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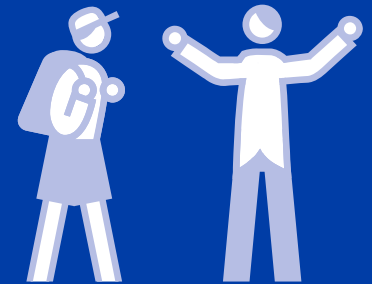
VOL.1

MOBI



LILITY IN

CULTU



Conceptual
Frameworks &
Approaches

RE

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Original: EN

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To contact the Kultura
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Manuscript completed
in July 2022

This document is
available on the
internet with the
option to download
the full text from:
kulturanova.hr
culturalfoundation.eu
mitost.org
i-portunus.eu

**Please use the
following reference
to cite this volume:**
Duxbury, N. and Vidović,
D. (eds.) (2022) *Mobility
in Culture: Conceptual
Frameworks and
Approaches. i-Portunus
Houses, Volume 1.*
Zagreb: Kultura Nova
Foundation.

**Please use the following
reference to cite the
chapters in this volume:**
Surname, N. of author(s)
(2022) "Title of Chapter",
in Duxbury, N. and
Vidović, D. (eds.) *Mobility
in Culture: Conceptual
Frameworks and
Approaches. i-Portunus
Houses, Volume 1.*
Zagreb: Kultura Nova
Foundation.

**Please use the
following reference
for in-text citations:**
Duxbury and Vidović
(2022)

The opinions expressed
in this document are the
sole responsibility of
the authors and do not
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official position of the
European Commission.

This publication was produced and published within the “i-Portunus Houses – Kick-Start a Local Mobility Host Network for Artists & Cultural Professionals in All Creative Europe Countries” implemented, on behalf of the European Commission, by a consortium of the European Cultural Foundation, MitOst e.V. and the Kultura Nova Foundation.

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ROOTS, ROUTES & RHIZOMES: CULTURAL MOBILITY & LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Mark Robinson

INTRO— DUCTION

In this chapter, I want to begin by considering the frameworks and patterns that surround the encounter between cultural mobility and local communities. This will allow for a fuller understanding of the impact of cultural mo-

bility on local communities and their creative practice. I am interested especially in how the dispersed network of mobility meets the geo-located and will draw on thinking around belonging before considering some of the impacts seen in various community-engaged international collaborations involving UK projects that I have worked with.

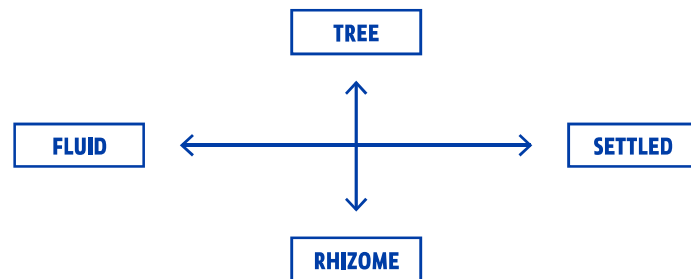
THE FLUID & THE SETTLED, THE TREE & THE RHIZOME

The world of the international mobile artist is often described using the image of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013). It is a network beneath the surface of the vertical hierarchical constructs of the Art World or Industry. It is horizontal, dispersed and distributed, connected, heterogeneous and multiple, creating its own unofficial maps that connect Newcastle to Bergen to Kyiv to Liverpool to

Freetown and Port Elizabeth. It starts and ends anywhere and everywhere, certainly not in one single place. Where this rhizome connects to the local community, it becomes entangled with the roots of the tree that Deleuze and Guattari consigned to modernity and pre-modernity, but where many people still live much of their life, often all of it. The local is literally rooted back to origins – the harbour. The rhizome sustains and draws from the arborescent local identity, even as it challenges that, as the tree draws in fresh ingredients and perspectives.

