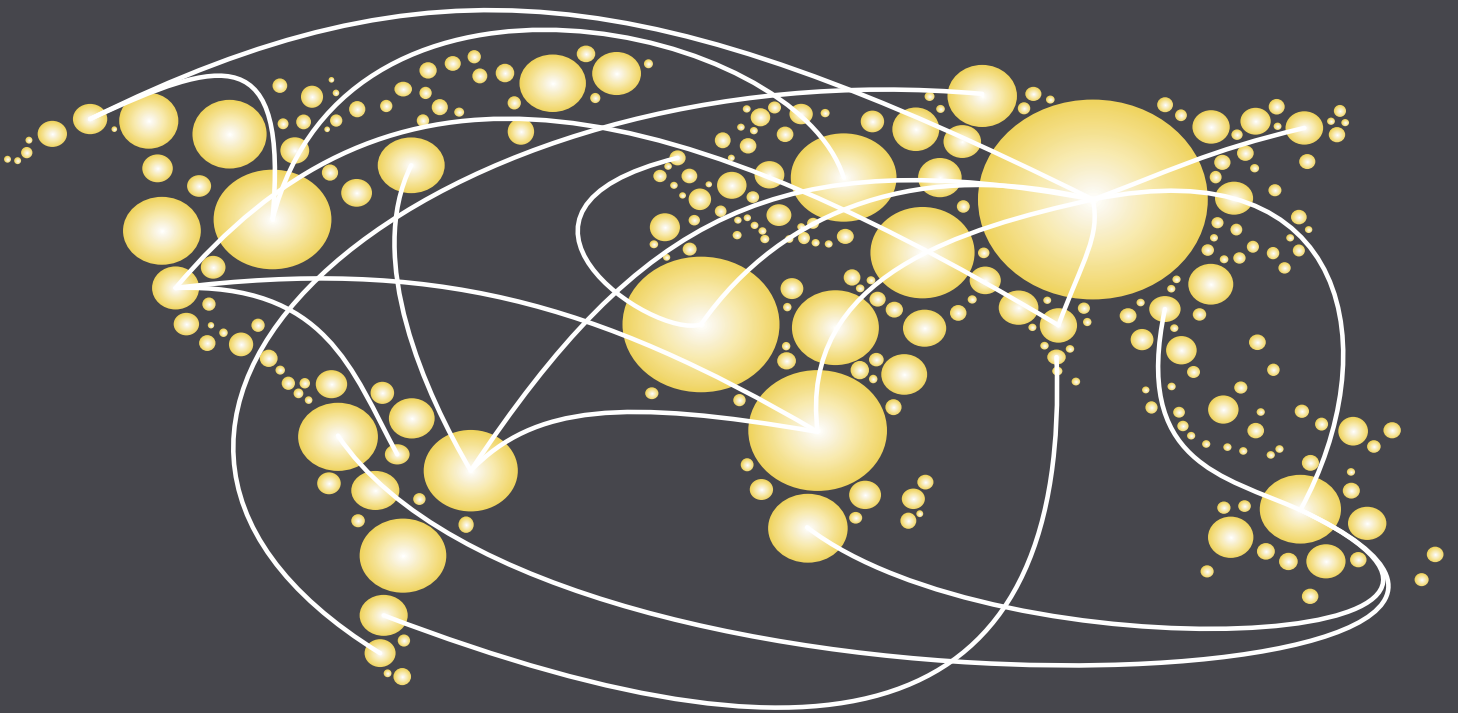


# Public and Private Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy: New Models for the 21st Century



SALZBURG GLOBAL SEMINAR



ROBERT  
STERLING  
CLARK  
FOUNDATION

Salzburg Global Seminar Session 490 was developed jointly by  
the Salzburg Global Seminar and the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation



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Salzburg, Austria  
April 28–May 2, 2012

Session 490



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles in International Cultural Engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

JONI MAYA CHERBO, PHD

Independent Scholar and Executive Director,  
Resource Center for Cultural Engagement

*Shifting Economic Power: New Horizons for Cultural Exchange in our Multi-Polar World*

YUDHISHTHIR RAJ ISAR

Independent Cultural Advisor; Professor, Cultural Policy Studies,  
American University of Paris, France

*Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media: The Future of International Cultural Engagement*

RITA J. KING

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JOSHUA FOUTS

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**I**N 2005, THE ROBERT STERLING CLARK FOUNDATION began to conduct research on U.S. cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange. Like many other American institutions, we were concerned about the precipitous decline in global attitudes toward the United States following the U.S. attack on Iraq in 2003. In the intervening years there had been multiple calls by scholars and public officials to determine why the government seemed incapable of recapturing the sympathy and good will expressed toward the United States following the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

Our research, which covered the period from the early 1980's through 2008, revealed that the public diplomacy functions of the U.S. government were largely eliminated with the demise of the U.S. Information Agency in 1999. The remaining functions were dispersed among multiple agencies, none of which had either the authority and/or the funds to conduct public diplomacy activities with the same efficiency as that exhibited by USIA during the period following the end of World War II. In addition to this investigation, we commissioned research on foundation support for cultural exchange—based diplomacy from 2003 through 2008. Our research revealed that many large foundations, including those with historical commitments to international engagement such as Ford, Rockefeller, MacArthur and the Open Society Institute, had turned their attention elsewhere. Moreover, there were no new foundations that had picked up the slack. Our research findings are published under the title *Promoting Public and Private Reinvestment in Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy*, and can be accessed on the Clark Foundation website at [www.rsclark.org](http://www.rsclark.org) under Publications—Special Reports.

Based on our research, the Foundation initiated a new grants program in 2008 aimed at stimulating interest in and providing support for international cultural engagement. The program was designed to account for factors that are emerging globally that have begun to alter the way we think about cultural diplomacy and the way we do business with other countries. Until recently, cultural and public diplomacy fell largely within

the purview of nation states. However, technological advances in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, including ease of communication and transportation, have resulted in accelerating globalization as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We now have population migration driven by economic opportunity or the lack thereof, international commerce, an international system of banking and finance, dispersion of an educated workforce, widespread use of social media, and a digitally interconnected world. Collectively, these transformative events have served to expand participation in public and cultural diplomacy to include interactions among and between individuals, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and many other entities that are increasingly populating the public diplomacy space. We call this phenomenon cultural engagement.

In 2010, the Foundation noted that many participants in the field seemed to be looking at past practice to guide them into the future. Believing there might be an alternative, we began to organize a forward-looking conference to explore what cultural engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century might become.

The resulting convening in Salzburg provided the opportunity to reflect on the following themes:

- Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles in International Cultural Engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;
- Shifting Economic Power: New Parameters of Engagement in our Multi-Polar World;
- Creating an Enabling Environment that Promotes Cultural Diversity Within the Context of Cultural Relations; and
- Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media: The Future of international Cultural Engagement.

While participants reflected a sense of optimism and opportunity with regard to the field, they identified a number of hurdles in the path of more active engagement, including:

- Outdated legacy systems for transacting global cultural exchanges;
- Uncharted paths of engagement;
- Lack of common ground with regard to attitudes and practices relating to cultural engagement;
- Conceptual and rhetorical deficits in the field;
- Inadequate documentation of the value of international engagement; and
- Absence of strategic communication and coordination among participants.

At the same time, participants identified several areas of opportunity where joint action is possible, including:

- Collaborating to provide better education and training for the general public as well as arts professionals with regard to arts engagement;
- Generating appropriate resources for developing trans-national partnerships among arts professionals;
- Rethinking the relationships among arts organizations, and in particular, creating opportunities for collaboration among small and large groups;



- Making use of social media to generate new sources of financial support for this work;
- Supporting strategic leadership in the field through improved communications and coordination;
- Developing research instruments to measure the impacts of cultural engagement; and
- Making use of new technologies to facilitate cross-border communication, exchanges, and artistic collaborations.

In addition, participants suggested a number of action steps to promote cultural engagement and strengthen professional activity in the field (*see p. 21*).

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We are profoundly grateful to the Salzburg Global Seminar for co-convening this session and to Susanna Seidl-Fox and her staff for producing this extraordinary event. Because our approach to the subject matter was forward-looking, we made the decision to select from among our participants some experts who we believed had particularly strong knowledge to add to our conversations. We were fortunate that Joni Cherbo, Yudhishtir Raj Isar, Rita J. King and Joshua Fouts agreed to prepare white papers on the main subjects of the convening. I also wish to thank our four keynote speakers, Karen Hopkins, Vishakha Desai, Sir Vernon Ellis, and Oussama Rifahi, for their presentations, which set the stage for our larger discussion of the four issues we came from so far to explore. Finally, we are collectively indebted to András Szántó, who served as our moderator and rapporteur. We are particularly pleased with his presentation of our discussions in the final report of Session 490.

Margaret C. Ayers

President, Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, and Conference Organizer

July 13, 2012



# *International Cultural Engagement at a Turning Point: Observations and Recommendations from the Salzburg Global Seminar*

ANDRÁS SZÁNTÓ, PHD

## **Introduction: A Moment of Opportunity**

**T**HE FIFTY-FOUR PARTICIPANTS of the Salzburg Global Seminar Session 490 on “Public and Private Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy” met at an auspicious moment in the evolution of international cultural engagement. As comment after comment at the Seminar made clear, there is a palpable sense of opportunity in the field. The tone and texture of cultural discourse, the range of included voices in creative practices, the organizational and technological infrastructure for conducting transnational cultural exchanges, are all undergoing a sea change—and generally for the better.

A defining fact of our time is that regions formerly consigned to a subordinate position beside wealthy states are claiming a more prominent role in global affairs. They are demanding more balance and sensitivity in cultural exchanges. Some find themselves in the position of being able to finance the sort of programs that had earlier cast them in the role of passive beneficiaries of Western exchange initiatives. Economic and cultural confidence come hand-in-hand, rewriting the terms of engagement.

The participants, hailing from twenty-eight countries, welcomed a turn toward more diversity and inclusivity, not just in the range of countries involved in cultural relations but also in the spectrum of content flowing through the system. Exchanges are encompassing a wider array of creative expressions—from high to low, and from international styles to local ones—going well beyond the traveling productions of elite cultural institutions that have prevailed in recent years.

The Seminar members in Salzburg were united in the belief that technology can enrich and amplify cultural engagement, with physical constraints on exchanges evaporating, and with the full promise of digital media innovation still on the horizon. They foresaw a vital role for private-sector and civil-society players going forward, even in countries where the state claims dominance in cultural life. The proliferation of

public-private partnerships, attendees remarked, will deliver new resources to international exchanges, and also de-politicize them.

In a telling sign of a shift in attitudes, the validity of the term “cultural diplomacy,” and even of the recently popular formulation “soft power,” coined by former Harvard Kennedy School Dean Joseph S. Nye, Jr., were repeatedly questioned during the three-day meeting. With their intimations of hierarchy, instrumentalism, and conflict, these concepts were seen as an inheritance of a time when cultural exchanges and government policies were closely aligned. Seminar participants called for fresh terminology that accurately reflects the more autonomous and intertwined global cultural discourse of our day, where exchanges are not a corollary of state power, however soft and benign, but where transnational cultural interactions can constitute a “third space” of vibrant creativity—a realm of curiosity, meaning, collaboration, enterprise, and learning that is not directly beholden to either political or commercial interests.

The contribution of such a third space, as notes from a small-group discussion captured, is to provide a “context for facilitated international engagements that do not necessarily have pre-determined outcomes; a space for innovation and improvisation, for new ways of collaboration and for fostering multifaceted forms of international engagement, for creating new forms of partnerships with cultural organizations, activities, funders, networks.”

In one way or another, much of the Salzburg Seminar concerned itself with exploring new pathways in a rapidly emerging new global environment for the creation of such an open and autonomous space.

## Gaps and Needs

**Y**et for all the optimism about cultural opportunity and vitality in the verdant Alpine setting of the Schloss Leopoldskron, Seminar participants also diagnosed a multitude of challenges in the realignment of cultural exchange-based diplomacy, along with relevant and often troubling gaps in the emerging framework for international cultural engagement.

Even the most effective cultural managers and policymakers have scant leverage over the macro-dynamics that set the context for global cultural interactions—from “hard” political conflicts and population shifts to gaping disparities in public health, education, citizen rights, literacy, and cultural participation, not to mention the unevenly distributed blessings of information technology. Cultural engagement, it was frequently noted, presupposes a measure of curiosity on the part of artists and the public alike. The nurturing of such curiosity is a prerequisite of successful cultural policy and engagement. Where it is absent, the tools of cultural exchange are blunted.

One participant in Salzburg summed up the concerns this way: “There is an underlying tectonic shift in the field overall—generational change, systems change—that lies well beyond the field of cultural engagement. There is uncertainty about basic arts advocacy and how we build audiences. Means of participation and appreciation have shifted dramatically. We can’t fix all these problems.”

Three days of intensive deliberations in Salzburg identified at least five dimensions of mismatch between current practices and current realities in the sphere of cultural engagement:

- *Outdated Legacy Systems*: Many existing structures, institutions, and norms of engagement are anachronistic. The sector needs to rethink its rationales and attitudes, institutional models, and information-sharing and data-gathering mechanisms, to make engagement practices congruent with today’s multi-polar world and its pluralistic artistic discourses and cultural markets.
- *Weak Channels of Engagement*: The momentous realignments of economic globalization have not been matched with the evolution of effective institutions, norms, and channels of cultural interaction. The field needs new infrastructure that encourages a world in which collaborative, reciprocal, balanced partnerships are the norm.
- *Lack of Common Ground*: Gaps in practices and attitudes exist not just between different regions but within regions, among age cohorts and creative sectors, and no less often between artists and cultural organizations.
- *Conceptual and Rhetorical Deficits*: The field is having difficulty articulating a terminology that is adequate to the complexity and fluidity of today’s culture. Advocates of cultural engagement are challenged to define what exactly they are advocating, and to whom. Terms such as “diversity” lack clear definition. Vague and malleable concepts and rhetoric lead to fuzzy strategies.
- *Absence of Coordination*: Cultural groups tend to be subsumed by the day-to-day demands of cultural management. Absent consistent, strategic action, a multitude of scattered initiatives fail to scale up to a larger and more consistent whole. Actions and programs do not achieve broad visibility and impact.

The Salzburg Global Seminar 490 was convened to grapple with the challenges of cultural engagement at a critical juncture, as the world takes stock of a new geopolitical system that has emerged in the wake of the Cold War. The meeting came at a time when governments across the globe, in particular in nations with a history of expansive arts funding and diplomacy, are digesting the implications of economic austerity. “The crisis is having an effect,” a European cultural manager allowed. “The consolidation of public funding will have an enormous impact on what is going to happen—we are at the beginning of extraordinary change.”

Under such circumstances, the Seminar was not intended simply to be a celebration of the ideals of cultural exchange. It sought to clarify the purpose and benefits of cultural dialogue, map the missing elements required to sustain meaningful cultural engagement, introduce new approaches to partnership and advocacy, and propose actionable frameworks for a world in which, as several participants suggested, “the West and the rest” are no longer separated into sharply delineated zones of cultural vibrancy and opportunity.

The proceedings revolved around four broad themes, each serving as the anchoring topic of a white paper, a keynote presentation, a plenary panel discussion, and four small-group discussions. The following sections of this report survey observations from the Seminar in each thematic block, along with recommendations for each topic area and for the conference as a whole.

In keeping with the principle of Chatham House Rules, this report avoids any direct attribution of comments to Seminar participants. Illustrative quotes, however, are used liberally throughout to convey the themes and atmosphere of the event. The intent of this summary is to synthesize, to the best extent possible, three days of extraordinarily diverse presentations and discussions, pointing the way forward to more effective action to further cultural exchange-based diplomacy.

### Theme One:

#### *Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles in International Cultural Engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

The new context of transnational cultural engagement demands innovative approaches from government actors and private-sphere actors alike. In the U.S., and increasingly in Europe, governments have been reducing their involvement in cultural exchange and handing over responsibility to the private sector. By contrast, many “emerging” regions, notably in Asia, Central and South America, and the Gulf, are experiencing a golden age in cultural diplomacy. Some are making significant investments into institutional infrastructure and providing new lines of support for exchange initiatives. The first thematic block of the conference inquired into new approaches and attitudes in the field.

Comments in these sessions, combined with suggestions from the Seminar’s opening discussion on the importance of cultural engagement, pointed to key prerequisites for successful policy-setting for state actors. As more than one speaker noted, governments need to put cultural diplomacy in a larger context, making it an integral part of the development model of their nations. Culture should be part of a national strategy, not just an afterthought. Arts exchanges should be positioned in the wider and economically salient context of the cultural and copyright industries. It is important to acknowledge the contributions of the cultural sector to the long-term prosperity of modern nations, various speakers noted.

The Seminar participants warned, however, about reflexively promoting an “international style” in cultural exchanges and infrastructure. All too often, critics of recent initiatives suggested, governments appear more concerned with building institutions with brand-name architects and institutional partners. Successful policy, by contrast, demands diversity, autonomy, the cultivation of local artist and practitioner networks, and a considerable amount of trust in local civil society and private sector partners.

Policymakers need to understand, as more than one speaker pointed out, that cultural programs cannot yield quick results. They are often impervious to the sort of quantitative measurements that agencies look for when evaluating funded programs. As an Asian analyst of cultural diplomacy reminded, “culture is not an expense, but an investment.” Governments should resist instrumentalizing the arts. And they should detach cultural programs from ideology: “The best propaganda is no propaganda,” the speaker concluded.

Suggestions for private-sector partners offered a number of guideposts for the successful planning and implementation of exchange initiatives. Institutions need to seek out mechanisms for self-financing programs that do not depend on state support. They must recognize, along with public policymakers, that exchange programs are successful



only when they work both ways. Good exchange programs facilitate creative contacts. They build lasting relationships between artists, not just among experts, advocates, and institutions. “One-off” engagements are to be avoided, it was voiced repeatedly in Salzburg. Organizations should design programs that combine start-up events with follow-up visits. Managing cultural exchanges, as an American programmer of events and festivals said, requires at least three years of active involvement at each site.

Several participants warned that public-private partnerships, while holding much promise for long-term engagement, have not yet lived up to expectations. “The language of public-private partnership is the correct language,” a keynote presenter allowed, “but we have not been able to deliver the results that this language promises.”

At the same time, participants warned, organizations and NGOs need to step up their efforts to lobby governments to advocate the cause of global cultural engagement and for the arts in general. This requires the ability to make an intrinsic case for the arts as a means of transcending borders and building important relationships. Within this context, access to reliable and consistent data would also be helpful, to link cultural programs to issues that motivate policymakers, such as education, crime, and immigration, a veteran government official pointed out. Other speakers observed that public-private partnerships should evolve beyond scattershot projects that do not add up to a larger and more strategic whole. Programs should scale, where possible, to full-fledged institutional consortia that can work across a wider community and across different cultural sectors.

The relative strengths of private philanthropy and public financing approaches loomed large over the discussions on public and private roles in cultural exchange. As several participants reminded, public financing frees organizations from the burdens of fundraising, and it can sometimes offer greater creative leeway for programmers. However, government support can keep organizations on a short leash. Further, the steady annual flow of public funding may produce complacency on the part of the recipient.

Private philanthropy, by contrast, bestows its largesse unevenly, often gravitating to high-status institutions and projects. It tends to infuse the interests of well-to-do patrons in the cultural process. Private art collecting in particular, it was noted during a discussion on international museums, tends to chase fashion and sometimes shun controversy. However, on a more positive note, the mechanisms of private funding do create a closer bond with the public. Benefactors and members of arts groups become direct stakeholders in an organization’s work. The search for money also means “you can’t get lazy,” a veteran American fundraiser commented.

In the world’s most disadvantaged regions, private philanthropy has a unique function. In some parts of Africa, a speaker from the continent reminded, government plays no discernible role in culture whatsoever. Here, where traditional concepts of cultural policy and diplomacy hardly apply, foundations can facilitate cross-border connections between practicing artists and cultural organizations.

The Salzburg participants offered reminders to the public and the private sectors about the objectives of cultural engagement. “The question of artistic quality needs to be mentioned,” a veteran American cultural diplomat cautioned. “Artistic quality is a goal of cultural engagement.” And while policy debates are often preoccupied with practical and financial matters, a participant from Asia reminded us of their human

stakes. “Even though we talk a lot about infrastructure,” he said, cultural exchanges are ultimately “about bringing people together.”

