and culture's intrinsic value. Given this insight concerning the democratic power of culture, one of our primary tasks has become singing the praises of accessibility and proximity to culture, that – in its own right or as part of an ambition or movement – brings people together and stimulates ideas and awareness.

Six Steps to More Culturally Vibrant Cities

To offer guidance for this work, White prepared a brief outline of six steps for achieving more culturally vibrant cities that can help to ensure that art, culture and cultural creation are all boosted and valued in urban planning.[1]

1. Inject the City with Culture!

Sweden is building more than ever, and when society undergoes rapid changes, culture becomes extra important. Culture creates meaning, is exploratory and is the mother of all creative industries. It generates desire and context in daily life, as well as jobs, innovation and new companies. Smart urban planning helps to make our growing

cities more culturally vibrant. It's good for individuals, it's good for enterprise, it's good for society.

2. Dare to Hand Over the Keys!

Culture is a value that doesn't disappear – instead it generates more culture. Many of the most successful projects and places create meaning and value through small gestures. Wise developers see the value of a cultural ecosystem where individual artists and major institutions alike need to be accommodated. Empty premises and abandoned spaces don't create value. Handing over the keys and freedom of action goes a long way.

3. Test Using Prototypes!

Cities are constantly changing and even the most amazing palaces are temporary. The eternal city is now – seize the day instead of dreaming about what doesn't yet exist. Food trucks, pop-up parks and art projects in city spaces demonstrate that the temporary is valued highly. Test using prototypes, evaluate together and provide great opportunities for unbridled creativity. Anything that is strong will take root when provided with a seed bed and nourishment.

4. Let Art Live!

Culture is a catalyst that initiates processes without being consumed, and artistic work is a diversity of methodically expressed interpretations. The 1 percent rule should provide the space that art needs, but cultural expertise is also required in the other 99 percent. Courageous developers see a fourth dimension of sustainability – culture – and therefore offer their trust, the right conditions and a mandate.

5. Embrace Diversity!

A lack of diversity is never creative. In the same way that biological diversity is necessary in order for nature to survive, cultural diversity is necessary in order for the city to be alive. All culture is equally beautiful. It is variety that makes cities attractive, which is where culture – in all its forms – belongs. This is an established truth in

most major cities: the breadth is the cutting edge and what is incomprehensible to some, can form life-changing experiences for others.

6. Introduce a Cultural Benchmark!

Municipalities have powerful instruments at their disposal to facilitate urban development. Parking and green space are both established benchmarks when residential areas and cities are being planned. Culture could very well be managed in a similar fashion in order to boost a city's dynamics, vitality and cohesion. Those who dare to make culture a priority in planning won't fail.

The Social Turn

Despite the fact that the struggle for the preservation and addition of public, democratic spaces is hardening in line with increasing urban density, fears of terrorism and commercial dominance in urban spaces, there are signs of a social turn. This turn is characterised primarily by space creation processes being transformed through new – or perhaps a blend of new and old – collaborations. The old order of things that saw architects and artists cooperate on large-scale community-creating projects has re-emerged in new forms. This social turn also sees space creation and placemaking partnerships generating quantifiable sociocultural value that would otherwise not have occurred.

When the British artists' collective, Assemble, which largely works on temporary architecture and placemaking, received the 2015 Turner Prize, it was not only the first time that the British art award went to a collective, but also the first time that the use and redevelopment of public spaces was brought to the centre. The fields of art and architecture overlap in all of Assemble's projects, which are mostly about creating places that are immediately socially accessible and thus incorporated into deeper processes of community building. Beyond the purely cultural experience – and without really

expressing 'the user/the person/the audience in focus' – Assemble successfully managed to give people an experience of empowerment through the convincing and revolutionary re-evaluation of places and the identification of spatial and cultural opportunities.

Within architecture and design, putting the focus on the user for what is being produced is not a novel approach. On the contrary, since the beginning of industrialisation it has been precisely the utility value for the user that has characterised good architecture, design and urban planning. The social turn now taking place is about architects working *with* rather than *for* users, which also involves developing an understanding of the life stories and experiences of different groups, identities and stakeholders.

People-focused Architecture

People-focused architecture can become an empty phrase if it is not translated into practice and design, where the needs of the individual and society meet. The design profession of architecture is not at liberty to be as free as their art colleagues. Nor is it meant to be, given that the architect is always in a relationship with both the client and user, not to mention society. The architect's challenge is to design places that provide the best possible social, ecological and economic results (the three so-called 'sustainability dimensions') in the form of healthy people and sustainable societies.[2]

Experience shows that placemaking is about much more than creating value. In order for people to want to reside and lead their lives in a place, and for businesses to grow and survive, it is important to create a balance between different values for basic security, justice and opportunities for development. Sustainable placemaking that creates value must happen together with residents, businesses and others who share a relationship with the location in question. Only through participation can we understand people's experiences, needs, expectations and perceived identities.

Three Ways of Working with Culture

Culture can be understood in different ways, and – like society as a whole – cultural creation is in a constant state of flux. The Italian Cultural Economist Pier Luigi Sacco describes how culture has evolved in three phases, which do not replace each other gradually but where new cultural forms have been added in parallel. Sacco argues that culture is society's most important resource when it comes to development and being innovative. In short, the steps can be described as Culture 1.0, being the culture funded by those with economic and political power, such as royal families and the church in pre-industrial Europe. Culture 2.0 is culture produced through the new opportunities provided by industrialisation to reach more people and become a market commodity. Culture 3.0 describes an ongoing shift in which the boundaries between production and consumption are dissolving through completely new forms of creation and re-creation, as well as taking advantage of new ways of sharing culture and organising large groups. On the basis of Sacco's three forms of culture, we are going to describe three ways of working with and on behalf of culture in urban planning and placemaking.

Room for Culture

Good architecture means that it responds to needs and desired functions. It should also provide experiences that are both aesthetic and social. This means that knowledge about specific users' needs is a necessity, in parallel with an interpretation of how those needs may change and how future opportunities can be capitalised on. Places for culture must therefore respond to the specific needs of culture, cultural workers and the audience, while also inspiring new encounters and independent creation. In recent years, White Arkitekter has been working with the Selma Cultural Centre in Gothenburg where user needs have been mapped and analysed in a comprehensive dialogue

process. In order to understand the daily work of all those people whose place of work is the cultural centre, individual and shared experiences have been gathered and analysed. The dialogue is based on the situation at present and which spatial and social aspects are most important for delivering a good working environment. All in all, this work provides a basis that is analysed, interpreted and translated into design – focused on people – in which culture is created, experienced and brings the place to life.

Providing space for culture means seeing the value of culture, creating opportunities for artistic creativity and development and also creating the right circumstances for everyone to participate in art and culture. Culture can then be said to constitute a fourth dimension in sustainable development – in parallel with the ecological, economic and social – that is also recognised as a separate dimension with its own value.

Temporary Architecture

Temporary architecture refers to structures that can be erected and disassembled in a short period of time, regardless of scale. It relates to projects that create space for implementing participation, in terms of both design and activities that contribute to the features and identity of the place. Temporary architecture can be a way of activating and making available spaces, or by supporting new types of use of spaces which can be developed as and when new needs and functions are identified. The conditions for exciting design arise when architects and artists collaborate together with local initiatives. It also generates knowledge about the public space and its opportunities for all participants. A collaboration relating to temporary architecture that brings together the community, the public sector and design expertise can result in processes that not only change places themselves but also the attitudes that exist in relation to these places. Temporary architecture can be one of several tools for strengthening communities, meeting the needs of different groups and contributing to democratic and equitable access to city spaces.[3]

Temporary architecture stimulates people's ability to use places and see culture in new ways. It helps to ensure a more varied and attractive cityscape both by adding something new and retaining what is already there. In the case of temporary architecture, culture can support sustainable development within the other three dimensions.

Collaborative Spaces for Opportunity

Cities and places are undergoing constant change as many different parts interact and are interdependent. This is an ongoing process that entails new requirements in terms of architects' knowledge and role in urban planning and placemaking. Instead of merely meeting requirements using built environments and new structures, architects also need to create opportunities for collaborative change with a balance between many different entities and radically different values. The architect's role involves listening to users, understanding what is meaningful and important to the local community and synthesising these elements to generate a vision of the whole that includes the users in the design process. This means that the place will be sustainable in the sense that more people have a connection to it and perceive it as valuable. Paying attention to what creates meaning and value for the local community and inviting local resources into the design process enhances the potential for self-organised long-term development. Collaborative co-creation that promotes participation increases social cohesion and stimulates learning and exploration. Focusing on values that drive the process forward enables the cultivation of collective intelligence that better responds to complex challenges and empowers people to see the connections between existing qualities and the creative vision.

The concept of culture is supplemented in this regard with an anthropological meaning in which culture encompasses the entire concept of sustainability, and where culture – as a way of life – is seen as sustainable development. Culture thus represents the essential content in which meaning is created that is required in order to achieve sustainability goals through changes in people's lifestyles in parallel with their physical living spaces.

Organised Complexity

Architects have increasingly emphasised that their field – despite the inherent technical and engineering focus – is a social discipline. The things created and enabled by architects are embedded into a wider social context where the common goal should be social wellbeing, on both an individual and societal level. In order to achieve this goal, we must conduct ourselves in accordance with the framework provided to us by the planet as well as the financial means at our disposal and those that can be created. Architecture is far from being solely a technical discipline – it is also about creating value and wellbeing. When that thought is taken to its extreme, it can transpire that no building at all is required to resolve the challenge laid down.[4] Is that architecture – or does it relate to other professions? Our answer is yes and no. That answer raises many follow-up questions and new challenges relating to what the role of the architect is – in partnership with other professions – in terms of developing sustainable, living cities and places.

