# FRAMING THE DISCOURSE, ADVANCING THE WORK

Philanthropy at the Nexus of Peace and Social Justice and Arts and Culture

*By Moukhtar Kocache*

*with support from Cynthia Madansky and Filiz Bikmen*

*edited by Andrew Milner*

PHILANTHROPY *for* SOCIAL JUSTICE *and* PEACE

# About the Author

Moukhtar Kocache is an independent consultant with expertise in philanthropy, cultural and civil society development and curatorial practice. Prior to this, Moukhtar was Programme Officer at the Ford Foundation's regional office in Cairo and Director of Programs and Services at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council in New York, a leading arts council in the USA. During his time at Ford, he worked mainly on the development and sustainability of arts and culture spaces, networks and service infrastructure. He also programmed and managed a cluster of grants that support alternative and emerging media platforms and media reform agendas, as well as a cluster of grants that support the development of local philanthropy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. At the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, he initiated and developed residency programmes, art in the public realm initiatives, exhibitions, publications, conferences and seminars as well as workshops and resources, including grantmaking for individual artists and small arts organizations.

# About the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace

The Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace (PSJP) exists to increase the impact of grant making for social justice and peace work. It does this by developing tools and practices to advance this field of work; shifting the narrative in philanthropy to place social justice and peace at the centre; and supporting a network for practitioners across the globe.

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- Chandrika Sahai, Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace Network Coordinator (Jaipur, India)

For more information visit www.p-sj.org

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[1] As of July 2014, Ana is a former member of the Working Group. Ana was a member of the Group and worked on the project through 2013 and early 2014.

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# Foreword

'Where overt protest is repressed, arts and culture are a subversive way to give people voice…unfortunately from a philanthropic perspective, this has not been a place where resources for change have flowed…,' said Barbara Ibrahim (John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, Cairo) at a convening of social justice philanthropy practitioners in February 2009 in Cairo. On the one hand, foundations from across the world, working in societies with deep-rooted structural and systemic injustices, are embracing the value of arts and culture as a powerful and uncontested space to regenerate broken societies, to give voice to people and to challenge and address discriminatory structures. On the other hand, there is still little organized information and knowledge about the links between such initiatives and social justice and peace building and the opportunities and challenges in funding this work.

In order to close this gap, in March 2013 we embarked on a journey to explore these areas. We looked into existing practice, reviewing the information that had been gathered about philanthropy at the nexus of social justice and peace, and arts and culture and the tools that existed to promote it. At the same time, through interviews and a convening held in August 2013 in Ontario, Canada, facilitated by the author of this report, Moukhtar Kocache, we heard both from philanthropy practitioners and from artists and cultural producers who are working on social, political and peace-building issues about their experience with philanthropy.

The ensuing report is based on the author's research and his experience in this field of work and the consultations mentioned above. It presents an overview of the relationship between progressive social change work and the arts, explores the role of philanthropy in supporting this work and sets out recommendations for how philanthropy might further its engagement with work at this nexus. The objective of the report is to stimulate further reflection and exchange of lessons and opportunities for inculcating practices in philanthropy for supporting arts and culture work as a means to advance social justice and peace.

We invite you to join this conversation and share your experience, perspectives and stories. If you would like to do so, feel free to send an e-mail to info@p-sj.org.

The purpose of this report has been to survey and to map existing terrain, not to formulate hypotheses or draw conclusions. However, we described the process of compiling this report as a journey and, like all journeys, it has involved changes of perspective and, like some journeys, a revision of ideas. During its course, it has become clear to us that arts and culture are not just a matter of better tools for supporting change; they are often central to personal and social transformation. The arts often reach us – and influence us - in ways that direct explanation cannot. The call to philanthropy that seeks to support progressive social change is to recognize this transformational power of arts and culture and to engage with it as a holistic strategy. This argument is presented more extensively in a brief paper entitled, 'Making the Case for the Arts to Social Justice Funders'.

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We would like to express our deep gratitude to all those who have contributed to the report especially the author and facilitator Moukhtar Kocache, and to Filiz Bikman and Cynthia Madansky for their assistance with research and writing. We are very thankful to all the philanthropy practitioners, artists and cultural producers who participated in the interviews and convening in Ontario, Canada. We also wish to thank Todd Lester of freeDimensional, the co-organiser of the convening, and Volker Hann and Helga Breuninger of the Breuninger Foundation for being our very gracious and generous hosts at Wasan Island in Ontario. We are grateful to the Ford Foundation (Cairo) for providing travel support for a part of the convening. Finally, we would like to thank Andrew Milner for giving the report its final shape, by editing it and incorporating into it the key themes and recommendations from the interviews and convening.

**The Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace**

# Introduction

'By being proactive, by watching and taking part as audience members, people's resolve to do something about a particular issue is strengthened.'

These are the words of Nicholas Kent, artistic director of the Tricycle Theatre in the UK, who was interviewed as part of the research for this report. Most would agree that arts and cultural projects can act as powerful persuasions for social change, illustrating examples of injustice graphically and immediately. Recent global social movements have shown how creativity and self-expression are released at moments of massive social change. A symbiotic relationship between art, self-determination, cultural democracy and social justice has appeared in citizen-led and democratic movements.

Funders acknowledge this, yet despite the fact that the relationship between the arts and the peace and social justice sectors is an evolving one, areas of uncertainty, even of mistrust, remain. Artists and arts projects whose purpose is explicitly or implicitly to bring about such change often struggle to get funding.

Why? Arts funders are unlikely to fund projects whose express purpose is social change for a number of reasons: either because they see it as reducing the funds available to those endeavours which are purely artistic, or because they are unwilling to court the controversy such projects sometimes attract or because they see such projects as diluted forms of art. Social justice funders, on the other hand, are more interested in funding the social change element of 'social change art' and are inclined to use artists and arts projects for a specific purpose which serves their own ends – something which is often resented by artists and cultural producers.

In short, one set of funders wants to fund 'pure' arts and the other wants to fund the social change element of art. However, the projects themselves are seldom divided up into such neat operative compartments and any distinction between what is purely aesthetic and what is politically influential is seldom clear even to the artists themselves – in fact even to talk as if there were such a distinction is misleading.

Moreover, the relationship between social justice and arts and culture is an uneven one – while most would acknowledge that art can contribute to social change, even if exactly when and how far this happens is debatable, it's not seen as the purpose of social change funders or organizations to contribute to art because it is a thing of a different order. The assumption for many is that social change is the higher good and it is for other forms of endeavour to serve it.

Even when social justice funders see the merit of funding arts projects (and many do), a number of practical difficulties arise. When are the arts the most effective means of addressing inequity? As we've seen, arts and culture are often only a communication and advocacy tool for peace and social justice issues – should they be more?  How can you tailor the breadth of arts and culture forms to specific programmes and strategies? How is the effect of this work to be measured? Overall, then, while the

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combination of peace and social justice and arts offers a great opportunity for creating change in public thinking and policy, in order to grasp that opportunity, the convergence needs to be better understood than it is at present.

The central questions that this research paper explores, therefore, are why don't more funders support social-change-through-arts work, what is needed to change this and what are the opportunities if such changes are made. The first section presents a brief review of socially engaged art and its function. The second looks at the growing recent convergence between the two sectors and is followed by a section of examples where arts and social change are successfully brought together. The next section presents a taxonomy of arts and culture which will allow funders and social change organizations to locate themselves and see where mutual interest might lie. Following this, we look at the challenges involved and the obstacles to a closer relationship between the two sectors. Finally, we draw out a number of recommendations for developing a fuller relationship which might help to realize the potential of greater collaboration between the two.

### Terminology

Throughout this report, we have referred to the social justice sector and the arts sector. We're aware that this casts a very wide net, taking in funders and practitioners from both sectors. For the most part, however, the audience we are addressing is comprised of social justice funders, and to a lesser extent, social justice activist organizations. Most of the recommendations, for instance, are addressed to social justice funders because they have the resources to be able to put into effect the steps needed to overcome the obstacles to closer collaboration between the two sectors. We have used either the word 'funder' or 'foundation' to signal this. Where both funders and activists are meant, we have tended to use the term 'organization'.

This is not to say that the report might not be profitably read by both arts funders and arts organizations. We hope that it can and will be, indeed we hope that all those working on collaboration between the two communities, as well as by others seeking information on the topic, will find it useful.

We have also put a broad construction on the term 'arts' to include products or artefacts that are consciously created or curated out of the experience of an individual or group. It is meant to embrace, for example, what is sometimes called 'high' art, as well as the productions of craftspeople, hip-hop and graffiti art. There are two reasons for this, one serious, one trivial. The serious reason is that while 'arts and culture' are usually bracketed together, the term culture is a very vague one, making any precision of argument difficult. The trivial reason is that 'social justice and peace and arts and culture' is a cumbersome label.

### Sources for the report

The report is drawn from three main sources: a review of the available literature, interviews with several of those active in the field of arts and social justice (whether as funders or practitioners) and the proceedings of a meeting organized in collaboration with freeDimensional and hosted by the Breuninger Foundation on Wasan Island, Canada which explored the relationship between the two sectors. It's evident that these sources are far from comprehensive. In particular, and as the Wasan Island meeting

underlined, much the research cited comes from the global North. The interviews with practitioners helps to balance this to a certain extent, nevertheless, the bias remains and it helps point the way toward further investigation of this issue.

# Social Engagement Through the Arts: A Brief Background

The argument about whether the arts should serve a social function or should exist for their own sake has been going on for at least 2500 years when Plato's *Republic* advanced what some consider the first example of an instrumental cultural policy. More recently, over the last century, the debate has become increasingly polarized. Mass movements and means of communication have arisen, new forms of creative expressions have emerged, some of which have an explicit political and social purpose. Totalitarian states have made use of the arts for political ends – think of Stalin's view of the artist as 'the engineer of human souls', for example - and attempted to silence those that didn't serve those ends. From the other side, artists themselves have increasingly attempted to extend access and involvement in culture to previously excluded groups. This has precipitated a division within the arts sector itself, with one side believing that the other feels legitimate creative expression is a function of high culture and the fine arts.

