

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a greenhouse interior. It shows the wooden frame of the structure and various green plants, including some with large, dark, rounded leaves. A large, semi-transparent white circle is centered in the upper half of the image, serving as a backdrop for the title and subtitle. In the bottom right corner, there is another smaller, semi-transparent white circle containing the authors' names.

Creative Power

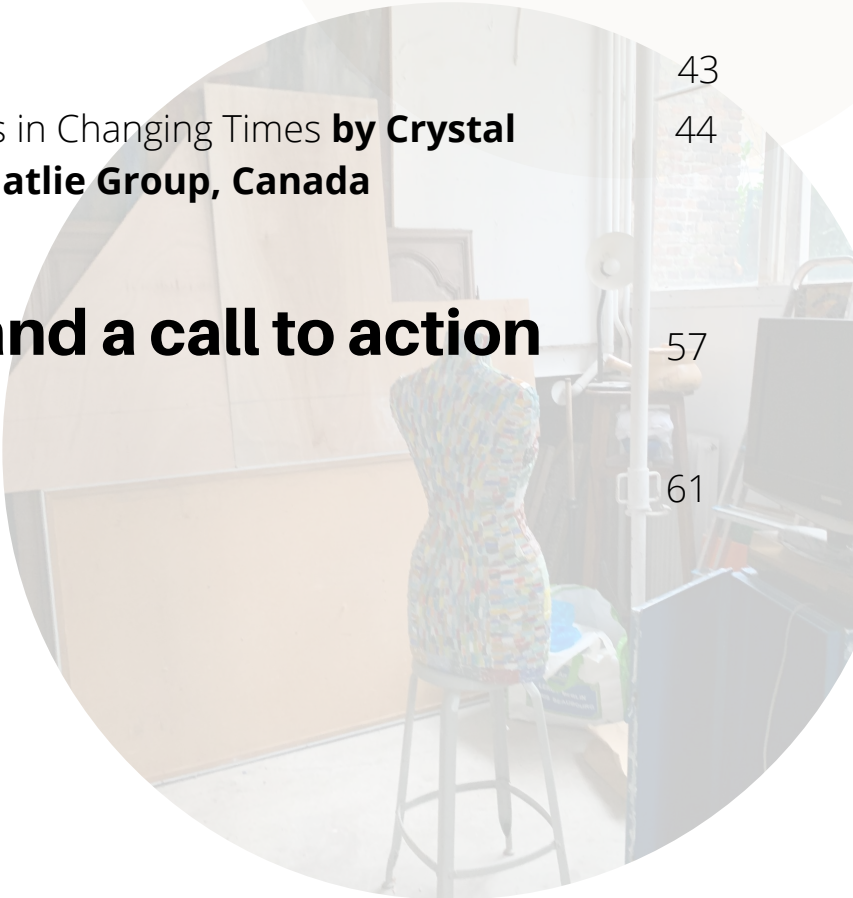
platform for sustainability and creative ecology

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Note to the reader

The essays included in this publication are presented in the format received from the author, including language and spelling preferences. The essays are available in Spanish and French at hatliegroup.ca

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introduction



introduction

In January 2020, L'AiR Arts hosted a residency for artists and cultural professionals as an opportunity to mark the 100th anniversary of the prolific period of intercultural artistic exchange during the 1920s in Paris, France. The L'AiR Arts Multidisciplinary Residency: Revisiting the Roaring Twenties: Art, Culture and the École de Paris Les Années Folles 1920 / 2020, brought together eleven artists from diverse artistic practices, and eight cultural professionals, arts administrators, academics, and consultants, to engage in a series of open and inclusive cultural events, including open studios, workshops, talks, and showcases – each built on the generosity of the Paris-based artists and cultural professionals, in addition to the curiosity and solidarity of international arts community.

The first two weeks provided the artists the opportunity to engage, apply, and reflect on their own practice within the context of artists currently living and working in Paris, historical connections, and exchange amongst the Residency artists gathered. The third week brought the cultural professionals into the fold, expanding the conversation to explore how organizations are supporting artists; encouraging creative spaces, places, engagement, and fostering opportunity for growth.

Along with a number of behind-the-scenes tours of arts and cultural organizations and institutes, visiting the studios housed in La Ruche, also known as the Beehive (historic ateliers of artists who were working in the 1920s), a guided visit to the Museum of Modern Art, and literary walking tours of Montparnasse, the participants shared their work with each other in formal and informal settings. Artists spontaneously danced in galleries and museums when inspired by the work, recited poems, or performed for each other in evening gatherings. A music and literary salon hosted by L'AiR Arts provided the opportunity to share existing work and present new pieces created during the Residency, as well as invited local musicians to perform.

Woven into these experiences were conversations about how arts and culture support social justice work, how the arts contribute to the quality of life of communities, the importance of the arts in building strong personal identity, and the value of the arts and culture in our society as a whole.

On Tuesday, January 27th, the cultural professionals participating had the opportunity to present their work during the Inter-format Symposium: How the Creative Power of Place Can Influence Art and Culture on a Global Scale. Each presentation highlighted the importance not only of work being done around the world to support arts, heritage, and

creativity in communities, but also it became evident that there were connections between what is happening in diverse locations and how we are so inextricably linked as human beings.

This publication, a gathering of essays presented during the Residency, form a platform for discussion about the role of artist, administrator, and advocate and exploring the ideas of sustainability – of the cultural sector, of organizations, and of practice. All of these elements contribute to a greater ‘creative ecology’, a living, breathing thing, which is made up of many parts working together to be viable. A creative ecology is “a living, balanced environment, [which] expresses how nothing happens within [the] system without its impact being felt widely.” (1) It is the interwoven aspects of our work, of the connections we make as artists and practitioners, and as human beings engaged in creativity whether it be through expression or appreciation.

Generally defined, sustainability is about “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.(2) For an organization sustainability can be described by how it demonstrates “agility, community relevance, and responsiveness to the interconnected world in which [it] exists and the issues affecting its future [viability].”(3) “Sustainability is an orientation, not a destination”; (4) it is a way of working, not an end goal.

Since the Residency took place in January 2020, the world has shifted. Dealing with the unprecedented situation of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the closure of most arts and culture organizations including theatres, art galleries, museums, performing venues, and more, the online consumption of artistic content has absorbed artists and arts administrators. Building content, developing new audiences, bridging communities – geographic and artistic, collaborations, and international co-productions, all of these ways of working are not new. The current global situation has highlighted the need for arts and culture to heal, uplift, engage, bring together, and contribute to true quality of life of our communities and is bringing these ways of working to the forefront.

More importantly, arts and culture organizations now have the opportunity to look at their business and operations, make systemic changes, and adjust ways of working and ways of presenting in order to shift to more resilient and agile organizations. Whether it’s a municipality, small theatre company, or large performing arts venue, exploring the business of arts and culture from a sustainability perspective, from a user/visitor/audience focus, from the viewpoint of community need, is now a necessity.

The following document includes presentations from cultural professionals participating in the L’AiR Arts Residency. The group has come together with the intention of showcasing

the connections between the work being done internationally, discovering how we can contribute to the sustainability of the sector and the artists and organizations within it, bringing the contribution to the quality of life of our planet through our creative ecology to light, and highlighting a series of calls to action to continue and broaden the international conversation that began in Paris, January 2020.

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(1) Davey, Alan, *This England: how Arts Council England uses its investment to shape a national cultural ecology* (Arts Council England, 2014): 4.

(2) United Nations, *Our Common Future* (New York: United Nations, 1987).

(3) Alberta Museums Association, *Sustainability Working Group Recommendations Report* (Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association, 2013).

(4) Bell, Joanne, Jan Masoka, and Steve Zimmerman, *Nonprofit Sustainability: Making Strategic Decisions for Financial Viability*. (San Francisco: Jossey – Bass, 2008).

# Historical Context - the 1920s

The story of 1920s Paris is one of transition in those interwar years where the world was grappling with very disruptive forces. Upheaval of populations, political and social unrest, the rise of new regimes and the redefinition of industry and communities resulting from rapid technological change created an environment very much defined by instability and change. It was also an environment where those that created and supported art and culture were able to find footholds and even thrive. In 2020, for those working in a culture sector struggling with redefining sustainability, this period in history provides unique insights into our times.

That art in 1920s Paris was in a period of redefinition with new methodologies, an intermingling of cultural influences, and challenges to traditional artistic morals, ideals and aesthetics is well documented and understood by art historians. It is also an interesting period for cultural organizations and administrators for what emerged in terms of support for the arts. The 1920s provides many well-known examples of people and organizations who created platforms and space for artists to exchange ideas and create and share their work. Among others, Alfred Boucher's La Ruche, Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company, Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas's salons as well as a multitude of art galleries, dealers and collectors and the vibrant creative community that grew in Parisian cafés played a critical role in deepening the practice of some of the 20th century's greatest artists and facilitated sharing their work with the world. (5)

These gatherings, networks and collaborations, were so much more than commercial or social spin offs to the story of the art and artists. Today we would talk about these businesses, organizations (formal or otherwise), and places as creativity catalysts or incubators and neighbourhoods like the 14th Arrondissement of Montparnasse as cultural hubs. Then as now, the symbiotic collaboration between those that practice or create art and culture and those that provide the infrastructure to support and share it, is the heart of our cultural institutions and a launching pad for artistic practices and careers. In this way, 1920s Paris was unique in history not only for artist output and movements but also for what the supporters of the arts did to nurture the intermingling, exchange, diversity, inclusion, and leadership that influenced and shared that work. The tension between those progressive and helpful influences and the harmful social, political, and economic forces at



play was itself a driver for the phenomena of 1920s Paris creatives, and how cultural organizations and organizers navigated or exploited that tension is where the most interesting learning can be found. It is nostalgic to think of 1920s Paris for its openness, metropolitanism, and bohemian ideals, but this period was just as strongly defined by these overarching themes:

- Racism and Nationalism
- Movement of People and Immigration
- Income Disparity
- Conflict and Protest
- Gender Inequality and Women's Rights Movements
- Colonization and Empire Building

Paris in the 1920s shared a sense of urgency to remake the institutions and structures they inherited from different eras to support the work and creatives that were more reflective of emerging realities. The consequences of upheaval, rapid and extreme change and social, economic and generational shifts happening in the years leading up to and including the 20s were evident in poverty and unrest, trauma and loss, class division, uneven distribution of wealth, and racism. Political, ethnic and religious violence was causing an extraordinary movement of people around Europe and the globe. Paris was seen as a haven in the face of these forces. But then, as today, progressive voices are often countered with an increase in extremism and norms bending toward inclusion and diversity are often met with backlash and isolationism. There were a half a million foreign born residents in Paris by the end of the 1920s – and many poor immigrant artists found opportunity to practice and be successful in Paris where they were not able to access those opportunities elsewhere – but the freedoms they found were countered with an environment rife with anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and gender and sexual persecution.

# Current Context - the 2020s

As we head into the decade of the 2020s, the issues our world is dealing with today are similar to those facing society one hundred years ago. To provide current context, Canada illustrates how issues that society is currently facing impacts communities and artists directly. Though Canada is often considered a peaceful and polite nation, there are many challenges it battles: racism, immigration, income disparity, and gender inequality.

Reported crimes motivated by hatred including race, religion, and sexual orientation, have increased substantially in Canada over the past number of years. Immigration continues to be a significant part of Canada's story, with the highest level of refugee resettlement globally in 2018. (6) However, racialized cultural workers make up only 18% of the sector and immigrant artists make up less than a quarter of all artists. (7)

In Canada, income inequality has increased over the past 20 years, (8) and this is magnified within the arts, where the median income for an individual artist is \$24,300, which is 44% less than all Canadian workers. (9) Not surprisingly, in alignment with income disparity, gender inequality also continues to be an issue. Comparing the hourly wages of full-time working women in Canada to those of men, women earned an average of 87 cents for every dollar earned by men, (10) which resulted in 1.9 million women in Canada living in low income circumstances. (11) Again, this is magnified in the arts where 52% of artists are women. (12)

Decolonization, the dismantling of the structures, hierarchies, and policies that were put in place during colonization of Canada to suppress and force assimilation of Indigenous peoples, and the Indigenization of organizations and Canadian society, has been a part of the conversation in Canada for a number of years, with the significant turning point being the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, (13) a process which explored the horrendous impacts of Residential Schools (14) on Indigenous individuals and communities. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) published its final report and 94 Calls to Action charging Canadian citizens, organizations, and governments were made, addressing and rectifying the wrongs done to Indigenous peoples across the country. Within the Calls to Action (15) there are ten Calls specific to museums, archives, libraries, and arts organizations: Museums and Archives #67-70, Monument #79, #81, #82, and Arts #83. (16)

Amplifying Indigenous arts and artists is embedded in this work; in Canada Indigenous people are under-represented among artists where 3.1% are Indigenous. (17)

Though these numbers and issues are presented from a Canadian context, they are not unique. Some of the numbers would be significantly higher, or issues magnified due to challenges including government suppression, poverty, lack of workers rights, and human rights abuses. The information presented is done so to highlight that there are similarities to the experience that surrounded the creative explosion of the 1920s, and that these similarities could result in a parallel creative upsurge one hundred years later.

