

Response to:
Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative
industries
‘For One Question many Answers’

Ambra G. Bergamasco

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ambrabergamasco@gmail.com

Creativity:

‘It’s not beginnings and endings that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that’s where you have to get to work, that’s where everything unfolds’ (Deleuze, 1995: 161). A creative process is in the middle of things but at the same time generates a third out come as in such process there is a mixing of different elements together. That middle becomes the moment in which problem solving and decisions are made to push a new way of living to realization.

For one question many answers

The European Cultural and Creative scapes of today need to be effectively rethought of within the urban and rural living economic and social sustainability.

It is obvious that due to fast changing past economic models and ‘impoverishment risks’ in our European society are at stake. For these reasons the cultural question needs to be addressed and its means reconsidered urgently. The legitimization of culture needs to be brought out strongly with the aim of having direct consequences on the economic development of every country and with the aim of bringing a new understanding of what societal living means. Schools and entertainment need to be thought as places where the tools for a better understanding of diversity are given. Engagement necessarily is brought by enablers. These enablers are located within culture industries and the creative.

The current Green Paper is not the first of the kind; Europe has been promoting culture and creativity for the past 15years as a means to promote regeneration in various European cities and supporting the development of regional corridors throughout the European scape. Secondly, a more cultural led society has been proven to be able to cope with social integration, well being, and inclusion.

The intention of this proposal is that of putting forwards some ‘initiating ideas’ to maximize culture and its economic viability, bringing to attention Finish and Italian good practices.

This proposal answers one question with multiple examples.

Suggestions for the Irish current situation

-legitimize cultural work and aid the process of legitimization of cultural makers as, not only, qualified professional but as resourceful professionals that can aid in the amelioration of society. Work closely with planning and education, be involved in Health Boards, re-launch the idea of cultural community workers.

Create a network of Irish CCIs – generate a platform that would be meeting twice a year. This would have a joining fee of 50 euro. It would keep the CCIs participants updated with any European funding, scheme or grants relevant to our sector.

- put culture at the centre of a competing economy though: mobility, sharing European experiences, health and education through cultural processes

If developed, these points would lead to a long term sustainability of creative and cultural industries meshed in the social organization of a city/region/country.

One Question

This below is one of the questions asked in the Green Paper entitled ‘Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries’. This proposal wishes to address and expand the question giving an answer that wishes to put in connection the work that has been done in other parts of Europe in the recent years, wishing in this way, to contribute to the Irish cultural creative current situation.

QUESTION 1

- How to create more spaces and better support for experimentation, innovation and entrepreneurship in the CCIs? More particularly, how to increase access to ICT services in/for cultural and creative activities and improve the use of their cultural content? How could ICTs become a driver of new business models for some CCIs? (**Green paper, p.8**)

Answers

- **Build a strong internal network using virtual and actual spaces**
- **Understanding the benefits of cultural networks**
- **Improve cultural creative activities**

Build a strong internal network using virtual and actual spaces

SPACE AS NETWORKS

Firstly, here the suggestion is that cultural and creative networks should be considered as a space for the better support for experimentation, innovation and entrepreneurship in the CCIs. The image behind this is that to try to picture the real, concrete and the virtual spaces as a dual entity. This would create a 'double effect' that would allow for the cultural and creative productions to spread around Europe and gain feed back and audience. This understanding of dual reality could facilitate partnerships and mobility and would give visibility to the ongoing creativity and cultural life of the various hubs. Spaces are there to be occupied. In this moment Dublin has a rich body of vacant places which could be successfully handed over to the cultural and creative enterprise. The relocation and emergence of new cultural and creative industries could be the first attempt to create a city network. The aim here is to bring the Irish CCIs to be compact and networked amongst each other. In such manner, there would be a strong core able to then, emerge in Europe and beyond successfully.

In regards to the functioning of cultural networks, here below are summarized relevant points from Ugo Bachella, Director of Fitzcarraldo, Turin.

Ugo Bachella, Director of Fitzcarraldo¹- Turin, answered as following to how efficient cultural networking can be and what are the good practices of such:

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.

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 underrated by Governments. The most significant support to their expansion -even though financially modest - came from the Council of Europe and only later on from the European Commission mostly through 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.**

¹ **How efficient is networking?**

Brussels, June 8th 2007. Cultural Networks at work Workshop: How efficient is networking?

Aims: Propose a set of criteria to measure the results from cultural networking as well discuss solutions for improving work / efficiency / productivity

Opening remarks by Ugo Bacchella, President, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, Torino (Italy), 2007

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.

Understanding the benefits of cultural networks

Cultural networks can be seen as a medium to building new business.

Networks have people at their core and not structures that might arise from institutes that are far from the cultural creative understanding of business.

Promote internal (Irish) networking through constituting a CCI platform could lead to awareness and could initiate new economic viable projects.

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 put value to 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.

Improve cultural creative activities

Education

As mentioned by many respondents to this green paper, culture creativity and artistic project need to become models able to penetrate the educational system. It is in schools and in their free time activities that children learn most of the behaviors and it is here age that the exposure to stimulations will be carried thought life.

For these simple reasons it is necessary to rethink the ways in which culture and creativity can be unlocking the potential of student and teachers.

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There is a urgency to think of amplifying the school curricula. The following suggestions wish to be considered as enablers of culture. All the indicated ideas would be ‘packages’ that each school and college in Ireland could buy and of which facilities could be used as integral parts of the main curricula.