## **Section Conclusion: Recommendations for Public and Private Actors**

- Develop mechanisms to document the contributions of exchange programs.
- Identify advocates to make the point globally about the importance of cultural exchange–based diplomacy.
- Create better strategies to communicate and lobby between private sector and government.
- Document and share approaches to the successful management of public-private partnerships.
- Refine arguments on behalf of cultural exchanges that place them at the heart of nations’ economic models and show that they are not an expense but an investment into the growth and well-being of nations.
- Seek out government agencies not typically linked to cultural programs but with a plausible connection to them (e.g. trade, military, development).
- Gather reliable data through international collaboration on arts programs, their contributions to local and regional economies, and tourism.
- Create a matrix or map that describes, in each specific context, the different roles of public and private institutions relative to cultural exchanges.
- Set up a training program for cultural journalists to understand and report on the complexities and benefits of arts policy and international cultural engagement.
- Translate and disseminate key documents on definitional issues relating to cultural diversity and international cultural engagement.

## **Theme Two:**

### ***Shifting Economic Power: The Parameters of Engagement in our Multi-Polar World***

Changing modes of engagement by private and public actors appear against a backdrop of a rapidly transforming world. Two epic shifts have reconfigured the context and content of cultural exchange–based diplomacy over the past quarter-century. First came the collapse of Communism and the end of a bipolar global order defined by superpower conflict. More recently, accelerated industrialization and economic integration, in particular in East and South Asia, the Gulf, and Latin America, have created a new global environment for cultural engagement.

The second thematic block of the conference explored the implications of this emerging multi-polar world on the evolution of cultural exchange-based diplomacy. The discussions on this point can be summed up in a remark by a participant who has long been involved in cultural exchanges between North America and Asia: “The transformation happened very quickly. The institutions haven’t caught up. Business as usual won’t do.”

Does multi-polarity lead to more symmetry and nuance in cultural relations, and if so how? The conclusions of the conference were mixed on this score. Several participants



pointed out that although the share of global GDP claimed by BRIC countries has been rising, in particular for China and India, this fact alone has not in itself resulted in a restructuring of cultural exchanges—as yet. The patterns are still nascent. The rise of Asia is without doubt the dominant historical narrative of our time. Having commanded 50 percent of world GDP some 250 years ago, the continent is now poised to reclaim its commanding role in the global economy. Living standards may rise by as much as 10,000 percent in a single generation. Yet this rapid and remarkable ascendance, several conference participants reminded, masks significant unevenness in the individual circumstances of “emerging” nations.

Speakers warned against lumping together countries such as China, with its proclivity for rapid and disruptive growth and its insistence on centralized cultural control, and India, characterized by a less torrid pace of development but also more consistency and tradition, as well as a more dispersed, federated approach to cultural policy. China, India, and Brazil, while often mentioned in the same breath, vary a great deal in their attitudes about exposure to international culture. Some see cultural exposure as a threat to be contained, while others embrace it with enthusiasm. For some nations, moreover, globalization is tantamount to re-integration after a period of historical isolation. For others, it is experienced as an encounter with potentially harmful foreign influences. Certain nations see cultural programs as a means of reclaiming well-established cultural traditions. Others look to exchanges as a pathway to a more modern, less conventional future.

Major disparities exist, moreover, in literacy levels, and in the proclivity of national governments to invest in arts exchanges. While the economic horizons of a nation such as Brazil appear extremely bright, its weak educational systems and high illiteracy rates may continue to hamper that nation’s attempts to integrate into global cultural flows.

Further, as at least one speaker pointed out, the world that began to crumble in 1989 was not as bipolar as it now seems in retrospect. Neither is our own economic and political horizon as “flat” as some observers might have us believe. “The moment we reach a point of emergency, there are still sort of two camps in the world,” a European participant in Salzburg observed. Generalizations about emerging patterns of cultural interaction at a time of globalization are therefore fraught with misinterpretation.

Despite such caveats, participants pointed to a number of key parameters in engagement amidst today’s shifting power constellations. Foremost among them is what one keynote speaker termed a widespread “demand for transcending the previously prevalent inequality of position.”

The “curatorial authority” that Western countries had enjoyed in defining the terms of cultural interchange is giving way to more complex relationships that are, by design, equally weighted and reciprocal. Nations that had been on the receiving end of cultural subsidies are now making their own funds available for cultural programs but, understandably, “with strings attached.” The search for new working models of cooperation and collaboration preoccupied much discussion in Salzburg on the subject of the emerging multi-polar world.

Balanced collaboration, it comes as no surprise, is more difficult to effectuate in practice than in principle. There is a danger, speakers warned, that programs will continue to “reproduce the same hegemonic structure even while contesting it,” as one analyst put it. Facilitating collaborative exchanges and nurturing “self-consciously hybrid cultural forms” is not as easy as it sounds.

Participants expressed concern about the overall status of arts and cultural engagement globally. Cultural programming must attain visibility in an environment where access to television and online media, technocratic career aspirations, and organized religion are competing no less effectively for “mind share” among populations emerging from poverty and marginalization. Will cultural programs that express “a cosmopolitan spirit and ethos,” as one speaker described the aspirations of progressive cultural exchanges, command the hearts and minds of the emergent middle classes of China and India? This outcome cannot be taken for granted, the Seminar discussions concluded.

On the whole, the Seminar members broadly agreed that the adaptations ahead should prove more difficult for “the West” than for “the rest.” The blurring of former cultural divides will require that Western countries relinquish their sense of cultural leadership and superiority. They will have to move out of their well-defined comfort zones. The situation is most challenging for Europe, a region one speaker described as being “full of self-pity about its loss of relevance.” A conservative, xenophobic backlash against immigration and globalization has become an unfortunate feature of public life on much of the continent. Yet Europe is also where, the same speaker reminded, some of the most progressive and sensitive cultural engagement policies are currently being designed.

Ultimately, what is at stake in this transformation is more than the changing power configuration of individual nations or regions in “the West” or among “the rest.” Cultural exchanges everywhere are occurring in the context of legacy systems that seem increasingly obsolete in today’s world. “We have to look beyond the nation state and its role in modernism,” a Middle East expert insisted. “That structure has determined the institutions we have created. Radical revision is required, needing a lot of guts and creativity.”

If managers of cultural programs are to move past nation-state mechanisms that have until now defined cultural exchanges, they must, among other adaptations, search beyond established sources of financial support. The conference returned repeatedly to the thorny question of funding. Advocates and cultural managers need to design mechanisms to raise funds from multiple sources, participants agreed. They will need to demonstrate entrepreneurship and embrace grassroots and crowd-sourced approaches to generating support.

Public-private partnerships and private philanthropy are not ready to fill the void, as comments in the conference made clear. The traditions of private philanthropy are absent in many countries. Even in America, where philanthropy is well established and incentivized, private foundations, on the whole, do not see cultural exchange as a priority. Advocates must, in short, come to terms with the realization that the demise of a geopolitically bipolar world and the waning influence of nation states, while constituting a happy development in many respects, mean that traditional sources of funding for exchanges will continue to dry up, with few alternatives as yet on the horizon.

Greater freedom and a more open space for international cultural dialogue, therefore, are linked to new challenges to sustaining exchanges in many parts of the world, including the industrialized West. Several participants in Salzburg reflected on the irony that the outlook for cultural engagements is clouded by the retreat of the very systems that had impeded free-flowing transnational cultural discourse in the past.

## Section Conclusion: Recommendations for Engagement in a Multi-polar World

- Develop mechanisms representing “communities of governance” as a counterpoint to institutions grounded in nation states.
- Shift more emphasis on civil society actors, and away from state mechanisms for cultural exchanges.
- Encourage hybrid exchange models and spaces that allow horizontal cultural engagement that underlies sustained international cultural understanding.
- Develop innovative mechanisms to pool resources and generate grassroots and crowd-funded support for exchanges.
- Conduct research to map how federal, state, and local governments engage in global activities.
- Advocate for cross-portfolio strategies, including education, trade, foreign affairs, tourism, business, and development aid.
- Seek innovative mechanisms within countries to raise funds for cultural exchanges and the arts in general—for example, a one percent surcharge on mobile phones.
- Develop international partnerships to offer two-way learning experiences—for example, between a theater in Brazil and one in England, where the former provides expertise in connecting with disenfranchised youth and the latter provides expertise in public programming.
- Invest in training for artists and cultural managers to prepare them for the challenges of operating in the context of rapidly changing arts and cultural practices and modes of creation, representation, and distribution.

## Theme Three: *Creating an Enabling Environment That Promotes Cultural Diversity within the Context of Cultural Engagement*

Diversity—of global populations and of global cultural expressions—was the topic of the third thematic block of the Salzburg Seminar. It was axiomatic for the attendees that cultural diversity is a positive value to be advocated for its own sake—a counterpoint to the fundamentalism and xenophobia that all too often infect public attitudes about globalization in today’s rapidly changing world.

Cultural diversity in itself is nothing new, of course. China encompasses fifty-six cultural groups, half of which have their own language, one Salzburg seminarian reminded. One hundred languages are spoken in the Russian Federation alone, added another. Even so, the attendees struggled with the multivalent connotations of the term “diversity” in today’s globally interwoven cultural life. The vague and inconsistent definition of the term, attendees noted, makes it difficult to design, and subsequently to assess, programs aiming to foster cultural diversity.

Although “ethnically marked difference is the primary ground on which international engagement takes place,” observed one group session, the concept of “diversity” now encompasses differences across a spectrum of phenomena: within and between

populations, among the range of cultural voices that compete for visibility in cultural marketplaces, and perhaps most importantly, when it comes to variations in access and agency for indigenous and marginalized groups. One of the small discussion groups in Salzburg identified no less than four dimensions of diversity—of audiences, of genres, of the scales of organizations, and of the nature of interactions and power relationships. “The word ‘diversity’ alone does not describe the tensions and contradictions that are inevitably a part of cultural activities, given that these are human processes,” the group concluded.

In a time of accelerated migration and inflows of immigrants into industrially developed nations and metropolitan areas, fostering an enabling environment for cultural diversity has become an urgent priority. Put simply, international cultural engagement is no longer only a matter of connecting people across the globe. It is, no less significantly, about connecting diverse populations at home.

Cultural exchanges can have a catalytic function in such circumstances. As participants in Salzburg noted in various contexts, art can bridge communities of disparate origin; it can help people grapple with their search for individual and group identity; and it can engender a sense of empathy in a complex and, for some, unsettling world. Books, music, exhibitions, theatrical productions, can raise difficult topics for public debate, offering a safe language and medium for cultural or even political dialogue.

Nonetheless, when it comes to assessing the environment for cultural diversity today, Salzburg attendees voiced concern about exclusion, chauvinism, and, in some parts of the world, censorship in cultural programming and communications. Even in the U.S., a nation of immigrants where cultural diversity has long been a fact of life, arts programming is seen by many as being out of step with demographic realities. With half of the rise in the American population now attributed to Hispanics, for example, Latino groups are still, in the words of one speaker, “marginalized, underfunded, and fragile.” Far from being enablers of diversity, many institutions function as gatekeepers. In failing to diversify their programming and their audience outreach, they are not only stifling excluded voices, but also compromising their long-term relevancy.

Even where such gatekeeping is not purposefully excluding expressions from beyond the mainstream, a number of roadblocks stand in the way of a more diverse cultural life, according to the Seminar participants. Much boils down to the exigencies of arts programming. Festivals and large arts events, for example, need to attract audiences, so they tend to make safe programming bets. “There is always a tension between selecting well-known artists that will attract the interest of the media, versus attracting acts that are new or not well known internationally,” a veteran cultural producer from the Middle East observed.

The result is that programming for diversity often ends up with “the usual suspects,” failing to reflect the energy and complexity of global culture. Compounding the problem are discrepancies in organizational capacity—not just financial but attitudinal. One seminarian called this a bureaucratic failure to “listen to each other.” A North American cultural manager suggested, “It is imperative that as we promote exchange we leave our comfort zones.” A colleague from the Middle East suggested that organizers of cultural events should not be afraid to “put a focus on the dynamism at the edge.” Several participants saw collaborations between larger and smaller organizations as a means of injecting diversity into the programming of the larger presenting entity. “Smaller-scale



collaborative projects, developed with minimal resources, can have a significant impact on the long run,” a group discussion on diversity concluded.

Much attention in Salzburg was devoted to programming in a time of rising conservative Islamic sentiment. Cultural programs, especially in the Middle East, contend with an environment in which religiosity defines the contours of the public sphere. In many countries, unfettered artistic freedom is not tolerated by either the state or by significant portions of the population. In such conservative and authoritarian systems, cultural exchanges can do more than expose audiences to a wider range of creative expression. They can catalyze new attitudes about cultural policy and management. “We have to introduce transparency, accountability, and vitality,” one speaker noted, inviting conference attendees to imagine a “Cultural Marshall Plan” for countries in the Middle East that have embarked on the arduous path to political liberalization.

One of the deepest challenges to emerge from the discussions on cultural diversity is that truly inclusive programs and policy approaches demand a sober questioning of the ingrained norms, categories, and reflexes of cultural managers. A conversation thread in one group session suggested, “High culture and education are forms of standard setting” and “the stratification system is a result.” As a group member observed, “words like ‘quality,’ ‘excellence,’ and ‘standards’ imply white power,” and these “hot-button words leach into the societal dialogue.”

The “habitual attitudes of tastemakers” embed hierarchies into cultural work, a curator who has organized exhibitions of African art and crafts observed, adding, “How do you decide, and who decides, what is ‘art’ and what is ‘craft’?” Such seemingly innocuous definitions foster exclusion and insensitivity in ways that are rarely overt, or even conscious. By framing the creativity of some as “craft” and that of others as “art,” institutions implicitly diminish the esteem of the former expression at the expense of the latter.

How could cultural programmers and managers promote diversity? One group session suggested the following practical and attitudinal markers: “Respect. Preparedness. Appropriate strategy for each situation. Long-term thinking and involvement. Expect the unexpected.”

The topic of cultural diversity raised other questions of a highly abstract nature in the Salzburg conversations, going well beyond the purview of cultural policy and international cultural exchange. One speaker warned about the modern world’s tendency toward homogenization, reminding the conference that exchanges should “celebrate diversity and harness it—not flatten it out.” Another participant observed how cultural diversity is becoming increasingly vague in a world where “people have hybrid backgrounds.” Others still pointed to the flowering of “transnational communities” or “diasporas,” which transcend geographic and cultural boundary lines. Such groups should be “recognized as stakeholders in, contributors to, and mediators for international cultural engagement,” one discussion group noted. “The cultural specificity of these ‘hyphenated’ cultural communities needs to be recognized as a valuable resource.”

Although the sessions on diversity undeniably raised more questions than they answered, they were unanimous in affirming the critical importance of diversity in global cultural relations. As one small discussion group concluded, “The principle of equal dialogue between cultures of equal dignity needs to frame all international cultural engagement.”

## Section Conclusion: Recommendations for Enabling Cultural Diversity

- Encourage collaborations between larger and smaller presenting organizations in which smaller groups can offer more access and connection to diverse populations and artists.
- Provide training to cultural programmers so they can become more knowledgeable, responsive, and culturally sensitive.
- Broaden the circles of decision-making about cultural programming.
- Create spaces that allow for unexpected interactions, and cultivate community “transmitters” who connect various cultural groups.
- Develop “access points for building trust with the less well-educated members of our societies in order to develop interest in and understanding and tolerance for other cultures.”
- Work to resolve tensions over the repatriation of cultural objects as an important means of bridge-building with source countries.
- Exploit the potential of traveling exhibitions as effective platforms for cultural exchange and debate.
- Recognize the need for long-term planning of international cultural engagement projects—“it’s about relationships and not quick, one-off events.”
- Work with international media to balance negative stories about cultural stereotypes and programming mistakes with “good news stories” about cultural exchanges in regions such as Afghanistan.

## Theme Four: *Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media: The Future of International Cultural Engagement*

**T**he application of new technologies in the creation, presentation, and distribution of art works and productions will have momentous consequences for transnational cultural interactions, the conference attendees universally acknowledged in the fourth thematic block of the conference.

New communications media can break down, or simply ignore, entrenched barriers to cultural exchange. On the one hand, they can circumvent nation state–based institutions and facilitate meaningful exchange without artists’ crossing national borders. On the other hand, new media offer a counterpoint to market-based mechanisms for sharing and valuing culture. As various speakers noted in their comments, digital platforms give voice to artists and connect noteworthy expressions to audiences and markets irrespective of their social or geographic origins. Moreover, technology is fueling novel collaborative mechanisms, articulating new economies, and giving rise to completely unprecedented conduits for creative engagement.

In the most abstract sense, technology is reframing our deepest understanding of art and society, obliterating inherited categories and uprooting expectations about creativity and learning. Given the all-permeating nature of technology, the discussions on this topic ranged broadly, from the immediate effects of social media during the Arab

Spring, to the practical uses of digital tools in making art and executing programs and, ultimately, to almost metaphysical questions prompted by the proliferation of virtual technology in modern life.

Meeting in spring 2012, the participants of Seminar 490 were deeply influenced by the recent turmoil in the Middle East. Much has been imputed to technology in the Arab Spring—also dubbed “the Facebook revolution” in news reports. One stream of conversation focused on lessons learned for the advancement of cultural engagement in this historic episode. But while technology experts confirmed the catalytic role of new technology in cracking open closed societies, they also expressed tempered enthusiasm about new media’s potential for fomenting open cultural dialogue.

Digital tools are often mistakenly associated with grassroots transformation, a keynote speaker cautioned. More than half of the 1.5 million daily tweets during the Arab Spring, for example, issued from a small core group. Cultural advocates, another speaker suggested, need to be careful about “returning to the image of the ‘magic bullet’ theory” from the early days of radio and television, which pinned undue hopes and expectations on the emerging technologies of that era.

In fact, there is scant correlation between new-media penetration and social unrest. And state power is proving adept at exploiting digital media for its own ends. The largest group of Facebook users now hails from the far right, an East European cultural analyst added in this context. In the Middle East, we are currently witnessing a “cyber war about control of the narrative,” a speaker with close ties to the region noted. Cultural diplomacy in much of the Middle East region now has less to do with grassroots exchange than with “multibillion-dollar cultural projects and purchased brands of museums and universities.”

For the sum of these reasons, Pollyannaish views on the impacts of technology on transnational exchange should be tempered with realism, the conference concluded. For some observers, the information age itself comes as a mixed blessing. One speaker lamented its “propensity toward consumerism and speed.” In the eyes of conservatives and progressives alike, digital technology can threaten local expressive ecosystems. Moreover, as an American participant warned, digital media have contributed to a “creativity gap” in many societies. Children, in particular, mesmerized by videos and computers, have “become passive consumers” of culture.

Seminar participants expressed a similarly tempered view of the uses of technology in the daily work of cultural exchange. An expert in public diplomacy and technology posed the question this way: “How do we let go of control and get to real models of collaboration?” Although we have been living through a period of technological effervescence, the speaker noted, the historical record shows that “each time a new technology was introduced, a drawbridge was let down and a new drawbridge was pulled up again.” The rapid proliferation and equally rapid commercialization of Facebook is just one recent example.

The problem is not just control and limits on free expression. Cultural institutions have, on the whole, been slow to exploit the potential of new technology. Many relegate digital-media initiatives to marketing departments, failing to see them as an intrinsic ingredient of arts management. A prominent museum expert suggested, “The average museum is not really using new media,” due to “the conservative view that museums are about objects, whereas digital technology is not about objects.” The conversations in Salzburg frequently noted the reluctance of cultural organizations to accept the kind

of audience involvement that new technologies support and demand. “Collaborative curation does not necessarily mean giving up control to the audience,” a participant reminded the group.

Despite the acknowledged gaps and slowness in adaptation of new technologies, Salzburg participants were unified in the conviction that digital applications will broaden and deepen cultural engagement for the long term. Their contributions will be magnified in regions experiencing chronic inequality and injustice: “Tens of millions of people are generating shared content,” observed a close observer of the Arab Spring, with hopeful consequences for social, political, and cultural development.

