

In Situ Insight Partnerships with the private sector on the 26 & 27 March 2018



The second In Situ Insight took place on the 26 & 27 March 2018 in Brussels lead and hosted by the Klarafestival. Under the topic partnerships with the private sector colleagues from [EFA](#), [Klarafestival](#), [Gent Festival van Vlaanderen](#), [International Film Festival van Vlaanderen](#), [Vilnius Festival / Lithuanian National Philharmonic](#) joined by colleagues from [Business to Arts](#), [Dublin's Culture Connects](#), [Fishamble: A New Play Company](#), [Helium Arts](#) and [Temple Bar Gallery + Studios](#) to discuss trends in sponsorship, approaches to reaching and engaging with new sponsors and keeping their corporate partnerships. Despite the challenges many success examples were shared and ideas of opportunities to cease were launched.

In the frame of this In Situ Insight Klarafestival the participants were also invited to enjoy the performances of the Klarafestival (running until the 30 March 2018).

All participants presented a healthy mix of public and private funding but with the public funding constantly in danger of not augmenting there is an added strain into looking for sustainable relations with private sponsors.



Before diving into sponsorship some additional sources of funding were brought up:

- Buying a building and getting revenue from renting out parts of it.
- Setting up additional services – e.g. a bar – to get further revenue.

Benefiting from tax shelters like the film industry. It is a complex situation since it involves changing the statute of non-for

profit to a situation of paying taxes non-for profits are usually exempt of. Furthermore normally tax shelters require that they are used for the production of national performances and in the case of festivals and Arts Organisations / Festivals working at an international level programming artists from different geographies this option is not fully adequate. Last but not least, different countries have different experiences. In the Irish case tax shelters are seen very negatively by the media which tends to highlight worst case examples and renders this option challenging to use effectively. In the Belgian, as our colleague from the Film Fest Gent reported, since the introduction of tax shelter for arts last year, [48 million euros were invested](#) in the cultural sector in Belgium.

When working towards a sustainable relation with private sponsoring one can identify some trends:

- Sponsors have moved from just wanting their logo in the programme to expecting, and demanding, a more complex offer from Arts Organisations / Festivals that can include creating content which is relevant for their agenda.
- The time invested in maintaining a sponsor is getting bigger and human resources allocated to that task need to grow.
- Communication is seen as more valuable than cash - some sponsors (e.g. KBC) can offer to sponsor just by using their communication channels (screens in cash machines, newsletters) to promote the Arts Organisations / Festivals.
- Sports continues to be a big competitor for sponsoring.
- Big companies (e.g. Mercedes, Proximus, etc) tend to organize themselves fully branded events so Arts Organisations / Festivals can't fully compete with that as they need to keep their artistic integrity.



There are nonetheless opportunities & potential in what Arts Organisations / Festivals are uniquely positioned to provide to sponsors:

- Being linked to an Arts Organisation / Festival brings the sponsor prestige and a better image it cannot access by other means. It can serve the sponsor to place

itself and reach a certain segment of their consumers.

- Arts Organisations / Festivals can be more appealing to sponsors than regular events' bureaus because they provide content and are better at organizing. However they need to set the right balance and define how far they are willing to go to cater to the sponsors' needs.
- In the path to brand themselves sponsors can be offered content and visibility that would require a much bigger investment if left to an advertising company.
- However it is not healthy for an Arts Organisation / Festival to compromise too much in organizing specific events for sponsors.



When approaching sponsors, or working to keep the sponsors one already has some things should be kept in mind:

- Do your homework! Research the organisation, their mission statement, their implantation in your country and across Europe, their biggest customers, their messaging, what their founders gave money to, what are the current values of the company, ... to reach them in the connections between what you are about and their mission and image.
- Ask them questions to see what they need and try to match the offer to their needs.
- See what societal issues you are addressing in your Arts Organisation / Festival that your sponsor may be interested to support (e.g. Competition for female composers & programmes for woman playwrights link to companies that want to brand themselves as having a feminist conscience or a balanced work force.
- Combining festivals to reach a European level sponsorship offer. E.g. package a co-tour or a co-commission as an offer to sponsors i.e. you create a performance in x festivals in x different countries and package that as an offer to a sponsor where he is made visible not only in one country but across Europe.
- Communicate what kind of audience you have so that the sponsor can see how that audience profile fits their consumers or goals.
- Get your contact in the sponsor company to understand what your organisation does, how it does it and what it means to the societal development of communities and engage them to advocate within their organisation for the support of the arts.