The binary tensions – potentially false – at play between the fluid and the settled (the mobile, even, transient, artist and the settled, sometimes indigenous community) and the rhizome and the tree root (the international network and the local infrastructure, say) are illustrated in ▶ Figure 1. I argue that these apparently opposing ideas can be brought together in the connections created by cultural mobility and local communities and local cultural ecosystems, and that projects should see these more as compass points than contractions and bear all of them in mind in their work: communities are often less “settled” than they may seem; artists’ fluidity is shaped and limited by the cultural ecosystem in which they work, and networks and ideas of place and belonging can connect the distributed rhizome and the rooted tree.

Figure 1 ▶ Potentially false binaries.



But to consider the potential of these binary tensions, it is important to understand the dynamics at play in ideas of local communities to see how creative practice can expand perceptions. What do we mean when we talk of “the local community”? Is it people who come out of their houses to gather in meetings, ceremonies, political, sporting, cultural or religious events and groups? Is it the people who vote in ward and local elections? Those who join political parties and local campaigns? (But not those who don’t?) The people

who wait at school gates to pick up their children and grandchildren and neighbours’ children? The people who use the same shops, or walk dogs in the park? The people who were born in a place? Those who have lived there for a long time? How quickly can you be considered part of the local community? Is a nod a sign of community, or do you have to talk? How does your community of place interact with your communities of interest, and intersect with your class, ethnicity, gender or sexuality?

All of these are relevant questions for thinking about how cultural mobility – artists and other cultural workers moving between locations and places – and local community interact. Importantly, and central to my argument, they illustrate the essentially *relational* nature of community in the context we are considering. It is important to see local communities as living, relational processes in continual evolution. The local is often seen as related to things that are fixed, or looking back at idealised versions of roots, heritage and landscape (including industrial landscapes). Local communities can be seen as representing “fixity and stasis” in comparison with the loose networks of cosmopolitan travellers and the temporary or distributed communities of internationally connected artists and curators (O’Sullivan, 2002).

The “local” in arts practice has often been associated with the nostalgic, both formally – the use of traditional folk forms – and in terms of content – a yearning for the past. “Local artist” or “local writer” are often used as restrictive terms, diminutives, rather than geographical identifiers. “Local” is often framed as excluding external influences and incomers. Yet there will be inward and outward migration and churn in any population, even in smaller towns and rural areas.⁽¹⁾

(1) For example, data shows that in parts of Blyth, the town in England that was a part of the EU-funded multinational project CORNERS discussed later in this chapter, up to 35% of households changed in the decade from 2011 to 2020.

The tensions of exclusion and welcome are always alive in communities, partly because local communities contain multitudes, and many different communities within them (Chavis and Lee, 2015). Many communities are excluded from their own local “art worlds” or creative industries. The social impact of arts and culture in the UK is, for instance, heavily weighted towards those with degree-level education and higher incomes and socio-economic status, who are also more likely to be mobile themselves. The Warwick Commission on Cultural Value reported that only 8% of the UK population engage with the arts three times a year. Local and vernacular cultural practices and creatives often report a lack of recognition for their work (Warwick, 2015).

The specific cultural practices and heritage attachments that grow up in particular places are often connected to a fierce attachment to locality, which is presented as defensive more than creative (as explored in Tomaney, 2013). This is countered by narratives of rootedness, such as that of Wendell Berry, who argues that in rural areas at least, multi-generational occupancies, communities and cultures lead to more sustainable use of land and more sustainable community life (Berry, 1981). The role of passed-down memory in the stewardship of places is, for Berry, not a defensive one, but a creative one that puts creativity and growth in its proper long-term, multi-generational context. The social capital in local communities at play is a crucial context for cultural mobility and the visiting/welcomed artist.

Within a local community this social capital can be seen as positively centred on belonging, an inclusive process rather than an exclusionary one, defined by bell hooks as “a fidelity to place” and “a vital sense of covenant and commitment” (hooks, 2009:

65). Without this covenant and commitment, rooted in time and trust and routed through mutual curiosity and agreement, the creativity of the community and that of the artist do not connect and combine but are only acquired and exploited by one or other. Alternatively, according to hooks, the work can seek a false universality that becomes homogenised rather than enriched by the particular, specific and local.