In terms of the arts' conscious involvement in creating social change, two cultural forms are worthy of mention here. Examples of the 'committed novel' have had direct political influence. The novels of Charles Dickens, for example, are often seen as having influenced public opinion in favour of social reform in 19th century Britain. The second is political theatre. Bertolt Brecht, one of the founders of political theatre which he called 'epic theatre' proposed that by observing and depicting reality, political theatre makes it possible to change that reality. Similarly, Augusto Boal's 'Theatre of the Oppressed' helped raise spectator's consciousness by involving them in a participatory process to reveal and help undo conflict, oppression and power. Engaged artistic and cultural production has helped alter people's perceptions and deep-seated beliefs about social justice, peace and political issues. Over the course of the last forty years or so, new types of socially engaged artistic practice have begun to emerge, questioning and altering artistic traditions and borrowing techniques from outside the arts. Artists and cultural producers have begun to see their work more as a process of change than as the making of objects and, correspondingly, they have begun increasingly to be seen as agents of change.

# A Growing Convergence

There is growing global interest in this convergence of arts and peace and social justice. Some academic institutions have created degree programmes that focus specifically on arts and culture in communities for civic engagement, activism and social change. Artists' collectives have been created to advance social justice issues. Existing civil society organizations and foundations have reframed their missions and their programmes in accordance with this theme. Annual gatherings bring together stakeholders that usually do not meet: foundations, governments, artists, culture professionals, social scientists, lawyers, activists, social marketers and policy-makers. Donor working groups, learning circles, convening and networks are being established to help develop work at this nexus. In 2012, a conference organized in Cairo by Culture Resource entitled 'Independent Culture for Democracy' brought hundreds of artists, culture managers and activists, cultural policy experts, curators and professionals together from throughout the Arab region to reflect on the sector's role in the social and political transformations of the region.[1]

Moreover, despite the obstacles which we will discuss later in this report, more foundations are displaying interest in the confluence of the arts and social justice with some making it a core area of work and others experimenting with it as an area of exploration. Despite the fact that many in the philanthropic sector are still puzzled and uncomfortable with this fusion, there is some recognition of its importance and the opportunities it might offer.

Several reasons have contributed to this growth of interest:

1.  The growing presence of arts and culture in the civic, social and political fields, their popularity at community level and the democratization of audio-visual creation and dissemination.

2.  The changing landscape of democracies, emerging citizen movements and new awareness of the inequities in the economic/welfare systems has attracted new forms of expression and participation that appeal especially to young people.

3.  The growing insularity of the 'art world' and its exclusion of the vast majority of community-based and engaged creative voices.

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[1] Some of the recommendations from the conference are worth mentioning here: a) "Coordinate and interact with all social and rights advocacy activities and movements espoused by civil society, and participate in and through them so as to better be able to perform the role of the independent cultural sector and promote its programs for social change; b) "Promote notions of contractual relations and partnership as mechanisms for shaping the relationship with the political establishment, the private sector and civil society; c) Creating mechanisms...to express solidarity and support victims of repression, censorship, confiscation, violations of freedom of expression and other such abuses..." d) "Build models of examples of cooperation with civil society operating in other sectors such as education, development, human rights and the media, with the aim of incorporating cultural components into their programs and services."

4.  Social justice foundations that have supported arts and culture in the past as integral to the development of human expression and imagination are looking at new ways to justify their continued work in the area.

5.  Recognition by peace and social justice organizations that, in their stress on economic and social rights, they have neglected the importance of cultural rights and a growing awareness of the importance and interrelation of these three in producing lasting change.

6.  Growing interest and experimentation by the peace and social justice sector in how arts may achieve significant communication and advocacy goals.

7.  The size and sophistication of the US philanthropic and non-profit sectors, which has fostered a willingness to experiment with and investigate new forms of work for change.

Among social justice funders, in particular, these considerations have helped produce a change of attitude. The general view of peace and social justice funders has been 'what can arts do for peace and social justice causes?' with arts, media and culture often seen as components of or afterthoughts to existing programmes and strategies. A growing number of peace and social justice organizations and funders, however, understands that the cultural expression and the artistic tradition of marginalized groups contributes to their self-determination and their ability to speak for themselves. Examples of this can be seen in the experience of South Africa, Palestine, the Dalit in India, the Roma people in Europe and Armenians in the Diaspora. This work needs to be more strategically supported with the knowledge and skills to more deeply advance the cultural rights of concerned communities.

The next section offers some examples of groups who are working with some success at the intersection of arts and social justice and looks, through their example, at how arts and culture can affect social change.

# Working at the Intersection: Some Examples

Let us now turn to look at some striking examples and those who support it that the fieldwork for this report has unearthed. The lessons to be drawn from them also point the way forward and will form some of the recommendations made at the end of the report.

### Puntos de Encuentro (Meeting Point)

*Puntos de Encuentro* (Meeting Point), based in Nicaragua, aims to boost societal dialogue on critical and often controversial social issues such as domestic violence, gay rights, homosexuality and abortion. In addition to the many discussion programmes and publications, they are the writers and producers of two "social soap" TV series, *Sexto Sentido* (*Sixth Sense) and Contracoriente (Turning the Tide)* brings contentious social issues into the living rooms of Central American countries. Debate on the issues is furthered by working closely with social movements and community organizations who are addressing them. For co-founder Amy Bank, this epitomizes the connection between arts, culture and social justice. Personal lives are connected to societal issues and societal issues to personal lives. This is why, she says, they produce 'drama, not debate shows'. Stories are powerful and effective means of conveying controversial messages and polarizing topics, and help build a bridge which people can then, in a self-determined manner, decide to cross or not.

### 'Peace in the Hood', TrustAfrica

TrustAfrica has successfully blended arts interventions with its programmes to promote social and economic justice. Under the 'Peace in the Hood' rubric, the Trust has funded projects which include theatre production about debt cancellation, a film about elections, youth poetry, hip-hop and graffiti art to promote townships and it actively commissions theatre, film, music and other artistic products to inspire and mobilize people around issues of social justice. Briggs Bomba of Trust Africa observes that projects involving an expression of artistic nature helps to spark conversations with a larger and more diverse audience.

### Creative Time

'Investing in the way people feel is a very powerful political device,' believes Creative Time's Chief Curator Nato Thompson. Creative Time supports artistic projects for social change in communities and neighbourhoods, creating a civic space of reflection, understanding and sharing.  Examples include a theatre production after Hurricane Katerina in one of the hardest-hit and poorest neighbourhoods of New Orleans; an art installation in several US cities of a car blown up by a bomb in Iraq which included conversations with Iraqi and American soldiers; and a project to provoke discussion about the future of feminism through neighbourhood forums in New York. All three combined techniques of community mobilizing and artistic expression as an 'investment' of which the return was a sharing of feelings, experiences and ideas about issues that affect individuals.

### Tricycle Theatre, UK

Tricycle Theatre focuses on what artistic director Nicholas Kent calls 'politically engaged art' and 'socially engaged theatre'.  The subjects it has tackled include Guantanamo Camp, Bloody Sunday and the

International Criminal Court. The theatre began in a racially and religiously diverse London community, though its work quickly spread to the rest of the UK and then other countries through TV, radio and other partnerships, reaching millions. For Nicholas, the theatre is the space in which the connection between artistic expression and social justice is conveyed. It also serves to bridge the gap between journalism and art. 'All art is good,' he believes, 'it brings together a group of people in a shared experience, and makes us realize we are all part of the human race, consuming something together; it makes people think and reflect.'

### Mama Cash, Netherlands

Mama Cash has a long history of funding arts and culture through prizes, competitions, visual art, photography, performance, painting, sculpture and drawing. In the 1980s, Mama Cash funded arts and culture more directly, supporting several leading women artists struggling to gain visibility in mainstream cultural venues. In 1998, they hosted an international women's film and video festival as part of their 15th anniversary and since then, they have funded the creation of numerous documentary films.

For Nicky McIntyre, 'Creative activism... taps into a different part of people's souls which is often a forgotten piece in social justice work...' Mama Cash and the organizations they support are increasingly using digital media and visual language and a group in Brazil uses graffiti art to display inspiring images of women as activists. This has led to a more recent strategy to direct funding toward creative cultural dimensions for activism rather than the direct support of artists per se.

### Anadolu Kultur, Anatolia, Turkey

'From the very beginning, social justice was a priority for us,' says Osman Kavala, founder and main funder of Anadolu Kultur. Anadolu Kultur is working to create open discussion and treatment of the Kurdish and Armenian populations in Turkey, one of the most controversial issues affecting the country's politics, discussion of which was, until recently almost taboo. 'We are not working solely in the area of artistic production; our objective is to support artists who are concerned about social justice, and through this, to promote dialogue and understanding between different parts of society which sometimes is in conflicting terms, both within Turkey and across borders.' Osman believes that part of the challenge is a general lack of engagement and action of citizens on these issues.  During the recent Gezi Park protests in Istanbul, Anadolu Kultur set up a video archiving project. Social media was the main channel for distribution and the level of civic interest and artistic expression increased significantly. Anadolu Kultur notes Increased vibrancy among local young artists and art and culture NGOs as two important changes that have come about at least partly as result of its work.

