



Connecting Through Culture

The Edinburgh
International Culture
Summit 2018



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Foreword

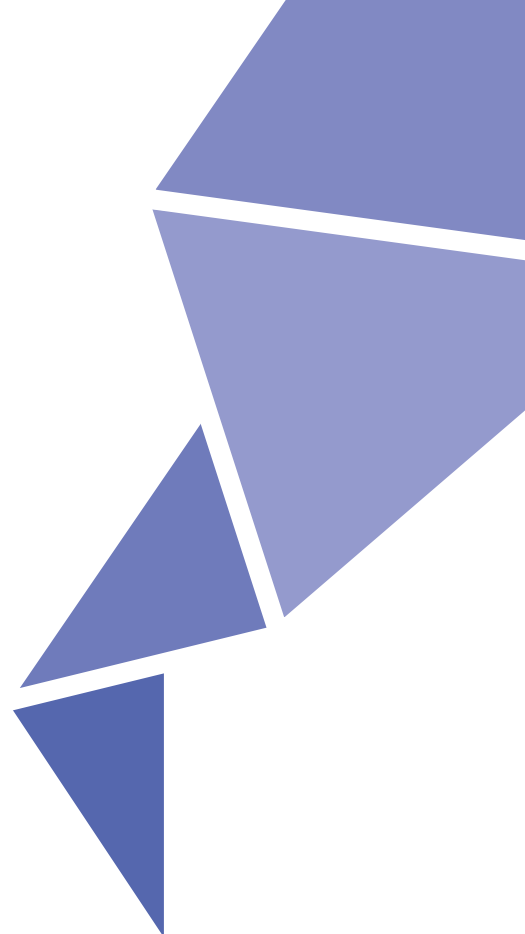
The theme of the fourth Edinburgh International Culture Summit, Culture: Connecting Peoples and Places, encouraged participants to contribute to a wide-ranging conversation across three interlinked topics: 'Culture in a Networked World', 'Culture and Investment' and 'Culture and Wellbeing'. In choosing these topics, delegates were urged to think about how art and culture can help us all to find common ground in a world that is increasingly dominated by social media; to consider the ways in which the policies of many different forms of government might best balance investment in individual artists, creative communities and infrastructure; and to examine how culture can make a contribution to the health and wellbeing of human societies.

The Summit's agenda is deliberately non-partisan, in a way that echoes the diverse, international, artistic atmosphere of Edinburgh in August. It aims to present multiple points of view, rather than singular attitudes, ensuring that no country, continent or cultural perspective comes to dominate its proceedings – aspirations that lie at the heart of the Summit's purpose as it seeks to emphasise the importance of artistic exchange in a world that is increasingly complex and multilateral.

The Edinburgh International Culture Summit was established in 2012 by the British Council, the Edinburgh International Festival, the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish and UK governments as a ministerial forum held every two years, in which artists, cultural leaders and policymakers come together to discuss substantial, global issues of mutual interest, during the largest annual celebration of the arts in the world – the Edinburgh festivals.

The Summit partners were particularly grateful for the many significant speeches made by the participating ministerial delegations from 45 countries, and especially those responding to the plenary sessions in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament.

The Hon. Alex Kofi Agyekum, Chair of the Youth, Sports and Culture Committee of the Parliament of Ghana; Hamat Bah, Minister of Tourism and Culture, Republic of The Gambia; the Hon. Charles Banda, Minister of Tourism and Arts, Republic of Zambia; Michael Ellis, former UK Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts, Heritage and Tourism; Deaconess Grace Isu Gekpe, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Federal Republic of Nigeria; the Hon. Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, government of Jamaica; Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, Scottish government; Woosung Lee, Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea; Sérgio Sá Leitão, Minister of Culture, Federative Republic of Brazil; Charles Mabaso, Acting Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Arts and Culture, Republic of South Africa; the Rt Hon. Sir Jerry Mateparae, former Governor-General and High Commissioner for New Zealand; Memunatu B Pratt, Minister of Tourism and Culture, Republic of Sierra Leone; Liana Ruokyte-Jonsson, Minister of Culture, Republic of Lithuania;



Dr Hilmar Farid Setiadi, Director-General of Culture, Ministry of Culture and Education, Republic of Indonesia; the Rt Hon. Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland, and the Rt Hon. Jeremy Wright, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, UK government, all made very pertinent contributions to the deliberations of Summit 2018.

A distinguished group of international artists, academics, architects, historians, medical practitioners and cultural leaders, including Faisal Abu Alhayjaa, Maria Balshaw, Bastiaan Bloem, Constantin Chiriac, Elizabeth Diller, Wesley Enoch, Assal Habibi, Akram Khan, Suhair Khan, David Leventhal, Fairouz Nishanova, Totto Niwenshuti, Ong Keng Sen, Joshua Ramo, Sanjoy Roy, Richard Sennett and Catarina Vaz Pinto, inspired with the depth and diversity of their keynote speeches in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament.

Actors Charlene Boyd and Pu Cunxin provided the perfect start to Summit 2018 with their exquisite performances of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and an extract from the play *Poet Li Bai*, a Beijing People's Art Theatre production written by Guo Qihong. Master musicians of the Aga Khan Music Ensemble Feras Charestan and Basel Rajoub celebrated the universality of music in a unique fusion of classical Middle Eastern instruments and improvisation. Choreographer Totto Niwenshuti shared the courage of his convictions and demonstrated the power of dance to heal the wounds of the Rwandan genocide in an interactive performance with David Leventhal, and virtuoso violinist Julian Herman earned a standing ovation for his inspiring performance of Bach. To close the Summit, Bea Webster, a Glasgow-based actress and theatre maker who graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Performance in British Sign Language and English, performed her own poem *Long Lost Lover*.

Summit 2018 proceedings were chaired by the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, the Rt Hon. Ken Macintosh, MSP, who also welcomed representatives from 17 Commonwealth countries to a special meeting, hosted by the former UK Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis, immediately prior to the Summit Opening Session.

In addition to the meeting of Commonwealth countries, Summit 2018 hosted over 60 bilateral meetings between the various government delegations at the Scottish Parliament.

In recognition of 2018 being designated as Scotland's Year of Young People, the Summit focused on integrating the experiences of young people into the event, in collaboration with the National Youth Arts Advisory Group (NYAAG). To complement the 16 international youth delegates, nine members of NYAAG and four Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament attended the Summit. Of particular note were contributions by Nicholas Kee, the Jamaican Youth Delegate, Syafiqah 'Adha Sallehin, the Singaporean Youth Delegate, and Emma Ruse and Arianne Welsh, two members of NYAAG.

In addition to the programme at the Scottish Parliament, delegates attended seven external events, including the Edinburgh International Festival's performance of *Kadamati* and reception at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Eurovision Young Musician of the Year final at the Usher Hall, a performance of *The Prisoner* directed by Peter Brook at The Lyceum, and visits to Blackie House, Trinity House in Edinburgh and the brand new Victoria & Albert Museum in Dundee.

Summit 2018 offered a unique platform for promotion and advocacy through the extensive media attention and professional networks of Edinburgh's summer festivals. Summit 2018 reached an audience of more than 250 million through over 900 media pieces in 49 countries.

On behalf of the Summit partners, we would like to thank the trustees of the Summit Foundation, an independent charity, chaired by Sir Angus Grossart, established in 2014 to support the work of the Summit, alongside all our corporate, philanthropic and individual supporters, for their contributions to Summit 2018.

We are grateful to Alistair MacDonald, British Council, for this thoughtful and stimulating report, which eloquently captures the spirit of enquiry and exchange that has come to characterise the Edinburgh International Culture Summit.

We also extend our grateful thanks to the Summit 2018 Knowledge Partners: Aga Khan Trust for Culture through its Music Initiative, Dance for PD (an initiative of the Mark Morris Dance Company), Georgetown University's Laboratory for Global Performance & Politics, NYAAG and Theatrum Mundi. These organisations, which share the Summit's ambition to promote genuine exchange between policymakers and artists in order to inspire positive change in cultural policy and investment, made vital contributions to the scope and potential of Summit 2018.

We hope you find this report as enjoyable and rewarding as we found Summit 2018 itself, and look forward to welcoming you back to Edinburgh in August 2020.



Sir Jonathan Mills AO FRSE
Programme Director
Edinburgh International
Culture Summit



Jackie Killeen
Director Scotland
British Council



© Scottish Parliament
Josh Ramo addressing the Edinburgh
International Culture Summit 2018

Executive summary

About the Edinburgh Culture Summit

The fourth Edinburgh International Culture Summit took place at the Scottish Parliament from Wednesday 22 to Friday 24 August 2018. The Summit welcomed 45 international delegations, which included 20 Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Assistant Ministers, and 16 youth delegates. In addition, 25 artists plus a further 54 speakers and session chairs and rapporteurs contributed to the programme, and a further 141 cultural representatives attended the Summit itself. Fifty-six volunteers supported Summit delegates and programme contributors, including six Young Scot Youth Ambassadors.

Introduction

In this section we summarise the discussions around the three core themes of the Summit. This summary is then followed by more detail on the topical discussions from the plenary sessions, policy round tables and workshops. The basis for this report is the transcripts from the plenary sessions in the Scottish Parliament's Debating Chamber, the notes of the rapporteurs and British Council note-takers, and the presentations and comments made by the participants themselves.

Culture in a networked world

Social capital, the networks, shared values and understandings that bind communities together, is essential to the smooth function of society. In the culture in a networked world strand of the Summit we learned that these networks matter whether they are at the local, regional, national or international level. Trust is the cornerstone of social capital. It is the foundation of any meaningful, lasting relationship, whether it is with our friends and neighbours or with some far-away country.

Paradoxically, despite being more connected than ever thanks to the rise of social media, mobile phones and other digital technologies, our societies appear to be increasingly fragmented and our communities more isolated. Culture, in the broadest sense, is one way we can counter the sense of dislocation and polarisation that is of increasing concern to policymakers. Investment in the cultural infrastructure of a place can build community resilience. Cultural participation reinforces the bonds of cohesion in our communities and facilitates co-operation within or among different groups. It is through cultural engagement that we develop shared understanding and establish the norms of behaviour, that we can explore our differences in a way that fosters respect and deepens trust.

Technology is crucial; it is increasingly core to how we connect and navigate our lives. And while it can and does risk the atomisation of society into self-selecting, rage-filled Twitter bubbles, our new digital age offers so much more that is exciting and positive. It allows us unprecedented capacity to access knowledge, to connect, and to share and understand the other. We should celebrate the manifold benefits of technology and work together to overcome the risks posed by the trolls and ideologues who would abuse it for their own selfish ends.





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Official Summit portrait

Culture and investment

If there is one constant in discussions between policymakers and practitioners in the cultural sector it's the subject of funding. Too often instead of strategic planning, investment decisions turn into a Darwinian race in a 'competi-sphere' where individual cultural institutions fight for 'their' share of the finite funding available from government. This approach risks perverse outcomes where less grand and/or glamorous but very possibly more deserving and impactful organisations and individual programmes and projects lose out on funding to the apex predators of the cultural ecosystem.

The competi-sphere model incentivises the big institutions to focus on major capital investments. Grand projects with their 'starchitects' and promises of regeneration tend to be a preoccupation of both the cultural establishment and policymakers. Investment in bricks and mortar is important but so too is investment in human capital, in the individual artists, cultural professionals and grassroots organisations that are the lifeblood of the sector, that turn a building from an empty shell to a vibrant cultural institution. Investing just some of the millions of pounds that are spent every year on grand designs on grants and loans for academic study; support for apprenticeships; professional placements and international cultural exchanges; funding for school and community arts programmes; and just creating affordable spaces for artists to live and practise their craft could have a transformative impact on our communities.

We need to move from the competi-sphere approach to a more constructive partnership model that places artists, cultural institutions, policymakers and the public on an equal footing – to a collaborative model that takes a holistic approach to the cultural infrastructure of place.

Culture and wellbeing

We all know from personal experience that cultural participation is a source of joy and intellectual stimulation. Today that intuitive understanding of the value of culture is increasingly supplemented by the evidence from science. There is a substantial body of data, an evidence base, to demonstrate the value of arts and culture to health and wellbeing – to the young and the old and all those between, with significant implications for our health and education systems.

Cultural participation shapes and enhances young people's brain development and improves their learning ability and social skills. Neuroscience research shows that when infants as young as nine months old are exposed to music they can show enhanced brain responses. Young people that play music in groups show significant improvements in executive function and social skills than the children who did not have music training.

Cultural participation has a powerful effect upon people living with Parkinson's disease. The experience of programmes like Dance for PD, which have shown that it is possible to choreograph a path through daily life that might otherwise be all but impossible, is being supplemented by the findings of scientists at the cutting edge of research into the disease, and inspiring enlightened new approaches to collaboration between artists and scientists.

Culture is fundamental to the human experience and is vital to our mental and physical health. It needs to be seen as essential to the function of society, to how we not only live but thrive. Participation brings joy and stimulation, a connection to our shared humanity; it makes the day-to-day experience of being alive happier and healthier.

Connecting through culture

The Edinburgh International Culture Summit is all about connections. It brings together artists, government ministers, businesses, academics and people from a host of other disciplines. The young and old, people from the four corners of the globe, all are welcomed to the cathedral-like space of the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament. Everyone has a voice and is encouraged to participate. The subject is culture, both in the narrow sense of 'the arts' and in the broader sense as described by thinkers such as Raymond Williams and Antonio Gramsci. Just as the Summit delegates are brought together through culture, so too are our communities. Culture is a force that can bring and bind communities together, whether that community is a market town in Scotland's Central Belt or the 'global liberal elite'.

The overall theme of the 2018 Summit was culture: connecting people and places. Discussions focused on three sub-themes:

- **Culture in a Networked World.** Why does culture alone have the power to express what makes us distinctive and what we have in common? How can culture build bridges of understanding across peoples, generations and tribes in a fragmented world? How best can we ensure full involvement of young people and multiple voices in civic society?
- **Culture and Wellbeing.** The sustainable provision of healthcare is a vital concern for governments around the world, made more acute with demographic changes and increased lifespans. A growing body of neurological and clinical research indicates that participation in cultural activity offers long-lasting benefits for a range of medical conditions. In this theme delegates explored the relationship between culture and health and wellbeing, and the implications for governments, clinicians and artists.
- **Culture and Investment.** There is growing recognition of the need to strike a balance between investment in physical cultural infrastructure and alternative models of investment to support the development of creative talent and to expand cultural participation. What is the optimum relationship between state investment in cultural bodies and infrastructure, private sector engagement and unsupported artistic endeavour?

Delegates came together to share their understanding of the role of culture in building communities – how it underpins success and how it can be used to overcome challenges and division. Such divisions can come from cultural differences, from suspicion of the other and from the exploitation of that fear by demagogues. Culture isn't always benign – it can divide us – but cultural engagement is also the best way to foster understanding and reconciliation. There was a collective view that culture needs to be central to thinking about how we connect to one another, to our communities, to people from other places, to the past, present and future, to the *other*. The arts have an essential role to play, helping us understand and negotiate our way through the challenges of the modern world, to explore what divides us in a way that fosters understanding and allows for co-operation. Where other avenues risk only exacerbating tensions, culture allows people with differing views to come together. The arts provide a 'safe space' where people can convene to rediscover their common humanity. In the age of beautiful walls and yellow jackets, the arts are more important than ever.

To understand the role of culture in our societies it is necessary to think very differently to how we have in the past. Instead of being seen as a luxury or 'add-on item', which can be safely cut when resources are limited, culture needs to be seen as core to the function of a community and to be approached in the same way that energy supplies, transport and other essential services are treated. Culture permeates throughout our societies, touching and affecting all aspects of the everyday experience of individuals and communities. It is part of the fabric of place, the connective tissue of our communities. It needs to be seen holistically, as part of a contiguous, living, organic whole rather than as one of a thousand competing interests.

Approaching culture as essential infrastructure in the same way as traditional assets such as roads, broadband and the water supply is the way to get decisions on investment right and ensure we focus on the strategic planning and interventions necessary to build resilient communities. Cultural infrastructure involves both physical assets – galleries, concert halls, libraries, theatres – and intangible ones. The latter can be hard to discern and harder still to understand, but have if anything greater impact than the capital assets.

A museum is more than its environmentally controlled galleries and collections – it is the curators and other staff, and the people it serves, both those who visit and the wider taxpaying public that fund its exhibitions and pay its workers' salaries. The physical asset, the museum, is entirely dependent on the co-operation of the different but overlapping communities that support it, on human and social capital.

The cultural infrastructure model requires us to think about society in a holistic way, to understand that culture is essential to the ecosystems of our communities. Communities are made up of complex interconnections, cultural connections. The health and resilience of our communities depend on those connections – on how we connect through culture.

This report summarises the discussions and debate at the 2018 Edinburgh International Culture Summit for both those who attended and anyone interested in the role of culture in our communities and how cultural practitioners and policymakers can work together to support the cultural sector. The way the various sections are ordered does not follow the exact same structure as the various plenary speeches, workshops and roundtable discussions but instead seeks to bring to light the many fascinating insights from the Summit by taking the cultural infrastructure model as our starting point and progressing from there through a discussion of the different elements that constitute that infrastructure.