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- (6) CBC News, Canada resettled more refugees than any other country in 2018, UN says, June 20, 2019. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-resettled-most-refugees-un-1.5182621>
  - (7) Canada Council for the Arts. A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada in 2016. Published November 27, 2019. <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2019/03/a-statistical-profile-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016>
  - (8) Conference Board of Canada, Income Inequality, n.d. <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/Details/society/income-inequality.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
  - (9) Canada Council for the Arts. A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada in 2016. Published November 27, 2019. <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2019/03/a-statistical-profile-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016>
  - (10) Canadian Women's Foundation, Fact Sheet: The Gender Wage Gap in Canada, August 2018. [https://www.canadianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Gender-Wage-Gap-Fact-Sheet\\_AUGUST-2018\\_FINAL1.pdf](https://www.canadianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Gender-Wage-Gap-Fact-Sheet_AUGUST-2018_FINAL1.pdf)
  - (11) Canadian Women's Foundation, Gender Inequality: our progress is at risk - The Facts, n.d. <https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/>
  - (12) Canada Council for the Arts. A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada in 2016. Published November 27, 2019. <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2019/03/a-statistical-profile-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016>
  - (13) For more information, visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, <https://nctr.ca/map.php>
  - (14) Residential schools "were used as a tool of assimilation by the Canadian state and churches", <https://nctr.ca/map.php>
  - (15) Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015. [http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
  - (16) Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015. [http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
  - (17) Canada Council for the Arts. A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada in 2016. Published November 27, 2019. <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2019/03/a-statistical-profile-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016>

# exchange

Intercultural exchange was the foundational idea behind bringing together artists and cultural professionals at the L'AiR Arts Interdisciplinary Residency Revisiting the Roaring Twenties. The intentional inclusion of practicing artists, administrators, academics, bureaucrats, and consultants from all over the globe was a rare opportunity to explore and discuss ideas, build collaborations, develop partnerships, and support each other. The success of this idea would not have been possible without trust underpinning the entire program. The Residency put a spotlight on trust as the essential ingredient for a platform for success so that openness and confidence could flourish, and the sharing and challenging of each other was done in a way that was advancing towards something new, something different, something better.

Trust was also an essential ingredient in two presentations given during the Inter-format Symposium: Lia Arenas, from Santiago, Chile, and Karina Muñoz-Pagán, from California, United States. Their work in particular embodied the necessity of trust in the process of exchange and the development of the work and demonstrated that social action and social justice work as artist, administrator, and academic necessitates building trust among colleagues and challenging norms and systems in order for the creative ecology to survive in their communities.



# Art and Creation in the Politics of Fear

**Lía Arenas, Chile**

*Translation of the original Spanish: Makarena Marambio, Santiago Del Valle and Lía Arenas*

On October 18th 2019, time stopped for the people of Chile. Suddenly -but wanted way for too many years- a social movement arose saying NO to the Chilean neoliberal system of Pinochet's dictatorship, the CIA, the Chicago Boys and Jaime Guzmán. The 30 years of "democracy" since 1989, didn't appear as such... especially today.

We are currently ruled by a Constitution created within a period of dictatorship, a process that to date has not made any review to state organizations, any human rights reparatory trials, given recognition to the victims and their families or repaired the annulment of culture, creation and knowledge. With the necessity of communication and time suspended, a question arises: how can we explain to others the way we live and understand the most neoliberal country in western culture?

Access to education, housing, health, the right to social gathering, rest, or even water are not guaranteed in Chile. Instead they are considered as property goods and whoever has the money to acquire them, has the right to choose. That's the education we'd been given, consumer citizens with no basic rights. They've taught us that the organization to demand our rights was because we didn't want to work, that was driven by our laziness, and we wanted chaos among the peace and quiet. The neoliberal reality doesn't allow any demands or requests, so we work with "what we got" and if the Government took on the costs of education or health, an economic deficit might kick in -or at least that is what they say each time a rise in the social budget is requested. Even further, the idea of keeping the population ignorant by reducing primary and secondary education to the efficient and pragmatic development of the human being is crystal clear, leaving aside the sensitive, reflective, creative and critical development before the system in which we inhabit.

This has produced a more competitive and less empathetic society, where there is no greater good, only me as an individual. The meaning of Success depends on the acquisition of goods and being above others. But this idea of "success" is nothing more than makeup for a population that doesn't have the money to support even two of the mentioned assets.

The minimum wage in Chile is \$400 US per month, from which a percentage is deducted for health and retirement plans, yet you have to pay an additional amount for any medical care. The average pension of a retiree is \$150 US, which is clearly not enough to cover housing and food. In our country the highest suicide rate is precisely among the elderly.

In the allegedly most developed country in Latin America, people die waiting for attention in hospitals, and as they wait, they're running highly into debt, without education or housing, without the right to rest, perhaps without minimum wage and of course without access to art and culture. Now, if we talk about access to education, the tariff of the cheapest career at a "public university" is around US \$5,000 per year, this without even considering tuition or any study materials. In between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean, one would think that Water isn't an issue in Chile, however, 96% of the water is consumed by large companies, which leave small towns without supply. Chilean water is private and large companies can buy the rights to consume and capitalize it, and the Government would have to buy water from companies to supply the villagers again in order to make this situation "sustainable". Today we say there is no drought, it's looting.

I live in a neoliberal country where everything is privatized, where laws of an economic market go over laws of social development and well-being, in a country where there's slavery still hidden as temporary work, where classism is rooted in our society as well as, discrimination, Christianity and patriarchy structures. Chile is a country where people mourn the destruction of business premises more than the death, torture, rape, kidnap and disappearance of protesters, or the mutilation of more than 350 eyes. BUT, within this time suspension all of that is changing.

Today, I have the possibility to be here and tell my experience as a woman, Chilean and art worker; what we've lived and how -from the place of art and culture we have become a citizen more in this awoken Chile.

Once again students have started everything. They jumped the subway turnstiles and carried out massive temporary occupations of subway stations for a whole week. On the last day, they achieved such a call out that everyone was encouraged to go out into the streets, expanding these protests in every major city in the country. Antofagasta, Valparaíso, Concepción, Temuco and



Valdivia among many of them. After just one day of massive demonstrations, the President declared war on us by proclaiming a State of Emergency, leaving control of the country and the streets to the Army. To this day the government has applied a specific Law to condemn and process protesters throughout the country, the State Security Law aims to condemn those who have done any damage to public and private property in a context in which the stability of the country may be affected.

The message they wanted to convey with the presence of the army in the streets was the recurrent fear of our dictatorship, and somehow with that, end the mobilization. But the new generations continue fighting. As the movement progresses the government fails to understand what the issue is and where it came from, why do we protest if we supposedly live in the best country in Latin America?; The problem arises mainly because for them those problems do not exist, they are heirs of an economic dictatorship that assured stability for their companies and built laws to protect their privileges, being able to exercise control over culture and nature, and holding positions of power within the Government, the legislature and judiciary.

They blamed Venezuela and Cuba for a few weeks, then Russia and aliens, they said we are being financed from foreign countries, that we have cutting-edge technology to attack the State and its infrastructure, we are a powerful and implacable enemy with a clear and violent objective that doesn't respect nothing and nobody. It's precisely within that respect that when we're enemies, we respect dignity, organization, freedom, diversity, empathy, culture and nature. They respect the Capital, consumer goods, a colonizing history, exploitation and slavery, discrimination and violence in the name of order.

To be an enemy has enabled me to see my work displayed in pure manifestation and living expression of struggle against a system. We've transformed the space and rewritten history, the city walls speak to us and the architectural space starts to belong to the population as a platform for registry, that pure and effective manifestation. Poetry, music and dance takes their space in the streets and through the organized cries of struggle, society expresses itself with whatever they know about art. This movement carries out an innate cultural management that organizes and mobilizes it, and in two months the cultural billboard of the cities have been filled with community lunches, film and documentary cycles, activities for children and adolescents, masterclasses and seminars, festivals of the most diverse artistic expressions, performance, constitutional community empowerment/work days. None of these organized by any artistic or cultural institution, instead was the people in charge of their own culture/programming.





As artists we have been questioned by society, which has decided on the relevant themes for art creation, whereas musical manifestations have been the most immediate and have addressed in lyrics and music what happens day in and day out in the streets. Also embracing new methodologies of cultural management by organizing events and festivals among neighbors, thus forcing cultural centers and venues to open spaces for organizations and activities programmed under the themes of protests. For the first time I see art workers transferring their knowledge and contributing as part of the social organization of a country.

As the enemy, we find the body as the main support of manifestation and territory, today we are a body that expresses, acts and decides. We are the body they seek to eliminate: they have weapons, we have body. Deep act of resistance to a system that denies, persecutes, criminalizes and represses it. Today we are body, and the body is pure movement in space and time. We are recovering the multiplicity of the human being. It is from the so-called social outbreak, that all fields of knowledge have been organized to work deeply on what defines them and how they carry out the work, what their working conditions are and how they operate in society. In this suspended time of Chile, artists have felt the deep need to organize and dialogue. We all wonder why we did not do it before, and it is because we lived for many years in a system that did not allow us to understand ourselves as partners and collaborators of a shared knowledge. Networks of dance, theater, music, art teachers, cultural management and production workers have emerged. Workdays have been organized to ask ourselves what art we are building, how art and cultural work have been functioning in society, how art has been developed in education and how we can be a social instrument.

While all this happens, in a peaceful demonstration the police decide to shoot their service weapons at the people who participated and in that exchange a ballerina receives a 32-caliber bullet in her knee. This fact reminds me that the only law regulating our working condition as performers was passed recently in 2019 bringing together theater, dance, circus, opera, puppetry and oral narration. This law only talks about promotion and accessibility, but at no time about specific working conditions and the establishment of a particular health and pension system for performing arts professionals. Today there is no legal instance to ensure that this ballerina can continue to exercise her profession after being shot by state agents.



I feel again that art in Chile is an act of resistance. Resistance to the scarce spaces of development, distribution and exhibition, to the null artistic education that promotes elitism and a deep ignorance in the face of the diverse manifestations of art, the little public and private budget for its development, the scarce and unsuitable infrastructure, and the almost non-existent minimum working conditions.

It is on this resistance during an eternal October, on the international day towards the elimination of violence against women, a performance created by a feminist group of artists stood out massively. Performance puts us rhythmically, musically and politically in an active state of resistance for the first time. One of the phrases of the song alludes to the historical guilt that others have made us feel for the violence that men exert upon us, the fact that we are to blame for how we are, where we were and how we're dressed, at the end of the day they can act above us. That same violence with which they condemn us.

Every time we go out to protest inside this social movement, they make us feel guilty as if we stop traffic and people cannot return to their homes, they make us guilty for interrupting classes in universities, when we fight for a free education, prolonging/extending the academic years and threatening to remove scholarships to low-income students. They make us guilty when we call-out against Companies and raises in water, gas and electric tariffs, and they most certainly make us responsible for the death of our colleagues telling us that we shouldn't have been there. Both in a feminist struggle and the general social struggle, guilt is something we need to eradicate, because it is not about guilt, it is about assuming and demanding political responsibilities regarding social issues. Rape is a political act of power of one over the other. Exploitation, punishment and murder as well.

Today, I deeply believe the movement has to be feminist, as an invitation to travel into a path that proposes us to deeply reconstruct ourselves culturally, and to doubt the social, political and economic foundations in which we have lived.

Immersed in everything that has happened, I remembered why I applied to the residency. What struck me the most about the experience was the fact that we didn't have to create an artistic work around what we were going to do. As artists we're used to being those who create works of art, but it's rare for us to stop and really feel like inhabitants of a context before artists. I deeply feel this is what this residency encourages, that is how I understand the School of Paris. A group of Artists who worked in a specific context, mobilized for artistic, political and social reasons, and for that point on their art developed widely gathering a diversity of cultures, languages and ways of making art in a city that received them and generated a creative effervescence.

I deeply believe that the issue of art today has to be once again inhabiting a context and transforming it into a social instrument that dialogues with it where the artistic work is not absolutely an end in itself or the only objective. Rather one more manifestation within a complex definition of the work of art.