### Shujaaz (Well Told Story), Kenya

The Well Told Story organization engages young Kenyans in creating stories to spur other young people to act to improve their own lives. The stories address core issues of what director Rob Burnet refers to as 'citizen agency' (how to vote, knowledge about rights, opportunities and access to services). 'We try to convey agency messages,' he explains, 'so that youth say "I am an active citizen…I have a voice, I and my friends can participate in decisions and in change."'  They also address practical subjects such as how

to harvest crops for greater return and small business management. The content is distributed through as many channels as possible, such as comic books (44 million in four years), radio shows (daily on 26 FM stations, a total of 11,000 programmes to date), national TV, YouTube, Facebook and text messages. So far, nearly seven million people have followed their stories. 'We are a deliberate active instrument for change, which sits under the social justice framework,' says Burnet.
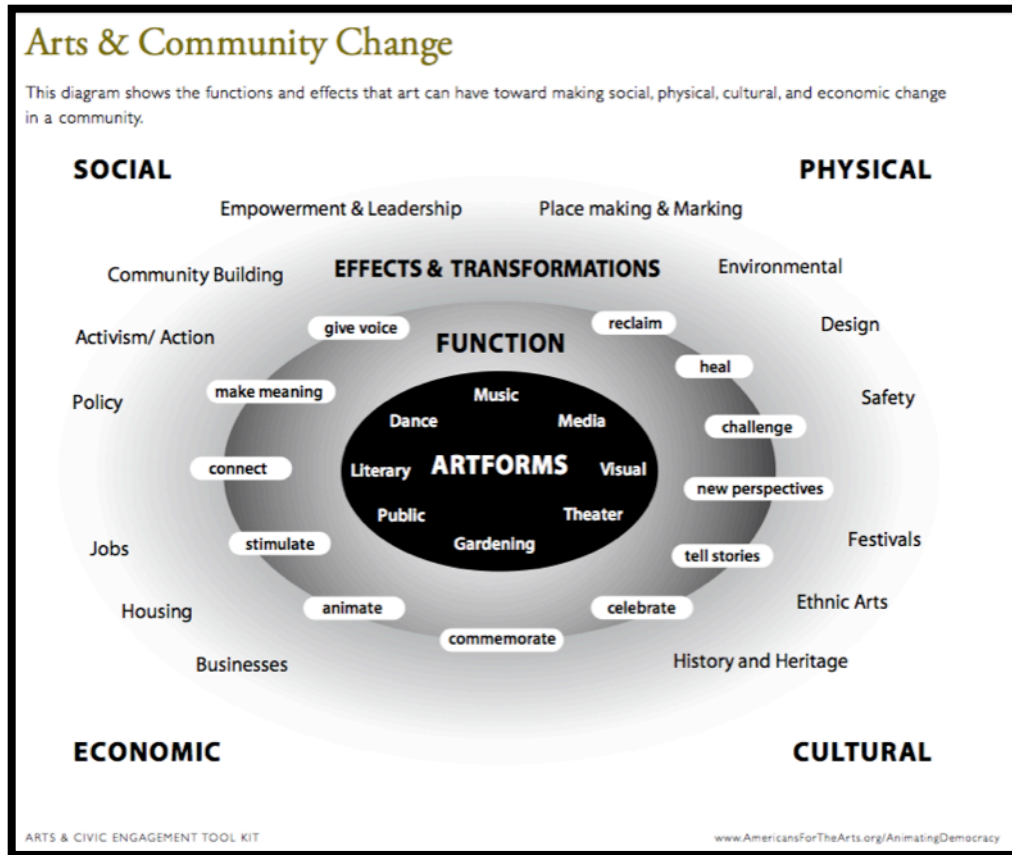
Not all of these initiatives are equally successful and most of them face stiff challenges. Two things are worth noticing about them, however. None of them seems to have any difficulty reconciling the artistic and social change elements of their work and none seems in any doubt that their work is valuable and *effective*. As we will see below, these two are crucial sticking points in creating a closer relationship between the social justice and arts sectors.

## Some other advantages

In addition to the benefits in terms of ends and effects which the above examples highlight, they also point to others which might accrue from a closer working relationship between the two sectors. To confine ourselves to a couple of examples: first, if the peace and social justice sector were to become more adept at using popular and mass media including new technologies, comics, radio, television, web-based platforms and games, it would increase the means to further its own ends as well as its reach.

Second, arts and their communities of practice continue to be remote from the policy-making arena both as benefactors of policy change but also as advocates for change in a variety of policy areas. These include media reform, freedom of expression, non-profit law, job creation, support for local governance, housing, urban planning and education. Arts organizations could profit from foundations' greater familiarity with, and access to, policy-making circles.

A model developed by Animating Democracy in their 'Arts and Civic Engagement Toolkit' (see the diagram below) shows how existing social change models and tools are increasingly being tailored to design arts and culture campaigns and programmes for social change. Although not much has been done to adapt this tool specifically for arts and culture, stakeholders from both sectors are using such material to design, plan and explain more strategic interventions.

Arts & Community Change

This diagram shows the functions and effects that art can have toward making social, physical, cultural, and economic change in a community.

Here, we run up against the perennially vexed question of evaluation, which appears in even sharper form in arts for social change projects than it does in other funder interventions. How can you tell what an art project might achieve and when it has achieved it? This will be discussed in the next section, but, for now it's worth noting that creative solutions for the measurement and evaluation of the impact of the arts and culture may lie with others sectors - human rights, civic engagement, political mobilization etc. Again, as well as a challenge, there is an opportunity here for the peace and social justice and the arts sectors to partner to jointly develop effective evaluation models and practices for work and activity that weaves them together.

# Arts: A Taxonomy

## Arts' Contributions on the Personal and Collective Levels

The arts is often a barometer to the mood of a society. Correspondingly, production of and participation in the arts are essential to social change since the values systems of societies and individuals need to be affected, and for this to happen, an appeal to the imagination and emotions is often as important as an appeal to reason.

What follows is a brief taxonomy of the ways in which the arts affects us on both the personal and collective levels for us to better understand how they might help lead to social transformation.

### Contributions on the Personal Level

Engagement in and exposure to culture has been shown to provide abundant benefits for the personal development of individuals.

One of the most profound identified effects of art on individuals is spiritual or metaphysical – a moment when individuals develop a dramatic sensitivity to and connection with the world and a glimpse of their place and role in it. Such cathartic experiences enable people to think, feel beyond their immediate reality and beyond their usual capacity.

There is also a good deal of research to suggest that art and culture can play significant roles in the development of expression and the construction of identity; they can help individuals overcome and heal trauma and re-establish self-esteem and confidence; participating in or partaking of them can also increase critical thinking, produce a larger awareness of the needs of others and thus an expanded capacity for compassion and empathy. As an index of this, the proportion of socially engaged and politically active cultural figures far exceeds that of any other professional or vocational group in moments of crisis.

### Contributions on the Collective Level:

The transformational elements of the arts, however, also operate on the collective level. For a start, the sense of emancipation that creativity provides is often inspirational and contagious.

It is through culture that groups, communities and nations develop but also question their collective identities and memories. Art and culture serve as coping mechanisms in times of collective trauma and can help initiate collective healing, peace building, memorialization and reconciliation. It is through culture that the moral and ethical values of the collective are presented and passed on. Art and culture can provide communities with the imaginative means to perceive the familiar in a new way and can help promote community revitalization and collaboration. The creative industries help generate economic benefits and development.

For social change to take place, new and diverse narratives must enter a society's public sphere. Creative power is an essential means of allowing this. Collective participation in culture can help develop the moral imagination indispensable to creating change and transformation.

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The following taxonomy of reasons for supporting and practising arts activities and the areas of impact of each of the various elements has been adapted from several sources.[2] The reason for including it here is that it may be useful for those designing programmes on the ground as well as for foundations and development agencies, helping them identify where they fit, how they wish to intervene and what to take into account. Interventions can obviously cover more than one category. The wide spectrum of the taxonomy will offer points of entry and the possibility of shared ground to both the arts and the peace and social justice sectors.

1.    **Sustaining and advancing the artistic canon and excellence (ARTISTIC CANON)**
       Support for artistic traditions, professional art education for the advancement of quality and innovation in cultural production and its dissemination to audiences at art and cultural institutions through art historical discourse and critical theory

2.    **Living artists and cultural production are forms of innovative, vibrant, contemporary societal expressions (VIBRANCY)**
       Arts and culture are important for open and vibrant communities and societies given their relationship to creativity, inspiration, identity formation, the presentation of perspectives and values, and the ability to encourage a diversity of voices and healthy critical discourse.

3.    **Supporting arts and culture infrastructure, policy and production as freedom of expression (FREEDOM of EXPRESSION)**
       Arts and culture mirror a society's freedom of expression and state of its human rights. They help advance freedom of expression and of assembly. Artists, media professionals and cultural activists are part of an expressive and free civil society and it is important to protect them as well as their rights.

4.    **Arts for the transmission of  cultural rights and preservation of cultural memory (CULTURAL DEMOCRACY & RIGHTS)**
       Support the access to, preservation and transmission of the cultural traditions of communities. This includes heritage, sites, languages, and contemporary production and narratives

5.    **Art education and participation in culture as a means for personal and collective development (EDUCATION)**
       Arts and culture contribute to emotional, intellectual, cognitive, creative and educational development. They also contribute to the development of new leaders, the building of self-

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[2] Typology adapted from Kevin McCarthy (2002), 'Trend or Tipping Point: Arts & Social Change Grantmaking, 2010, Animating Democracy, Americans for the Arts' and Joshua Guetzkow 'How the Arts Impact Community. Guetzkow created a chart adapted from Kevin McCarthy's typology with three added layers to consider: direct involvement in arts organizations, participation in arts as an audience member, and the presence of arts organizations in the community

confidence, the advancement of group work and participatory processes. They help form personal and collective identity and values.

