



## WORKING GROUPS THEMES & PRESENTATIONS

### THEME 1

#### **How efficient is networking? *An analytical approach to a network's work***

Working group 1A - Chair: Ruth Jakobi, European Music Council (*Cafeteria*)

Working group 1B - Chair: Per Kvistad Uddu, St Olav Festival Trondheim (*Foyer 3*)

### WORKING GROUP DESCRIPTION

Cultural networks have been overflowing Europe during the last 20 to 30 years. They have been created for diverging reasons, e.g. to combine forces, to facilitate interaction, to advocate certain ideas and interests, to disseminate information, to enable co-productions... A closer look to the mission statements of various networks depicts well these multiple rationales driving the creation of networks. Sometimes they last for decades, sometimes they stop existing after a certain time because they accomplished their mission, or in other cases because they failed.

In times when networking is a major phenomenon in cultural practice in Europe today, the questions of effectiveness, utility and terms of evaluation of a network's work are not far-fetched.

This working group approaches a cultural network's work from an analytical point of view and shed light on the following questions:

- What makes a network's work successful and sustainable?
- How can we evaluate networks?
- Are there common criteria to analyze their work?
- How do networks want to be evaluated?
- Tangible and intangible results - What is a reliable proof of efficiency?
- When does the network need to put its existence into question?
- Did networks improve their efficiency in the course of the years?

This working group aims to propose a set of criteria to measure the results from cultural networking as well as discuss solutions for the improvement of their work and their productivity/efficiency:

- How could we increase cultural networks' efficiency?
- Are there directives for a successful European networking process?
- How to define these directives?
- How can we create synergies between cultural networks to go beyond the current barriers faced by networks?
- A European House of Cultural Networks - Would it be a feasible project?

### PRESENTATIONS

#### **Ugo Bacchella, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo**

##### 1. The challenge of evaluating networking

Evaluating the performances of cultural networking and networks and getting to convincing results is a tough challenge, whatever approach is adopted.

Analysing networks is a difficult task for researchers, despite different interpretational approaches, analysis instruments and theories have been developed for understanding social network.

The network of relationships explodes into thousands of real or potential interactions, links and interconnections, making complex a pertinent and comprehensive representation of the system.



Accordingly it is difficult to identify appropriate tools that can guide those who work within the network and can be used for evaluation for those who have the problem of understanding the partial or global performance of the system.

As far as the cultural networks are concerned, the complex nature of networks, particularly when active internationally, adds up to the difficulty of rendering the whole range of values of arts and culture without sticking to the mere economic arguments.

The nature and activities carried out by cultural networks today do not substantially differ from all the other social networks:

- *Learning and capacity building environment*
- *Provision of services*
- *Advocacy:*
- *Management / facilitating unit*

Cultural networks, as have been developed first and mainly in Europe in the last 30 years, do much more than that and represent a very diverse and lively environment.

Their role and function in nurturing the cultural cooperation have been underated by governments as well as by private donors. The most significant support to their expansion - eventhough financially modest - came from the Council of Europe and only later on from the European Commission mostly trough the cultural programmes.

But their growth and invaluable relevance is not appreciated to the extent it deserves. There are recent signs that some already modest structural support to networks is weakening.

There is in my opinion is a matter of legitimacy. The practice of transnational networking and the cultural networks themselves are not valued as the best form of semi-structured environment for facilitating exchange and cooperation.

The responsibility for this lies mainly on the self-referential attitude largely prevailing in the field of arts and culture and in the resulting inadequacy and inability in unveiling the good of cultural networking.

## 2. Where is the good of networking?

Networking - and related multilateral project set up and management- is one of the most effective learning exercise for capacity building and professional development.

It nurtures attitudes:

- to placing the people and not structures at the center of the stage
- to dealing with complexity and diversity
- to "mettre en valeur" your own know how and experiences
- to implement developmental strategies through project building rather than selling ready-made products
- to working by projects and objectives

Networking and particularly cross-cultural projects and exchanges lead to more relevant intangible legacies than concrete outcomes.