Culture is what makes us human



Extracts from the speech by Dr Catarina Vaz Pinto, Councillor of Culture for the City of Lisbon. Catarina has served as Culture Councillor for the Lisbon City Chamber since November 2009. She is a cultural manager and independent consultant in the areas of cultural policy and development.

As we well know and can attest to in our daily lives, our world is becoming increasingly complex, confused and unintelligible. As a result of the deep and sudden changes brought about by globalisation and a digital paradigm that has invaded our daily lives at work, in our personal lives and in our free time, it is a paradigm incepted with the creation of immense expectation regarding the ability to foster wealth exchange and sharing, and the ability to recognise the other.

Today, however, we live in a divided, fractured world. It confronts us with a broad range of phenomena of exclusion, conflict and even refusal of the other. On the one hand, we are immediately and constantly connected, we are more efficient and swift in our work, and we have access to an unparalleled amount of information and goods; on the other hand, we often feel insecure and unsatisfied with the uncertainty of present life, and our sense of time, distance, place and human relationships has been challenged by technology, which has accelerated or modified what we were accustomed to.

We are permanently connected with the world, yet we can feel as though we are completely alone in our homes. The commodity-based ideology of economic success – of technological progress and the accumulation of assets, exacerbated by financial crisis, climate change, wars and forced migration – has led to the adoption of production and consumption lifestyle patterns that have generated levels of inequality, stress, the loss of a relationship with nature and a sense of alienation in a less cohesive world.

I believe that culture can make connections across those divisions in our society as well as being able to create the conditions for mutual understanding. Ultimately, it can work as a way of fostering social cohesion and co-operation across borders. That is why I believe that change can be achieved only through the appreciation of the cultural dimension in global development.

Culture is the vital ability for expression and symbolic constructions. It allows us to affirm identity, to build a sense of belonging and of public space, to think about defining options and values to establish the links between the past, present and future, to fulfil desires, and to find an individual and collective purpose for the time that we live in.

Culture is what makes us different; culture is what makes us human. In order to address the negative effects of today's reality, it is paramount to put culture at the centre of public policies by protecting heritage, by supporting creativity, by promoting diversity, by granting access to knowledge, and by taking advantage of the technological evolution and the comfort provided by economic vitality while seeking to create a counterbalance and new ways of connecting the analogue and the digital worlds.

The territory within a specific physical living space is where we can try to reinstate balance, making our cities more human and more sustainable – cities that are more close-knit, where everybody has the same rights and access to the same opportunities; cities that seek to activate, mobilise and accommodate the creative energies of all, bringing forward the conditions to build bonds, ties of belonging and solidarity, and a spirit of active citizenship; cities that seek the appropriate scale for each project or activity by taking into account the target or prospective audience, the level of funding or other available resources and the actual needs; cities that promote and welcome human diversity, respecting the uniqueness of each and every group, ethnic, religious, gender, artistic or cultural; cities able to function as an ecosystem, seeking to articulate the varied public policies, combining public and private resources and realising the role of each actor in their specific niche and their contribution to the big plan.

Lisbon is now experiencing a moment of great and unquestioned vitality. Unlike what we have seen in recent years, even here in Europe, in Lisbon we want to be on the side of those who are open to the world. In fact, this is an ancient identity trait of our city. The geo-strategic position of the country and of Lisbon at the westernmost point of the European continent dictates its everlasting condition as an intersection between Europe, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, a point of arrivals and

departures and a place of exchanges and gatherings of culture. The Phoenicians, the Romans and the Arabs inhabited Lisbon throughout the ages. As early as the 12th century, an English crusader travelling through Lisbon was astonished to see so many peoples in the city.

In a letter signed just 'R', he wrote that the reason for such a huge agglomeration of people was that among them there was no obligatory religion and that, since anyone could have the religion that they wanted, from all over the world men would gather there.


If geography favours us, it is true that we also learn from history. In all the periods in which we repressed and rejected diversity, we lost economic, political and cultural relevance. Whenever we respected and valued cultural and spiritual diversity, we progressed and became wealthier as a people and more sympathetic and tolerant, and we upheld Lisbon as a great cosmopolitan metropolis.

Therefore, geography does not weave the permanent construction and reinvention of an identity. We wish to be open, hospitable, happy and sad, authentic to the contemporary world – a city that is capable of creating a public space, a common square, a community in every neighbourhood on every corner and in every park; a city capable of responding to the anxieties that afflict us all,

women and men of our time, those who live and work in Lisbon and those who are in transit, all of them in search of meaning, happiness and peace.

As far as culture is concerned, we went through a first stage of diagnosis and strategic redefinition and reorganisation, creating and rehabilitating infrastructures, so that we can now go into a stage of consolidation, where local public authorities in the area of culture act as a facilitating and capacity-building agent and work to bring culture closer to the people and vice versa in order to combine the attraction of culture with the need for culture.

Following said purpose, the public space has been one of the priority areas of our intervention – open to all, present in all parts, without social or economic barriers. The street art of one of our most prominent artists, Alexandre Farto, also known as Vhils, is captured throughout the city of Lisbon and currently all over the world. In his oversized scratched murals that invariably show anonymous faces sculpted in the stones of buildings we look at the common and anonymous citizen. He or she is the protagonist and agent of change in today's world. It is with these citizens in mind that we want to design our policies and demonstrate the transformative power of culture.



We are permanently connected with the world, yet we can feel as though we are completely alone in our homes.

Social capital

Cultural infrastructure operates through human connection – the bonds that enable societies to form and thrive. Social scientists refer to this phenomenon as social capital: the links, shared values and understandings that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and so work together or, as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development describes it, 'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups'.¹ Social capital was the focus of the 'Culture in a networked world' theme of the Summit. Personal anecdotes were shared that proved both John Donne and the Sherman Brothers had it right – 'no man is an island' and 'it's a small, small world'.

Investing in buildings and in human capital is essential to the health and function of our communities but social capital is the crucial third element in the cultural infrastructure of a place. Investing in capital projects and education and other human capital programmes has a direct impact on the social capital of a community, but it is important to also foreground social capital in planning, to think strategically and holistically about the impact of specific investments (or cuts) on the social cohesion and resilience of the community as a whole.

Where the cultural infrastructure of a place is weak or failing, that crucial sense of local pride, of belonging and of having 'skin in the game', disappears. Such places are colder, less welcoming, depressing even. This matters because over time that breakdown in the civic fabric risks generating a spiral of decline. A 'brownout' in the cultural infrastructure of a place may not be as immediately obvious as any disruption to the power supply but its effects are very real and deeply damaging, and can be measured in increases in crime, unemployment, teenage pregnancies and other indicators of social deprivation. Isolation, division, resentment, insularity – these are the ingredients in a toxic cocktail that corrodes community cohesion. Where the cultural infrastructure of a community is left to wither, young people are more likely to turn to alternative groups to find that crucial sense of connection, identity and belonging – gangs and extremist ideologies find the space to thrive when established social networks break down.

An artist well understands the power of human connection. The actor and audience, the portraitist and subject, the string quartet, the perfectly executed pas de deux.

1. OECD Insights, What is social capital? Available online at: <https://www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf>



The increasing fragmentation and division within our societies is a growing concern for policymakers around the world. A focus on culture, in the broadest sense, is one way we can act to counter the dissolution and polarisation that increasingly characterises the public sphere. Far from being an added extra or luxury, the cultural infrastructure of a place is absolutely vital to a community's resilience and success, and policymakers need to recognise this. It is through strategic investment in cultural infrastructure that we reinforce the bonds of cohesion in our communities and facilitate co-operation within or among the different segments of society. It is through cultural engagement that we develop shared understanding and establish the norms of behaviour. It is through culture that we can (re)build trust. The importance of trust cannot be underestimated – the legitimacy of our institutions and of governments depends upon trust. Where the cultural infrastructure of a community fails, trust will be in short supply.

There is a crucial role for the arts in fostering social capital. An artist well understands the power of human connection. The actor and audience, the portraitist and subject, the string quartet, the perfectly executed pas de deux. All these things revolve around people-to-people connections, around trust in and a dependence upon one another. By playing as part of a youth orchestra the violinist gains an understanding of the value of collaboration; they join a positive social network and find an identity individually as a performer and also as part of something bigger. An orchestra is a community that succeeds only when its many individual members come together to act as one. Cultural participation can teach us about being a part of a community as well as allow us to explore issues of identity and how to engage with the difficult and divisive challenges in our society in a way that builds understanding and fosters social capital.

Understanding the role of culture in the function of our communities is essential to building a meaningful partnership between policymakers and the culture sector. It needs to be recognised that culture offers solutions to the challenges facing our communities. Developing a collective understanding of the integral role of arts in our societies and then coming together as partners to invest strategically in the cultural infrastructure of place is how we build the social capital on which success depends.



Lithuania is proving to be a laboratory for innovative ideas with much to teach both policymakers and cultural practitioners around the world looking to rethink their approach to culture. Liana Ruokytė-Jonsson, the Lithuanian Minister of Culture, described some of the changes they are making:

... We are going through really big changes in the financial sector, healthcare, social care, education and science and cultural policy. Everything is connected to the people, of course. In this government, we are here to redesign the whole of cultural policy, because it is time to rethink... After 28 years of the restored independence of Lithuania, a lot of structures were a bit old fashioned, too bureaucratic and not very efficient. Therefore, we have plans to change many sectors, at many layers.

We are not only changing the financial funding system for culture and arts but initiating various instruments and programmes that are focused on developing a new generation of culture users.

We are pretty much focusing on cultural education and access to culture. Involvement in the creative process is one of the top priorities, along with cultural heritage preservation. We are working on plans to totally change the whole system and the model should be finished at the end of the year.

We are working with cultural policy and co-working with other sectors, especially ... regions ... together with the other ministries – such as those for internal affairs, social affairs, healthcare, education and science, and transport and communications... We consider all the infrastructure and the powers of creativity and, from the perspective of our own sector, we look at implementing various instruments and programmes to develop strong communities. A strong culture can come from the development of strong communities. We encourage people to stay in the places where they live, to be proud of their identity and local culture, to have higher self-esteem, and to be more confident and motivated to create processes in their local spaces.

We do a lot of things with the Ministry of Education and Science. Seventy per cent of our actions, as confirmed by the government in the governmental action plan, will be implemented with the Ministry of Education and Science. This is the first time in our history that we are collaborating really closely with each other...

We have a model for the implementation of sustainable cultural development in the regions, because we are decentralising. The Council for Culture is the cultural policy implementation organisation. We are creating ten regional councils, connected to the territorial counties, each of which will work autonomously on the strategy for the region – the cultural strategy for three years ahead – and will define what is most important for that region. We are also creating expert boards with local experts for members. Only financial control will be concentrated in the central office, which is the Council for Culture. We are making it possible for each regional council to decide what is important for a particular region or municipality.

Of course, the allocation of funds for culture and the arts has been doubled... This will activate local governments to be more active in funding culture, because there is a requirement to allocate at least 30 per cent of the money for selected projects for the regions. The more a municipality invests, the more money comes from the state. That is the algorithm that we use. It will be more encouraging for local governments to be part of the funding of their local projects: it involves more people in culture and the creative process.

We have plenty of initiatives within formal and informal education. We think that it is so important to invest, first of all, in people. That is why we care about the new generations and about people in rural areas or regions. As in all other countries, people in Lithuania are leaving the regions and going to major cities, and we want to keep people more in those local places and make communities there stronger. Cultural identity is about having small, strong identities all over the country.

I could share with you information on lots of initiatives that we are doing at the moment. We are doing a lot of things, starting with cleaning up the ministry. One colleague said, 'Stop being bureaucrats; let's work together,' and that is exactly what we did. When I became head of the ministry, I said, 'Let's work together with the artists and the culture people.' We changed the whole structure at the ministry and flattened it, as in private companies. Instead of three directors, we now have only one, and we removed departments, going from 18 units to 11. They are co-working, project-wise, and it is more results orientated. We started by cleaning our home before going outdoors, so to speak, in the cultural fields, to make drastic changes. We want to make changes in the mindset, which is why our approach has many layers and aspects.

Lithuania is far from alone in putting culture at the heart of thinking about building a sense of place. Deaconess Grace Isu Gekpe, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Nigeria, shared valuable lessons with the Summit on how a country where more than 500 languages are spoken, and which is incredibly rich and diverse in faith and culture, seeks to bring people together through participation in the arts. The fundamental lesson from both the Lithuanian and Nigerian experience is that '... everything is connected to the people'. We each have much to teach one another; this is what makes forums like the Edinburgh International Culture Summit so important and valuable.

Cultural infrastructure needs to be seen as part of something bigger. Success depends on breaking out from our silos and working across artificial barriers. It needs joined-up thinking between different groups both within the policy sphere and across the culture sector and beyond. The public need to be engaged, to feel listened to and involved in decision-making, so they can trust policymakers and gain a sense of agency and ownership of their communities. Businesses, academics and others need to be in the mix too, to bring in their expertise, introduce new ways of thinking and open up their networks. Connections, networks – these are vital to social capital. Through culture we can foster trust, in each other, in our institutions and in our governments; we can bridge what divides us and find new purpose. We can build the social capital that is essential for community resilience and success.

Lessons from Nigeria



Extracts from the speech by Deaconess Grace Isu Gekpe, Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Nigeria. Deaconess Gekpe started her career as a Corps member with the Nigeria Television Authority and was subsequently employed by the Federal Civil Service, rising through the ranks to become the first Cultural Officer to be elevated to the post of a Federal Permanent Secretary in Nigeria.

Nigeria's strength is its cultural diversity. Our language is diverse: we have more than 500 languages. We are also diverse in music, arts, beliefs and religion – we have Christianity, Islam and traditional religion – drama, paintings, cuisine, architecture, crafts and fashion. Indeed, we are diverse in every aspect of our lives.

In order to galvanise our people's creative ingenuity, bonds of friendship, insight and goodwill and our shared and different manifestations of our unique cultural heritage, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, which I superintend, is mandated to protect, preserve and promote Nigeria's culture as well as to encourage the development of technology and scientific studies in all aspects of our cultural lives. Nigeria reaches our diverse communities and addresses significant disparities in the level of arts, cultural opportunities and engagements that are available to different communities through the 36 states of the Federation, the Federal Capital Territory, the 774 local government areas, the ministries, the departments and agencies, the private sector, faith-based organisations such as churches and mosques, traditional institutions, 138 civil society organisations, cultural stakeholders, social media, functional websites and international partners.

Best practice in improving the accessibility and performance of cultural events, and the public's attendance at them, includes the provision of an environment that enables cultural activities to thrive, including the provision of standard performance space and the provision of adequate infrastructure and logistics; the creation of awareness through various media platforms; the use of international standard-setting instruments for culture, such as bilateral and multilateral agreements; and effective collaboration with our development partners – for example, we partner with the British Council to do a lot of things in our country. The effective and equitable sharing of national assets and resources in Nigeria is achieved through the three tiers of government – federal, state and local government – as well as through strict adherence to the federal character principle.

Nigeria maximises the value of technology and digital space to provide opportunities for citizens to experience and benefit from cultural and creative activities through the recent switchover to digital broadcasting, the provision of adequate internet facilities, enhanced use and penetration of the 144 million active mobile phones in Nigeria and the establishment of state-of-the-art public and private media organisations, seminars, workshops and summits such as the one that we are attending today.

Nigeria protects and creates pathways for more artistic voices to collaborate in the production of cultural expression by providing the necessary platform for the 774 local government areas to showcase their diverse cultural heritage through festivals, carnivals, exhibitions, community theatres, capacity building and skills acquisition, cultural education and exchanges, live theatre, music shows, cultural non-governmental organisations and guilds, financial intervention for cultural practitioners – it is estimated that an intervention fund of about 3 billion naira was made available for the Nollywood industry, which is our movie industry – and technical and professional support for stakeholders.

In spite of all that, policymakers face challenges, including inadequate training and capacity building. Yes, we have been doing a lot of training, but we need more for our stakeholders. There is also insufficient political will, inadequate up-to-date equipment, inadequate funds and poor remuneration and welfare packages for our stakeholders. However, inspiration through transferable best practice can be drawn from living human treasures: the film industry, the music industry, publications, media, digital technology, development partners and the National Institute for Cultural Orientation, which reorientates people on cultural matters.

We can learn from best policy and practice to build a robust cultural sector through the domestication of international standard-setting instruments for culture such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization conventions and the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, as well as collaboration with – as I have mentioned – the British Council and other development partners. We can also learn from the organisation of, and participation in, local and international seminars, workshops, exchanges of cultural workers and stakeholders, research, documentation and, finally, reciprocal participation in local and international cultural events.

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A teenage dancer performs during the African
drum festival in Abeokuta, southwestern Nigeria



Investing in culture

If there is one constant in discussions between policymakers and practitioners in the cultural sector, it is the subject of funding. Questions of investment and cuts have always haunted the relationship between policymakers and the sector, often turning what should be a strategic partnership into a bitter tug of war that pitches the two sides against each other. Yet there is much common ground. Virtually all the delegates at the Summit, policymaker and practitioner alike, would agree there is never enough money to go round. Even if they disagree on how best to invest in and support the sector, all would share a belief in the role of public funding: that it is crucial to the public service ethos of the arts and supports a sense of shared purpose and understanding. The delegates would also agree in principle that investment in culture for culture's sake is absolutely legitimate and the case needs to be made for it.