6. **Arts that is central to building social capital and cohesion (COMMUNITIES)**
Arts and culture contribute to the health of communities, stimulating engagement and participation and developing social and civic networks. They help improve the safety, stability, independence and quality of life of communities, neighborhoods and cities. They increase tolerance, healing, diversity and citizenship.

7. **Arts that help build bridges, improve dialogue and resolve conflict between communities (DIALOGUE)**
Arts and culture encourage the development of empathy, respect for diversity, peace building, memorialization, reconciliation, tolerance, mutual understanding, diplomacy and dialogue.

8. **Arts that promote awareness of specific causes and promote activism (ACTIVISM)**
Arts and culture raise awareness of causes (the environment, sexuality, refugees, etc), encourage debate and foster understanding of them.

9. **Arts and culture are central to economic development and renewal (ECONOMY)**
The creative industries are essential for the economic well-being of communities. They help create jobs, spur urban renewal and development, improve tourism and corporate investments.

# Obstacles to a Closer Relationship

We have seen that there is growing interest in the arts among social justice funders and organizations and some of the ways in which arts organizations can further social causes. Why is the relationship between the two sectors not a closer, more developed one? This section looks at some of the reasons, many of which have been noted in passing in the preceding sections.

## Reasons for Reluctance

Understanding, explaining and evaluating political and activist art is especially challenging. How does political art work? Who will be affected and what will happen as a result? In the nature of this type of work, form needs to serve function. This is often misunderstood as meaning that the 'message' should take priority over the aesthetic. However, art that manages to combine both has often proven to be the most successful. Moreover, artistic and cultural productions can help to alter views and beliefs even if they have no conscious intention to do so. And if it is difficult to measure the effects of art that consciously sets out to deliver a message, it is almost impossible to assess the effect of art that doesn't.

Another source of confusion has been how we should understand art and what sorts of things we should call art. As artists become community activists, policy researchers, campaign managers, real-estate developers for the poor, civil rights leaders, innovators, scientists and educators, traditional definitions seem to be becoming eroded.

As the following sections of this report show, these are questions which preoccupy social justice funders and are still proving a serious obstacle to a more fruitful relationship with the arts and culture sector.

### Lack of Mutual Understanding

This is an underlying problem which has been noted before. As Katherine Watson of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) points out, organizations from both sides of the social justice and arts and culture divide struggle to move beyond their own islands. Similarly, Nato Thompson of Creative Time believes it is the scepticism of social justice organizations about impact and a 'lack of healthy respect for artists' that keeps the arts sector facing inward and reluctant to engage. Artists and arts organizations have often felt - and resented the fact – that they are simply used as means to a very explicit end (putting across a particular message in a particular programme, for instance) and have not been engaged by social change funders and organizations on a longer-term and more fully collaborative basis. They feel unappreciated and undervalued. (It's only fair to point out, however, that artists themselves are not always the easiest collaborators and sometimes have difficult relationships with those they consider administrators or funders.)

Trust Africa has two ways in which it tries to overcome this sense of 'instrumentalization'. It invests in artists - especially young artists - helping to develop their technical capacity in social media, citizen journalism and other areas, which helps to further disseminate their work. Second, it creates a shared space which allows an organic connection to emerge between NGOs and activist artists. Similarly, ECF

tries to address this problem by affirming that artistic voices provide a different perspective. The goal is not to change this perspective, but to amplify it.

For their part and in order to justify their involvement, social justice funders are more likely to look for a 'product' from a collaboration with the arts and culture sector (this again, touches on the problem of impact and evaluation), rather than seeing the process as important. Contrast this with an explicitly arts-for-social-change funder, the ECF. As Katherine Watson stresses, ECF has learned that the process is just as important, if not more so, than the product, which has led to a new strategy of making multi-year institutional investments to increase operational capacity of grantees.

### Unclear Definitions or Context for this Work

When is art, art for its own sake and when is it a means to social change? In practice, it won't always be easy to tell and it is doubtful if it even matters, though it seems a sticking point for funders. It would be easy to overstate this, however.

On the other hand, the paucity of data is a serious obstacle to understanding the field. Data about philanthropic giving for work where arts and culture and social justice intersect is very hard to isolate from purely arts or social justice and peace giving. Even when analysing the numbers and categories for social justice giving in the US, where data is more plentiful, it is virtually impossible to see what portions of these funds went to support cultural and artistic initiatives. Most of the time, money spent on arts and cultural activities is embedded in programmes, outreach, advocacy and communication budgets.

### Lack of Understanding of the Role of Arts and Culture as Social Change Strategy

One crucial reason for the reluctance of funders to support work at the nexus of arts and social justice is ignorance of how and what it can do. One of the interviewees, Briggs Bomba of TrustAfrica, draws attention to the need for increasing donors' knowledge and awareness by documenting and sharing success stories. Nicholas Kent of Tricycle Theatre makes a similar point. In order to overcome funders' reluctance to support such projects, he proposes the production of a book of essays which should include a section examining funders supporting what he refers to as 'interventionist art', documenting their experiences and knowledge.

Nicholas also suggests that all foundations focusing on social justice issues host an 'artist-in-residence', as a way to strengthen programme development and implementation, thus addressing the strong tendency to compartmentalize programme areas which limits opportunities to connect art to social justice projects.

### Lack of Evidence of the Value and Impact of Arts and Culture in Achieving Social and Civic Goals

This is a familiar bug-bear to most fields of philanthropy but it is particularly acute here. It is also a significant contributor to the funding problem (in fact, many of these obstacles are related). Nato Thompson of Creative Time probably speaks for many funders and practitioners when he says he believes that the sector has not yet devised an effective methodology and approach for understanding impact.

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What means are groups using to try to estimate the effects they have? These are unlikely to be formal in the present state of things, and more likely to be as Briggs Bomba describes TrustAfrica's appraisal of such projects – active reflection on outcomes, impact and learning. Katherine Watson from the European Culture Foundation believes that 'it is not possible to make a clear connection with impact at the outset of a project; and there is no guarantee of impact in the end…yet, what we can say is that we were there; we contributed to change. We can make the link between the work we support and the change that took place.' AnadoluKultur in Turkey examines the immediate reactions of participants at events and exhibitions as well as longer-term indicators such as the increase in dialogue and debate on the issues (for example, through press coverage), and, at a higher level, how democracy is operating, how civil liberties are structured and how open society is to controversial ideas. For the Open Society Foundation's staff, there is an intellectual understanding that artists and cultural leaders are at the forefront of social change processes and movements and that supporting the arts is a nuanced and sometimes subversive way of bringing critical thinking and consciousness to the forefront when more overt processes might prove difficult. Yet, the foundation recently closed its global arts and culture program and the programs that continue to support arts and culture under the umbrella of social justice work, constantly struggle to prove and justify the value of their investments in creative communities and projects.

The will to change this informal approach is apparent among both funders and funded. Oussama Rifahi of the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture notes that the process of capturing stories of grants has been a powerful tool in communicating the links between the arts projects they support and social change - they regularly publish two-page grant stories on their website (and through social media) conveying activities and outcomes. Yet capturing stories is not enough, he warns and sees the need for a more defined and agreed-upon (by the grantmaking community) methodological approach to collecting, measuring, analysing and communicating case studies and visual documentation of artistic productions concerning social justice. He also stresses the importance of doing this analysis after the grant has been made and projects are completed because of the need to 'disassociate the analysis of artistic production from actual expression'. For him, this is a defence against the influencing and instrumentalization of art. It is also likely to be a point of contention with evaluators who traditionally stress the need to build in measurement at the design of a project.

Finally, an important barrier to effective evaluation of arts-based civic engagement and social change is that researchers are looking at the social change effects mostly from an arts perspective (initiated by arts and culture groups and funded by arts and culture based foundations). Research needs to begin to also be grounded in case studies that are led from the social and civic change perspectives about the inclusion of arts and culture by social action groups.

### Organizational Incapacity

Organizationally, too, the bulk of arts and culture organizations are ill equipped to compete for resources from other civil society and social justice sectors and to develop partnerships across fields and movements. Even where such incapacity does not exist, funders are often inclined to believe it does. Most at risk are small and medium sized arts and culture groups especially those that work within

marginalized communities and are tackling sensitive social, political and civic issues. Those working in the global south, who usually lack public funding and philanthropic support, are most vulnerable as they try and convince donors, corporations and development agencies of the value of their work in a vacuum without access to knowledge, skills and human resources that are increasingly available in the North.

It's worth noting that there are preconceptions at work on both sides which exacerbate these difficulties, many of which turn on misunderstanding and lack of communication. There is an abiding belief, which artists and culture producers themselves have sometimes subscribed to that creativity and analysis are unlikely to be found in the same place. Artists excel at the one and are traditionally bad at/unconcerned with the other, so runs the cliché.

### Tendency to Compartmentalize

This was a concern that was raised at the Wasan Island meeting. One participant observed that philanthropy has created categories that are separate from one another, but the most interesting work going on at the grassroots is where no such separation exists. It's a tendency that very much plays into the reasons for funders' wariness about work that crosses what are perceived as boundaries. Funders tend to be more comfortable with projects that fit into clear categories for any number of reasons, conceptual and administrative. We have even seen that arts funders can be anxious to preserve what they see as art and to shut out anything which might call the notion of what that is into question.

## Reasons for Uncertainty

Most of the foregoing help explain funders' unwillingness for funding arts for social change projects. However, even where they are willing to support such projects, there are still impediments to doing so:

### What to Fund and How?

Funders are grappling with a number of questions here. Should they create meeting points for the expanded stakeholders and constituencies this work engenders? Should they act as matchmakers between experienced socially engaged artists, curators, and cultural activists and social justice organizations? Is it better to work with established cultural figures or emerging and grassroots-based art professionals? How do they make sure that they do not force the issues and methodologies on their grantees and avoid bad experiences that may put people off in the process? How do they best support a bottom-up process of participation with this work amongst their grantees? Where limited funds exist, such uncertainty can be crippling.