*"The core business is not the manufacture of products or the provision of services, but social learning, communication and the making of meaning."* (Engel, 1993 about networking in general)

Arts networking rather than an infallible supplier of cultural products, is - at its best - a medium - long term process largely dependent on the direction, the journey and the way of moving through the network of each member.

This is what makes measuring the results of networking a tough business, unless you downscale and impoverish the phenomenon.

## 3. Building legitimacy

A full recognition of the above mentioned nature of networking has obvious implications not only on how to design and study networking.

Far more important the complex nature of this social phenomenon needs to be accepted by public policy makers and private funders as a precondition for setting up a new system of relationships between the networks and their stakeholders.

This is a matter of legitimacy.

The practice of transnational networking and the cultural networks themselves are not in fact valued as the most effective form of semi-structured environment for facilitating transnational exchange and cooperation.



A responsibility for this lies mainly on the self-referential attitude largely prevailing in the field of arts and culture and in the resulting inadequacy and inability in unveiling the good of cultural networking, providing sound evidence of their role and function to governments at all levels, to the foundations and to civil society and to the general public.

#### 4. How to increase efficiency and credibility

Besides a lack of awareness, there are also undoubtedly behaviours and practices within many cultural networks that raise questions among public and private funders.

The activity of a number of established networks consist mainly in nice annual meeting places, ruled by almost the same nomenclatura for too many years, and do not reflect the dynamics neither represent any longer the emerging driving forces within their sector. Some in fact loose impetus and legitimacy, membership decline and narrow.

Other networks duplicate and overlap activities and subsequently waste resources in absurd competition.

Within Europe, there is not a common umbrella organization really representing the whole arts and culture, the performing arts, the heritage and other cultural activities as well as the arts organizations, the professionals and the practitioners all together.

Networks may dislike it and probably do not even consider this a priority. This is wrong.

In times of declining public budgets and increasing competition for supporting other than the arts, proving in a convincing way your *raison d'être* is vital.

This is particularly true for most of networks whose membership include mostly dinosaurs, eg those large and long established monodiscipline institutions.

Public funders, id est supranational and intergovernmental organizations, national governments and their national cultural institutes, as well regional local authorities have become cautious in allocating increasingly scarce financial resources.

They do want to understand and evaluate.

The challenging task for cultural networking is accepting this ground, increasing efficiency without altering and then spoiling the delicate, distinctive nature of these environments.

#### 5. What can we do?

Some final hints to increase the knowledge and the awareness of what networking is as well as to improve their efficiency and to enhance their governance and decision making process:

- 1) some comparative analyses capable of identifying and conceptualizing best practices and methodologies for cooperation as well as shedding light on a number of networks simultaneously in order to reveal their structural differences and similarities;
- 2) more focus on the key specific issues and activities, instead of pretending to cover a broad range of fields and services;
- 3) a radical transparency approach, with every decision making process made public and accessible on line to the membership and to general public;
- 4) a determined opening to next generations through the rotation of the board members as well as the executives
- 5) increasing interaction, interconnection and cooperation among networks to avoid duplications and overlapping, to share instead of to compete whenever possible:
  - establishing common resource centres responsible for information, documentation and dissemination
  - setting up projects and activities for professional development (courses, staff exchange etc)
  - adopting joint advocacy initiatives
  - enhancing technological infrastructures and tools

#### **Giannalia Cogliandro/Alessandra D'Angelo, ENCATC**

"Models of Networks Management in the Cultural Sector" is a project initiated in 2005 by ENCATC, the only European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centres, together with the University of Barcelona.

Focusing on Weaknesses and Threats, we identified the following negative points:

- The precarious financial situation.
- The dependence on public grants.
- The inadequacy of human resources.
- Deficiency in the managing structure.



- Insufficient use of Information and Communication technologies (ITCs)

On the other hand we recognized the most relevant Strengths and Opportunities in the following factors:

- High level expertise/advocacy and consulting capability of their members.
- The expanding European context.
- Possibility of larger members' participation.
- Opportunity of an increasing visibility of local diversity.
- The opening to new issues.