The final aspect of the local community I want to highlight is a positive aspect of “parochial”, a word with as many negative connotations in English culture as positive ones. The Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh claimed the word as a positive opposite to provincialism: “The provincial has no mind of his own, he does not trust what his eyes see until he has heard what the great metropolis towards which his eyes are ever turned has to say on any subject... The parochial mentality on the other hand is never in any doubt about the social and artistic validity of his own parish” (Kavanagh, 2003: 237). He went on to claim that “parochialism is universal and deals with fundamentals” (p. 237). This echoes Wendell Berry praising the African American writer Ernest Gaines, who puts the positive case for cultural localism as well as any: “the local, fully imagined, becomes universal” (hooks, 2009: 187).

Although community engagement with the mobility of artists is my focus in this chapter, this exists in the contexts of current practices. Before moving on, I want to highlight some aspects to be kept in mind. These reflect Greenblatt’s urging that thinking around mobilities of any kind takes seriously the physical, political and social factors such as passports, visas, cost, eligibility, time, the contact zones of movement and the tensions between individuals and structures within particular times and culture (Greenblatt, 2009).

First, we should acknowledge that for many artists, the international residency or project is a necessary part of their portfolio and curriculum vitae. Being accepted onto a residency at one of the artist residency centres around the world is almost a rite of passage – a validation as well as an opportunity to make work or to learn about other cultures. This is especially so for artists in peripheral places, for whom residencies and international projects can be a way of connecting to hierarchical if not geographical centres (further described in the CORNERS of Europe case study in this chapter).

For artists working with local communities as part of their international mobility, there are several expectations and preconditions. The international network Res Artis identifies 13 core principles⁽²⁾ that it suggests apply to the full diversity of kinds and scales of arts residencies. These include what one might call “hygiene factors” (Herzberg, 1966), such as being well organised with sufficient time, space and resources, and a clear understanding of mutual responsibilities; process principles such as enabling the creative process, actively “dwelling in a place”, and encountering the unknown; and impacts such as contributing to the arts ecosystem, encouraging global mobility and contributing to cultural policy and diplomacy.

I should also acknowledge that who is able to be culturally mobile, and which communities welcome others are questions of privilege and political power. A recent UNESCO paper aimed at “reshaping policies for creativity” identifies ongoing global inequalities in mobility due to “unequal distribution of funding and burdensome visa requirements” (UNESCO, 2022: 143). This makes it difficult for some people to travel and,

for some places, limits the number and range of artists who can be invited to visit.⁽³⁾ UNESCO (2022) argues for increasing support for artists from “developing countries” so they can access markets elsewhere.

The internationally mobile artist is now often seen as part of a dispersed and decentralised network that moves in unpredictable ways, altering over time as energy flows differ. This international network is not entirely separate from the geographic places artists may come from or visit: many cities and towns have used residency exchange models to reposition themselves in reciprocal national and international cultural networks and policies that through this reciprocity benefit local creatives too. Emma Duester, in a study of artist mobility and Baltic cities, argues that mobility creates alternative art worlds, “a transnational community that is made up of multiple connected local settings spread across different cities” (Duester, 2013: 116). She elaborates how the mobility of short-term migration creates zones of exchange that allow roots and routes to connect, and people to form their own “nations”, albeit on a project basis.

This temporary nature of mobile artists networks can be limited and potentially damaging for local communities if there is not an ongoing or regular local anchor or docking institution of some sort (such as the local government cultural services or specialist arts agencies such as D6 in the CORNERS of Europe case study). If the international routes through which the rhizome flows and grows have no rooting places to attach to, they can replicate the “parachute in – disappear after” model of community cultural engagement that many disadvantaged communities have become used to, leading to persistent mistrust which, in turn, impairs engagement (Williams, 2003).

(2) The full list can be found on the Res Artist website: <https://resartis.org/global-network-arts-residency-centres/definition-arts-residencies/> (Accessed: 22 April 2022).

(3) As just one of many examples around the globe, the UK government’s “hostile environment” policies made it increasingly difficult for the Swallows Foundation UK, which I chaired, to bring black, male, South African artists to North-East England, as they were often refused visas, at least before appeal.