White's six steps for more culturally vibrant cities, set out above, demonstrate the intention and willingness to work with and on behalf of culture in urban planning and architecture. But the most important thing is to accept that there are no single, simple solutions. Many challenges are highly pressing – climate, democracy, segregation, equality – and require joint action. But joint willingness is also necessary in order to bring about structural change. Once again, we need to take old truths, renew them and see places and societies from a system perspective, where the best that we can achieve is, in the words of urban planning critic Jane Jacobs, 'organised complexity'.[5] This means that in order to understand how cities work, which is necessary in order to ensure good urban planning,

we must simultaneously deal with a large number of interrelated and interdependent factors as part of an organic whole. As early as 1961, Jacobs described 'a web way of thinking' that involves dynamic relationships and sudden changes, where diversity and the regenerative capacity to deal with new problems are both constantly increasing.

In a world where large groups of people communicate and organise themselves in new ways, it is important to plan and design shared spaces in harmony with this change. We need collaborative processes and interdisciplinary leadership in order to achieve collective change. Regarding culture as the fourth dimension of sustainability is a potential route to finding a role for culture in sustainable development. However, a more comprehensive step is to perceive and understand culture – both in terms of the creation of art and artistic experiences and as a way of life – as being the very essence of the development. This means that a cultural perspective is necessary for a sustainable future.

If creative youths of color need to tackle a norm to find togetherness and feel represented, or if performing art professionals of color like myself need to look abroad to find creative spaces, we have a serious structural problem.

Ninos Josef

Ninos Josef
– Dancer, choreographer and lecturer

My Unintentional Political Body

All of a sudden it hit me. The phrase that, throughout my adult life has anchored itself as a trauma, echoes in my head and cuts into my heart. It was at that moment my relationship with the art form I have dedicated my life to – the one that had previously been my identity – changed. This was where my safety barriers fell apart. I cast a glance at my colleagues and threw my arms up into the air as I systematically bowed to the première applauses on the stage of the Royal Swedish Opera. There and then, I had fulfilled the vivid dream which had followed me since I graduated from the Royal Swedish Ballet School. But this time it was different. I could no longer relate to my body.

Or was it perhaps my body that could no longer relate to the moment. Or maybe it was that my existence could no longer relate to my surroundings. The audience's contemptuous gaze reached all the way to the stage, and when I look back at that moment, I remember it so clearly. The feeling that they had stood up to laugh at me. Pointing to distinguish me and my body from my normative colleagues. Like a bad movie sequence that makes everyone in the cinema auditorium stiffen with discomfort.

I'm well aware that I am imagining – that the scene I remember is merely a fiction. But there and then my hope was suffocated, because it could just as well have been true. The phrase keeps repeating in my head as the curtain falls.

'You're too dark for my typecast.'

I started dancing relatively late compared to other colleagues whom I have met over the years. This has been an obstacle in my career and I have long tackled my thoughts on whether my development might have looked different or if I would have had more opportunities had I not automatically been placed within the barriers of an oppressive structure.

I grew up in Navestad, a suburb of Norrköping. Despite the fact that the municipal authorities have vainly carried out a pathetic name change to Ringdansen, or Ring Dance in English, it will always be Navestad to me. To us. To our identity. It was probably in the hopes and beliefs of exculpating themselves from the unsuccessful government housing project that the area bears an unfortunate testimony of. A valiant attempt to embellish the reality of a concrete jungle. A delusion that the rebranding of the area would create less alienation, but an opposite reality. The politicians can call the area what they like, but the fundamental problem is based on a systematically unequal allocation of resources, also known as socioeconomic segregation. I remember it well: how the access to cultural schools, educational associations, and private performing arts schools was non-existent and how we were consistently excluded from taking part of so called fine arts. This was my first encounter with the contemptuous gaze – but this time from the societal structure, from the

leadership and rulers. The ones who later went on to become my audience.

Since time immemorial, dance and movement have been used as an art form to interpret thoughts and emotions. Dance is art. Dance is political. Dance is freedom. Dance is a way of developing society. Dance is a Friday night out on the town. 'Dance is essentially coordinated bodily movements, often rhythmical and to music. All movements have the potential to be dance,' according to Wikipedia. But for me, dance is a sanctuary of bodily expressions in a non-normative development process. A language of movement, without set vocabulary, in which the body is allowed to work freely to create space for a personal narrative. It is a stimulation of senses beyond my human reality, where time and space revolve around each other. But it is also a struggle of ownership of my personal expression. Dance is also one of several performative art forms in which white normative bodies are free to exercise their ignorance. It is one of several oppressive art forms where homogeneity is not questioned. Dance in Sweden is an exclusionary structure permeated with a colonial gaze.

Throughout my career, that has taken me to many places around the world, the echo telling me that I should seek my way abroad due to the lack of market for dancers like me in Sweden, continuously returns. It was my former principal at Sweden's foremost elite dance school who politely attempted to relinquish responsibility for the fact that I, as a student of color would graduate from the school into what would, for me, be a non-existent working field. Naively, I did not understand then what awaited me and what significance my body would have within this structure. Perhaps it was for the best, given that I am convinced that it is my discipline and determination that have formed the basis of my international career.

Ten years later, having finally returned home, I am forced to lead a battle against The Swedish Union for Performing Arts and Film, to be included in the same safety net as my white colleagues. A battle to ensure that the constitutions for membership organisations include aims relating to ethnic representation in line with those that

exist for gender, age and geographic spread. A battle to enforce clear guidelines for long-term work on matters of diversity and inclusion. Today, there are still no directives for how intersectional work should be implemented as part of the union's internal activities. This can be interpreted as taking an active position on whether one actually is interested to represent artists from foreign backgrounds within the safety net of the union. This leads to the questioning of the lack of ethnic representation becoming illegitimate because regulations and goals are structured to permit white homogeneity and therefore exclusion. I constantly see how representation within state-funded performing arts lacks ethnic diversity and how it echoes of white cis-homogeneity. I see how state cultural institutions and authorities continuously allocate taxpayers' money to the advantage of the same type of homogeneity within the performing arts. Time and time again, I see the audience remain silent and how society turns a blind eye to this racialised struggle.

A decade later, the colonial gaze does still not understand that if children and young people of color have no one to represent them in white centric spaces, it suffocates these children's hopes of breaking that norm. If creative youths of color need to tackle a norm to find togetherness and feel represented, or if performing art professionals of color like myself need to look abroad to find creative spaces, we have a serious structural problem.

Unconventional choices are often seen as breaking the norm, and when these choices are not encouraged, the contemptuous gaze comes from the closest surroundings. Growing up in a conservative environment, my identity as a male dancer has been questioned by the audience closest to me – my family. A lack of knowledge about how artistic professions exist and an artists position in a secular society resulted in me, in relation to traditional and stereotyped norms, being seen as a Swedified phenomenon. Far beyond the horizon of my Syriac* heritage, I stood alone in the need to express myself through my body. Rejection was served on a silver platter. As a male Swedish-Syriac dancer, I have repeatedly carried the need

** Syriac/s = are a Christian ethnic group who share a common culture, religion and origin with Assyrians and speak a form of Aramaic. They originate from Iraq, Turkey and Syria.*

to justify my choice of profession to those around me in order to vainly try to create acceptance for dance as an art form. A justification of unrealistic exaggeration and lies. Lies that turned into surreal reality when I gathered the courage to meet their gaze, head held high – the gaze that burned the most. I remember how I presented myself as something I was not. How I buried my queer expression and how I chose to block my artistic expression. I cannot help but reflect on what might have been had I and thousands of other suburbian youngsters like me, not had to bear the weight of a body scarred from condemning looks. My thoughts revolve around the structures that still today, just like then, consistently exclude socio-economically vulnerable areas from cultural expressions. How I, like thousands of other suburban children, have to suffer stigmatization in the shadow of failed integration. The exclusion is paradoxical in a dual sense: we are considered to be flouting the norms of our cultural surroundings, and furthermore, our artistic expression is not valued equal as the existing norm of whiteness within the art form that we have dedicated ourselves to. A norm that permeates the performing arts as a whole, which we artists of color have attempted to adapt to but have never succeeded in doing so. A norm which stems from the fact that specific expressions and identities are valued more than others. But above all, a norm identical to colonial abuse which continuously steals identity expressions from vulnerable minorities to apply them in a white normative context. It is a norm where my body is only used for typecasting, where its expression is being given limited space and where my art is valued indifferently to that of white expression. Yet there are no boundaries in the performing arts when white people are painted black or handed roles created for another ethnicity. We who are happy to name ourselves the world's most open-minded society.

This racist gaze and its colonial mindset also prevails in LGBTQ+ society, where bodies of color are systematically subjected to injustice. In a vacuum, and in lack of identity, I – a homosexual dancer of color – have been left to wander without protection from the condemning gaze.

The actual gaze is a central starting point in how a dancer approaches their audience. It is individual to each performer and can differ markedly. One common denominator is that there is always a political power relationship between the audience's gaze and my body. I am being encountered by a carefully condemnatory gaze and regardless of artistic reception, I bear responsibility in relationship to the structure to deliver an interpretation that leaves an impression. A structure where the exploited artist's body must satisfy the audience's gaze. This is in order to generate profitable consumption of the performing arts, primarily to retain accreditation as an artist, which in turn leads to artistic freedom. The gaze – in this case the audience – therefore holds all the power. It is known that as a consequence of the distribution of resources applied in society, fine arts, and culture are almost exclusively consumed by the white middle and upper classes. This means that the gaze is overwhelmingly white. The power is – and is owned by – the white gaze. Historically, power has always been driven by economic gain and as a consequence of socioeconomic segregation, in which the vast majority of vulnerable people are from non-European backgrounds, this is reflected in representation within all genres in the performing arts. A circle that seems impossible to break as stages, performing arts, art schools, and cultural education institutions cater to the white demand. For me, the matter of the gaze is a personal power game that is about challenging societal norms, breaking taboos and through the bodily language of movement, questioning the representation of ethnic diversity. Trapped in a body whose existence causes indignation, my trust falls back on my indisputable talent as a dancer. I let my explosive dancer's body speak for itself. It is my way of making a statement and challenging the audience's comfort. My gaze is intense and strong, playful but threatening. It is both absent and present, vulnerable and omitting, and yet self-assured. I float between masculinity and femininity, a spectrum where boundaries have been blurred and I am unapologetic. My body is unintentionally political, chained to a racist structure, but no one can take away my pride in it.