### Embedding Cultural Strategies into Funders' Theory of Change

Most social justice foundations and organizations are increasingly using and experimenting with arts and culture as communication and advocacy tools. The task ahead is, while continuing this line of approach, to develop and implement cultural strategies that are more integrated, long-lasting and embedded in organizations' theory of change. Most understand that cultural strategies would contribute significantly to changing people's minds and hearts, in turn producing shifts in public opinion, discourse and policy, but most foundations and their grantees are in the dark about how to fully do so and are overwhelmed by the resources and investments it might involve.

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**Distribution**

The medium that appears to be most interesting for foundations and their grantees is film, more specifically the social documentary genre. Despite easier access to the means of production and dissemination, real issues remain on how best to horizontally distribute films and how to build debate, popular action and campaigns around them.[3] Foundations are increasingly looking at how to move from simply supporting production to amplifying a film's impact through web platforms, mass screenings, debate fora and mobilization.

## Funding Arts Initiatives

Flowing from all these things is a lack of funding. Where uncertainty exists, money is reluctant to follow. Again and again, those interviewed for the research spoke of the difficulties of funding arts interventions which can be expensive. The cost (combined with the other factors noted above) makes donors shy away (where mainstream commercial sponsors might in theory be interested, for instance in the Central American soap opera produced by *Puentos de Encuentro*, mentioned above, they are put off by the fact that their main purpose is often political rather than commercial). Funders are less inclined to see work involving a cultural component as critical compared to other pressing needs, and the difficulty of assessing and communicating its impact only adds to the difficulty of funding it, creating something of a vicious circle, says Nicky McIntyre of Mama Cash.

Supporting the convergence of arts and culture and social justice implies a level of experimentation and failure. This is particularly difficult to justify given the economic austerity and heightened financial scrutiny of the philanthropic sector.

Two statistics help to point this up. One comes from a study produced by the Foundation Center in 2013 entitled *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking*. The report states that in 2010, 6 per cent of overall human rights funding was allocated to social and cultural rights. Only 3 per cent of this 6 per cent – in other words, a minuscule amount – went to fund work on the right to participate in the cultural life of a community and engage in community duties essential to free and full development.

The second comes from a study published by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy in 2011 called *Fusing Arts, Culture and Social Change: High Impact Strategies for Philanthropy*. According to this, every year in the US approximately 11 per cent of foundation giving is awarded to non-profit arts and culture institutions. Only 4 per cent of this amount is to organizations focused on advancing social justice goals.

## Possible Solutions

The interviewees also offered possible solutions to what is a pressing problem. Amy Bank of *Meeting Point* in Nicaragua proposed the idea of 'basket' funds which allow donors to pool resources and share

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[3] For interesting strategies and models on the use of film for advocacy and social change refer to "Culture Matters: Understanding Cultural Strategy and Measuring Cultural Impact" p.14

the costs. Another is to use deal-makers with experience of distribution and marketing to bring sponsors and producers together.

One group which seems to have cracked the funding conundrum is Well Told Story in Kenya, which has a broad base of investors - mainly from the West and North but is also now working with domestic partners. Google, Microsoft, Vodafone, Gates and Hewlett Foundations, USAID, DFID and the World Bank. These are not, stresses Rob Burnet, 'funders of the arts' per se, in fact the company has a different income model in that it sees partners as clients and investors. The key to engaging them, he believes, is the development of clear goals and measures of progress which all parties involved agree on, a remark which brings out clearly the relationship between funding and impact, which, as we will see shortly, is another critical sticking point.

# Recommendations for Finding Common Ground & Furthering the Work

We have looked at growing area of interest between the arts and culture and social justice sectors and at the difficulties preventing closer collaboration between them. This section will offer some suggestions for ways in which the two might draw closer together. It's worth stressing again here that when we talk of foundations, we are principally talking about those with an interest in funding social change. For one thing, that is the constituency that this report primarily addresses and where many of the opportunities for growth and synergy are to be found. For another, as we have noted, the majority of arts funders are unlikely to be drawn into funding initiatives where they see the social change component as stronger than the aesthetic.

For this section, we draw on all the three principal sources of information used in this research, but especially on the observations of the group at the Wasan Island meeting.

### Be prepared to fund 'hybrid' ventures.

This, arguably one of the most crucial recommendations, comes from the Wasan Island meeting. Funders should be prepared to fund hybrid work (that is, work that embraces both artistic production and social change) and recognize that *the process of change can be furthered by cultural activity even when there is no explicit intention for it to do so*. This recognises the false dichotomy that was highlighted in the introduction to this report, that in practice any distinction between art for its own sake and art for social change is arbitrary and that any artistic or cultural production might provoke a change of perspective of belief in the participant. (See also, the taxonomy.)

### Invest for the long term.

Again from the Wasan Island group comes the view that funders should be prepared to adopt long time horizons. It is almost a cliché that since it involves changing attitudes, social change takes time. This touches again on the point raised earlier that one of the problems of the present view of funders towards funding arts projects is that they tend to see them in terms of product, rather than process. The idea of a product implies a specific, identifiable moment or moments in which the product is produced, which militates against extended collaboration. Process suggests a prolonged period of working together.

### Fund learning and capacity.

Many foundations interested in this convergence are realizing that they need to fund considerable research and capacity building not only to support the case for this line of work but also to help develop the mechanisms and support structures that are indispensable to its development. Foundations, for instance, can support the creation of a database or a directory of artists, curators, programmers, organizations and consultants who specialize in socially engaged, political and civic-minded work and programmes.

**Share good practice through case studies and peer learning.**

Case studies and peers exchanges are needed not only to document successful projects where arts and culture and social justice meet, but also on larger strategic policy designs to support this work. This came up not only at the Wasan Island meeting, but in the interviews. One of the groups at the Wasan Island meeting noted that documentation of experience should have a long time horizon (see also the point made above in this connection) - the figure of 10 years was suggested. Briggs Bomba of TrustAfrica and Nicholas Kent of Tricycle Theatre (see above or Annex 1) were both clear on the need to publicize successful examples of social change.

**Include global perspectives and representation.**

We have already noted the partial nature of this work and that the global south is very scantily represented. More examples of social justice and arts and culture partnerships from the global south are needed. There is belief that knowledge from the south, where there tends to be more fluidity between sectors but also much less infrastructure, capacity and resources, would generate different programmatic designs and benchmarks.

**Increase representation of artists in foundations and organizations.**

Peace and social justice foundations and organizations can consider including appropriate artists and culture professionals on their boards, staff, selection and advisory committees (see also Nicholas Kent's suggestion of hosting an artist-in-residence). They might also explore the inclusion of appropriate artists and culture professionals in planning exercises at the institutional and programme design levels. If artists and culture professionals are included in foundations' work with constituencies and communities, it may help expand engagement and improve service delivery.

It might be worth exploring how artists and cultural producers might not only help dramatize the work of social justice funders, but also how they can be partners in generating earned income for organizations and foundations through annual fundraisers, auctions and product development.

**Experiment with programme parameters and funding guidelines.**

Peace and Social Justice foundations and organizations can experiment with slowly opening up their programs and funding guidelines to see what kind of requests, conversations and proposals they might come across. This could help build their own knowledge and familiarity with more arts and culture based projects and constituents while providing arts and culture groups an opportunity to hone in their skills in finding the parallels and mutual shared space with the social justice sector.

Most freedom of expression and safety focused foundations and organizations are not open to extending their support and services to artists and cultural leaders. Yet, many artists and cultural leaders around the world continue to experience censorship, harassment, imprisonment and sometimes death. "With boldest expression there are greatest risks and we must be prepared to...intervene...to safeguard the security and wellbeing of cultural creators" says Antony Richter from the Open Society Foundations.

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**Incorporate cultural strategies for the longer term.**

Social justice funders and organizations may wish to design long-term cultural strategies as part of their planning exercises. These strategies would help move engagement with arts and culture from a piecemeal project basis to a strategic deployment of arts and culture to help produce change within specific constituencies and among decision-makers.

**Form alliances.**

Peace and social justice foundations and organizations can develop partnerships with cultural and educational institutions to conduct joint programmes but also to help them learn, locate, select, curate and activate artworks and cultural projects to achieve desired social change. This would also have the effect of mediating the 'risk' of the unknown, which we have seen can be an inhibiting factor for social justice funders venturing into the world of culture and the arts.

**Use convening power.**

In addition to funding, foundations, by the use of their convening power, can help develop the relationship between the two sectors and further the work of both in several ways:

They can help support the broader dissemination and activation of socially engaged and political artistic and cultural projects through outreach, education, debates etc.

They can support and further a common ground between the peace and social justice and arts sectors by promoting joint learning and exchange initiatives.

They can bring together stakeholders and key players, including government, philanthropic and the corporate sectors to see how to better support socially engaged and political arts and how the peace and social justice and the cultural fields might be expanded, modified and enhanced to support common agendas and ventures.

They can convene and harness commercial creative media producers and corporate investors in support of collaborations and partnerships to support social movements and issues.

**Support new leaders.**

Again, this was a point that surfaced strongly at the Wasan Island gathering. Philanthropy can help support the emergence of a new leaders in the non-profit sector who have the know-how to act as brokers between peace and social justice movements, the arts sector and commercial mass media structures.

**Offset risk by the use of pooled funds.**

Taking up the point made by Amy Bank of Meeting Point in Nicaragua, groups of foundations may consider the creation of basket funds to explore and share risk as they gradually familiarize themselves with the common ground emerging between peace and social justice and arts and culture.