Understanding ourselves as workers of a specific knowledge with which we build and propose, is what led me from being a dancer to a cultural organizer, transforming the knowledge of the movement into the understanding of art and culture as moving bodies in different spaces.

Thus, the dialogue is transformed into an act of resistance because of its main strength: the fact that it happens constantly. Through dialogue we can shed colonialism and act together from what each one does in their specific territories. Dialogue allows different manifestations to inhabit the same context, mobile in space and time. It allows us to relate according to the different definitions of what we do, enabling reflective and sensible knowledge to be built permanently.

Everything I've shared fills me with deep emotion, and in the act of speaking out, oneself realizes -and materializes- what has been happening, although there is always more than what I can tell you today. Also, while this was being written, information arrived from social unrest in other Latin American countries. We are in a very specific social moment, where we have to take a great breath to continue resisting and making the territory something of our own and for everyone.

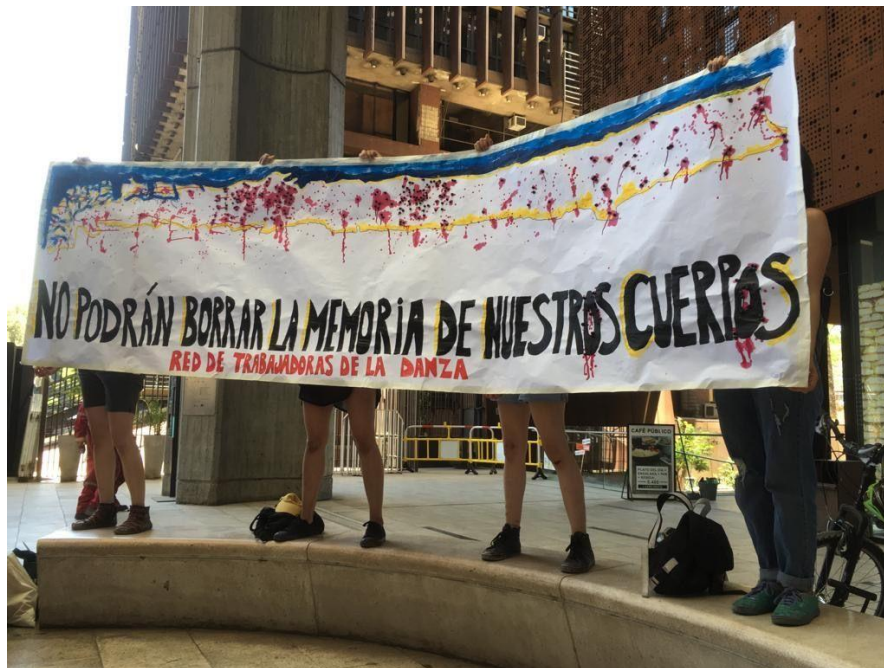
For the government and its institutions, Chile has not changed and has no reason to do so. Every week a new bill is created that aims to continue the criminalization of protests and even regulating the right to assembly. The repression increases every day, and meanwhile we see it in action in the main squares of the country, in the poorest small towns it is silent and without warning. All international agreements on demonstrations, riots and war protocols have been ignored. Today they attack us with chemical weapons that have left many protesters with severe burns on their bodies.

For us, the Chilean people, the change has been profound. We have been regaining confidence, dialogue, union, all of which has given us strength to go through the instability of what it means to carry out a social movement. But that instability makes much more sense than a life full of bank loans, debt, material goods and extreme competitiveness. Today parks in neighborhoods have been filled again with children playing, community activities and popular dining rooms.

Now we know each other.

The change we want requires time and a lot of effort, and we will be there. As I heard in a talk by Indo-American women, one of the participants mentioned that we are rehearsing new ways of inhabiting the world, which comforts me, in the face of such violence and incapacity from the government and its weapons. It gives me great comfort because it allows me to be an art worker in the social movement. As artists, we rehearse to reach the end of our processes, and if we can expand that rehearsal methodology to society, we are also sharing and transmitting our technical knowledge to a community knowledge.

Por todos nuestros muertos  
Arriba los que luchan  
No estamos todos, faltan los presos  
Piñera culiao  
Que muera Piñera y no mi compañera  
Hasta que la dignidad se haga costumbre  
Chile despertó  
Gracias.  
Thank You



### ***Since January, and Acknowledgements***

I arrived to Paris to attend the residence in January 2020 with the feeling of leaving behind something important, somehow something was left in Chile making me feel a mismatch in what I was doing.

Since October 2019 a large social movement had been generated throughout the national territory; these had been and still are a very important months in the history of our country. A constant question was within me: ¿Why I was traveling so far at a time when I feel I have to be in the streets? I felt a big contradiction, I want to share what was happening and at the same time forget about other contexts and stay in the movement that was being lived.

Being able to share with the other residents, I came to realize this movement was with me, it was continuous and detached from any borders. The possibility to share not only my work, but what was happening in Chile was gaining strength every day. I had prepared an essay and video for the Symposium that, as a manifest, brought together what I had experienced and observed during months of mobilizations. BUT! I did not want to do it alone, I felt that if I invited my residences mates to be part of the presentation, I could share even more what was happening and transform this specific movement into a collective one.

Finally in this action of “sharing” was the answer of what I was doing in Paris. Sharing ultimately means building together, to weave relationships, making art an instrument for dialogue and creation and culture something we can transform into collective power and cooperativism. I abandoned the feeling of being from a developing country to the feeling of being a part of a wider territory that is in constant resistance, generating new ways of doing and being art and culture.

In the end my presentation not only transformed itself but also transformed those of us who participated and enhancing the sense of trust and collaboration in the way we work. Chile's social movement was not longer just in Chile, it was everyone's, and everyone's context we could transform what was being demanded in the streets of Chile into any global movement.

I can only thank the compañeras who participated with me in the Symposium, and those who opened the doors to the Creative Power platform, platforms that not only brings together from diverse actions and perspectives of artistic and cultural works but through trust and mutual collaboration: Deanna Galati, Karina Muñiz-Pagán, Zsuzsi Lindsey Page, Crystal Willie, Alexandra Hatcher and Julie Fossitt. Also to Mila Ovchinnikova and the organizer team from L´AiR Arts for have the amazing and bold idea of brings together artists and cultural workers in the same residency program.

# The Narrative Power of Place – Paris at the Intersections – 1920s/2020s

**Karina Muñiz-Pagán, United States**

*The following essay is a written and edited version of the L’AiR Arts Symposium: Revisiting the Roaring 1920s Presentation (1/27/20)*

I arrived at the L’AiR Arts residency with the goal of researching and writing about the narrative power of place: of Paris then and now. As a writer, urbanist, and community organizer, I wanted to explore the geohistory of Paris in the 1920s, how artists shaped the city and how the creative power of place influenced art and culture on a global scale. I wanted to understand Paris through the lens of what Haitian scholar, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, described as “the production of historical narratives” which involves the uneven contribution of competing groups and individuals who have unequal access to the means for such production. The ultimate mark of power, Trouillot noted, “may be its invisibility and the ultimate challenge; the exposition of its roots.” (18)

I sought to answer two overarching questions. First, what were the stories of artists at the intersections? I searched for stories about Black writers, musicians, and dancers from the US and Harlem, like Jessie Faucet and Ada “Bricktop” Smith, painters and poets from Latin America, and queer and trans folks who found refuge in the salons, cafes and bars of Paris. How could I center these stories often told, if at all, at the margins? As artists shaping culture between the wars, distilling life across genres, how did Paris influence them on a transnational-scale? And upon their return home, did this decade of flourishing creativity, strengthen their resiliency and help prepare them for the rise in fascism and war that was to come?

(18) Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past, Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995) xix.

And my second overarching question: how does Paris of the past connect to Paris of today, a time when across the globe we are once again seeing a rise in fascism and also growing resistance movements?

In the style of intellectual thought of the 1920s, I found fragments and contradictions and tried to bring them together. The search for a portal to connect the past to present turned into a research vortex. After two weeks of digging in, asking questions and searching for answers, I learned enough to know I hardly know enough — past or present — about Paris: Paris as cultural capital of the world, as colonial empire, as artistic catalyst, as a city once divided between the Left and Right bank. Now the contrasts are better understood as arrondissements vs banlieues, ex-pats vs refugees, yellow vests vs neoliberal reforms. And what I hoped to present at the L'AiR Arts Symposium could only scratch the surface. I vowed to return to these topics one day, to excavate the lives of artists who deserved a bigger spotlight.

The remnants of history are with us, whether it's the famous stories like the ones of Le Dome where I sat working on a draft of this essay, surrounded by glasses of afternoon wine and oysters, remembering that writers once gathered there with nothing but lint in their pockets as they waited for another artist to arrive with a little extra money to front the cost of the coffee.

I wanted to dive into the romanticized nostalgia of the 20s, to hunt for the muse of an epic decade in the City of Lights where the spirit of creativity breathed life into hands, bodies and minds. But whimsical notions of the past negate the critical awareness of its historical production.

I started with the schools of thought and practice of this era that continue to influence us today. Artists searched for meaning on the heels of World War I, where millions of lives were lost on the battlefield. Millions more wounded. And for what exactly? What was the rationale behind such devastation? Dadaism, with its disjointed thoughts, rendered art as everything and art as meaningless. Malik Crumpler from Paris Lit Up simulated in our writing workshop at Shakespeare and Company the interruptions that often took place in the salons: interruptions to break free, to hunt down our own imaginations.

Breaks in the writing -- fragments of ideas and thoughts -- created a certain rhythm that flowed outside the workshop, and I began to walk throughout the city paying attention to interruptions: ones that brought me back to the present and others as remnants of the past.

### **Interruption: La Greve**

The transportation strikes were going strong upon our arrival, with France's retirement system at stake. I witnessed interruption for political power and leverage. The labor organizers successfully shut down the city, making life inconvenient, and public support remained high, even with union density relatively low in comparison. Because the metro was shut down, walking was my major form of transportation and I could explore the city in a different way. I walked past a protest in front of the Pantheon and asked a student why she was protesting. She held a sign and waved at cars passing by, honking at her in support.

"Retirement is important for all of us. As a student I support the strike," she said, in fragmented words in English. I was interrupted and humbled by my inability to speak French. No longer was I travelling in Latin America, which I am accustomed to, where speaking Spanish or Portuguese opens doors to knowing people, to learning about what everyday life is like for folks, what they care about and why. In Paris, I could only gather information and stories through a filter.

We learned how artists played a role in supporting the strike, and in resisting the rising rents and high cost of living in modern-day Paris. For the last five years artists at the DOC, including L'AiR Arts painter, Lauren Coullard, have squatted in an abandoned building that once was a high school. This collective of artists meet regularly to maintain and run the community space and have their own studios and workshop spaces. Visual artists at the DOC made banners, created signs, and fundraised for the striking workers who were without an income.

The ability to live on very little money in the 1920s and find affordable housing, like La Ruche, attracted many artists to Paris. Today, with high rents in most major metropolitan areas across the globe, gentrification and displacement are a reality for working class communities, often of color, and pose challenges for artists to have space to create and connect. DOC was my portal to the past and showed what could be possible with regard to collective land acquisition and adaptive reuse of a building for community benefit.

### **Interruption: Exposition of its Roots**

Through a friend, I was fortunate to meet Séverine Catelion, one of the founders of Cinemawon, a collective of Black filmmakers, producers, and directors that showcase documentaries and films. Their mission is to center and bring visibility to the stories of Afro-descendent communities from France, Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa.

As many Parisians took to the streets to support the strike, I saw more and more people wearing yellow vests — on their bikes and in the parks -- and, of course, in the massive street protests that blocked intersections and forced the entire country to pay attention. I was impressed by the turnout and creative street protest and effective political pressure. I noticed, though, that there weren't a lot of people of color participating. I asked Severine about it.

She told me how most working class folks, including herself, are supportive of the strikes. The growing neoliberal reforms Macron continues to implement are problematic for the future of France. But, she said, the unravelling of a public safety net has been an issue for many folks of color and immigrant communities for years, and never got much traction. The history of French colonialism isn't even taught in the classrooms.

She also mentioned how the Yellow Vest movement in 2018 was started by a Black woman named Priscillia Ludosky from Martinique. She said she had since been pushed out of the movement. Her response resonated with me. How many times have Black women in my own country been the catalyst for social justice and change and not been given the recognition they deserved? How does it still happen today?

I thought about the whitewashing of the Stonewall Riots in a feature film that came out several years ago, and the director's decision to give the film a white male protagonist and invisibilize Martha P Johnson, a Black trans woman and leader who had played a pivotal role. Or more recently, the #MeToo movement, and how Tarana Burke, a Black woman from New York, founded the movement over a decade ago and far too many gave celebrities like Alyssa Milano the credit for its creation. (To be fair, Milano has since made clear it was Tarana Burke who has been doing this work for many years.) And closer to home, I was reminded about the domestic workers movement I am a part of, and our shared belief that our organizing must be led by and center the lives of Black women because Black women are who the industry was built to exploit.