Adept uses of new technology in other global realms offer some interesting comparisons. During the Arab Spring, for example, as one speaker described, the American University in Cairo ran a “virtual newsroom” in which the U.S. Department of State hosted a press conference for bloggers, complete with a virtual avatar for the U.S. Undersecretary for Diplomacy. Modern war is increasingly fought by robots, a futurist whose work spans space science and the arts pointed out. While cultural exchange could hardly be more distant in its aims and approaches from unmanned military drones, there is no denying that technology can be transformational. Kickstarter, the online crowd-sourcing site, is already raising more money for creative projects in the U.S. than the National Endowment for the Arts provides through its grant programs. Exploiting such capabilities will require a shift in attitude, however. “It’s not about the platform,” the futurist added, “it’s about the mindset—the ability to use technology creatively and expansively to find and interact with people.”

The most hopeful message about technology in Salzburg—echoing an overarching theme of the conference—concerned its role in “the creation of a ‘third space’ and a cosmopolitan spirit.” Digital tools are, in essence, about communication and sharing. Technology gives a boost to those who work on the frontlines of cultural engagement for a simple and obvious reason, one speaker noted: “Everything we do is based on friendship and personal connection—our capital is our network.”

## **Section Conclusion:**

### ***Recommendations for Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media***

- Provide stable funding for new-media projects to facilitate cultural engagement.
- Encourage entrepreneurial, public-private collaborations to exploit new technology in moving forward.
- Encourage uses of new technology applications to generate support and revenue.
- Expand training in arts management to focus more deeply on the uses of digital and social media in international cultural engagement.



## Conclusions and Next Steps

Summarizing the discussions that took place over three days in Salzburg is no easy task. Acknowledging every theme and comment runs the risk of diluting the outcome of the conference. Reducing all that was said into a few pithy bullet points threatens to blunt the diversity of opinions expressed over three days of discussion in the Schloss Leopoldskron.

Even so, some encompassing themes did emerge. The final sessions of the Seminar sought to generate consensus about the conference's conclusions, which are gathered here by way of a conclusion. Additional observations and recommendations are included in the White Papers commissioned for each thematic block, which were updated by their respective authors to absorb impressions gained during the Seminar, and are attached to this summary.

## Areas of Need and Opportunity

The Salzburg Seminar discussions identified the following areas of need and opportunity, where concerted action and coordination are deemed possible among stakeholders in the field of international cultural engagement:

- *Providing Better Education and Training:* The conference diagnosed pressing needs in education—of both general populations and professionals in the field of international exchange and diplomacy. Conference speakers called attention repeatedly to the need for educational investments to promote curiosity, creativity, and openness to foreign cultures, all of which also assume improved cultural and linguistic literacy levels. Cultural engagement cannot thrive in the absence of curiosity and communicational competence—and Salzburg conference participants called repeatedly for investments in these areas. In terms of expert skill-building, cultural engagement demands better-informed, better-prepared, better-rewarded artists, arts managers, and arts journalists. Training in information, fundraising, cultural sensitivity, and technologically advanced arts-management practices, as they apply to transnational cultural practices in a changing global environment, remains in exceedingly short supply.
- *Meeting the Needs of Artists:* The direct engagement of artists continues to lie at the heart of international cultural exchange-based diplomacy, the conference participants affirmed. While much attention is devoted to delivery systems, regulations, the role of governments, and presenting institutions, international cultural engagement will always ultimately hinge on the work of artists and artist groups “on the ground.” Resources and policy in the field need to focus on means of supporting, connecting, and empowering artists in direct creative collaborations. This includes a greater commitment to funding of individual artists, more attention to residency programs, the creation of programs that encourage and reward collaboration, and the design of new mechanisms, in particular digital tools, to connect and facilitate the interactions of artists seeking to undertake exchange-based collaborations.

- *Rethinking the Relationships of Arts Organizations*: The conference called attention to the distinctive and complementary contributions of small and large organizations. Small organizations are uniquely suited to maintain close links to artists from a wide variety of regions and population groups. They need access to funding, expertise, marketing, commissioning, and presenting opportunities. Large organizations, by contrast, have the clout to generate support and significant audiences, but they are often locked into brand-name productions and may be less daring in their programming choices. Large institutions need to be incentivized to collaborate with smaller groups. The combination of the sensitivity and access of smaller groups with the resources and visibility of the larger ones can be highly effective.
- *Developing New Funding Approaches for Cultural Engagement*: From the decline in government support in the industrial nations of the West, to the emerging funding capabilities of economically ascendant regions, the Seminar discussions called attention repeatedly to the need for a thorough reassessment of funding models in the field of international cultural exchange. The participants affirmed, “One size does not fit all.” Opportunities and obstacles differ from country to country, sector to sector, and organization to organization. No “magic bullet” solution was found for the inconsistent and chronic undersourcing of transnational cultural exchanges. The conference called attention to the untapped potential of public-private collaborations and digital crowd-sourcing, and the need to innovate and set priorities in each particular sphere of funding and to explore new joint mechanisms to connect and scale disparate funding streams.
- *Implementing Strategic Leadership*: The field of international cultural engagement needs more focused leadership and a stronger infrastructure of professional management. This includes sources of consistent and reliable data, and the elaboration of new systems of interaction and communication across the field. International working groups, data sharing, and regional networks of collaboration remain underdeveloped in comparison to other realms, such as science, education, and international relief work. The field operates as a patchwork of national and private initiatives. It would benefit from a systemic investigation of the global ecology for cultural engagement and new mechanisms to meet the needs of the system. National funding bodies and philanthropic and international organizations should assist the field in identifying and promoting better infrastructure and strategic leadership. Advocates need to develop and employ new, up-to-date, effective rhetorical strategies to make the case for cultural engagement to funders and policymakers.
- *Realizing the Potential of New Technology*: Digital media comprise a vital area of opportunity and need for international cultural engagement. The transformative power of digital media permeated every discussion of the conference. Technology changes power relationships. It alters the workings of public and private actors. It changes the meaning of cultural diversity. An emerging supranational technological infrastructure for conducting cultural exchanges

promises to supersede borders and circumvent state controls on cultural activity and free expression. Technology can provide tools to aggregate information, map cultural resources, connect players, facilitate dialogue, and provide feedback and evaluation for exchange programs. As such, technology represents the greatest opportunity for cultural exchange-based diplomacy but also, arguably, the greatest challenge. The field's approach to technology, conference participants concluded, should be agile, dynamic, and fluid—as befits the values and aspirations of international cultural engagement.

## Action Steps

In addition to these general conclusions and the recommendations listed in earlier thematic sections of this report, the participants of Salzburg Global Seminar 490 suggested several specific action steps to promote cultural engagement and to strengthen professional activity in the field.

- Synthesize and communicate the values of cultural engagement consistently.
- Work with institutions of higher learning and cultural organizations to offer training, professional development, and capacity improvement for professionals in the field.
- Map the contributions of cultural-exchange programs worldwide.
- Compile and disseminate case studies of successful programs that have achieved impact in the field.
- Develop a joint plan to talk to governments and foundations about the values of arts investments in general and cultural-exchange programs in particular.
- Use a variety of means and develop unique methodologies suited to cultural exchange to measure the impact of exchange programs, and apply them consistently (while maintaining “a healthy skepticism about the veracity of measurement”).
- Update and reconfigure the UNESCO convention on cultural diversity.
- Advocate for the streamlining of visa requirements to arts and cultural organizations.
- Expand social-media resources to benefit the field of international cultural engagement.
- Integrate youth into the leadership and decision-making process underlying international cultural exchanges.
- Build more robust alliances among networks representing various cultures, gender groups, and human rights and civil governance advocacy.
- Create working groups to assess needs in specific regions and to continue research and development of new policy and program approaches.
- Link up with upcoming conferences on cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, including the January 2014 World Summit of Arts and Culture in Chile, to relay the themes of the Salzburg Seminar and bring more consistency and connection to professional interactions in the field.
- Translate the conference proceedings and reconvene participants of the Salzburg Seminar, along with other international guests, in three years to assess progress toward the goals identified in the Seminar.

Above all, as one participant observed at the end of the conference, “what we need is a simple process that takes what comes out of this seminar and turns it into concrete program ideas.”

# Program

## *Public And Private Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy: New Models for the 21st Century*

Salzburg, April 28–May 2, 2012

Saturday, 28 April 2012

### PARTICIPANT ARRIVALS

- 12:30 Lunch
- 15:30 Coffee/Tea
- 16:00 Welcome and Introductory Meeting  
Stephen Salyer, President, Salzburg Global Seminar  
Margaret Ayers (Conference Organizer)  
President and CEO, Robert Sterling Clark Foundation  
Susanna Seidl-Fox (Conference Facilitator)  
Program Director, Culture and the Arts, Salzburg Global Seminar
- 17:30 Tour of Schloss Leopoldskron  
The Historic 18<sup>th</sup> Century Home of The Salzburg Global Seminar
- 18:00 Dinner
- 19:30 Opening Roundtable  
*The Importance of International Arts Engagement*  
Arturo Navarro, Executive Director, Mapocho Cultural Center,  
Santiago, Chile  
Lowery Stokes Sims, Charles Bronfman International Curator,  
Museum of Art and Design, New York, New York, United States  
Yasushi Watanabe, Professor, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan  
Xiang Xiaowei, Deputy Director General, Bureau for External Cultural  
Relations, Ministry of Culture, Beijing, People's Republic of China  
Followed by Reception

Sunday, 29 April 2012

9:00 PLENARY I: Moderator: Andras Szanto, (Session Rapporteur)

*Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles In International Cultural Engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

KEYNOTE

Karen Brooks Hopkins, President, Brooklyn Academy of Music,  
New York, United States

Respondents

Sari Bermúdez, Chief Executive Officer, Inter-American Culture and  
Development Foundation, Washington, D.C., United States; former  
President, National Council for Culture and the Arts, Mexico

Joni Cherbo, Executive Director, Resource Center for Cultural  
Engagement, New York, United States

Joy Mboya, Artistic Director, The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi, Kenya

Corina Suteu, Director, Romanian Cultural Institute, Romania,  
New York, United States

DISCUSSION

10:30 Coffee/Tea

11:00 PLENARY I Breakout Sessions

12:30 Lunch

14:00 PLENARY II: Moderator: Andras Szanto, (Session Rapporteur)

*Shifting Economic Power:  
New Horizons for Cultural Exchange in a Multi-Polar World*

KEYNOTE

Vishakha Desai, President, Asia Society, New York, United States

RESPONDENTS

Raj Isar, Independent Cultural Advisor; Professor, Cultural Policy  
Studies, American University of Paris, France

Moukhtar Kocache, Program Officer, Ford Foundation, Cairo, Egypt

Michael Schindhelm, Writer, Cultural Manager, and Theater and  
Film Director, Zurich and Moscow

Claudia Toni, Expert on Public Policies for Arts and Culture; Chief  
Consultant for Music and Dance, São Paulo State Public TV and Radio,  
São Paulo, Brazil

DISCUSSION

15:30 Coffee/Tea

16:00 PLENARY II Breakout Sessions

18:30 Dinner

20:00 FIRESIDE CHAT

*The Role of Museums in International Engagement*

Michael Conforti, President, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown,  
Massachusetts, United States

Yuko Hasegawa, Chief Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art,  
Tokyo, Japan

Görgün Taner, General Manager, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and  
Arts, Istanbul, Turkey

Mats Widbom, Director & Cultural Counselor for Sweden,  
The Swedish Institute, Paris, France; former Director, Museum of World  
Culture, Gothenburg, Sweden

Monday, 30 April 2012

9:00 PLENARY III: Moderator: András Szántó, (Session Rapporteur)

*Creating an Enabling Environment that Promotes Cultural  
Diversity within the Context of Cultural Relations*

KEYNOTE

Vernon Ellis, Chair, British Council, London, United Kingdom

RESPONDENTS

Basma El Hussein, Managing Director, Al Mawred al Thaqafy,  
Cairo, Egypt

Olga Garay, General Manager, Department of Cultural Affairs,  
Los Angeles, California, United States

Lowery Stokes Sims, Charles Bronfman International Curator,  
Museum of Art and Design, New York, New York, United States

DISCUSSION

10:20 GROUP PHOTO

10:30 Coffee/Tea

11:00 PLENARY III Breakout Sessions

12:30 Lunch

14:00 PLENARY IV: Moderator: András Szántó, (Session Rapporteur)

*Global Communications And The Rise Of Social Media:  
The Future Of International Cultural Engagement*

KEYNOTE

Oussama Rifahi, Executive Director, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture,  
Beirut, Lebanon

RESPONDENTS

Dieter Bogner, Museum Planner, Art Historian, Author, and Collector  
of Site-Specific Contemporary Art Installations, Vienna, Austria



Joshua Fouts, Executive Director, Science House Foundation, Science House, New York, United States

Rita King, Vice President of Business Development, Science House, New York, New York, United States

DISCUSSION

- 15:30 Coffee/Tea
- 16:00 PLENARY IV with Breakout Sessions
- 18:30 Barbecue

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

- 9:00 *Small Working Groups Prepare For Final Presentations*
- 10:30 Coffee/Tea
- 11:00 PLENARY V: Moderator: András Szántó, (Session Rapporteur)  
*Small Working Groups Report Back*
- 12:30 PLENARY VI: Moderator: András Szántó, (Session Rapporteur)  
*Reflections and Next Steps*
- DISCUSSION
- 13:00 Lunch
- 18:30 Reception  
Venetian Room
- 19:00 Concert  
Hossam Mahmoud, Oud  
Frank Stadler, Violin
- 20:00 Final Banquet Dinner

Wednesday, 2 May 2012

Departures after Breakfast



*Public And Private Cultural  
Exchange-Based Diplomacy:  
New Models for the 21st Century*

Salzburg, April 28–May 2, 2012



### **Margaret Ayers, United States (Conference Organizer)**

Margaret Ayers has served as president and CEO of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation since 1979. From 2007 through 2009, she conducted research on public and private disinvestment in international arts engagement and wrote a major report entitled *Promoting Public and Private Reinvestment in Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy*. The report has been made available to government and foundation officials and serves as the bedrock of the RSCF's new arts program. Ms. Ayers also serves on several boards of non-profit organizations including the New York Foundation for the Arts. A graduate of Douglass College, Rutgers University, she majored in political science, and is a Fellow of Session 453, *Achieving the Freer Circulation of Cultural Artifacts* (2008).



### **Sari Bermúdez, México**

Sari Bermúdez is CEO of the Washington, D.C. based Inter-American Development Bank Cultural Foundation, the most important multilateral financial institution in Latin America and the Caribbean. From 2000 to 2006, she served as president of the National Council for Culture and the Arts of Mexico (Ministry of Culture). During her tenure, she implemented the latest technologies in Mexico's public libraries, and built the new Public Central Library, the National Phonoteque, five Universities of the Arts, three Cultural Centers, and eight new Contemporary Art Museums. Ms. Bermúdez has given lectures on cultural policy at universities such as The London School of Economics and the John F. Kennedy Center at Harvard University.



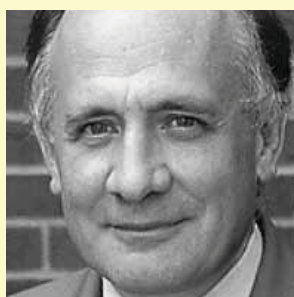
### **Dieter Bogner, Austria**

Dieter Bogner is managing director and owner of bogner.cc, a private company that curates new displays of museum collections and exhibitions and develops museological master plans and concepts for new museum buildings. He is also an exhibition curator, museum planner, university lecturer, author, and collector of site-specific contemporary art. He was the founding director of the MuseumsQuartier, Vienna. Mr. Bogner is chairman of the board of the Austrian Frederick and Lilian Kiesler Private Foundation, and a member of the board of trustees of the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. His current and recent museum projects include the Salzburg strategic museum master plan, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY and the Musée des Beaux Arts, Lausanne.



### **Karen Brooks Hopkins, United States (Co-Chair)**

Karen Brooks Hopkins is the president of the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), where she has worked since 1979. She has served as the chair of the Cultural Institutions Group, as a member of the Mayor's Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission, as a member of the New York State Board of Regents, and is currently on the Board of New York's Convention and Visitor's Bureau. A graduate of the University of Maryland, she received an M.F.A. from George Washington University in Washington, DC. Karen Hopkins was a member of the Advisory Committee of the Salzburg Global Seminar—*Alberto Vilar Project on Critical Issues for the Classical Performing Arts* (2002).



### **John Brown, United States**

John Brown is adjunct professor of liberal studies and associate at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, where he teaches courses in public diplomacy. He was formerly a consultant for the Library of Congress' Open World exchange program with the Russian Federation. He is a member of the Public Diplomacy Council and is on the editorial board of the journal *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*. When working at the Kennan Institute, Washington D.C. he compiled (with S. Grant) *The Russian Empire and the USSR: A Guide to Manuscripts and Archival Materials in the United States*. He received a Ph.D. in Russian history from Princeton University.



### **Karilyn Brown, Australia**

Karilyn Brown joined the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) in February 2009 and currently serves as general manager. She has worked on a range of international initiatives and projects, including IFACCA's World Summit on Arts and Culture in 2009 (South Africa) and 2011 (Australia). She worked for twenty years with the Australia Council for the Arts including a number of years as executive director. She was also responsible for developing and implementing a number of significant long-term programs presenting and promoting Australian arts and culture in Europe, the US and Japan. She was program manager for the 1997-2000 Olympic Arts Festivals and Paralympic Arts Festival programs.



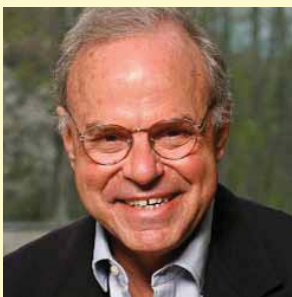
### **Clayton Campbell, United States**

Clayton Campbell has been a consultant for the past fifteen years in the artist residency and cultural exchange field. His range of skills include design and implementation of visiting artist residency and cultural exchange programs both national and international, strategic planning for arts organizations and programs and budgeting and fundraising planning. Mr. Campbell is currently writing planning and concept documents for UNESCO's new Contemporary Art Center in Doha, Qatar; redesigning the Creative Fusions International Residency Program for the Cleveland Foundation; and designing an expanded visiting artist residency program for the Rasmuson Foundation, Alaska. He is a technical advisor for the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Artist and Scholars Residency program.



### **Joni Cherbo, United States**

Joni Cherbo is currently executive director of the Resource Center for Cultural Engagement (RCCE). Together with its partner organizations Visiting Arts, UK and Libros, UK, RCCE has developed the WORLD CULTURES CONNCET web portal to connect the arts community worldwide. She developed the inaugural National Arts Policy Roundtable for Americans for the Arts, was on the Research Advisory Committee of the Center for Arts and Culture, Washington, DC., and is a senior research fellow at Ohio State University. She has initiated, organized and lectured on the arts at various convenings, taught at a number of universities in the New York City area, and served on boards and committees of many cultural institutions, and written extensively on a wide range of topics.



### **Michael Conforti, United States**

Michael Conforti is director of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown and is on the faculty of Williams College. He is an expert in sculpture, decorative arts and design, and on the history of museums and collecting. He is a trustee of the American Association of Museums' International Committee on Museums and the Association of Art Museum Directors, where he also served as president for two years. He graduated from Trinity College and went on to receive an M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University. Mr. Conforti is a Fellow of the Salzburg Global Seminar. He was co-chair of Session 453 *Achieving the Freer Circulation of Cultural Artifacts* (2008) and led the *Museum Partnership Advisory Meeting* (2008).



### **Michael Cundall, United States**

Michael Cundall is director of the Honors Program, and assistant professor of philosophy at North Carolina A&T State University. His areas of specialization include philosophy of psychology, cognitive science, and humor studies. He has published numerous articles in professional journals and is invited frequently to speak at conferences. He applied for two grants from the National Endowment of Humanities, which are currently under review: *The African Diaspora*, and *The Liberal Tradition and Enduring Questions, Art, Belief and Aesthetic Experience*. Michael Cundall holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Cincinnati and a B.A. in philosophy and psychology from the University of Kentucky.



