

Topic	CREATIVE SPACES		
Date	May 2, 2018	Location	401 Richmond, Toronto
Host(s)	Bruce Pitkin , Executive Director, Theatre Ontario		
Participants	Alex Glass , Program Manager, ArtsBuild Ontario Julian Sleath , CEO, The Bentway Maria Karam , Owner, The Redwood Oliver Pauk , Studio Director, AKIN Collective Michael Vickers , Studio Director, AKIN Collective Kristian Clarke , Working Group Member, Mass Culture		
Notetaker(s)	Mindy Doherty , Administrative Assistant, Mass Culture Fanny Martin , Engagement Coordinator, Mass Culture		
Facilitator(s)	Jane Farrow , Department of Words & Deeds		
Invitation	<p>“Please join us for this conversation to celebrate Creative Spaces in Toronto and our recent policy accomplishments, and also discuss your research capacities, needs and success stories. We will explore together how community-centred research on creative spaces could be strengthened through its creation, collection and use for planning and policymaking.”</p>		
Perspectives and thoughts	<p>The group first discussed the successful campaign for property tax relief led by tenants of 401 Richmond. Lessons learnt from this were summarized as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be bold about what we ask - Offer solutions - Find commonalities amongst community - Get success stories out there <p>While this example campaign was in many ways a ‘perfect storm’ (sense of urgency, wide range of stakeholder mobilisation...), and was only concerned with a specific element of evidence & policy, we can use it to build on. What mechanisms, stakeholders and research do we need to make change happen on a long-term basis?</p> <p>We also discussed international examples of creative space categories and modes of operation, such as meanwhile space (popular in the UK and defined as “temporary use of vacant buildings or land for social or economic gain until they can be brought back into commercial use.”). In Toronto, AKIN have been active for 10 years in turning temporary vacant buildings into artist studios.</p> <p>We mentioned other sectors that have coordinated research and advocacy efforts and have benefited from evidence-based policy, such as Film & Music and Parks and Recreation. The group felt that the</p>		

	<p>case for the arts (e.g. for public support) hasn't yet been made to the same extent.</p> <p>When looking for future topics to stimulate conversations at Mass Culture gatherings it was suggested that we consider all the feedback that was gathered as part of the Ontario Cultural Strategy consultations and look at topics of interest in regional feedback provided. This information is still available online.</p> <p>A potential vision for Mass Culture is that these gatherings take on a self-sustaining and initiated model much like "Jane's Walk". "Mass Talks" could become recurring gatherings that happen on an annual or biennial basis where recurring themes are distilled and then form the basis of research projects that are chosen from at the "Mass Culture Market" which academic institutions would attend in person or virtually.</p>
<p>What research would be useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Lit review' of existing research ● Culture mapping (asset, needs, gaps etc.) including Visual Arts, Accessibility, Types of artists and their modes of operation ● Measuring Social Return on Investment of the Arts ● Mapping of publicly- and privately-owned vacant properties ● Models for acquiring property (rented and owned) ● Case studies of success stories ● International benchmarking
<p>Whose voices are missing around the table?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greater diversity of artists & cultural operators. If we can't get a diverse audience at our table then we need to go to their table(s) ● Property developers ● Academics & students ● Policy makers ● Large cultural institutions ● More cultural spaces out of downtown core
<p>Resources & Links (mentioned during discussion or shared afterwards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Property Tax Class to Bring Relief to Arts and Culture Hubs (May 9 article on 401 Richmond campaign) ● Ontario Culture Strategy (published 2016) ● Social Return on Investment (Wikipedia entry) ● SpaceFinder Toronto ● thisisopenspace (AirBnB of pop-up spaces for rental) ● Examples of research about parks ● Examples of research about music
<p>What else happened during and after the Gathering?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group decided to set up mutual site visits and to keep in touch ● Several participants wanted to host more Mass Culture Gatherings to include more voices and / or on questions that came out of the discussions