- Research who the direct competitors of your sponsor are (other banks, other phone cins etc) and talk to them as well. If your sponsor knows he's not the only one being offered an opportunity he'll be more awake to consider the potential benefits your offers brings.



- Have a business oriented person, someone who knows and understands the language of corporations, to help you adapt the “artistic / cultural” language to terms more easily understood by your counterpart.
- Don't underestimate the fact that your Arts Organisation / Festival may have air time in radio or television to promote your programming and for sponsors having access to 2 seconds of your air time can cost them less than buying adds themselves.
- Produce short videos that showcase the content of your work in less than 30 sec (also with subtitles and possibility to be viewed in silent mode). When you tag your video content tag key words that link to your sponsor.
- See if you can have access to key visible points where a product placement can be put that are not in the venue – a billboard in the city, a short video, preferential rates with google & Facebook, etc. Don't go for product placement unless there is a significant revenue.
- Find ways in which the sponsor is servicing the audience (e.g. restaurant app with restaurants around the venues so that audience can have choices after the performance)

To consider carefully is how far does one want to go. A sustainable relation with the sponsor means that there is dialogue and understanding of how Arts Organisations / Festivals work and how its content can reinforce the sponsors' mission and profile its branding in the shared values with the Arts organisation.

- Do we want to be part of the sponsors' marketing instead of it being the sponsor's role to help the Arts Organisations / Festivals with their marketing?
- Arts audiences are not very open to too much commercial product placement so a limit to what one's willing to offer sponsors has to be set before alienating one's audiences.

Some very interesting examples of how a relation with a sponsor can work in this more demanding complex environment were presented:

[Fishamble: A New Play Company](#) got involved with the Irish Postal Service and created a site specific performance for them [Inside the GPO](#). The sponsorship was mainly in kind but made for a very impactful production since for the company there's much historic content they can work with. Since then the Irish Postal Service has commissioned another immersive piece to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Dublin General Post Office - [GPO 1818](#). This partnership will continue but being post office specific.

The two largest ports in Ireland (Cork & Dublin) have commissioned / sponsored a series of song cycles. One that manifested in a festival – [Songs from a Safe Harbour](#) – where songs were created related to Cork. For the other - [Starboard Home](#) - Dublin Port commissioned a very specific long term project where artists and Arts Organisations are commissioned to tell the story of the importance of transport between countries. For this Dublin Port Put invested a 6 figure sum to commission this storytelling – write a song about a river, a bay interacting with the city – turned into an album and a tour. This is an example of how sponsorship moved into the content creation area. It is long term and has the added benefit that the artists can be brought in in the Ports different events throughout the year.

Air Lingus picked up a curated programme with the Irish Film Board to short films to show in their long haul flights. Dublin Film Festival could have provided that curated programme.

The [Vilnius Festival](#) created a Digital Concert Hall – their own digital channel. To find support for this expensive project the Vilnius Festival screened who were the biggest national companies with whom there could be an entry door to sponsor this project. First off the National Railway was approached as they are both the biggest national organisations in their field, one can argue the audience /



consumers are in the same socio-economical group and the National railway is looking to rebrand. The national railway was on board and allocated a wagon in their trains to brand as the Digital Concert Hall. Next the biggest telecom company in Scandinavia was approached. They are a service provider for high quality fast speed internet. Again the socio-economic target group coincides, both pride themselves for offering high quality “products” (performances in the case of the Vilnius Festival). The goal is that inside the Digital Concert Hall carriage the travellers can listen to a high quality concert via headphones provided & powered by the telecom company’s service and enjoy a concert between, for instance, the two major cities in Lithuania, a travel that takes approximately the time of a concert.

Another initiative of the Vilnius Festival was reaching out to the biggest producer of fertilizers to sponsor a conference on Sponsorship and philanthropy. The Vilnius Festival wants to take the lead in this field and researched the history of sponsorship in Lithuania to present the sponsor with a story line. The sponsor will also bring in their contacts in corporate sponsoring and the Vilnius Festival will work together with them to organize this conference in April 2018.