Analysis and segmentation are key tools when working on audience development. But surveys have little impact if the insights are not shared across organisations and implemented in institutions' strategic plans. All too often, the survey is left to gather dust in the head of marketing's desk drawer.

Ingrid E. Handeland

Audience Development in Norway

Ingrid E. Handeland
– Director of
Audiences Norway

After six years of audience surveys and identifying best practice in the field, there is a basis for stating that audience development is demanding and that when it works, it requires insight-based leadership and collaboration across the board. It's not rocket science. But it shakes established prejudices, attitudes and practices in the field.

Cultural Policy Ambitions

Norway's red-green coalition government, led by the Labour Party's Jens Stoltenberg, imported audience development from the UK as part of its culture initiative (referred to as 'kulturløftet' in Norwegian).[1] The goal they set in 2005 was that 1 percent of the state budget would be spent on cultural purposes by 2013. This financial latitude would enable institutions to reach out to new users other than the big consumers in the cities. The social democratic ideal was and remains a cultural sector that reflects the composition of the population and that functions both as a social equaliser and as a financial stimulant.

Right wing cultural policy advocates used the 2013 election campaign to trash talk this culture initiative. A voice to the right of the Labour Party would ensure freedom from state intervention. The social democrats achieved their budgetary goal – 1 percent of the budget was actually spent on art and cultural purposes in 2013 – but they lost the election.

The current government's goal is to make institutions less dependent on public subsidies. In simple terms, this means plateauing and gradually cutting funding. Award letters to institutions set out requirements for them to increase their own income, 'including ticket revenues, other revenue-generation activities and initiatives, as well as donation and sponsorship income'.

Flexible institutions have responded to the lack of compensation for wage and price inflation since 2013 with an increased emphasis on audience-focused activities. Institutions recognise that new users must be convinced if they are to increase their own income. The danger is that they are forced to play it safe and that they are unable to take artistic risks. There is a higher willingness in the market to pay for what is known and loved as opposed to the unknown and innovative. One of the most interesting and challenging tasks for the field is therefore to successfully develop a larger audience for art and culture that is outside the mainstream.

Audiences Norway is a knowledge-producer that provides cultural authorities and institutions in the field with knowledge about the motivations of and barriers to users and non-users. Our vision is that the institutions should continue to play a key role in society, including in the future. The institutions are important shared arenas and meeting places in an era where democracy is under pressure. However, in order to appear credible as important shared arenas, we must be able to change the distorted usage patterns and develop new markets. Audiences Norway's goal is to offer insight that takes the institutions one step further in their audience development work.

What Do We Know About the Audience?

Measurements carried out by Statistics Norway show that cultural consumption has remained stable in Norway since 1991.[2] Indirectly, they reveal that the expansion of cultural infrastructure and increased subsidies for the operation of institutions nationwide has not led to increased or more diverse participation. As a result, influential cultural scholars have claimed that the democratisation of the arts has failed.[3]

Statistics Norway's surveys are designed to show development over time. They report which cultural activities people claim to have participated in within the last year, but do not take into account all those who engage with culture less than once per year or who use art and forms of culture that were not current when the measurements began. The report does not say anything about who takes the decisions and who is dragged along. Nor does it include anything on motivations or barriers, or about potential users. Audiences Norway's goal is to provide insight that can be actioned. We are committed to identifying and understanding potential users.

There is a well-documented correlation between high levels of education and frequent use of and high levels of interest in publicly funded art and culture.[4] Nevertheless, there are large segments of

non-users with lower levels of education who have the potential to participate in the same way that there are segments of people with high levels of education who it is more difficult to engage. University education in the humanities and teacher training drive participation in art and culture, while higher education in financial administration does not have the same effect. The correlation between income and cultural participation is not as clear. Use of and interest in what is on offer in publicly funded art and cultural institutions is greatest amongst the cultured middle classes whose finances are average or slightly above.

With regard to gender, we can say with certainty that women are more interested in art and culture than men.[5] Surveys of and focus groups with our members give us reason to assume that eight out of ten cultural institution customers are women over the age of 45.

Alongside gender and education, age and phase of life are also of great significance to participation. Children and young people experience more culture than all the other age groups because they are taken to it by teachers, parents and grandparents. Children and young people also experience art and culture thanks to the Cultural Rucksack – the biggest and most important public funded initiative for developing interest in art and culture in Norway.[6] We do not know what the long-term impact of this initiative is as the scheme has only been in place since 2001. Currently, the following pattern has emerged: teenagers and young adults begin to fall away when they start making independent decisions. Those who were used to taking part in culture during childhood return when they have their own children. Visits to the cinema and concerts are less age-dependent than things like the opera, ballet and visual arts, but if we separate out art films from the full cinema repertoire and classical music from the orchestral programme, we see the same picture as elsewhere in the field of art and culture: mature women taking the initiative and making decisions, while men, children and young people are largely 'hangers-on'. In our surveys, men report lower levels than women regarding interest in and use of the majority of the cultural genres

examined, with the exception of concerts and museum visits that provide the opportunity for freedom of movement and interactivity.[7] This trend is more marked in qualitative studies. Young people and men are more likely than women to want to be interactive in a situation. A 2017 study of children and young people's consumption of culture in Oslo shows that parents of boys choose interactive museum experiences and knowledge centres to a greater extent, while girls are likelier to be taken to the theatre, opera or dance performances.

The findings relating to gender and participation give rise to a range of unanswered questions and speculations: is the sweeping predominance of female ticket buyers the result of purely practical role distribution in the home, or the result of something deeper? Is it about gender constructs? Is part of the heteronormative woman's role to take responsibility for her family's cultural education? And will patterns of cultural participation change as gender roles are altered? We do not currently include questions about sexual orientation in our surveys, but after many years as an audience developer both in theatre and as a knowledge producer at Audiences Norway, I would hypothesise that there is a preponderance of gay men amongst the men who buy tickets to the performing arts on their own initiative. Is it possible that the current provision is most relevant to women, in addition to those men who have freed themselves from the heteronormative male role?

Users and Non-users

We are often asked who the non-users are and what the most important barriers to their participation are. The answer is that in reality, non-users have nothing in common, except that they don't visit you and your venue. From an institutional perspective, most people are non-users and they come in all shapes and sizes.

An important lesson from conversations with non-users of specific institutions is that only rarely do they consider themselves to be excluded.[8] The main barrier is that they are unfamiliar with what is on offer, and secondly that they do not perceive it to be relevant.

They are just as likely to come from higher income backgrounds as they are from lower income backgrounds. They are more frequently young men rather than older women. Very few actively reject what is on offer.

Gender, age and educational background are all common ways of segmenting the audience. But it is not the most interesting approach to segmentation if the goal is to inspire audience development. In some surveys, we included a range of questions developed by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre.[9] The questions elucidate affiliation with one of eight segments specific to cultural consumption. This makes it easy to spot completely different types of users within the same age and educational background segments. It distinguishes between those who live and breathe art and culture and those who are not quite so devoted but are still open-minded and adventurous by nature. The model distinguishes between non-users who are more inclined towards discovery and exploration and those who need more confirmation and assurances, while identifying those who are independent and self-motivated from those who are more social and community-oriented. This helps us to think outside the box, put away our customer lists and discover potential users who have never heard of a given institution but who may well be in the market for what is being offered. Depending on which segments the various institutions prove to be over- or under-represented in, qualitative studies can then be carried out to find out what they think of the institution's actual repertoire or exhibition programme, its social events, website and social media communications. This provides the institution with valuable insight that can be used to make adjustments to resonate with the segments they want to include.

Audience Development and Marketing

Analysis and segmentation are key tools when working on audience development. But surveys have little impact if the insights are not

shared across organisations and implemented in institutional strategic plans. All too often, the survey is left to gather dust in the head of marketing's desk drawer.

In institutions in the artistic field engaged in production and curation, it is generally the marketing department's job to fill the house with as many people as possible for the lowest possible marketing cost, regardless of which programme-related decisions are made. This means it is rational to focus on low-hanging fruit – the regulars. It goes without saying that it is important to take care of high-frequency users, but audience development is about taking care of these people while *simultaneously* working strategically using a whole range of levers to reach new groups.

Smart marketers can increase their repeat purchase rate, hijack their competitors' audience and identify and convince so-called 'digital twins' to buy.[10] But new users with different socio-demographic profiles and tastes are hardly going to turn up unless the marketing department starts using tools they traditionally do not have control over. We are talking about curatorial and direction initiatives, castings, new concert formats and exhibition design, strategic programming of full seasons to engage different kinds of audiences, adaptation of premises, events and catering to make the social ritual more appealing to different groups.

Barriers and Motivations

During in-depth interviews or focus groups, we get closer to understanding non-users' barriers and motivations to participation. In addition to a lack of knowledge, an assumed lack of relevance is the most important barrier. This assumption is often based on brand associations connected to institutions with a long history. Non-users do not capture the development taking place in terms of programmes and audience development. The extent to which a cultural offering is considered relevant is not only about which stories are being told or which works are being presented, but about the prejudices relating to

the programme, the established audience and the social setting. There is often uncertainty amongst those who go occasionally in relation to whether they will get what they are looking for – whether this will offer an emotional experience, intellectual stimulation, aesthetic enjoyment or pure and simply relaxation from their hectic lives.