Topic	The language(s) of art, research and policy		
Date	June 25, 2018	Location	Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, ON
Host	Robin Sokoloski, Playwrights' Guild of Canada / Mass Culture		
Participants	<p>Notes: As this was a drop-in session, participants could come and go at any time and not all names have been captured. Most participants also belong to more than one network / institution / professional group - for example, they are <i>also</i> artists, writers, academics - but only one affiliation is listed below.</p> <p>Irfan Ali, TDSB Rebecca Benson, TWUC Sandy Crawley, National Reading Campaign Eva Hellreich, Neighbourhood Arts Network Ellen S. Jaffe, TWUC Alicia Payne, Playwrights' Guild of Canada Monique Renaud, Playwrights' Guild of Canada Rebecca Peirson, Centennial College Siobhan O'Connor, TWUC Ann Shortell, Writer Donna Yuen, Town of Newmarket</p>		
Notetaker	Sally Nicholson	Facilitator	Kevin Ormsby
Gathering Question	<p>What research choices & frameworks result in inclusion and exclusion when building cultural policy? Many things have changed since the founding of many Canadian arts institutions and organizations, not least the language that we use to discuss and define our contemporary context. Choices - of words, concepts, frames of reference - made 60 years ago have influenced the development of cultural policy to date. If we were to write a new foundational document for the arts sector today, what would it contain to reflect current and emerging realities? How would we decide on the definitions, scope of research, priorities... that will influence future cultural policy?</p>		
Perspectives and thoughts	<p><i>What does policy and language mean to us?</i> They both have a variety of meanings, for example a common code to communicate; a tool; something that shapes a vision. They both hold power. Policy can represent an opportunity: for connecting, correcting, adjusting, adding, including... <i>What are the challenges we feel are happening right now, specifically in the arts?</i> Sustainability is always a consideration, but <u>who are we sustaining for?</u></p>		

	<p>There can be confusion around words in the political realm, political correctness, and even a palpable fear around using the incorrect word/term that needs to be looked at.</p> <p>Words have different meanings for people - for example <i>Canadian</i> (is it the land itself, the people who live here, the European lineage and associated privileges?) or <i>immigrants</i> (which meaning may vary depending on citizenship status, place of birth, identity...)</p> <p>The understanding of a word at a certain time will influence the policy development in that moment.</p>
<p>What further research on the topic discussed would be useful?</p>	<p>Who is producing Canadian culture? Who are the “shapers” in cultural policy? Whose language is being used? What policies are supporting them?</p>
<p>Whose voices are missing around the table?</p>	<p>It was acknowledged that “Who attends this event is shaping the outcome”. Given the time, place, context... participants are likely to have a certain background and level of education. However, in a drop-in event, it can be difficult for participants to know who’s here, and therefore who is not. We discussed instead:</p> <p>Where and how is the shaping of language and policy happening?</p> <p>Influencers might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Celebrities – influence through pop culture ● Language academies / academics ● Boards of directors ● Corporate language ● Subcultural groups reclaiming words ● Research in various fields ● Digital technology, for example text messaging and emojis ● Infographics - making the oversaturation of information more digestible <p>Different groups need a different language (i.e. doctors have their own language) (There was a difference of opinion by attendees on whether or not it’s a good/ok thing)</p> <p>We also discussed the different languages of art / artists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form-filling can be an obstacle to those who don’t master the official language(s) - music, choreography... are other languages and forms of expression that can tell stories and emotions. ASL interpretation, use of technology... can also give greater access and clarity.
<p>What next steps were mentioned as a result of the Gathering?</p>	<p>We need to spend more time working on and talking about definitions, otherwise we just glaze over it and possibly misinterpret it.</p>