### **Vishakha Desai, United States (Co-Chair)**

Vishakha Desai is the president and CEO of Asia Society. She is a frequent speaker at national and international forums on a wide variety of subjects that include US-Asia relationships, cultural roots of Asian economic development, regional connections within the Asia Pacific region, as well as the arts and cultures of Asia and Asian America. As a scholar of Asian art, she has published and edited several books and numerous articles on traditional and contemporary art. Dr. Desai holds a B.A. in political science from Bombay University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Asian art history from the University of Michigan. Vishakha Desai was the keynote speaker at Session 482 *Libraries and Museums in an Era of Participatory Culture* (2011).



### **Basma El Hussein, Egypt**

Basma El Hussein is an arts manager and a UNESCO expert in cultural governance. She currently is managing director of Culture Resource (Al Mawred Al Thaqafy) in Cairo. She co-founded and was a trustee of the Arab Fund for Arts & Culture. She previously was the Media, Arts & Culture program officer for the Ford Foundation in the MENA-region and arts manager of the British Council in Egypt. She is a member of the advisory board of the Center for Cultural Policy and Management, Bilgi University, Istanbul and co-authored the EU report *Towards A Strategy for Culture in the Mediterranean*. Basma El Hussein is a Fellow of Session 468 *The Performing Arts in Lean Times: Opportunities for Reinvention* (2010).





### **Vernon Ellis, United Kingdom (Co-Chair)**

Sir Vernon Ellis became chair of the British Council in March 2010. The British Council is the UK's leading international organization for cultural and educational relations, in terms of reach and impact. He was chairman of the English National Opera 2006-12 (now President, succeeding Lord Harewood). He is also on boards of several other musical and educational entities. In addition, he supports many arts companies, artists and charities through his Foundation, which manages around 80 concerts a year at his London home. He chairs the boards of several private companies. Prior to 2010, he spent all his working life at Accenture in a number of major operational roles, overseeing the firm's operations in Europe, Middle East, Africa and India, as well as developing Accenture's relationship with the World Economic Forum. He chaired the Ditchley Park conference on Cultural Diplomacy in 2012.



### **Joshua Fouts, United States**

Joshua Fouts is executive director of Science House Foundation. He is a senior fellow for Science Diplomacy, Culture and Education at the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress. He has worked for more than twenty years as a leader in the use of technology and science for cultural relations. His internationally recognized collaborative research projects with Rita J. King have focused on novel uses of new technology for education transformation and cultural collaboration, especially in the digital sphere. He co-founded and directed two think tanks at the University of Southern California Annenberg School.



### **David J. Fraher, United States**

For more than three decades, David Fraher has directed his creative skill to building and leading arts organizations and programs throughout the US. He has served as executive director of Arts Midwest since its creation. In addition, he has led Arts Midwest in building a diverse and expanding array of international partnerships and cultural exchange programs which directly link American artists to international audiences, and (especially rural) American audiences to the many cultures of the world. He has a degree in creative writing from SUNY at Brockport, New York and completed two years of graduate work in creative writing and American literature at Ohio University in Athens.



### **Aimee Fullman, United States**

Aimee Fullman joined the British Council in 2011 as the manager of Cultural Relations and Networks. She holds over a decade of Washington, DC-based and international experience as a cultural policy researcher, international program manager and policy practitioner specializing in international cultural engagement and cultural diversity. Past professional affiliations include American University, American Voices, Americans for the Arts, the Center for Arts and Culture, the Canadian Cultural Observatory, Sister Cities International, the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, the Institute of International Education and UNESCO. In 2011, she began Doctoral studies in Cultural Relations Management at HEC-Montreal and is a U40 Cultural Diversity fellow.



### **Olga Garay, United States**

Olga Garay is executive director of the Department of Cultural Affairs for the City of Los Angeles. She has been committed to international cultural exchange throughout her more than twenty-year career. While director of Cultural Affairs at Miami-Dade College, she managed a Ford Foundation funded, multi-year grant focused on Latin America and the Caribbean. As founding program director for the Arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF), she established a grants programs that made DDCF one of the top international arts funders in the U.S. She also launched LA's International Cultural Exchange Fellowship Program in 2008. The collected funds allow dozens of LA and international artists to conduct extended residencies.



### **Irene del Carmen González Peña, Chile**

Irene González Peña is director of programming and owner of Teatro NESCAFÉ de las Artes in Santiago, Chile. Previously she was production assistant at Galo Producciones Artístico Culturales, and project director at Ventana Cultural Producciones Artístico Culturales. She has conducted special research and thesis work in Mapuche poetry, the poetry of Chile's indigenous people. Irene González Peña holds a B.A. in literature and journalism and has a degree in translation and interpretation (Spanish English).



### **Jennifer Goodale, United States**

Since 2008, Jennifer Goodale has led two foundations focused on global exchange as executive director: Trust for Mutual Understanding (TMU), and the Asian Cultural Council (ACC). Previously, she worked for 20 years in philanthropy at Altria Group/Philip Morris Companies Inc. From 2002–2008 she served as vice president at Global Contributions, working on programs in the arts, domestic violence, hunger relief, HIVAIDS, the environment, and humanitarian aid. She serves on the board of Mark Morris Dance Group and The Yard. She is an advocate for sexual assault prevention and volunteers with Safe Horizon and Joyful Heart Foundation. Jennifer Goodale grew up in London, UK, and is a graduate of Barnard College and Columbia University.



### **Yuko Hasegawa, Japan**

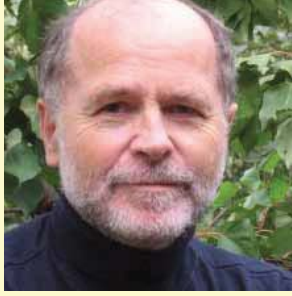
Yuko Hasegawa is chief curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo and is also a professor in the Department of Art Science, Tama Art University, Tokyo. She was founding artistic director of the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (1999–2006). Ms. Hasegawa curated the Istanbul Biennale (2001), Shanghai Biennale (2002), Seoul International Media Art Biennale (2006) and was co-curator of São Paulo Biennale (2010). She has been a member of the Asian Art Council at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum since 2008, serves as an artistic advisor for the Venice Architecture Biennale, and is curator for Art HK Projects 2012 and Sharjah Biennial 11 2013.



### **Atsuko Hisano, Japan**

Atsuko Hisano is program director of The Saison Foundation (SF), a private-sector grant-making foundation, established in 1987. It is dedicated to contributing to the advancement of the arts primarily in the fields of contemporary Japanese theater and dance, and to promoting cultural exchange between Japan and overseas. Recently, the SF started a new program, the Visiting Fellow Program, which invites program directors, curators, and administrators in the field of performing arts from overseas. Before that she was a program coordinator for dance and theater at Studio 200, an alternative art theater, where she worked on over 100 programs. She graduated from Aoyama Gakuin University of Tokyo with a B.A. in law.





### **Péter Inkei, Hungary**

Péter Inkei is director of the Budapest Observatory. He does consultancy on cultural policy for various organizations, including the Council of Europe, the city of Košice, the Hungarian National Development Agency, and the European Expert Network on Culture. He served on the Board of Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE), was a stakeholders' representative on the Lab for Culture board, and has been the keynote speaker at a number of international conferences. Previously, he held various positions in the civil service, including deputy minister for culture, general director for publishing (Ministry of Culture), and national coordinator of research (Ministry of Education).



### **Yudhishtir Raj Isar, France**

Yudhishtir Raj Isar is an analyst, consultant, public speaker and writer whose work encompasses cultural theory, experience and practice. He is professor of Cultural Policy Studies at The American University of Paris and eminent research visitor at the University of Western Sydney, Australia (2011-2013). He is trustee of or advisor to diverse cultural organizations in Europe, the US and India. Previously he served as cultural specialist at UNESCO, most notably as executive secretary of the World Commission on Culture and Development and director of cultural policies. He was the first executive director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and MIT. Mr. Isar was educated in India and France.



### **Rita King, United States**

Rita J. King is executive vice president of business development at Science House and the creator of The Imagination Age. She founded Dancing Ink Productions, and most recently co-directed *IMAGINATION: Creating the Future of Education and Work*, an interactive project for educators focused on science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics. She is senior fellow for Social Networking and Immersive Technologies at the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress, a former innovator-in-residence at IBM Virtual Analytics Center, and a former senior fellow at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs. She is currently serving as futurist at NASA Langley's think-tank, the National Institute of Aerospace.



### **Moukhtar Kocache, United Kingdom**

Moukhtar Kocache is a curator and arts manager. He recently worked on the development and sustainability of arts and culture spaces, networks and infrastructure at the Ford Foundation's Cairo office. He was director of programs at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), has managed and organized exhibitions, and has consulted for and worked with art galleries, museums and nonprofit organizations in the US, Europe and the Middle East. He has taught university level seminars, presented papers, been a keynote speaker at various institutions, and has published critical texts in catalogs and periodicals. He received an M.A. from Columbia University in art management and art history.



### **Martina Kohl, Germany**

Since 1993, Martina Kohl has been working as cultural affairs specialist for the U.S. Embassy in Bonn and Berlin where she coordinates a nation-wide speaker program. Prior she served as writing consultant at the Business School of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is a frequent guest lecturer at Humboldt University Berlin where she teaches seminars on Public Diplomacy. With other colleagues she serves as general editor of the electronic *American Studies Journal*. Martina Kohl studied at Johannes-Gutenberg University in Mainz and Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. She received an M.A. and a Dr. Phil. from Mainz University. Martina Kohl is a Fellow of Session 358 *The Social and Political Implications of the Internet* (1998).



### **Elena Kolovskaya, Russian Federation**

Elena Kolovskaya is co-founder and director of the St. Petersburg PRO ARTE Foundation for Culture and Arts. Previously, she was director of the Arts and Culture Program at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Open Society Institute, and taught courses on arts management, art journalism, and museum design. She writes about cultural institutions and events and has edited more than thirty publications on modern art and culture. She graduated from the philological department of St. Petersburg University and did her post-graduate studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Science, Moscow. Elena Kolovskaya attended the 2002 planning meeting and was a faculty member of the session on *Cultural Institutions in Transition: Making the Case for Culture* (2003).



**Ophelia Lau, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**

Ophelia Lau is senior staff officer in the Research and Development Unit of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, under the Hong Kong SAR Government. In addition to serving as a coordinator on cultural matters, she assists in researching materials and examining policy issues that will facilitate development of cultural sites and activities. An experienced manager of professional performing companies and cultural facilities, Ms. Lau has also overseen the planning and implementation of a program to foster partnerships between arts venues and performing arts groups.



**Licong, Zhang, China**

Licong Zhang currently serves as third secretary in the Bureau for External Cultural Relations' Policy and Regulation Office at the Chinese Ministry of Culture. Previous positions include posts in the cultural office of the Chinese Embassy in Canada and in the office of American and Oceanian Affairs in the Bureau for External Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Culture. His interests include cultural policy, cultural diplomacy, public relations and culture case studies. Mr. Licong holds a double degree in English literature and diplomacy from the China Foreign Affairs University.



**Alberto Lignaluppi, Argentina**

Alberto Lignaluppi is managing director of Complejo Teatral de Buenos Aires, Teatro San Martín. He is an academic advisor and teacher of the international course on cultural management at the National University of Córdoba. Previously, he was co-director of the International Festival of Buenos Aires (FIBA), cultural director of the Goethe Institute Córdoba and programming coordinator of the International Theatre Festival of Buenos Aires, as well as managing director of the Festival Latinoamericano de Teatro Córdoba.



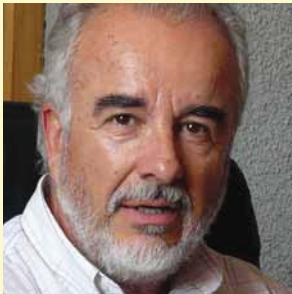
**Joy A. Mboya, Kenya**

Joy Mboya is the founding and executive director of a performing and visual arts centre called The Godown in Nairobi, Kenya. She is a trustee of the Gaara Dance Foundation (Kenya) and the Kalasha Film Awards (Kenya). Ms. Mboya is very active in theatre in Nairobi, both as an actress and as a writer/director of musicals, and has launched two very popular and successful annual cultural events: the *Love Jam* and *Vunja Mifupa Games*. Ms. Mboya graduated from Princeton University and pursued post-graduate studies at the National Institute for Dramatic Arts, Sydney.



### **Farai M'Pfunya, Zimbabwe**

Farai M'Pfunya is executive director of the Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust. With a more than ten-year track record in arts, culture development and strategy, he has become an expert in areas that encompass African intellectual property, small organization capabilities development, film festival management and not-for-profit trust start-up and fund-raising. In 2009 he was one of the African speakers during the World Summit on Arts and Culture held in Johannesburg. Mr. M'Pfunya studied French at CAVILAM Foch in Vichy, France, and Electronics Engineering and Industrial Information Processing at the University of Pau and Paul Sabatier University in Toulouse. He holds an M.B.A. from Middlesex University Business School, London.



### **Arturo Navarro Ceardi, Chile**

Arturo Navarro has been the executive director at Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho since 1990. He is also a professor of cultural policies at the Cultural Management Masters Program, Faculty of Arts at the University of Chile. He is an expert in the formulation and implementation of cultural policies and cultural site management and has advised four governments during the past twenty years. This has led to the creation of the National Council for Culture and the Arts and the non-profit corporation that manages the National Center for the Performing Arts Gabriela Mistral. He was a visiting fellow at Harvard University and is invited regularly to lecture at various universities across the globe, including Harvard, New York University, Johannesburg, and Melbourne.



### **Kajo Nelles, Germany**

Kajo Nelles is director of the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW, Germany. He is the co-founder and managing director of the Dance Projects Cologne—Creativity through Movement, and has worked as a movement teacher, producer and dramatic advisor. In this position he aims to holistically conjoin movement, creativity, art and business. He also co-founded Creating Movement, the first international exchange project in South Africa after the cultural boycott. His publications include *JAMES—Life, Work and Vision of the Dancer James Saunders* (1999), and *Choreographers* (2010). Mr. Nelles studied social work at the Cologne University of Applied Sciences and worked in various social fields.





### **Phloeun Prim, Cambodia and Canada**

Phloeun Prim and his family emigrated from Cambodia to Canada when he was three years old. He returned to Cambodia in 1998 and joined a European Union program with fifty traditional Cambodian artisans. He has helped to transform the program into a self-sustainable company called Artisans d'Angkor. Now employing over a thousand artisans and staff, it distributes high-quality traditional handmade crafts throughout Cambodia and around the world. In 2010, after serving on the organization's board for five years he was appointed as the first executive director of Cambodian Living Arts. It aims to do this through traditional and contemporary arts education programs, promotion of the arts, and advocacy for the arts.



### **Ossama Rifahi, Canada (Co-Chair)**

Oussama Rifahi joined the Arab Fund for Arts & Culture as executive director in July 2010. Previously, he was managing director for museum development with Global Cultural Asset Management in New York, and provided cultural consultancy services to governments, cities, foundations and private collectors in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. As director of special projects for the Guggenheim Foundation, Mr. Rifahi led feasibility studies of modern and contemporary museums in Lithuania and France. From 2003 to 2006, he was project manager at Mubadala in Abu Dhabi and an advisor to the chairman of Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC). Mr. Rifahi directed the market analysis, strategy definition and development of the business model for tourism and culture in Abu Dhabi.



### **Fernando Sáez, Cuba**

Fernando Sáez has been chair of the performing arts programs at the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba since 1998 and has been a member of the board of directors since 2000. He founded the Estudio Teatral de Santa Clara ensemble, where he also worked as an actor. Additionally, he was the coordinator of a social and cultural development program in Las Terrazas, a rural community in Pinar del Rio, Cuba. He often lectures in Cuba and abroad about diverse topics related to Cuban contemporary cultural matters, including Cuban performing arts. He has published numerous essays and articles in Cuba and around the world. Mr. Sáez graduated as a theatre critic and playwright from the School of Theatre at the Superior Institute of Arts, Havana, Cuba.



### **Ahmad Sarmast, Afghanistan and Australia**

Ahmad Sarmast is the founder and director of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM). He has been conducting research on the music of Afghanistan since 1993, resulting in the landmark book: *A Survey of the History of Music in Afghanistan*. Mr. Sarmast has received several accolades, including the IMC Musical Rights Award, the First Prize of 2009 David Chow Humanitarian Award, and the Education Award of the Government of Afghanistan. He received a B.A. in performance and music education from Gnisinikh College of Music, Moscow, an M.A. in musicology/ethnomusicology from the Moscow State Conservatorium, and a Ph.D. in music from Monash University, Australia.



### **Michael Schindhelm, Germany**

Michael Schindhelm is a writer, international performing arts expert, cultural advisor for international organizations, theater director and film director. He is research curator at the Zurich University for the Arts in Switzerland and research director at the Strelka Institute Moscow in Russia. He has also served as the director of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority. Mr. Schindhelm was director-general of the Stiftung Oper in Berlin and oversaw Berlin's three opera houses: Staatsoper Berlin, Deutsche Oper, and Komische Oper. Some of his novels include *Dubai High* (2011), *Zauber des Westens* (2001) and *Roberts Reise* (2000). His latest documentaries include *Bird's Nest* (2008) and *Chants of the Steppes* (2004). Mr. Schindhelm holds an M.Sc. in quantum chemistry from the International University of Voronezh (former USSR).



### **Lowery Stokes Sims, United States**

Lowery Stokes Sims is the Charles Bronfman International Curator at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD). She served as an educator and curator at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and was executive director, president and adjunct curator at The Studio Museum in Harlem. She specializes in modern and contemporary art with a particular interest in African, Latino, Native and Asian artists. Ms. Sims holds a B.A. in art history from Queens College, an M.A. in art history from Johns Hopkins University, and a Ph.D. in art history from the City University of New York. She was a visiting professor at Queens College, Hunter College, and a fellow at the Clark Art Institute. She also served on the selection jury for the World Trade Center Memorial and is on the board of ArtTable, Inc., the Tiffany Foundation, and Art Matters, Inc.



### **Corina Suteu, Romania**

Corina Suteu is currently director of the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York. She is a researcher and consultant in the fields of cultural policies, cultural management and international cultural cooperation. Ms. Suteu is also the founder and president of the ECUMEST Association in Bucharest. Formerly, she was the head of the Cultural Management Unit of the *Institut de l'homme et de la technologie* in Nantes, and president of the European Forum of Cultural Networks. She has worked extensively as an independent trainer, consultant and researcher in the fields of cultural cooperation and cultural management and policies in Europe. She co-chaired *Cultural Institutions in Transition* and was a member of its planning meeting (2002 – 2004).



### **András Szántó, United States and Hungary (Rapporteur)**

András Szántó is a writer, researcher, and consultant in the fields of art, media, cultural policy, and philanthropy. He is the former director of the National Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University, where he also directed the NEA Arts Journalism Institute, and he has been a lecturer on arts management at the Sotheby's Institute of Art in New York. He has designed conferences, conducted research, and launched initiatives for major foundations, museums, arts organizations, and commercial enterprises. He is the co-author and editor of five books, and his reporting and commentary have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Art Newspaper*, and other various publications. In 2003, he helped organize an international conference on cultural diplomacy at Columbia University titled *Arts @ Minds*.



### **Görgün Taner, Turkey**

Görgün Taner is general director of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts. He also teaches cultural management at Istanbul Bilgi University and is on the board of the Istanbul Modern Museum. Previously, he was commissaire general of *Saison de la Turquie en France* (Commissioner General of the Turkish season in France), on the advisory board of Istanbul Cultural Capital 2010, a member of the European City's Scientific Council (Paris), director of the Istanbul Jazz Festival, and president of the International Jazz Festivals Association. Mr. Taner studied management and history and is an amateur DJ.





### **Claudia Toni, Brazil**

Claudia Toni is a consultant and expert for public policies for arts and culture. She has a long career as a manager of cultural and musical institutions, having worked in this area since 1977. She is currently the chief consultant for music and dance at the public TV and radio of São Paulo State. She has previously advised the Secretariat of Culture at the city and state level. She was the executive director of the Orquestra de São Paulo, where she set up the administrative department, implementing a pioneering model of public administration for the Brazilian cultural sector. She has been a board member of the International Society for the Performing Arts Foundation since January 2006. Ms. Toni and is a Fellow of Session 479 *Instrumental Value: The Transformative Power of Music* (2011).



