Street for Art Festival Praga Caput Cultura

September 18-19, 2014

<u>CONFERENCE INSIGHTS</u>

DAY 1

PANEL I: THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN CITY DEVELOPMENT

Panel speakers:
Jiří Fajt (director general, National Gallery, Czech Republic)
Ernst Woller (chairman of the Municipal Committee of Science and Culture in Vienna)
Weston Stacey (executive director, American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic)
Krzysztof Nawratek (head of architecture program at the School of Architecture, Design and Environment, University of Plymouth)

Chaired by:
Petr Vizina (head of the culture department, Czech Television)

- Currently, the promotion of Prague uses an image of the city that is very narrowly defined. Residents do not identify with this image and it fails to take into account the fact that all tourists are not the same but rather have different interests and tastes. Therefore, there is a need to change the content of culture in Prague and make Prague "sexier."

- Tourism is a key sector in Vienna. Ernst Woller mentioned that globally, around 50% of media reports about Vienna are about its culture. Also, approximately 70% of visitors go to Vienna to explore its culture. Every year, around 20 million tickets for cultural events are sold in the city.

- Krzysztof Nawratek noted that there are a great variety of activities that can be identified as "culture and entertainment." Furthermore, he understands culture in a much broader sense than how it is commonly understood. To Nawratek, culture in a city is all life taking place there. Culture is how people communicate, eat, dress, enjoy leisure time, travel, etc.

- Nawratek shared his provocative thought that, for him, an ideal model would be one where cities belong entirely to their citizens and where all land in the city is in public, not private hands, and businesses can only carry out their activities on that land without owning it.

- Jiří Fajt believes that the unique role of culture institutions offering high quality art and culture in Prague is normative.

- How do we initiate a dialogue with society and understand its needs and wishes? We need to create platforms for public discussions that would have tangible impacts on institutions. Public media should also play an important role. The Czech public media do not effectively moderate public discussions on important topics.

- Jiří Fajt finds that the extension of direct democracy in cities is a positive change. For example, citizens of Berlin directly decide on projects of the city based on a very well-functioning dialogue between politicians and citizens.

- Krzysztof Nawratek told a story of the Olympic Games project in Krakow. Bringing the Olympic Games to Krakow was the mayor's idea and a significant amount of money was invested into the project prior to a referendum. It was a great surprise to City Hall that the residents of Krakow rejected the idea.
- It is important to keep in mind that a rich cultural life arises from an active and engaged community in the city.
- Culture should be anti-elitist and should remain mainly a way to communicate ideas and opinions among people.

WORKING SESSION I

Working session led by:
Lukáš Jiřička (theatre director and radio-art compositions producer)
Petr Vizina (head of the culture department, Czech Television)

- The working session focused on the evaluation of existing official platforms for public discussion about culture in Prague as well as ideas for creating new platforms. One of the most important questions raised was: "What kind of new institution should replace the current advisory committee for arts and culture of the Prague City Council? Which tasks should this new institution be entrusted with? Who should be appointed as members of this institution? Is the concept of a formal institution for debates about cultural issues necessary?"
- Among the participants in the discussion were: representatives of the cultural sector, members of the "Metropolitní ozvučná deska" and Václav Novotný.
- Guests agreed on the benefits of the existing advisory committee despite its lack of decision making authority.
- A consensus was reached on the importance of continual strategies and an institution-alised platform. Future institutionalisation is being negotiated.

PANEL II: CULTURE FOR LOCALS VS. CULTURE FOR TOURISTS – HOW TO CONNECT THESE TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS?

Panel speakers:
Václav Novotný (deputy mayor of Prague, chairman of the Committee for grants in tourism)
Šárka Tittelbachová (chair of the department of tourism, University of Business in Prague, chair of the Board of Directors, CzechIT)
Petr Šourek (corruption tourism pioneer)
Andrea Kostner (deputy director for Content Management & Production, Vienna Tourist Board)

Chaired by:
Pavlína Kvapilová (journalist, presenter and visual artist)

- Panel speakers critically reflected on current conditions of tourism in Prague – Petr Šourek indicated a problem, "How do we present the beauties of Prague? Although we as locals would not choose to visit the Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, we literally force tourists to pay for such attraction. Would it not be more appropriate to show them our places and events – those aspects of Prague that would enable them to live like locals?"
- Guests expressed their concerns about the view that tourists are intruders. All speakers agreed with the opinion of Andrea Kostner who said, "Tourists and locals do not really have different needs." Šárka Tittelbachová and Václav Novotný stressed the importance of projects that are attractive not only to tourists but also for locals (e.g. Letní Letná or United Islands).
- Andrea Kostner noted that it is crucial to spread culture beyond the city centre and bring tourists to urban peripheries too. To make this possible, good infrastructure and public transport are essential.
- Speakers concluded that the relationship between locals and tourists needs to be strengthened and that this is a task for competent institutions (e.g. tourist information centres, the official Prague portal and tour guides).
- Among some identified weaknesses were generally low quality of Prague tour guides, insufficient tourist information and a lack of sophistication to Prague tourism strategies.

