



**National Arts
Policy Roundtable**

A Program of **Americans for the Arts**

2012 REPORT and RECOMMENDATIONS

*Leveraging the Remake: The Role of the Arts in
a Shifting Economy*

**September 27-29, 2012
The Redford Center at the Sundance Resort and Preserve, Utah**

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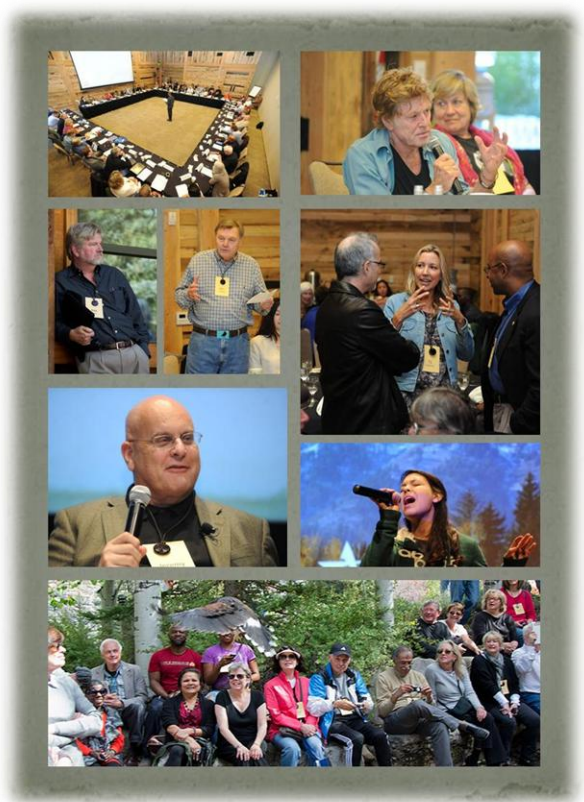
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A Message from Robert Redford and Robert L. Lynch

We founded the Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable at Sundance Resort together in 2006, as a place to engage high-level leaders from government, business, arts and the social sectors in not only talking about big ideas—but envisioning new ways to engage in action to advance the arts and our American society. Since then more than 175 decision-makers and thought leaders have convened annually in spirited discussion and debate. Significant and measurable policy achievements at the national, state, and local levels have resulted from each convening.

The 2012 topic, *Leveraging the Remake: The Role of the Arts in a Shifting Economy*, proposed that the arts can serve as both a model and catalyst for change for a number of the pressing societal challenges which face our nation. In the process, we were reminded again that challenge is really just another name for opportunity.

The Roundtable participants, who come from a variety of sectors, discussed ways in which the arts can assist individuals and communities—working in partnership with foundations, business, and government entities—to develop locally-based solutions. Our goal was to generate specific, actionable policy recommendations—and to extend them to the appropriate leaders in both the public and private sectors. This report is the result, and action toward change has already begun.



As we do every year, the Roundtable conversation was deeply rooted in engagement with artists. We are so grateful for the participation of spoken word artist, Marc Bamuthi Joseph. We also welcomed three emerging artists from The National YoungArts Foundation, Kenyon Adams, Kelley Kessell and Da'Shawn Mosley who, in addition to performing, also participated in our discussions. Filmmaker Patrick Creadon and design thinker Emily Pilloton added their voices to the discussion as well.

Thanks are due to our 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable Chair Jeremy Nowak as well as Founding National Arts Policy Roundtable Chair Marian Godfrey. We are grateful to Americans for the Arts staff members Vice President of Leadership Alliances Nora Halpern and Manager of Leadership Alliances Christine Meehan, as well as Keri Putnam, Executive Director and Cara

Mertes, Director, Documentary Film Program and Fund at the Sundance Institute for their leadership in realizing this program.

Finally, we thank the participants both at the Policy Roundtable itself as well as at the preparatory resource seminar which took place at the Committee for Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy Summit in New York City in June 2012. The ideas gathered from both convenings informed the work and actions that came out of the 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable and have launched us into new ways of thinking and viewing the topic at hand. We appreciate the time, expertise and insight that all of the participants provided. We hope this report will provoke further thought and continued discussion, and lead to collective action among all leaders, across all sectors, in building a healthy, vibrant America through the arts.



Robert Redford
Founder
Sundance Institute



Robert L. Lynch
President and CEO
Americans for the Arts



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I. Overview

These are changing, uncertain times—times that require new ways of thinking and engaging with both the opportunities and challenges of a more diverse, technologically driven, and entrepreneurial world. When we talk about a changing world and the role America will play in shaping the “new normal,” the idea of a competitive advantage naturally arises—moreover, how such an advantage may be achieved.

Education, innovation, engineering, technology. All of these are terms that have been imbued with particular significance as we attempt to position ourselves to move into the future. At the core of all of these, however, there is something much more fundamental at play: the recognition that the way forward is through creative thinking and nontraditional problem-solving. Both of which are inherent in—and developed through—the arts.



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The 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable convened around the idea that the arts are fundamental to navigating our shifting economy and should be recognized as such. Communities all across America are grappling with changing structures in economics, education, demographics, and more, and the arts have an important place in every locale—urban, rural, and everything in between. Thus, the charge for the 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable was to grapple with the question of how best to navigate “the remake” through the lens of the arts, and develop a set of actionable steps to put the arts to work in providing sustainable, creative and innovative answers.