The Social Ritual

Feeling at home and part of the community is a fundamental element of the experience of art and culture outside the home. All social life is primarily associated with the audience that attends it, how old they are, where they come from, what they look like, what they are wearing and how they behave. Most people are reluctant to go somewhere where they feel they do not fit in. The social ritual creates a sense of belonging for some while excluding others. For the very most frequent users in the sector, the ritual itself and social codes are quotidian. For many non-users, there is greater uncertainty related to the social aspect than the encounter with the unknown work.

Aversion to Risk

Most people are reluctant to experience art and culture that they have no experience of or references to. Amongst low-frequency users, there are many who seek out art in connection with holidays, and precisely to experience something that is enduring and solid in a world undergoing violent change. They want to hear the same work played at the same time every year, or to introduce the same performance to new generations. The highest frequency audience members expect innovation and turn their noses up at anything that seems old fashioned.

By nature, there are segments that are more open and inclined towards discovery than others, without necessarily having significant prior knowledge or references to hand. However, they generally represent a limited portion of the overall market. They like to be the first to discover new and exciting formats and places, and it can be difficult to persuade them that a cultural form or institution with ancient traditions is worth a visit unless the institution does something that is sensational, new and leaves its mark on the public.

A risk-mitigating measure for those who have the institution on their radar but are uncertain about whether to go and what to choose, is to offer audiovisual content that makes it possible to see what the experience will be like. Some larger institutions offer interpretation assistance through introductions to the works in question. These are often popular, especially amongst regular visitors. Others offers extensive communication initiatives in the shape of artistic co-creation projects. But not everyone wants to go into such depth. Most cultural consumers just want to know what they are going to. Regulars know the repertoire inside out, but occasional visitors appreciate help in making the right choice from everything being presented over the course of a season. All too often, communication is directed at experts in the audience and in the field.

Internal Institutional Barriers to Audience Development

Audiences Norway not only carries out audience surveys, but also industry surveys to identify and share best practice. We conduct conversations with our members annually, award a prize to the member achieving the best results, and observe clear patterns in terms of how audience development is understood and practised in the field.

Some see similarities between audience development and inclusion, while others draw a connection between audience development and marketing. In the field of diversity, inclusion and marketing become increasingly interchangeable. According to these voices, audience development is about developing your own activities to make them more relevant to multicultural consumers of art and culture.[11]

Too Little Diversity

Large sums of money have been invested in the inclusion of minorities and people from working class backgrounds over recent decades in

the UK, without producing any results. A fresh report shows that they are grossly under-represented in the cultural sector both amongst producers of content and the audience.[12] The explanation offered is that those working in creative professions do not have individuals from working class or immigrant backgrounds in their networks.

The Years of Cultural Diversity in 2006 and 2008 contributed to an increased focus on the inclusion of people from immigrant backgrounds in Sweden and Norway respectively. At present, a project taking place under the auspices of the Nordic Council is seeking to establish ways to stimulate better integration through increased cultural participation. The goal of this project is not to develop a new audience for institutions, but to develop an experience of citizenship in parts of the population that live on the brink of social and cultural exclusion.[13] The programme focuses on the target group's need for cultural participation rather than the institutions' need for new audiences and development of the market basis.

Too Little User Orientation

Audiences Norway's membership comprises different types of institutions. Performing arts institutions, orchestras, festivals, museums, art galleries, concert halls, cultural centres and libraries. Cultural institutions involved in production are overwhelmingly product-oriented and focused on ensuring quality and artistic development, ahead of audience development. Public libraries represent the other extreme when it comes to audience development. Their primary task is to serve the population. They do not write books and they do not make films. They lend them – for free. Yet borrowing figures are falling. The most development-oriented libraries of the present day have been transformed from book depositories into activity centres and literary centres where the population can socialise, study and engage in debate. Audience development is a core activity and they programme for and with their target audiences.

Audiences Norway is trying to identify and understand how best practice institutions work. We are not exclusively focused on user orientation, but see that there is great potential for audience

development in the sector. In some cases, radical investment in innovative activities can lead to audience development. And in some cases perhaps this is right and proper. In yet further cases, routine ways of thinking and acting lead to the maintenance and reproduction of impractical usage patterns.

Our main impression is that the two key barriers to audience development in the production-led area of the field are: the fear that quality will fall if user orientation takes over, and an understanding of the roles that sometimes occur in silo organisations and a lack of interaction across disciplines.

A hypothetical worst case scenario might look something like this: An artistic director is recruited by a board that fails to emphasise audience development in its appointment. The director is expected to focus primarily on artistic quality and international recognition, and has neither a plan nor the passion to reach out to a wide spectrum of the local population. The individual in question shows no real interest in how the market is developing, or who the audience is, so long as budgets are secured, and artistic scope is maintained. This has an internal impact on culture. The production of art is perceived to be more important than audience development. There is a big distance and lack of communication between the production and marketing departments. The marketing department fails to provide input to the programme – they are merely responsible for packaging it, identifying relevant target audiences, selling the product to them and achieving their own revenue goals. The audience cannot take up too much space – whether this is in strategies and plans or in practice. Too many inexperienced audience members represents a burden that the institution is not equipped to deal with. There is disagreement about the marketing of the repertoire between those employed to develop the artistic product and those employed to put bums on seats. The result is conflict and a poor working environment. The auditorium is filled with an audience of high frequency users in segments that are easy to convince. Audience development as we have defined it is not taking place. The institution contributes indirectly to entrenching the skewed usage patterns amongst the population.

Common to winners of the Audiences Norway prize is that they see no contradiction between artistic development and audience development. Their work is vision-based and audience-focused. They generally have more specific audience targets than the vague, non-committal standard aim of 'reaching out to as many people as possible'. The top brass are passionate about audience development in certain segments and convey their engagement both within the organisation and to the outside world. Their ambition is often – but not always – embodied in a short and concise strategy in which the goals are clear and where it is easy to evaluate whether they have been fulfilled. Programming is strategic and targeted in order to reach new groups. There are good collaborative partnerships internally and a good balance between product orientation and user orientation in theory and in practice. In exceptional cases, they measure not only the number of people in the audience but also the size of the different segments. They know *who* is coming and *why*. The most forward-looking institutions have long used data-driven insight based on their customers' digital footprints.

The reality in most large and medium-sized institutions is somewhere between the worst case and 'the next step'.[14] Small institutions more frequently face the challenge that budgets are too small to allow knowledge-acquisition, and there are insufficient bodies available to put new, resource-intensive communications initiatives into effect. One of the advantages of a knowledge producer like Audiences Norway is that it generates insights that can be used by all types of institutions in the network and that there is someone who can help if they want to apply these insights.

We gladly take the Swedish cultural policy model from 1974 for granted, but it diverges from the norm, whether you look at it from an international or historical perspective. If you listen to the cultural policy debate, it is easy to get the impression that cultural life stands or falls with the current system.

Lars Anders Johansson

Lars Anders Johansson
– Poet, musician and journalist

A Club for Mutual Admiration

The Swedish cultural policy system is creaking at the seams. It emerged in an era completely different from our own – the radical seventies – and is characterised by ideological standpoints that few support in the present day. Nevertheless, interest in transforming cultural policy has essentially been non-existent.

There are no specific proposals for what we might replace it with. Instead, governments of varying persuasions have chosen to patch and mend, tightening things up a little here and nailing things down a bit there. Or they have quite simply chosen not to do anything at all.

The question, however, is why we should maintain a political system that in forty years has failed to achieve its own goals. The policy of publicly-funded cultural activity remains a priority, primarily amongst the educated urban middles classes.

In Sweden, we have become accustomed to almost reflexively thinking that if something is important then it is a pressing matter for the public sector. Anyone who questions whether a specific activity should be financed using taxpayer funds is suspected of being an opponent of the activity itself rather than merely the form of funding. This is particularly apparent in the cultural debate. Anyone expressing doubts about public funding of cultural activities is frequently accused of being hostile to culture.

The Swedish cultural policy debate has for decades been provincial and overly concerned with naval gazing. It is based on the notion that the cultural policy system established as a result of the Government Bill on Culture in 1974 is the only obvious way for the state to pursue cultural policy, and that any deviation from the model in practice would be a cultural revolution.

In my book *Att dansa efter maktens pipa. Kultur i politikens tjänst* [Dancing to the Tune of Power. Arts and Culture in the Service of Politics] (Timbro förlag, 2017), I argue that it is actually the current Swedish system that is the deviation from both a historical perspective and in terms of international comparison. There are and have existed many ways to organise public sector involvement in cultural life. The fact that the Swedish system and its foundations are not under debate ought to be considered a democratic problem and should concern anyone who is seriously interested in cultural policy. Perhaps the absence of debate is a symptom of the generally low levels of interest in cultural policy issues.

Particularly distressing is the indifference of the right wing towards cultural policy. Anyone listening to conservative cultural politicians could easily get the impression that the current cultural policy system is some kind of politically neutral infrastructure without any ideological undertones. In reality, the cultural policy shift

in the mid-1970s constituted a highly radical reform agenda characterised by the same spirit of the era that left its mark in the shape of proposals for wage-earner funds and the nationalisation of entire sectors such as the pharmacy industry.

There was a time when the Swedish National Labour Market Board, apparently quite seriously, proposed a state monopoly artists' agency (!). In short, you would have been obliged to turn to the Board if you wanted to book artists for your festival or venue. However, the proposal hit the buffers thanks to efforts to influence public opinion from a number of prominent troubadours, headed up by Bengt Sändh. But while policies from the seventies in most other areas of society have been abandoned, cultural policy remains in situ and largely unchanged.

The fact that the cultural policy reform of 1974 had an ideological slant is obvious. This was already noticeable in the report that formed its basis. The report committee included representatives from the various organisations of the labour movement, as well as the new cultural institutions founded during the sixties, such as the new cultural centres. Conspicuous by their absence were representatives of the political right wing, as well as the major national theatres and royal academies, which had formed the backbone of Swedish cultural policy since the second half of the eighteenth century.

