



Tuesday, 4 October 2011, 1:30 pm.

Roundtable 9: Moving fast and flexible – the changing landscape of digital technologies

Speakers

Becky Schutt, Fellow, Judge Business School, Cambridge University, United Kingdom

Shane Simpson, Special Counsel, Simpsons, Australia

Pius Knüsel, Director, Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council

Moderator

Katherine Watson, Director, European Cultural Foundation, Netherlands

Rapporteur

Nick Herd, Director, Research and Strategic Analysis, Australia Council for the Arts

Description of the session

The session focused on the issues facing art as the digital world develops.

Pius Knüsel talked about the opportunities and challenges that digital presents to funding agencies as digital opens new ways of practice and consumption. Pius underlined that: *'Creative forces are still alive and art will survive'*.

Shane Simpson talked from the perspective of an IP lawyer working in the cultural sector. According to him, new technology does not decimate artistic practice, but it does change the business models. Shane called for a greater engagement of the cultural sector in the development and reform of copyright law. He called for a general push for a more whole of government approach to development of cultural policy.

Becky Schutt talked about her involvement in a number of UK based projects where arts was making use of digital technology – NT Live, Digital Theatre, Culture Label (museums connecting directly with consumers to develop retail opportunities).

The general discussion remained focused on the main themes of the presentation around –

- New business models
- Copyright
- The public value of art
- Definition of art is challenged by digital creation and consumption
- The absence of youth in this discussion
- Need for more information about consumption

Creative intersections discussed in the session

There was general agreement that digital technology was creating new ways of privatized consumption of the arts. This was developing further with mobile technology.

There is a big question in relation to the idea of the role of art in place. What does this atomized consumption mean for place and community? Are new communities emerging that are not related to place? Is “art at home” the future challenge of cultural policy?

Recommendations for future actions

- Focus on supporting creative forces, which has implication for how we define and fund art
- More emphasis on funding, what people want, which then orients funding decision to consumption – means more information about what people are doing
- Funding the new business models that will allow us to take full advantage of digital trends
- There is an opportunity for government to rethink how they support the arts, but with a whole of government approach – must move out of the silos of arts, film, games funding

Other additional comments

- *‘What if Google took over your arts agency? How would it change?’*