STATUS OF THE ARTS

Report from the IETM Bucharest Plenary Meeting, 20 - 23 April 2017

by Ioana Tamas

Status of the arts

Who decides on quality in the arts and based on which criteria? This was the central question of IETM Bucharest session "Status of the Arts". During the three-hour panel, the performing arts world was scrutinized through lenses of race, gender, class, and aesthetics. The idea that beauty lies in the eye of the beholder led to vivid conversations about decision making practices, diversity and standards in evaluating quality. Ground realities from Western and Eastern Europe, Australia and Canada showed how distinct, yet similar cultural experiences can be in different parts of the globe.

The discussion was framed by initial interventions of three speakers – Dawn Walton, theatre director and founder of Eclipse Theatre Company in Sheffield (UK), Corina Suteu, cultural consultant and former Minister of Culture (Romania), and Pippa Bailey, senior producer at Performing Lines in Sydney (Australia). For one hour, the panellists debated the evolution of the role of the arts in society and questioned the notion of excellence based on who makes the decision.

Status of the arts session at IETM Bucharest 2017 © Alina Usurelu

Speakers:

Pippa Bailey - Performing Lines, Australia

Dawn Walton - Independent, United Kingdom

Corina Suteu - Cultural consultant, former Minister of Culture, Romania

The definition of quality in the arts is closely dependent on the people involved in decision-making. In the process of selecting and presenting qualitative art work, curators have a decisive word on setting the standards. "Quality is in the eye of a programmer or a curator," said Dawn Walton. In the performing arts world, theatre managers and festival curators have the capacity to select the artists that get to be showcased. Therefore, the opportunity to be seen and judged by art critics, audiences, other artists or programmers depends on this initial phase.

It is important to acknowledge that taste and aesthetics are determined by a limited framework of a personal cultural baggage.

Dawn Walton brought to the discussion the problem of Black British perspective being often overlooked in the UK and on the continent. Eclipse Theatre produces new work centred on the Black experiences in the UK. In 2014, the theatre launched Revolution Mix, a project that anticipated the different cultural biases embedded in the selection process of any mainstream theatre. "Revolution Mix started with commissioning 15 Black writers all around the UK, mostly outside of London because Black artists are pretty much invisible outside of London. If you are going to a regional theatre and ask if there are Black artists in the city, they will most probably say that there are not any. But if they don't know them, this doesn't mean that they are not there or that they are not very good." (Dawn Walton). For Eclipse Theatre, it was not unusual to receive comments on their plays and requests to change parts of the text. If a white literary department doesn't understand a black reference, then it is rejected on the grounds of quality. Revolution Mix was designed to eliminate such constraints. Eclipse Theatre partnered with other theatres that committed to co-produce 15 plays without knowing the name of the playwright or the text in advance.

Race remains a source of discrimination in any diverse, yet mono-cultural society. The aboriginal arts in Australia are judged from a predominantly White perspective on beauty and excellence. Understanding the rich subcultures within one country, just like understanding other foreign cultures, is hard to achieve, even for high level decision makers. Pippa Bailey shared her experience in working with aboriginal artists: "Australia is a fairly mono-cultural society at a mainstream level from Perth to Sydney, which is the distance from London to Istanbul. It is a very homogenous culture, largely commercial, influenced by America and the UK. However, the land accommodates over 300 indigenous nations, people who have a symbiotic relationship with the natural environment, and a completely different understanding of stories, art, and culture."

In 2010, during the IETM Stockholm Meeting, gender academic Vajna Hermele shared her thesis that undefined notions of excellence in the arts protect and preserve the status quo. The idea that a work of art is not good enough might actually mean that more men are in positions of power, or that there is still not enough diversity in the decision-making process. "If we want to see a diversity of art forms and culture at the forefront of new ideas, see gender equality and diversity in our culture, we must either abandon or expand current preoccupation with excellence, which is contributing to the homogenisation of culture. We must also explore what role contemporary practice plays in standardising sexism, racism and consumer values in a free market economy." (Pippa Bailey)