It is all too easy for practitioners to take aim at policymakers and the grey-suited bean-counters in charge of the public finances but it is incumbent on the culture sector to understand the pressures and challenges policymakers face. Where the choice is investment in schools, hospitals and social care and/or investment in culture, is it really surprising that the latter ends up the last item on a long list of spending priorities? That it is a false choice does not in itself make it easier to sell culture to either policymakers or the public. Sérgio Sá Leitão, Brazilian Minister of Culture, explained to the Summit the challenges faced by policymakers around the globe:

... We have the hard task and hard challenge of feeding 200 million people, of making jobs available for 200 million people, of improving the quality of life of 200 million people, of building a more tolerant and inclusive social environment for 200 million people and, of course, of stimulating 200 million people to transcend and to live for more than necessities – to fulfil their destinies as human beings.

But he then went on to explain the role of culture in meeting those challenges and how an enlightened approach to investment in culture can be a win-win-win for a country:

It is incredible that most people do not realise culture's power to transform lives and to promote inclusive development... If people do not realise it, governments will not. The first challenge that we have in establishing cultural policies that are devoted to promoting culture as a development tool is to make people realise culture's power, and that culture can increase and boost the development process. It is hard to believe, but we started only last year to measure the impact of culture and cultural investment in the development of our country. The results are, of course, amazing and people have started to realise its power.

Rather than seeing culture as a tool for delivering this or that government target, both the sector and policymakers need to take in the bigger picture...

... In Brazil, we have a literary event called Flip – the Paraty International Literary Festival. Paraty is a pretty small city with 36,000 inhabitants. It is a colonial city that was founded in the 16th century by the Portuguese and is a jewel of cultural heritage. The festival has been held for 16 years, and this year we conducted a very profound economic impact study on how the event impacts on the city, its economy and the lives of Paraty's citizens. It was amazing to discover that the event cost less than \$1 million, which is pretty cheap – almost nothing in international terms – but generated an impact of \$10 million in the city alone, and created 2,000 jobs. There was a multiplier factor of ten – every \$1 that was invested had an economic impact of \$10. It was also amazing to realise that from public investment in the event of about \$700,000, tax revenues for the city, state and federal governments were almost double that.

That was a win-win-win – a triple-win situation. You have the social and the cultural impact of the event on the lives of the more than 40,000 people who participate in the event, which is more than the population of the city; there is the economic impact in terms of generation of jobs, wealth and inclusion; and there is the tax revenue success for the government. Investment in culture pays off for the state not only because of the social impact and social good, but because of the money that the state earns from tax revenue, which means that investment in culture generates money for other areas such as healthcare and education.

To move from a relationship based on tension to a more constructive partnership model means ditching the traditional donor-suppliant relationship, with all the myriad dangers of dependency, political interference, entitlement and complacency that lie therein, and replacing it with a compact that places artists, cultural institutions, policymakers and the public on an equal footing. For practitioners the first step must be understanding that the 'enemy' is actually a would-be ally that wants to do the right thing and wishes them to succeed but has a thousand other competing priorities to address. The sector needs to think strategically about what it wants and needs but also understand how it can align with the priorities of funders. How can culture help policymakers address their wider challenges, whether it is the rise in mental health problems in young people or the social isolation that far too many older people experience? How can investment in culture address the severe challenges some societies face with youth unemployment?

This isn't advocating for the instrumentalisation of culture as a policy tool, of funding for the arts being tied to the delivery of education and outreach outcomes. Rather than seeing culture as a tool for delivering this or that government target, both the sector and policymakers need to take in the bigger picture, to understand the role of the arts in the cultural infrastructure of our communities. The sector has a responsibility to connect with and support its host communities, to respond to their needs and aspirations. Delegates learned in the Culture and Wellbeing strand of the Summit that culture has so much to offer beyond being a diversion or entertainment. Cultural participation enhances the lives of the young and the old, benefits those with physical and mental health problems and is crucial to social cohesion. It brings colour, light and warmth to our communities – fundamentally, it is what makes life liveable. Culture enables 'people to transcend and to live for more than necessities – to fulfil their destinies as human beings'. Both policymakers and practitioners need to recognise this and find ways to work together to bring culture into the mainstream when thinking about place-making and how we support healthy, cohesive communities.

Investment decisions need to be driven by strategic thinking and planning, especially where the money being distributed is drawn from taxpayers. Yet too often instead of strategic planning, investment decisions turn into a Darwinian race in a competi-sphere where individual cultural institutions duke it out for 'their' share of the funding. It isn't entirely the fault of the sector – to a degree governments themselves encourage the competi-sphere model. This approach risks perverse outcomes where less grand and/or glamorous but very possibly more deserving and impactful organisations and individual programmes and projects lose out on funding to the apex predators of the cultural ecosystem. It is unsurprising that the big metropolitan institutions tend to monopolise the attention of policymakers. In the competi-sphere, the powerful, elite institutions will almost inevitably crowd out all others trying to get to the funding trough. They exploit their considerable resources for competitive advantage, investing in PR and development teams, and employing consultants to hone their funding bids to government and other funders. At times they can appear to worry more about stakeholder relations than they do about the art form(s) they ostensibly serve.

Instead of seeing the world in terms of a zero-sum game of winners and losers, the sector, especially the leading cultural institutions, should take a more responsible, collectivist approach and look to support others that lack their capacity to engage with governments and other funders. They should engage with other cultural enterprises, offering their advice and helping broker the relationships with policymakers that underpin success. Fostering coalitions and being generous in sharing their knowledge and expertise is not just unselfish, it actually benefits the institutions themselves by building social and human capital that will cycle back to them in the medium and long term. The opportunities for the young and talented created by enabling local and regional organisations to secure much-needed investment will enable the next generation of artists and cultural professionals to develop the skills and experience the big institutions need to continue to thrive.

The competi-sphere model incentivises the big institutions to focus on major capital investments. Grand projects with their starchitects and promises of regeneration tend to be a preoccupation of both the cultural establishment and policymakers. As Dr Maria Balshaw CBE, Director, Tate Art Museums, told the Summit, 'sometimes within the cultural sector we have been a bit beguiled by the bricks and the mortar and the concrete'. She went on to explain that 'enlightened capital expansion [should be] combined with long-running building of community and culture from the ground up – in the Raymond Williams sense of culture rather than the sense of culture as the high arts'. Capital investment in culture is vital – it can make a massive difference especially in places less well-endowed than London or Edinburgh – but the importance of investment in human and social capital must be given equal if not greater priority in decision-making. We need investment in people, in communities, local and regional institutions and grassroots organisations, and in individual artists, as well as in shiny new theatres and galleries for the great metropolitan institutions. There needs to be investment in the creative endeavour itself, in widening participation and in projects that enrich all our communities, not just for the entitled few in our capital cities but for our small market towns and rural communities that too often get overlooked by the establishment.



© VisitScotland/Kenny Lam
A sculpture in the grounds of the Burns Museum

A funny thing happened in the back of a taxi...



Extracts from a conversation between Akram Khan (Director, Akram Khan Company) and Sir Jonathan Mills AO FRSE (Programme Director Edinburgh International Culture Summit) at the Culture in a Networked World plenary.

Akram Khan is one of the most celebrated dance artists today, building his reputation on the success of imaginative, highly accessible and relevant productions of XENOS, Until the Lions, Kaash, iTMOi (in the mind of Igor), DESH, Vertical Road, Gnosis and zero degrees. His Kadamati brought together hundreds of local dancers at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in a grand gesture of unity and was a highlight of the Summit.

Sir Jonathan Mills: The conversation starts with a taxi ride in Sydney, does it not? Tell us about that.

Akram Khan: I was performing at the Sydney Opera House with Juliette Binoche – it was the fourth of five shows – and I was on my way back to my hotel. Although I could see the hotel, for some reason I did not want to walk to it and decided to take a taxi.

Sir Jonathan Mills: You were exhausted.

Akram Khan: Yes.

Sir Jonathan Mills: Funny, that.

Akram Khan: I was waiting for the taxi. When it arrived, I opened the door and this rude couple behind me assumed that I had opened the door for them, and they got in. The taxi did not move. Eventually, they rolled down the window and asked me whether I was Akram, to which I said, 'Maybe.' They then asked whether I was in the performance at the Opera House, and I said, 'I'm not sure,' because I was a bit peeved that they had taken my taxi. When they realised that it was me, they said, 'Thank you so much for the show,' rolled up the window and left. *[Laughter.]*

A second taxi arrived, five minutes later, and I opened the door. That was the first time in my life that I needed to hear my father's voice. I do not really have a phone relationship with my father; I have that mostly with my mother. My father and I do not quite know what to say to each other on the phone – it is that kind of relationship – but I called him. I did not know what time it was in London, but I think that I woke him up.

Sir Jonathan Mills: It would have been very late – or very early.

Akram Khan: Yes. When I asked my abba if he was all right, he said, 'What do you want?' *[Laughter.]* I assumed that I had woken him up; maybe it is just his personality. I said, 'Nothing.' I did not know what to ask him. He asked me whether I was in trouble with the police. I said, 'No, abba, everything is fine. I have a question for you, but I'm not sure what it is.' He said, 'Do you need money?' I said that I was 30-whatever years of age, told him not to worry and said I was sorry that I had woken him up. He put the phone down, then I put the phone down.

I had been speaking to my father in Bengali. The taxi driver then turned around and asked, in Bengali, 'Is your father's name Mosharaf Hossain Khan?' That made me wonder whether I had mentioned my father's name while I was speaking to him, but of course I had not, because in our culture we would not say our parents' names directly to them, as that would be very disrespectful. I thought that the taxi driver had made a very lucky guess and told him, 'Yes, it is.' I felt quite positive. He then asked, 'Can you answer one more question?' I said, 'Sure.' He said, 'Is your father from Algichor?' Algichor is a small village in Bangladesh, and I would guess that only about 200 people in the world know that place. Of those people, 195 still live there and the others are me, my mother, my father, my sister and – I presume – the taxi driver. *[Laughter.]*

At that point, I was getting tense, because he had provided some very specific information. It kind of freaked me out. I was in Australia, not America, but could he be from the CIA or the FBI? I started to get paranoid.

Sir Jonathan Mills: We have the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

Akram Khan: I said, 'Stop the taxi.' He eventually stopped the taxi, and as I was getting out he said, 'Please, just tell me – is he from Algichor?' I needed to know how he knew, so I said, 'Yes, he's from Algichor. How do you know that?' The taxi driver said, 'I've been looking for your father for 35 years. He was a childhood friend of mine in that village. Your father had big dreams; he wanted to do accountancy and he wanted to open a restaurant – he loved working with his hands and cooking. Both of us couldn't live our dreams, so I saved a bit of money and I gave it to him, saying, "Go, live your dreams".'

My father went to Dhaka – the capital – and got a degree. He eventually emigrated to London, where I was born, and he opened a restaurant. Many years later, this childhood friend of my father's is seeing my father's name and his stories pop up in the newspapers in Bangladesh because of me. I said, 'This is unbelievable – my father has to speak to you.'

I called my father and he said, 'What do you want?' [Laughter.] I said, 'There's a man who needs to speak to you.' My father asked, 'Who is he?' I asked the taxi driver, 'What would my father know you as?' He said, 'Say Bilu bhai – bhai is "brother" and Bilu is my nickname. Only he would know that, because he used to call me that.' So I said, 'It's Bilu bhai.' There was silence. That was the first time that I heard my father cry.

I went back to the Sydney Opera House a year later, and I invited my parents to come. During that year, I tried to find all the logical and technological reasons why that connection was made. How did it happen? What are the chances of that happening? My parents were in the audience; he was in the audience. I stopped the show in the middle of the performance and I told this story.

After the show, a couple came to me – it was not the same rude couple; it was another couple. They said, 'Did you know that couple who got in the first taxi?' I said, 'No. I think they were audience members and they just thought I'd opened the door for them.' They said, 'Maybe they were your angels, because, if they hadn't got in the first taxi, you would never have got in the second one.'

© Scottish Parliament
Akram Khan speaking at the Edinburgh
International Culture Summit 2018



Bricks and mortar and concrete

Grand capital investment projects attract both public and private funders, often to the exclusion of smaller local and regional institutions and individual artists and cultural professionals. The cultural elite sell their visions with the promise of local regeneration, growing tourist footfall and/or projected increases in ticket sales and other sources of revenue such as retail outlets and rental income from events. They also offer politicians a nice photo op and a legacy, something to show that their time in office produced something concrete (or brick or glass). Many of these great projects fulfil their side of the bargain, meeting their visitor targets and gentrifying an unloved quarter. Some fail to live up to expectations and in the process tarnish the culture sector 'brand'. A few transform the fortunes of an entire city, as has happened most famously with the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in the 1990s and, as many Summit delegates saw first-hand, in Dundee with the new outpost of the V&A.

Professor Richard Sennett OBE (Chair, Advisory Committee of Theatrum Mundi) explored this phenomenon in his speech at the Summit, highlighting some of the problems it creates:

Putting money into concert halls, museums or theatres seems obviously good for a city or a nation's balance sheet. Such investment attracts tourists, who in turn activate a whole supply chain of activities, from restaurants and hotels to modest craft shops that flog mementos. However, that kind of tourist-orientated investment is not necessarily good for artists and, indeed, can stifle the culture of a city...

... there is a kind of zero-sum game at work in culture, just as there is in investment banking. What the elite gains, the mass loses. For instance, this zero-sum game has ruled the city of Hamburg which, over a decade, spent more than €700 million to build the Elbphilharmonie concert hall, which is a vast project jutting out into the port of the city. The structure has indeed successfully attracted tourists from around the world and global brand musicians,


but there is no money left in the city's budget for support of youth orchestras or studios in which young artists can work or for the semi-professional choirs that once fanned out over the Hanseatic League.

How can we get out of such a zero-sum game? The argument I want to make is that righting the balance means investing more in producers and less in distributors. Moreover, we need to think about how to encourage communities of practitioners, not focus on individual artists. The writer William Empson once declared, 'the arts result from overcrowding', which means that a community of people who do different things and speak in different voices will interact, compete and conspire and so energise one another.

The original expected cost of the Elbphilharmonie in 2003 was €77 million. It ended up costing ten times that and was delivered seven years late. It is an undeniably awe-inspiring architectural achievement. Within its glittering crystalline shell, the Grosser Saal offers concert-goers superb acoustics, thanks in part to the 362 springs that hold it apart from the noise and vibrations of the busy harbour without. Yet local ambivalence about the project is reflected in Hamburg's former culture senator Barbara Kisseler's wry observation, 'the Elbphilharmonie is very dear to us, in both senses of the word'. While a 2016 report in the *Guardian* tells us:

... many Hamburgers have grown to regard the Elbphilharmonie as a symbol of an untrammelled political elite. In 2010, protesters formed a human chain around the building site and ceremonially burned 'Elphie million' dollar bills. The Golden Pudel nightclub, a ramshackle venue on a less salubrious side of the port, was re-christened as the 'Elbphilharmonie of the hearts'. One of the club's proprietors, the former punk singer Schorsch Kamerun, dismissed the concert hall as 'lighthouse politics' – a trophy building projecting its own glory out to the rest of the world, but with little use to the people in the city.²

2. Philip Oltermann, the *Guardian*, 1 November 2016. Available online at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/01/hamburg-elphie-concert-hall-elbphilharmonie-finished>



As dazzling as it is, the Elbphilharmonie has had, as Professor Sennett observed, a deleterious effect on the cultural life of the wider city. To borrow from Jacob's Well, 'to robbe Petyr & geve it Poule, it were non almesse but gret synne'. The sin in this case is the impoverishment of the cultural infrastructure of the city to sate the ego of the elite. Cost overruns and delays in delivery are as common for grand cultural projects as they are for other major infrastructure schemes – just look at London's Crossrail or Berlin's Brandenburg Airport. However, no matter how fantastic a building is, there is something utterly obscene about a public project that requires toilet brushes costing €291.97 each. Such pharaonic excess has no place in the modern world. Artistic integrity is critically important in the realisation of the creative vision but with public funding comes responsibility and accountability. The frivolous and self-indulgent can and will be damned by the public as a shameful waste. *And rightly so.* The failures in the planning and delivery of the Elbphilharmonie project have harmed the cultural opportunities of the city, reducing participation and undermining the natural cycle of self-renewal that is needed for a sustainable cultural ecosystem. Where are the next generation of artists and performers to come from to fill the Kleiner Saal with the great songs of Brahms? Without investment in the city's youth orchestras and other ensembles they won't be from the composer's native Hamburg. In time the memories of excess and delays in completing the Elbphilharmonie may well fade into irrelevance as the city and the country as a whole come to love their version of that other late, vastly over budget, harbour-side icon, Sydney Opera House. Assuming the running costs of the Elbphilharmonie are more modest than the capital ones and do not continue to monopolise public expenditure, the vandalism inflicted on the city's cultural infrastructure will be undone as a more balanced, community-focused approach to investment replaces the ego-driven, elitist decision-making that lies behind the many mistakes in the development.