**Invest in improving measurement and evaluation.**

As foundations have the strongest vested interest in creating reliable means of evaluation of arts for social change projects, they should play the lead role in helping to develop an agreed set of standards. In addition to elaborating a methodology, this will involve the use of anecdotal evidence and finding ways to show how story-telling, film, multimedia presentations and testimony can be evaluated.

# Afterword

If the ultimate goal of the peace and social justice sector is to make long lasting change in the attitudes and values of a society, it needs to recognize that cultural shifts are a necessary precondition for such changes. This helps to explain why conservative regimes routinely try to reduce funding and curtail the development of the arts, culture and humanities. For people globally to make sense of the challenges they face and to organize themselves to find creative solutions, the peace and social justice sector needs to build alliances and sustained partnerships with other stakeholders in order to sustain and solidify creative cultures of resistance, investigation and imagination. One of the things this report has tried to show is that, despite the difficulties entailed on a closer relationship between the two sectors, such a relationship can be developed. "We need to find ways to expand the learning about the social and political value and dimension of artistic creation today. It is clear that investment is needed in bridging this gap and cultivating a better understanding of how the arts contribute to more open and just societies" Anthony Richter reiterated.

What is needed for the social justice and peace sector and the arts and culture sector to work together is, first, a clearer recognition by each sector of what the other does and can do – the arts are not just interesting things to patronize, they can change minds and hearts - and, second, the creation of a space in which the two sides can work together more fully and more harmoniously.

# Appendix I: Voices from the Field: Interviews with Practitioners

**Amy Bank, Puntos de Encuentro (Meeting Point), Nicaragua**

*Fiction, Drama and Media for Social Change: The 'Mística' of Puntos de Encuentro*

Puntos de Encuentro (Meeting Point) is based in Nicaragua -- the second poorest country in the hemisphere with a history of dictatorship, revolution and civil war that has led to a politically and socially polarized society. Co-founder Amy Bank aims to boost societal dialogue on critical and often contoversial social issues such as domestic violence, gay rights and abortion by blending three ingredients to create the alchemy of social change: Content, Social Movement Networks and Mass Media. In addition to the myriad of dialogue programs and publications, they are the writers and producers of two "social soap" TV series, *Sexto Sentido* (*Sixth Sense) and Contracoriente (Turning the Tide)* which have been bringing "taboo" social issues right into the living room since 2001, reaching across the Central American region and beyond. The conversation is continued by working closely with social movements and community organizations who are addressing the same issues raised in the soap operas.

*"Arts and culture have a way of making people think and analyze things in a way that an informational written text alone often does not: It's a combination of the emotional and the rational."*

*Amy Bank, Meeting Point*

For Amy, this epitomizes the connection between arts, culture and social justice. These elements create a very potent formula in touching peoples' souls, connecting personal lives to societal issues and societal issues to personal lives. This is why, says Amy, they produce 'drama, not debate shows'. Stories are powerful and effective in fostering reflexion about controversial and polarizing topics, and help build a bridge which people can then, in a self determined manner, decide to cross or not: 'It is a cycle of deconstructing and reconstructing thoughts and ideas about social issues... we don't try to change minds... we try to reach people with the ability to question their own way of thinking and consider alternatives,' says Amy.

The commercial reach of mass media is a very powerful tool, and brings legitimacy to this work. In order to ensure the continuation of the conversation, it is critical to establish and sustain strong links to social movements and community organizations, to move the process from thought to action (changes in norms and behaviour). Whether through quantitative or qualitative analysis, their assessments have shown that this approach results in great reach and a low financial cost per impact/person. Even so, while Puntos de Encuentro conveys impressive proof of concept and impact, the dollar figure of these

massive productions (which includes the extensive training that the actors, writers and production staff receive)  put donors off. Because Puntos de Encuentro's orientation is social and not commercial, they face great challenges in securing a sustainable financing mechanisms, especially in a region where international aid is decreasing.

How to address this gap? According to Amy, 'basket-funds' or mechanisms that allow donors to give together in a pool through an accountable and transparent mechanism may be useful for such major endeavours. Another is the need is for brokers, deal-makers and experts with marketing and media distribution skills who could harness the potential of large commercial producers and the sponsorship of corporate donors and bring them together with social movements to bring media projects to reach the masses.  By upscaling the model of what *Sexto Sentido* and *Contracorriente* have successfully achieved over the past dozen years at a national and regional level, fiction and drama can fuel social change in and across countries and regions all over the globe, connecting people to the 'mística' of social justice and equality for all.

*'Mística' - a word in Spanish that means the feeling of being connected, through idealistic aspirations, to something bigger than oneself.*

## Briggs Bomba, Trust Africa
### 'Peace in the Hood': Creating Social Solidarity Between Artists and Activists in Africa

Trust Africa believes that art for change brings out the essence of social and economic justice work, taking the struggle to a deeper level by allowing for broader civic engagement around key issues of democratic development. The Trust has funded projects which include theatre production around debt cancellation, a film about elections, and youth poetry, Hip-hop and graffiti art to promote 'Peace in the Hood' in townships. While more traditional modes of civil society programs- research, reports, conferences- tend to 'preach to the converted', Trust Africa observes that projects involving an expression of artistic nature helps to spark conversations with a larger and more diverse audience.

Briggs has blended in his own personal passion for the arts with the Trusts' programs to promote social and economic justice. Trust Arfica actively 'commissions' theatre, film, music and other artistic products to attract, inspire and mobilize people around issues of social justice. Yet they are also very sensitive and aware of the importance of 'art for arts sake'. In a political environment which is increasingly limiting freedom of expression, artists are feeling suspicious and distrustful of utilitarian approaches to artistic projects. Briggs and his team makes a targeted effort to convey that art is much more than a mere instrument for conveying social issues in two ways: First, they invest in artists - especially youth- helping to develop their technical capacity in social media, citizen journalism and other areas which helps to further disseminate their work. Second, they create a shared space which allows for an organic connection to emerge between NGOs and activist artists. Briggs underlines that this relationship must not be forced; when understanding and trust emerges, they naturally begin to explore cooperation on projects of mutual interest.

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Bringing an arts and culture perspective to social justice work and facilitating new connections between artists and activists has brought many positive outcomes, but certainly not without challenges, especially when it comes to funding. TrustAfrica donors have a tendency to lean more toward programs which engage with social issues- for example, they may be more likely to approve the publication of a report rather than the production of a music CD. Also, the groups which focus on artistic programs also tend to struggle with raising funds themselves for the same reason. Briggs draws attention to the need for increasing donors' knowledge and awareness by documenting and sharing success stories, thus communicating through specific examples how art and the artistic community helps promote awareness and citizen engagement for social justice.

The Trust has not yet undertaken a formal evaluation of programs involving and supporting art and artists, however, they actively reflect on outcomes, impact and their learning as it emerges throughout various grants and projects. With each new program they support and each new relationship they help create, Briggs and his team are not only helping to bring peace to neighborhoods and townships, but also among artists and activists in Africa.

## Katherine Watson, European Culture Foundation
### *Building Brides: Culture for Open, Democratic and Inclusive Societies*

The European Cultural Fund (ECF) was set up in the early 1950s with a view that artists as activists play a critical role in the social and political development of Europe. As such, 'art for social change' has always been the core ethos of ECF's strategy.  Now looking to the expanding European neighborhood, ECF is connecting and supporting the work of individuals and networks across sectors through programs such as Tandem in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Mediterranean regions. These 'hubs' of cultural and social /democratic development organizations work on issues such as free culture and open design, media activism, ecology and urban transformation, and community and civic action. The Zagreb network, for example, has become a successful proof of concept of how a network of youth and cultural organizations advocated for public space. This way of working has spread across the country and region, and shows how different community organizations and perspectives, including culture, can come together around a common agenda to express their voice about local issues - some of which can also be an expression of global issues at a local level.

> *"Culture engages citizens with their democracy...and is a critical and equal player among the pillars of sustainable development..."*
>
> *Katherine Watson. European Culture Foundation*

ECF believes that social change is achieved when culture is treated as an equal player among the pillars of sustainable development. To facilitate this, ECF focuses on four specific actions: Identifying and supporting organizations and individuals, supporting their work and connecting them to one another, nurturing the work that emerges among them and amplifying the outcomes to make the connection between practice and policy.  Over the years, ECF learned that the process is just as important, if not more so, than the product, which has led to a new strategy of making multi-year institutional

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investments to increase operational capacity of grantees. Imbedding an impact assessment methodology in this strategy is part of the task, yet they are also aware of its limitations. According to Katherine, 'it is not possible to make a clear connection with impact at the outset of a project; and there is no guarantee of impact in the end…yet, what we can say is that we were there; we contributed to change. We can make the link between the work we support and the change that took place.'

Katherine proposes that the philanthropic lens for culture work is important, especially from the point of advocacy. EFC seeks partners to help scale the work they support yet building a bridge of between organizations from the two worlds of 'culture' and 'social justice'  is not an easy feat. Both struggle to move beyond their own islands. Culture organizations fear of instrumentalization - which ECF tries to address by affirming that artistic voices provide a different perspective and the goal is not to change this perspective, but to amplify it and give it more voice and visibility. Social justice foundations are concerned about the inability to make connections and display impact.  With more examples of success, making the case will be easier, thus helping ECF build a bridge between these two worlds.

## Nato Thompson, Creative Time
### *Art: A Critical Piece of the Larger Puzzle of Social Justice*

Creative Time work to enliven public spaces and support artists which they believe have a lot to contribute to issues of our time. Nato sees the connection between arts and culture as a 'hybrid method that includes issues of political concern with methods of artistic practice that might make a difference' and claims that 'investing in the way people feel is a very powerful political device'.