Audiences rank high among quality influencers. Their number, gender and cultural background are estimates for the success of a cultural product. Live performing arts are particularly sensitive to audiences' profile. "Having the right audience in the room makes a big difference" was Dawn Walton's conclusion after presenting the same show to all-White and mixed audiences. "The first production we did with the Eclipse Theatre in 2010 was called Sus by Barrie Keeffe. Set during a police interview of a black man by two white officers, the first act was a very funny witty act. When it was an all-White audience, which was quite frequent, everyone sat very tense, and nobody laughed. It was respectful, but pointless. When there was a mixed audience including a Black audience, then the White audience had the permission to laugh. They were opened up and relaxed. When the story switched to the inevitable violence in the second act, people were broken, they were crying. This meant that they had a better understanding." (Dawn Walton)

In economic terms, audiences translate into markets. The potential outreach of a play, or a book determines its chances to be presented. "Quality is associated with risk." (Dawn Walton) In 2016, the Man Booker Prize was awarded to African American writer Paul Beatty for "The Sellout". Before being published, Paul Beatty was turned down 18 times. When asked why he thought his book was rejected so many times, his answer was "I guess they thought the book wouldn't sell". Publishing houses believed that they would not have an audience for it.

Standards of quality in the arts are also shaped by cultural systems (public institutions, NGOs, legislation, policies) and **funding mechanisms**. For Eastern European and Latin American countries, quality lays under the weight of heavy bureaucratic public cultural institutions. The relationship between the government and the arts is very different from Western societies. "After the fall of communism, Eastern Europe has not quite reshaped itself. Big institutions such as the National Theatre in Bucharest continue to have a repertoire that is decided by the theatre's manager alone, or by the manager together with the artistic director. The director's taste runs the repertory theatre, the opera house etc." (Corina Suteu).

Eastern Europe is not the only place where taste is shaped by a handful of people. The theatre system in the UK gravitates as well towards funding mainly theatre buildings, while the programming is decided by the artistic director solely.

Some Asian countries aspire to replicate the European model for organising and funding the arts, without acknowledging and questioning its downsides. "In South Korea, the industrialisation process, which has happened over the last 30 years, has been very much about sending people to Europe, to France and to England particularly, to learn the systems and later to be able to replicate them. The rollout effect of culture and cultural systems around the world is profound." (Pippa Bailey) This practice overlooks minorities' right to cultural expression and existent subcultures within a society.

In any circumstance, quality should be evaluated based on criteria of **diversity**. Judging quality should be replaced by the more enriching practice of showing **curiosity** towards different cultures, subcultures and practices. Strict representations of beauty and excellence oppose diversity and inclusion in the arts world and in society. "Diversity and equality in theatre have not been my experience." (Dawn Walton) "The entire process of deciding what is excellence is about letting go. If I am not judging and I am more curious, what do I discover? The main provocation is how do we encourage ourselves, our colleagues and our audience to be more culturally curious?" (Pippa Bailey)

Pippa Bailey shared an Australian custom of acknowledging the Aboriginal land on which she lives and works; the Gadigal Land in the Eora Nation, the area around Sydney Harbour: "If I was in Australia I would be acknowledging the traditional owners of the land. I would pay my respect to their elders - past, present and future, to First Nations people across the world and invite you to consider what this means to you in your country. Who are your elders, personally and professionally? How are they reflected in your work?" (Pippa Bailey) The question reflected the diversity of practices and the broad spectrum from which quality should be approached in any culture.

Historial Perspective

The status of the arts in society transformed over time. During the last decades, in Europe, the value of the arts shifted from being mainly aspirational to serving society in more specific and quantifiable ways. From a revelatory and cathartic intrinsic value, the arts have become an instrument for a better society. Corina Suteu exposed this transition, analysing the historical evolution and its consequences.

1950-1960: In the golden age of cultural diplomacy, culture reflected the ideal of reconciliation and unity in Europe. The newly created Council of Europe (1949) adopted the European Cultural Convention (1954), promoting mutual understanding and reciprocal appreciation between the different cultures of Europe. With the creation of the first Ministry of Culture in France, led by André Malraux, culture as public service gained legitimacy across the continent. French ideas influenced not only national governments, but also international bodies such as UNESCO. Culture became pivotal in considering identity.