Case studies

CORNERS OF EUROPE

The *CORNERS of Europe* project was an international collaboration between 11 partners in Sweden, Croatia, Slovenia, UK and Northern Ireland, Poland, Basque Country/Spain, Serbia, Italy and Kosovo. The project connected places on the physical peripheries of Europe that had experienced deindustrialisation to explore what they shared and what was different.

Two of the manifestations in North-East England connected to community engagement projects within the national Creative People and Places programme⁽⁴⁾, which centres on community involvement. CORNERS worked in Blyth in South-East Northumberland and in Horden, Shotten and Blackhall in East Durham. CORNERS events also took place in Haninge (Sweden), in Prizren (Kosovo) as part of DokuFest, and in Belfast (Northern Ireland) as part of the Belfast International Arts Festival.

Altogether, 30 artists and producers visited North-East England, meeting with many local people and community groups. Through this, dialogue and collaborative working methods were developed. Artists, producers and community members travelled to festivals and installations, meeting each other and becoming part of discussions around the overall project. They were also able to become familiar with each other's ideas before they visited their own local community to work together.

In an interview, the Director of D6 described the project as “connecting people to people and place to place” (interview, 2 February 2022). As such it reflects the rhizome network and the arborescent centres described elsewhere. Within this, there is a positive engagement encouraged with the specifics of the local, and with what communities share. People were reportedly more positive after the projects, as a result

of seeing their local place and community as “worth visiting”, and of examining their own heritages further. Having their place recognised mattered to local people. One piece about migration provoked some public debate but the piece was described as enabling the kind of respectful, sensitive conversation of controversial issues that a purely political framing did not.

The range of partners involved in Blyth is indicative of an asset-based and collaborative approach. It included local radio, schools, colleges, town and county councils, the police force, community and shopping centres, property developers and landlords, arts organisations, museums, youth groups, local churches and social clubs. This helped build the trust and depth of relationships crucial to the reception for the artists and their works, and to opening up avenues of inquiry and research for them.

In East Durham, local people shared experiences of change in their locality. The *[Voiceover]* project combined stories from East Durham with ones from Gdansk and Zagreb. D6 describes those stories as “both specific and universal”, echoing Wendell Berry's words (“the local, fully imagined, becomes universal”).

Safari Here, a collaboration between Maria Anastassiou (UK), Isabella Mongelli (Italy) and Milos Tomic (Serbia) was based on research in local communities. It presented their stories back to local people, through a travel agency, a guided tour of the locality and a short film. This was reported as boosting people's understanding of their own place and community – sharing and creating fresh perceptions to enrich but not to replace or overwrite their own.

(4) Creative People and Places is a programme instigated by Arts Council England. It launched in 2012 and is an intervention to inspire new ways of thinking about cultural engagement in local authority areas where the official statistics showed historically low levels of engagement. The programme has created over 7.4 engagements.

The confidence of community connectors and members in the programme's creative process was vital. This came from all involved being well supported through a well-managed and resourced, long-term, connected and collaborative process. One local artist I interviewed said the project "opened my eyes to how you could work as an artist with other artists. It made me want to do bigger projects – which I now am" (interview, 10 February 2022).

The impact on community members who took part was reported as predominantly positive. The use of familiar spaces in the community for unfamiliar – even strange – purposes made people look at them afresh and think about what those places might mean to others. Both visiting and locally based artists were interested in the shared experience of understanding the landscapes and histories of the local communities.

The presentations of work were highly "located" in specific places – hyperlocal within towns and villages to reflect the nature of people's experiences – and "connected" through the collaborative nature of the projects, which had a different dynamic than that of a solo artist "discovering" or "interpreting" a place. This collaboration built in reflections on the similarities between places as well as the diversity. The use of public spaces and social settings was part of an approach D6 describes as "the international in the everyday", connecting to ideas of everyday creativity and community engagement while rejecting any potential for exoticism or benevolent-explorer approaches.

SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE RHIZOME MEETS THE TREE & THE PEOPLE BENEATH THE TREE?