WORKING SESSION II

Working session led by:
Andrea Kostner (deputy director for Content Management & Production, Vienna Tourist Board)
Šárka Tittelbachová (chair of the department of tourism, University of Business in Prague, chair of the Board of Directors, CzechIT)

- Data presented by Andrea Kostner shows that the budget of the Vienna Tourist Board is approximately 24.6 million Euros, of which 70% is raised through local accommodation tax, 11% comes from the budget of the city of Vienna and 18% is generated by the Vienna's Tourist Board own activities. The contribution of tourism to the GDP of Vienna accounts for approximately 4%.
- The Vienna Experts Club is one of the projects of the Vienna Tourist Board. It is a training program for employees of hotels and travel agencies in Vienna and its aim is to improve their knowledge of the city and the quality of their services.
- Prague's budget for tourism, when compared to that of Vienna, is much more limited. The Prague Information Service website, which serves as a search engine for events and activities happening in Prague, likely does not have the capacity to cover all events.

PANEL III: ARTS AND CULTURE IN PUBLIC SPACE

Panel speakers:
Martina Taig (managing director, KÖR Vienna, Art in public space)
Benjamin Foerster Baldenius (architect, member of Raumlaborberlin)
Harry Sachs (co-founder and member of the Board of Directors, ZK/U, Center for Art and Urbanistics)
Marcela Straková (executive director, Prague Quadrennial 2015)

Chaired by:
Šárka Havlíčková (program director of Pilsen 2015 – European Capital of Culture, currently on maternity leave)

- Šárka Havlíčková said that Prague has a new regulation regarding the placement of art in public space. The regulation is mainly concerned with permanently installed art such as sculptures or objects. Nevertheless, this highlights Prague's progressive approach toward art in public space.
- Martina Taig noted that in Vienna, people open their flats for artists to create any kind of art and that this practice creates a link between public and private space.
- Harry Sachs shared with others the example of a hotel room in Berlin made out of billboards which provides a unique experience of the city to both locals and visitors.
- The participants noted that, unfortunately, there is a missing political will in Prague to provide old unoccupied buildings to groups who, in exchange for occupying them free of charge, would take care of them and transform them into lively cultural spaces with added value to the local community.

DAY 2

PANEL IV: PROMOTION OF LOCAL CULTURE NETWORKS

Panel speakers:
Roland Zarzycki (project manager, founder of 2B Fair Foundation)
James Thomas (head of Hackney Music Service, London)
Radek Vondra (Mayor of Prague 14)
Michal Křivohlávek (officer for local civic initiatives, Prague 10)

Chaired by:
Olga Škochová Bláhová (senior consultant in cultural policy)

- James Thomas shared his experience from Hackney, a part of London located to the North of the city centre. Diversity is its strongest characteristic. It is a true melting pot where differences are celebrated and give ground to a vibrant community. Hackney, however, also faces many challenges, e.g., 30% of its children live in poverty. Young Hackney is a successful initiative targeting the youth of Hackney. It provides them with information about leisure activities, cultural events, and even about employment opportunities. Its mission is to nurture a community and support personal development of young people to keep them off the streets and away from crime.

- Radek Vondra admitted that at the moment, Prague 14 has limited facilities it can provide for leisure and cultural activities of the local community. Yet, Prague 14 has recently become very proactive with its cultural policy and hopes to be a good example to other parts of Prague in the future.

- Currently, about 70 events take place in Prague 14 every year, but the plan is to increase the number to 200. The City Council cannot do this alone. Its plan is to strengthen local culture networks and empower the community to actively contribute to the program of Prague 14. According to its mayor, Prague 14 has funds available to support interesting projects but most are not fully utilised because of lack of good applications.

- Panellists agreed with James Thomas that organisations engaging with communities should be able to take risks and cooperate with one another, bringing to the table their best abilities, to produce the best outcomes for the community. They should not shy away from such cooperation due to fear of losing their organisation's identity.