1960-1970: In a decade of social rebellion, cultural policies were dominated by the concepts of cultural democracy and democratic culture. Because culture was perceived as having an important educational role, access to culture and cultural participation become key for cultural policies. With the increase in popularity of American pop culture, cultural exception was theorised. Cultural diversity and national identity demanded governmental protection.

1970-1980: The cultural systems in Europe were set in place by building the present cultural infrastructure, by consolidating public funding for the arts through central and local governments and the arm's length principle (UK), while adopting legislation that regulated the field for the following decades.

1980-1990: Public funding for the arts began to be questioned around Europe. European cultural networks promoting

The arts are entering a new stage where audiences become also the author © Valle Occupato

international cultural cooperation were created, such as IETM, Trans Europe Halles, Akademie Schloss, among others. With the Arc-et-Senans Declaration, artists were placed at the centre of any decision concerning arts and culture in Europe. In the UK, the first study measuring the economic impact of the arts was made public.

1990-2000: With the fall of communism in 1989, the Western and Eastern perspectives encountered each other and clashed. Eastern Europe developed a different approach towards heritage and emerging arts, one that was imbued with ideology. After the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Union included culture in its funding mechanisms.

2000-2010: New technologies marked the new decade, opening the arts for everyone. Anyone could be a producer and a consumer simultaneously. Collective culture slowly transformed into connective culture. Creative industries entered the discourse of cultural policies. In one of his articles, Denis de Rougemont declared that "Information n'est pas savoir" (Information

is not knowledge). With the wide spread of online cultural consumption, audiences are often unaware of the value of online content. The arts are re-devaluated under the impact of new technologies.

2010-present: The arts and the humanities in general enter a new stage where the audience becomes also an author. Access and participation happen simultaneously. The arts are turned into an instrument for human rights, education, environment, ideology etc. The economic crisis lead to public support for the arts to be again requestioned. The argument that arts are good in themselves is no longer valid.

Debate

The debate offered panellists and participants the opportunity to scrutinise in even greater detail the notion of quality. Inequality, discrimination, rigid notions of beauty, outdated cultural institutions, and a limiting vocabulary for evaluating the arts were some of the problems pointed out during the two hours of the open conversation. Experiences from France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Romania, Canada, and Australia revealed nuances of the realities and challenges of each country.

Diversity

Diversity stands as one of the great challenges of today's arts world. The notion of diversity in the arts might seem obvious to accommodate and mirror the diversity of our societies in all its features. However, shared experiences prove that more often than not diversity is hard to attain. The notion is complex and it covers prejudices of race, gender and class. Theatre professionals have hard times to reflect diversity on stage. Most theatres' response to diversity is cross casting, even though it represents only one facet of a complex reality. Cross-casting or setting the plot in a different context that originally intended by the playwright are quick responses to the demands for diversity. For Dawn Walton, pushing diversity is part of her company's mission: "Because regional theatres in the UK are predominantly mono-cultured, my agenda is to push their programing. There is no shift from programming pantomime, Shakespeare, and occasionally contemporary plays that had first premiered in London. Most regional theatres' response to diversity is through cross-casting. There is no consciousness for creating the classics of the future. This is how diversity is approached. A major theatre wanting to reflect the diversity of the city in one of their seasons once asked me if I would do a Shakespeare, but placed in Africa. I asked them which country in Africa they had in mind (there are 54 to choose from). There is a better way to push diversity." (Dawn Walton)

Class is a major aspect for our societies and addressing it becomes vital. In countries, such as the UK and Australia, it is evident

Winds of Woerr choreographed by Torres Strait Islander artist Ghenoa Gela, Produced with support from Pippa Bailey, Performing Lines. © Gregory Lorenzutti

the wide degree to which class influences taste and the notion of quality. "The best art" is representative for the White, middle class dominating taste. Addressing this cannot be but difficult. By portraying middle class people on stage is only the flip of it. In the UK, Dominic Cooke introduced the idea of putting middle class lives on stage when he took over the Royal Court Theatre. It was considered a bold thing to attempt because middle class people are precisely the ones who go to the theatre, and need to be challenged with their own lives. (Dawn Walton)