### **Jakub Urik, Slovak Republic**

Jakub Urik is the authorized representative of the mayor of Košice for European and Cultural Affairs and head of international relations and development projects for Košice 2013—European Capital of Culture. Previously, he has served as assistant to the permanent mission of the Slovak Republic to the Council of Europe (Strasbourg), assistant to the Slovak Euro-deputy at the European Parliament (Brussels), and manager of culture and communication for the House of Slovak regions (Brussels). He received degrees from Université de Reims Champagne Ardennes (France), Université Nancy 2 (France), and University of Matej Bel (Slovak Republic).



### **Katelijn Verstraete, Belgium**

Katelijn Verstraete has been deputy director of the Cultural Exchange Department at the Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Singapore since 2006. In the last seventeen years she has built up an extensive experience and networks in Asia and Europe in the business and cultural sector. She co-founded BizArt, the first autonomous art space in Shanghai. She developed communication, training and Asia projects for the International Network of Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM), where she also managed *On the Move*, a cultural mobility information network. She was chief advisor and writer for the recently published Europe-China Cultural Compass. Ms. Verstraete holds an MA in Sinology (Leuven/ Leiden) and Marketing Management (Ghent) and studied in China (Nanjing).



### **Yasushi Watanabe, Japan**

Yasushi Watanabe is a professor at the Graduate School of Media and Governance at Keio University. Highly interested in the relationship between culture and politics, he has published several books and articles, including *Culture and Diplomacy: The Age of Public Diplomacy* (2011). He currently serves on the advisory committee on public diplomacy at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as a councilor at the International House of Japan. He is co-chair of the Japan Advisory Council of the Salzburg Global Seminar. Mr. Watanabe received a B.A. in American Studies from Sophia University (Tokyo), an M.A. and Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from Harvard University, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. He received the Japan Academy Prize - the highest award for scholars under 45 in Japan.



### **Katherine Watson, Finland and Canada**

Katherine Watson currently is director of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF), an independent pan-European foundation, that acts as a catalyst for change through arts and culture. She has over thirty years of international experience, on both sides of the Atlantic, combining interdisciplinary art productions with advocacy, research, and policy and program development for non-profit arts organizations as well as governments. She has a particular interest in investigating how the digital shift has affected our society and in the intersection of art and culture with other fields of endeavor. Ms. Watson has been a producer, director, manager, fund developer, arts adviser and jury member, and chair of several boards. She is currently on the governing council of the European Foundation Centre in which ECF plays an active part.



### **Mats Widbom, Sweden**

Mats Widbom is director of the Swedish Institute in Paris and cultural counselor for Sweden. He is the recent director of the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg. He established a cultural program with exhibitions and different art forms in the new House of Sweden in Washington D.C. Mr. Widbom has extensive experience in international museum development work and initiated the important international conference *Museum 2000—Confirmation or Challenge*. He holds an M.A. in architecture from the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm and has also studied at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York. Mr. Widbom was on the Faculty of Session 482 *Libraries and Museums in an Era of Participatory Culture* (2011).



### **Steve Willis, United States**

Steve Willis is director of the Division of Humanities and associate professor of theatre and speech, at Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina. He has presented frequently at theatre and academic conferences and he currently serves on the editorial board of *Southern Theatre*. An award-winning playwright, his plays have been produced internationally—in Australia and South Africa—as well as in New York City. He holds an M.F.A. in acting/directing from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a B.A. in English/dramatic arts and speech from Averett University. Additionally, he is a certified yoga instructor with over one thousand yoga teaching hours.



### **Xiang Xiaowei, China**

Xiang Xiaowei joined the Bureau for External Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Culture in 2009, first as assistant director general, and has been deputy director general since 2011. Before that, he served as director of American and Oceanian Affairs; Bureau for External Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Culture; head of the Chinese Culture Center in Malta; and as Consul for Culture at the Chinese consulate in Los Angeles, USA and Toronto, Canada. His research interests include external cultural policy, the management of governmental cultural exchange programs, and international cultural relations. Mr. Xiang holds a B.A. in International Cultural Studies from Peking University.



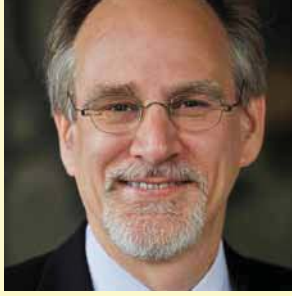
### **Benjamin Zeller, United States**

Benjamin Zeller is an assistant professor of religious studies at Brevard College, North Carolina, where his research area is religious currents in the U.S. that are new or alternative. He is co-editing two forthcoming anthologies *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*, and *The Bloomsbury Companion to New Religious Movements*. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, M.T.S. from Harvard University, and B.A. from the University of Rochester. He will spend Fall 2012 at Åbo Akademi University in Turku, Finland as a Fulbright Scholar. Mr. Zeller is a Fellow of *Colleges and Universities as Sites of Global Citizenship - International Study Program 22* (2008) and *ISP 29* (2009).

### **Observer:**

**Monika Kalista**, Head of Department of Culture, Society and Generation, Department of Sports and Culture, Government of the Province of Salzburg, Austria

## SGS STAFF



**Stephen L. Salyer** is president and chief executive officer of the Salzburg Global Seminar. Prior to joining the Seminar, he served as president and chief executive officer of Public Radio International during which time PRI became a leading developer and distributor of news and cultural programs with a global perspective for public radio in the United States. He is a graduate of Davidson College from which he also received an honorary doctorate in 2003, and of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Mr. Salyer studied law as a Root-Tilden Scholar at the New York University School of Law.



**Clare Shine** was appointed vice president and chief program officer of the Salzburg Global Seminar in January 2012. A firm believer in multi-disciplinary thinking, her own background spans law, business, sustainability and the arts. Clare is a UK-qualified barrister bilingual in French with 20 years' experience as an international environmental policy analyst for the UN and regional organizations, governments, the private sector and NGOs. She has also written regularly for the Financial Times arts section since 2003. She began her career in industry after studying literature at Oxford University and holds post-graduate degrees from London University and the Sorbonne University, Paris.



**Susanna Seidl-Fox** is program director for culture and the arts at the Salzburg Global Seminar. She joined the staff of the Salzburg Global Seminar in 1995 and has served in various capacities including academic program coordinator, director of program development, and director of seminars. From 1986 to 1995, Ms. Seidl-Fox worked as a simultaneous interpreter for the Office of Language Services of the United States Department of State. She was a Fulbright Fellow at the Universities of Mainz and Berlin. Ms. Seidl-Fox has a B.A. in German literature and political science from Dartmouth College, and an M.A. in translation and interpretation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California.



**Julia Stepan** has joined the Salzburg Global Seminar in May 2011. In her role as program associate she assists program directors with the development, administration, and logistics of several sessions per year. Julia received an M.A. in American Studies, focusing on Cultural Studies, from the University of Graz, Austria and did a one-year student exchange at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire.





# White Papers

## *Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles in International Cultural Engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

JONI MAYA CHERBO, PHD  
Independent Scholar and Executive Director,  
Resource Center for Cultural Engagement

## *Shifting Economic Power: New Horizons for Cultural Exchange in our Multi-Polar World*

YUDHISHTHIR RAJ ISAR  
Independent Cultural Advisor; Professor, Cultural Policy Studies,  
American University of Paris, France

## *Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media: The Future of International Cultural Engagement*

RITA J. KING  
EVP for Business Development, Science House  
and

JOSHUA FOUTS  
Executive Director, Science House Foundation





# *Re-Imagining Public and Private Roles in International Cultural Engagement for the 21st Century*

JONI MAYA CHERBO, PHD

Independent Scholar and Executive Director, Resource Center for Cultural Engagement

*White Paper Theme One*

*Distributed in preparation for discussion at Salzburg Global Seminar  
Session 490*

## **Executive Summary**

**T**oday's world is defined by increasing interconnections and interdependencies between nations and peoples. Despite this interconnectedness, age-old grievances rooted in political and cultural differences continue to exist. It is in our collective interest to learn to live together more harmoniously. The arts, which are recognized as vehicles that can promote goodwill and understanding across cultural divides, remain nominally utilized and supported in this regard. Why?

Nations differ in how they structure, value, support and participate in international cultural engagement. In the U.S. - my point of reference - this is a field without a center. It just happens. Culture remains a marginalized tool in advancing U.S. public diplomacy, under-valued in its potential impact and modestly supported despite the fact that American arts in general are highly valued and U.S. films and music are major global industries.

Despite their public stature, international cultural engagements are civil society weeds, sprouting up and nourished by NGOs, academic centers, commercial activities, and citizen diplomacy efforts. There is no over-arching strategy, no inter-agency coordination at the federal level or external organizing capability; no consistent funding, no information hub on international cultural engagement, and no educational or career path, outside of the Foreign Service, for becoming a "cultural ambassador."

Envisioning new public-private roles entails reckoning with our evolving world order and its challenges; re-defining appropriate objectives that have measurable impacts; and, dealing with the weaknesses and limitations in the infrastructure for international cultural engagement. Unless and until we address these issues, the field will continue to be an outlier rather than center stage where its inherent ability to contribute to today's challenges could be more robust.

## Our Evolving World, Circa 2012<sup>1</sup>

- Globalization is characterized by increasing worldwide integration and economic development. While this has brought nations and people closer together, it has also resulted in the loss of some individual cultural identities. Ease of travel, increased tourism, 24/7 international news cycles, and the exponential rise of interactive technological devices have all contributed to an increase in our interconnectedness. Nearly 60 percent of the world's population now have mobile phones. Nearly half of these devices will soon be smart phones, and tablet sales are on the rise. All of this will accelerate the process of globalization.
- The hegemony of the United States is being transformed due to the economic and political rise of the BRIC countries and other emerging nations around the globe. While the United States accounts for 60 percent of the world's GDP, its share is estimated to fall in the not too distant future, and its relative share of political and military power is expected to decline as well.
- The Arab Spring has ushered in the demands of the Arab population for a voice in self-governance, human dignity and jobs. With about 3 billion people emerging from poverty around the world, creating sustainable economies will be a huge challenge, along with the continued persistence of ethnic and religious wars and the threat of nuclear proliferation.
- Trans-national corporations operate across borders, while smaller companies use the Internet to market and distribute their wares globally. As political and economic issues increasingly impact the wider global community, trans-national and trans-regional organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, World Trade Organization, the Council of Europe, the International Monetary Fund, and The International Court of Justice become more important.
- Our current situation holds enormous implications for those invested in international cultural engagements. Those of us in the field need to reassess: Why do we engage? Where? When? And to what end(s)? How do we attain desired goals? How do we find partners, raise funds, and manage cultural engagements? How do we assess impact, determine what projects should be sustained and replicated elsewhere? And, how do we articulate the value of impactful projects to critical stakeholders?

## Let's Talk Terms

**C**ulture in its anthropological usage refers to the totality of values and activities that define a culture, including its religion, education, sports, and arts. Culture can also refer to the broad range of artistic expressions, from media to performing, visual arts, and interactive/fusion forms.

*Cultural Diplomacy* tends to refer to government use of culture to promote official policy, while *cultural engagement* references the activities of both public and private players involved in international cultural programming.

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1 Technology and global power shifts are more fully addressed in other white papers prepared for the Salzburg seminar.

For purposes of this discussion, I use *international cultural engagement* to refer to all forms of artistic expression engaged in by the entire range of players—government, foundations/trusts, NGOs, trans-national corporations and other commercial entities, trans-national or trans-regional organizations, citizen diplomats, academia, and “netizens” (those using the Internet exclusively to conduct exchanges).

Artistic engagements between nations and peoples have been staples of human history and will continue to be so. Along with being shared for their intrinsic value, the arts have been the handmaidens of various non-artistic goals. For example, they have been used to promote official government policy, for nation branding, to build hemispheric and regional solidarity, and to reinforce political alliances. They have been called into service to promote certain economic and political ideals or practices, such as democracy, free-market capitalism, meritocracy, accountability, freedom of expression, and equality; to create trust, respect and mutual understanding globally; as well as to address social issues, such as population migration, gender equality, economic growth, conflict resolution, health, economic development, and diversity. The arts have been employed to supplement and reinforce business and economic ties for corporations and governments, to promote specific products and to publicize celebrities.

Given the lingering recession in the Western world and the pressing need to reduce deficits, funding for cultural engagement has dwindled in the United States and Europe, even while the need for international outreach and cooperation has increased. This awareness has allowed more cash-rich nations, such as China, to ratchet up their international cultural programs, while “deficit nations,” including many former stalwarts of cultural diplomacy in Europe, are being challenged just to maintain existing support, as government budgets tighten amidst conditions of economic austerity.

## The Infrastructure of International Cultural Engagements Data Deficits

Do those who are invested in international cultural engagements think of themselves as participating in an “activity,” a “field”, or a “profession”? If so, can we speak of a field or profession in the absence of an infrastructure? At a minimum, an infrastructure should include a delineated history, a databank, a cluster of service organization(s), and some kind of an advocacy arm. Many professions also have international components as well.

Data on international cultural engagement is often non-existent, sketchy and insubstantial. Statistics are usually nation specific, and not geared to the global arts community.

The International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA) 2010 Discussion Paper, *Supporting international issues for national arts funding agencies*, reported cultural agency expenditures for 11 countries. The German Federal Cultural Foundation’s expenditures on international cultural programs were almost 100 percent of total allocations, as their mission is exclusively to support such programs. At the

other end of the spectrum, the arts funding agencies of Burundi, Ireland and the U.S. dedicated 1 percent to international cultural programs.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, data is de minimus, and what exists is often rife with methodological limitations. A few examples of studies that have attempted to quantify trends and patterns include:

- A 2011 Congressional Research Service Report, requested by the John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress at New York University, Wagner School, identified and sketched out expenditures from federal departments, agencies, and organizations that received federal monies for international cultural engagements in 2008. Many of the surveyed entities do not track arts expenditures separately. However, a rough estimate tracked \$900 million in such outlays (including \$115 million from non-U.S. government funding sources).
- A 2008 study noted in the U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy's, *Initiative for Global Citizen Diplomacy*, that there were 300 U.S. non-profits with international missions and 5,000 organizations with an international component to their mission. How many of these organizations focus on cultural engagements remains unknown.
- A Robert Sterling Clark Foundation study, *Promoting Public and Private Reinvestment in Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy*, was the first to benchmark trends in the U.S. among diverse organizations engaged in international cultural exchange. The Report documented declines in U.S. Government and foundation support for U.S.-based international cultural engagement projects over time. The study also proposed a series of activities that might be undertaken by private foundations to reverse this trend.
- Americans for the Arts, 2011 study, *Think Locally-Act Globally: How Local Arts Agencies are Acting on the Global Stage*, found that 75% of Local Arts Agencies participated in international arts activities.

It is noteworthy that no known research, to date, has attempted to track international corporate engagements.

## The Mechanics

There are numerous factors that can affect the success of international cultural engagement, most of which could benefit from review. Questions worth asking include:

- What are the benefits and downsides to the creation of quasi-governmental agencies such as the British Council model or the Alliance Française missions abroad to undertake such activities?

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2 International Federation of Cultural Agencies and Arts Councils: *Supporting International Issues for National Arts Funding Agencies*, Discussion Paper, September 2010. Burundi, 1%; Ireland, 1%; United States, 1%; Sweden, 3%; New Zealand (Creative New Zealand), 5%; Scotland, 5%; South Korea, 7%; Australia, 7%; Canada, 8%; New Zealand (ministry), 11%; Germany, nearly 100%.

- Within governments, should more attention be paid to inter-agency coordination of such initiatives and to assisting public/private partnerships, perhaps even private endeavors?
- What is the state and status of professional development of personnel to carry out such activities both within governments and in private sectors?
- Should there be a central clearinghouse to provide information about visas and customs, foreign taxes, work permits, fee structures, guidelines for creating effective partnerships, managing international touring, marketing exchanges, the role of the presenter, curator or programmer, funding prospects, partnership opportunities, international festival listings, travel arrangements, and, or language translators?
- How can participants identify impacts, assess “best practices”, evaluate what successful programs might be replicated elsewhere, and advocate for the field?

Select information on these issues exists, but it is usually aggregated by artistic discipline, within a specific nation, and nowhere is it coordinated for global use.

Although few organizations attempt any rigorous efforts to evaluate the impact of international programs, there have been recent attempts to do so. The British Council insists on “impact-led planning” for every project, small and large, and reserves funds from every project’s budget for evaluation purposes. Americans for the Arts’ *Animating Democracy* program has devised evaluation indicators for arts projects that promote social change, although they are more applicable domestically than internationally. COMPENDIUM has a Good Practices database for European projects that focus on inter-cultural dialogues.

The mechanisms noted above are the cogs in the wheel of cultural engagement. But who pays attention to these questions in a manner that might make a difference? The participants in this fledgling arena need to sharpen their focus, their tools, and their information sharing systems, both nationally and trans-nationally, to bring them into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## The New Approach: The Past: Top-down

**H**istorically, cultural diplomacy has been a tool of governments, a stepchild of public diplomacy used primarily to promote political policies and advance national culture. Defeating communism and totalitarianism while promoting democracy and “telling America’s story” to the world were precepts of U.S. policy during the cold war. Nations also tended to promote their cultural accomplishments as a source of pride, an aspect of what we now call “nation branding,” and to boost trade and tourism.

Most cultural engagements were one-way and short-term. They tended to be evaluated anecdotally, and made use of elite cultural institutions and established artists as ambassadors. Their target audiences were usually the governing elite of a country, not its citizenry.

## Into the Future: Bottom-up

In recent years, there has been some serious reassessment of the role of culture in addressing the new global challenges. This is reflected in new verbiage contained in a number of policy documents.

The U.S. Government's recent report on "Strategic Communications" emphasized the importance of the "synchronization of words and deeds" in U.S. foreign policy. Statecraft also defined the notion of "smart power" and "soft power" as a contrast and compliment to "hard power." The Institute for Government in the U.K. ranked 26 countries on a "Soft Power Index."<sup>3</sup> The Council of Europe's programs on "Inter-Cultural Dialogues" were targeted to reduce racism, xenophobia and intolerance among multi-cultural communities. These activities clearly reflect a growing acknowledgement that the diplomacy tool kit should contain tools other than military might and economic persuasion—tools that might even prove more appropriate and effective in today's world.

### Components of the New Approach

Aspects of the new approach are used in different ways by practitioners of engagement depending on what they hope to achieve. Yet, there is a growing awareness that greater understanding needs to be paid to cultural differences. The following components are gaining currency:

- Understanding host cultures prior to engagement;
- Connecting with foreign publics rather than elites and foreign officials;
- Listening to others' stories rather than telling one's own;
- Creating innovative public and public/private partnerships;
- Undertaking longer-term, two-way engagements and residencies that often include singing, dancing and creating together; and
- Increasing the use of social media such as Facebook, texting, email, Twitter, YouTube postings, portals, etc. to broadcast and publicize such engagements.

The older approach co-mingles with the new. China's recent foray into cultural diplomacy emphasizes telling its own story. The 320 Confucian Institutes around the world teach Chinese language and their new bureau in Washington, DC, The China Central TV, reports on current affairs in China—selectively, to be sure. Turkey recently refocused its international relations agenda putting greater emphasis on soft power activities including promoting its Ottoman cultural heritage.

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3 Institute for Government, London, England, "*The New Persuaders: An International Ranking of Soft Power*", Jonathan McClory, December, 2010. The UK, USA and Germany were nos. 1, 2, and 3 out of 26 respectively. The UAE, Turkey and Russia had the lowest three scores.



## Snapshots

Aspects of the new approach have been making their way into a handful of innovative engagements as exemplified in the examples cited below, most of which are U.S. initiatives, reflecting this writer's focus. Importantly, many of these involve partnerships across multiple sectors (public-private-commercial).