Then there were the times I saw either 'Anonymous' written next to African art in the museums — or failure to mention in the interpretation of the art the influence and appropriation of Black culture by renowned artists in the 1920s and beyond. Again, I hear the words of Trouillot, the invisibility of historical production. The challenge: the exposition of its roots.

### **Interruption: Collage Feminicides and Protest Street Art**

I was reminded of #MeToo for different reasons as well. This began when I walked out of FIAP and discovered the Collages Feminicides. A movement of feminists, known as 'the



gluers', founded by Marguerite Stern, wheatpasted statements throughout the city that forced us to pay attention to the sexual violence endured by women and girls.

One image in particular pasted on a building led me to a Google translation and search: 'Gabriel Matzneff: Pedocriminality Is Not Sexual Freedom It Is A Crime.' I learned about this acclaimed author, and known sexual predator of girls and boys, who had fled France and has yet to be prosecuted. A brave survivor, Vanessa Springora, published the book *Consent* about what happened to her. France was reckoning with acts of gender-based violence overlooked for far too long.

Then I headed to the Musée d'Orsay, where Gauguin's work is displayed, and tourists take pictures of paintings of young exploited Tahitian women. This sexual predator is famous for renderings made possible thanks to patriarchy and colonial rule. Now, the paintings have turned into instant likes on Instagram. The invisibility of historical production. The challenge: exposition of its roots.

### **Interruption: Yo Soy Pintora**

As a Chicana, my portal to the 1920s begins with Mexico City, with Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, indigenismo and the muralist movement. The possibility of freedom after the Mexican Revolution, and of Tina Modotti's camera lens capturing the fervor of an agitated working class. But Paris, I'd come to find out in my L'AiR Arts journey, was also seen as the capital of Latin American art in the 1920s and an important place of cultural convergence for Latin American artists. Through excerpts of the book *Transatlantic Encounters: Latin American Artists in Paris Between the Wars* (19) by scholar Michele Greet, I'd discover there were over 300 artists from across the region, often not accounted for, who had made Paris their home during this decade. Many fled the political turmoil of their homelands.

I learned of women like Amelia Peláez, a Cuban painter, and tried to imagine her life in Paris, during our L'AiR Arts theater workshop. How did she navigate this new language, these spaces dominated by European men? Did the sights, smells and sounds of Cuba have its own rhythm she could tap into on the canvas? As I dug into the research, I learned another layer: many Latin American artists, despite their own European heritage and white privilege, were shunned by the dominant art scene in Paris when their work wasn't exotic enough to the European palette.

Once the artists arrived, they were othered, Greet noted, and any work they attempted to create with a European aesthetic was considered "derivative". But Greet also wrote about their resiliency, and the notion of "exhilarating exile" which gave Latin American women artists like Amelia Peláez a heightened awareness of their cultural differences, a new framework and inspired creativity.

### **Interruption: The Immigration Museum**

Migration as a portal between past and present is palpable. Understanding what's happening today, cannot be done in a vacuum. I head to the Immigration Museum one afternoon. The purpose of the museum, I read online, is to advance the views and attitudes of immigration in France. I learned that in 2007, President Sarkozy, refused to officially recognize the museum when it opened.

With interpretation in French, I made out what I could about Arab and North African, Asian, Eastern European and African communities' migration stories to France over decades and centuries. My lack of language forced me to think about the images and draw parallels to life back home. I saw a painting by André Fougeron titled 'North Africans at the Gate of the City'. They are lying under what looks like a corrugated metal wall, similar to sections of the US/Mexico border. I saw photos and posters of immigrant communities protesting in the streets, of home videos and archival photos and newspaper clippings.

Then I saw a magazine cover, with the words "Immigration or Invasion?" A woman in a hijab stood in the background. There is danger in those words. It had only been a few months since I returned from El Paso, Texas, at the US/Mexico border and site of the massacre, where my family was directly impacted and grieving the lives that were taken away. The murderer, inspired by the US president's hate, used the word "invasion" too to attack and kill my people. I also read that Le Pen said Trump's election was an additional stone in the building of a new world. I wanted to learn more about what immigrant communities in Paris are doing today to resist and counter dangerous narratives.

I returned to my original questions fused into one: how to learn from this decade of flourishing creativity 100 years ago, to strengthen our resiliency and power, and prepare us for the rise in fascism, as communities under siege. The invisibility of historical production. The challenge: the exposition of its roots.

### **Interruption: The Right to the City**

I am inspired by Charlotte Perriand, a woman architect whose genius broke glass ceilings from France to Brazil. At the Louis Vuitton Foundation, a museum whose architecture impresses as much as the exhibits themselves, I learned about Perriand's work with Le Corbusier. I am interrupted once again after the visit. Fragmented pieces of story blend. I want to know more about the cités and banlieues, and I discover how the Brute architecture of Le Corbusier inspired the highrise buildings on the outskirts of Paris. We don't see these photos as architectural achievements on the walls of the Louis Vuitton Foundation.

I read about the resistance against police brutality in the banlieues, the protest of thousands in the streets after police killed a Black man named Adama Traore on his 24th birthday. They have coined the protests “Ferguson in Paris”. And as I sat in the backseat of an Uber on a midnight ride past the Louvre, driving through iconic architecture, I remembered a quote from a community organizer of Cité 93: “I do not know the Mona Lisa, my dream is to see it one day.”

And so I learned enough to know I hardly know enough about Paris, past or present, and vowed to return one day, excavate more stories with a spotlight and a microphone. I am drawn to cities of paradox and contradictions: inside such contested spaces I better understand humanity. Ironically, it isn’t the romanticized notion of Paris that drew me in, it’s in the shattered mirrors, the fragments. The unanswered questions make me want to chase down the muse in streets filled with historical remnants too often overlooked.

# community

Building on the importance of exchange and having trust to support openness and confidence in sharing and challenging the cultural sector, the second element we identified for the platform for a sustainable creative ecology was community. This is not only about the defining of, and the building and development of community, but maybe -- more importantly -- understanding the needs and wants of those in one's community. Having knowledge of one's community and how as an artist or organization one can support and contribute to improving or cultivating creativity, strengthens everyone's success.

Two presenters expressed this element in their work, highlighting the accomplishments that can happen when community is truly taken into consideration instead of actions being done "to" the community; truly embracing the adage of 'nothing about us without us'. Deanna Galati, from Ontario, Canada, and Zsuzsi Page from Reading, United Kingdom, spent considerable time in their organizations gaining an understanding from their respective communities, identifying their needs, and working with the community to determine the best way to address those needs.



# Creative Hubs in Suburban Communities

**Deanna Galati, Canada**

## **Part One: Mapping It Out**

### **What is a suburban community?**

Often when I travel, meet new people, or converse with friends, I refer to Toronto as my home. In reality, I have never had a Toronto address in my life. My impetus for focusing the duration of my residency with L'AiR Arts on the importance of cultural hubs in suburban communities was my way of reclaiming where I come from and better understanding the importance of a creative identity. If we continue suppressing creative communities in suburban centres, people will continue to flock to city centres and neglect the places they grew up. This summation is not meant to deter people from speaking about where they generally come from. I will surely continue to tell people I meet outside of my geographical scope that I am from Toronto because it is more globally recognized than Richmond Hill, Newmarket, Markham, Brampton, or Oshawa. This paper is also not meant to educate anyone on a suburban community, because Google can tell you that, but to resonate with those that continue to live and work in suburban centres on the importance of developing the place you live, specifically its arts and culture.

### **About York Region**

As a region that neighbours Canada's largest city, artists often flock to the downtown core of Toronto to learn, create, and connect. This poses a threat for York Region as we are losing local artists and great talent to Toronto. In 2018, the York Region Arts Council (YRAC) and Shadowpath Theatre Productions (Shadowpath) received funding to conduct a study to support our community's need for a cultural hub, a place for York Region-based artists to call home. The study included conversations with key stakeholders, existing arts hubs, and local artists.

To put it in perspective, York Region covers an area of 1,762 km<sup>2</sup>. It houses over one million people in nine different cities and towns including Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Markham,

Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, King Township, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, and Georgina. Of the population, five percent work in arts and culture.

## **Commuter Story**

The luxury of living close to a city centre means that York Region artists do have the opportunity to work in the downtown core of Toronto. That means, those who do so will likely commute for at least an hour whether it be by car, bus, or train and there is a good chance many are using more than one mode of transportation to get to where they need to go. While we are fortunate to have these opportunities in Toronto for work and leisure, it sure does not always need to be the case, especially for arts and culture.

## **About York Region Creative Space Feasibility Study**

The York Region Creative Space Feasibility Study report and action plan is the culmination of 12 months of research. This study was funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and was conducted in collaboration between two independent non-profit charitable organizations, Shadowpath and YRAC, who both serve the York Region arts community in their respective ways. The intention of the study is to explore potential solutions in creation and presentation struggles that local arts professionals currently face.

The long-term goal of this project is to establish multi-functional, sustainable spaces for York Region artists to work and perhaps even live. Shadowpath and YRAC researched 17 existing creative facilities and analyzed the regional community's unique needs through several stakeholder input sessions. The spaces that are recommended in this report will serve individual artists and arts organizations in acting as a collective creative home base. The spaces would be places for collaboration and cross pollination that would connect the region's creative community and further promote arts and culture in York Region.

**Shadowpath** is a registered charitable organization and has been turning everyday spaces into creative places since 2002. Shadowpath is the recipient of Newmarket's Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Award for Innovation, 2016 and Richmond Hill's Creativity Connected Award for Best Innovation for their Café Cruise project in 2016.

**YRAC** is the only York Region-wide non-profit charitable arts service organization focused on capacity building, creative placemaking and community engagement in support of artists, arts organizations and creative entrepreneurs.

## **Cultural Industries in York Region**

As mentioned, of the one million people who live in York Region, five percent of those work in the arts and culture sector. To better map out the creative sector in the region, artists taking part in the Creative Space Feasibility Study were asked to offer personal information on age, geographical location, and artistic discipline. The largest age demographic was 30-49 at 40%, the largest artistic discipline was visual arts at 54%, and majority lived in either Richmond Hill or Newmarket at 19.6% each. These majorities did not come as a surprise in analyzing the York Region Arts Council's typical programming statistics, as well as regional demographic data ([york.ca](http://york.ca)). Where new information was given was in where artists were conducting their work. 74.2% of artists across all disciplines worked from home, while in second, 16.2% had studio or office space. For those who work in the sector, the act of producing and creating art is often communal, and with the majority of our artists working from home, this poses large barriers in terms of having adequate space and potential for collaboration. While working from home should not be frowned upon and is conducive to many types of work and processes, the need of an arts hub in York Region came through in the study when artists were asked about what they are missing in their community and the types of spaces that they needed.

Now that you have a clearer picture of where this research has come from, who York Region is, and the expressed need for a cultural hub, I encourage you to keep this at the back of your mind when reading the research and recommendations that have come from the study.

## **Part Two: What we found**

### **Artists' Input**

There are a large number of artists in York Region who work from home and few have an external place to create or build their work. There is nothing wrong with having a home studio, but with the majority of artists working in solitude, the region as a whole loses the interconnectedness and sense of community that comes with being in a collaborative space. Where do artists work? Where do they turn to? And where do we go to experience and live art as it is meant to? I often ask myself these questions sitting on the arts management side of the sector and want to help build a clearer path and picture for the arts community around this.

Artists surveyed for the study were asked to dream big when responding to the questions and to imagine living and working in a place with endless opportunity. When asked What is

stopping you from being an artist and/or running an arts organization in York Region?, a similar pattern appeared. There were five key needs brought up that were stopping individuals from being an artists, which included:

1. Physical Space: this included lack of physical creation and/or presentation space for artists to work. There was a general sense of confusion in knowing where they would rehearse their next show or store their collection of art.
2. Community: this included lack of feeling connected and wanted that exists due to working in silos. Artists are unsure of who to turn to and where to go for advice and support.
3. Finances: this included lack of income and financial stability, as well as high costs for living in the region. Richmond Hill, Vaughan, and Markham are on the list of places with the highest cost of living in Ontario, Canada (YorkRegion.com 2018).
4. Accessibility: this included accessing physical locations, as driving is often necessary and bus routes are not always accessible. With such a large land mass, this also included proximity to places in the region.
5. Resources and Opportunities: this included professional development programming, administrative support, press coverage, and more that was missing in order to support arts and culture careers in York Region.

Space is a commonality amongst these top five needs, whether it is physical space, access to space, or affording space.