Contemporary arts are a good indicator for the lack of diversity. The aesthetics of contemporary arts are just as controversial as the aesthetics promoted in the past, in much more closed societies. Pippa Bailey exemplified this through a co-production that she produced together with indigenous Indonesian artists in Lampung, Sumatra and Australian artists. The play was a political piece set in Australia. It depicted a story that broke in the Australian press in 2011 about Indonesian teenagers who were found in Australian adult jails. While they were seeking for asylum, the Australian government did not tell the Indonesian government about the kids. It was quite unusual to address a political subject in Indonesia, as people fear repressions. The show had a lyrical, magic realism style that was not considered contemporary enough

by Australian mainstream viewers. Among White audiences in Australia it is quietly believed that aboriginal art is not very good. This subtext will not be openly expressed as it would be politically incorrect. The Anglo-Saxon aesthetic frame is rather exclusive. It becomes hard to penetrate its norms of beauty and allow for other criteria to coexist. "Contemporary culture is a concept in which we colonise and exclude people" was Pippa Bailey's experience in mediating mainstream and aboriginal subcultures.

Western views opt for a transformational role of contemporary arts. Good art raises questions, gives new insight, and triggers change on oneself and the external world. This is a dominating, heavy qualitative judgement. But even this does not apply evenly throughout the Western world. The West itself does not behave as a monolithic culture. Between close countries, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, there are contemporary aesthetic differences. Acknowledging these nuances is fundamental for any presenter or producer. "As a presenter or a producer, you should try to understand the **context** in which you like or not a work of art," was pointed out during the discussion. When facing a new culture and different aesthetic norms, the best attitude is to be curious, ask and be open to learn something new. As art is a personal intimate experience, it is fundamental to create spaces for difference and contrast.

Artists

"In judging quality, I trust my artists. I never question their talent. With artists, when you understand and give them what they need, they excel" was Dawn Walton's answer when asked what is her strategy in appreciating quality. In the art world, artists are central to shaping and challenging quality. Producers, presenters, and policy makers need to trust the artists' talent, the alchemy of creation, and the creative process. "We have to come to a term where artistic work is not about success, it's about endeavour, process, research, and reflection" said former Romanian Minister of Culture Corina Suteu. In managing art and artists, it is equally important to embrace failure. The Creative Europe programme of the EU was cited as an initiative that is too rigid for the creative dynamics of the art world and cultural shifts in general. The bureaucratic language limits the expression of arts and their impact on society.

Dawn Walton also spoke about the idea of reckless generosity in the arts. It is important to provide artists with the support they need, where they need it most. The Eclipse Theatre launched a programme called Slate that supports Black artists in North England (where funding is scarce) with financial resources and partnerships.

Arts managers and policy makers

"Endless freedom and boundless trust in artists need to be counterbalanced by a certain degree of rigour," was the input coming from some producers and arts managers present at the discussion. Pippa Bailey explained this through lenses of race, class and the status of professional and amateur artists in society. The rigour of a producer who understands differences and is aware of the privileges existent in a given context might help the creative process. In Australia, few artists are aware of their privilege of being white and middleclass. In the Indonesian theatre, Teater Satu, no artist was a professional by Western standards. All actors had other jobs, and their artistic work happened after the working hours and was unpaid. They met every day,

The Slate programme delivered by Eclipse Theatre supports thousands of UK Black Independent Artists by increasing access to local, national and international networks. © Eclipse Theatre

six days a week, and they rehearsed from 6 pm to midnight. The Australian artists involved in the project were professionally trained, had professional auditions every year and paid contracts for their performances. Working in this context, said Pippa Bailey, raised questions about quality on each side.

From a policy making perspective, rigour is needed because policy trends change, while problems remain unsolved. In Europe, policy priorities changed at a fast rate. In 2007 the priority was intercultural dialogue. Later on, the creative industries became a trend. Access and participation also gained momentum in the last decade. Countries like Romania try hard to shrink the distances with more solid Western democracies. The change of the European policy priorities outpaces the Eastern European realities.