Nato shares three examples of artistic projects for social change, situated in communities and neighborhoods and creating a civic space of reflection, understanding and sharing. They include: A theatre production Post-Katerina in one of the most hard hit and poorest neighborhoods in New Orleans; an art installation in several US cities of a car exploded by a bomb in Iraq which included conversations with Iraqi and American soldiers; and a project to ignite discussions around the future of feminism through neighbourhood forums in New York. All three combined techniques of community mobilizing and artistic expression as an 'investment' of which the return was a sharing of feelings, experiences and ideas about issues that affect individuals.

*"Art exposes a space of possibility which is often covered up… and that space can sometimes be seen as elitist and ineffective. Yet the confusion, questioning and open ended-ness is a space where the rule of power is opened up and connects with people."*

*Nato Thompson, Creative Time*

As with many organizations working in this field, the focus on measuring 'return on investment' and the cost and difficulties in doing so can be a deterrent to potential funders. Nato believes that the sector has not quite yet figured out an effective methodology and approach for understanding impact. It is the skepticism of social justice organizations about impact and what he sees as a lack of healthy respect for artists that keeps

the arts and culture 'sector' facing inward and reluctant to engage, thus creating barriers for what could be fruitful arenas for cooperation. 'We are only as strong as the people who are brave enough to put the money where they think the best ideas are,' says Nato. Yet lingering doubts about effectiveness, audience, messaging are all indicative of a 'clash of cultures' between these two worlds.

What we must do, says Nato, is more effectively convey that 'arts are an open ended methodology of inquiry, which are part of the fabric of the way one works- it is not something in and of itself.' He believes there is also a lack of exposure to the kinds of projects such as those he describes, and a great diversity of interpretation when it comes to what art is and is not. He suggests addressing this by preparing and publishing case studies. He also warns against the dangers of spending more on impact assessment than on the project itself, suggesting that there are very clear instances- for example the closing of a maximum security prison which was an effort led by artists- in which this work creates clear and positive results. 'Projects lay the groundwork for changing minds which are then further built on by social movements,' says Nato, suggesting that this work is examined in a broader perspective as a process or journey which begins with cultural production and ends with action/intended change. Artistic expression is ultimately just one piece - albeit a critical one- of the larger puzzle of social justice.

## Nicholas Kent, Theatre Director, Artistic Director, Tricycle Theatre (1984-2012)
### *The Power of Socially Engaged Theatre*

Guantanamo Camp. Bloody Sunday. International Criminal Court. Not necessarily subjects one would expect to be tackled on the artistic stage. Nicholas refers to The Tricycle Theatre, what has turned out to be his life's work, as focusing on 'politically engaged art' and 'socially engaged theatre'. The theatre began in a racially, religiously and ethnically diverse London community, and quickly spread to the rest of the UK and other countries via TV, radio and other partnerships, reaching millions. Inside a dark theatre, stage lights shine to illuminate critical issues including Islamophobia, xenophobia, discrimination and other abuses of human rights. This is the space in which the connection between artistic expression and social justice is conveyed. According to Nicholas, it also serves to bridge the gap between journalism and art.

*"By being proactive, by watching and taking part as audience members, people's resolve to do something about a particular issue is strengthened."*

*Nicholas Kent, Theatre Director, Artistic Director, Tricycle Theatre*

Critics can dismiss political theatre as 'not quite art'- but that is of little concern to its advocates because their ultimate goal is to alter people's perception of how we live now. 'All art is good; it brings together a group of people in a shared experience, and makes us realize we are all part of the human race, consuming something together; it makes people think and reflect,' says Nicholas. For him, there is a far greater challenge: Funding. This work is expensive, and requires extensive research and large teams. As government funding for the arts in UK shrinks under austerity plans, they are turning to corporate and private donors. But strict codes and

parameters leave little if any room to support this form of work, and the strong political messages they contain is often a deterrent.

Nicholas proposes several ways in which the root causes of this challenge can be addressed: One is to publish reports which unearth the field and activities of political and human rights art, perhaps by preparing a collection of essays written by prominent people in the field. The report should include a section examining funders supporting what he refers to as 'interventionist art', documenting their experiences and knowledge.  Another suggestion is to increase donor's understanding and recognition that this form of art is an important tool and area of work worthy of support- just as medical, food and water aid. Bringing together donors, government, artists and people working in arts institutions to discuss how human rights can be bolstered by art- as well as how the arts agenda can be adapted to support this- would make a tremendous contribution. Finally, Nicholas suggests that all foundations focusing on social justice issues host an 'artist-in-residence', as a way to strengthen programme development and implementation, thus addressing the strong tendency to compartmentalize programme areas which limits opportunities to connect art to social justice projects. When these actions are taken, the power of socially engaged theatre and other forms of artistic expression can continue to open the hearts and minds of audiences in communities and beyond.

## Nikki McIntyre, Mama Cash
### Creative Activism: Changing Hearts and Minds

Mama Cash has a long history of funding arts and culture through prizes, competitions, visual art, photography, performance, painting, sculpture and drawing. Back in the 1980s, Mama Cash funded arts and culture more directly, supporting several leading women artists struggling to gain visibility in mainstream cultural venues. In 1998, they hosted an international women's Film and Video festival as part of their 15th year anniversary and since then, funded the creation of numerous documentary films.

*"(Creative activism).... taps into a different part of people's souls which is often a forgotten piece in social justice work…"*

*Nikki McIntyre, Mama Cash*

According to Nicky, artistic expression provides a different entry point that can be useful in telling a story in a way that a news article or blog may not: 'As human beings that are motivated by our brain and our heart, artistic expression helps people access real feelings of injustice that can motivate them to get involved around a shared agenda.' Mama Cash and the organizations they support are increasingly using digital media and visual language- whether it be for an annual report, or, a group in Brazil which uses graffiti art to display inspiring images of women as activists. This has led to a more recent strategy to direct funding toward creative cultural dimensions for activism rather than the direct support of artists per se.

Throughout this process, two main challenges have emerged: One is the lack of expertise (in Mama Cash and grantee organizations) necessary to take 'one off' creative efforts and distribute them widely

enough and/or increase their impact by including other programmatic activities such as public dialogues and advocacy. The second major challenge has been harnessing the resources and tools needed to effectively measure the social impact of programmes which incorporate art and culture. Given the short length of projects, smaller funds and limited resources, extensive impact assessment efforts are difficult to realize. Funders are less inclined to see this work as critical compared to other pressing needs, and the difficulty of assessing and communicating the impact of this work only adds to the difficulty of funding it- creating somewhat of a vicious cycle.

Given the right resources and tools, Nicky believes that organizations which raise awareness around abortion rights, domestic violence and a host of other issues can convey powerful messages through art to fuel further actions for social justice. By doing this, art and culture can help not just tell a story but can help change hearts and minds of people who collectively mobilize around issues of justice.

## Oussama Rifahi, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
*Quantum Steps: The Potential of Art to Create Action for Social Justice*

The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture has funded approximately 500 projects over the past 6 years. Recently, they conducted a study to take stock of grants, categorized under three categories: a) Arts for Arts Sake b) Art for Purpose (Social and Political Issues/Justice) and c) Art for Archiving (to conserve and maintain memories for future generations). It is within the second category of grants that the Fund observes a direct link between artistic expression and social change. For example, a group in Lebanon teaching women prisoners photography, and an artist in Egypt organizing street theatre on socially sensitive issues such as interfaith dialogue.

The process of capturing stories of grants has been a powerful tool in communicating these linkages and their impact. They regularly publish two-page grant stories on their website (and through social media) conveying activities and outcomes. Yet capturing stories is not enough, warns Oussama. He suggests more defined and agreed-upon (by the grantmaking community) methodological approaches to collecting, measuring, analysing and communicating case studies and visual documentation of artistic productions concerning social justice. Osama also emphasizes the importance of doing this analysis downstream, after the grant has been made and projects are completed. One must be careful, he warns, to 'disassociate the analysis of artistic production from actual expression' so as not to influence and instrumentalize art which is born in a moment of reflective expression. Grantmakers should take specific steps to understand the impact of this work on the audience, community at large and ensure broader dissemination both nationally and

*"We should not try to connect the fleeting nature of artistic production directly to very specific social impact... (however, it is important to convey that)... the creative process, when disseminated effectively, can lead to actions to change a situation (of social injustice)."*

*Oussama Rifahi, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture*

July, 2014

internationally. These actions help convey the importance of funding such programs and allows for reflections, in organizations and across the sector, about lessons learned.

Many grantmaking organizations are missing the resources and tools, and often, claims Oussama, struggle to spend their most limited resource- time- on impact assessment and determining the channels for broader dissemination. Yet given the discouraging factors for greater investment in this field, which Oussama sees mainly as the sensitivity of political issues and the increasingly negative image of philanthropy as a tool to polish images thus perpetuating the status quo of injustice, proof and stories of impact are even more necessary. Producing highly analytical case studies and visual documentation about the impact of these grants, will help organizations learn more about what works, and demonstrate to funders and potential donors that investing in arts and culture for social justice does create impact whether through a gradual process or sometimes, even in quantum steps.

## Osman Kavala, Anadolu Kultur
### Art and Activism in Anatolia and Beyond

The Kurdish and Armenian issues are among Turkey's most contentious, controversial social justice subjects affecting Turkish democracy and politics. Until very recently, they were considered to be very taboo, and supporting artistic expression about these issues brought with it a serious risk of assault and criticism. Yet over the last 5 years, things have changed significantly, and the work supported through AnadoluKultur seems to have made a significant contribution. 'From the very beginning, social justice was a priority for us. We are not working solely in the area of artistic production; our objective is to support artists who are concerned about social justice, and through this, to promote dialogue and understanding between different parts of society which sometimes is in conflicting terms, both within Turkey and across borders,' says Osman Kavala, Founder and main funder of AnadoluKultur based in Istanbul, with a center in Diyarbakir (Southeastern Turkey) which has, over the past 10 years, significantly contribute to the landscape of the art and activism field. Increased vibrancy among local young artists and art and culture NGOs are two important changes they have witnessed as a result of their work.