So, we dug deeper and asked artists what kinds of space they lacked. The following were the top responses: open studios, performing arts/film studios, rehearsal halls, exhibition/gallery, and storage space. When asked how often they would use these types of facilities, the majority said weekly (38.6%), while daily came in at a close second (34.1%).

## **Municipal Input**

In order to have the support and strength that this study needed, key stakeholders were brought in as they have the largest influence on operations within the region. It was important to include municipal leaders such as mayors, councillors, economic development staff, and cultural department staff. The study included conversations with these individuals within each of the nine municipalities.

The majority of municipalities in York Region agree that a cultural hub is certainly needed. What emerged from conversations with municipal leaders included ideas on how they as each municipality would support the idea and implementation of a cultural hub, should it



happen. Support came in many different forms including subsidized rates on already existing spaces, marketing and promotional support, community engagement, staff to navigate through zoning and permit laws, and in some cases, funding or partnership development.

All municipalities have already developed culture plans and are in various phases of implementation of their respective plans. Noted in the study was that culture plans and economic development plans recognize the importance of supporting artists and cultural groups, but the development of spaces to support local arts is not specifically identified. Most municipalities that operate professional theatres and galleries reported that over 70% of performances and exhibitions are part of a professional program series that bring national and international artistic talent to York Region, while 30% or less is used by local artists and arts groups. It was not noted why this may be the case, but I personally speculate that due to high costs to operate such facilities, and very little funding support for local arts and culture, local talent will have a hard time affording these spaces.

In cases where space is occupied entirely by an independent local arts group, only that one group is served per location and other artists and organizations never to rarely access these spaces. This part of the study adds to the issue of lack of space, even in already existing spaces, making it almost impossible for artists to start up or continue their practice locally.

### **To model after what?**

The study also included research of different types of existing cultural hubs to analyze their current models and gain a deeper understanding of functional business models and partnerships that enable these spaces to exist and thrive. At each facility, owners, managers, and facility operators were consulted and responded to a series of questions about the development and current operation of their space.

Spaces visited included Toronto-centric, national, and a few international spaces. Noted thoroughly in the study includes: The Cotton Factory in Hamilton, Ontario, Akin Collective in Toronto, Ontario, and Canadian Music Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The purpose of including research on other spaces in

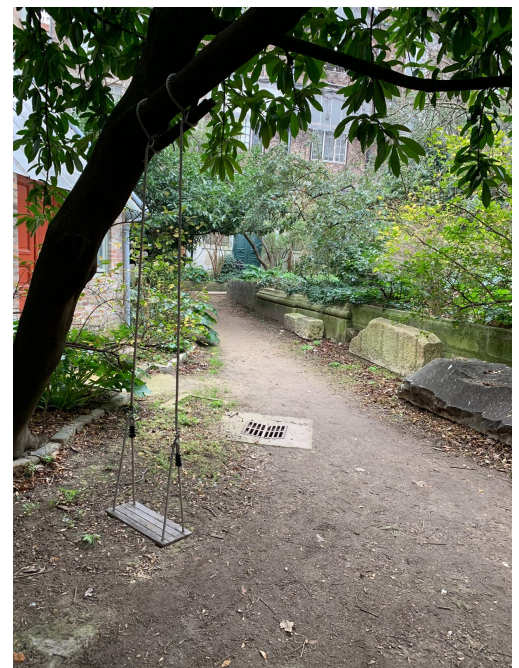


image at La Ruche by Deanna Galati

the study was to develop ideas around what works and what does not work when it comes to creative spaces. This portion of the study yielded factors to consider when moving forward on building a creative hub in York Region and will certainly serve a purpose in the planning phases.

## **Part Three: Paris and Next Steps**

### **Where does Paris fit in?**

I was fortunate enough to spend time in Paris doing cultural research and speaking with an intelligent group of cultural leaders from around the world with L'AiR Arts in January 2020. While completing my residency, I wanted to focus on two key things in my short time:

1. How arts hubs are used in Paris today and what models have worked for Parisian artists?
2. How was the rest of the world feeling about arts spaces? Was there a lack of room for artists to work around the world?

I would get this information at surface level, but knew that it would only help strengthen the already existing study by Shadowpath and YRAC by adding research on hubs that were not already looked at and in speaking to new individuals in the sector. I gathered this information through visits to cultural hubs and conversations with local artists in Paris.

Throughout the L'AiR Arts Residency, I was able to visit cultural institutions that either previously served as arts hubs or continue to do so today for both local Parisian artists and artists from around the world. In delving into hubs and models that worked in Paris, I gathered research on La Ruche and Villa Vassilieff primarily as two hubs that still operate in Paris. La Ruche is a unique, enclosed, live-work space for artists who apply for a studio space and upon approval receive a studio to work in indefinitely. The artists there included predominantly visual artists who either had a studio space or both a studio and place of residence. Villa Vassilieff on the other hand is a gallery and arts residency space, also for primarily visual artists. This space houses artists-in-residence and showcases their work to the public in its open gallery space.

In speaking to local artists, the theme brought up most frequently was an artist's search for belonging and seeking space to call their own. Historically, many have found this sense of belonging in Paris and as I learned, this dates back to the 1920's when a large wave of artists went to Paris to live and create. This need for belonging and space was evident still today through the conversations I had. Artists living in Paris that I met included individuals from Canada, England, Ireland, Russia, Peru, Argentina, China, and more.

For me, the idea of relocating for your art career to Paris felt very similar to the artists that York Region was losing to Toronto. I began to think about why it may be that these individuals left their respective places of home for a new home in Paris. The responses were the same - space, whether physical or metaphysical.

## **Next steps**

With this research, Shadowpath and YRAC identified four recommendations on what a creative hub could look like in York Region. Details on what each model would include, the business model behind it, and ideal locations were identified for both small-scale and large-scale hubs. Here is a breakdown of each recommendation:

1. The Mothership: The “Mothership” would be a large-scale, interdisciplinary and multi-purpose space that would offer a variety of amenities for artists, arts organizations and the public, and promote collaboration and cross-sectoral exchanges. The size of the facility should be no smaller than 25,000 square feet.
2. The Akin Model: It’s not always about reinventing the wheel. Akin Collective has established a great reputation and very unique and innovative model that has positively impacted hundreds of artists throughout Toronto. They are already exploring partnerships in other suburban and rural communities so there is an opportunity to work with them to expand into York Region. This would address many visual artists' needs for open studio space.
3. Live-Work with common amenities and space: One of the biggest challenges artists and cultural workers in York Region face is the high cost of living. This study explored a few models where regions, cities, independent non-profit housing corporations and condo corporations have worked together to provide below market housing units for arts professionals. In some cases, these residential buildings did not include common amenities and shared spaces for its tenants, which is something that would be important to include to promote collaboration rather than isolation.
4. Building on Existing Models: NewMakelt and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority are two organizations which own and/or operate spaces that are ripe for artists and cultural workers to inhabit more regularly. They have equipment and natural spaces that are already available to use and are very open to introducing new features, facilities and services that can further serve the needs of the local arts community.

The study shed light on the creative facility needs of approximately 100 artists and arts organizations in York Region, the position of municipalities on grass-roots arts facilities, and viable business models that currently exist. The recommendations in this report are the first steps towards realizing creative spaces that support local artists.

My time in Paris has inspired me to help push this agenda forward in visualizing a creative, cultural hub for artists in York Region.

## **Conclusion**

We in York Region lose many artists to Toronto because of the lack of available resources and opportunities that remain within the region. People flock to the city centre for training opportunities, classes, work, and entertainment. The story of living in a hotel community is far too real in our case and individuals in the region, myself included, spend a lot of time commuting into Toronto. Arguably, artists can spend more time doing what they are meant to do and love if given available space and resources to do so. So, why not build and create these spaces and resources?

I believe that a creative hub in York Region would allow the five percent of artists to collaborate, learn, perform, exhibit, and ultimately work. It would encourage artists who already live in the region to want to stay and work where they live. It would welcome artists from Toronto and surrounding areas - heck let's think even larger and say it would be a call to artists globally - to create a community of artists in York Region. We would not compete but work with Toronto artists, while also developing our own unique voice. Physical, accessible space is important.

With this research, we are able to have clearer and stronger conversations with municipal stakeholders, potential funders, and region-wide representatives in the arts and culture sector. I dream of a York Region that is thriving with artists and cultural leaders, and hope that this study and the voices behind it act as an entryway to build on the already extraordinary communities.

## **Acknowledgements**

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# Engaging Multicultural Communities through International Programming

**Zsuzsi Page, United Kingdom**

## ***The Story of Reading 2014 to 2019 - and how culture helped shape this story***

2014 was a time of substantial economic growth in Reading, (the UK's largest town) however, the town's gap in cultural offering was obvious. Whilst there was a very rich undercurrent of cultural activity, a melting pot of diverse communities and an enthusiastic audience that had not yet been activated, this would not have been immediately obvious to the outside world. Reading's arts community was not being recognised by national, international funders, businesses and audiences outside Reading. To many, Reading was a new town, that was filled with high rises, modern big offices, overshadowing the historical and multicultural nature of the town.

It was a town that was struggling with its proximity to London, but at the same time benefitting from its location. People were able to commute easily to work in the city, equally businesses could relocate to Reading and take advantage of the cheaper property but also benefit from its connection routes with the rest of the country. It was also this connectivity that made the town feel like a transient place with little personality. People travelled in and out of Reading but didn't stay to enjoy everything else that the town had to offer.

At the same time, soft indicators, (20) in terms of personal discourses and what the media reported, seemed to point to the fact that no one really wanted to move to Reading, and those that did, weren't particularly proud of the fact. Lines such as 'Reading is a cultural

wasteland', 'there is nothing to do in Reading' on social media platforms were commonplace. Media was more focussed on economic growth, than on Reading being a great place to live, it was regularly reported that 'Reading is set to become UK's most successful economic city', (21) 'Reading is UK's fastest growing economy' (22) or 'Reading is in Europe's top ten cities for Direct Foreign Investment' (23). It was in these personal discourses and media reporting that it became obvious that work needed to be done to draw the community together, to create a sense of place that people could be proud of, but also to ensure that the upward turn in the economy was a constant growth, by attracting the right candidates to Reading for the long term (24). The obvious answer to this challenge that Reading now faced was to ensure that the cultural sector was given the support it needed to change how the town was perceived.



With this in mind and given that our town was so transient, meaning that a critical mass of people were located within local businesses, it was clear that business engagement was going to be key in the development of the sector. While there was some isolated support from businesses for individual arts organisations, generally they were not engaged with the cultural sector. But yet, early surveys carried out by Reading UK CIC, the economic development organisation for Reading, suggested that businesses viewed the arts as an important factor when judging the attractiveness of a place and in the recruitment process. In a

survey carried out in 2015, 85% of businesses who were surveyed believed they should be doing more to work with local arts groups to support the economy and 100% of those businesses surveyed also felt that arts and culture were important to attract and retain good employees. It was clear that we needed to engage these businesses in the arts, with large scale events and more visibility for our arts organisations, thus our journey started.

This desire to activate, create a step change, catalyse ambition and grow the cultural sector in line with the economic prosperity of Reading, was at odds with the cuts that the arts were experiencing, both nationally and locally as a result of austerity. Reading Borough Council (RBC), local government, had been asked to make savings to budgets on a yearly basis by central government. Reading Borough Council was already stretched and was continually facing challenges around delivering essential social services and finding resource to support to the development of grassroots arts and culture both through direct grant funding and capacity building support. With further cuts on the horizon, the



Cultural Partnership, that had been brought together by the RBC to service the arts community and allocate funding, reallocated their remaining funds to match funding for a large Arts Council bid around a Reading Year of Culture concept, with the hope that this would be enough to catapult the arts sector to the next level.

For the first time, three partners -- RBC, Reading UK and Reading University -- came together to position Reading for a Year of Culture (25) and they made a successful application to Arts Council England. The programme ran for 12 months, celebrating a different theme every month. Each theme centred around positive areas throughout the town as well as locations that would benefit from development. It was a mixed variety of artists, local, national and international artists that came together to deliver the programme.

This application by RBC, Reading University and Reading UK to the Arts Council was successful and put Reading on the cultural map of the UK. The Reading Year of Culture engaged more than 50 local arts organisations, 30 national and international arts organisations, 35 local and multinational businesses and raised £100,000 in business investment. But more than that it created long term partnerships between Reading Borough Council, Reading University and Reading UK, for further more ambitious applications to larger funding schemes, a 130% increase in arts council applications from local artists and organisations, stronger partnerships within the arts community and a number of new and exciting projects.