Challenges:

The analysis of the present situation does not leave any doubt on networks' high quality and specialization, but it opens the debate on a more reasonable management model to assure networks' sustainability. We would like to discuss about the new possible managing directions to improve networks' efficiency. In particular, during this presentation we will focus our attention on:

- The introduction of flexibility in the managing structure. Mostly (80%), when they were asked to mention their administration, networks referred to a very formal structure, composed by a CEO, a President or a Board that designs, plans and manages in order to achieve established goals. Moreover, the majority considered this traditional structure as a problem.
- A different distribution of human resources, giving more importance to the specific task of fundraising.
- A larger exploitation of Information and Communication technologies, to improve members' participation.

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## THEME 2

### How do networks survive? The financial and economic dimension of a network's work

Working Group 2A - Chair: Stef Coninx, IAMIC (*Studio 3*)

Working Group 2B - Chair: Angie Cotte, Les Rencontres (*Salon Diongre*)

#### WORKING GROUP DESCRIPTION

International cultural networks function at a supra-national level. They promote trans-national collaboration, exchange of know-how, mobility etc. They are real 'European heroes' focusing on the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. This inherent nature of an international network makes them difficult subjects in terms of financing as they do not belong to any local or national political set of power. This is why a lot of networks struggle with their fragile economic basis which often makes their work hard and short-term directed. Yet there are different public authorities such as the European Union, foundations and public bodies at regional and national level who fund supranational networks in the frame of their international politics and also sponsoring, own income.

The purpose of this working group is to analyze the structural mechanism and functioning of a cultural network in terms of its finances, economics, finances, funding... to understand and explain how cultural networks survive today.

- How are networks funded?
- Who is funding them?
- What are the funding patterns and budgeting of a network (public funding, EU funding, membership fees, income from own activities, sponsoring, marketing...)?
- Are there structural requirements for funding? Criteria a network needs to respond to?
- Is there a minimum structural requirement? And how to improve it?
- How and why are structural and organizational questions crucial for networks?



The aim of this working group is to define and underline essential principles of networks' mechanism and performance and to explore and identify reasons of funding them.

#### PRESENTATIONS

**Jeroen Mourik, IFEA Europe**

**Colm Croffy, AOIFE**

The frustrations of creating your own new traditions - creating effective cultural networks, in devising a Business Development Strategy for it's next five years of growth the Irish Festivals & Events Association examined over 20 national models of co - operations in Europe, North America and Australia. Some common trajectories have emerged from all historic examples - some valuable lessons gained and some terrible mistakes attempted to be hidden.

Colm will use his presentation to look at the common linkages and tactics adopted by these sister festival and event networks in attempting to discern the essential principals of network success, longevity, impact performance and critically financial viability.

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#### THEME 3

**From the local to the European and back: Cultural networks as facilitators of cross-border collaboration. The artistic dimension of a network's work**

Working Group 3A - Chair: Henk Heuvelmans, ECPNM (*Foyer VIP*)

Working Group 3B - Chair: Gavin Henderson, Dartington International Summer School (*Studio 2*)

#### WORKING GROUP DESCRIPTION

Cultural practice as an international activity takes different forms. For a few decades now, networks have been playing an important role in enhancing cross-border cultural activities. They offer a fertile field for artists, cultural professionals, festivals, concert houses and other local organizations to enlarge their professional activity, broaden perspectives, exchange know-how, meet people, discuss common projects.... But what are exactly the tools and patterns in a network's work that enable to go beyond the local or national borders, the international cultural cooperation, co-production and touring via network channels?

This working group will delimit networking features which enable different players engaged in a networking process to go beyond the local or national borders.

- What are the networking patterns that enable mobility and cross-border collaboration in the arts?
- In how far do networks enhance international cooperation?
- Do networks play a role in terms of mobility of the arts and the artists? Do they create an international community that contributes to the founding of an integrated European identity?
- Do networks have an impact on the development of the arts and the artistic work? Can they foster the inclusion of international aspects of productions into the creative process?
- What are the tools that networks offer: Networks as actors, Networks as communicator, Networks as facilitators of collaboration and lasting relationships, networks as meeting spaces?
- In terms of artistic development, is networking a European phenomenon? Is there a model for European collaboration and co-production schemes?
- Eastern, Central and Western European: how to encourage cultural collaboration?