Rightly or wrongly there is a particular onus on the culture sector to avoid being seen to waste money on fanciful capital projects as any failure can and will be taken up as a brickbat to beat upon the sector as a whole. The cost overruns of the Elbphilharmonie or the abject failure of the aborted Thames Garden Bridge project make it harder to make the case for investment in culture. There are hundreds if not thousands of brilliant, transformative projects in London and across the UK that could have been funded by the £53 million wasted on the Garden Bridge. There will always be those who would argue for resources to be put to 'better' use and the sector cannot afford to give ammunition to those who would look upon such failures as confirmation of their myopic views of the value of culture. But equally fear of failure should not be allowed to reduce our ambitions or shackle the creative impulse. Societies need the culture sector to dream and inspire, to think the unthinkable. This is as true of hard decisions over investment as it is of the creative endeavour itself. There is a balance to be struck that manages risk in a way that enables rather than constricts the growth of the sector, that minimises failures while maximising opportunities. Risk management is an essential part of a strategic approach to investment in culture. Investment in the cultural infrastructure of place should be made on the basis of what is most beneficial to the health of our communities as a whole. Such an approach rejects vanity and ego. And €291.97 toilet brushes.

There is an interesting contrast between the Elbphilharmonie and Herzog and De Meuron's other famous reinvention of a former industrial site – the transformation of the Bankside Power Station into Tate Modern. Like Hamburg's new concert hall, the Tate has proven popular with tourists, pulling in 5.7 million visitors in 2017–18.³ Yet where public ambivalence has greeted the Elbphilharmonie, the local community in Southwark has welcomed the change wrought by the Bankside development. The transfiguration of the site reclaimed it for the local community as well as the worldwide audience for Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ai Weiwei. Creating space for the community was seen as a fundamental part of the development from the outset, expressed most touchingly in the community garden, which was designed and constructed by local people in a creative collaboration with the gallery, charity Magic Me, visual artist Michelle Fuirer and garden designer Lucy Williams. For all the vastness of the Turbine Hall, Tate Modern is a project that is human in scale and feel. And because the approach to the Tate Modern development was sensitive to the local context and sought to embrace the community, the proposal to extend through the construction of what became the Blavatnik Building was broadly welcomed. Dr Maria Balshaw, Director, Tate Art Museums, explored the approach to the development of Tate Modern and other UK regeneration projects in her speech to the plenary:

I had been walking along the South Bank for many years – it was a site of desolation until this spider sculpture arrived as part of the conversion of a power station on the Thames in a previously rather deserted part of Southwark. It became a gallery of modern international art. Everyone said it could not work; it was signalled by the arrival of spiders inside the building and also outside on the edge of the Thames – Louise Bourgeois sculptures, as many of you will know. It was ... predicted to attract 1.25 million people. In fact, this newly created gallery space saw 5.25 million visitors in its first year.

Latterly, it grew again to become Tate Modern, which saw 8.4 million visits in its first year of operation. Tate's expansion changed London fundamentally. It made London a global centre for contemporary art in a way that it had never been before and it made contemporary art part of the mainstream life of a world city.

With the many other businesses, cultural and community partners in the area, Tate regenerated the neighbourhood and it still strives to make this a living, working neighbourhood, rather than it simply being ... about the displacement of existing resident communities and artists to make way for the wealthy and the culturally connected. To regenerate a neighbourhood sensitively is very hard work.

Last year, there were swings in the Tate Modern, which were co-ordinated by the Danish collective SUPERFLEX ... The swings that were inside the turbine hall saw people as the generators of the creative energy that is now driving a power station that is for culture ... The cultivation of such joy in action, which that project was, is not silly or playful, as some grumpy art critics suggested; it is politically necessary and invites citizens into the making of the culture that they then enjoy.

... You will all recognise the problems that we face around the globe. They are about intolerance between people, inequalities across society and the social isolation of individuals, which is worse for the poor and exacerbated for the elderly. I do not think that museums or cultural institutions save lives, and we should resist that missionary zeal. However, I think that they contribute to the living of a good and engaged life, and they make us more mentally resilient and give us a cheerier outlook on life, which is not an insignificant thing. That is part of the intrinsic value of culture for people, who are all welcomed into our museums, and invited to participate and to create the art that surrounds us.

In that way, cultural institutions are not just about their infrastructure; they can be partners in the complex shaping of places where a wide diversity of people can live, thrive and work. That gives us the real case for investment in the culture of a city or country.

3. Tate Annual Report 2017/18. Available online at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/124628>

Communities are not passive. They have ideas and can help shape and drive regeneration programmes. That can be infuriating for developers, architects, planners and politicians, but once the cranes and diggers depart and the grand opening of that new multi-purpose arts space has passed, the communities are the people who have to live with the development; they are the custodians of place. Regeneration programmes that work with communities build civic pride; they create places where people are happier, healthier and safer. Crime and anti-social behaviour fall. Schemes that are imposed on their communities are much more likely to fail; the shine soon fades on soulless developments that ignore or spite a sense of place. Success means being inclusive and accessible, bringing prosperity to the community as a whole.

The successful regeneration scheme that truly benefits local communities needs to be rooted in and owned by those communities. Communities need to be consulted, their needs and aspirations understood. They need to be involved in the decision-making, to have a sense of ownership and, having collectively agreed that they need a shiny new gallery or theatre, to continue to feel included. New buildings and expansive renovations should be welcoming, and both embrace and embody the local community rather than hide behind some grand portico that says to the locals, 'I'm not for you'. Maria achieved just that in Manchester with the masterly reimagination of the Whitworth Gallery, which reconnected it with a neighbouring public park. Ask a community what they want and the answers will likely include: better public services; jobs; affordable housing; safe, accessible public spaces; 'somewhere for the young people to go'. There will always be a local context – something that people associate with their community, that somehow defines their unique sense of place. The equivalent to Dundee's 'jam, jute and journalism'.

In making any substantial capital investment in culture, practitioners and policymakers alike need to respond positively to both the past and the future aspirations of the local population. The collective experience accrued from the capital investments of the early 21st century is that the most successful offer so much more than 'just' a new gallery or stage. The best schemes offer spaces for community enterprises, market stalls and public performances, and just for meeting friends. Culture is a fundamentally human activity; it needs spaces that are human in scale, that embrace the communal, social instincts of local people.

The V&A Dundee is the centrepiece of the £1 billion transformation of Dundee City Waterfront, a 30-year project (2001–31) encompassing 240 hectares of development land stretching eight kilometres alongside the River Tay that is projected to lead to the creation of 7,000-plus jobs. The vision for the Waterfront is, 'to transform the City of Dundee into a world leading waterfront destination for visitors and businesses through the enhancement of its physical, economic and cultural assets'.⁴ The development has been long in the making. Back in 1998, the Dundee Partnership started preparation on a masterplan to re-integrate the Central Waterfront area with the city centre. The development of the masterplan sought to unlock the exceptional opportunity provided by the Waterfront and to create a shared vision for the area to not only create a distinctive identity and sense of place but also provide a robust framework for investment and decision-making. Following a major public consultation exercise in 2000 and 2001 a consensus view emerged and the masterplan was approved. Today the regeneration of the Waterfront has brought a real buzz to the city; there is a sense of excitement and optimism.

4. Discover Dundee Waterfront, About the Waterfront. Available online at: <https://www.dundeewaterfront.com/about>



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V&A Dundee

It would be wrong to paint an uncritical, overly rosy picture of the Waterfront development. There are similarities between the V&A Dundee development and the Elbphilharmonie project. Both are fantastic architectural jewels that have had issues with rising costs, delays and local calls for the funding to be spent directly on tackling poverty – the city of Dundee has some of the most deprived communities in the UK. But it is the differences that really stand out. The V&A is very much part of the community-led, holistic reinvention of the city of Dundee through the power of culture. Here is a marriage of a grand vision with an understanding of context, of an imaginative ambition for the city that is both shared with and inspired by its citizenry. Consultants, advocacy and lobbying are a part of what has made the regeneration of Dundee's long-unloved waterfront possible but it has been engagement with the local population, to put their interests at the heart of the development, that has made it a successful example of capital investment in the cultural infrastructure of place. V&A Dundee is both an inspiration for and an expression of the people of Dundee's values and self-confidence. Perhaps unsurprisingly, like Tate Modern, it too has a community garden but the place of the community in the project goes beyond that. Architect Kengo Kuma has described the museum as a 'living room for the city'. It is a welcoming space for Dundonians to be directly involved in shaping their changing city – or simply to hang out with friends over a coffee. Picking up on the living room concept, designers Linsey McIntosh and Sooz Gordon, alongside Peter Ananin and Jen Robinson from community-led project Skill Share Dundee, encouraged curious communities to realise their potential as designers by supporting them in making personalised lights and showcasing them in a Living Room for the City exhibition, making clear that Dundee's new living room is for the whole community. Opening up the living room to communities beyond the city itself, Design in Motion, V&A Dundee's first national touring exhibition, took the work of seven of Scotland's most exciting contemporary designers to 85 locations across Scotland on a coach, inviting Scots from across the country to come on in for a cuppa and a chinwag.

The V&A Dundee, Tate Modern and Elbphilharmonie are all massive capital investments costing millions of pounds but capital investment isn't just about the big Guggenheim Bilbao-style projects. Design in Motion shows that capital investments need not be so eye-wateringly expensive. Smaller, cheaper investments can be made that while less showy can nevertheless have a powerful impact. A coach to take exhibitions from a city centre gallery to rural communities, a soundproofed booth in a school for students to practise the bagpipes, a lease on studios for artists to work in – in the grand scheme of things these are all relatively inexpensive but they create spaces for culture, enriching communities and increasing participation. Sanjoy Roy, Managing Director, Teamwork Arts, spoke powerfully about the difference such relatively modest capital investments can make to a community in his speech at the Culture and Investment plenary. The kinds of marginalised groups Teamwork Arts work with do not need grand new buildings – indeed they will generally be utterly excluded from such places by barriers both physical and social. Like all communities they need real, grassroots capital investments designed with them in mind, to create places that are safe, welcoming and inclusive. Shared spaces encourage participation. When there are benches for older people, when we ensure public space is easily navigable for those with limited mobility – we create living rooms that say 'please come in' and 'you belong here' not 'keep out' or 'this isn't for you'.

Capital investment in culture is vital to the health of our communities – there will always be a need for investment in bricks and mortar and concrete. Done well, it can have transformative effect, renewing and reinventing a place and bringing joy and confidence to local people. But to make a difference to the social capital of a community, regeneration needs to complement and enhance a place and not drain its cultural lifeblood. What use is some shiny new glass mecca to the arts if it comes at the expense of the artists and participants that are needed to populate it? Investment in bricks and mortar and concrete needs to be balanced with investment in human and social capital.

Shared spaces encourage participation ... living rooms that say 'please come in' not 'this isn't for you'.

Tackling social exclusion through investment in culture



Extracts from the speech by Sanjoy Roy (Managing Director, Teamwork Arts) to the Culture and Investment plenary. Teamwork Arts produces performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across 40 cities in countries and territories such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, UK and USA, including the world's largest free literary gathering – the annual ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival.

... artists do not necessarily create work only to entertain. They create work because they have volition to do so; they create work because they wish to represent the past, reflect on the future and perhaps put up a mirror to what is happening and make sense of the present.

For far too long, the art sector has been seen as a charity case that receives handouts. What you all forget – as artists and people working in the arts, we will remind you again and again – is that the arts produce tangible and intangible wealth in many different ways around the globe. You may choose not to acknowledge that and to continue to cut the budgets of arts organisations and infrastructure projects, but you do so at some peril.

I will give you a few examples of some of the work that we have been partly responsible for; really, in a way, we have been facilitators rather than doing it all. We work around in the globe in about 40 countries. We run 26 art festivals everywhere from Australia to the United States and bits in between. We work in places where there is distress and conflict, such as Israel, Egypt, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Alice Springs in Australia. In each of those places, we have found that every time that we are able to bring an intervention of the arts and make an investment, it changes the lives of the people and the community, and it brings about great economic progress.

In 2002, the then Western Australia minister for the interior invited me to go over there... In 2002, the interior minister came to see something that we were doing in India with street children. I set up a street children's organisation 30 years ago; it started with about 25 kids and today we have 9,500 children. Much of the work that we do to mainstream the children uses the arts – music,

theatre, dance, literature and film – and of course everybody wants to become an artist. I say to them, 'Whoa, hold on a minute! You can do other things as well. It is not necessarily only the arts that you must be responsible for.'

The Western Australia government wanted to reimagine open prisons because two per cent of the Western Australia population is Aboriginal yet 98 per cent of their prison population is Aboriginal. The particular community that we were taken to 40 miles outside Kalgoorlie had a 100 per cent incarceration rate, which meant that, from cradle to grave, everybody had been to prison.

We said, 'Why don't we work collectively with the communities in a 100-kilometre radius, and allow them to create a project that would define their language, form and art, and would tell their stories in a big desert project?' We asked the government not to ask the communities to come into town to receive their dole; instead, we asked whether the dole officer could go out in a van to the community to make the payments. We also asked whether the government could send a van or truck with supplies and provisions during the project, and if they could map it over a six-month period.

As most of you will know, in any community where you get dole, you get the money at one end of the street, you then go to the alcohol shop and, at the other end of the street, there is a policeman who arrests you and throws you into jail. That is the case for most disenfranchised communities where there is inequity. What happened was that the incarceration rate went from 100 per cent to 12.5 per cent in that six-month period. It is not rocket science and governments need to understand that.

Similarly, in South Africa in 2005 or 2006, Steven Sack, who was the head of culture in the Newtown district of Johannesburg in Gauteng, approached our High Commission to ask whether I would go out to give them a little bit of advice on how to resurrect Newtown, which had fallen apart. All the wealth had disappeared, it was crime-infested and there was only Standard Bank and First National Bank.

When we went in there to assess the need, I said to the city government, 'If you are able to delineate an arts precinct in Newtown and ensure that there is great lighting and excellent policing 24/7, I promise that in three years' time, I will walk across Mary Fitzgerald Square with my mobile phone and I will not be mugged.' It came to pass. Restaurants, art galleries and photography shops opened, the old power centre was transformed into a conference centre, and museums came along. Bassline, with Brad Holmes, did an incredible job. The area has opened up and, today, more and more investment is coming into it.

Again, this is not rocket science. This is something that all of you should be doing in communities where there is a problem; you need to find a way to create a new beginning.

In Egypt, just after the Arab Spring, we got a call from the High Commission again, which had been approached by the government of the time. We went out there. We understood that 80 per cent of Egypt's GDP was based on tourism but tourism had disappeared over that period. People needed to live – they needed jobs and they needed the tourists to come back.

We said, 'We need to show the world that Egypt is safe.' We began a festival there but we began it at the airport, at terminal 1 in Cairo. Images were beamed out across the world by the BBC, by CNN and so on and so forth, which allowed people to at least understand that people who were not Egyptian were coming back into the country and it was a safe environment.

At roughly the same time, because of the bombings in Boston, Logan International Airport connected with us to ask us whether we could do the same thing there. I immediately said no. I said that Homeland Security would never allow it – they would arrest every artist – plus America would never give us visas so there was no point even considering this particular artistic intervention in America.

I gave you those examples to show that you do not need a lot of money; you do not need a lot of new ideas or thoughts. You can look at what already exists... and then transform your space and transform it for good.

My experience in creating these platforms comes thanks to the city of Edinburgh, which I visited thanks to the British Council in 1999 as part of one of the British Council's missions to take people out and show them Edinburgh. I was transformed by the collective energy of these thousands of artists from across the globe coming together. Yes, a lot of the work that you see is perhaps rubbish or not so good, but when you see that collective energy and when you see a moment of brilliance, as those of you who saw *HOME*... did, it lifts your heart, it lifts your soul, and it transforms you.

That 1999 visit transformed me and it gave me a sense that we need to create these many platforms; we need to believe again in the arts. Unfortunately, in the very same city of Edinburgh today – because of the policies of the present UK government, I suspect – you do not allow visas to many communities and people who would like to come here and participate in this incredible offering of culture.

We need to break down our boundaries. On one hand, we are talking about the internet having democratised us and having allowed us all to come together across the world; at the same time, every country and every city state across the world feels threatened – threatened by artists. They feel that we do not speak their language necessarily and that artists wish to jump their visas and stay on in other countries, and they deny us that right to speak – that right to be able to express ourselves.

For all of us together in this very complicated and complex world that we inhabit, the one thing that can bring about a difference, especially in societies where there is inequity – all the way from America through to India, Indonesia, Africa and everywhere else – is knowledge and education. The arts provide that. The arts give us an opportunity to open our minds. The arts create a window that allows us to be able to see a different history, a different culture, a different philosophy, and a different way of being able to work. That is the investment that we need to do; that is what we have to create.

I will share [two] short stories with you, again to show how investment in the arts and people makes a difference. At Salaam Baalak Trust, the streetchildren's project that we began, there was a young boy who was not doing great in his studies, so his teacher said to him, 'Why don't you find something to do – not necessarily education – after your 10th standard?' He said, 'Oh, I want to do photography,' because one of his peers had become very successful doing that. We put him through a photography course and a whole process of training, seconding him to two or three photographers of some eminence. He went on to find his own voice. Today, Vicky Roy speaks across the world, in every TED talk and conference. His work sits in most private collections and in museums across the world. This was a child who was from the streets and unlettered.