The outcomes from the Year of Culture were so profound for the arts community that more funding was achieved from national sources to the arts sector in Reading and three organisations were awarded NPO status (National Portfolio Status). In addition, Reading's Year of Culture concept was replicated in towns and cities across the UK, including a London borough competition for a pot of funding to run a Year of Culture.

The Year of Culture brought about the next stage in Reading's journey in 2017. This was embodied by an application to the Arts Council to create a Reading on Thames Festival. The motivation for this, was to continue to engage the businesses that had supported the Year of Culture, to continue the town's placemaking ambitions, but also, there was a



recognition that whilst the Year of Culture had engaged a large number of people in Reading, it wasn't representative of the town's make up or diversity, this, they hoped, would be rectified by a single festival that was focussed on engaging a more diverse audience, celebrating one of the town's most beautiful assets, its rivers. This Festival idea also helped to inspire the Reading 2050 vision (26) that was launched in October 2017, to make Reading a place of diversity and culture, celebrating Reading's green spaces. (27,28)

This application was again successful, and the festival was well received by local organisations and audience members. It engaged some of Reading's most deprived areas and was seen as a concept that had potential to meet both engagement targets and placemaking ambition. As a result, it was included as a part of a wider more ambitious



application to a new pot of funding that had just become available called the Great Place Scheme in 2017 (29). This pot was about putting art at the heart of the town and had been conceived by the Arts Council and the National Heritage Lottery fund (30). The application was made again by RBC, Reading University and Reading UK.

This funding pot gave the Reading on Thames Festival another 3 years to build on the outcomes from the first year. But it also allowed the development of two further strands to help address one of our biggest struggles, of engaging with our most diverse and hard to reach communities.

Reading's Great Place Scheme, "Reading, Place of Culture" Cultural Commissioning Programme focussed on supporting local organisations to develop cross-sector partnerships in order to engage the community's most marginalised and hard-to-reach groups, and to provide genuine social, health and well-being impacts.

Three exciting programmes were funded in year one, taking place between July 2018-2019. Each programme followed its own timeline, based on bespoke participant, partner and evaluation needs. They all began with an Action Research and Story of Change session. In addition, all three projects developed a joint Action Research question to explore during the course of their funding, which was, "How can partnerships with arts, culture and heritage enhance existing services for disadvantaged participants?"





The outcomes have been substantial for this work. In 2019, we saw the impact of these art events and activities, that had managed to attract business engagement to the sum of £220,000 in cash, with in kind support to the sector at well over £500k. Audiences for events increased and many events were selling out and venues reported an increase in ticket sales across the board. New events and festivals continue to pop up throughout the year, and Reading now has festivals that run from April to December! In addition, we have seen an increase in engagement of our most diverse and hard to reach members of the community through the Great Places Scheme strand of work.

This work was started because we wanted to affect the way in which the town was perceived by those living here as well as those who lived outside of the town, we wanted to attract some of the best employees to our town to ensure the future of its economic growth. What we learned along the way, was that in order to reach these targets we had to ensure a more connected community and to work to support a vibrant arts scene as a vehicle to achieving these aims.

In 2019, it was far more common place to see the media reporting good news culture stories about Reading and the town's reputation has vastly improved in personal discourses, with people quick to jump to the defence of the town when disparaging remarks are made about its cultural offering. PriceWaterhouseCooper's most recent report listed Reading as the UK's second best Place to Live (31), and it was reported as such in the local media. Blogs have been popping up with lists of best places to eat, best festivals, best arts events, even the top ten places to live in Reading (32), which would have been unthinkable when this work began.

What's next for Reading's journey? There is still more work to be done, we have only just started to engage with the most diverse and hard to reach members of our community, with the Great Places Scheme funding running out at the end of this year (2020), more money will be needed to continue to support these projects moving forward. Reading Borough Council have recently appointed an Assistant Director of Culture and their cultural team is growing, an indication that the continuation of this journey may well be possible. Reading UK also appointed a Reading Place of Culture Lead to help develop the 2050 vision and engage with businesses. In addition, Reading UK will be leading on work to link local businesses Corporate Social Responsibility targets in with Reading's cultural offering, with the aim of further embedding the relationship between businesses and at the cultural sector to ensure its sustainability. So, whilst Reading has come a long way from 2014 in terms of supporting its placemaking aims and the cultural sector, the journey is not over yet!

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- (20)https://www.researchgate.net/publication/248973964_Deconstructing_the_City_of_Culture_The_Long-Term_Cultural_Legacies_of_Glasgow_1990
- (21)<https://livingreading.co.uk/news/reading-set-to-be-uks-fastest-growing-economy>
- (22)<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/reading-predicted-to-be-one-of-britains-economic-powerhouses-over-next-three-years/>
- (23)<https://www.getreading.co.uk/news/business/reading-ranked-top-10-european-6730037>
- (24)<https://www.peoplescout.com/insights/economic-impact-talent-acquisition/>
- (25)<https://www.getreading.co.uk/all-about/reading-year-of-culture>
- (26)<https://livingreading.co.uk/reading-2050>
- (27)<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/a-glimpse-of-whats-to-come-at-reading-on-thames-festival-2018/>
- (28)<https://www.getreading.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/reading-launch-first-thames-festival-12413707>
- (29)<http://readingplaceofculture.org/greatplaces/>
- (30)<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/arts-council-england-and-heritage-lottery-fund-great-place-scheme-year-1-programme>
- (31)<https://www.getreading.co.uk/news/business/reading-named-one-top-cities-17244489>
- (32)<https://www.comparemymove.com/advice/area-guides/where-to-live-in-reading>

connection

The third element for building a platform for a sustainable creative ecology was the need for connection. The obvious response to this element is connection to each other as artists and arts administrators, or within organizations to the needs of audiences, visitors, or patrons. The presentation highlighted in this section however goes beyond that, to gaining a true understanding of an organization's, or artist's, purpose and determining the most effective way to align this purpose with action, and then connecting those actions with the needs of the community, creating an ongoing loop of exchange, community, and connection.

The work presented by Alexandra Hatcher and Crystal Willie of Hatlie Group, based in Canada, brought forward the steps needed for organizations to consider when working to adapt to a more agile and viable organization. The process outlined in their presentation is intended for organizations of any size, scope, or discipline. However, the outlined steps and tools could also easily be explored by individuals or larger entities such as municipalities.



Agile and Sustainable Organizations in Changing Times

Crystal Willie and Alexandra Hatcher, Hatlie Group, Canada

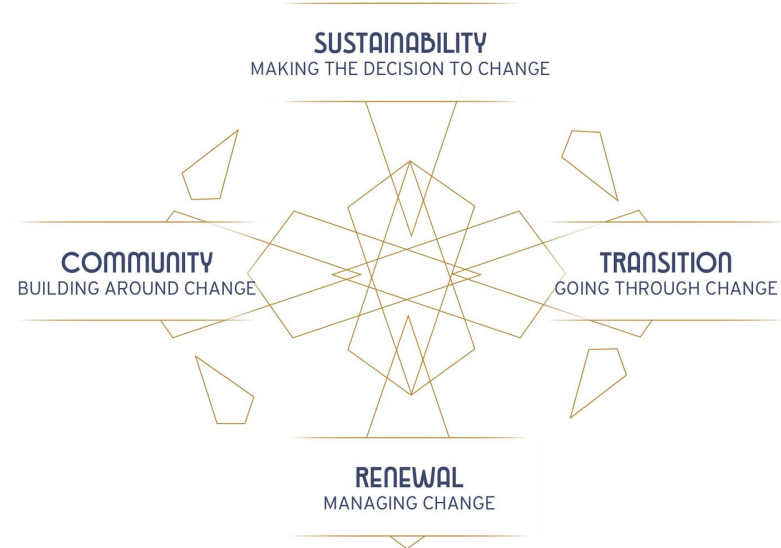
Agile and sustainable organizations are built to be responsive and reflective of their communities and doing so takes intentionality and purpose in how they are organized, managed and lead. Many cultural organizations are in a place in their organizational history where they need to redefine how they work and what they do in order to stay relevant and viable. If they want to thrive, they need to change how they work – specifically this means making changes to their decision-making, systems and culture to make the most effective use of their resources and relationships, in pursuit of their mission and in service to community. Sector-wide, this need for change sometimes looks like older, established institutions struggling and dying as new organizations emerge to fill gaps and to reflect the needs of communities in a way that is difficult for more established organizations that carry with them the baggage of organizational habits and histories. Within organizations, change has a path. This discussion shares what that path can look like, focussing on the elements and systems that make organizations holistically sustainable.

An Approach to Sustainability

Core Elements

Hatlie Group has developed a model around Four Core Elements, each part of the process of change that supports building and nurturing resilient and agile organizations:

CORE ELEMENTS



Sustainability is about making the decision to change. Organizations that consciously and mindfully make this decision, are starting on the right footing. The steps in this part of the process include:

- clarifying the organization's purpose and developing clear strategy;
- being mindful in decision making (aligning to strategy);
- working from a holistic perspective; and
- defining the impact you want to achieve.

Transition is about the process of going through change. This step provides organizations with the opportunity to objectively examine the work they have been doing, and the way in which they have been doing that work, and determine where efficiencies can be made, and actions can be stopped that are not furthering the agreed upon strategy. This includes:

- examining and reviewing an organization's practices – governance, programs and services; and
- assessing these against the impact the organization wants to achieve.

Renewal focuses on managing change. Once an organization has clarified its vision and strategy, and has examined its practices, and determined where adjustments should be made, the next stage is to support these changes through the systems, supports, and resources that an organization has access to, and uses. These include:

- Systems and Supports include:
 - o Policies, practices & training
 - o Human Resources including teams, hiring practices and capacity building
 - o Communications (internal and external)

- Resources are:
 - o Physical Plant (facility requirements or changes needed)
 - o Technology (systems, devices and applications)
 - o Time (availability of staff / volunteers, bandwidth, sustained attention to stakeholder engagement, lead time on partnerships)
 - o Materials and Equipment (inventory, supplies and machinery / devices)
 - o Information (research, knowledge and experience base and relevant and reliable data)
 - o Money / Funding (cash, assets, funding agreements, revenue potential)

Community in its most broad sense, is about building around change. An organization having gone through the other stages of work, will have identified their communities, their stakeholders, and their audiences. This stage allows for the organization to gain a better understanding of their needs, and what type of relationship they have with each, and what type of relationship they want or need to have in order for the organization to be successful. When examining stakeholders and relationships, there are four categories to consider. These include:

- Outcomes: Parties with an interest in what the program can achieve
- Users & Potential Users: Individuals & organizations who will or could participate in the program
- Funders & Authorizing Environment: Organizations / individuals who provide financial support or can make decisions about the program
- Partners & Collaborators: External groups / individuals who have or need a relationship to the program even though they may not be users (33)

Zones of Execution

Sustainable organizations understand their work happens in different zones of execution. These could also be thought about as levels or areas of management, leadership and program delivery. The zones are interconnected and have distinctive practices and approaches.



Sustainable organizations look at their operations holistically – this means that they understand the relationships between the different activities that go into governing, managing and operating an organization and are able to apply their strategy and values to decision making across all zones:

- *Community*: Who you work for. This is who you serve—your community or communities; your users, first and foremost; your funders; and your partners.
- *Operations*: How you do your work. This includes your policy and procedural framework, your standards of practice, your management techniques and processes.
- *Activities*: What work you do. This is your programs, projects, products and events offering.
- *People*: Who does the work. This includes healthy and creative workplaces, leadership, strong teams and engaged individuals – board, staff and volunteers.
- *Strategy*: Why you do your work. This guides your organizations through your strategic direction – defining where you are going and why – and the change you want to make.

Sustainable organizations have an understanding of strategic thinking that allows them to work in each of these zones simultaneously – because they are seeing their work from different perspectives. These organizations may shift where they place their focus and energy from time-to-time but maintain an understanding of the holistic relationship between each of the zones.

Facets of Sustainability

In 2013 the Alberta Museums Association (AMA) published the *Sustainability Working Group Recommendations Report* (34) which included a series of facets of sustainability for museums, heritage organizations, and cultural institutions. This work came to form the foundation of discussions on sustainability in Alberta's museum sector and has had direct

impact on the community through the AMA's Grants Program, the Recognized Museum Program, and the themes and sessions at their annual conferences. The research that led to the AMA's report has also influenced the sustainability model that the Hatlie Group now uses in its work.

Sustainability has five facets: culture, health and wellbeing, environment, financial, and social. As we've worked with these facets we have further defined and refined the model and placed it in context with other elements in nonprofit organizations including governance, program and service design, and a solid understanding of operational realities and the systems and structures that support success.