Art critics

Art critics lost much of their role in influencing quality. In Romania, the profession has undergone radical changes during the last decade and a half. The gap between the public and the independent cultural sectors in Romania contributed to their

decline. Stefania Ferchedau, arts manager and founder of The Institute of the Present in Bucharest, explained this shift of power. At the beginning of year 2000, theatre critics started to write more about the independent sector, showing their support for the new movement of young artists. It was their way to help independent theatre in Romania gain legitimacy. Public theatre became less interesting, and therefore less covered. Theatre critics chose to write only about what they liked. As a vicious circle, the lack of quality remained unaddressed. The effect of this phenomenon is that today theatre critics continue to write exclusively about the plays and the shows that they like. "The real voices don't write anymore. We have to raise a new generation of people who write, but also to work more closely with the artists" concluded Stefania Ferchedau.

In the French system, the connection between quality and expertise is often reviewed. Because culture as public service is deeply rooted in the French cultural policy philosophy, the spending of public funds requires accountability in providing this service. The notion of collective expertise has gained popularity. Quality is judged by a mix of artists, producers, various positions in the theatre world, and policy makers.

Language

For arts managers and policy makers, **language** is an obstacle in finding a common ground during negotiations. Participants complained about vocabulary limits in discussion about the arts world with professionals from other fields. Words such as fund, sustainability, stakeholders, creativity, and community contribution have different meaning for different people. Negotiations become difficult and tiring for advocates and policy makers. "Public institutions are bitter about the independent sector and vice versa. It is so difficult to find a common language" said Rarita Zbranca, director and co-founder of AltArt Foundation in Cluj, Romania.

During the IETM meetings, it is common for participants to have different definitions of the same terminology. It is the cultural professionals' interest to emerge themselves into an interdisciplinary environment and learn the language of other professions. "Surrounding myself with people from different disciplines has been very enriching and allowed us to grow really fast" shared Dawn Walton.

Corina Suteu expressed her belief that the autoreferential way of understanding and speaking about culture is profoundly European. "It is an illusion that society is sharing what we know" was her conclusion.

In evaluating their own impact, the arts have imported words from other domains. Terms such as sustainability and entrepreneurship used for measuring the economic and social impact of the arts are taken from the business and economic sectors. The challenge becomes to create a language that is specific for the arts world and to make it understood by others. One idea was to use words that are less tangible, that don't have a compass, words that that the arts professionals understand and embody in their work. "Curiosity", "inconsistency", "not knowing" could be words specific for the creative environments. Such words could be infiltrated and used in structures that are pushing the arts to define value based on economics.

A diversification of language is also needed to better communicate with audiences. Because the vocabulary is limited, professionals working in the field of culture feel trapped in a linguistic bubble that limits their capacity to engage with different audiences. Stefania Ferchedau suggested that a good idea might be to use a reverse perspective and listen more to audiences, to what people from different generations have to say.

Audiences

Audiences are engaged in the artistic and social quality of any cultural product. The notion of developing art in dialogue emerged during the conversation. Dialogue was pointed as critical to the notion of quality. Discussing and debating with citizens and people who attend a show is absolutely vital. "I don't know if that results in quality work, but from my experience it results into work that resonates with different people in different places" said one of the participants.

Education

Cultural education was a topic that resonated with most of people present at the discussion. For some, education is part of preparing citizen to become engaged audiences. For others, it is just another way to preserve the status quo and perpetuate inequality in our societies.

Corina Suteu pointed out the standardisation of taste by the crucial role the television plays in educating and shaping it. "We have an unregulated and hectic way to think about education and artistic policies today. They are uncorrelated, including the media policies". The European Digital Single Market was cited as example in this sense, since European of Culture are negotiating policies regulating the media content closely related to what qualitative art is. The commercial airtime margins during movies are negotiated based on what Ministries of Culture perceive cinematographic art to be. "The world moves very fast, is very much image dependent, and has lost a lot of references in terms of what we are really supposed to protect. What are the check and balances inside which we develop our audiences to still appreciate quality in art?" was the question that Corina Suteu addressed to panellists and audiences alike.