A further example is the partnership between [Volvo and the Gothenburg Symphony](#). Volvo launched, at the moment of the Nobel Prize week, a series of cars equipped with a Bowers & Wilkins equipment. The Bowers & Wilkins system was designed to provide the same sound experience as the Gothenburg Concert Hall. “The quality of the sound experience in our Bowers & Wilkins-equipped cars is as impressive as it is in the Gothenburg Concert Hall.” Henrik Svensson, Director of Audio & Displays, Volvo Cars. In this case Volvo brands its product using the stamp of quality of the high level Gothenburg Concert Hall and the Symphony, who provided the basis for the expertise, is also achieving &an added visibility with the Volvo’s target customers.

In Situ Insight Partnerships with the private sector on the 26 & 27 March 2018 | PROGRAMME

Monday 26 March 2018

20.00 [The Night of the Unexpected](#) at the Beursschouwburg Brussel: 3 consecutive shorter concerts (including MUSMA) + DJ + Open bar

Tuesday 27 March 2018

10.00 Arts & Business London meeting about sponsorship @ Co.Station / Offices Klarafestival

12.00 lunch offered by EFA @ Co.station

	<p>26 March 2018 20:00 The Night of the Unexpected Beursschouwburg Rue A. Ortsstraat 20-28, 1000 Brussels</p> <p>Metro 1 & 5, stop De Brouckère or Sint-Katelijne / Sainte-Catherine Tram 3, 4 & 32, stop Beurs / Bourse Bus 29, 66 & 71, stop De Brouckère Bus 86 stop Beurs / Bourse</p>
	<p>27 March 2018 10:00 – 12:00 Co.station Festival van Vlaanderen Brussel Sinter-Goedeleplein 5 1000 Brussels T: +32 (0)2 548 95 95</p>



26/03 | 20:30 BEURSSCHOUWBURG | NIGHT OF THE UNEXPECTED

Interactive musical evening of exploration at the Beursschouwburg

Frank Agsteribbe Harpsichord | **Korneel Bernolet** Harpsichord | **Bart Naessens** Harpsichord | **Guy Penson** Harpsichord | **Liselotte Sels** Harpsichord | **Dieter Van Handenhoven** Harpsichord | **Liesje Vanmassenhove** Harpsichord | **Frank Theys**

Video || **Ex Novo Ensemble** | **Valentina Coladonato** Soprano || **BLINDMAN** [sax]

PROGRAM

20:30 | Frank Agsteribbe, Korneel Bernolet, Bart Naessens, Guy Penson, Liselotte Sels, Dieter Van Handenhoven & Liesje Vanmassenhove harpsichord | Frank Theys, film | John Cage & Lejaren Hiller, HPSCHD

21:15 | *Music Masters on Air*

Ex Novo Ensemble | Valentina Coladonato, soprano | *Music* by Joris Blanckaert, Eliott Delafosse, Raffaele De Giacometti, Katarzyna Krzewińska & William Sundman Sääf

22:30 | **BLINDMAN** [sax]

John Cage, Five, Story, from *Living Room Music* | Jean-Féry Rebel, Le Chaos, from *Les Elémens* | Olivier Messiaen, Le Verbe, from *La Nativité du Seigneur* | Eric Sleichim, Storm at low tide | Johann Sebastian Bach, Pedal-Exercitium, BWV 598, Passacaglia in c minor, BWV 582, Concerto in d minor, after *Antonio Vivaldi, op. 3, No. 11*, BWV 596

23:30 | **Kopi & Luwak**, dj

Innovation is hard-coded in the very DNA of Klarafestival. This year, it takes shape in the all new project *Night of the Unexpected*: an evening devoted entirely to creation and creativity, to experience and discovery. *HPSCHD*, by the revolutionary composer John Cage, is without doubt a discovery. In this work, no less than seven harpsichords are accompanied by 52 sound tracks. Absolutely. You will be able to move amongst the harpsichords and so find yourselves literally surrounded by sound. As for creativity, it will be the focus of the *MusMA* programme for the evening. Five young composers participating in *Music Masters on Air* will deliver their musical vision of the art of seduction, inspired by *Ars Amandi* by the Roman poet Ovid, and will reveal their new creations to you. Finally, **BLINDMAN**[sax] will celebrate Flanders Festival's anniversary as well as its own (the unusual collective will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year) with a programme devoted to Bach.