- Hip Hop, the American art form that emerged in the 1980s, has gained immense popularity around the globe. Singer/Songwriters have adapted it to their own cultures and situations, often addressing controversial issues that have wide appeal for youth audiences.  
American film industry partnerships are helping Middle Eastern countries develop their own film industries to tell their stories to the world. Examples include The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences exchange visit with the Iranian House of Cinema in 2009, the Sundance Foundation's work with Jordan's Royal Film Commission, and the Red Sea Institute of Cinematic Arts' (RSICA) work with the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. These collaborations open up channels of understanding and cooperation.
- The U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, began under Madeline Albright's tenure as Secretary of State, boasts some 500 projects that have provided assistance to restore historic buildings and sites in countries throughout the world. These projects are designed to reflect our respect for the cultural heritage of others.
- The American Idol model has been successfully copied and adapted throughout the Middle East. *Afghanistan Star and Millions' of Poets* has been seen by millions of viewers around the Arab world. Cultural performers such as poets and singers are judged by officials and members of the public, who vote via smartphone. This adaptation encourages merit-based activity and democratic practice. The latest incarnation of the American Idol model is, *Sing Egyptian Women Let the World Hear You*, a partnership between a commercial U.S. organization, Share the Mic, the U.S. Embassy in Egypt, and an American academic, Cynthia Schneider. Its primary goal is to assist women's empowerment in a male-dominated world. The winner will travel to the U.S. for a visit and a recording session.<sup>4</sup>
- Sesame Workshop, broadcast internationally, aligns itself with local artists and arts organization members who, rather than simply dubbing in American versions, customize the Sesame Street characters and their stories to reflect their own cultures in the program.
- One Mile Square, a project of Visiting Arts, U.K., brought artists and biologists together in 7 cities—London, Delhi, Dhaka, Johannesburg, Karachi, Shanghai and Tehran—to explore the aesthetic, cultural and biological diversity present in a one square mile multi-ethnic neighborhood in each of these cities. The intent was to break down entrenched cultural stereotypes, strengthen

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<sup>4</sup> See Cynthia Schneider on the American Idol Model, [www.ted.com/talks/cynthia\\_schneider\\_the\\_surprising\\_spread\\_of\\_idol\\_tv.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/cynthia_schneider_the_surprising_spread_of_idol_tv.html). On the Egyptian Women Sing project, see <http://fb-212093.strutta.com/entries>.



- inter-cultural understanding, and improve the biodiversity and ecological balance in these communities. The projects reached wide audiences and attracted substantial media coverage. An evaluation component was integrated into the project to measure its efficacy and a website was established to report findings. The original project has become a springboard for replication in other countries.
- WORLD CULTURES CONNECT, a newly designed web portal due to launch in 2012, is a partnership between two U.K. nonprofit organizations, Visiting Arts and Librios, and the Resource Center for Cultural Engagements in the United States. WCC is a social networking and information hub designed for the global arts community. Individual artists, arts organizations, countries, states, regions, cities, policy makers, embassies, and educators will be able to post their contact numbers, showcase their activities and communicate with one another online: Users will be able to obtain practical information about cultural engagement including funding, festivals, and immigration issues, as well as visa, customs, and foreign tax information. It is expected that WCC will help forge new partnerships and provide examples of impactful engagements that can be used to advocate for support for the field.

## Reflections on Field Building

**F**our trends were identified for discussion at the Salzburg Global Seminar that conveners believe will alter current thinking and practice in the field of international cultural engagement. These include:

- the changing roles of public and private sector players;
- the emergence of a multi-polar world resulting from shifts in global wealth;
- increasing cultural diversity around the globe; and,
- increased participation in international cultural engagement through advances in digital technology and social media.

When 58 participants from 28 countries gathered to reflect on these issues and share their experiences, concerns and future goals, the Seminar highlighted the wide range of contexts that circumscribe the practices and possibilities for advancing cultural engagement on the global stage. More specifically, we learned that Mexico's budget for international cultural engagement has increased dramatically, while many countries in Africa and the Middle East have no official cultural policy in this arena. Art exchanges that emanate from the non-profit sector are widespread in the U.S., but are rare in countries that are more centrally controlled. We learned how varied the objectives of this work are in different parts of the world. In the U.K., the focus is on developing international respect and understanding among nations while China's primary goal is to build a national brand that will advance its cultural industries abroad. At the same time, many independent arts organizations working across borders are interested in sharing their art globally and learning from artists in other countries. We have little information regarding how educational institutions or distinct regions, cities and states are involved in international arts exchange. We acknowledged that the information that is needed to engage in exchange is often non-existent, sparse or not easily accessible. We agreed that

advancing the case for international cultural engagement requires concrete examples of impact for advocacy purposes.

Finally, we agreed that a reappraisal of the field is in order in light of our changing global ecology. Sixty percent of the Seminar's participants felt that the current world economic recession has impeded the advancement of the field. Only 22% claimed that their country was currently broadening its international arts programming, while forty-seven percent said their country had no official policy regarding international arts engagement. Despite frequently heard laments about the lack of support for the arts in general and international cultural engagement in particular, 77% of the participants were optimistic about the long term prospects for the field.

Their collective optimism appears to be supported by data showing that the arts account for 5-7% of GDP among developed nations, and developing countries are eager to grow their cultural industries. Entertainment and cultural tourism are flourishing globally. The arts remain a source of national identification and pride with exchange of art objects and artistic events establishing growing connectivity between nations and international populations. Everyone, everywhere engages in some type of artistic activity, be it dancing, singing, painting, weaving, taking photos or going to arts events. The arts are part of our individual and societal DNA.

Importantly, the arts are in a distinctly advantageous position in our contemporary world. There is a grave discrepancy between our increasing global interdependency and the existence of worldwide cultural diversity. The arts are uniquely poised to help bridge this gap, and to help individuals from diverse cultures know, respect and live together with greater harmony.

Among the many excellent suggestions brought to the fore at the Salzburg Global Seminar, none, by this writer's account, has the potential to make as significant a contribution to the advancement of the field as an interactive, information internet hub.

Technology has given us the tools to create an interactive community of interest for those involved in international cultural engagement. Practitioners need to consider the potential this holds for individual arts organizations as well as the field as a whole.

A dedicated internet site would address a number of concerns articulated at the convening. Communicating with others was earmarked as a necessity and a priority. An Internet site would be inter-active, allow practitioners to stay in touch, to post their activities and concerns, and forge new partnerships. Sharing information on the mechanics of cultural engagement was identified as another priority. An Internet site could aggregate essential information such as festival listings, and provide visa, customs, international tax and funding information. By sharing information on exchanges that worked (and didn't), the field would be in a position to identify 'best practices'—documentation critical to galvanizing financial support—another Seminar priority.

WORLD CULTURES CONNECT (WCC) which I mentioned earlier in this paper, and briefly presented at the Seminar, is being developed to address these needs. The WCC --- or a similar site --- could become the 'GO TO' place for our field. It could be the 'Mothership'— its Facebook and de facto service organization. As such, it could provide a quantum leap forward.

Finally, the gift of a convening such as the Salzburg Global Seminar is that it brings together practitioners from around the world to network and share experiences and ideas. There is no substitute for person-to-person interactions. And while such convenings are expensive and the benefits accrue primarily to those who attend, it is our expectation that lessons learned at the Seminar will make their way back to the participants' home countries to be shared with local practitioners.

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# *Shifting Economic Power: New Horizons for Cultural Exchange in our Multi-Polar World*<sup>1</sup>

YUDHISHTHIR RAJ ISAR

*White Paper Theme Two*

*Distributed in preparation for discussion at Salzburg Global Seminar  
Session 490*

## Executive Summary

How is the changing distribution of wealth among nations transforming the ways in which actors in the arts and culture sector engage with each other across the planet? To address the question, this paper first sketches out the variegated contours of the global shift in economic power from “the West” to “the Rest.” It then explores how the new wealth impacts on the cultural field, where a far more nuanced, if not uneven landscape has emerged. Economic power may well give greater voice and self-confidence to entire societies among “the Rest,” but there is little sign that it either reduces the asymmetries significantly or leads directly to more and better practices of trans-national cultural exchange. Increasing wealth has undoubtedly strengthened the capacity and desire of many cultural actors in these societies to step up their engagement with the rest of the world. But neither governments nor the corporate sector are providing means proportionate to the new horizons of aspiration. And while considerable energies are emerging from civil societies, these can compensate for the lack of resources only to a limited extent. In the face of such intractable obstacles to greater, less asymmetric and more dialogical cultural engagement, how can cultural actors—artists, operators, activists, scholars, and policy makers—organize themselves better? How can they act, concretely and to good effect, on the conviction that, as this paper will argue, cultural interactions are indispensable to the weaving of the complex cultural polyphony our interconnected and interdependent world so urgently requires?

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1 The paper as submitted for the seminar has been enriched here in the light of the discussions that took place in Salzburg.



## Introduction

How can we turn the redistribution of wealth across the world and the resulting geopolitical re-alignments to the advantage of meaningful multi-directional trans-national cultural exchange? This was one of the four key questions discussed at the seminar entitled “Public and Private Cultural Exchange-Based Diplomacy: New Models for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, organized by the Salzburg Global Seminar and the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation on 28 April – 2 May, 2012.

Setting the stage for that conversation was the purpose of this paper, which had to be very succinct, hence synthetic in the extreme. What follows, therefore, is but a thumb-nail sketch of current situations and trends, followed by a few pointers for the way forward. Today, the imperatives and opportunities of a transformed global environment are driving economic and political actors in the hitherto dominant “West” to rethink the ways in which they engage with their counterparts in the now rising “Rest”,<sup>2</sup> and vice-versa. But what about cultural actors? How enabling for them is the new wealth of nations, in particular as regards creative engagement across boundaries?<sup>3</sup> And what can they do together to promote such engagement?

To ask such questions is to break new ground. The cultural implications of global economic change have so far been evoked mainly in terms of the broader “anthropological” understanding of culture—how people with different values and ways of life are now encountering, adopting, rejecting or adapting globalized ideas, values and practices. Little appears to have been thought or written about how artists and cultural operators,<sup>4</sup> for their part, contribute to this greater good, as they work across boundaries in a differently textured world to create new work(s), to reflect and learn together, or to carry out artistic research and experimentation.

So the challenge is to extrapolate down from culture understood as collective identity to culture in the arts- and heritage-specific sense. This means focusing on the creative individuals who are culture’s makers or on the cultural institutions that are its custodians and transmitters.<sup>5</sup> How can they together enrich the “global ecumene”, as billions of people are only just beginning to escape from existences that are “solitary, poor, nasty,

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2 This term – “the Rest” – was first coined by the Singaporean diplomat-scholar Kishore Mahbubani and used by Samuel Huntington in his “clash of civilizations” writings.

3 Yet increased material wealth is hardly the lone causal factor. It does not operate independently of other forces that are equal if not more powerful drivers of change, namely the blurring of the boundaries of agency, notably public-private; increasingly vocal claims to recognition and representation of cultural difference both between and within nations; and the huge transformations in the technologies that shape the ways in which cultural expressions are produced, distributed and consumed.

4 This term is a neologism coined by the European Commission. It appears barbaric at first sight, but is a useful overarching word to use for organizations or individuals other than practicing artists that produce, deliver, or perform custodianship in the arts and heritage.

5 Given the Seminar’s focus on non-commercial international arts engagement, we do not discuss commercially viable popular culture — Bollywood and Nollywood, or Bhangra, Rai and Mbalax are quintessential examples. The universe of this paper is subsidized or not-for-profit culture (whether publicly or privately financed). Nor do we discuss the “cultural industries,” which have become a buzzword in European cultural advocacy and for which interest has burgeoned elsewhere, particularly in East and Southeast Asia. Yet as investment support for the cultural industries remains scarce

brutish and short,” while others prosper and are already actively shaping the world system? What role can or should cultural operators play in finding increasingly complex and varied pathways of interaction with others? How can they help forge the truly cosmopolitan imagination that our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world requires?<sup>6</sup> What transformations are needed in their understandings of Self and Other as they do this? How can they build a new ethos of sharing and reciprocity, or contribute creatively to a productive global “fusion of horizons”? How are the global shifts of power and wealth advancing these causes?

## The New Multi-Polarity

**U.S.** public opinion was marked in 2008 by *The Post-American World*, a book in which the Indian-born American popular pundit Fareed Zakaria presciently advised his countrymen about the challenges of a world in which, as he put it, “for the first time ever, we are witnessing truly *global* economic growth that is creating an international system in which all parts of the world are no longer objects or observers but players in their own right.” Zakaria cited a list of the 25 companies likely to be the world’s next great multinationals. Among them were four each from Brazil, Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan; three from India; two from China; and one each from Argentina, Chile, Malaysia and South Africa. Many similar analyses have been penned since then. All recognize that we are living in an increasingly multi-polar or poly-lateral and inter-dependent world. In the coming decades, three of the world’s biggest economies will be non-Western (Japan, China and India).<sup>7</sup> Concomitantly, the ethnoscapings of the fourth and the fifth, the United States and the EU, will be increasingly shaped by growing non-European populations, just as Australia’s already has been.<sup>8</sup> The *McKinsey Quarterly* reported, in March 2011, that more than 20 of the world’s top 50 cities, ranked by GDP, will be located in Asia by the year 2025, up from 8 in 2007. During that same time period, more than half of Europe’s top-50 cities will drop off the list, as will 3 in North America. In this new landscape of

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everywhere, trans-national cooperation in and around the cultural industries is clearly an area with quite some potential for exchange, e.g. through the provision of micro-credit, the exchange of “know who” and know how for micro-projects. Witness UNESCO’s “Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity”.

6 See Gerard Delanty, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

7 In 2012, as reported by *The Economist*, real GDP in most rich economies is still below its level at the end of 2007, whereas the output of the “emerging economies” has jumped by almost 20%. The latter accounted for 38% of world GDP (at market exchange rates) in 2010, twice its share in 1990. If GDP is instead measured at purchasing-power parity, emerging economies overtook the developed world in 2008 and are thought to have reached over 50% of world GDP in 2011. They now account for over half of the global consumption of most commodities, world exports, and inflows of foreign direct investment. Emerging economies also account for 46% of world retail sales, 52% of all purchases of motor vehicles and 82% of mobile phone subscriptions. Almost a quarter of the *Fortune* Global 500 firms come from emerging markets; in 1995 it was only 4%.

8 See Ien Ang, “Australia, China, and Asian Regionalism: Navigating Distant Proximity,” *Amerasia Journal*, 36:2 (2010).

urban economic power, Shanghai and Beijing will outrank Los Angeles and London, while Mumbai and Doha will surpass Munich and Denver.<sup>9</sup> While there is more than a kernel of truth in the binomial “the West and the Rest”, both terms are problematic. It has never been appropriate to speak of a monolithic and uniform “West”, but at least the idea used to correspond to a coherent geopolitical presence that once dominated the world completely. To speak in one breath of “the Rest”, however, is even more difficult. For this term embraces societies that until just a couple of decades ago were thought to be “developing” or “Third World,” or at least considerably behind the post-industrial societies, e.g. the former Soviet Union and its geopolitical bloc. Today, all these societies include millions whose consumption levels and disposable incomes are truly “First World.” But there are plenty of countries also that are still “Third” if not “Fourth”...

Moreover, the “rising Rest” discourse is based on GDP measures, hence it tends to focus on two Asian giants, China and India, at the expense of resource (mainly oil) rich nations with small populations (and thus GDPs that are not as high) that have high per capita incomes. These include the wealthy nations of the Persian Gulf, two of which at least, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (1 and 6 respectively in the IMF’s 2011 listing of per capita income at purchasing power parity—the USA comes 7th and Austria 11th), have created massive and sophisticated “Western” style cultural infrastructure in recent years, mainly for their “rest of the world” to come and visit...

What is more, cultural relationships to “the West” differ greatly across the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China), the MIKTs (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea and Turkey) and beyond. For example, in the creole societies of Latin America (Brazil in particular), sophisticated forms of western culture exist alongside pockets of instability and marginal cultural production. Although much of the region’s cultural autonomy has been lost to the North, the continent abounds in innovative cultural expression.

Modern South Asian societies are also products of the colonial encounter, resistance to which has generated a high level of cultural pride and awareness. These peoples have so far managed to keep a broad array of indigenous cultural forms alive, and they have long also been active in the business of cultural exchange. Many citizens from the privileged westernized strata of these societies have integrated themselves smoothly into the global intellectual and cultural elite.

East Asian economic expansion, by contrast, has been marked by a more recent rediscovery of cultural identities and, in certain countries, a form of political stagnation leading to discourses of “Asian values” that have attempted to reconcile global capitalism with local distinctiveness.

Many other variants exist. It is difficult to generalize.<sup>10</sup> How does the global shift impact on cultural action?

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9 See: [http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Urban\\_economic\\_clout\\_moves\\_east\\_2776](http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Urban_economic_clout_moves_east_2776).

10 Countries also diverge considerably in how they fund the arts and the ways in which they find uses for the arts as resources, often for reasons divorced from intrinsic cultural value. “Cultural diplomacy” in the original sense of the word is among these uses. We could develop a typology of national stances regarding cultural diplomacy that would have a bearing on the extent and nature of cultural exchange that gets promoted. But doing so is beyond the scope of this paper.

Yet there is one common thread: the ability of actors in all these societies to transcend the previously prevalent *inequality of position*. Today, they can engage with the “the West” far more self-confidently. They can be secure in the knowledge that they are being courted now for their cash, their markets, their workforce, their geopolitical clout...and their cultures. This gives all of them a greater degree of agency in determining the nature and perhaps just as importantly, the *directions* of their cultural engagement with the rest of the world as a whole.

For the “West/Rest” axis is not the only relevant one. Artists and cultural operators everywhere have in fact always yearned to interact and cooperate in a universe of omnidirectional flows—from Seoul to São Paulo or from Lagos to La Paz. Yet the pathways of exchange have remained largely pre-ordained, the zones of interaction fixed mainly on the North/South axis. There are very few alternative routes or structures of representation. Indeed, “crossroads” have often been superseded by the “inroads” of institutionalized inter-culturalism, in which South-South relationships are mediated by the North. While these mediations are well-meaning and not necessarily harmful per se, they have constrained and impoverished cultural exchange.<sup>11</sup> Countries in all regions, for example, are beginning to look towards and open cultural offices and centers in cities other than the former “metropolitan” ones. In 2011, for example, South Korea opened cultural centers in Australia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Spain and Turkey. It recently opened one in Mexico City hoping “it will serve as a bridge between the two cultures.”<sup>12</sup> More bridges of these kinds are needed more than ever before.

Cultural operators in the West, for their part, have come to recognize that the cultural world they once dominated is moving into increasingly uncharted directions, that its inner resources are increasingly escaping their exclusive control, drawing on other narratives, dreams and memories, and that they will increasingly have to take on board references and constructs which their own cultures have played no part in making, and which, like their own, will be given universal relevance by people from other shores. The Cuban art writer and curator Gerardo Mosquera reminds us that there is now a “South-East” axis (now that the “East” is beginning to leave the “South”) and that...

... the flux of culture cannot always remain circulating in the same “North-South” direction, as dictated by the power structure, its circuits of diffusion, and accommodations to them. It does not matter how plausible the appropriating and transcultural strategies are; they imply a rebound effect that reproduces the same hegemonic structure, even if contesting it. The current should also be reversed, not just to establish a “repetition in rupture”, as Spivak would say, but to pluralize and enrich international cultural circulation. The point is to accomplish plurality as international agency by a diversity of cultural subjects who, enacting their own agendas, can diversify cultural dynamics productively, for all.<sup>13</sup>

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11 See Rustom Bharucha, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking Through Theatre in an Age of Globalization*. London, Athlone Press, 2000.

12 See <http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20120314000340>, accessed 25 March, 2012.

13 Gerardo Mosquera, “Walking with the Devil: Art, Culture and Internationalization” in Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar (eds.) *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation, The Cultures and Globalization Series*, 3. London: SAGE Publications, 2010.