The flip side of teaching taste and aesthetics is that it might eventually lead to an autoreferential artistic community, one that is only listening to itself. Instead, education towards understanding the coding of artistic work might prove more beneficial both to audiences and artists. "I am bothered by the idea of teaching quality. We teach people to be in this bubble. This is what is happening in England and Australia" shared Pippa Bailey's. In the UK, in places such as the Royal Opera House, Black and Brown people continue to be regarded with mistrust. Dawn Walton had a different experience: "In the UK, people are complaining of the behaviour of audiences. In buildings like the Royal Opera House people tell other people how they have to behave, it is like religion. The atmosphere should be more relaxed. Let people come back if they want to come back". A diversity of needs was invoked in the discussion. "We need opera where we behave in a certain way, just as much as we need community based theatres where we welcome people in" said Corina Suteu. However, diversity of needs might bring exclusion. "Exclusive" needs such as opera houses where a certain behaviour is imposed might contradict the notions of inclusivity and diversity that formed the core of the debate. The question becomes "what do we lose by being exclusive?" (Dawn Walton)

A different approach in teaching taste and quality would be to expose audiences to a variety of art forms and allow them to react the way they like. Projects where the audience is allowed the freedom to move, to leave at any time and engage in various manners break the conventional theatre hall where people are more controlled, observed and critiqued. Pippa Bailey gave an example from when she was still the creative director of Total Theatre: "In London,

we ran a large fire and fireworks company. We made shows with 12000 people in the audience. The idea of taking risks was important. Engaging in a free way as audience was part of the ecology".

Education should start with children and be as practical as possible. Workshops where children learn to transform ordinary things into art, and are assisted to develop small theatre productions proved to have extraordinary results. This type of education is different than seeing classical drama and Shakespeare on stage. Cultural education has to go this way too.

Cultural institutions

Because our societies have changed, cultural institutions have transformed as well, but are often outdated. Participants pointed out the organisational model that was established during the 19th and 20th centuries. It follows a vision that is no longer valid. Many countries continue to preserve organisations designed for the needs of a faraway past. The infrastructure is maintained regardless the cost, as great part of the public budget for culture goes into subsidising this large infrastructure. The distinction between public and independent sectors in the arts is also rooted in this old understanding of cultural systems. More so, it is this status quo that continues to legitimise discrimination based on race, gender, and class.

Participants expressed the need to rethink the role of institutions, such as the National Theatre in Bucharest, and to accommodate them to the needs of the 21st century. The educational system for the arts should also be revised to serve the needs of the 21st century. Furthermore, Ministries of Culture need to redefine their contribution to the cultural system and our societies today.

In Romania, the public sector many times works against entrepreneurship and private initiatives. Institutions are not available for everyone. Change-making is a

There is a need to rethink the role of cultural institutions, such as the National Theatre in Bucharest (in the picture), and to accommodate them to the needs of the 21st century. © Alina Usurelu

matter of personal choice for young people who do not fit in. Corina Suteu referred to the Romanian professionals in the room, leaders in their own field: "Whether I stay or move on, because I am a context creator and shaper in a country that still needs this so much, is a matter of choice, self-sacrifice, and curiously mixed with a huge sense of responsibility in a very precise given context". In countries like Romania, the young generations are more aware of the cost of change. "My generation was coming out of communism. We were just confused about what way we should go first. Your generation bears the burden of this awareness" added Corina Suteu. Sometimes people don't choose to be change makers, but are chosen, whether they like it or not, and it is not a fixed position.

Quality metrics

The only anti-example during the discussion was that of the new quantitative quality metrics issued by the Arts Council England. Pippa Bailey shared this as a word of warning: "Every single funded organisation, as of next year, is going to have to apply the numbered system of measuring quality. It fundamentally undermines everything we all are talking about. There is more than one way of looking at quality. Because various systems roll out between countries, if one comes near you with quality metrics tell them to go away".