Topic	How can rural artists create environments where professional fees are expected?		
Date	May 25, 2018	Location	Meteor Café Haileybury, ON
Host(s)	Clayton Windatt , Executive Director, Aboriginal Curatorial Collective		
Participants	<p>Gordon Duff, Treasurer, Minto Arts Council Sandy Irvin, Artistic Director, Folkus Concert Series Aengus Finnan, Executive Director, Folk Alliance International Lynda Brown, Co-founder/performer, Siginiup Qilauta/Sunsdrum Liz Forsberg, Inspired People Strategy Lead, Ontario Trillium Foundation Maura Broadhurst, Arts Service Organizations - Associate Officer, OAC Noora Sagarwala, Touring and Residencies – Officer, Ontario Arts Council Patricia Fell, Artistic Director, Windsor Feminist Theatre / Lollipop Guild David Barnard, Senior Program Advisor, Canadian Heritage Linda Albright, Executive Director, Arts Network for Children & Youth Dominic Lafontaine, Director, le Conseil des arts Temiskaming Arts Council Rebecca Ballarin, Network Coordinator, SPARC Trevor Malcolm, Professional Composer and Musician, Lollipop Guild Collete Broeders, President/Treasurer, Windsor Feminist Theatre Teajai Travis, Executive Director, Bloomfield House Lara Fournier, Artist, Windsor Feminist Theatre Myra Stephen, Arts Ally Jim Blake, Chair, Dance Happens Here Haliburton Kevin Closs, Independent Artist Heidi Langille, Co-founder/performer, Siginiup Qilauta/Sunsdrum</p>		
Notetaker(s)	Tara Windatt , notetaking on behalf of Aboriginal Curatorial Collective With assistance from Liz Forsberg, Linda Albright, and Rebecca Ballarin		
Facilitator(s)	Joshua Bainbridge , Artistic Director, Proscenium Club		
Research Question	<i>How can rural artists create environments where professional fees are expected?</i>		
Perspectives and thoughts	<p>Artists are not seen as professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often approached to donate work/volunteer time and skills “for the good of the community” • Expectation that if materials/space are provided, the artist should be happy to do the work and/or doesn’t need compensation (e.g. murals) • Volunteering devalues the artist’s time and effort and undermines others trying to make a living off of their craft • Being an artist not considered a job unless the artist pushes for 		

	<p>themselves to be seen in that context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts education undervalued despite the high amount of skill transference and time and effort spent developing and honing skills <p>All artists and cultural workers need to be paid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum fees need to be included in funding applications (i.e. should be an expectation of paying artists from the beginning) Once artists have been paid they can decide to reinvest/donate money back if they want Arts communities should boycott groups that abuse artists Support staff and administrators also need to be paid <p>Barriers to artists being paid appropriately in rural communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current minimum fee schedules don't address regional needs/constraints Some municipalities provide little to no support for the arts Much fewer full-time cultural workers Attitude of "Well if you won't do it for this price, I'll find someone who will." Emerging artists and arts administrators happy to get any work/willing to work for less to build career Artists don't see themselves as professionals and/or are reticent to ask for payment People happy to pay for finished product/performance but don't understand everything that goes into the creation process (training, practice, materials and equipment, mental/emotional effort etc.) <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a minimum wage for artists and/or revise fee schedules Increase awareness/advocacy efforts Convert artists to professionalism Include business acumen as part of post-secondary arts education (e.g. setting expectations, pricing work/labour, negotiating contracts, etc.) Increase support for peer mentorship/apprenticeships Participate in municipal cultural planning Establishing minimum investment in the arts from municipal budgets
<p>What research would be useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics of establishing a minimum wage for artists and/or revising current fee schedules Approaches to educating municipalities/advocating for the arts Better definition of Cultural Workers so monitoring can happen and statistical data can be compiled How do we better leverage corporate and public funding in the arts? Ways to help artists see and present themselves as professionals
<p>Whose voices are missing around the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need greater diversity of voices from the arts community (francophone artists, Indigenous artists, artists of colour, youth/new generation artists, deaf and disability artists, etc.)

<p>table?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to include municipal staff, members of council, cultural workers
<p>Resources & Links (mentioned during discussion or shared afterwards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARCC (CARFAC) fee schedule • CARFAC “Has the Artist Been Paid?” campaign • Lollipop Guild – arts association advocating for artist minimum wage
<p>What else happened during and after the Gathering?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Gathering was held as part of the SPARC Symposium in Cobalt, and there were many other discussions throughout the symposium that touched upon similar issues.