What happens when you invite an artist into your community? Or when one or more come to visit, or to stay? When the rhizome of the international network pops out of the ground near the thick, gnarled and lovely roots of the biggest tree in your neighbourhood? What are the potential impacts on those nutrient-rich channels, the hidden and visible roots and routes, and the people beneath the tree?

In seeking partial answers to these questions, I want to draw on my experience as a Critical Friend to the UK-wide network of local arts centres, Future Arts Centres. I was part of a project to explore how arts centres could benefit from international ideas, resources and networks, and remain connected to local communities.⁽⁵⁾ There were three aspects to internationalism that were especially im-

portant to Future Arts Centres' members that particularly reflect on the impact on the local communities of which they are part, with the complexity and richness described earlier: connection and anti-isolationism, encouraging exchange and dialogue; intercultural solidarity and collaboration; and development, exploration and reflection on home.⁽⁶⁾

(5) The project included a series of conversations and exchanges between a UK and an international organisation, six large commissions of new work and a conference. The programme involved 18 UK arts centres and multiple international partners drawn from 23 different countries.

(6) Network members also identified benefits in terms of staff development, increased arts networks and confidence, which applied more to themselves as cultural organisations.

Internationalism as Connection and Anti-Isolationism, Encouraging Exchange and Dialogue

The breaking of potential (and sometimes very real) insularity through long-term dialogue that connected communities where arts centres have their roots to other ways of thinking and being were especially important. This was even more so the case in local communities that were home to diverse and diasporic communities when the visiting artists connected to their backgrounds. Mobility facilitated exchange of people, ideas, experiences and creative work in several directions. Dialogue was also important with local creative communities, with spillovers to artistic practice and also the creation of new, international communities of artists, as often come from residencies.

Such anti-isolationist dialogue reflects the role of connection, collaboration and multiplication in both Deleuze and Guattari's image of the rhizome, and the non-hierarchical leadership found in *Creative People and Places* (Robinson, 2020). Such leadership is inherently communal and collective and has the impact of bringing people together. For physicist David Bohm, the purpose of dialogue is "to reveal the incoherence in our thought" so a group of people can discover or re-establish a "genuine and creative collective consciousness" (Bohm, 1997: 175). It requires three basic conditions: a suspension of usual assumptions; a genuine acknowledgement of others as peers; and the facilitation of a space, especially at first.

This seems to me what happens within many creative and cultural projects, and these characteristics can be seen in the CORNERS case study. It also echoes Peter Block's conclusions

about building community through connecting and caring for the whole and shifting conversations "from the problems of community to the possibility of community" (Block, 2008: 177). This sense of possibility, "a future distinct from the past", as Block also writes, is crucial to the engagement between people from different cultures and artistic practices, which leads to new ideas and encourages people to articulate their own values and modes of production.

Internationalism as Intercultural Solidarity and Collaboration

For many, connecting to others with similar values but different traditions (or indeed, traditions with surprising similarities) the work that comes from the international mobility of artists is an act of cultural or political solidarity. The CORNERS project showed this mutual recognition across its multiple sites, with artists and communities meeting and exchanging responses in different social and historical frames. Politically divisive issues such as migration can be explored in ways based on shared discussion, rooted in the artworks.

The work that happens as a mobile artist meets a local community is much more of a collaboration than a simple swapping of locally specific worldviews or practices. Community participants and artists in the CORNERS project, for instance, reflected on the benefits of seeing their own practices differently as a result of working with others.

Internationalism as Exploration and Reflection on Home

The dialogue and discovery that happens in the interaction between artist and local community happens in a kind of third or potential space of art (Winnicott, 1971). Mobility creates spaces (or processes) that are different from the norm for both visiting artists – by virtue of taking place “elsewhere” – and for local people, artists and participants. It brings in lateral perspectives and different ways of doing things as well as practical connections and ideas, generating possibilities for growth and new insights that more “direct”, “like for like” engagement may not. The mobile approach to things is always at least slightly “slant”, to borrow Emily Dickinson’s term.