Success Stories

Eclipse Theatre uses Black British experiences to create new work. It tours around the UK particularly in middle scale venues. "When we started, there was no Black work in middle scale theatre. We took a landscape of 500 years of Black British history as a jumping off point for the plays we produce. There is a myth. The myth is that Black people just arrived in the country, we just got here, and then we keep just getting here. Of course, if you read Staying Power by Peter Fryer it starts with the line "There were Africans in Britain before the English came here". It makes me smile. We did a lot of research and with very little effort we found the stories of people - entrepreneurs, artists, circus owners, that lived from the beginning and influenced British lives over the last 2000 years" said Dawn Walton, founder and Artistic Director of Eclipse Theatre.

The theatre has been very successful at bringing new audiences to regional theatres, while at the same time maintaining the audience that most theatres fear of losing if "Black productions" are staged. Between 25-30% of Eclipse Theatre's audiences on tour represent newcomers for the regional venues. The touring figures over the last 16 years have gone from 48% to 60%. "We score higher than theatres in reaching audiences and experience seekers. We are going against the grain because we have a different offer." (Dawn Walton)

Eclipse pays particular attention to its audiences. Before going to a new city, the theatre's staff travels to that particular city two months in advance to meet and talk to the local community. The theatre launched Eclipse TV in order to be more accessible and keep the audience engaged. "Have some food with the people in the theatre, leave leaflets. Build relationships with the audience. I think you need to be as flexible as you can, and talk to your audiences." (Dawn Walton)

The Culture in Education project was initiated in 2013 in Romania, and its results are extraordinary. The project started as relaxed informal discussions about how children are educated to experience art, how art is integrated or not in the school environment, how teachers are used to work with the arts, and how artists are used to work with teachers and children alike. In 2013 a community of practice came into existence. Through formats of trainings, meetings, and advocacy, the project developed resources for more creative, more efficient, and more sustainable partnerships between schools, artists and audiences. Developing an interdisciplinary coalition and a network of educators was a need for building sustainable and quality projects. "In order to experience art, you not only need knowledge about how things are made, but also an encounter with someone who puts you as an audience in the spotlight. We have discovered a certain type of solidarity for a common good. The responsibility you have for a child makes you more rigorous in the type of answer you need to provide." (Raluca Iacob, M3 – Resources for Culture)

The Total Theatre Awards at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe has introduced a new way of assessing and judging the performances. The new architecture was put in place by Pippa Bailey who at the time was the director of Total Theatre, the organisation that ran the awards. "When I took over the organisation, there were 3 people running the biggest theatre festival in the world and deciding what was the best. I felt very uncomfortable about that. I thought I would be the good person to try then to reimagine the system. We put in place a process based on a dynamic conversation between a lot of people about what was good and why. We brought together academics, critics, artists and presenters in order for that conversation to happen between various people who have stakes in the work. It is a two-stage process where about 30 people run around and see hundreds of shows. If there are some disputes, then somebody else sees them, so that they can have this dynamic conversation that we aimed at. At the next level, it remained quite hierarchical as about 10 of the people who have more position and more power look at the shortlist of about 30 shows and they decide which ones ought to have an award. Over time, I was really shocked at how many people even those in positions of power could not discern between their own taste and other ideas about what quality might be" (Pippa Bailey)

The Kunstenfestivaldesarts developed a more progressive selection process for 2 of its programmes. The final artistic projects to be showcased were not decided before the start of the festival. There were 30-40 artists to start off, while the producers continued to see new work and exchange ideas, allowing for changes to happen. As someone from the audience noted, "art is not a standstill and it shouldn't be."

ADITIONAL RESOURCES

Turned down 18 times. Then Paul Beatty won the Booker ... by Charlotte Higgins, The Guardian, 26 October 2016

Frank Cottrell Boyce: what's the point of culture in Brexit Britain? by Frank Cottrell Boyce, The Guardian, 15 July 2016

The European Digital Single Market

The European Cultural Convention (1954)

The Arc-et-Senans Declaration (1972)

Information n'est pas savoir (Information is not knowledge) by Denis de Rougemont

IETM, Whose Story is It?, Stockholm, 2011