- Concerns about financing should not be the first step when designing a way to engage with and promote local culture networks. First, it is important to ask ourselves the question of what we want to achieve. Thomas believes that, when it comes to financing, Prague should not have to rely solely on public funding. Initiative should also come from the private sector.

- Michal Křivohlávek, who works for Prague 10, explained that his task is to convince politicians that their direct involvement and dialogue with the community is crucial. In

Prague 10, there are around ten active civic associations and a majority of them opposes the local government.

- Roland Zarzycki spoke about his experience gained while working for the Wroclaw – European Capital of Culture 2016 project. He highlighted that local governments should not design cultural strategies on their own but listen to what people and civic organisations propose. Zarzycki stressed that politicians need not do things for people, but with people. They need to know well the needs and wishes of people and promote their active involvement.
- Radek Vondra noted that each of the districts of Prague has its own identity, history and way of life and that this should always be considered.

WORKING SESSION IV

Working session led by:
James Thomas (head of Hackney Music Service, London)
Michal Křivohlávek (officer for local civic initiatives, Prague 10)

- Based on his experience from London, James Thomas recommends that the first step to bringing together culture and arts organisations operating in the same city district of Prague is to identify common interests. Then, it is important to convince the parties to work together in partnership. For such a partnership to work goals need to be clearly articulated and all should have in mind the big picture they are working to achieve. Last but not least, work and results should be evaluated and lessons learned should be remembered.
- Schools are a great place to start with change. Because attendance is mandatory, projects at schools have the capacity to reach all children.
- It is important to give children something that would make them feel good about themselves and give them the confidence to explore and enhance their skills. In this regard, music can be very helpful. In England, music is compulsory at elementary school as well as for three years at senior school.
- The current reality is that organizations compete for funding. Instead, they should collaborate more.
- An open and honest environment is necessary to find new partners and promote fruitful cooperation.
- Children and young people should be included in the dialogue.
- While it is desirable that many are included in the dialogue, there needs to be someone playing a strategic role of coordinator and leader within the network.

PANEL V: RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC PLANNING IN CULTURE

Panel speakers:

Lia Ghilardi (founder and executive director of Noema Culture and Mapping)

James Doeser (founder of the Culture Case project, freelance researcher)

Eva Žáková (head of Arts Institute section, Arts and Theatre Institute)

Jaroslav Novák (head of the education, health, culture and social security statistics section, Czech Statistical Office)

Chaired by:

Petr Návrat (co-founder of Oh & Návrat Joint Planning Laboratory, consultant in urban regeneration)

- Lia Ghilardi accented that before drawing a strategy, there needs to be a clear understanding of what its purpose will be and what the challenges are that we are facing. Also, three main realities need to be taken into consideration during this process with regards to culture: (1) people; (2) economy; and (3) geography. In addition, mapping of what each part of Prague can offer needs to be performed before we start making decisions on what to do.

- Research has a lot to offer to policy-making as long as it is done well. Sometimes, a policy decision comes first and research is then manipulated into producing desired findings that support the decision posterior. In the United Kingdom, a substantial research project preceded the formulation of a national policy for culture. An opinion poll found that many people felt excluded from culture and felt that their ideas were ignored.

- It is necessary that public administrations think more about the demand and not focus too much on the supply.

- Jaroslav Novák listed some of the limitations to research on culture, such as availability of data, use of imperfect classifications, the fact that non-cultural institutions are also sometimes important contributors to culture and the discrepancy between an institution's official place of residence and the place where it conducts its activities.

- Data show that the economic value of culture oscillates mostly around 2% of GDP, but, in reality, its contribution to both economy and society is much greater.

- Culture is particularly concentrated in Prague which accounts for about 50% of cultural activity in the Czech Republic.

WORKING SESSION V

Working session led by:
Lia Ghilardi (founder and executive director of Noema Culture and Mapping)
James Doeser (fouder of the Culture Case project, freelance researcher)