The individual facets cannot be considered separately, the model has to be considered from a holistic view – if one facet is overlooked in the organization's actions or strategy, then the entire model falls apart. This holistic approach supports resiliency and agility and provides the opportunity to discuss impacts in all areas of the organization's work, including its relationships, activities, and communication.

Facets of Sustainability

Culture

Culture is the way in which organizations provide opportunities to access, engage, and participate in the appreciation, exploration and expression of culture. For arts, heritage, and culture organizations, this is their reason for being. It is about how story, objects, art, creativity, ceremony, and education are offered to the community, and how we as organizations engage with our communities to build meaning.

Health and Wellness

Health is defined as the absence of disease, and wellness is the maintaining and balance of all aspects of being human. To simplify wellness, we have broken it down to five parts – social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual. When examining health and wellness in the context of sustainability we explore it from a holistic, nested perspective: from the position of the individual (i.e. staff members), the organization (i.e. organizational culture and its behaviours and practices), community (i.e. geographic, like practice, like interest etc.), and society (i.e. the role of the organization in the larger context).

Environment

Often when discussing 'sustainability,' environment is the first word that comes to mind. When considering the environment within a holistic perspective of sustainability, it is still about making intentional decisions for the long-term viability of the world that surrounds

us including flora, fauna, and our built environment. This model also takes into consideration the connections of one thing to everything else, and views sustainability holistically, as a large ecosystem.

Financial

Financial sustainability is concerned with balancing the impact of an organization's mission and relevance with the revenue generated, and the potential for revenue in order to continue the work of the organization. It is about considering the monetary bottom line and building a revenue model, but also about linking that financial bottom line to the other bottom lines a nonprofit has to manage, including mission, stakeholder relationships, and customer expectations.

Social

Social sustainability can be defined as supporting, contributing to, and addressing identified community priorities or issues, with the community, with the intention of contributing to positive social change. Again, it is inextricably linked to the other facets and needs to be taken into consideration from a nested approach, involving the individual, community and society as a whole.

Tools and Resources

When examining how an organization can be sustainable for the long-term, we have developed and adapted a number of tools and resources that support this work. The tools are not intended to be used in a linear form (though they can be), nor is any one element intended to be considered independent from another. Each tool has a role to play in the overall sustainability of the organization and needs to be considered in the realm of the entire organization.

The process of working towards sustainability is neither quick, nor easy.

An organization first needs to identify its stakeholders, users, audiences, and communities, understanding who the organization serves, who uses its programs and services or attends performances, and the communities in which it plays a role.

Developing a Strategic Framework, which includes Values, Vision and Mission, and a series of Impact Statements which define the changes that will take place because of the organization's work, provides the guideposts necessary for strategic decision making.

Building a Business Plan that is focused on the customer (the identified users), includes a Unique Value Proposition to differentiate the organization, identifies revenue streams and resources that may have previously been underexploited, and examines all activities and

how they support the vision, mission and impact you want to achieve will provide a strong foundation for annual planning and assessment tools.

Implementing a Governance Model that is based in transparency, shared leadership, and is policy focused assists in reliable decision making.

This model of sustainability is supported by a truly team-based Human Resources Structure. The characteristics of a team-based structure have been defined as Trust, Common Purpose, Shared Consciousness, and Empowered Execution (35). Members need to trust each other in order for the team-based approach to be successful. Articulating a common purpose that everyone supports, the shared vision, is important for understanding the “end goal” that everyone is working towards.

Shared Consciousness is about having a shared understanding of the purpose and the issues faced by the team, and organization, and ensuring alignment in their future direction. Ensuring that there is shared access provides all team members with the information necessary to make good decisions. Ongoing education and training supports building capacity and general understanding among not only the team, but throughout the organization.

Empowered Execution is a way of working that starts by communicating with transparency. This includes providing unobstructed, up-to-date views of the rest of the organization as well as access to information and open information sharing. Decentralized decision-making is also an element of Empowered Execution, which comes with high accountability.

Rather than succumbing to traditional hierarchical structures and their trappings such as annual performance reviews, developing Accountability Agreements in alignment with Annual Work Plans allow for individuals to work with their teams and those that they report to, to clearly articulate their accountability, what outcomes they are responsible for, and how they are contributing to success of the organization.

This process is then connected to outcome-based planning and assessment, doing the right things in service to your organization’s identified users, audiences, and communities.

SUSTAINABILITY MODEL



Case Studies

Change management theory teaches us that an organization requires a sense of urgency or crisis to launch the process of change (36). The following three case studies focus on established cultural organizations that each experienced a significant catalyst prior to entering into the discussion around sustainability and how their organization could adjust to more sustainable practices. Whether faced with the possibility of a new facility, a financial crisis, or a crisis of purpose, these arts and culture organizations had the right initial condition in place for successful change, and each organization made an intentional, mindful decision to enter into the process, and begin to consciously explore, and assess, their decisions and actions, their relevance, who they were serving and defining their impact, all through the lens of sustainability.



Arts Commons, *Calgary, Alberta*

Type of Organization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Performing Arts Centre
Staffing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61 full-time and 150 part-time employees
Size:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 600,000 sq. ft. (55,742m sqaure)
Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Theatres, 1 Black Box, and 1 Concert Hall
Programming:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 external Resident Companies + Arts Commons Presents programming

Over the course of a year, the Arts Commons Board and staff defined their impact using the five Facets of Sustainability as their guide. They examined their work from an individual, organization, and community perspective and took their current organizational culture and values into consideration. Building on the strong foundation that existed, they wanted to be more intentional with their decision making. Since the establishment of the Impact Statements, the organization has started to adjust their internal systems and structures in order to more fully support the meaning they want to have in the community.

Arts Commons Impact Statements

Cultural

- Our values are integral to all we do.

Health and Wellbeing

- Healthy people, organization, and community are encouraged by working together holistically for wellbeing.

Environmental

- Deliberate and intentional choices are made to minimize our environmental impact.

Financial

- A strong, effective, and efficient organization is cultivated by empowering and investing in our people, programs and facility, and our community.

Social Responsibility

- Conversations and connections are fostered and promoted through the collective leveraging of our resources and the arts, as a tool for society to experience, discover, and broaden understanding.

On April 3, 2020, Arts Commons announced that it would be keeping all salaried employees fully employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the press release announcing this commitment they cited the importance of supporting the mental wellbeing of their staff as one of the reasons for making this decision (37), a direct action in alignment with the organization's Health and Wellbeing Impact Statement.

Alberta Aviation Museum

Edmonton, Alberta



Type of Organization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid-sized Museum
Staffing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 full-time and 1 part-time employees
Size:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approx. 80,000 sq.ft. (7,500 m2)
Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collection of more than 20 full aircraft on display
Programming:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education programs, public programs, exhibitions, collections and research• 8 partners on site (as tenants)

The Alberta Aviation Museum (AAM) faced a serious financial crisis in the fall 2018. The Board of Directors went to Edmonton's City Council and informed them that the organization was in a position where if additional funding was not made available, that they would have to close their doors. City Council agreed to provide the additional funding, with the requirement that the organization complete a process to ensure sustainability as this one-time emergency funding would not be made available in the future.

Over the course of a year, the museum worked with Hatlie Group to develop a strategic framework, and conduct a program and services audit, a governance practice review and an operations review. Examining its relevance through a sustainability lens, and making changes to its governance practices, its organizational structure, and developing a business model that is user and stakeholder focused has changed its financial position as well as its success within their communities.

Alberta Aviation Museum Sustainability Goals

Health and Wellbeing

Predictability, stability, and accountability in decision making, expectations, and motivation is supported by our clearly defined vision.

Culture

Inclusive and diverse relationships are the foundation of our visitor-focused programs and services.

Social Responsibility

Our programs, services, events, and relationships foster an awareness of community issues and contribute to local positive change.

Environment

Intentional decisions minimize our environmental footprint, individually and organizationally, and we work with our assets to increase energy efficiency and reduce waste.

Financial

A balance of revenue and relevance contributes to our long-term stability.

Corps Bara Dance Company

Calgary, Alberta



Type of Organization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Dance Company
Staffing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 contracted part-time employees• Contracted Dancers, Choreographers etc. as required
Size:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A (no home venue or theatre)
Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Programming:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 scheduled performances per year

Corps Bara was established in 2000 and over the past nineteen years has transformed and changed as a dance company based in a spiritual practice. As it entered into its twentieth year, the Board of Directors and the leadership of its contracted Artistic Director made the decision to clarify its purpose: who they are, who do they want to be, and for whom. By entering into a strategy development process and ensuring sustainability was a part of the conversation, Corps Bara has been able to define its impact for those that it serves directly: the dancers, its audiences, and its current and potential partners.

Corps Bara Strategic Framework

Vision:

We are a thriving contemporary dance company that explores life's meaningful questions.

Mission:

We develop and invest in artists, facilitating an expansive, holistic dance practice to create and present work which engages our diverse audiences.

Impact Goals:

- Our dancers have stability.
- Our dancers are challenged.
- Our audiences are our champions.
- Our partner and collaborator relationships are mutually beneficial.
- Our partner and collaborator relationships are stable and ongoing.
- The spiritual lives of our dancers, audiences, and partners are enriched.

Recently, when discussing the use of the organization's Strategic Framework over the past several months during the pandemic crisis, and its helpfulness in providing direction, Artistic Director Deanna Witwer stated,

In a time when it would be tempting to roll over in uncertainty and put everything on hold, Corps Bara's impact statements and mission have held us accountable to our purpose, while our vision has provided a guiding ethos within which to imagine our efforts. The question became, 'how can we develop and invest in artists in the time of COVID-19 in ways that offer them and our collaborators something stable and beneficial, while connecting with our audiences in ways that are spiritually enriching.'

Out of this question came a virtual research project on a theme of solitude, a social media thread using imagery and reflection to publicly process grief and loss, and an upcoming pop-up performance project exploring the aesthetics of peace.

Conclusion

Today arts and culture organizations navigate similar forces to what was experienced in the 1920s and these can be the same catapulting forces for creativity, and a multiplier of access and promotion for artists and cultural creatives. But in the cultural sector, organizations are once again struggling with sustainability, being viable for the long term, and not surprisingly being relevant and reflective of the communities they serve. At Hatlie Group, we suggest that this is because many of the organizations that support the arts were established in a different time. And again, the old structures and systems find themselves in conflict with or inadequate to deal with what is happening in the communities they serve. Change has always been there, but this time, it is more rapid and extreme.

Community relationships, revenue models, programming approaches, communication and marketing methods, human resources systems and governance practices were all created to work in communities that do not look or act like our communities today.

Being sustainable in unpredictable and tumultuous times is about creating organizations that can bend, respond and move quickly. This is as much about knowing your environment and having strong relationships as it is about being well managed in the traditional sense of doing things correctly or efficiently. Competence, experience and a broad knowledge base matter because they are what allow organizations to make good decision and serve their audiences, customers, users, and communities well when nothing around them is going according to plan and the training or procedures manual do not match with the reality, or become redundant because of circumstances such as the COVID-19 global pandemic. In these environments where plans date quickly strategy based on vision, values and well articulated outcomes keep organizations making the best use of their resources and energy.

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Crystal thanks the Edmonton Heritage Council for supporting her participation in the L'AiR Arts Residency through the Heritage Community Investment Program.

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building the platform and a call to action



Building the Platform and a Call to Action

The Inter-format Symposium hosted by L'AiR Arts on January 27, 2020, and the presentations featured under the session title How the Creative Power of Place Can Influence Art and Culture on a Global Scale included seemingly wide-ranging speakers presenting work in various disciplines from all over the world. What was revealed over the course of the day was the interconnectedness of our arts and culture communities and how the work being done within organizations and municipalities was supporting the development and nurturing of local creative ecologies. These creative ecologies in turn were the ecosystems that were supporting the public, private, and commercial artists and practitioners who were contributing to the greater quality of life for citizens, tourists, other organizations who had the role of partner, collaborator, or supporter.

It became evident that building a platform for sustainability for our creative ecology requires a number of simple conditions to allow for thriving and nurturing environments to exist. Exchange between artists, administrators, funders, and supporters was essential. Conditions for exchange to be fruitful included the requirement of openness and confidence to share, and challenge one another in a healthy, positive, and constructive way. As evidenced in the work of Lia Arenas and Karina Muñiz-Pagán, trust is a crucial element of success, and openness and cultural exchange can not happen without it.

The second element of the platform for sustainability, Community, was not only the building and development of, but more importantly, understanding the needs, and wants, of those in the community, however defined. Having knowledge of your community and how as an artist or organization you can support and contribute to improving or cultivating creativity, strengthens everyone's success.

Thirdly, Connection, is about connection to each other as artists and arts administrators, within organizations to the needs of audiences, visitors, or patrons, and understanding the organization's purpose and determining the most effective way to align its purpose with its action, and connecting those actions with the needs of the community.