I will talk about another case. We started the Jaipur Literature Festival 11 years ago, with 250 people coming through our doors in the first year. [In 2018] ... half a million people came through our doors over five days, and 61 per cent of that half million were below the age of 25. We were very clear that we wanted to aim the festival at young people and make it a city festival. We wanted to reach out to all those people who did not have access to this kind of education and learning.

Four years into the setting up of the festival, I was standing at the door – I stand there and receive people for an hour every day after we open the doors at 7.30 a.m. – when this man and boy walked in off the street. We had put in place security, and the man and boy were stopped because they looked like they did not belong. Because I was there, I went up and said, 'Can I help you?' The man said, 'You know, I sleep on the pavement up the road, opposite the SMS Hospital. I know I'll never be able to afford to send my son to school or buy him a book, but I thought that if he heard a story it would change his life for ever. I am sorry that I have come; I didn't realise that this was not for me.' I said, 'Not only is it for you but I want hundreds and thousands more people like you to come in. This is a shared space.'

You have to understand the sociological context of this. In a city like Jaipur, which lives in many centuries at the same time, walking through the gate of a palace like that is unthinkable on a regular day – yet that man believed that he could come. That brought about change.

This change ... is something that we can feel. It is something important. It is something that can break down boundaries and barriers and bring us together. It is war out there. There is hatred. Once the genie of hatred is released, you cannot put it back into the bottle. How can we bring about change? The arts are one possible way of doing that.

What we need ... is action, not lip service. What we need ... is investment, not charity. What we need ... is intent and support for artists, to allow them their voice, irrespective of race, country or religion ... Be you a senior bureaucrat or a minister, I say: please, we are not a threat to you; we are here to work with you, we are here to create more understanding and we are here because we want our voices to be heard across communities and across places of inequity and division. Please do not look on us as a threat. Do not shut us down. Please support these individual voices, from Bangladesh to the Philippines and everywhere in between.

We need your help. We must stand together. We owe it to our next generation – our time is long over. Invest in young people. Invest in the arts. Invest in the future of communities.



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Sanjoy Roy speaking at the Edinburgh
International Culture Summit 2018

Human capital

The competi-sphere approach to investment is selfish and can easily become self-defeating. Unchecked, the Darwinian impulse leads to perverse outcomes that are less about the cultural infrastructure of place than the narrow interests or worse the egos of a privileged few. It can, as Professor Sennett described, actually erode the cultural infrastructure of a community by taking resources away from less glamorous grassroots projects and programmes. What might have been achieved for Hamburg's artistic community if the cash needlessly flushed away on those toilet brushes had been invested in the creators instead? Investment decisions driven by promises of regeneration and attracting tourists to some dazzling new attraction may be more superficially attractive than small-scale community projects or direct support for artists in the form of affordable housing or studio spaces, but a proper assessment of cost versus benefit to the cultural infrastructure of the cultural elite's latest wheeze may well reveal that it is the more modest choice that is the superior long-term investment. There is a responsibility here for policymakers to take the lead and resist the pressure from the usual suspects from the cultural elites and reach out to communities less able to get themselves heard. For many communities investment in human and social capital can be far more impactful than spending on a new gallery or concert hall. It will also be perceived as having a greater legitimacy than the 'lighthouse politics' of the privileged few.

We need the arts to be a vital, living, ever-evolving force. We need them to enable our communities to process and understand the world around us. We need artists to interpret and challenge the pressures facing our society, to heal the divisions that increasingly mar the public discourse. Yet instead of investing in artists both the sector and policymakers continue to be beguiled by the bricks and mortar and concrete. The continued pursuit of grand designs with

their starchitects and superstar performers and exhibitors at the expense of investment in actual artists and grassroots participation in the arts puts the great metropolitan institutions at risk of consuming their own children, for that is how the sector should look at the next generation of practitioners and audience members living out in the provinces.

Investing in human capital, in artists and cultural professionals, is absolutely essential to the cultural infrastructure that underpins our communities. We need to renew and replenish the people that are the lifeblood of the arts. Artists need to learn their craft, to develop the skills and knowledge to create and the confidence to find their voice. As well as artists we need a continuing flow of new curators, critical thinkers, technicians, registrars and other highly skilled professionals to maintain the capacity of our institutions and to bring in fresh ideas and the latest innovations. Traditionally in the UK, local and regional arts companies were the place where young practitioners developed their craft but these are the very institutions that have suffered the most significant cuts to their funding under 'austerity'. Meanwhile, funding for national institutions has been, comparatively, protected and what's more continued to be supplemented by additional funding for major capital investments. Yet without the talent traditionally cultivated in regional theatre the future of the famous stages of London's Theatreland – not to mention the great film studios of Bollywood – is threatened. Similarly, without school and community arts programmes there will be nowhere for musicians and artists to take their first steps on the path of a creative career, to even realise they have a talent or learn that there is such a thing as a career in the arts. Every professional artist begins as an enthusiastic amateur. That drive and passion needs space and support to experiment and grow.

© Mat Wright
An artist works in a studio in Pakistan



Grants and loans for academic study; support for apprenticeships; professional placements and international cultural exchanges; mentoring programmes for young people like Robert Peston's Speakers4Schools⁵ programme; funding for school and community arts programmes – there are many ways policymakers and the sector can come together to help support practitioners to learn their craft. But investing in human capital is about far more than just education. Artists don't just need to learn which brush to use or how to perform the perfect fouetté, they need studios in which to practise their craft, affordable homes and help with the other necessities of life that are that much harder to secure for creatives who tend towards more flexible patterns of work, often with temporary assignments and the uncertain incomes that flow from being self-, part-time and/or 'under'-employed. Woosung Lee, Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea, told the Summit how, in recognition of the particular challenges artists face, the government is intending to establish a social security system specifically for artists and athletes. Such innovative approaches have the potential to transform lives.

In discussing the development of the New York High Line, architect Elizabeth Diller, Founder of interdisciplinary design studio Diller Scofidio + Renfro, highlighted how it has become that much harder to be an artist these days and the implications that the rising cost of living has on the cultural infrastructure of the city she has done so much to shape.

In the 1970s, New York was a great place of artistic production. When I was in school, so many people, including Matta-Clark, Phil Glass, Sol LeWitt and Patti Smith, were producing so many different things. Our rent was cheap. The city has changed tremendously since then. That was a time of production; today is a time of consumption. Most artists have moved out – they have been priced out of their lofts.

Elizabeth went on to describe the latest project her team have been working on that shows it is possible for a major capital investment to also be an investment in human and social capital:

The idea of the Shed came out of my frustration about what has happened to New York... We thought that it would be great to bring some of that production back to New York. With the Shed, we have seized the moment in an opportunistic way. The city did not know what to do with a piece of its property and it asked whether anyone had any ideas. That was in 2008, when the economy was tanking.

First, we asked what art will look like in five, ten and 20 years. The basic response was that we did not know; we had no idea. Therefore, the best thing that we could do to preserve a place for culture and cultural production would be to make an architecture of infrastructure. By that I mean a little bit what Cedric Price meant with his fun palace project: space is preserved, there is a lot of structure, loading capacity and power, you have the ability to do pretty much anything you want and there is lots of space, so you can make small and large spaces.

We usually think of buildings with such flexibility as being without architectural distinction, but what if we could make a building with distinction that is not just neutral and also has the capacity for transformation, interpretation and change and that could be rescripted every day and on into the future? By doing that, we would be bringing back something of what was lost.

If we speed up to today, the Shed will open in 2019. Alex Poots, the previous director of the Manchester International Festival, is the artistic director and chief executive officer. He is doing a fantastic job. The Shed will only commission new work and co-produce with cultural institutions all over the globe while also inspiring and leaving space for local artists to do all sort of things.

It isn't just New York where consumption has displaced production; rents in many cities are unaffordable for artists. The rising cost of living has priced many artists out of the metropolitan centres, the very places where once they congregated, often having fled their 'suffocating' provincial lives for the bright lights and excitement of the city to study, explore and experiment, and be a part of a mixed artistic community. It is a tragic irony that often those grand cultural projects that gentrify an unloved corner of a city end up driving out the creators that lived and worked there before the fashionable set arrived and pushed up all the rents. The city has long been the white-hot engine of creation, the crucible where different ideas and identities are smelted and, amid a shower of sparks and noise and heat, something new and wonderful is created. In college studios, lofts, HMOs, cafes and clubs, the back rooms of pubs, and car parks and alleyways, art is created by the interaction of artists in shared spaces. Those conversations and collaborations – those crucial connections – are formative. Here human and social capital interact fostering creativity. An artistic community has needs and wants that need to be met if its individual members are to thrive. We need to make space for them, to support them in ways that enable them to flourish.

5. Speakers for Schools. Available online at: <https://www.speakers4schools.org>

Professor Sennett explored the impact of the rising cost of living on artists in his presentation:

It is news to no one that inequality is increasing in the global economy and those places where economic growth has become intense. We usually think about such inequality in terms of the obscene amounts of capital controlled by those in the very top one per cent or even 0.1 per cent. Meteoric expansion at the top has, in the last 30 years, been paralleled by income stagnation and declining social mobility in the middle or lower middle classes. Most artists are part of that stagnant middle. Of course, there is a global circuit of musicians and visual artists whose fortunes resemble those of Goldman Sachs bankers, but artists who live a more civically orientated and modest existence have seen their fortunes decline in the last 30 years.

For instance, a few years ago, a team of my students analysed the economic condition of visual artists in New York City and found a steady decline of income from the sales of art, even as the incomes of the global artist elite expanded exponentially. The number of shows and galleries for artists under 30 shrank by 40 per cent over a 25-year period. Rents on studio spaces tripled or quadrupled in the same period, forcing many artists to abandon the city in order to pursue their work.

Professor Sennett then went on to set out how artists need space to experiment and iterate on their work, in the process drawing parallels with the tech sector, before going on to explore how to improve the sector's approach to capital investment:

... in the early days of the tech revolution in Silicon Valley outside San Francisco... [our research] found that about 40 start-ups were needed to produce every patent. That is an example of technology, in the pre-monopoly days, resulting from lots of people interacting with each other in the tech business. We need to think the same way in finance and culture. We need to build communities if we want to build creative industries. That is a basic rule. God may be able to cherry-pick the Google platform that will raise \$80 billion or whatever Google is up to now – God may understand what that is – but, for us, the process of experiment, failure and, most of all, communication among people in a living community of creative types is what will produce a culture. We cannot know that in advance and try to cherry-pick the one that looks promising and to lift the individual out of the mass...

Instead of the Elbphilharmonie model, how could a concert hall be designed for programmes small as well as big? How could it be integrated into the everyday working lives of artists in the city? There is the same problem for big museums. Their public consists of makers as well as visitors. How can a museum service the needs of creators for a community among themselves? To go back to the tech example, how can big cultural institutions become something like laboratories in which there are some successes and many failures, just as every patent required 39 failures or aborted projects?

Creative work entails failure and frustration, and that is something that is not easily exposed outside of the community. So how should we support that and invest in this necessarily dark side of the creative process? My argument is that, in some way, we need to orientate ourselves to make institutions large and small in which that creative work ... of all sides, artistic as well as technical, flourishes because people are interacting with each other face to face.

Policymakers are increasingly recognising the need for affordable homes and studio spaces for artists and community arts organisations. San Francisco's Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST⁶) was founded on the belief that the arts drive strong, vibrant, diverse communities. CAST seeks to stabilise rents for non-profit arts organisations by freezing real estate prices in an escalating market. It also provides support to increase the financial acumen of cultural organisations, brokers partnerships with local government and other funders, and assists arts organisations to secure a capital asset, such as a studio space, without risking their operations and programmes. London's Creative Land Trust and new Creative Enterprise Zones draw on the lessons from the work of CAST. Funding from City Hall and philanthropists will provide London's artists with training and education and support for affordable workspaces in certain boroughs of the city, such as Hackney Wick in east London, which is home to a large concentration of artists, but also an area of rapid gentrification and rising house prices. It can and will take time and financial investments to reverse the modern trend for cities to change from places of production to consumption. Creative approaches, such as the use of 'meanwhile leases' that offer property owners tax incentives to let artists take on an empty building for use as a studio while they look to find a 'normal occupier', can be very helpful where spaces to create are few and/or prohibitively expensive, but they are a short-term fix – capital investment will be needed to bring appropriate, secure spaces online for artists.

6. Community Arts Stabilization Trust. The Model. Available online at: <https://cast-sf.org/the-model/>


Investment in people and in our artistic communities is fundamental to the health and vitality of our shared cultural life. Without investment in the grassroots the arts will become the preserve of the privileged, narrowing and impoverishing the cultural discourse. It is at the grassroots that we find the disruptors, the upstarts and start-ups that challenge established norms and renew and reinvent what we think of as art. It is there that we find the creative hubbub Empson alluded to that is at the heart of the artistic endeavour. Innovation comes from individuals, smaller organisations and coalitions on the periphery, people that form connections and spark off one another. It is the outsiders, the entrepreneur, *the other*, that challenge the status quo. New forms and ideas emerge not in the mainstream but along these fringes. Rap and hip-hop are now mainstream and accepted, even feted, by the cultural elites, but they came from the streets not the salons of the wealthy. There needs to be far more attention given over to the creation and protection of pathways for developing and enabling the talents of artists, especially those with fewer opportunities to participate. The talented should all have access to opportunities for professional training and cultural participation regardless of background. We need their voices and fresh ideas, especially those with a provincial or working class accent, the citizens of somewhere that the elites too often ignore.

It is ultimately a futile endeavour to pour investment into buildings and institutions if we do not invest in up-and-coming talent, in enabling the artists and other skilled personnel that bring life to these great venues to learn their craft, to experiment and iterate on their own creative process. Rather than focus all our resources on bricks and mortar, policymakers and the cultural establishment should place a much greater emphasis on investing in human capital. Many cultural institutions, especially national organisations, enjoy generous public subsidies and can afford in turn to be generous. Partnerships and even small grants for grassroots groups can make a vital difference to practitioners operating on the fringes. But it isn't just about money – sharing studio spaces or offering a public platform to perform, for example, can make a huge difference to emerging artists. Sharing knowledge and skills, giving a little time for mentorship, can have a transformative impact. And not only for the new artist; the staff in institutions can find such engagements immensely rewarding.

Establishments are naturally conservative, even liberal, 'woke' cultural ones. Those who occupy the cultural heights talk the talk on equality, diversity and widening opportunities for participation but it remains a world of gilded porticos and glass ceilings that too often shuts out the other from power. Investment in human capital must include supporting people from different backgrounds to break through the barriers to participation in the arts at all levels, even the boardrooms of our leading institutions. Culture cannot just be the purview of the privileged few. Our institutions should reflect the diversity of society as a whole – how else can continued subsidy from general taxation be justified to the general



© Getty/Gary Hershorn
The Shed, New York




Those who occupy the cultural heights talk the talk on equality, diversity and widening opportunities for participation but it remains a world of gilded porticos and glass ceilings that too often shuts out the other from power.

populace? Addressing the barriers that keep women and other under-represented groups from positions of power is not an easy task but it is an essential one, both morally and for the benefits that would accrue from unlocking the huge untapped potential of that much larger pool of talent. Policymakers can look at boardroom quotas and other macro-level interventions but there are also organisational solutions that individual institutions can look to implement without waiting for a government diktat. Fair and open recruitment practices, in-house programmes for the development of talent and a relentless focus on systemic and sustainable change to an organisation's mindset and processes regarding diversity are vital. Institutions need to understand the systemic issues and recognise the often invisible barriers to advancement and implement comprehensive diversity and inclusion policies. By being inclusive institutions can challenge the perceived stuffy and elitist nature of the arts, broaden their appeal to new audiences and evidence a real commitment to their local communities.

As well as investing in artists and cultural professionals, it is also essential to invest in that other crucial human element of the arts, the public. The people are the consumers of culture. They make up the audiences that buy the entry tickets and pay the taxes that fund investment in the arts. They are the most important group in the cultural infrastructure of place and yet are the least heard in the cultural discourse. They are not all 'culture vultures' that can't wait for the latest revival of *Betrayal* at the Harold Pinter Theatre or who head to Edinburgh every summer to catch productions like Geoff Sobelle's *HOME*. For many the arts, defined narrowly as what happens in the great cultural institutions and at cultural extravaganzas such as the Edinburgh International Festival, are 'not for me'; they are exclusive, the preserve of the well-off few in metropolitan capitals such as New York or Seoul. For all the millions that visit the British Museum every year there are millions of Brits that never have and would never think of doing so. In the UK the proportion of over-16s that have visited a museum or gallery in the past year is around the 50 per cent mark. It is considerably lower for BAME Britons.⁷ It is hard to make the case for the arts and for the importance of investment in cultural infrastructure if barely half the population is personally engaging with that infrastructure on anything like a regular basis.

Our cultural institutions have a duty to reach out to communities, to prove that they are for the many not the few. There may well be a vague, general sense in the community that the local museum or library is a good thing, a public good even, but unless local people feel truly invested they are unlikely to fight for it if the council decides to cut provision, especially if the justification is to increase spending on something 'more important' – such as social care, or bin collections. To succeed, institutions have to involve and fully reflect the communities they serve, listening to and addressing their interests and concerns. The family outing to the Christmas panto is for many Brits their first experience of the theatre and such popular fare is core both to getting bums on seats for the much-needed ticket revenue and for demystifying institutions that might otherwise seem almost alien to the daily experience of life.

7. Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Taking Part Survey, 22 August 2018. Available online at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/culture-and-community/culture-and-heritage/adults-visiting-museums-and-galleries/latest>

A photograph of Nicola Sturgeon, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark jacket with a light-colored trim. She is speaking and gesturing with her hands. The background is blurred, showing other people. The image is framed by large, stylized purple and white geometric shapes.

The Edinburgh International Culture Summit is, without a shadow of a doubt – in my unbiased opinion – the world’s leading forum for the discussion of arts and culture policy.

Nicola Sturgeon

Clever programming can cut through the invisible barriers to participation – the art critics might have sneered at the swings and slides that have featured in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, but approachable, enjoyable culture needs to be part of the offer of our institutions, great and small. Audiences are far more likely to know Tom Hiddleston as Loki or for *The Night Manager* than for his roles on stage, but casting actors such as Tom or Charlie 'Daredevil' Cox or Benedict 'Dr Strange/Khan/Sherlock' Cumberbatch in a West End production is a sure-fire way to pull in people that might not otherwise have made the trip to London from the provinces. Likewise when the V&A does Kylie or Bowie a whole host of new visitors are attracted, many of whom will take in some of the museum's more 'worthy' galleries as part of the trip. But there are many more innovative examples of reaching out and doing culture differently and most do not involve a star turn from a former *Doctor Who* or soap star.

Finding ways to grow a connection that goes beyond that once-a-year trip 'for the kids' is essential for building understanding and support for culture's place in the community. This can mean offering popular events but it should also mean tackling potentially difficult and uncomfortable issues in their programming that proves their relevance to their communities. To succeed, institutions need investment and support to develop the skills to fully engage with local people; yet when funding is tight, the outreach and education services that can build those connections are often the first to go. Where resources are tight, creative solutions such as the pooling of funding by small groups of local organisations to support a full-time education officer post that individually none could afford can enable continued engagement and dialogue. Local and regional cultural organisations are the entry point for most people's cultural participation, so it's in the interests of the sector as a whole for them to thrive. National institutions can help by being generous with their own resources and finding ways to partner with other organisations outside the local equivalent of the Circle Line.

There are lessons from Scotland, a country with a densely populated Central Belt but a much sparser and more rural population spread far and wide across the Highlands and Islands. Providing opportunities across a large, thinly populated country presents unique challenges. The V&A Dundee's Design in Motion tour is one example of what a national institution can do to engage people that would not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.

The Screen Machine, Scotland's mobile cinema that takes the cinema experience to the farthest corners of the Highlands and Islands, demonstrates that with a relatively modest capital investment and some imaginative use of technology it is possible to bring the arts to even the remotest communities. A third example is the Wigtown Book Festival. Wigtown, a remote community of 1,000 people on the far south-west coast of Scotland, has an enviably picturesque setting between the Solway Firth and the Galloway Hills but is isolated and fell into decline when the train line that linked it to the rest of the country was closed in the 1960s. By the 1990s it had one of the highest unemployment rates in Scotland. One after another the pretty fishing cottages that lined the harbour were being boarded up as people and businesses left the town. Salvation came to an initially sceptical community through the town's designation as Scotland's National Book Town in 1998.⁸

Most people were unconvinced that it would do much good, or that anybody from further afield would be interested. News that the designation would be followed by a Wigtown Book Festival the same year didn't do much to enthuse the naysayers. Who would come?

Lots of people, it turns out – at least eventually. In its first year, the event took a modest £950 in ticket sales. In 2006, the festival attracted 6,000 visitors, and in its 20th year in 2018 it attracted 29,000, generating £3.45 million for the regional economy. A Hollywood film company has even bought the rights to two books by locally based authors with the idea of combining the two stories to create a movie or a TV series.

Wigtown still has its problems. The bookshops that line its high street offer few high-paying job opportunities for ambitious youngsters, who continue to move elsewhere to get on in life, but where once the community was in despair now there is optimism. Through culture the town has found new meaning and a revived sense of place.

We need to include people in our thinking about the cultural infrastructure of place. It is no good investing in grand designs if we are not going to support our artists and cultural professionals or support and encourage the public's participation in the arts. Culture is what makes us human. It is a fundamental expression of who and what we are; it is how we connect with one another, with where we come from and where we are going. We have to put people before buildings.

8. Josh Adams, Unherd, Can books save a dying town? 27 February 2019. Available online at: <https://unherd.com/2019/02/can-books-save-a-dying-town/>

Music education and brain development



Extracts from the speech by Dr Assal Habibi, Assistant Research Professor, Brain and Creativity Institute, University of Southern California, to the Culture and Wellbeing plenary. Dr Habibi is an expert on the use of electrophysiologic and neuroimaging methods to investigate human brain structure and function.

... I am here today to share with you some of the scientific evidence, specifically from the perspective of neuroscience, psychology and education, on why every child, regardless of their socio-economic status, race, ethnicity or nationality, should have access to high-quality arts education. I am going to focus my remarks on music education, because that is my area of expertise, but given everything that we know about the brain and development, what I will say today applies equally to dance, the visual arts and theatre.

First, I want to make it clear that, irrespective of the research findings that I will share with you today, I consider music and the arts to be essential components of childhood education. We do not have to justify music's place in our education system solely based on research findings that are related to extra-musical benefits including on language, intelligence and maturation of the brain. However, I believe that neuroscience research in that area has greatly developed, and that the benefits of music education on the brain and behaviour are becoming increasingly evident, so educators, administrators and policymakers who are often faced with making difficult decisions about the school curriculum and activities, especially at times of limited budgets, need to have the most up-to-date information in order to make informed decisions about the place of music and arts in school.

What are some of the benefits of music? We know that experience shapes the brain. That includes the creation of new connections and the facilitation of communication between neurons or brain cells – a process that we call myelination. Neuroscience research shows that, when infants as young as nine months old are exposed to music, they can show enhanced brain responses to changes of pitch and rhythm. That means that they notice when something does not sound right. That is not only in music – it is in patterns of speech, as well. That means that they notice which syllable belongs to which word. Exposure to music helps not only their musicality but their language development.

We also have evidence that exposure to music can help infants to perceive and recognise in the human voice emotions including sadness, fear, anger and happiness. That leads to more successful communication and interaction with family members and care givers.

Beyond infancy into childhood and the experience of music making, we now have clear evidence that learning and performing music engages and activates many areas and systems of the brain. Consider some of the steps that are involved in playing a musical instrument: reading a music score, which consists of abstract symbols; having to translate them into meaningful sound by adjusting fine finger movement on an instrument; listening and making necessary adjustments while evaluating the performance; learning and remembering the nuances of a piece; and often playing an entire piece from memory. In addition, in ensemble playing, every musician has to attend to their own performance while co-ordinating with others.

Through neuroimaging techniques, including magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, and electroencephalography, or EEG, we can now identify the brain systems that are involved in that orchestration. They are the sensory and perceptual system that is involved in tactile, visual and auditory perception; the cognitive and executive function system that is involved in planning, attention and decision-making; the motor system that co-ordinates fine and gross motor action; the reward and pleasure system; and the learning and memory system. In short, making music actively engages many major systems of the brain, and there is good evidence that it increases brain capacity through neuroplasticity. In other words, music shapes the brain by making new connections and increasing the strength of existing connections between neurons.

What are some of the specific findings on the benefits of music making? Let me start with the more obvious ones. Learning and performing music during childhood improves listening skills by tapping into the plasticity of the brain regions that process sound information, including the auditory cortices. One important feature of better listening that has been shown to improve with music training is the ability to detect relevant sound amidst noise. For example, when there is ambient noise in a classroom, children who have had music training can perceive the relevant information and instruction more

successfully. That is very important for all children throughout the world who live in noisy environments.

From a neuroanatomical perspective, brain regions that are involved in sound processing, such as the primary auditory cortex, and brain regions that are involved in sound-motor integration, such as the inferior frontal gyrus, have been shown to be anatomically enhanced in trained musicians. The differences are even more pronounced in musicians who started training during childhood.

If those were the only findings, the implications would be truly significant, but there are many benefits beyond auditory processing. I will give a few examples. We have strong evidence that music training in childhood facilitates language learning, reading readiness and general intellectual development. We have evidence that it can foster a positive attitude and mindset and can ensure that children at every stage of development are able to understand that effort and discipline can lead to success. It is also true that learning to play music enhances creativity and promotes pro-social behaviour.

I will now give some specific examples from a five-year longitudinal study that my colleagues and I at the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California have been conducting in collaboration with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and its youth orchestra programme, YOLA – Youth Orchestra Los Angeles. We have been tracking how participation in that music programme impacts on the brain, on cognitive and social development, and on overall wellbeing and success for its participants.

We compared a group of children aged six and seven from the programme with a group of children of the same age who did not have access to music or any enrichment programme. When the study began five years ago, the groups of children were no different from each other in any of the brain measures or in the social, emotional and cognitive measures. However, we began to see significant differences after just two years of music training – children in the music programme not only became better musically, but showed more mature brain auditory pathways, which meant that they were better at processing all kinds of sounds. They also showed significantly more improvement in executive function and social skills than the children who did not have music training.

We also observed that children in the music group had more robust connectivity between the right and left sides of their brains. I want to take a moment to consider the implications of what I have just said. Stronger connections between the two hemispheres of the brain can facilitate

communication and integration of information across the entire brain. That can potentially give a child an advantage when it comes to synthesis of information, as well as in creativity. That change in the actual anatomy of the brain was observable after just two years of music training.

I want to leave you with the story of one of the students in our study – a student I will call Daniela. She comes from a family of six: she lives with her parents, sibling and grandparents in a small two-bedroom apartment in the Rampart neighbourhood in Los Angeles. It is the country's second most densely populated neighbourhood, and it is affected by extreme poverty, gang violence and drug trafficking.

Daniela's parents are hardworking immigrants who spend ten to 12 hours a day in cleaning and construction jobs. Their demanding work schedules do not leave time for cultural activity or social interaction and learning with their children. At the same time, they cannot afford to send their children to after-school programmes, and Daniela's public school does not offer any arts or music programmes. In 2012, she was selected to enrol in YOLA, the community youth orchestra that is sponsored by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which provides free music training and instruments to children from underserved communities in Los Angeles.

After five years of participation in the programme, Daniela has not only become a skilled young musician; she recently spoke to me about how, through her music training, she has learned how a complex skill is developed through effort, mindful practice and discipline. She is a significantly better student at her school, she is more compassionate and empathetic towards her family and friends, and, most of all, she has gained self-confidence and believes in her natural abilities. She recently told me that she has committed herself to becoming a physician to help her community, but also plans to continue playing the violin to maintain art and music as part of her life.

We all agree that our greatest resource for the future is the potential intellectual, creative and social capacity of our children. We in this room are tasked with the responsibility to support development of those capacities through all available means, so I am excited that we now have compelling evidence from neuroscience to support what we already intuitively know – that music and the arts can play an important role in helping children to become successful, creative and caring individuals.

The power of participation

The manifold benefits of cultural participation were discussed in the Culture and Wellbeing strand of the Summit. Dr Assal Habibi's speech highlighted the impact of music education on the brain development of young people. Participation increases socialisation, cognition... Dr Habibi's presentation covers the science but, in essence, it makes our kids' brains work better. It helps them be more successful in school and to be better humans, able to work well with others and understand the importance of community. It is imperative that children and young people are encouraged and supported to participate. That means financial support for the visual arts, music and drama in schools; for the training of teachers and other cultural professionals; and for facilities for practice and performance in the community. It also means looking beyond traditional methods and practice to break down silos and embrace the digital technologies that are transforming how we all engage with learning and each other. Not every community will have its own YOLA, but today – broadband permitting – it's possible to play together in a virtual string quartet even if the players are miles apart.

There are numerous ways that policymakers and the cultural sector can work together to widen opportunities for young people. Liana Ruokytė-Jonsson, the Lithuanian Minister of Culture, shared an interesting example with delegates at the Summit of a new initiative they have just introduced:

The cultural passport is an innovative initiative that applies to school kids, who will get a range of cultural services and products for free. That means that we are allocating money for school kids. At the start of every school year, they will have a menu containing various cultural services such as theatre performances, concerts and educational programmes in various museums – of course, there is free access to all museums in Lithuania. They can select what they want to see or experience, alone or with a class or smaller groups.

... If a kid in a small village would like to see a good theatre performance in the capital city, the local government has to take care of the transportation. The programme will be applied as a pilot project from 1 September [2018], for kids in levels 1 to 4. The programme will be created for three age

groups. We will start with levels 1 to 4 and next year, from 1 January [2019], we will apply it to all age groups in all schools in Lithuania. We see it as a huge investment in developing a new generation of creative thinkers who are aware, responsible and actively involved in cultural processes. It is also about developing new audiences, because when culture becomes an essential part of everyday life, you do not have to invest much in building new audiences; it will come naturally. It will be a natural need for everyone to use culture every day.

Apart from anything else, by increasing opportunities for young people to participate in culture the sector is supporting the cycle of renewal and reinvention. It brings talented new voices into the cultural discourse. By creating opportunities for young people to join in we give them a chance to see a future for themselves as an artist, to kick-start their journey and so ensure a future for the sector after we have left the stage.

However, it isn't just the young who need opportunities to participate. Composer Syafiqah 'Adha Sallehin spoke about how engagement in culture can have a powerful effect on older people:

In Singapore, some of the most meaningful work that I have had the opportunity to do has been to perform as a roving musician in a hospital. I play the accordion and, together with two other musician friends of mine, performed for the patients there. We moved from ward to ward performing several songs that would remind patients of their past or would entertain them. It was a very fulfilling experience for me.

I clearly remember playing for an elderly lady who was bedridden and was very ill. I was asked to perform a traditional song for her, which I did. When I was performing, I was very surprised to see her smiling and humming along to the song that I was performing; she was also moving her head. After I finished the song, her daughter came up to me and thanked me for my performance; she had not seen her mother smile for a long time because her mother was in constant pain. I felt honoured to be able to make that kind of impact on her mother. For me, that experience truly proved the power and magic of music in getting through to someone and bringing out human emotions.

© Scottish Parliament
Local dancers perform Akram Khan's *Kadamati*
outside the Palace of Holyroodhouse at the
Edinburgh International Culture Summit 2018



Culture and the arts should be accessible to all people – people with disabilities, people in palliative care and people who have terminal illnesses, because they have as much right to enjoy the arts as others. The very act of bringing culture to a person with a terminal illness, for example, dignifies him and makes him feel validated as a human being. Singapore is becoming increasingly aware of that. We have the example of hospitals in partnership with our performing arts centre – Esplanade – which enables the running of such programmes with local artists.

That smile, the emotional connection made in that hospital ward, is a very real and precious thing. Culture is what binds us as a community; it weaves past, present and future together and gives meaning to our daily lives, as well as the much-needed joy that smile represents. For older people in societies where traditional family support structures have given way to more atomised living patterns, loneliness and social isolation are a growing problem with significant costs. Culture can provide much-needed solace and should be at the forefront when policymakers are wrestling with the challenges of an ageing population. Participation in culture is a social activity, mental and physical exercise, and entertainment. Just as it is beneficial to the brain development of children, it is vital to the health and wellbeing of people of all ages and is of particular benefit to older people. Cultural participation builds resilience. It gives people agency and power over their own lives, building self-confidence. A weekly tea dance – or floss-off – may not negate the need for medication but it can significantly improve both mental and physical health outcomes, reducing the burden on accident and emergency and social care services.

Research by Age UK has found that, unsurprisingly, older people with good social networks, good health and good financial resources are more likely to have high levels of wellbeing. However, the strongest message from the research was the importance of maintaining meaningful engagement with the world around you in later life – whether this is through social, creative or physical activity, work, or belonging to some form of community group. Even more striking was the finding that creative and cultural participation was the single factor that contributed the most out of all 40 of the factors to wellbeing.⁹

David Leventhal, Programme Director, Mark Morris Dance Group, gave insights into how dance can have a transformative effect on people with Parkinson's disease. Dance for PD, founded in 2001, offers specialised dance classes to people with Parkinson's, their families, friends and care partners in eight locations around New York City and through a network of affiliates in more than 100 communities in 20 countries around the world. Dance for PD classes allow people with Parkinson's to experience the joys and benefits of dance while creatively addressing symptom-specific concerns related to balance, cognition, motor skill, depression and physical confidence. The programme's fundamental working principle is that professionally trained dancers are movement experts whose knowledge about balance, sequencing, rhythm and aesthetic awareness is useful to persons with Parkinson's. In class, teaching artists integrate movement from modern, ballet, tap, folk and social dancing, and choreographic repertory to engage participants' minds and bodies and create an enjoyable, social environment for artistic exploration. What the academic studies of programmes such as Dance for PD have shown is that for people with debilitating disease it is possible to navigate a seemingly impossible path through their symptoms through choreography and dance.