*"Artists are the bridge between the field of arts, politics and social struggle."*

*Osman Kavala, Anadolu Kultur*

Dissemination and the circulation of artwork to a broader audience remains a challenge. To address this, Anadolu Kultur aims to create more collaborative partnerships- for example with mainstream arts organizations like the Istanbul Arts and Culture Foundation. Osman believes that part of the challenge is a general lack of engagement and action of citizens on these issues. During the recent Gezi Park protests in Istanbul (during which Anadolu Kultur immediately set up a video archiving project) the level of civic interest and artistic expression increased significantly, using humor and wit and, of course, social media as the main channel for distribution. He and his team have taken note of these experiences for their own work going forward. But lack of reach will not limit the type of work they support: 'Not all

forms of art reach the masses; but they are still important for creating an open environment for debate to simulate thinking essential for the gradual transformation of society.'

Assessing impact is a natural part of what Osman describes as a 'self-critical' way of working. AnadoluKultur examines the immediate reactions of participants at exhibitions as well as more long term indicators of impact such as the increase in dialogue and debate on the issues and at a more meta level (for example, through press coverage), how democracy is operating, how civil liberties are structured and how open society is to controversial ideas. On one hand, Osman observes an improvement with regards to the Kurdish and Armenian 'situation' in terms of an increased openness of dialogue; on the other, he observes an increasing conservatism in certain segments of society, and strong government support for this position, particularly with regards to the recent protests. This creates a sense of threat among the Anadlou Kultur community about the potential of continued open, critical artistic political expression in Turkey. Looking ahead, Osman hopes to create more linkages with organizations in the Middle East, Balkans and Greece. According to him, activist artists should also be aware and engaged in the problems and priorities of societies beyond the borders of Anatolia.

## Rob Burnet, Well Told Story / Shujaaz
### Making Arts Real to the Masses

In Kenya, there is an implicit and innate sense among artists that art has a social justice narrative. Yet to the general public, the arts is still a sideshow that does not contribute anything socially or economically - and the arts community has difficulty articulating the reasoning behind how and why society benefits from having an active art sector.

So how can the ingredients of media, art, technology and civil society combine to convey the value of art with a social justice narrative, made relevant through popular culture to reach a large audience? Rob and the Well Told Story organization seem to be on the right track to finding out: They are engaging youth to generate innovative content (stories) sprinkled with wisdom and practical ideas that nudge youth to take action and improve their own lives, and promoting distribution through as many channels as possible. The stories address core issues such as what Rob refers to as 'citizen agency' (how to vote, being informed on issues, knowledge about rights, opportunities, access to services). 'We try to convey agency messages so that youth say "I am an active citizen, I can participate, it's not top-down, I have a voice, I and my friends can participate in decisions and in change",' says Rob. They also address practical subjects such as how to harvest crops for greater return and small business management. The content is distributed broadly through various popular media platforms- traditional and digital- such as comic books (44 million in 4 years), radio shows (daily on 26 FM stations, a total of 11,000 programmes to date), national TV, YouTube, Facebook and text messages. To date, nearly 7 million people have followed their stories.

*'Our work is about activating a set of values and excitements using arts, culture and story, and how we contribute to a new kind of self image and self narrative for young Kenyans. We are a deliberate active instrument for change, which sits under the social justice framework.'*

*Rob Burnet, Well Told Story/ Shujaaz*

Well Told Story enjoys funding and support from a broad base of partners - mainly from the West and North, and now working to work also with domestic organisations. Partners include Google, Microsoft, Vodafone, Gates and Hewlett Foundations, USAID, DFID and the World Bank which are not, underlines Rob, 'funders of the arts' per se. His key to engaging them is developing clear goals and measures of progress agreeable to all parties involved, both commercial and development in focus. Encouraging partners not to give up a good idea for the sake of a bottom line, he emphasizes the value of collecting 'Clusters of Evidence' to present proof of what has happened as a result of their work.

According to Rob, while this stunning success has been exciting and full of learning, they are still in the process of self-discovery to determine new instruments to create a real connection between the creative work of artists and local art consumers. 'We are still looking for the right medium to have a powerful and meaningful conversation with ordinary citizens and ordinary artists,' says Rob.  An important step in this journey is to continue the democratization of the arts, to take it out of the elite white-dominated art spaces and into the local context. But even then, for Rob, the challenge is to find the right medium to determine 'where to apply the flame to set the fire to light' to 'make arts real to the masses'.

## Anthony Richter, Open Society Foundations
### *Supporting Arts for Social Change*

'Over the years, we have supported the development of the arts and culture sector in the Middle East North Africa region through our work on human rights and the development of free and open societies. We understand that there is a diverse range of artistic expression, starting from what we might call free art expression or art for art's sake and ending with instrumentalized or, dare I say, propaganda art.' OSF tries to not support arts and culture that are not at least rooted in the values that it espouses as a social justice foundation and that somehow advance its interests in human rights and the development of vibrant civil societies. Anthony Richter, hopes that they do that without prescribing or stifling the creative process and outcome, since that would defeat their goals of supporting free and open expression in societies that are experiencing change and where experimentation and creativity are important on their own as an accompaniment to civic and political developments.

> *'With the boldest expression there are the greatest risks and we must be prepared to anticipate this and intervene when needed and possible to safeguard the security and safety of cultural creators.'*
>
> *Anthony Richter, open Society Foundations*

OSF's MENA program tries to emphasize the connections between arts and culture and the social transformations happening in moments of social change. 'We see the arts as a vehicle for social protest but also that artists and cultural leaders are at the forefront of social change process and movements. Investment in this community means that we are also supporting robust and resonant voices of social transformation' says Anthony. Also, during times of confusing and chaotic social change, they understand that supporting the arts is a more nuanced, and sometimes more subversive, way of

bringing questions, critical thinking and consciousness to the forefront when other more overt processes might be more complicated and slow.

OSF staff are cognizant that an important layer of their work in supporting artists and cultural leaders is to understand the vulnerability and risks that sometimes these people are putting themselves in and taking and that there are times where they might pay severe costs for their expressions. For Anthony, 'with the boldest expression there are the greatest risks and we must be prepared to anticipate this and intervene when needed and possible to safeguard the security and wellbeing of cultural creators'.

After supporting flagship organizations for several years in the MENA region, OSF feels more at ease in taking more risks in reaching out to new organizations and new players and ready to take more risks as well in terms of political controversy; but it took them time and investment in relations before they could feel more comfortable with this. They also understand that when one supports work and voices that are proposing new and alternative ideas, perspectives and emotions or that can be controversial, there is a potential risk in upsetting those who are in power or those who may espouse more traditional values and beliefs... even if it was never intended to do so; foundations must at least be prepared to address such situations.

The staff at OSF  have noticed that it is difficult when working in the arts and culture sector to find agreement about what works and why. This is something that they continuously struggle with because they see that the field and the community of practice have divergent notions and understanding of what the arts are and what their function is in a society. The Foundation is trying to focus support on the capacity of its arts and culture grantees so that they can be better able to monitor and document their successes but also, so that they can be models in terms of management and governance. 'So, part of our assessment' Anthony notes of their success in this field, 'is how well these organizations are developing and looking at their institutional effectiveness over several years.'

For Anthony, the opportunities for social justice funders to support the creative sector remains unexplored. He says, 'there is a gap of imagination and understanding not only of most western, but also of indigenous social justice funders of what art today is and its potential for expression, discourse and representation of peoples and communities on the global stage. Most understanding of arts remains traditional or is based on the decorative or the aesthetic which can explain funders' reluctance to support it. This is a reality that we somehow need to address; we need to find ways to expand the learning about the social and political value and dimension of artistic creation today. It is clear that investment is needed in bridging this gap and cultivating a better understanding of how the arts contribute to more open and just societies.'

# Appendix 2: List of Participants

## List of Participants at the Convening, 24-26 august 2013, Wasan Island, Ontario

- Ana Criquillion, Founder, FondoCentroamericano de Mujeres
- Ana Tome, Spanish Cultural Centre, Mexico City
- Barry Knight, CENTRIS
- Caron Atlas, The Arts & Democracy Project
- Chandrika Sahai, Working Group on PSJP
- Christopher Harris, Independent Philanthropy Consultant, Formerly of Ford Foundation
- David Kaiza, DoenStifting
- J Bob Alotta, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
- Jakob I Myschetzky, Danish Centre for Culture and Development
- Mary Ann DeVlieg, Arts Rights Justice and Creative Resistance Fund
- Michelle Coffey, Lambent Foundation
- Mike van Graan, Arterial Network, South Africa
- Moukhtar Kocache, Independent Consultant (Facilitator)

- Oussama Rifahi, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
- Peter Jenkinson, Culture and Conflict
- Siddharth Joag, freeDimensional
- Stephen Pittam, Formerly Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Todd Lester, freeDimensional, Creative Resistance Fund, World Policy Institute's Arts-Policy Nexus

## List of Interviewees

- Amy Bank, Meeting Point
- Briggs Bomba, Trust Africa
- Katherine Watson, European Culture Foundation
- Nato Thompson, Creative Time
- Nicholas Kent, Theatre Director, Artistic Director, Tricycle Theatre (1984-2012)
- Nikki McIntyre, Mama Cash
- Oussama Rifahi, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
- Osman Kavala, AnadoluKultur
- Rob Burnet, Well Told Story / Shujaaz
- Anthony Richter, Open Society Foundation

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