In myriad ways, then, as Mosquera also points out, new cultural subjects, energies and information are “bursting forth from all sides.” Increasingly “horizontal” networks are subverting the earlier “vertical” radial scheme based on the “centre” and “periphery” model. Thus it is no longer possible for a curator to work purely within the New York—London—Germany axis (as she could not so long ago), and to look down condescendingly from there. “Today curators have to move around and to open their eyes, ears and minds,” says Mosquera—and that applies to cultural operators of all kinds, as they go about appropriating and “re-functioning” the once imposed international culture, transforming it for their own needs, “deploying their own imaginaries and perspectives on a planetary scale.”<sup>14</sup>

It is not just a question of new directions of flow and sources of cultural production but also of new *kinds* of culture and cultural practice, many of them hybrid forms across the entire range of artistic fields. These are emerging today from Bahia, Beijing or Bombay just as easily as they once did from New York, London or Paris. Latin-America is a particularly fertile terrain; as Néstor García Canclini observes, the new forms are

...happy marriages between pre-Columbian iconography and contemporary geometrism, between elite, folk, and media industries’ visual and musical cultures. This is evident in much Mexican, Peruvian, and Guatemalan folk art which combine their own myths with transnational images, in the rock music that enlivens local festivals and is nourished with ethnic melodies which may later achieve international dissemination. Many works have taken the dialogue between the elite, the popular, and the mass as their test-bed: from Octavio Paz and Jorge Luis Borges to Astor Piazzola and Caetano Veloso, these testify to the fertility of liminal creations and rituals that are concerned less with the preservation of purity than with the productivity of the admixture.<sup>15</sup>

Music is a domain particularly rich in such liminalities. Mandarin pop, for example, a Cantonese and Pacific American combination of styles, has become “part of the soundscape of the Pacific Chinese diaspora,” as the anthropologist Jan Nederveen Pieterse writes, “its audience ranges from youngsters in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to prosperous second-generation Chinese immigrants in the United States. One of its original inspirations is Hong Kong crooners doing Mandarin cover versions of Japanese popular ballads” (themselves already a mixture of Japanese and American styles).<sup>16</sup> Western cultural operators are now taking a keen interest in these sorts of new cultural elaborations, without of course abandoning their fascination with the “traditional” or “authentic” cultural forms. But whatever kind of culture is involved, accompanying or underpinning the interest is the prospect of leveraging more cordial political relationships, or accessing

14 Premonitions of this came as early as Goethe’s vision of the dawning age of Weltliteratur, in which writers and poets should become the first citizens of a worldwide “Republic of Letters.”

15 Néstor García Canclini, “Hybrid Cultures and Communicative Strategies,” website of World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), accessed 21 March, 2012. <http://www.waccglobal.org/en/19971-cultural-boundaries-identity-and-communication-in-latin-america/940-Hybrid-Cultures-and-Communicative-Strategies.html>

16 See Jan Nederveen Pieterse, “Hybridity, so What? The Anti-Hybridity Backlash and the Riddles of Recognition,” in *Theory, Culture Society*, 2001.



vast consumer markets or obtaining lucrative contracts. Hence a readiness on the part of many Western institutions, notably museums, to commit considerable resources to collaborations with counterparts in the non-West. Yet this enthusiasm for a changing kind of “Otherness” faces the discouraging realities of the economic recession.

Cultural funding is down in all the post-industrial societies, in the US to be sure, but also across Europe.<sup>17</sup> This bad news has become public knowledge. One recent media account evokes the 25 percent cuts in public funding for the arts in the Netherlands, whereas taxes on tickets to cultural events have been raised to 19 per cent from 6 per cent, in a policy climate “in which institutions must justify what they do economically and compete for limited funds. In practical terms, that has meant that smaller companies, especially those engaged in experimental and avant-garde efforts, bear the brunt of the projected cuts.”<sup>18</sup> As do international tours of productions and performances, leading to a situation in which “the cutbacks are hitting so hard that some of the cultural institutes in New York that have been intermediaries for arts companies in their home countries have experienced reductions of staff or salary, or both.” Even in France, which accords such high priority to culture and cultural exchange, ours is a time of crisis. “The political and economic realities of austerity are beginning to intrude,” wrote Alison Smale in an article reporting on the French National Assembly’s wish to drastically reduce the government’s cultural budget.<sup>19</sup> But, more importantly perhaps for our purposes, how much and how does the new wealth in the “rising Rest” increase or intensify, or improve the operating conditions for, cultural exchange?

The quantitative question is difficult to answer, not just because facts and figures are hard to get, but also because support for cultural exchange is dependent ultimately on funding for the arts and culture sector as a whole by governments as well as societies at large. It is also risky to generalize across all the different art forms that are real or potential vectors of intercultural contact and exchange. Yet we can say that the lot of the performing arts, like others affected by cost disease, has not been significantly improved. Today, it is hardly any easier, for example, to raise the funds needed to take a musical ensemble or dance troupe from Africa or Asia (even, as we have just seen, from Europe) to the United States today than it was two decades ago. In addition, as a leading Indian dancer observes, there is a clear tendency for Western performance and event

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17 The CultureWatchEurope platform of the Council of Europe summarized the results of a 2009 survey covering 21 countries as follows: “13... countries envisage an overall reduction of budgets for culture and heritage as a possible short or medium term consequence of the financial crisis, and one country partial reductions. 52 % (11 countries) envisage cuts in budgets of major cultural institutions, and nine mention reductions to subsidies of independent art and cultural organizations. Twelve countries envisage cuts to cultural infrastructure projects. On the other side, 8 countries could imagine additional finance for infrastructure projects to stimulate employment, whilst only 5 countries could see an increase in the investment in creative industries to help generate employment.” (Source: ‘The Financial Crisis and its Effects on Public Arts Funding’, observations by Andreas Joh. Wiesand posted July 2011 on the website of the Compendium on Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. See: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/compendium-topics.php?aid=174>

18 Larry Rohter, “In Europe, Where Art is Life, Ax Falls on Public Financing.” *The New York Times* Global Edition, March 24 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/world/europe/the-euro-crisis-is-hurting-cultural-groups.html?pagewanted=2&\\_r=1&ref=global-home](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/world/europe/the-euro-crisis-is-hurting-cultural-groups.html?pagewanted=2&_r=1&ref=global-home)

19 Alison Smale, “Investing in Culture in Time of Crisis.” *International Herald Tribune*, March 3-4, 2012.



organizers to make scarce resources go further through recourse to sources of “otherness” closer at hand, in other words performers in the diasporas, who do not have to be flown in from distant places.<sup>20</sup> The visual arts, on the other hand, via their relationships with big spenders in the global marketplace, present quite a different picture. Apart from the well-known European venues, there are prestigious art biennials in São Paulo, Gwangju, Sydney, Dakar, Istanbul and Sharjah, to name but a few. The January 2012 India Art Fair held in New Delhi brought together 91 galleries from around the world, 48 from India and 43 from 20 different countries in Asia, Europe, Americas, Middle East, Africa and Australia. By attracting “almost 150,000 visitors,” writes Sushma Bahl, “including 26 groups from international museums including the Tate, the Guggenheim, MoMA and Singapore Art Museum besides 400 members of Indian and International press as well as collectors, experts, artists and art students, the India Art Fair has moved into the league of the world’s most attended art fairs.”<sup>21</sup> At the 2012 edition of Art Basel that opened on June 14, two galleries from the Gulf region were among the nearly 300 showing there, showing a slowly but surely growing presence of the contemporary art scene in the Middle East.<sup>22</sup> This being said, what are the general trends?

First, what can be said as regards the general dispositions of entire *societies*? Western actors, whether in government or the business sector (although the US may still be the exception here) are probably devoting more attention to cultural exchanges with the “emerging market” countries, if only by reason of the economic and political externalities referred to earlier.

On the other side of the fence this is also the case, but the drivers are different. The emergent and substantial moneyed or “middle” classes in these societies are keen to buy into global cultural flows and processes in the arts. They no longer have to brandish their cultures rhetorically, as if it were their true—if only—wealth, a compensation for their material backwardness. Today, when they are up there in the global economy, their cultures too are drawn into a wider political economy of prestige.<sup>23</sup> This may well give these societies as a whole a potential for greater agency in terms of cultural exchange, but as we shall see, this potential is not matched by adequate levels of public or private funding.

Special mention should be made here of the cultural exchange potential of the diasporas or trans-national communities (already referred to above, but in a different context), within which increasing affluence appears to be both promoting and facilitating stronger reciprocal relationships with their “homelands”. Culturally, new wealth has generated increased demand for flows of cultural expression to/from those homelands, including different hybrid adaptations, particularly in genres such as popular music and film, e.g. Bollywood and Nollywood.

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20 We are grateful to Anita Ratnam for this insight.

21 Sushma Bahl, The New Avatar – India Art Fair, NuktaArt, contemporary art magazine of Pakistan. <http://www.nuktaartmag.com/Nukta/>

22 Anna Chloe Esposito, “Basel Fair Salutes the Rising Influence of Middle East Art Scene”. International Herald Tribune, June 12, 2012.

23 The reverse of the medal is the headlong rush on the part of these newly rich classes to adapt their tastes and behaviors to global consumerist models (still mostly exported from North America). The attrition and loss of existing cultural forms, accelerated by galloping urbanization, are the tragic result. This is the dark side, culturally speaking, of the compact made with global market capitalism.

*Governments* are not generally devoting increased percentages of their spending to culture (worldwide, the trend in public spending for the arts is down), but as governmental budgets increase so too may the proportion spent on the latter (but not necessarily). In many countries, culture is seen much as the environment was thirty years ago—"a subject to which wider political and economic circles offer rhetorical support but treat as a fringe issue - either a benign but peripheral matter of leisure time activity, or (just as frequently but paradoxically) as a key source of national prestige yet for which there is much passion but few resources."<sup>24</sup> It is no surprise, therefore, that only a tiny proportion of public funds goes to the arts and culture. In India's budget for 2012-13, the culture ministry's budget has gone up, but it is still pegged at a mere fraction (0.01%, to be specific) of total government expenditure—and that's with over 30 percent of the funding going to the Archaeological Survey of India, the federal government's custodian of all protected monuments and sites in the country.<sup>25</sup> Vietnam's public funding total for culture is rather higher, at 0.55 per cent, but the figure includes spending on the information sector.<sup>26</sup> Hong Kong on the other hand, according to Wikipedia, allocates to the arts about 1 per cent of its total government spending each year.<sup>27</sup> Brazil is in many ways a special case. Currently, the country spends only around 0.50 per cent on cultural projects. Yet this figure already marks a considerable increase when compared with earlier percentages.<sup>28</sup> Recently, a constitutional amendment was proposed to the nation's Congress with a view to earmarking 2 percent of federal expenditures for culture, as well as 1.5 per cent at the state level and 1 per cent at the municipal level.<sup>29</sup> It now appears, however, that the proposal has been sidelined. Yet the country can also boast of an exceptional parastatal yet autonomous institution called SESC (*Serviço Social do Comércio*), created in 1946, which can spend as much as 600 million dollars a year in all the domains of the arts. Its funding base is provided through a 1.5 percent payroll tax on Brazilian commercial and service industries.

A recent *New York Times* article reports *inter alia* on how some of this "bounty" is being spent on international exchange: a jazz festival co-sponsored with the New York record label Nublu; partnership with *the Latino Theater Festival of New York*; or the presentation of works by people such as David Byrne, the salsa drummer Bobby Sanabria and the stage director Robert Wilson. The SESC's "emergence as a global force has not gone unnoticed," the article observes, "either by artists or the people who pay for their

24 Simon Mundy, "Rapporteur's Report" on a Brainstorming Meeting on the establishment of a "Global Forum on Cultural Enterprise Development," Ford Foundation, June 2000.

25 Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/et-cetera/union-budget-2012-13-culture-ministry-gets-rs-67-crore/articleshow/12292630.cms>

26 From the UNESCO Secretariat's "Culture for Development Indicator Suite," a methodology in progress, hence the figures are therefore only preliminary and need to be validated.

27 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong\\_Kong\\_cultural\\_policy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong_cultural_policy)

28 See [http://www.brasil.gov.br/sobre/cultura/projects-and-programs/budget-management-1/br\\_model1?set\\_language=en](http://www.brasil.gov.br/sobre/cultura/projects-and-programs/budget-management-1/br_model1?set_language=en) (accessed 21 March 2012).

29 Noted by Maria Carolina Vasconcelos-Oliveira in her chapter "São Paulo: Rich Culture, Poor Access" in Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar (eds.) *Cities, Cultural Policy and Governance. The Cultures and Globalization Series*, 5. London: SAGE Publications, March 2012.

work” in other countries, who see it as a model for the imaginative state-sponsored leverage of funds.<sup>30</sup> The article cites a former foreign minister making the case that the “cultural dynamism, the monetary stability, the process of social inclusion—all of that makes Brazilian culture a very valid pathway for the exercise of soft power, a way to make our society better known and better understood by others.”

Now, that last statement reveals the governmental hand unambiguously. Indeed the rising economic powers *are* stepping up the cultural component in their public diplomacy, using it as one of the ways to climb the global league tables.<sup>31</sup> So there is a place for more arts and culture funding here. There has also been a marked turn towards forging alliances with civil society—read for our purposes, arts producing and delivery organizations—in order to engage with much larger publics in the countries targeted by these strategies of influence. But government involvement comes with an important caveat. State agencies tend to set the agenda instrumentally, not necessarily (or often) in the most valid artistic terms.

Some may do so with imagination and restraint, like the Indian External Affairs Ministry’s public diplomacy cell, created in 2006. Yet genuine dialogue with the arts community rarely drives official schemes. The paradigm of government-directed cultural diplomacy these days is, of course, China. In October 2011, China’s official party newspaper *People’s Daily* declared on its front page, “A nation cannot stand among great powers without its people’s spiritual affluence and the nation’s full expression of its creativity.” The country has indeed placed vast resources at the service of its network of Confucius Institutes and the like, as a major yet secondary component in an ambitious overall strategy of influence.<sup>32</sup> “Yet,” said one local scholar commenting on a recent case of art censorship, “the government is overconfident about controlling art. They think as long as they provide money... and a value orientation, there can be good art produced. This is not surprising at all, because they have never experienced the process of free expression.” The understanding that artistic work, like scientific research, rests on processes that “push the boundaries of creativity, no matter whom it offends”, is not one that comes easily in this society.<sup>33</sup> Yet, as Vishakha Desai pointed out in Salzburg, Chinese society has always understood the “power of culture”, whether in service of statecraft or as resistance to the state.

Even in societies that are less state-centric than China’s, however, conformism tends to reign in their media and cultural establishments. It is also difficult for most governmental actors to recognize that people in the creative sectors do not work across boundaries to promote a national image, but for their own artistic purposes: mutual learning;

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30 Larry Rohter, “Brazil’s Unique Culture Group Stays Busy sharing the Wealth,” *The New York Times*, March 27, 2012, accessed March 29, 2012.

31 See Jan Melissen, “Public Diplomacy Revisited,” in Pauline Kerr & Geoffrey Wiseman (eds.), *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.

32 More details can be found, in the context of the opening of the world’s largest museum in Beijing in: András Szántó, “China’s New Age of Enlightenment,” *The Art Newspaper*, April 4, 2011.

33 Michael Wines, “China Tries to Add Clout to Economic Muscle,” *The New York Times*, November 7, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/08/world/asia/china-seeks-cultural-influence-to-match-economic-muscle.html?pagewanted=all>, accessed January 15, 2012.

joint reflection, debate, research and experimentation; pooling of resources and “in its most complex forms, cooperation in the creative processes, the creation of new artistic works.”<sup>34</sup> Hence most cultural operators are careful to distinguish between artist-led cultural exchange and government-led cultural diplomacy. And many wish to maintain a safe distance from the latter.

And what about the *private sector*? While in the West private support for the specific purpose of cultural exchange appears to be a growth area, elsewhere (Brazil is the exception) the private sector has hardly been more constructive than government.<sup>35</sup> By and large, the business community too views arts support as a promotional strategy and therefore prioritizes the visible, influential, safe and respectable. Drawing on their advertising budgets, companies make ad hoc, one-off and short-term commitments mainly in support of artistic products and presentations. The observations made by the head of India’s only independent foundation that funds artistic endeavors on a significant scale, no doubt apply elsewhere: “even when the goals of corporate patronage and product promotion are aligned, support tends to go out to art that needs it the least ... the arts are defined for corporate leaders and marketing executives by the elite social circles in which they move. As long as product promotion remains their principal justification for supporting the arts, business houses will continue to give no attention to creative processes, constraints and innovation.”<sup>36</sup> An Indian exception is the work of the Mahindra Group, a major multinational company with a long-standing commitment to the arts and humanities. The Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards were created to encourage both emerging and established theatre and celebrated its Sixth Anniversary in 2011. In January 2012, Sundance Institute and Mahindra announced the winners of the 2012 Sundance Institute/Mahindra Global Filmmaking Award, in recognition and support of emerging independent filmmakers from around the world. The collaboration also includes the establishment of the Mumbai Mantra/Sundance Institute Screenwriters Lab in India—an opportunity for eight screenwriters from India to develop their feature scripts under the guidance of accomplished international screenwriters and filmmakers.<sup>37</sup> The annual Mahindra Blues Festival held in Mumbai in February 2012 was the largest festival of its kind in Asia, showcasing the best international Blues artists and providing a common platform for emerging Indian Blues bands.

The picture as regards individual philanthropy, e.g. that of the Cisneros or Marinho families in Venezuela and Brazil, respectively, has to be more nuanced. It has not been possible, however, to determine the extent to which cross-cultural exchange rather than purely national projects are among their priorities...

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34 Klaic, Dragan. *Mobility of Imagination*. Budapest: Center for Arts and Culture, Central European University, 2007, p.46.

35 In our view, attempts to apply the American model of private support to the arts in other countries is illusory. The US model has been generated by specific American values and social practices. It is not simply an outcome of tax reductions – when introduced in countries such as France tax reductions have not affected the societal assumption that arts funding is primarily the responsibility of the State.

36 Anmol Vellani, “The Case for Independent Arts Philanthropy, website of the India Foundation for the Arts, accessed 10 March, 2012. [http://www.indiaifa.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=20&Itemid=17](http://www.indiaifa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20&Itemid=17)

37 See <http://reviewfix.com/2012/01/sundance-institute-mahindra-global-filmmaking-award-to-be-presented-at-2012-sundance-film-festival/>

The encouragement of public-private partnerships, however, is a growing trend, both in the West and elsewhere, but cultural exchange does not appear to be one of the priorities when governmental players seek to spread the weight of the funding burden in this way.

The expansion of the middle classes, as discussed above, has without doubt reinforced *civil society* activism. This sector may not be raising or spending large amounts of cash, but it is bringing into the arena commitment, social energy, and new horizons of aspiration, primarily in favor of cultural rights and democracy. New social and cultural movements are focusing on the recognition, preservation, and protection of the ways of life of many groups—notably at the sub-national and local levels—and on connecting these rights claims to other domains of social and political life. They play an increasingly crucial role in facilitating both the production and dissemination of a variety of cultural forms. They are among the most active explorers of cultural practice in which old traditions meld with the new, the inherited with the invented. These sorts of connections with “grassroots development” have long occupied the attention of Western cultural activists.

The 2011 Arab Spring has thus stimulated cultural actors in the European Union to consider how they might work trans-culturally to support the inchoate democratization processes that are on the move there. In that context, the present writer was asked to set forth some new challenges for cultural exchange in a theme paper presented at a recent cultural forum. He concluded his essay as follows: “artists need to have the freedom to express their views and be encouraged to do so, to be aided in finding their individual and collective voices that reflect the contexts in which they work, and to bring their insights to bear through their creative work that will then be distributed on the continent and internationally. European arts organizations could help give them international exposure.”<sup>38</sup> It is against the backdrop of all the processes described above that more than three quarters of those who responded to a survey done by the seminar organizers said that they were “optimistic about the long-term prospects for international cultural engagement”. Yet over sixty per cent of the same respondents also thought that current conditions, particularly in the world economy, impede its expansion. The optimism needs to be concretized in ways that tackle the realities of our current moment.

## What is to be done?

Cultural exchange can only be carried out on the scale of our shared expectations if more funding and other forms of support are made available for it. This applies, of course, to the entire cultural sector. And it is a case that the sector has been making for over four decades! The cause is still far from won.

So what is to be done? For a start, we would argue, the cultural sector must put its own house in order. It can do so by renewing or re-articulating its commitment to meeting needs that have long been identified, often vigorously advocated, but so far

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38 See Y.R. Isar, “Civil Society Empowerment in Third Countries: Are Culture Actors Providing Powerful Voices in Support of Democratization Processes?” theme paper prepared for the European Culture Forum 2011. <http://www.eenc.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Panel-4-Issue-Paper-Civil-society-third-countries-European-Culture-Forum-2011.pdf>



inadequately addressed. These needs apply generically, regardless of the extent or direction of the current shifts of wealth. They include more substantial funding bases, better operating infrastructures, heightened professional skills, and more focused streams of expert knowledge.

