

Kathrine Winkelhorn

Arts and Money

If three or more disparate institutions collaborate and co-ordinate their programmes and marketing, this will help to make culture play a more decisive role in local city life. This is not only significant for the theatres and the artists. This I believe is vital too for decision-makers, city governments and politicians since it is a way to create a visible and balanced cultural life.

For a number of years I have been working as a cultural producer primarily concerned with initiating cultural activities within the more experimental scene of visual art, theatre and music. And for five years I worked at Copenhagen 96 - European Capital of Culture, with responsibility for large-scale international projects. If I were to find a common denominator for the activities on which I have been working, it would be a developmental perspective, either artistically or in a more urban context. The driving force behind my work, my credo, has been to implement the idea of the arts as part of trying to create the future. But times are changing. Where are we going?

About four years ago I got the chance to initiate a Master's programme in cultural production at Malmö University. This programme was founded in July 1998 as Sweden's newest venture in higher education and currently it has some 1,100 staff members and 20,000 students. Our undergraduate and graduate courses are based on the idea that theory and practice are connected to each other. Production and reflection are woven together in the training programmes, which is not the normal approach within the academic tradition. I suppose this is a milestone: to acknowledge a practice and in this way work with a notion of tacit knowledge in an academic context.

Being involved in establishing a Master's programme became an unique opportunity, a chance to ask those complicated and tricky questions you otherwise seldom have the time, or even dare, to ask; questions and doubts regarding the role of art and culture. I can argue why art and culture are important and fundamental to local city life and ask the questions that are not easily answered. What I have in mind is the less commercial sector of cultural life and the live arts in particular, which are the most vulnerable and exposed.

There are many reasons for this. One of the more obvious is that cultural activities within the last twenty-five years have turned into a huge industry. Financially the



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cultural industry is considered one of the most promising sectors.¹ Culture and entertainment are now the largest industry in the USA and international trade has increased from US\$ 95 billion in 1980 to US\$ 387 billion in 1998. In this sense culture and entertainment are regarded as one of the fastest growing global markets.

The distribution of a commercial mass culture to new markets is a basic aspect of the global development of the cultural industry.² But as a result of the growth of global migration, the impulses and influences are moving from the periphery towards the centre. Within film, literature, and music one can no longer talk solely about a truly Western hegemony, as my colleague Oscar Hemer puts it. This raises another question

that is new, in a European context.

In some parts of the world, Bollywood is far more important than Hollywood. Commercial streamlining and increased cultural pluralism characterise cultural globalisation.³ Rather than talking about Americanisation one might talk about Latin Americanisation, i.e. a hybrid fusion of highly different cultural elements in new artistic expressions, commercial or not. How do we meet the challenges of non-stop global expressions in practice?

Another key issue at the beginning of the 21st century is migration. The eastern European transformation from communism to capitalism has, according to the Swedish writer Ulf Peter Hallberg,⁴ contributed to what he calls a number of misconceptions

1. *Denmark's Creative Potential* published by the Danish Ministry of Culture 2002.

2. Oscar Hemer, Senior lecturer in journalism and literature, K3. University of Malmö.

3. Ibid

4. *The Right to Be Unhappy*, Lettre Internationale, Denmark, September 2003.

currently haunted by simplification and the cultivation of nationalism, racism, populism and terrorism.

It is in this chaotic context of cultural, political, emigrational and economic transformation that cultural and artistic life has to play a decisive role. And very often we feel that extraordinary performances, films and exhibitions are suffering from a lack of attention from the media, decision-makers, audiences etc. We might complain. But perhaps we have to find out how to work differently and invent new strategies to reach other audiences. What's more, I guess we have to rethink the ways in which we disseminate information about our work, our knowledge and our expertise.

Working alone is almost not possible any longer. The competition is too high and the noise from the outside world too overwhelming. One of the buzzwords is networking, but networking is often nothing more than a bunch of addresses for people you don't know and in this way it becomes a waste of time and money. However, it is not only fringe theatres and the like that feel the pressure from a global world. Many mainstream cultural institutions are suffering as well and go down under pressure from lack of funding and a decrease in audiences.

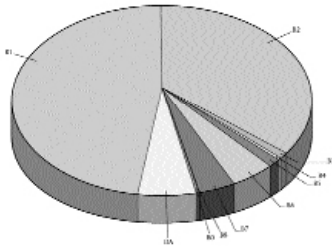
One of the strategies that we are trying out at the University in Malmö is to collaborate with a few institutions such as a gallery, a museum, a theatre or a church. Even if most universities have a limited budget, they do have resources in terms of equipment and students. For the students of art, cultural management, theatre, music, journalism or whatever, it is an opportunity to learn, to reflect and to make contact. Even if this is a lot of work for both parties it is both a convincing method for coping with lack of attention and a strategy to create new audiences. If three or more disparate institutions collaborate and co-ordinate their

programmes and marketing, this helps to make culture play a more decisive role in local city life. This is not only significant for the theatres and the artists. I believe it is vital too for decision-makers, city governments and politicians since it is a way to create a visible and balanced cultural life. For a city of culture a well-balanced relationship between the more experimental work and the more institutional work is fundamental - otherwise cultural life becomes boring and trivial.

Sometimes numbers are like magnifying glasses. It is not that numbers themselves are interesting, but they have some odd kind of magic. They enable you to see a tiny area clearly, but without a truthful context. At an official meeting in January 2001 in Brussels, the Head of the Cultural Sector at the EU Culture Department stated that some three million people in the EU are presently working within the cultural industry, which includes everything from avant-garde theatre to soap operas, visual arts, music, film, television programmes, computer games etc. This means that more people are working within culture than within the total agriculture sector in Europe, not including any new member states!

While preparing this article I was surfing on the Internet and quite accidentally came across the EU budget. Some 45% is being spent within the agricultural sector. In comparison, culture and education is supported with some 0.9% of the total EU budget. These are abstract figures and rather incomprehensible, but to my mind they broaden the vision. They give an image of the role culture has within the eyes of most EU politicians. But certainly one would be mistaken if one took numbers of Euros as a token or a mark of what role culture plays in cities and communities throughout Europe. On a local, regional and national level culture does get financial support and

Budget 2004
Summary of appropriations for commitments



Authorisation	Amount	%
B1 EUJDP assistance for rural areas	14 404,1	14,7
B2 Regional operations, structural and cohesion funds - financial instruments, other agricultural and regional operations, transport and fisheries	54 902,5	54,9
B3 Training, youth, culture, radio-visual media, information, social dimension and employment	718,7	0,7
B4 Energy, transport, nuclear safeguards and environment	248,7	0,2
B5 Consumer protection, internal market, industry and trans-European networks	1 172,9	1,2
B6 Research and technological development	4 016,0	4,1
B7 External action	8 914,0	8,8
B8 Common foreign and security policy	10,0	0,0
B9 Customs and reserves	213,0	0,2
D1 Administrative expenditure of all the institutions	5 178,1	5,2
Total	99 614,7	100,0 %

certainly is crucial for local life per se.

Nowadays many artists and cultural institutions are working internationally and more EU support is indispensable. Before I close this article, I would like to point out that even if the EU cultural budget is limited, it is possible to get solid support. I mean this as a request to apply! Well-prepared projects that imagine an open-minded and cosmopolitan Europe are needed. Perhaps artistic and cultural projects are the best way to fight and to neutralise nationalism, racism, populism and terrorism, which are now haunting Europe. In this context the EU has an important role to play in supporting the development of European cultural life in the 21st century.

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