- If you are about to develop a strategy, you need to be able to identify whether a change has happened and if that change is a result of your strategy.
- Research in culture utilises various types of data: activities, venues, investment data, attendance / participation data, etc. To find the relevant data for a particular research and strategy, there first needs to be a clear understanding of what the research and strategy are about.
- A strategy should first focus on a city as a whole, then continue with smaller units.
- When setting objectives of a strategy, ability to evaluate its results needs to be considered. For example, in the United Kingdom, cultural strategies must have measurable indicators. Both policy makers and independent external researchers should be involved in strategic planning. It is essential that independent researchers are involved in the early stages of planning, ideally at the beginning of the process of drawing a strategy, because they can help design indicators to measure and evaluate the strategy.
- To develop a strategy for a particular group, segmentation of the target groups is necessary.
- The more detailed and precise a cultural strategy is, the easier it is to measure its impact and effectiveness.
- Precise estimates of research results are not possible. For instance, a survey conducted in the United Kingdom on groups excluded from benefits of cultural policies produced very different results to those that the government anticipated. Indeed, groups that were expected to be excluded were in fact included.
- The volume of quantitative data that Prague has at its disposal is extensive, but extracting relevant information is not an easy task.
- A question was raised on whether Prague possesses data on local activities organised by NGO's, civic associations, etc.

PANEL VI: CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Panel speakers:
Calvin Taylor (professor in Cultural Economy, University of Leeds)
Jana Vinšová (co-founder and executive director, CZECHDESIGN)
Jan Dobrovský (head of Department of Business Activity, City of Prague)
Petr Suška (consultant in strategic planning, Institute of Planning and Development of the City of Prague)

Chaired by:
Milota Sidorová (project manager and coordinator, reSITE)

- There is growing interest in cooperation with creative industries among companies based in the Czech Republic. Jana Vinšová explains that every year, a number of companies approach CZECHDESIGN, a non-profit organisation representing designers and promoting design in the Czech Republic.
- Globally, creative industries are among the most dynamic sectors of the world economy. They have been equally successful in Prague, despite the global economic slowdown. Its growing significance needs to be fully recognised and Prague needs to find a long-term vision on creative industries that it could incorporate into the strategy of Prague.
- In Prague, the cultural and creative industries account for about 10% of GDP and 54% of cultural and creative entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic.
- Petr Suška noted that Prague has very limited capacity to measure impacts of grants it awards and that this is an opportunity for improvement. Without such a mechanism, it is difficult to make best use of the funds available for grants. Another problem with the current grant policy is that subjects receive equal amounts of funding, often meaning that they can either slowly prosper or slowly perish.
- Jan Dobrovský presented a new initiative involving "innovative vouchers", a form of co-financing for innovative projects in all fields that also involves universities.
- Jana Vinšová shared her view that funding is not necessarily what young entrepreneurs in the creative industries need most. For example, many young designers turn to CZECHDESIGN for guidance on bureaucratic matters and many of them fail with their projects due to their lack of business skills. Jan Dobrovský agreed, proposing that financial support of projects in cultural and creative industries should only be last resort and assistance should mainly be provided in form of counselling.

WORKING SESSION VI

Working session led by:
Calvin Taylor (professor in Cultural Economy, University of Leeds)
Jana Vinšová (co-founder and executive director, CZECHDESIGN)

- Calvin Taylor shared his insight into existing models of public engagement with the creative economy. The rise of creative industries often presents a challenge for public administrations because, unlike most other industries, there is no clear representative of the creative economy to whom public administrations could turn to.

- The traditional centralised approach of public administration to the private sector fails in the case of creative industries, not only due to public budget constraints, but even more so due to specifics of the industry. When designing its approach to cooperation with creative industries, the Prague City Council should look to models implemented abroad.

- The Prague City Council could support creative industries through public procurement, which, so far, has not been the case. For example, Prague has built new costly public administration buildings without input from an architect. In this regard, Croatia is a very positive example to follow. In Croatia, a number of very successful projects helped not only reconstruct, but also reinvent old public schools.

- Prague could highlight the positive examples of cooperation with creative industries. This has the potential to inspire companies on the ways in which they could benefit from cooperation with the creative sector.

- The City of Prague could also be an initiator of creative entrepreneurship by providing a number of small-scale incentives for creative projects to its residents. Alternatively, public support can assume the position of an accelerator, by directing funding to successful projects that need support to grow. Ideally, the City Council will also assume the role of a strategic leader with a clear vision for the industry.

- Apart from the City of Prague, other actors should also be invited. These can be individuals and institutions that can serve as intermediaries, connecting the City Council with the heterogeneous creative sector, but also universities, civil societies, and engaged business representatives.

- Opportunities for the public administration to engage with and support creative industries are numerous. It should be noted, however, that sometimes no intervention is better than ill-directed action that can be counter-productive.

- A consensus among participants emerged that there is a need for coordination, both in the approach of the Prague City Council to the creative sector and within the creative sector itself. This is a challenging task due to the wide range of activities the creative industries contain. It is difficult to imagine an expert who would understand all elements of creative industries and their particular needs.