Meeting such needs would involve working together to address challenges such as the following:

- *Funding*: In a difficult financial environment, it is more necessary than it has ever been, given the growing demand for trans-national artistic engagement, to both increase the amount of financial resources made available for this purpose and diversify the sources thereof.
- *Organization*: Enabling cultural operators, together with their organizations and networks, to collaborate trans-nationally in the crucially important area of strengthening professional skills and organizational infrastructures in the arts and culture sector.
- *Dialogic Partnerships and Horizontal Circuits*: Developing cultural relationships based on a spirit of dialogic partnership and mutual learning for a plurality of cultural agendas. We must all learn to recognize the existence of multiple centers and criteria that are being deployed across a wide range of “horizontal circuits”.
- *Cross-sector alliances*: In forging these new pathways of cultural exchange we must be ever mindful of the need to build stronger alliances with other sectors of public policy.

But there is one more overarching challenge: *making a persuasive political case for trans-national cultural discourse and exchange*.

The case needs to be made across societies and across all levels and sectors of society. Here in the concluding lines that follow, we will not explore the *how*, but the *what*.

In recent decades the case has increasingly rested—in the West at least—on a series of economic benefit arguments, of which the most recent is the “cultural/creative industries” paradigm. But the claims of the latter are easily trumped by the more robust impact potential of many other sectors. Economic arguments are not to be scorned, far from it. Yet I would argue that in the vocabulary of advocacy we adopt they ought to be supplanted by other kinds of considerations. Our arguments need to foreground other benefits, such as the contribution of the cultural and the artistic to the free, creative and liberal flourishing of all societies. As Benjamin Barber once put it, “a society that supports the arts generously is not engaging in philanthropic activity but assuring the conditions of its own flourishing. This is perhaps the most important single argument in favor of a democratic government playing some role in the arts: not in the name of the needs of the arts, but in the name of the needs of democracy.”<sup>39</sup>

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39 Benjamin Barber, “Serving Democracy by Serving the Arts and the Humanities,” essay prepared in 1997 for the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, p. 1. Unpublished typescript.



Barber's is a very American voice, but his conviction speaks to us all. Surely we must champion the idea of enabling cultural actors—each in their own way and in their own terms—to deploy the creative imagination as they establish and defend their renewed senses of place within the uneven and shifting terrain of globalization; to strengthen lateral, technologically-enabled networks for creative collaboration and community building; and to nurture “the eruption of intensively, self-consciously hybrid cultural forms, grounded in aesthetic and social codes that traverse imaginatively the frontiers of tradition and cosmopolitanism.”<sup>40</sup> Theirs can be an essential contribution to the flourishing of the global civilization that is in the making. Their many talents and voices will be vital in the processes of “cultural translation” that weave the complex patterning and re-patterning our interdependent—and decidedly post-Western—world so urgently requires.<sup>41</sup>

40 Chris Waterman, “Closing Reflections,” in Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar (eds.) *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation, The Cultures and Globalization Series*, 3. London: SAGE Publications, 2010.

41 Ien Ang, “Cultural Translation in a Globalised World,” in N. Papastergiadis (ed.), *Complex Entanglements. Art, Globalisation and Cultural Difference*. London, Sydney, Chicago: Rivers Oram Press, 2003.

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- Waterman, C. (2010) 'Closing Reflections' in Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar (eds.), *ibid.*



# *Global Communications and the Rise of Social Media: The Future of International Cultural Engagement*

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## **Executive Summary**

**T**his paper reviews the path to creating a meaningful environment in which cultural exchanges can take place through visual and performance art.

Artists and the institutions that serve them are in an excellent position to take the lead on the shaping of the global culture and economy in what we call the “Imagination Age.” Artists are required to help society make sense of complex scientific ideas and to explore what it means to be human at a time when people and machines are becoming integrated.

The exploration of what it means to be human has always been the main role and higher calling of the artist. This will never change.

## **Talk To Me**

**I**n 2011, the Museum of Modern Art in New York organized an exhibition, *Talk To Me*,<sup>1</sup> to highlight the integration of art, technology and life.

“Whether openly and actively or in subtle, subliminal ways, things talk to us. Tangible and intangible, and at all scales—from the spoon to the city, the government, and the Web, and from buildings to communities, social networks, systems, and artificial worlds—things communicate. They do not all speak up: some use text, diagrams, visual interfaces, or even scent and temperature: others just keep us company in eloquent silence,” MoMA’s statement explained.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Talk to Me: Design and the Communication between People and Objects, curated by Paola Antonelli  
<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/1080>

2 Ibid.

The exhibit included myriad apps, gadgets and visualizations involving urban life, home life, street life, interactions between people, between people and objects, and even between machines, to make human life easier or more understandable. *Talk To Me* underscores that human life has been completely transformed by the combination of brains and technology.

Twenty-first-century culture is centered on interaction: “I communicate, therefore I am” is the defining affirmation of contemporary existence, and objects and systems are now also expected to have personalities. Contemporary designers do not just provide function, form, and meaning, but also must draft the scripts that allow people and things to develop and improvise a dialogue.

What is the role of the technological object as a form of cultural exchange? Artists, in this sense, have never been more integral to the functioning of society.

What kind of world will we live in, if we find a way to create it with our minds... together?



Figure 1: Kate Moss as Hologram from the Alexander McQueen show.

## Techno-Magic

Art has been amplified by technology since the first cave painting was etched with a stick. Modern tools, however, allow far more than just a depiction of a fleeting reality. They offer artists and the institutions that serve them a chance to create the future.

Keeping current on the dizzying array of modern tools is hard enough. Cultivating the creativity to use them well is a massive challenge. The same way a printing press is only as magnificent as the books it enables, the Internet is only as connective as the content and networks we create.

The spark of imagination is what brings technology to life for meaningful human interaction, whether it is a stick or the Internet. There are many unique ways to create meaningful exchanges between human beings through technology.

The idea that digital media “replaces” physical interactions and objects is a short-sighted one. Google Art Project, for example, allows visitors to explore works of art that are physically housed in the world’s top museums. While some travelers may experience the pleasure of personally viewing these pieces, nobody’s eye can magnify each microcosm and brushstroke the way Google Art Project can, transforming a masterpiece into a personal experience.

Then there are the instances of mixed reality curation so fascinating that viewers cannot tell if what they are seeing is real. In 2006, designer Alexander McQueen stunned a Paris audience and later, global audiences, with “an astonishing feat of techno-magic,” as writer Sarah Mower described it in *Style.com* at the time.

“Inside an empty glass pyramid, a mysterious puff of white smoke appeared from nowhere and spun in midair, slowly resolving itself into the moving, twisting shape of a woman enveloped in the billowing folds of a white dress,” Mower wrote. “It was Kate Moss, her blonde hair and pale arms trailing in a dream-like apparition of fragility and beauty that danced for a few seconds, then shrank and dematerialized into the ether.”

This vision of Kate Moss was actually a state-of-the-art hologram. This was not just a visual stunt to mesmerize the audience with a feat of techno-magic, however. It was the most imaginative way in which the exhibition’s curators could display McQueen’s luminous gown of transparent, airy organza ruffles.

Whatever it is you are creating or curating, you can amplify it with imagination, enabled by the prism of technology.

## Cool-Hunting

**B**ack when a stick was used for cave paintings, only the people who lived in or around that cave would have ever seen the work. Eventually, some humans from the distant future, their world made smaller by mass transit and other modern technology, would come across the ancient sketch and photograph it, exhibit it in a museum, publish it in a book or post its digital likeness on the Internet, where billions of people now and for years to come might have a chance to glimpse back into the distant past to the origins of symbolic thought and art.

Similarly, great artists can now emerge from what would have formerly been an invisible darkness of obscurity. The emergence of unexpected, magnificent talent transforms the global arts scene by turning the entire digital culture into one museum with many side galleries waiting to be experienced or created by those who know how to participate in the environment. This “mixed reality” environment includes the digital culture and the physical world and most importantly, the people who occupy it.

Exhibiting traditional or known work in a new way is an exciting aspect of the emerging global arts scene, but an equally important part of the mission is to find truly avant-garde artists and curators. Sometimes, if you know how to look, you can find them on Twitter and Instagram.



## The Ubiquity of Visual Art

In *101 Things to Learn in Art School* by Kit White, the author elegantly summarizes the state of visual art in the world today. “Hybridity defines the art process,” she notes. “It describes the cross-pollination of areas of study, disparate types of experience and the polyglot nature of the globalized world. To embody this glut of atomized experience, art incorporates multiple media and points of view, often together.”<sup>3</sup>

Twitter and Instagram are two of the platforms that incorporate multiple media and points of view. The idea that Twitter is “only 140 characters” and therefore an insignificant form of communication misses the point. The news media have well documented the many ways in which some of the 500 million Twitter participants around the world have used the platform to great advantage, though many powerful Twitter stories remain untold. A short tweet can include a link to a website, an image, a video, in other words, a glimpse of a previously unseen world, out there for anyone who seeks to find.

In “The Death of the Cyberflâneur,” a recent opinion piece for *The New York Times*, digital critic Evgeny Morozov asserts that in the early days of the web, the romantic notion of a thriving culture of cyberflâneurs—people who explored cyberspace as virgin territory like those who once drifted anonymously to capture images in urban environments—seemed inevitable. The title of his piece implies that this fantasy has not come to pass.

We disagree. It is no surprise that hundreds of millions of people use Facebook, for example, but that does not make it the most interesting or creative way to connect with people. The avant-garde is still at work.

That the Internet is a visual medium requiring great content and presentation in order to reach its full potential is only just now becoming evident. With 25 million users<sup>4</sup> and more every day around the world, Instagram, a popular photo-sharing tool, is one of the digital platforms enabling this increasingly visual global perspective.

Created in 2010 by a young Brazilian emigré to the US, Mike Krieger, and his collaborator, Kevin Systrom,<sup>5</sup> Instagram is an app that allows iPhone, iPad and Android<sup>6</sup> users to filter their own images with special artistic effects and share them. People can look at and “like” each other’s photographs.

The implications of this seemingly simple idea are extremely significant. Cultural engagement was once brokered solely through intermediaries. Governments and the media instructed us on how to perceive and why to fear or accept other cultures. Only the most intrepid travelers, generally people with resources enough to treat diversity like an exotic novelty instead of a way of life, were able to create independent perspectives.

The digital culture has opened up a possibility for much greater connectivity, not just because we can experience the unfamiliar while remaining in our own daily lives, but

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3 101 Things to Learn in Art School, by Kit White, October 2011, The MIT Press <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?tttype=2&tid=12600>

4 “Instagram appears to have passed 25 million users, adding up to 3000 more per hour,” *The Next Web*, March 2, 2012 <http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2012/03/02/instagram-appears-to-have-passed-25-million-users-adding-up-to-3000-more-per-hour/>

5 Wikipedia: Instagram <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instagram>

6 “Instagram for Android gets tablet, Wi-Fi, SD card support,” *CNet*, April 6, 2012 [http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938\\_105-57410704-1/instagram-for-android-gets-tablet-wi-fi-sd-card-support/](http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57410704-1/instagram-for-android-gets-tablet-wi-fi-sd-card-support/)

because, in so doing, we become aware of the interconnectedness of life from the standpoint of a single global environment.

The value of being able to create a shared global snapshot with a click is so valuable that Instagram, a company with around a dozen employees and no revenue, was recently purchased by Facebook for \$1b.

The role of the artist has always been to illuminate in a unique way that which remains hidden, including the commonalities between “us” and “them.” Art is an act of creative imagination, and as technology and cultural relations evolve at a rapid pace, so too must evolve the artists who are called upon to help us make sense of the increasingly complex world in which we live.

### Exhibiting and Selling Work to a New Audience



Figure 2: Double Fine Adventure raises over US\$3MM on Kickstarter. (Source: Kickstarter screenshot.)

### Kickstart Your Art

In 2008, New Orleans artist Perry Chen collaborated with colleagues to try and find a way to help artists raise the visibility of their projects and get funding. The result was Kickstarter<sup>7</sup> an online crowdfunding website for creative projects.

On Kickstarter, artists post a description of their project and a financial goal. They have a fixed amount of time to successfully get funded by small micro-donations from many people. Contributors to the projects receive rewards (sometimes thrilling ones—including original works and one-of-a-kind experiences) for their support.

In three years, Kickstarter has consistently broken expectations and records. In 2010, 3,910 Kickstarter projects were successfully funded with \$27,638,318 dollars pledged and a project success rate of 43%. In 2011, 11,836 successful projects raised \$99,344,381.<sup>8</sup> A video game producer just raised \$3.3 million for a game called

<sup>7</sup> Wikipedia history of Kickstarter, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kickstarter>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Double Fine Adventure on Kickstarter.<sup>9</sup> Since then two other game-driven art projects have raised over a million dollars each on Kickstarter,<sup>10</sup> which brings together artists and new fans of art from around the world who support art at levels as accessible as \$1 per pledge.

In this way, technology connects artists to a new market and fan base.



Figure 3: Battery Dance International Cultural Diplomacy Toolkit,  
(Source: Battery Dance Company)

## Meaningful Cultural Interactions

A few years ago, Battery Dance Company's director was not sure how a performance art as visceral as dance could translate to the digital culture.

For 35 years, New York City-based Battery Dance Company has traveled around the world, performing symbolic choreography rich with opportunities for meaningful cultural relations. Recently, the U.S. Embassy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo hosted BDC dancer Carmen Nicole in Kinshasa for one month to work with the National Ballet and local dancers to create four original dance works dramatizing sexual and gender-based violence and encouraging respect for women and girls.

When we met Jonathan Hollander, Battery Dance Company's executive and artistic director, he asked us how this very physical, face-to-face work could be represented in the digital culture. We took the question as a personal challenge. In 2011, Battery Dance Company commissioned us to collaboratively tell its story in multimedia, incorporating maps, blogs, audio, video, text and still images to document Battery Dance's work around the world.

<sup>9</sup> Double Fine Adventure on Kickstarter <http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/66710809/double-fine-adventure>

<sup>10</sup> "Double Fine Adventure's Kickstarter Success Pumps New Life Into Crowd-Funded Gaming," Forbes, March 30, 2012 <http://onforb.es/HnDgOV>

The resulting Battery Dance Company story, still ongoing, is shared on a digital map of the world.<sup>11</sup> A visitor can click on any place on the planet where BDC has been and telescope down to the story, divided into personal, artistic and practical details by Hollander. The point of the project is not just to promote the work of BDC (though the story map achieves that with tens of thousands of visitors), but also to create value for other organizations looking to learn from BDC's experiences.

For example, in the case of the Congo, where crime against foreigners is a serious risk, the BDC map includes detailed instructions for personal safety. In other cases, such as a trip to Mongolia, Jonathan explains how to troubleshoot on the fly if, for example, you arrive to find your performance space has no floorboards.<sup>12</sup>

This project was originally developed on a Google map, but later a specific site was created to build and display the story. While it is important to understand the available platforms for artists to share their work, it is also necessary to have a mindset that is platform-agnostic and instead takes into account the way in which people want to share and digest information. While technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace, so do humans. We are finding new and unique ways to communicate by shattering geographical boundaries.



Figure 4: Culturehub connects performing artists through Telepresence,  
(Source: Culturehub)

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11 Battery Dance Company International <http://bit.ly/HnDpBU>

12 "Be ready for surprises," Battery Dance International, Mongolia <http://bit.ly/IdTxKU>



## Telepresence

Performance art is becoming a mixed-media process, with companies like Culturehub at LaMama, in New York City, testing out new ways to connect with global performers and audiences through technologies such as telepresence.

Culturehub<sup>13</sup> connects its own New York space with other performance spaces worldwide through multiple screens placed in both venues. This requires a lot of difficult work, from managing the sound to the visuals and ensuring that live streams to the Internet showing both sides are participatory and not just one-way broadcasts.

“As artists, we can look at our humanness in relation to technology and shape the future of how it’s used. We have the capacity to reach out infinitely across the globe and we should capitalize on that,” says Billy Clark, International Program Director of Culturehub.<sup>14</sup>

One of Culturehub’s early telepresence experiments connected live musicians in New York with counterparts in Seoul, South Korea. In New York, late at night, a traditional Senegalese musician played a stringed instrument in the way he had been taught by generations of performers before him. A video was shown of him playing the instrument while his many siblings engaged in a beautiful call-and-response song. In Seoul, where it was morning, a woman played a traditional Korean instrument.

After each artist had played alone, they were invited to improvise. Audiences in both locations watched live and on screens as the two musicians struggled briefly to discover the immediate incompatibility of their two traditions before they found a way to play together. Tears streamed down the Korean musicians’ cheeks as they forged a new path together—a powerful moment of genuine, transformative cultural engagement.

Neither the performers nor the audience had to travel a single mile to experience the beauty that results from creating something truly new, and human, together.

## Conclusion

As the global economy and culture continue to expand and intermingle, opportunities for artists will grow, not just to make sense of the abstract, changing world, but to help drive that growth. Data visualizations are becoming a critical aspect of communicating complex scientific concepts, for example, and artists are required to meet this demanding role.

The future requires artists in order to help us understand how to keep the thread of our humanity alive. Art helps make sense of the complexity of human life by giving us a glimpse beyond the systems that govern our ways of thinking. It is not just a matter of how artists use existing platforms, but also how art drives the future itself.

“Change is the process by which the future invades our lives,” wrote Alvin Toffler in his seminal book, *Future Shock*, “and it is important to look at it closely, not merely from the grand perspectives of history but from the vantage point of the living, breathing individuals who experience it.”<sup>15</sup>

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13 Culturehub <http://www.culturehub.org/>

14 Source: Interview with the authors.

15 *Future Shock* by Alvin Toffler, Random House, 1970, Introduction.

These words were written in 1970 for the people of the future. You, the readers of this essay, are the people of the future. The shock Toffler wrote about is now upon you.

Museums, arts organizations and their digital assets are increasingly becoming global hubs for an interconnected network of curators, artists and a participatory audience. This service is an extremely important one in an interconnected world. Art is a visual representation not only of a nation-state, but also of a state of mind.

Creating the future we can imagine involves searching the world for the most visionary artists, developing the most imaginative ways in which to exhibit their work, and attracting an engaged global audience by giving people a compelling view and a chance to shape the mixed media reality we inhabit together. This requires an openness to the rapid rate of transformation in society, as well as a constant effort to creatively use available resources, whether of a digital or physical nature.



## Resources and Further Reading

Google Art Project launches at Art Institute of Chicago:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/ct-ent-0403-google-art-project-20120403,0,1469391.story>

MoMA: Talk To Me:

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2011/talktome/>

Start Your Project: Kickstarter

<http://www.kickstarter.com/start>

Double Fine Adventure on Kickstarter

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/66710809/double-fine-adventure>

Double Fine Adventure's Kickstarter Success

Pumps New Life Into Crowd-Funded Gaming - Forbes  
<http://onforb.es/HnDgOV>

Kickstarter's annual giving rivals NEA

<http://www.artworldsalon.com/blog/2012/02/hey-friend-can-you-spare-150-million/>

Art and Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time and Light, by Leonard Schlain

<http://www.amazon.com/Art-Physics-Parallel-Visions-Space/dp/0688123058>

The Art and Technology Program, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

[http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/MWEB/archives/artandtechnology/at\\_home.asp](http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/MWEB/archives/artandtechnology/at_home.asp)

Interactive Technology Program, NYU: archives

<http://itp.nyu.edu/shows/spring2012/>

3D printed heels

<http://www.theimaginationage.net/2012/02/hoon-chungs-experimental-3d-printed.html>

Kate Moss hologram for Alexander McQueen

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7z4Kkh7duI>

Instagram:

<http://instagr.am/>

The website and art of Angeliki Jackson

<http://astrodub.com/>

Battery Dance Company International cultural diplomacy toolkit

<http://bit.ly/HnDpBU>

Culturehub

<http://www.culturehub.org/>

Webstagram, Instagram web viewer

<http://web.stagram.com/>

Art in virtual world, Second Life

<http://secondlife.com/destinations/arts>

101 Things to Learn in Art School by Kit White

<http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?ttype=2&tid=12600>

Artist Jenny Holzer on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/jennyholzer>

Museu Picasso, Barcelona, Las Meninas

<http://www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/en/collection/mpb70-433.html>

This paper was written by Rita J. King and Joshua Fouts, who are collaborators on the Battery Dance and Culturehub projects mentioned within this document, both of which are funded by the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. Science House has a global science art collection, exhibited at Science House in New York City.



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