A large part of the preparatory work had also been carried out under the auspices of an organisation called Kulturarbetarnas Socialdemokratiska förening [the Cultural Workers' Social Democratic Association], formed in 1964 with the aim of bringing the cultural sector closer to the Social Democratic Party, as well as producing the basis for a new type of culture policy.

The Government Bill on Culture was preceded by intense debates in which the right wing in particular warned what it would do to cultural life. However, since the bill was pushed through, the conservatives have remained silent. Minor cultural policy battles have flared up on individual issues, but the overall direction has remained fixed.

Some key differences between the cultural policy of the seventies compared with previous policy – beyond the scope of the commitment – were that the cultural policy was expanded from its previously delimited purpose of promoting the arts, to a wider definition of culture, in addition to cultural policy promoting political ambitions in other areas of society – for example in terms of economics or social equality.

The new cultural policy transformed culture into a tool for the pursuit of social, economic and ideological politics. It was also reflected in the cultural policy goals, which established that cultural policy was to 'counteract the negative effects of commercialism'. This phrase – reeking of the seventies – was only removed from the cultural policy goals by the centre right coalition government in 2009.

The former Social Democratic cultural policy – or the artists' policy as it was known – drawn up by Arthur Engberg, the Minister of Education in Per Albin Hansson's government of the 1930s, had borne the traits of the early labour movement's ambitions to educate the population. The working class would be given the opportunity to elevate their levels of education by participating in high-class culture. For a long time, there was a culturally conservative and education-oriented consensus between social democrats and conservatives with regard to the contents of cultural policy. Fine culture was to be promoted. In order to protect good taste, a prohibition on the import of poor art was even introduced – the ban was only overturned in 1953.

It is probably this consensus on aesthetic matters that explains why the right-of-centre parties did not oppose the centralisation efforts in the cultural sector that occurred gradually between the thirties and seventies, and that created the conditions for the radical changes to cultural policy in the seventies. Step-by-step, the public support system for the arts had been expanded (initially inspired by the cultural policy of the Third Reich) while constantly rising rates of taxation undermined opportunities for privately-funded culture. Centralised systems lack the inertia that otherwise offers protection from overly hasty upheavals.

The new cultural policy was accompanied by a fresh perspective on culture. The educational concept was considered outdated and dismissed as 'bourgeois' despite the fact that it had been sanctified to just as great an extent by the labour movement. Culture was to be 'democratised' through hierarchies being overthrown. Town hall meetings were introduced in theatres because the janitor was considered to have as much to say about the artistic content as the educated actor or playwright.

An important aspect of this 'democratisation' of culture was also that culture was to reach out to more social groups. Theatres were no longer to be the bastions of bourgeoisie they were regarded as – the auditoriums were to be filled with members of the working classes.

Four decades later, not much has happened. Any visitor to the Royal Swedish Opera or the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm will be struck by how the audience appears to have changed little. It is largely the educated middle classes who frequent the taxpayer-funded cultural institutions. You might even go so far as to say that while the doctors and lawyers' opera tickets are subsidised by the taxpayer, the worker pays a high price for their rock concert tickets on the free market.

Despite forty years of active cultural policy and despite many of the seventies radicals carving out careers as institutional heads and powerful cultural bureaucrats, the publicly-funded cultural sector still remains a priority for a fairly narrow and rather well-to-do segment of the population. Or perhaps that is precisely the reason why.

All cultural institutions operate in a market, including those with public funding. While private theatres and concert venues have to adapt their repertoires to their customers in the shape of the audience, the publicly-funded cultural institutions need to adapt their activities to their customers in the shape of the political powers that be. This means that publicly-funded cultural institutions are particularly susceptible to the trends and ideals prevailing in the social strata in which the political powers are located.

Is this a problem? It depends on what the purpose of the policy is. It may be that the ambition to reach out to new groups has in fact been subordinate to another aim – namely that of providing for cultural workers and keeping them loyal to the political system.

Some years ago when I was debating cultural policy with the former Social Democratic cultural politician, Bengt Göransson, he explained that he did not think it was a problem if the policy on literature was funding contributions to publishers' slush piles so long as authors were being supported. Based on that approach, it is also not a problem if no one goes to publicly-funded cultural institutions, or that only a small circle attends, so long as the actors and dramatists have a guaranteed meal ticket. The current government's latest play of suggesting that authorities employ artists points in this direction.

This is how power buys loyalty from the cultural sector. Granted, this is nothing new but something that has happened at all times and in all political systems. Art and culture are a powerful force that politicians prefer to have with them rather than against them. Buying the cultural sector's loyalty can be a very worthwhile investment for the powers that be.

Similarly, the publicly-funded cultural sector tends to absorb its critics and make them loyal. In the seventies, the radical left was on the outside, protesting against the lopsided composition of cultural audiences and the 'bourgeois hegemony' of the cultural sector. The political sphere responded by handing out commissions and appointments to the most radical voices. In his doctoral thesis *Musikens politiska ekonomi* [The Political Economy of Music], historian, Rasmus Fleischer demonstrates how the prog movement in Sweden died out in the years following the major cultural policy reform. The reason was that there was no longer any need for an alternative movement when everyone involved in it had been employed by the publicly-funded cultural sector.

Today, it is political activists focusing on identity politics who are criticising the limitations of the audience and the alignment of cultural life in the form of a 'whiteness norm' and 'heteronormativity'. Politics

has responded by advertising roles such as 'Diversity Coordinator' and appointing these activists to expert panels and insight groups. As they are sucked into the cultural bureaucratic superstructure, their voices will probably also be silenced. When a critic becomes a cultural bureaucrat, she normally turns to forcefully defending the system she previously criticised.

However, the risk with this development is that the legitimacy of the adopted cultural policy will decrease. I often hear people in the public cultural sector wishing for cultural policy to become an electoral issue. I am not sure this is an altogether wise desire. It is not certain that a review of the publicly-funded cultural sector and an open debate on the issue would increase citizens' willingness to pay for it via taxation. Even less so if they were to notice how much public money disappears into the bureaucratic superstructure and how little ends up with the hard working artists, musicians and actors.

Yet another brewing issue of legitimacy is that an ever-increasing portion of public cultural funds is aimed at initiatives in metropolitan regions. The inequality between the city and the country is on the rise, despite regionalisation. Furthermore, there seems to be no correlation between public investments in culture and a rich cultural scene in terms of the number of practitioners.

On the contrary, some of Sweden's poorest municipalities like Nordanstig in the northern county of Hälsingland have a more vigorous amateur culture in the shape of choirs, folk music groups and so on, than areas that invest significantly more taxpayer money into cultural life. When I have discussed cultural policy with musicians and other cultural practitioners who are active in rural areas, they have often spoken about cultural policy as a club for mutual admiration, in and around Stockholm. This is a reality that strikes a discordant note with the supposed political ambitions for a 'cultural policy for the whole country'.

As privately-funded cultural life spreads like wild fire, the publicly-funded cultural sector seems to be increasingly lagging behind. The seventies model is a thing of the past, but no one seems to have worked out what they want to replace it with. The party political

debate is about detailed issues, like free admission to state museums in Stockholm – a reform that it has transpired has little effect on the composition of the audience. Quite the opposite, in fact – it is yet another subsidy aimed at the educated middle classes.

We gladly take the Swedish cultural policy model from 1974 for granted, but it diverges from the norm, whether you look at it from an international or historical perspective. If you listen to the cultural policy debate, it is easy to get the impression that cultural life stands or falls with the current system. Yet cultural life before 1974 was at the very least equally vibrant, and there are countries where the public sector's undertakings are significantly less extensive or look quite different to Sweden's.

In my book *Att dansa efter maktens pipa*, I review a number of cultural policy models and systems from different eras to give perspective on the Swedish way of conducting cultural policy. My hope is that Swedish politicians and those interested in culture find inspiration and new approaches, because one thing is certain – the cultural policy model from the 1970s has had its day, just like the society it emerged from.

> The institutions' continued focus on the groups they already have, and the cultural sector's often self-referencing practice, means that despite many and persistent attempts to create a larger anchorage, they still only reach a new audience with a different social and demographic background to a limited extent.
>
> Niels Righolt

Niels Righolt
- CEO, the Danish Centre for Arts & Interculture

Audience Development and the DNA of Culture

Is audience development merely a commercial manipulation of the DNA of culture? Is the common Scandinavian translation of the English term Audience Development in fact an expression of a real liberalization and erosion of the very essence of the arts? Is it about an inappropriate dismantling of the premises and characteristics of culture, and thus also a violation of the artist's and cultural institutions' integrity? If so, Stina Oscarson just might be right in activating her defence mechanisms and argue against what could be perceived and interpreted as an untimely and moral political interference in the creative processes of the arts and an expression of distrust towards artists, and thus also a limitation of artistic freedom.

But audience development is perhaps rather an expression of the cultural institutions' adaptations to the changes our society is undergoing, and thus a willingness to try to nuance and anchor the role and importance of culture? Art and culture as a kind of societal function, as a change agent, a way for cultural actors, artists and institutions to contribute to actual changes by becoming relevant to a larger group of citizens than the *usual suspects*, the norm-setting cultural-consuming elite, as Allan Klie describes it.

Or could it even be so, that audience development simply is a nuanced, deliberately strategic way of working in order to increase public figures, create an institutional financial security and ensure a strategic overview of which groups the institutions are turning to and in what way? A way to understand and navigate the relationship between market development and the institutions brand and profile, as Andrew McIntyre puts it in his description of the work on the Audience Atlas Sweden.

Or is it none of the above? Or maybe all and more to them? Simultaneously? The discussions about what audience development really means, and how we should define the term have been going on for a while. There are many reasons why this discussion is both demanding, provocative and highly interesting.

In my opinion, the understanding of what the term means and what it covers has changed a lot over the past 8 – 10 years. The notion of the concept has shifted. From being a more or less advanced market-oriented asset, which focused primarily on bringing a suitable number of people with the widest possible social background, economic status and age in contact with the arts, and thus being able to achieve the best possible financial results[1]. To increasingly becoming a processual and more holistic asset for deepening, strengthening and expanding the relationship between the cultural institutions and the different audience groups[2] under the influence of the social changes that defines the outer framework for art and culture.