This working group will stimulate participants to discuss the role and the challenges of networks in Europe in terms of their contribution to the internationalization of the arts.

#### PRESENTATIONS

##### **Jelena Jankovic, Belgrade Music Festival**

When speaking about the cross-border collaboration, I believe that the tools that networks provide are extremely helpful. I have in mind these two tools in particular: networks as meeting places/spaces and networks as facilitators of collaboration. Networks invite people to get to know each other, which is a first step towards establishing any kind of collaboration. However, I don't think that networks can ensure lasting relationships among their members. Individual members must share their responsibility with the networks for the success of individual cross-border projects and lasting relationships.

Big international networks like EFA are of utmost importance for member organizations/festivals coming from small or peripheral cultures. Through their membership such organizations/festivals receive credibility, visibility and thus they are enabled to find partners more easily and to become 'players' on the international artistic scene.

I think that networks could put more emphasis on their role as actors through featuring certain artists or projects and supporting their mobility. It is true that the biggest 'stars' (of music, theatre, dance) are already featured on numerous festivals around Europe (or even worldwide). However, networks could act as initiators or supporters of some other artistic ventures - such as innovative projects of cross-border collaboration.

##### **Cristina Farinha, Utrecht University**

Geographical mobility can be valuable to artists since confrontation and exchange of ideas might be important to the development of creative processes. In many cases, artists are not only willing to circulate, but also depending on the possibility of working in different places as a vital part of their professional life, in order to reach wider audiences and access larger and more diverse labour markets.

Furthermore, many contemporary artists claim the need to experience the world and its many environments and cultures, to realise *in situ* research and projects, to be temporarily part of creative communities and to profit from the opportunity they offer for cross-fertilisation.

Currently performing artists still face many administrative and legal obstacles when moving around in Europe. Additionally, to be mobile requires various sorts of resources and skills that challenge (arts) education and training systems along with values and mind-sets.

I would argue that mobility should be addressed in terms of accessibility. If we take a closer look, the concept of mobility contains not only the notion of aspiration, but also the idea of ability. The capability to move depends on personal and professional expectations, but also on educational attainments, linguistic and communication tools, social and political circumstances and financial resources. To go international demands long-term planning, an organisational and financial base, the access to information and social contacts and expertise in what comes to rules and funding. Moreover, artists are not only crossing borders, but also overcoming frontiers among disciplines and art forms, blurring the differences between technique and arts, breaking distances and changing roles amongst creators, interpreters and audiences. All these ongoing processes intensify the need for inter-cultural communication competences.

The artistic sector has indeed a special need for networking, coordination and dissemination of knowledge, experiences and information, since it is constituted by a large number of small and medium sized organisations as well as many self-employed individuals to whom staying by themselves in the international scene is a hard task.



#### THEME 4

### Europe, Asia, Africa, the US, South America... the world! The international challenges of cultural networks' work

Working Group 4A - Chair: Linda Bukhosini, Durban Playhouse Company (*Landing 1<sup>st</sup> Floor*)

Working Group 4B - Chair: Sydney Selepe, Pretoria Department of Arts & Culture (*Vestiere Studio 1*)

#### WORKING GROUP DESCRIPTION

Networking, or working together with a circle of partners, in the cultural sector seems to be a common phenomenon, at least in Europe. But is networking evenly common in all parts of the world? Can we speak about a real international dimension of cultural networking that takes shape by means of collaboration between Europe, Asia, Africa, the US, South America, Australia?

Broadening the geographical scope of the discussion and implementing case studies from Asia, Africa, Europe and the US, this working group aims to understand the current international challenges faced by cultural networks in different continents. It will question the existence of a real international cooperation between one continent and the other.