Oftentimes for organizations, a renewal of strategy, examining existing practices, and having an openness to adjusting the way it works supports a greater ability to meet the

needs of those it serves. Determining what a cultural organization needs to be in order to support artistic and cultural expression is not a simple nor easy process, however, it is essential in contributing effectively to the creative ecology.

Viewing the work of arts and cultural organizations from the perspective of the Five Facets of Sustainability (culture, health and wellbeing, environment, financial, social) has become even more important in the days since the Residency at L'AiR Arts took place. We have learned recently just how inextricably linked these facets are, not only in our organizations, but as artists, administrators, academics, and as human beings. Transitioning this view into actions, from the individual, interpersonal (relationships), organizational, community, and then to public policy changes (38), is what is required for that platform to create a solid foundation for a new way of working to exist.

The creative ecology is a living, breathing thing, which is made up of many parts working together to be viable. It is "a living, balanced environment, [which] expresses how nothing happens within [the] system without its impact being felt widely." (39) Holden further explains, "An ecological approach concentrates on relationships and patterns within the overall system, showing how careers develop, ideas transfer, money flows, and product and content move, to and fro, around and between the funded, homemade and commercial subsectors. Culture is an organism not a mechanism; it is much messier and more dynamic than linear models allow (40).

Creating safe spaces for artists to create, perform, and share their work, building environments such as creative hubs in places that currently don't have the support systems in place, involving participants, citizens, visitors, in the planning and design of creative and cultural opportunities, and supporting organizations as they renew, transition, and foster sustainable practices are all part of our local and global creative ecology.

Over the past several months, it has become blatantly evident that the funding agencies and government systems that support artists and arts and culture organizations need to adjust in order for the creative ecology to thrive in what ever our new reality will look like. New funding programs have been announced, reallocations of funds have been made for short term operational funding and crisis support for artists and arts organizations. Though, the need for change to public policy, funding mechanisms including individual and ongoing operational supports, changes to granting programs and application processes and access, bridging of systems, and encouraging and nurturing of partnerships and collaborations, all of these are essential for sustainability to be the true orientation for the arts and culture sector.

connecting around the world to view plays online created and performed within a day, curated and hosted by Fiona Leonard, Director and Founder of Blue Goat Theatre and L'AiR Resident, or providing digital music and dance classes, visual artists collaborating through the mail, or poets continuing their weekly gatherings through virtual performances, as a world, as connected humans, we know change can happen quickly, and have adapted with agility and grace. The systems that support this work now must do the same. "Arts and culture organizations can be a balm in times of crisis" (41) is the headline from a recent opinion piece in Canada's largest newspaper in mid-March 2020. The writer goes on to say that "We will need the arts – and artists – long after the COVID-19 pandemic has become just another story we tell." (42)

The cultural professionals who have contributed to this manuscript have committed to furthering this exchange, and to supporting the next stage of building a platform for a sustainable creative ecology through ongoing conversations, building connections among our networks internationally, and advocating for change at the public policy and systems level. We invite you to actively participate as well.

- o How are you contributing to a trusting, open environment?
- o How are you bringing people together through your artistic practice or through your organization?
- o Who are your partners, your collaborators?
- o What are your community's needs?
- o How is your practice contributing to addressing these?
- o What knowledge do you need to be a better practitioner?
- o Are you looking at your work from a holistic perspective?
- o What can you do with your local or regional arts agencies to support changes to the ecology?
- o What can you do to advocate for changes to public policy to support arts and culture? For changes to funding systems?

Let us know what you're doing! Contribute to the conversation at www.hatliegroupp.ca

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contributors



Lía Arenas

Chile

Bachelor of Arts, minor in Dance from the Universidad de Chile, she has focused her work on the creation of gathering and creativity spaces; understood as places to generate new artistic and cultural manifestations, capable of modifying, transforming the processes that occur in that specific space.

As a dancer, space has always been his work axis, and what we can do and transform in it. Visualize the space as a mobile place of transformation and cultural dialogue, where all the agents that participate have the possibility of making action. His goal is to generate spaces for interaction in various areas of artistic development, working from three perspectives: cultural management and production, theory and research and interdisciplinary scenic creation. These three axes of work allow to understand and develop art from various points of views and contents, which at the same time allow to make this as a specific field of knowledge that develops a sensitive awareness and another perspective of understanding and making the socio-cultural context. These areas let her make and convert the art in a cultural mobilization.

The scenic work has been developed in collaboration with musicians mainly from Santiago, dance and architecture research projects, broadcasted in dance film and small choreographic pieces, also interpreter of the "Gesture Archaeology". In teaching Lía has been able to develop as an assistant to the lectures "Introduction to Dance Theory and History", in the Department of Dance of the Universidad de Chile, Perception, Shape and Space, of the Department of Architecture at the same University, and professor of Academic Technique at the Maipú School of the Arts. In cultural management and production, she has developed the work by founding and being General Coordinator of the Espacio Elefante Cultural Center (2013-2016), production assistant and Executive Secretary of the Bicentennial project "Choreographic Actions", of the Dance Department of the Universidad de Chile (2016), and producer of the extension area of the Music Department of the Universidad de Chile, work she has being doing since 2015 until now. She also works independently with the Capitan Cobarito, Uva Robot and Sello Fisura record labels. In the research, she presented the paper: "Centro Cultural Espacio Elefante: Cultural spaces and proposals for student University Extension in post-dictatorship Chile", at the Second Latin American Congress of Cultural Management, held during October 2017, in the city of Cali, Colombia. She is currently developing a research that proposes cultural management as a mobile body in the continuity of spaces.

Julie Fossitt

Canada

Currently living on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe Peoples, Julie is a passionate advocate for access to arts, culture and heritage for everyone. She has held marketing positions at the National Arts Centre, the Victoria Symphony and the City of Kingston.

In 2015 Julie was awarded the John Hobday Award in Arts Management by the Canada Council for the Arts and in 2016 she earned both her Certificate in Cultural Planning from the University of British Columbia and her Masters Certificate in Marketing Communications Leadership from the Schulich School of Business. This year, she completed the Cultural Leadership Program at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Julie is also a part-time professor of Marketing Research and Analytics at St. Lawrence College. You can find out more about Julie on social media @juliefossitt and at JulieFossitt.ca.

Deanna Galati

Canada

Deanna Galati is an arts and culture professional in York Region/Toronto, Canada. After earning her degree in Theatre (BA Hons) from York University, she worked in the theatre industry as a producer, stage manager, and performer. Her passion for managing projects, budgets, and professional development programs led her to wearing many different hats within the sector. She is now the Program Coordinator for the York Region Arts Council, Coordinator of Education and Community Engagement at The National Ballet of Canada, and Partnership Officer at contemporary dance company princess productions.

Deanna currently sits on the Cultural Leadership Committee for the City of Richmond Hill. She has also served on the boards for Theatre Ontario and Guild Festival Theatre, and has worked with several organizations including Generator, Outside the March, Creativiva, and Shadowpath Theatre Productions.

When not working, Deanna enjoys performing and taking acting classes, keeping up her French language skills, and doing yoga. She will be pursuing her MBA at the Schulich School of Business with a focus in Arts, Media and Entertainment Management in fall 2020.

Alexandra Hatcher

Canada

As an employee, board member, facilitator, contractor, and volunteer, Alexandra has worked with, and for, non-profit and public sector cultural organizations for over twenty years. She has held the position of Director at the Musée Héritage Museum, Civic Partner Consultant for Arts & Culture at the City of Calgary, and Director of Site Operation for Historic Sites and Museums at Alberta Culture and Tourism.

From 2009 to 2014, Alexandra was the Executive Director / CEO of the Alberta Museums Association (AMA). Under her leadership, the AMA launched a number of initiatives including the Sustainability Working Group, Robert R. Janes Award for Social Responsibility, and the Community Engagement Initiative.

Establishing her consulting practice in 2017, Alexandra facilitates visioning and strategic planning work, and supports building capacity in the arts and heritage sector. Alexandra has worked with a variety of organizations in the arts and culture sector, and clients include Royal British Columbia Museum, United Way Calgary, and the Rozsa Foundation. Since May 2017 Alexandra has also held the role of Facilitator for the City of Calgary's Moh'kinsstis Public Art Guiding Circle, supporting building capacity for Indigenous artists working in Calgary and decolonizing internal processes to support increased access for Indigenous artists to the City's Public Art Program.

In March 2019, Alexandra partnered with Crystal Willie of Purple Aspen to form Hatlie Group, a full-service consulting and cultural services firm, with a focus on sustainability, transition, renewal and community. Clients include Alberta Aviation Museum, Calgary Stampede, and Edmonton Heritage Council.

Alexandra is an alumni of the Getty Center's Museum Leadership Institute. In 2010, she was named one of Edmonton Avenue Magazine's Top 40 under 40 and in November 2011 was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from MacEwan University.

Karina Muñiz-Pagán

United States

Karina Muñiz-Pagán is a writer, literary translator and organizer, born to a Scandinavian mother and Mexican father in San Francisco, California. She has an MFA in Prose from Mills College where she was the Community Engagement Fellow and taught creative writing to members of Mujeres Unidas y Activas; a Latina immigrant rights organization where she

also served as Political Director. As a result of the generative workshops, Karina co-founded the writers' group, Las Malcriadas, and edited and translated the bilingual anthology *Mujeres Mágicas: Domestic Workers Right to Write*, published in 2019 by Freedom Voices Press.

She has also earned MAs in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies from UCLA and has written and led campaigns focused on place-based storytelling and the power of understanding the social history of the built-environment. Karina is a contributing author of the books, *Endangered Species*, *Enduring Values: An Anthology of San Francisco Writers of Color*, edited by Shizue Seigel, Peace Press and *Working for Justice: The LA Model of Organizing and Advocacy*, edited by Ruth Milkman, Victor Narro and Joshua Bloom, Cornell University Press.

Karina is currently working on a memoir called *Flygirl* about her search for home as a queer Xicana, community organizer raised on Hip Hop, and her political education journeys throughout the US, México, South America, Asia and Europe. She is an alumna of Voices of our Nations Arts Foundation (VONA) and lives in Long Beach, CA and works for the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

Zsuzsi Page

United Kingdom

Zsuzsi Page is a cultural professional with an MA in International Relations. Over the past 7 years she has worked in Reading, demonstrating arts link with economic growth, creating community and a sense of place. In all of the programmes that she has curated as well as all festivals that she has run, Zsuzsi Page has integrated the belief that in the power of art to unite, promote change and discussion and bring communities together.

An integral part of any programme that she curates is an international element. She works closely with artists across the world, not only inviting them to perform in her town but also to create relationships with the artists that call Reading their home. This has promoted great friendships and incredible artist outputs, but also great understanding and an opportunity to discuss differences, and more importantly, celebrate similarities.

Zsuzsi Page ran the Reading Year of Culture in 2016, started Reading Thames Festival in 2017, created the Festive Season programme and has been running the Reading Fringe Festival for the past 7 years. Previous to her seven years of working in Reading, she worked in China and America on art projects, working on the First Shanghai Pride and celebrating LGBTQ work in America. Producing a number of plays that encouraged people to discuss

difficult topics on one hand and then be wildly entertained on the other. Bringing Panto to Shanghai for the first time in the city's history and producing Corpus Christi in Bible Belt America.

Crystal Willie

Canada

As a cultural sector consultant, Crystal Willie works with public and non-profit groups to build sustainable and effective organizations that achieve their missions and serve their communities. She specializes in the areas of project management, policy development, program review, and planning. She serves a broad array of clients, from small arts cooperatives to provincial and municipal government agencies and departments, including the Edmonton Arts and Heritage Councils, Calgary Stampede, Alberta Aviation Museum, Archives Society of Alberta, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, National Music Centre, and the City of Lethbridge.

Crystal holds a Master of Arts from the University of Alberta, a Professional Specialization Certificate in Cultural Heritage Sector Leadership from the University of Victoria, and a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science from Concordia University of Edmonton. Her Masters thesis explored cultural identity and immigrant expressions in community museums, and the ideas of identity, belonging, and multiculturalism continue to influence her consulting practice. She is editor and project manager of the Standard Practices Handbook for Museums, 3rd Edition (2014) and HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums, 2nd Edition (2018). Both publications are used in museum studies programs and sell internationally.

Before starting her company Purple Aspen Inc., Crystal worked for a leading museum professional association and several non-profit or public cultural or community organizations.

In 2019, Purple Aspen joined forces with Alexandra Hatcher Consulting to create the Hatlie Group, a cultural services and consulting group. Hatlie Group is a collaboratively managed company that works with organizations seeking sustainability, transition, renewal, and stronger relationships with community.