This reflection back on place and local community from outside perspectives comes across in interviews about the CORNERS project and other research as a vital impact on local communities. People talk about seeing their place differently as a result, be it landscape or history or atmosphere. There is also something from the Future Arts Centres’ experiences about the impact that travelling – literally or imaginatively – can have on reflection of home.

This reflects how mobility can and, I would argue, should make communities more themselves, enhancing their particularity, rather than diminishing it. Where long memory – the part of the local that may lean towards nostalgia or intransigence in some circumstances – meets fresh perception, the local can be enlarged and enriched by cultural mobility. This is reflected in comments from those I interviewed about the CORNERS project, such as: “Having our place rec-

ognised mattered – seeing it how others saw it made us see it differently” (interview, 10 February 2022). For D6, a partner in the CORNERS project, this is very much why internationalism is an aspect of cultural diversity and should not be separated out from it in policy terms: it brings in diverse agents, connects to the diversity within local communities and multiplies both.

Routes in the Ecosystem: Artist or Community-Centric?

This brings us to another tension: that between views of cultural ecologies that prioritise artists or arts practice and those that are more concerned with the role of, and impact on, communities of place, interest or practice. Much cultural policy remains artist-centred, which is reflected in its framing of mobility. In UNESCO's recent report, *Re/Shaping Policies for Creativity*, for instance, mobility is seen as internationalising the arts, and transnational mobility as a public good. Mobility is seen as "a fundamental part of the professional trajectory of artists and cultural professionals" without reflecting on its role for the places visited or dwelt in (UNESCO, 2022: 143).

In the same report, some of the quotations from practitioners with more localised concerns cast doubt on this career-focused perspective. Phloeun Prim, Executive Director of Cambodian Living Arts, for instance, frames mobility around its impacts on the places and people reached or involved:

When implemented for the benefit of all, cultural mobility is about building friendship, compassion and a deeper understanding of humanity. In times of crisis, friendships and connections are the building blocks of resilience.... While the future of mobility and cultural mobility will take on new forms, the principles of interpersonal, contextual and transnational learning will endure. (UNESCO, 2022: 155)

The relational aspect suggested by Phloeun Prim can also be found in considerations of creative ecosystems with a community engagement perspective. Research into the cultural ecosystems within Creative People and Places (Gross and Wilson, 2019) identified 54 elements, ranging from artists to youth services via cafes and car parks, pubs, police and property. The authors propose recognising things such as housing stock and the shape and size of a place as elements of cultural ecosystems, alongside more obviously cultural resources such as artists, libraries or venues. They also emphasise that just as a community is always relational – how people relate to each other, bridging, bonding or avoiding – so is the cultural ecosystem: "What a cultural eco-system consists of is not just a question of the 'items' within it, but of their interrelations and interdependencies, their levels of connectivity, their systemic conditions" (Gross and Wilson, 2019: 28). The ecosystem, then, is a kind of rhizome rather than a fixed, rooted thing, always relational, always changing.

The key is to consider the kinds of dynamics described above in terms of the emergent relationships they set up. These might be between local people, their sense of the past and future, and the heritage institutions and narratives present in their place. Or they might be between local people and each other, especially local creatives who might come together differently when artists from elsewhere visit or projects happen. (I have often seen local artists and cultural workers meet for the first time when they come together to welcome visitors.) It may also be in terms of the kind of dialogue present within the local ecosystem as a result of mobile activity, such as the connections between resident institutions that were boosted by supporting the CORNERS project, for instance, or recalibrations of ideas of the local.

The key metric – if one needs metrics – ought perhaps to be the amount of energy flowing through the relationships in a place and outwards beyond.

One of the lessons from *Creative People and Places* is that building and deepening those relationships is enhanced by building on what exists, the tangible and intangible assets and heritage of a place, rather than by deficit-thinking. An asset-based approach connects cultural ecosystems to the relationships and infrastructure found in a community. To assess the flows of energy, positive or negative impacts and other feedback loops based on the kinds of impacts described here, requires an asset-based approach, such as that set out by John McKnight and others. McKnight's Asset Based Community Development or ABCD framework (McKnight, 2016) considers six kinds of assets and capacities, which are clearly identifiable as valuable dimensions of planning for or assessing the value of projects that connect cultural mobility to local communities:

- what people know, can do and care about
- the social and citizen groups in a locality
- the state and non-profit public bodies
- physical assets such as buildings or landscapes
- relationships and connections
- tangible and intangible cultural assets.