Audience Development in Scandinavia

In an often quoted article from 2000, Heather Maitland[3] describes audience development as a conscious and planned process, which involves establishing an actual relationship between the individual and the art. A relationship that is established over time and which presupposes that the art and cultural institutions actively work to develop and strengthen it. This is an interpretation of the concept that Maitland develops in her article in this anthology by highlighting the importance of the institutions being aware of what values they represent and express. Accordingly, it can be described as a shift from speaking and looking at audience development as a method for increasing audience figures and turnover, as well as strengthening the institutions' profile and brand, to speak about audience development as an institutional relational awareness, responding to the increasingly articulated demands of the citizens for relevance and stories that resonate with their reality.

It is a contradiction as well as a development that to a great extent also has been visible in the Nordic countries, all of which have looked at Britain and the Benelux countries for inspiration to develop new ways of working with the audience. While Maitland's thoughts on the relationally conscious cultural institution were quickly anchored in Denmark, especially within the museums field where institutions were inspired by her and by interaction researchers and educational philosophers such as John Falk[4] and Gert Biesta[5], arts and culture professionals in Norway found inspiration in Britain's and Tony Blair's New Labour's cultural policy and ideas about Audience Development. The idea of the then red-green Norwegian government was to raise the sector's societal status, and at the same time ensure a more reasonable distribution of and participation in the cultural offerings, by on one hand increasing the grants, and at the same time setting political demands for increased efforts to reach out to a new audience, rather than the already privileged elite in the big cities.

Since then, as Ingrid Handeland describes it in her article, there have been some rather significant changes in the political landscape, and at the same time, digitization and social development in general have made it necessary to think broader, and nuance the methods used. Partly to motivate working with the audience both internally within the organizations and externally – especially in relation to the donors – and partly as a way to direct the efforts and at the same time be aware of what other opportunities exist. How to navigate operationally between *extended marketing* and *cultural integration*, naming two counter positions identified by the Japanese cultural researcher Naboko Kawashima[6].

As Handeland points out, it poses great challenges to get the politically motivated investment in strengthening the cultural institutions' work on audience development to function as intended. The institutions' continued focus on the groups they already have, and the cultural sector's often self-referencing practice, means that despite many and persistent attempts to create a larger anchorage, they still only reach a new audience from a different social and demographic background to a limited extent.

In Sweden as well as in Norway, major national efforts were made in the years 2006 and 2008[7] to do something about this. Millions of kronor were pumped into full-year programs to strengthen the opportunities for immigrants and other minorities to take part in the cultural offerings, not least to increase the opportunities for migrant and minority artists to make an impression on the cultural retina, to make themselves heard and gradually get the opportunity to become part of the professional cultural environment and thus get access to the means of production. However, as both Ninos Josef and Qaisar Mahmood describe it, this yielded no major results. The integration didn't occur and the minorities were, involuntarily and partly ignorant of it, being exploited in a cultural debate, which basically revolved around whether there was any need at all to change the cultural institutions' modus operandi, and what qualitative concepts one could reasonably use in relation to new and "non-Western" cultural actors.

The Digital Shift

But this was before the economic crisis really struck Europe and before we realized the full magnitude of the smartphones' importance for how people interact, create and participate, before events in North Korea and Hawaii were just a click away. Overnight, we became glocal citizens, where the analogue physical reality was constantly paired with a global attention that enabled us to search for information and experiences in the digital space.

The digital shift has already turned the audience into a co-creator. And, of course, the challenge in the Nordic countries is how artists and cultural institutions should relate to that reality. How interactive technology can be exploited and perhaps even integrated into the cultural experience in addition to the obvious communicative perspectives. Although it is more than eleven years since Facebook revolutionized the media-based interaction, there are still many cultural institutions that do not fully dare, or have the ability to integrate the opportunities into their operations.

Digital and technological developments make it almost impossible for our cultural institutions to maintain a traditional institutional narrative and to maintain their "ownership" to their stories. The traditional didactic structure where the cultural institution is the "narrator" and the audience listens and learns belong to yesterday. A one-way communication is no longer sufficient, and a variety of new platforms, interactive elements, and targeted individualized formats have replaced the classic communication channels. Concepts such as *co-creation* and *participation* as a consequence of digitization have become central to the institutions' ability to attract new audiences, in particular the attractive, trend-setting and educated youth.

Access to cultural experiences and the demand for a more inclusive institutional practice is increasingly setting the agenda. Both in relation to the means made available by public authorities and funds, and in relation to the public's requirements, as the audience itself puts to words in user surveys and other audience surveys, such as, for example, the recurring study of the Danes' cultural habits[8].

Ever since World War II, cultural institutions have traditionally been inspired by and used an advertising-influenced marketing form where cultural offerings are conveyed via the media that the intended target group may wish to use. The cultural institutions' communication staff communicated with relatively stable segments and designed their strategies accordingly. The cultural sector "copied" the communication strategies from other sectors and at the institutions, the people responsible for communication worked closely with those responsible for marketing in special departments, often perceived as the primary tool for "selling tickets" to the intended audience. In fact, it still works like that in many European institutions. The goal was to sell tickets and profile the institutions / actors in relation to donors and other potential financiers.

Through the spreading of the Internet, those structures were challenged and a new world opened up, with new opportunities to reach out with the message. However, the structures were still intact, with relation to the institutions continuing to convey their information to well-defined segments of potential users, only now by using a website as a "link" on the way, where the users themselves could find all the information that the institutions chose to define. The large search engines, with their algorithms and individualized navigation functions, undeniably gave the institutions a hint of what was expected.

But with the smartphones and Apple's launch of iPhone in 2007, digital technology has completely exploded. Cultural communication to, and with the audience, has not been the same ever since. The social media universe, consisting of millions of users, has long since reached a level that few cultural players have the opportunity to relate to. And phenomena such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have set new standards for how we communicate with each other. The ownership of the "story" about our experiences lies now even more so than before with the audience. In practice, digitization has meant a shift in power that cultural institutions have to relate to.

When the Boundaries Blur

Today, more than 90 percent of the population in the Nordic countries have a smartphone, and surveys show that we are now spending more time on the Internet via our tablets and smartphones than with the help of our computers. That is the reality cultural institutions, decision-makers and politicians must take into consideration when it comes to facilitating access to culture and ensuring a broader integration of different target groups. Over a short period of time, the audience's behaviour has changed quite dramatically in terms of cultural participation and consumption. The institutions are faced with new requirements, not only in relation to how they communicate but also what they communicate!

The former, and rather clear, boundaries between the curators and the communication staff are blurred. In order to attract a new audience and open up the institutions for "unusual suspects", accessibility is no longer just a matter of pricing and effective marketing. It is increasingly about being perceived as relevant by a wider group of people with very different backgrounds and preferences. This of course challenges the traditional modus operandi. For the cultural institutions, it becomes a question of new "stories" and new ways to program, collaborate, find new competencies and new partners, etc. It challenges the cultural institutional practice as we know it – and of course it creates friction.

In reality the changes are so extensive and happens so fast, that it becomes a pure survival strategy for the cultural institutions in their present form, to be able to relate dynamically to the new opportunities as a prerequisite for the development of the institution and its employees as well as for the relationship with the audience. But it is difficult to crack the code. Studies in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the UK on how the cultural institutions use digital solutions in their daily work show that it is surprisingly difficult for them

to meaningfully integrate the digital possibilities in relation to the organisation's overriding strategic assignments. It may be that the institutions to a large extent are still governed by a generation, who is profoundly sceptical about the opportunities digitalization entails.

New Media and Fake News

A large number of the traditional value-bearing media in the Nordic countries, major newspapers, radio and TV stations, have been forced to execute substantial cuts over the past decades, especially in the field of culture. Compared with the end of the 1990s, most major media in Denmark have reduced their staff on culture by between 50 and 75 percent, or in some cases even closed down a whole culture editorial department completely. And although it seems less dramatic in Norway and Sweden, the tendency is nevertheless the same.

The changes in the media landscape obviously have enormous consequences for how cultural actors and institutions work. The earlier communicative logic and order has been broken, the role of the old media as "judges of taste" and "gatekeepers" in relation to what is perceived as good and bad art, has been challenged by both the digital revolution, the arrival of entirely new communication platforms and by the general changes in society.

The digitization of our society also poses other challenges. As the world has become smaller and we have gained access to a constant flow of news and opinions, the perception of what is true and false has changed. Stories in cyberspace reaches millions of people before they can be verified in any sense of the word. And with Donald Trump in the White House, the concept of Fake News has become part of our daily navigation universe. Politicians from many countries, with the American president at the forefront, can now relate relatively freely to facts and problematize knowledge that would otherwise have been supported through the source-criticism of tradition-bearing media and news reporting of both small and large events, locally as well as globally. The result is a fragmentation of the

news stream and thus also of the bearing societal stories. With the support of new digital and social media and its habitat, the concept of Fake News has created a mood of distrust towards the established media and instead a cacophony of news, stories and perspectives leaves it to the individual to relate to and check facts. We can only speculate on the possible implications for cultural life. But there are already voices on both sides of the Atlantic that speak of fake news and obvious falsehoods leading to an ethical crisis that could potentially put democracy and society at risk[9].

Possible Ways Forward

From a political perspective, the demands for a democratic review of the cultural sector increases in the form of a more inclusive practice, that can both increase the size of, and the composition of the audience. The political ambition seems to be the creation of better conditions for all citizens' opportunities to take part in cultural life, and thus create space for a true meeting and interaction between different cultural traditions and the citizens' own experiences, knowledge and perspectives. Or a desire that culture, as a reproductive carrier of a national value system, should be a scene for a specific understanding of national cultural identity. Or to act as completely free culture actors (with some exceptions) in terms of supply and demand.