Culture can help address physical and mental health challenges, sometimes in surprising ways. Professor Bas Bloem, Director and Consultant Neurologist, Radboud University Medical Centre, shared one example with the Summit of a man from India with Parkinson's disease who was unable to walk:

We know that patients with Parkinson's disease have a deficit in the brain's automatic pilot, which means that anything that needs to be automatic goes awry. However, when people try to climb stairs, they find that they can walk; they compensate for their disease. This particular man climbs stairs every day, but as you know, houses do not have staircases everywhere. His niece, who is a designer and an artist, created a three-dimensional illusion of a staircase on the floor, and it allowed him to walk. She has now painted these three-dimensional staircases throughout the house and, in fact, she is giving away three-dimensional carpets to people with Parkinson's around the world. She is doing that for free; the only thing that she wants in return is not money but a video of how well the patient has improved.

9. Age UK, Creative and Cultural Activities and Wellbeing in Later Life. Available online at: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/rb_apr18_creative_and_cultural_activities_wellbeing.pdf

Professor Bloem's speech to the Culture and Wellbeing plenary offered many such examples and explored the close relationship between the arts and medicine. He acknowledged:

... At first sight, the world of medicine could not be more different from the world of culture and the world of art... [They] are not only closely intertwined, but are, in fact, inseparable. For me, as a neurologist who is a specialist in the condition called Parkinson's disease, it is really fascinating to see how the brain has created one molecule that binds those two worlds together. That molecule is called dopamine. A lack of dopamine causes ... Parkinson's disease [but] if you have lots of dopamine, it makes you creative and helps you to produce art and contribute to culture. All that is bound together by one molecule...

What is so fascinating is that a lack of dopamine can be corrected with medication. There is now some very good scientific evidence on patients with Parkinson's disease who had not previously been artists becoming artists after being treated with dopamine, and producing some really beautiful art.

... We have put out two papers in which we look at patients with Parkinson's and the job that they chose when they were 20 or 21 years old. It turns out that if you, at 20, choose to become a book-keeper or accountant, you are slightly at risk of developing Parkinson's; however, if you choose at a young age to become an artist, you are protected against it. This particular paper just came out, and you are the first to hear about it.


My point is that medicine and culture are inseparable worlds: like Romeo and Juliet, they are a couple in love for life. I can see how, in times of crisis – there are many challenges ahead of us – it is very easy to close a museum or to cut the budget for an orchestra, but I think that we harm the population's health by saving on culture.

There is a substantial body of data, an evidence base, to demonstrate the value of arts and culture to health and wellbeing – to the young and the old and all those in between. Cultural participation is crucial to our mental health and presents valuable opportunities for vital physical activity. The full range of artistic practice, from the performing and visual arts to literature, museums and digital art forms, all have something to offer to the promotion of a healthier, happier life. In terms of the artist, what emerged from the discussions at the Summit was the imperative to include the kind of experiential and embodied knowledge that an artist brings into wellbeing research, health provision and policymaking. It is important to bring together theory, practice and policy, with the artist integrally engaged as practice-based researcher, as co-creator of knowledge and policy, and crucially as a driver of innovation. That is already happening but it is often still too difficult for Romeo and Juliet to find a happy ending; there are still too many barriers to this kind of cross-discipline collaboration. There are all sorts of reasons – economic scarcity; restrictive funding models; mismatches between policy and practice; fear and mistrust; and a lack of joined-up policymaking – in arts, in education, and in health and wellbeing provision. Artists themselves can be the problem, 'I'm an artist, I don't do data'; 'I'm an artist, I'm not a therapist'. Cultural practitioners should both engage positively with the medical and academic communities, and be more open to outside expertise, to advice from professionals from other disciplines that could help open up their institutions to excluded groups.

Culture is essential to the human experience, both to our individual quality of life and to the health and cohesion of our communities. But for the arts themselves, broadening the appeal and increasing participation is surely an end in itself, and not only to put bums on seats. The act of creation doesn't just happen on the stage or on the canvas; the interaction with the audience is often the most crucial element. But people need to be inspired and have the skills to join in and be part of that conversation. The sector needs to find ways to be more inclusive and to demonstrate that the arts are for everyone, including the most marginalised, that they are for people like them, that they too are wanted and included.







© Getty/AMELIE-BENOIST/BSIP
Fifteen-year-old Mathilde enjoying
a bodily expression class designed
for people with Down's syndrome

Cultural participation
is crucial to our
mental health and
presents valuable
opportunities for vital
physical activity.

Embodied knowledge



Extracts from a conversation between David Leventhal (Programme Director, Mark Morris Dance Group) and Prince Totto Théogène Niwenshuti (Multidisciplinary Artist, Dancer and Choreographer) at the Culture and Wellbeing plenary.

Prince Niwenshuti was born and grew up in the Great Lakes region of Rwanda. He survived genocide and other crimes against humanity that ravaged the region in the 1990s. Arts, mainly dance, music and poetry, were fundamental to his attempts to deal with the trauma and consequences of the violence he experienced and witnessed. David Leventhal leads classes for people with Parkinson's disease around the world and trains other teachers in the Dance for PD approach.

David Leventhal: It is always hard to transition out of performance and into conversation, but that is what we are going to do. We have a brief time together, and we are going to try to share as many different things as we can.

My first question for Totto is this: what is so special or powerful about the absence of words? That is what dance is most notably about to a first-time viewer. There are no words, but there is a lot of meaning. Why is that important?

Prince Niwenshuti: It is so important, especially for me, as a genocide survivor, and many survivors – not just genocide survivors, but survivors of any crime or any unspeakable violence. We know what happens with violence against women or children, or with various abusers or different diseases – when people deal with something that they cannot express in words. I find dance – movement – so powerful because it goes deep to the heart of our souls and our being. It connects us with ourselves, with nature and with other people in ways that are beyond what can ever be expressed in words. That is why I find movement and dancing more powerful than any other medium of art or expression.

David Leventhal: You talked the other day about intuition – the intuition of the body – and about a point in your escaping. There were a number of years in which you felt as though you were constantly escaping and you had to make choices. Will you briefly tell us that story, what it taught you about physical intuition, and why that is important?

Prince Niwenshuti: There are so many words that people use: 'embodied intuition', 'physical intuition' and 'embodied knowledge'. I would say that there is a kind of embodied wisdom – something that you know but cannot put into words.

It is a long story, but I will be very brief. There were many moments during the genocide in 1994. Those who know the Rwandan story know that, in 1990, a war in Rwanda started, and that in the four years from 1990 until 1994, we had a period of huge hate propaganda and hate speech, and a lot of tension arose in the country. In 1994, after the former president's plane was shot down, the whole country really started burning. People who we knew as neighbours and friends started to chase us and wanted to kill us. We went into hiding, and we did not know whether we were going to leave the next day. I survived because someone saved me and my family.

After we left the mental hospital in Ndera that we hid in, it was completely destroyed. That was on 17 April. Thousands of people, including my father, died there. After we had left that building in ruins and started to walk from place to place and hide – from forest to the places of people's friends and families – we reached a crossroads in one forest and did not know which way to go. Do we go left or right? The majority of people I was with were women and children and younger people like me. I was just a high school student; I was very young, but people seemed to trust me and to trust that I knew that I could help them to go somewhere and be their leader. However, I did not really know what to do. When we reached that crossroads, I could not make a choice. I was afraid that, if I made a choice, I would put people in danger and we would die. We had never argued or discussed that before, but at that moment, people started to argue about where we should go – whether we should go right or left.

In that dilemma, I called on a child. Her name was Icyeza, and she was about six or seven years old. I said, 'Icyeza, where would you like to go?' She immediately pointed in a direction without thinking, and we ran in that direction. Some people went in the other direction – the opposite way. After three hours of walking and running, we sat down, and other people who took the other way came running back to us. Some of them were bleeding and injured. I do not know what happened in that moment, but that child saved us because of that instinct and intuition.

Later, at night – most of the time, it was during the night that we had the chance to rest and sleep, because the militia were drinking or had gone home before coming back the next day to continue killing – one of the young people I was with got a high fever. He was very hot, and was trembling and shivering. I quickly told everyone to help me. I started digging in the soil, and we covered him

with soil and leaves up to the neck. At around four or five in the morning, the fever broke, the young boy stood up and we continued running and walking. That is an example of the embodied knowledge that comes from instinct and intuition. It also comes from growing up in a family of medical doctors and nurses, and listening to my parents and looking at what they were doing. I knew from when I was a child that when I had a fever, my mum would bring water and cold clothes, which would be put on my head. We used the soil in many ways to heal ourselves. Therefore, when I was in the forest, I had already internalised that kind of knowledge, which I used to help that young boy, and it saved him.

When the soldiers or the militia were shooting – in the hospital, for instance – throwing grenades and using bombs, people were dying all around us, so moving quickly could save your life. You did not know what would happen if you moved, but it was often the case that the spot that you had just left would be hit by a bomb or a grenade and people would die there. My mother and my younger sisters, who were very small then, sometimes asked me, ‘What made you move? How did you know that there were people at that roadblock who were going to kill us? Everybody behind us was killed, but you made us turn around. How did you know that?’ I told them that I did not know, that it was just instinct and intuition and that I could not put it into words. When I am dancing, performing or creating work with people, I try to help them to get in touch with that kind of knowledge, wisdom and instinct, which I know all of us have the capacity to get in touch with.

David Leventhal: It is interesting that you say that, because even though it is a very different situation when we are talking about a chronic disease like Parkinson’s – we are not talking about war, trauma and genocide – there is an overlap, which is about finding an embodied knowledge and understanding your body and your movement in a different way from the one that has been prescribed. There is a parallel.

Some of you who were here in 2016 will have seen a film about one of our participants, Cyndy Gilbertson, in which she talks in her living room about the feeling that even when she cannot walk, she can dance: she can source the knowledge of dance movement and of being a dancer to initiate and control movement, which is otherwise so difficult for her. There is something about the connection with movement that is not just intuitive knowledge, but artful knowledge. There is a consciousness to it, which involves decision-making. Often, that decision-making is non-verbal. It is not a case of someone saying that they are making a choice – it is a feeling; there is a sensory part to it.

Another overlap is to do with the theme of resilience. In both our areas of work, we are using dance as a way to generate not just embodied knowledge, but resilience whereby, regardless of what the circumstances have

been and how challenging or degrading they have been, the act of moving together and dancing together provides an uplift and a sense of confidence. It provides a language for a person to reconnect with one’s own body and maybe with one’s own people. So, resilience and community are very much tied together in any kind of community dance form. We are trying to build resilience through community and to build community through resilience. Does that sound like a working model that we can be comfortable with?

Prince Niwenshuti: Completely. I agree.

I would like to add that not far from here – in Aberdeen, I think – there is a professor I admire very much called Professor Timothy Ingold. He talks a lot about embodied knowledge, knowing and learning and really trying to challenge rigid or fixed forms of learning in classrooms, universities and other places. He talks about using art, performance, music or other experiential approaches to help us to learn and to tap into who we are, but also to create or make knowledge. For me, it is about those experiential approaches. It is about art forms – community dancing and singing together. There are many experts here who are more knowledgeable than I am in neuroscience and other sciences, who say and prove that things that we do together, such as singing or dancing, have so much benefit for and impact on our brains, our bodies and our emotional and psychological wellbeing.

For many years, before industrialisation and enlightenment, our communities moved and danced in connection with nature and with each other. We did not use the names for it that we use today, but they knew about it because they felt it and they lived it, daily and constantly, together. We know that thousands of years ago, bonding was essential to survival. To create that bonding and connection, people used movement, rituals and community-oriented activities. Today, we have a huge resource that we can tap into.

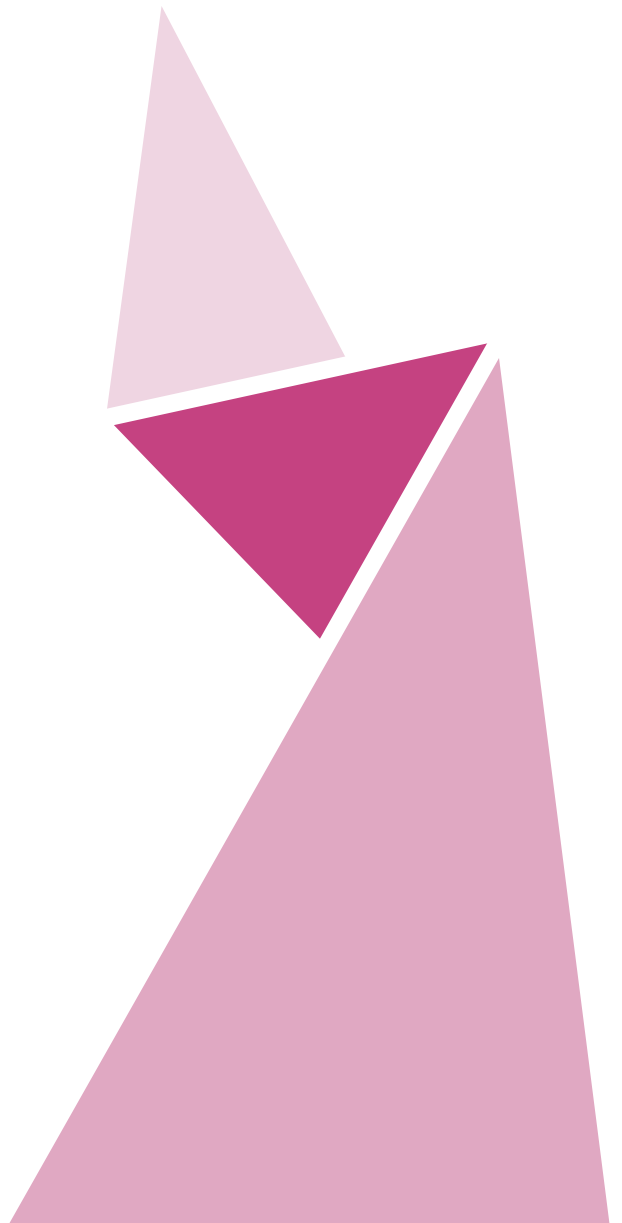
One of the earlier speakers, Joshua Ramo, said that we are in a difficult time today, with technology and artificial intelligence. He said that there is a distribution of power, but that we see at the same time a concentration of power. There seems to be a tension and a contradiction. What do we do with this huge power being concentrated on the one hand, while on the other hand, there is distribution and freedom of information? As Mr Ramo said, throughout the years of evolution, we have had moments of great change that were, unfortunately, followed by wars and conflict. What do we do? I suggest that our next stand, or our last stand, might be about dance or movement, embodied human knowledge and connecting and bonding as a people beyond any region of science or whatever, because dance, moving and singing have the capacity to go beyond any barrier of discrimination.

The digital revolution

The exponential growth in cheap air travel, the rise and rise of social media and the ever-growing complexity of just-in-time, transnational supply chains are all aspects of our small, shared world. A world where individuals, communities, businesses and states are all connected to and dependent upon one another. That interconnectedness has brought unimaginable prosperity, lifting millions out of poverty and unprecedented technological progress but it has also made the world more vulnerable, whether it's pandemic disease, economic shocks or the cancerous spread of extremist ideologies. The challenges of the 21st century demand multilateral, collective action. The only credible response to climate change depends on everyone around the world playing their part to reduce global carbon dioxide emissions.

That interconnectedness is nothing new, as Dr Catarina Vaz Pinto told us in her speech in the Opening Session of the Summit, but it has changed fundamentally in the last decade. The old adage goes 'When Wall Street sneezes, Europe catches a cold' but, as we saw in the 2008 financial crisis, the world had grown far more integrated in the 80 years since the Wall Street Crash. What began with the meltdown in US mortgage securities gave the world pneumonia. Ten years on from the 2008 crash there are some countries that still have not recovered to pre-2008 levels of prosperity and growth. That interconnectedness that has brought prosperity to so many served to spread a crisis created in the US and Europe to all four corners of the globe. One of the most crucial lessons of the crisis is the need to build resilience into the co-dependent relationships that underpin global prosperity and security to protect against future contagions.

Popular culture has brought the concept of the butterfly effect from chaos theory to a mass audience. We all now (think we) know about the impact a delicate butterfly's wings can have on the weather on the other side of the planet. What is new is the way digital technologies mean even virtual wings can stir up a storm that can wreak havoc. The world today is just a tweet away, as we are all reminded on a daily basis by the President of the United States. Recognising the new realities of our networked world is one of the major challenges facing policymakers today. For many it is a terrifying Jurassic world of trolls, catfish, fake news, grooming, the dark web and other even more horrible things. The online world can seem culturally barren, its influence coarsening the public discourse. It is a place that somehow brings out the Mr Hyde in the most unassuming and learned Dr Jekyll. But for many of the same people it terrifies it is also an essential source of joy and knowledge, of liberation and friendship. For young people it's a place to hang out with their pals after school; they laugh and joke over their headsets as they do battle in *Fortnite* and *Overwatch* and constantly IM inanities to each other in what amounts to a virtual playground. It is second nature for millennials to be all over Instagram, Weibo, Eskiimi and dozens of other social media platforms many delegates at the Summit will never have heard of – stuck as we are on level 43 of *Candy Crush Saga*. For some



it's an outlet. Moving stories of people with severe disabilities making friends through *World of Warcraft* show a very different side to the digital revolution. For them it was a slap in the face when the heroes of *Ready Player One* claimed to be doing us all a favour by shutting down the Oasis twice a week to encourage us to go outside. What about those who can't, whose almost entire social life is online, who there alone find the freedom to be themselves and just have fun?