- What is the current situation regarding international networking?
- Is a real international collaboration possible/feasible?
- What would be its aimed results, its intention?
- What are current obstacles between continents and hemispheres, problems and challenges faced by networks to improve international collaboration?
- How could people from all over the world work altogether?
- Are there any cultural differences in networking techniques on the different continents?

This working group aims to understand the differences, challenges and obstacles regarding international cooperation and co-productions and propose new initiatives which could be developed among networks from all over the world.

#### PRESENTATIONS

##### Tisa Ho, AAPAF

###### 1. Networking in Asia

The first challenge is to speak briefly and simply about Asia. Asia is the largest continent in the world in both area and in population. And if one thinks of the big countries with ancient civilizations and deep cultural histories like China and India, for example, it is necessary also to remember nations like Brunei with its population of 400,000 out of the 4 billion in the whole of Asia. The diversity of Asia cannot be overstated, and to some degree, we in Asia are in the process of discovering and getting to know each other, along with the rest of the world.

It is a fact of history that Europe has had a significant presence in many parts of Asia, and in some places the bilateral relations are stronger between nations in different continents, than between neighboring nations. Formalized Asian cultural networks are a fairly recent phenomenon. ASEAN itself was not formed until 1967. In arts and culture, it was not until 1997, that the Alliance of Orchestras in the Asia Pacific Region was formed; and AAPAF (the Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals) was established only in 2004. The Hong Kong Arts Festival, which was founded in 1973, is proud to be a founding member of AAPAF.

###### 2. Interacting with the rest of the world

The diversity of Asia is not only in size, scale, history, culture and language, there is also a great disparity in developmental status, and this has real impact on interactions with the rest of the world.



As a very broad generalization, I feel that the developed parts of Asia are often treated primarily as receiving destinations, or 'markets'; and it is only the less developed regions are seen as being of interest as sources. We often find cultural archeologists and impresarios who are fascinated with 'discovering' nearly obsolete examples of naïve or folkloric traditions, which are of as much curiosity value as cultural and artistic. And this is taken as a measure of authenticity. Asia has a very hard time escaping from the expectations of exoticism, and some of the most successful Asian work in the international arena have been those that managed to use this 'exoticism' to advantage.

However, I fear that this is can be a limiting advantage, and I hope to see - possibly as a result from improved networking on a wider basis - better understanding and appreciation leading to real respect for all manner of cultural manifestation, whether in indigenous or adopted form, whether in traditional or contemporary expression, whether from urban centers or rural communities.

### 3. Works resulting from networking

There are many examples of interesting work being done as a result of developing networks. There are a few that I would like to mention.

One is dance project that is being undertaken by APAAF and led SIDANCE from Korea. At a meeting in Bali in March this year, we decided to attempt a first APAAF Dance Collaboration. Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore have all nominated dancers to participate, as has Mexico's Cervantino Festival. The production will eventually tour in various places represented in APAAF.

The second one that I would like to mention is much simpler in organizational terms. It is the Asian Super Guitar Trio, with three star guitarists, Eugene Pao from Hong Kong, Jack Lee from Korea and Kazumi Watanabe from Japan, supported by Malaysian percussionist Lewis Pragasam. They performed in this year's Hong Kong Arts Festival with great success. This was the result of informal networking amongst these fabulous musicians, and the Festival as well as everyone who went to their concerts were the beneficiaries.

The third and last example that I would like to mention is also from this year's Hong Kong Arts Festival. It is a new play entitled 'Lost Village' which was co-commissioned and co-produced by the Festival, the New National Theatre of Japan and the National Theatre Company of China. It was co-written and co-directed by Oriza Hirata from Japan and Li Liuyi from China, and the subject matter has to do with perspectives of history in the context of Sino-Japanese relations. The result was a multi-layered and multi-faceted work, which premiered in Hong Kong and then played in Beijing and Tokyo.

These are examples of outcomes of successful and mutually respectful networks within Asia at the moment. I believe there is room for much more, and for many more partners to participate, both from within Asia and beyond.