In the first case, an institutional challenge may be best described as a matter of artistic, performative and social representation regarding repertoire, recruitment routines, audience and mediation work, organization, etc. without lowering the requirements for quality and timeliness. In the second, the desire to capture culture in a political ideological mind-set becomes a question of limitations of institutional and artistic freedom that are often regulated through grants and governing documents. And in the third case, culture is granted freedom to investigate and test its own survival skills on the conditions of the free market.

Regardless of which political ambition is at stake, for the institutions the implication is a renegotiation of their profile and program/repertoire, their relationship with the outside world and, not least, a more nuanced audience than before. It is also about which collaborations they include, which partners they work with, what skills they are looking for in new employees etc. Set against this background, the external relation becomes a complex relational balancing act where the anchoring and the institutions' ability to create resonance with any given audience group becomes a core issue. It is in itself not rocket science, but can work as a good starting point. Why do we do what we do? For, with and by whom?

Footnotes and References

Heather Maitland
– Who is Developing Who?
Pages: 14–23

Footnotes

1. See, for example, McCarthy, K. F., & Jinnett, K. J. (2001) *A new framework for building participation in the arts*, Rand Corporation, p. 14 and European Commission Creative Europe Culture Sub-Programme, Support for European Cooperation Projects 2018 and Support for cooperation projects related to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018: Guidelines, p. 5.

2. See, for example, Tim Gill (2010) 'Keeping it Real: why and how educators should be expanding children's horizons', in *Born Creative*, ed. Tims, Charlie, London: Demos; Beth Juncker (2012) 'What's the Meaning? The Relations between Professional Theatre Performances and Children's Cultural Life', in *TYA, Culture, Society. Inter national Essays on Theatre for Young Audiences.* A Publication of ASSITEJ and ITYARN. ed. by van de Water, Manon, in: Kinder-, Schul- und Jugendtheater – Beiträge zu Theorie und Praxis, Band 15, (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Brussels, New York, Oxford, Vienna: Peter Lang); Matthew Reason (2010) *The Young Audience: exploring and enhancing children's experiences of theatre*, (London: UCL Institute of Education Press); Tom Maguire (2012) 'There is no audience: meeting the dramaturgical challenges of the spectator in children's theatre' in Tom Maguire and Karian Schuitema, *Theatre for Young Audiences*, (London: UCL Institute of Education Press); Ellinor Lidén and Karin Helander (2012) 'Slutrapport till Statens kulturråd: Interkulturella perspektiv på scenkonst för barn och unga'; Ellinor Lidén (2013) 'Rörlighet och rörelser i en barnteater', paper from the conference On the Move: ACSIS conference 11–13 June, Norrköping, Sweden 2013, organized by ACSIS (Advanced Cultural Studies Institute of Sweden). Conference Proceedings published by Linköping University Electronic Press.

3. See, for example, Margaret E. Blume-Kohout, Sara R. Leonard, Jennifer L. Novak-Leonard (2015) *When going gets tough: barriers and motivations affecting arts attendance*, (Washington: National Endowment for the Arts).

Tiffany Jenkins
– The Tyranny of Relevance
Pages: 34–40

Footnotes

1. Adler, Jacob (1999) *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir*, translated and with commentary by Lulla Rosenfeld, Knopf, New York, p. 232.

2. Cited in *Artists and Patrons in Postwar Britain*, ed. Margaret Garlake, 2007, Courtauld Institute of Art.

3. *Art Apart: Institutions and Ideology Across England and North America*, by Marcia R. Pointon, Manchester University Press, 1994

4. *Art Apart: Institutions and Ideology Across England and North America*, by Marcia R. Pointon, Manchester University Press, 1994

5. See https://www.museumsassociation.org/news/24042017-help--diversify-museum-visitors

Alan Brown
– All the World's a Stage
Pages: 42–63

Footnotes

1. StreamJam, a software application developed by The Electric Sheep Company, allows users to 'attend' live concerts within the Facebook environment. When the full version of StreamJam is launched, it will be a perpetual 24/7 online music festival with venues embedded on pages across the Web. See http://www.electricsheepcompany.com/streamjam/

2. Melissa M. Chan, a graduate of Columbia University, made a fine contribution to this topic with her master's thesis paper *Second Chances: Exploring the role of unexpected context in live performance to rekindle classical music's relationship with today's audience*, 2010 (unpublished).

3. The Cultural Policy Center of the University of Chicago plans to release a major study of the U.S. cultural infrastructure in 2012. For information, see http://culturalpolicy.uchicago.edu/index.shtml

4. Achieving more equitable access to culture was a theme of the Future of the City symposium in June 2011, organized by the University of Chicago. See http://futureofthecity.uchicago.edu/arts/

5. La Folle Journée is a French annual classical music festival held in Nantes. According to the organization's website, 'la Folle Journée offers a new perspective on concerts that attracts and instructs new audiences of all ages by doing away with the unchanging and rather predictable rituals of conventional concerts.' Other cities have developed their own festivals based on the format of La Folle Journée, including Madrid, Bilbao, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro and Warsaw. For more information, see http://www.follejournee.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=85&lang=en

6. These figures derive from a survey of 762 *Carmen on the Common* attenders; research conducted for the Boston Lyric Opera by Audience Insight LLC of Fairfield, Connecticut, 2002.

7. The creation of inviting social environments to attract younger audiences was a recurrent theme at a 2010 symposium on the 21st century arts center, hosted by Dartmouth College. The entire proceedings were videotaped and are posted in time-marked segments at http://hop.dartmouth.edu/uncategorized/arts-of-the-21st-century

8. ArtPlace America (ArtPlace) is a ten-year collaboration among a number of foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions that works to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities. 'ArtPlace believes that art, culture and creativity expressed powerfully through place can create vibrant communities, thus increasing the desire and the economic opportunity for people to thrive in place. It is all about the local.' - from www.artplaceamerica.org

9. Our Town is the NEA's primary creative placemaking grants program, and invests in projects that contribute to the livability

of communities and place the arts at their core. See https://www.arts.gov/national/our-town

10. The Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities (CECC), administered at Simon Fraser University from 2005 to 2008, was an extensive research project into cultural infrastructure in Canada. For a list of publications, see http://www.cultureandcommunities.ca/resources_infrastructure.html

11. See http://www.themarttheatre.org.uk/

12. See http://www.popupartloop.com/index.php

13. The Chanel Mobile Art Pavilion was a traveling exhibit created by Karl Lagerfeld and Zaha Hadid. For a video tour of the inflatable venue, see http://www.chanel-mobileart.com/. The architecture field has long been fascinated with temporary, inflatable and mobile structures: http://weburbanist.com/2011/09/09/blow-up-buildings-17-inflatable-works-of-mobile-architecture/

14. Examples of urban ephemera include The Big Dance, a large scale event planned in conjunction with the 2012 Olympics in London (see http://www.bigdance2012.com), and The Sultan's Elephant, a show created by the Royal de Luxe theatre company and performed in London in 2006, involving a huge moving mechanical elephant, a giant marionette of a girl and other associated public art installations. See http://www.thesultanselephant.com/about/royaldeluxe.php

15. For an accounting of the conception of the production in this unusual space, read Matthew Gurewitsch's January 14, 2010 New York Times story on the production at www.nytimes.com/2010/01/17/arts/music/17mondo.html?pagewanted=all

16. See http://sleepnomorenyc.com/, accessed November 26, 2011. Also see Ben Brantley's New York Times review at http://theater.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/theater/reviews/sleep-no-more-is-a-macbeth-in-a-hotel-review.html?ref=theater

17. Woodshed Collective describes its work as 'full-scale installation productions designed to allow our audiences to explore a tactile theatrical landscape through language, story, image, sound, light, dance, and visual art, all within a densely rich surrounding environment.' See http://www.woodshedcollective.com/mission/

18. See http://dacamera.org/about_us.php

19. Classical Revolution is a musician-driven, zero-budget, multi-city movement to bring chamber music to a wider audience by '…offering performances in highly accessible venues such as bars and cafés, and collaborating with local musicians and artists from various styles and backgrounds.' As of early 2012, there were 20 chapters in communities ranging from Portland to Ann Arbor. Marketing is done almost exclusively through Facebook. For more information see http://www.classicalrevolution.org/

20. The New World Symphony's new facility in Miami Beach includes a large wall on which video content is projected (i.e., Wall-casts™), with a high quality audio experience. Live orchestra concerts and other programs occurring inside of the hall can be enjoyed simultaneously by a different audience outside of the hall. For information about the New World Center, see http://www.newworldcenter.com/

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Acknowledgements

This paper would not have been possible without the great work of other researchers, writers, consultants, and practitioners, including Ben Cameron, Melissa Chan, Lynne Conner, Betty Farrell, Arlene Goldbard, Nick Herd, John Holden, Nan Keeton, Peter Linett, Diane Ragsdale, Josephine Ramirez, Duncan Webb and Steven Wolff. Charith Premawardhana, founder of Classical Revolution, was especially generous in sharing his passion for a new approach to concertizing. One publication in particular was especially influential in guiding my thoughts about setting: *Redefining Places for Art: Exploring the dynamics of performance and location*, by Helen Lancaster, Suzanne Kyte, Jennifer Craik, & Huib Schippers (Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University). Finally, I am especially indebted to Kyle Marinshaw of WolfBrown for his detailed research and assistance with outlining and editing the paper.

Steven Hadley

Audience Development: Democratising Culture?