- **‘technology tanks’**: here, under the guidance of experts in the field, children and teachers and children and parents can be exposed to learning how to use the various technologies. They can be protagonists of their own projects and follow them to completion.
- **artsLab**: the same principle of the technology tank. Here the users would be participation to artistic projects that could vary from painting to crafts and photography.
- **Health and Culture platform**: the aim of such a platform would be that of educating citizens (youth/adults/elderly) to main health and well being education though the use of cultural tools: a theatre show, paintings video making and so forth.
- **Youth Houses**: Please see below the Finnish example of Youth houses

EXAPLES FORM FINLAND: HELSINKI

The mission of the Youth Department is to support young people's life choices and their sense of responsibility as well as to increase their participation. In the first place this means creating the prerequisites for moral and ideological growth; secondly it means facilitating their skills, motivation and experiences in civic interaction, and thirdly it means shouldering responsibilities for young people's social risks and place in society. <http://www.hel.fi/hki/nk/en/Introduction+of+Youth+Department>

'If you are a Helsinki resident aged 17-25 and either unemployed or under threat of becoming so, the Youth Department can offer you a work experience placement. This involves a period of work tailored to your aptitudes and needs and gives you the opportunity of a job and a wage. This is done under a wage-subsidy scheme and enables you to work with art, media, culture productions, handling motor vehicles and equipment, night basketball or supervising young people at the Youth Department's work locations

Loistefestari-Young Culture Event

Loistefestari (Shine Festival) highlights the artistic talents of young people in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In alternate years, its theme is theatre, music or dance. A jury drawn from professionals and experts in the field evaluates the performances and gives the artistes both oral and written feedback. nuoriso.hel.fi/loiste

ÄänijaVimmBand Review

First organised over ten years ago, the Ääni ja Vimma (Sound and Fury) band review has provided several young artistes and bands with a springboard from which to launch their careers. All under-25s are entitled to compete. The 14 bands that reach the final get, in addition to fame and honour, studio time to make a demo, gift cards as well as gigs at music venues in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Be careful to register before the deadline!

Read more here: nuoriso.hel.fi/aanijavimma.

Radio broadcasts, video editing, music videos, editorial work, photographing...

In the Youth Media you get to create exactly the kind of media content you want. At the editing office you can write stories, do radio broadcasts as well as shoot and edit videos. You are free to use top gear from cameras to blue screen and professional radio equipment. You don't have to know anything beforehand; the Youth Media staff can help you out in everything.

YouthMedia

Your own skating movie? Blair Witch Project or Big Brother at the youth house? Filming your friend's drama projects premiere? Yes of course. From the media centre of Oulunkylä's youth centre you will find a video camera and a software for editing.

Youth centres online

Netari is doing youth work at the internet communities called Habbo and IRC-Galleria.

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EXAPMLES FROM ITALY: TURIN

SALONE DEL LIBRO - BOOK SALON.

This Culture as economic driver. The Chamber for Commerce of Turin reaserch shows how the BOOK SALON has generated 53million euros, 384 temporary job places, the public funding came to 1.600.000 euro which equals to every euro spent generated 33euro. The Book salon is not only an editorial festival, within the 10days, a lot of cultural and economic conferences are held in the premises, inviting and attracting international and national speakers and audience.



**INNAMORATI
DELLA CULTURA**

LOVERS OF CULTURE

Every 14th of February, the city of Turin created a 'cultural love' celebration. This transforms the city in a open theatre stage where well-know theatre/dance companies showcase their work and writers and musicians orchestrate the city. The aim behind this initiative is that of rendering culture accessible to each citizen so to experience what culture is collectively and personally. The initiative follows a theme, which changes every year.

City Initiatives

Here above are two brief examples from the City of Turin.

These suggestion which to bring evidence on how the cultural stimulation can happen, and to what extend the CCIs can get involve publicly, generating new thinking and new creative projects that end with an economic success.

Final remarks

There is fertile humus ready to be cultivated, in Ireland and in Europe today. Not every citizen is aware of the cultural products available in her/his city, not every child is made participating cultural activities or though how to. It is up to the CCIs to create this visibility and to step out from an invisible fragmented unit.

The aim is to generate knowledge and for it to be shared and used.

It this point is not made a priority, there situation will not improve. Productivity needs to be a shared action.

This is why this proposal outlined simple ideas. It believes that shared knowledge comes through networking, and through networking new and challenging ideas can come about. It also believes that in order to use a creative product or to make culture an integrated part of everyday living, this must be though. There is a need of pedagogy of this sector to come along and for it to be promoted in schools and long lasting learning venues.

Thank you for the attention,

Ambra Bergamasco

PhD Fellow

Nirsa/ Geography Department

NUIM- Kildare

Ireland

ambrabergamasco@gmail.com phone: 0872132438

BIO:

Currently a PhD fellow in Nirsa and Geography Dep in NUIM. The research investigates cultural participation in Turin Italy. As Assistant Director of the theatre Espace in Turin, Italy, she has been producing theatre shows and cultural events since 10 years. She has worked internationally and nationally. She has been working with theatre for social change with Dr. Mallika Sarabhai in Gujarat India for two years (www.darpana.com; www.mallikasarabhai.com).

She directed her own solo shows and has been a theatre practitioner in educational institutes, and used theatre methods in psychiatry, drug addiction and disability.

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