



Wednesday, 5 October 2011, 1:30 pm.

Roundtable 15: Creating dynamic intersections

Speakers

Paula Abood, Arab Australian Writer , Australia

Nike Jonah, Project Manager, decibel Performing Arts Showcase, Arts Council England

Michael Mel, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea

Tim Curtis, Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO office Bangkok

Moderator

Magdalena Moreno, CEO, Kultour, Australia

Rapporteur

Ricardo Peach, Program Manager Inter-Arts, Australia Council for the Arts

Description of the session

This session focused on diversity noting that diversity exists, it does not need to be created. However there are still barriers in the arts world that mean that the potential for great art to be produced and enjoyed remains unrealised. A shared equal space with a diversity of engagement for all needs to be developed supported and respected. This session also touched on the need to facilitate an open and respectful intercultural dialogue between and within nations and the need to activate and deliver the goals of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression 2005, to activate this instrument and deliver on its goals; and

Key comments from speakers included:

- That diversity of cultural expressions is central to national, state and local cultural policies and must be recognised and affirmed in all goals
- Interculturality needs to be open, accessible, and negotiated without borders
- Diversity benefits all as it is valued and used as an active driver for equality

- A nation's dynamic artistic offer is reliant on the benefits, the richness and innovation that cultural diversity brings.

Creative intersections discussed in the session

There needs to be better connections between communities that exist on the ground and the institutions that have the responsibility to represent and support all the citizens in its borders.

Examples of good examples and practices

- UNESCO Convention of the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression 2005
http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- Culture360.org case studies
<http://culture360.org/>
- Achieving Great Art for Everyone, A strategic Framework for the Arts, Arts Council England:
www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/a-strategic-framework-for-the-arts/
- Creative Case, Arts Council England:
www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/What_is_the_Creative_Case_for_Diversity.pdf
- Decibel Performing Arts Showcase UK
www.decibelpas.com/
- Kultour
www.kultour.com.au

Identified problems

- UNESCO convention has yet to be fully activated
- Transnational movement of cultural objects are still difficult to facilitate
- Australia (in the context of the Australia's National Cultural Policy development) and all countries that have signed the UNESCO Convention should have diversity imbedded in the core purpose of their cultural policies.
- Obstacle: Multiculturalism as other and Indigenous as other

Recommendations for future actions

- For all governments to activate the UNESCO Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expression
- The diverse nature of the world in the 21st century is the perfect catalyst for ever greater innovation in culture when diversity is placed at the heart of everything cultural.
- Create more and diverse support to fill the gap between the cultural diversity in the population and the representation of that diversity in arts and culture
- Facilitate the movement of cultural objects across borders

- Education should empower and culturally represent all communities, not force a dominant version of history and culture on these communities
- Support for a showcase of Australian diverse performance and other art that truly represents the cultural make-up of this country (eg at APAM)

Other additional comments

- The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression is a key base from which other policies should be developed and help guide policy makers to imbed cultural diversity into the core framework of all cultural and arts policies.
- There is a strength in new and evolving models in diverse practice where complexity and difference is essential to new and innovative work
- New and increasing promoters are buying and new and increasing audiences are paying for culturally diverse work (e.g. Decibel)
- Culturally diverse showcases such as Decibel in the UK are selling innovative, diverse work, to new, diverse audiences, therefore widening audience engagement
- New models for creative industries need to be developed, as the European (western) models can be sometimes seen as exploitative. Whereas in non-Western countries the value of the arts and diversity is intrinsic to its engagement with civil society. UNESCO was asked to do more case studies in relation to these Creative Industry models.
- Education should empower and culturally represent all communities, not force a dominant version of history and culture on these communities
- Diversity exists; we do not have to create it. How the diversity is expressed and barriers to this expression removed, is a key issue.