Pages: 76-85

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Andrew McIntyre and Joss Luckin
– A Complete Picture of the Swedish Culture Market
Pages: 94–105

Footnotes

1. Museum; Art gallery or art exhibition; Craft / object art exhibition; Digital or video art event; Any Film at a cinema or other venue; Any Film shown as part of a film festival; Swedish film at a cinema; Swedish film shown as part of a film festival; Play or drama; Musical theatre; Comedy; Pantomime; Another kind of theatre event; Contemporary dance; Ballet; Cabaret or burlesque; Circus; Another kind of dance event; Street performance; Literary event as part of a festival; Other event connected with poetry; Other event connected with books; Other literature event; Classical concert (e.g. orchestra, chamber music); Opera or operetta; Choral concert; Contemporary classical; electronic music or sound art event; Rock or pop concert; Rock or pop music festival (e.g. Sweden Rock Festival); Other music festival; Jazz or blues concert; Country or Folk music concert; Hip hop concert; Another kind of live music event.

2. https://mhminsight.com/culture-segments/survey

3. If you'd like to learn more about Audience Atlas and Culture Segments in Scandinavia please contact Andrew.Mcintyre@mhminsight.com or Joss.luckin@mhminsight.com.

Malin Zimm and Mathias Holmberg
– Placemaking For and With Culture
Pages: 106–116

Footnotes

1. *Sex steg till kulturtätare städer*, White 2017.

2. The basic definition of sustainable development made its breakthrough in the Brundtland Report of 1987. Sustainable development is described through three dimensions: the ecological, the economic and the social. The environment, the economy and the social conditions in society can all individually undergo sustainable development, but in order for development as a whole to be considered sustainable, all need to be developed and balanced.

3. *Tillfällig arkitektur ger plats för kultur*. http://www.stockholm.se/PageFiles/1285349/Tillfallig%20arkitektur%20ger%20plats%20f%C3%B6r%20kultur%20bilaga%201.pdf

4. 'If you want to change society don't build anything' says a sign on the cover of ICON 065 from November 2008 that illustrates Beatrice Galilee's article *Architecture Without Buildings*. https://www.iconeye.com/404/item/3834-architecture-without-buildings

5. Jane Jacobs' best known work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* has influenced the urban planning debate ever since its publication in 1961. Jacobs' books, articles and critique of urban planning and urban life have been crucial for development away from the modernist and technical view that came to dominate urban planning for much of the twentieth century.

Ingrid E. Handeland
– Audience Development in Norway
Pages: 128–140

Footnotes

1. The culture initiative ('Kulturløftet') ran from 2005 until 2013.

2. The survey is carried out once every four years and is known as the Culture Barometer (Kulturbarometern). The survey is aimed at a representative sample of the population aged 9 to 79 to find out how many times they have engaged with cultural offerings over the past year.

3. Mangset and Hylland (2017) *Kulturpolitikk: organisering, legitimering og praksis*.

4. According to Norwegian cultural consumptions measurements conducted by Statistics Norway (SSB) and surveys conducted by Audiences Norway between 2012 and 2018.

5. Evidence for this is once again found in Statistics Norway's measurements that are available as far back as 1991, as well as in Audiences Norway's population and audience surveys.

6. The Cultural Rucksack ('den kulturelle skolesekken') has been part of the Norwegian government's cultural policy initiative in primary schools since 2001. All pupils in primary schools and in the first three grades of upper secondary school are covered by the initiative. Read more on Kulturtanken's website: http://www.denkulturelleskolesekken.no/

7. Audiences Norway surveys 2012-2018.

8. Audiences Norway 2015. The Performa-Project 2012-2015. Reports based on focus groups comprising non-participants with low incomes. Development discussions with new target groups.

9. The model is described in further detail on their website and portraits of the various segments are available to download in multiple languages. https://mhminsight.com/articles/culture-segments-1179

10. An example of this type of segmentation is Mosaic™ G5 which is used to classify the entire Norwegian population into 44 lifestyle types and 13 main groups based on their postal addresses. The method is based on sending offers to new customers with the same profile as you already have in the database, as it can be assumed that these 'twins' will be more attracted to your offer than others.

11. Det lønnsomme mangfoldet, Mind the gap, Akershus County Council's Cultural Conference 2018.

12. http://createlondon.org/event/panic2018/

13. http://www.kulturradet.no/inkluderende-norden

14. Audiences Norway awards four prizes: 1) Biggest increase: to those who can document increased influx regardless of audience type; 2) Best communication: in-depth relationship through communication strategies; 3) Most inclusive: to those who can document increased audience diversity; 4) Next step: to institutions who are especially innovative and future-oriented. Read more about the Audiences Norway prize here: http://norskpublikumsutvikling.no/award/npu-prisen-2018

Niels Righolt
– Audience Development and the DNA of Culture

Pages: 152–162

Footnotes

1. Keith Diggle (1984) *Guide to Arts Marketing: The Principles and Practice of Marketing as they apply to the arts*, Rheingold Publishing.

2. Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations, European Commission, 2017.

3. Heather Maitland (2000) *A Guide to Audience Development*, London: Arts Council of England.

4. John Falk (2009) *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

5. Gert Biestra (2014) 'You can't always get what you want: an anarchic view on education, democracy and civic learning' from *Museums, knowledge, democracy*, transformation, The Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces, Copenhagen, (eds.) Ida Brændholt Lundgaard and Jacob Thorek Jensen.

6. Naboko Kawashima (2000) *Beyond the Division of Attenders vs Nonattenders: a study into audience development in policy and practice*, Warwick University.

7. *The Year of Cultural Diversity* was launched in Sweden in 2006 and was intended to focus on and enhance integration into cultural life in relation to immigrants and cultural-, ethnic-, religious- and sexual minorities. The aim was an open, transparent and inclusive cultural scene. Norway followed suit with its own *Year of Cultural Diversity* in 2008, which resulted in a string of political gestures and legislative initiatives under the Minister of Culture, Trond Giske.

8. Since 1957 the Danes cultural habits have been identified and recorded in a national survey with up to 55,000 respondents. The surveys are conducted at roughly five year intervals. The most recent one was published in the autumn of 2012, and the next one will be issued in the late autumn of 2018.

9. The former US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said in a speech to students at Virginia Military Institute on May 16, 2018: '… Only societies which are able to seek the truth and question alternative facts can be seen as truly free. If we as Americans do not confront the crisis in our society in terms of ethics and integrity, American democracy as we know it will have dark times ahead'.

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Contributors

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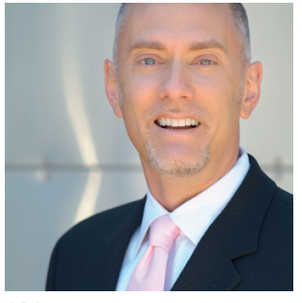
Heather is an arts consultant and writer affiliated with the University of Warwick. She has worked as an advisor on several EU Creative Europe projects, as well as with projects relating to female artistry. As the head of two different audience development organisations, she has worked with more than 100 organisations on audience development issues.

Qaisar Mahmood
Qaisar is Head of the Department for Cultural Environment at the Swedish National Heritage Board. His book *Jakten på svenskheten* [The Hunt for Swedishness], in which he writes about a 9000 km journey by motorcycle through Sweden looking for Swedishness and the Swedish identity, received a great deal of attention. Qaisar often debates on issues relating to diversity and integration.

Tiffany Jenkins
Tiffany is a writer and consultant from the UK. In 2016, she published her acclaimed book *Keeping Their Marbles: How Treasures of the Past Ended Up in Museums and Why They Should Stay There*. Tiffany is a regular contributor to a number of British newspapers and a frequent keynote speaker at conferences.



Alan Brown
Alan is a researcher and consultant from the USA. He co-owns the consultancy firm, WolfBrown and works primarily with cultural institutions and organisations on approaching art in relation to a changing world. Alan is a sought-after speaker on matters relating to audience behaviour and cultural participation trends.

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Stina Oscarson is a director, playwright and freelance journalist. She has been Artistic Director of the Orion Theatre in Stockholm, Head of Swedish Radio Drama and a columnist in the cultural pages of *Dagens Nyheter*. Now a freelancer, her current commissions include Stockholm City Theatre, the newspaper *ETC*, ABF – the Workers' Educational Association of Sweden and the University of Gävle.

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Andrew is one of the founders of Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, one of the world's leading organisations in cultural segmentation. MHM have worked with cultural organisations both in the UK and internationally using their Culture Segments model, which is nowadays considered the standard in audience segmentation.

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Malin holds a PhD in Architecture and is currently an Architect and Research Strategist for White Arkitekter. She has previously worked as an expert for Arkdes and as Editor-in-chief of the Swedish architecture and design magazine, *Rum*. She has worked as a teacher, writer and critic, and is the co-founder of the mobile architecture and art gallery, Zimm Hall.

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Ingrid has been Director of Audiences Norway since 2012 and has been responsible for the development of the platform that defines the organisation today. Her previous roles have included Head of Marketing at the National Theatre in Oslo. Ingrid studied the History of Ideas at the University of Oslo, and has also studied Philosophy and Musicology.

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Lars Anders is a poet, musician and journalist who is currently Editor-in-chief for the Swedish think-tank, Timbro. He is the author of *Att dansa efter maktens pipa. Kultur i politikens tjänst* [Dancing to the Tune of Power. Arts and Culture in the Service of Politics], a book on Swedish cultural policy. He is a trained reporter and historian of ideas, and has worked for SVT, TV4 and the *Östgöta Correspondenten* newspaper.

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Why should we care about the audience?

There are many views on audience development. Some argue that it directs artistic content. Others believe that the many are paying for the few to experience publicly funded culture. Some are already reaching an audience but want more visitors. Others find the word 'audience' to be problematic, since it suggests that the visitor is passive. Some art and cultural institutions think that audience development is about packaging, leaving the task to their marketing departments, while others see it as being part of artistic development.

In *AUDIENCE – An Anthology on Art, Culture and Development,* we have invited thirteen writers from Sweden and abroad to share their thoughts, experiences, knowledge and perspectives relating to the audience. The contributors are artists, researchers and leaders in the cultural sector. Each brings their own perspective, helping to broaden, question, embrace and use the term.

What does it mean to work with audience development, and in the end, who is developing who?