A final important aspect of how a cultural ecosystem operates, and of cultural mobility, that I want to flag is time. Our experience of both community and mobility – of the fluid and the settled, the rhizome and the root, exists in time – both duration and rhythm. How long an arts project lasts and how often or regularly it happens, are important dimensions of how we experience it, and can be enabling or limiting. Yi-Fu Tuan, in considering the relationship between identity and place, connects it to the rhythms found in individual and collective life, for instance, and argues that “identity of place is achieved by dramatizing the aspirations, needs and functional rhythms of personal and group life” and that “quality and intensity of experiences matters more than simple duration” (Tuan, 1977: 178, 198). This echoes much of my research into *Creative People and Places* (Robinson, 2017, 2021), which found that the principles of good community practice require careful consideration of the role of time. Too many communities have rightly grown mistrustful of short-term, hit-and-run projects. Long-term regular commitments to listening and acting upon local insights boost engagement, support and learning. This need not be continuous, but should be regular.

CONCLUSION: TIME, TRUST, RHIZOMES & ROUTES

The dynamic ideas of fluid and settled and rhizome and tree, as suggested at the beginning of this chapter (► Figure 1), can be productive compass points for local communities and local cultural ecosystems to consider when creating new ways of thinking and creativity – and especially when engaging with visiting artists and other mobile cultural workers, and broader issues around

mobility. What D6 calls “the international in the everyday” or “everyday internationalism” can connect to ideas of cultural democracy and everyday creativity in local communities when visiting artists are supported, through clear and well-managed structures, to engage with communities.

Local ecosystems benefit from fresh insight and from exchange and dialogue, which combat any insular impulses and break down isolationism, helping to connect and multiply local creativity. New collaborations spring up. The diversity within communities is made more visible through connection with external diversity. The skills of dialogue create new hybrid communities. The reflection on “home” – a set of assets working in and through a relational system – becomes different as a result of the mobile artists “playing back” what they see, find and create while in residence. Local creatives benefit from this as well, in addition to the development of their own international networks.

An international residency can become, at best, a kind of asset-based community development, connecting the internationally distributed rhizome and the local trees and woods. The involvement of local people as “connectors”, utilizing their community networks, can mitigate the risks of projects being

perceived to parachute in without consideration of the welcoming community or place. This can actively damage the trust without which activities remain, at best, surface-level and insignificant and, at worst, likely to misunderstand or misrepresent local places and heritage. Trust comes from connection and collaboration, which require investment of time, resources and relationships. These can be built by adapting planning and developmental processes to involve mobile creative workers, local people and the professional facilitators of a project.

In designing how to meet the needs of the fluid and the settled, the rhizome and the trees, six of the principles found in Creative People and Places and in the work of local arts centres could be crucial for cultural mobility and local communities:

Time ► Taking a long-term approach changes how people working together in a place can think about the challenges and opportunities facing that place and its communities. The rushed residency can slip into mutual exoticism.

Trust ► Trust matters, because it encourages genuine exploratory dialogue.

Community voice ► Having community voice present throughout helps deepen projects. Community connectors or brokers to introduce people are valuable.

Listening ► A core skill for community practice is listening to the dreams, desires and stories of local people – and also to what they do not say or those who may not immediately come forward.

Partnership ▶ Making the residency a partnership helps as partnership develops common cause amongst diverse interests.

Asset-based ▶ Every local place is rich in creative practice, in ideas and in heritage. These should be part of the focus of mobile artists residencies.

Through these principles, artists can progress their own work and careers while also being in harmony with, and contributing to, what Peter Block (2008) calls “the structure of belonging” and creating lasting impact for local communities. This is likely to create greater insights for artists and communities alike, deeper new relationships, and also lead to more sustained routes for creative practice within communities and networks, rhizomes and roots alike.

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