**Claudia Toni, Secretariat of Culture, Sao Paolo**

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#### THEME 5

**Cultural Networks at Work: Success stories of networked projects. The practical dimension of a network's work**

Working Group 5A - Chair: Dag Franzen, Jeunesses Musicales International (*Studio 5*)

Working Group 5B - Chair: Joanneke Lootsma, Felix Meritis Foundation (*Foyer 3*)

#### WORKING GROUP DESCRIPTION



This working group will be dedicated to presentations of different case studies which depict the purpose and utility of cultural networking in the form of 'networked projects'. By analyzing different concrete examples of cultural networking projects, real and virtual ones, this working group will allow insight into basic challenges of networks and illustrate the added value as well as obstacles of result-oriented networking. The working group will demonstrate how networked projects are born, how they evolve, what kind of challenges they face, and how the 'project character' eventually turns into a permanent network structure: When do networked projects with a pre-defined life-time develop into permanent structures? What does this evolution imply in terms of the mission, scope and results?

- From idea to life: how to develop the concept of a networked project?
- Preparation and organization - how to bring the concept to life?
- Analysis of the aimed and achieved results

The aim of this group is to learn from the experience of networked projects, their strategies, their development and the challenges they are facing: what are the lessons to remember when setting up a networked structure? What are the particularities of networked projects?

#### PRESENTATIONS

##### **Angela Plohman, Lab for Culture**

Networking in the cultural sector is an everyday, indispensable and multi-layered activity that we love for its undeniable potential for connecting, sharing and discovery. But what has commonly been an offline endeavour is now moving increasingly to online spaces, connecting us instantly despite geographical constraints and often offering more transparency to our networked actions. With the use of online tools becoming more and more prevalent in our professional and personal lives, we are at a point where we are rethinking the way we network. Web 2.0 tools and the surrounding hype are omnipresent, but how much are we using these tools in the cultural sector and to what extent do we understand their potential?

In a recent article on LabforCulture.org, Adam Jeanes investigates these challenges and proposes more temporal, cluster-type networked projects and structures that reflect these new ways of working. Far from discounting the value of offline networks he rather proposes that "what lies ahead is an opportunity for the development of new tools that individuals, organisations and networks can use to extend their reach and pull even closer together the 'unusually large group' with whom we live and work." How can we use these new technologies to complement our offline work and build truly interactive, effective and innovative online cultural communities that will enhance creative exchange and collaborative actions? What are the stumbling blocks to cultural networking online versus the trusted face to face encounters with which we are so comfortable? How does the cultural sector (net)work online?

This discussion will highlight the specific practical needs and challenges in relation to these online tools, looking at case studies such as LabforCulture.org and other online networks and projects (also outside of the cultural field) that offer new possibilities for communication and collaboration.

##### **Sabine Frank, EFAH**

The Civil Society Platform for Intercultural Dialogue was set-up in the autumn of 2006 as a time-bound initiative to respond to and complement a public policy initiative, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. It was created by the European Cultural Foundation and the European Forum for the Arts and Heritage and is supported by the Network of European Foundations. It builds on the notion of civil society engagement with political institutions and as such performs a double task: federating a broad range of organizations from different fields with a commitment to intercultural dialogue (around 80 to date), and developing ways of engaging with policy makers and



their institutions (the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the first instance). Building a network for its own sake (exchange for practice development) takes time; being a political counterpart requires being ready with well-founded positions. What compromises need to be struck? How can networking as an expression of participatory democracy be reconciled with the need to produce visible outcomes with few resources?

The Platform is a 'networked project' in which the arts embed themselves in several layers: Not only are organizations from different art disciplines brought together, but they look at the broader picture of culture(s) and do so together with NGOs from education, youth work, anti-discrimination work, integration of migrants etc as civil society actors. The classical arts networking purposes are here both extended and exceeded. Intercultural Dialogue as a topic requires both the recognition of complexity of actors implicated, but also the need to be an outward-looking partner rather than an inward-looking club.

The Platform's coordinator, Sabine Frank, will outline the genesis and evolution of the Platform so far, present the aims it has set itself and the processes for their achievement. Her presentation will try both to raise interest in daring 'networked projects', and invite thoughts on 'how to handle such beasts'.