Suhair Khan leads on global initiatives and partnerships at Google Arts & Culture. She painted a very different picture of the impact of the digital revolution on the world of culture, far from the world of fake news, the alt-right and angry, woke Twitter mobs:

Technology now is important – it is immersive and part of all of our lives – but nothing is going to replace the experience of ... going to one of Akram Khan's performances ... I hope that you keep in mind the idea that we think of technology as something that is augmentative and allows for access to culture but will never replace the experience of seeing something or feeling it in real life.

... Google Arts & Culture ... was founded in 2011 by a bunch of people at Google who wanted to do a side project. We call them 20 per cent projects – you spend 20 per cent of your time doing something that you are interested in or think is important. They felt that there was not enough cultural content or information on the arts online. At the time, whatever one found in terms of artworks was very low resolution and there were watermarks on paintings – it was before everyone had selfies. Those people set about looking to create a digitally immersive interactive platform that allowed sharing of cultural content online. We launched it with 17 of the world's art museums, from the Met to the Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery and the Prado.

... [Today] it is ... accessible on your computer, tablet or mobile phone and we now work with almost 2,000 institutions in more than 70 countries around the world. There are about seven million artefacts on the platform now. Each of those has been individually selected and uploaded by the cultural institution. We work only with not-for-profit institutions and we ourselves do not monetise the platform.

The goal is to provide access to all of these institutions so that they can share their artworks in a way that gives them access to a global audience... We translate the content into multiple languages and we seek to use different avenues and different platforms at Google to bring the content to people around the world. We have also integrated it into Google search so that, if an institution wishes, it can have its content featured directly on search.

We must also include the digital dimension, the networks through which we connect. Many people are already living in both the online and real worlds simultaneously...

Suhair went on to explain how Google is using its latest technologies to help secure our universal cultural heritage for generations to come:

I was recently in Lucknow in India, which is a city in the north of the country. It is beautiful, and it is known for poetry, history and literature. There is amazing architecture from the British Raj and from the Mughal era. A lot of it is crumbling away, due to population growth and new buildings coming up. Part of what we are doing is thinking about places and cultures such as that. Technology cannot replace them or recreate them but it can perhaps help to preserve and showcase them, and at least represent those stories to people around the world.

For the preservation project, we have worked with an organisation called CyArk, and we have documented 25 sites from 18 countries around the world, ranging from the Al Azem Palace in Damascus to Bagan in Myanmar...

We have used technologies such as laser scanning, 3D printing, augmented reality, street view captures, drone view imagery captures and high-resolution photography to look at these sites around the world, bring them online and make them accessible and, I hope, enjoyable for people to explore, whether on their phones or their computers.

Digital technologies can be a crucial lever in widening access for cultural participation. They can be a powerful tool in schools, libraries and other contexts. They can make the remote accessible and make possible new ways of working. Unsurprisingly digital art and multimedia forms of expression are increasingly common in fashionable galleries – as ever, artists are at the forefront of the revolution, pushing the technology in new and unexpected ways.

The digital world is a complex, constantly evolving ecosystem, yet for all we know we may only be in the virtual version of the Cambrian period. The AI revolution hopefully will go better in the real world than it did in the alternative timeline(s) of the *Terminator* movies, but even as we adjust to the idea of a world of driverless cars and thinking refrigerators, even more fantastical technologies are already in development. It is the pace of change that is the most amazing – and daunting – aspect of this new revolution. As Joshua Ramo (Vice Chairman and Co-Chief Executive, Kissinger Association) explained to the delegates at the Summit, the hyper-connectivity ushered in by the digital revolution will have as great an impact on our lives as the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Reformation and all the other great cultural shifts of the past.

My idea is that all of the noises we hear around us today – the political breakage, the uncertainty, the miracle sounds of hopes of new ideas – mark the first measures of a new era, one that may surpass the Enlightenment in its impact. This new era is still only dimly apparent to us in its ideas, rules and habits, but it is one that will fundamentally change the nature of the human experience... The great break of the Reformation was the idea that individuals could have their own access to God... That triggered other processes that were part of the Enlightenment: the idea that individuals should have their own access to political power and to commercial power, to decide what they wanted to do with their lives – that what was for so many years a prison for people of where they were born and who their parents were could be replaced by people living the lives that they wanted to lead. In short, it was the essence of being modern.



Before the Reformation, power was incredibly concentrated in the hands of a few kings, feudal lords and priests, who had all the knowledge and all the information. Then, one day, that began to break down, which triggered a massive wave of change. Today, we are at the beginning of an equivalent wave of change. It is one that will be marked by miracles for sure, and by the sorts of tragedies that came along with the Reformation and everything that came after it. It is in understanding the nature of that change that we can begin to address the importance of culture.

The nature of the revolution that is emerging around us today has to do with the fact that we are entering an era of networks. By 'networks', I do not just mean the internet; I mean any set of connected points. People who sit in this Parliament building are a network; people who speak Mandarin are a network; people who use bitcoin are a network. The fundamental insight is that connection changes the nature of every object – a connected voter, a connected library, a connected actor and a connected performance are all different from ones that are not connected. That represents a shift in the nature of power. If the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution were all about liberating individuals and freeing them from the tyranny of history and where they were born, the current revolution is about connecting people.

Connecting introduces fundamentally new dynamics of power. We are in the earliest stages of understanding that; we are in the position that Locke might have been in – he had a hint that something was changing dramatically. All of us who spend time working on and thinking about network theory realise how early we are in the process, but I thought that I would give you one example of the nature of the shift.

The difference between the digital revolution and the Reformation and Enlightenment is that the changes will come in a much smaller window of time. Technological change will rapidly transform how we live and work and has massive implications for our communities, for how we are governed and organise our societies. History teaches us that such upheavals can easily lead to conflict and societal breakdown. We need to prepare for and mitigate the impact. Culture is in many ways the answer. A focus on culture, on how we connect and engage with the world and on how to build resilience through investment in the cultural infrastructure of our communities is going to be essential to manage the far-reaching changes that will affect us all so profoundly in the days ahead. Just as we need to factor in human and social capital into our thinking about cultural infrastructure, we must also include the digital dimension, the networks through which we connect. Many people are already living in both the online and real worlds simultaneously and it's only a matter of time until these realms converge completely as the 'internet of things' becomes our everyday lived reality.

What needs to be remembered at all times is that our networked world is – even when it's made up of the ones and zeros of binary code – founded in humanity, it is about people-to-people connections. Ingenious, fallible, marvellous and prejudiced humans are the links that form the vastly complex web of daily life both on- and offline. Investment in human and social capital is vital if we are to find a common sense of purpose and build meaningful connections with one another. These networks are increasingly essential to the success of each of us as individual human beings and for our communities, all the way up from the familial to the local, regional, national and even international level. The international community is just that – an integrated, co-dependent family that for all its squabbles and strife is absolutely reliant on its members recognising and finding common ground, on finding shared purpose and working together for the common good. Forums like the Edinburgh International Culture Summit are essential to making those vital connections.

© Getty/Southern Metropolis Daily
Visitors enjoy Renaissance Italian art through Virtual Reality technology during the opening of the 'Renaissance 2018, from art to heart' exhibition at Haixinsha Island on 20 July 2018 in Guangzhou, China

Conclusions and recommendations

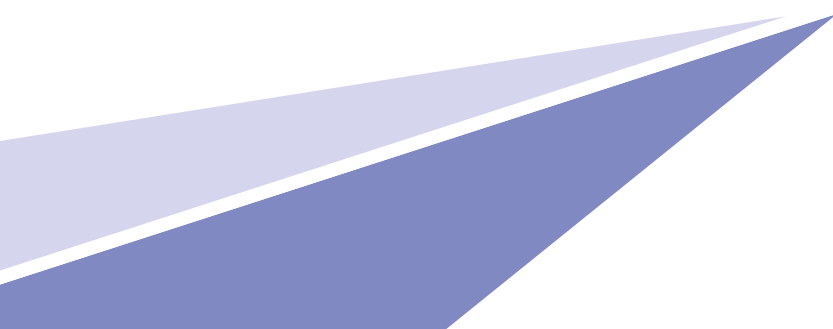
There is an urgent need to rethink how we fund culture. Investment is about more than grand regeneration schemes, the renewal of the cultural talent pool, or even equality of opportunity for cultural participation. Certainly these are all of fundamental import and need to be at the forefront of the thinking of policymakers and practitioners alike, but what really needs to change is the understanding of culture's place in our communities. Culture is what connects us one to another; it permeates our societies and is the foundation of social capital.

We need to take a holistic approach to investment, to adopt a cultural infrastructure approach that encompasses the physical, digital, human and social dimensions of place. We need to focus on the complex ecosystem rather than just the biggest beasts – we need to see the wood for the trees. Culture is essential to the health and resilience of our communities. It is also absolutely essential to us individually, to our health and wellbeing from cradle to grave. The arts make us better humans, effecting physiological and neurological change that is fundamental to who and what we are and what we can be. Our brains are shaped by participation in the arts and performance can enable us to negotiate through the trials and tribulations of life, to literally dance through the symptoms of disease.

Strategic decision-making that eschews the competition model and instead takes a holistic approach to investment is essential. Practitioners, policymakers and the taxpaying public must all be involved in prioritising and balancing investment decisions. We need a compact that places artists, cultural institutions, policymakers and the public on an equal footing; that brings together the funders, producers

and consumers of culture to work for the common good. We need a cultural infrastructure approach to investment where human capital is prioritised over toilet brushes, where funding for bricks and mortar and concrete is conditional on it being to the benefit of the many rather than the egos of the few. Investment in culture can transform a place and the lives of all those that live there, inspiring 'people to transcend and to live for more than necessities – to fulfil their destinies as human beings'. None of this is rocket science but it does require common sense, imagination, generosity and courage.

There is no going back to the age of isolation; neither beautiful walls nor yellow jackets can change the reality that we are living in a complex, hyper-connected, globalised world. Networks – local, regional, national and international – are only going to become more important. This brings risks of global contagion, whether it's the H5N1 virus, subprime mortgages or fake news. It poses enormous challenges to our institutions as digital technologies redistribute power and people divide into polarised tribes of like-minded fellow travellers. Yet it also brings opportunities. We may panic about the impact of bots and troll farms based in foreign countries on our domestic politics but those same technologies being exploited for wrongdoing have and will continue to do so much more good than harm. While being alive to and taking action to protect and build resilience into our communities, we should also embrace this rich and exciting, ever-changing world. We should recognise these opportunities as well as the threats and work to foster positive connections, to build networks that bring us together, that promote co-operation and collaboration. Forums like the Edinburgh International Culture Summit are crucial for doing just that. We need to come together, to find common purpose and build a better future.



1. Much more effort needs to be made to understand fully the critical role of culture in society and the role of networks, trust, and human and social capital in the function of our communities. Research is central to this, but so is prioritisation by policymakers.
2. Investment in culture needs to be strategic. We need to ditch the competi-sphere model where individual institutions are encouraged to fight over resources and instead take an infrastructure approach to investment that properly balances the costs and benefits of specific interventions to prioritise the most impactful and effective interventions over the most glamorous.
3. Investment in bricks and mortar and concrete is absolutely essential but investment in human and social capital will very often be more important and impactful. To ensure we renew and build up our human capital we need to invest in the producers of culture, through education, apprenticeships and international cultural exchanges but also by making space for the artists to practise and develop their talents through the provision of affordable housing, studios and performance spaces.
4. There is a growing body of scientific evidence that the arts are of crucial importance to a child's development, to their brain development and socialisation. We need to ensure young people have access to quality cultural opportunities in our schools and communities. We need to think in terms of STEAM not STEM.
5. Programmes such as Dance for PD demonstrate the therapeutic potential of the arts. Cultural participation can transform health outcomes without recourse to invasive procedures or medications and has a massive potential for both alleviating suffering and prevention. It is absolutely core to the wellbeing of older people; it shapes childhood development; and it is a vital tool in the treatment of mental health. The arts can augment conventional therapies and in certain circumstances may even be the best form of treatment. We need more research on the benefits to mental and physical health of cultural participation. We need to mainstream the arts into health systems. That means into both medical training and practice.
6. The value of culture needs to be taken seriously. The arts and creativity are going to be critical to personal, community and national success as we adapt to the ever-increasing pace of change ushered in by the digital revolution. Governments should recognise the need for investment in the cultural infrastructure of place to ensure our communities and institutions are resilient and thrive despite the stresses caused by such dramatic changes in how we live, work and organise our societies.
7. The culture sector should develop a better grasp of the links between participation, legitimacy and public support in making the case for public funding and the prioritisation of culture in policymakers' strategic thinking. Our institutions must be more open and engaged with their host communities, and be generous with each other, big and small. They must both reflect and embrace the societies they serve, to do all they can to encourage diversity and plurality, and foster understanding and our common humanity.
8. The Edinburgh International Culture Summit offers a unique and essential platform for bringing together the arts sector and policymakers to share best practice and unite in addressing the major socio-economic and cultural challenges facing communities. We have much to learn from one another. Connecting through forums like the Summit is absolutely essential to our shared global success.

We need to come together,
to find common purpose
and build a better future.

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The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

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Acknowledgements

Text: Alistair MacDonald

With thanks to: Melike Berker, Jackie Killeen, Lucy Young, Olga McIntosh, Rod Pryde, Ben Spencer, Lily Hughes and the British Council Design Team

Editors: Alasdair Donaldson and Mona Lotten

Published by the British Council

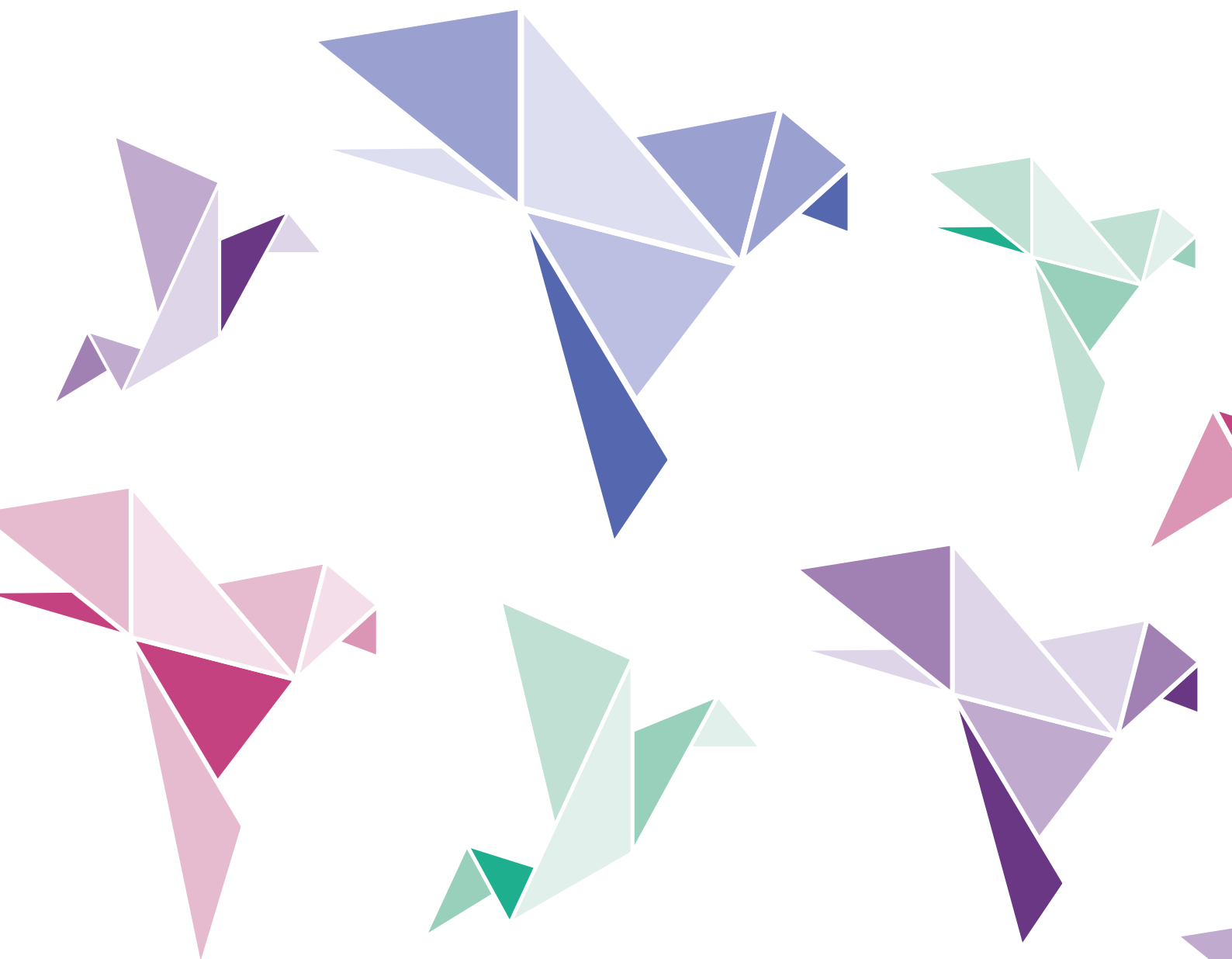


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Julian Herman, Violinist and Former Concert
Master, the Netherlands Philharmonic
Orchestra, performing at the Edinburgh
International Culture Summit 2018





ISBN 978-0-86355-939-6 (paperback)
978-0-86355-940-2 (electronic)



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