Jeremy Nowak, past President of the William Penn Foundation and Chair of the 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable, opened the convening with a quote from Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.: “I don’t give a fig for simplicity on this side of complexity, but I’d give my life for simplicity on the other side of complexity.” Taking Holmes as his guide, he continued, “Our job in the next 36 hours is to get to the simplicity on the other side of complexity. We need to look at the following tensions:



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1. The transition between big-picture thinking and the fact that we have been asked to come up with very specific actionable items; between the general and the particular;
2. The tension between the urge to preserve and the urge and interest to innovate, and
3. The tension between what we know and what we think we know— standing on terra incognita because we’re in such an uncertain time.

Our task is to manage those tensions— not resolve them—and eclipse them by taking a stab at big issues we think are big enough to matter, but specific enough to have meaning to the institutions that will carry them out over the next year.”

II. Background



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But first—what do we mean by “*the remake?*” Author and economist Richard Florida’s insight that a “creative class” is on the rise provides a useful foundation, but certainly does not tell the full story. Certainly, the programmers, designers, and engineers who are envisioning the cyber-foundations of our society fall into such a category, but they cannot realize their vision without capital investment. It is at this junction that creativity and economic reality meet, and the tensions that Nowak describes become evident as the dual and sometimes contradictory goals of a creative economy are made clear. First, the creative class is one of the key drivers of a still-stagnant economy, acting as one of the main architects of a society that must value creative thinking in order to remain viable in the future. And beyond this, the remake of the economy rests not just on Florida’s “creative class”, but rather on the development of creative thinkers on all levels. If we are to develop the kinds of thinkers who can thrive in and drive such an economy, “the remake” also includes education as a component and must be manifested in the ways in which we teach our children to think and to comprehend the changing world around them using the arts.



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Beyond intellectual capability, numerous thinkers point to a new valuation of social and emotional intelligence that is required to successfully navigate the increasing diversity in our world. For instance, in terms of demography, the recent election threw into stark relief the realities of our nation—reflected in both voter demographic and the make-up of the elected officials themselves, as we enter into the first House of Representatives whose majority is comprised of non-white males and women.


Age diversity also plays a significant role. The younger generation best understands the new avenues of creative, innovative impulses in the current economy, often expressed through digital platforms. Not surprisingly this is also the constituency that does not attend classical music concerts and theatre performances in traditional venues, such as performance halls. The question becomes, then, how to

attract millennials— and in the near future, post-millennials. This increasingly important demographic understands the underlying concepts of the arts, but does not necessarily proactively engage in the arts or embrace them in the traditional forms that have developed in the 20th century.

III. Outcomes and Recommendations

Taken together, these attached presentations provided the grounding for the conversations that followed, and led to the following recommendations:

- 1) **Understand our nation’s demographic changes and build partnerships across the breadth of diverse America, including ethnic, gender, age, preference, income and all kinds of diversity.**
- 2) **Give artists the tools and training to be leaders in their communities and part of the brain trust that helps the country move forward in this new economy.**
- 3) **Better utilize design thinking in problem-solving for communities and for the arts themselves;**
- 4) **Develop a consistent “brand” message for the multiple values of the arts, so when we do speak to decision makers and stakeholders we speak with a common voice.**
- 5) **Convene a national dialogue around technology and how it can be better utilized by the arts and involve: creators of technology, funders, artists, curators and policy leaders;**
- 6) **Create a central database for the research and case-making information about the arts and categorize it easily, including: economy, education, society, quality of life, and more;**
- 7) **Establish a searchable online database for cultural tourism opportunity in America;**
- 8) **Study the viability and potential options for at-risk legacy organizations;**
- 9) **Identify outstanding success stories in the arts and arts education and create a best-practices guide.**



“What can we do to take the change going into the future and make it positive? We can’t control the future, but we can try to shape it.”

Robert Redford

IV. Detail on the Convening's Roundtable Sessions



During the first evening, economist, Dr. Kathryn Graddy; the Honorable Michael Nutter, Mayor of Philadelphia; Jeremy Nowak; and Designer and Project H Co-Founder Emily Pilloton held a panel to frame the discussion from a variety of perspectives. The first presentation the next morning, by Vice President of Research and Policy at Americans for the Arts Randy Cohen, introduced research and data that can be used to provide a more objective, theoretical

underpinning to the transformative power of the arts. Following up on this data-driven presentation, professor Manuel Pastor (USC) discussed his research on demographic changes in the United States. Vice President of Paul G. Allen Family Foundation Sue Coliton moderated a panel based on the Foundation's recent *Bright Spots* report, which studied a handful of highly successful arts organizations in the Pacific Northwest, as well as success stories from Miami and Miami Beach, FL. Roundtable hosts, Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert Lynch and Sundance founder, actor, director, and activist Robert Redford took such place-based assessment another step when discussing the vital role of local culture in supporting tourism. Finally, participants heard from design team and teachers Emily Pilloton and Matt Miller, on the role of design thinking in K-12 education.

An economics professor, a mayor of a major urban center, a foundation leader, and a designer: What do all of these people have in common? Without context, the answer might not be immediately clear. Even within the space of the Roundtable, these four people—Dr. Kathryn Graddy, Mayor Nutter, Jeremy Nowak, and Emily Pilloton—displayed widely disparate ways in which the arts figure in their professional lives.

For Graddy, the association with the arts is grounded in “pure enjoyment,” and she considers the arts to be part of her “complete education.” While Graddy believes that both the aesthetic and economic value of the arts are well established, she argued that the arts community cannot just “sit back.” Instead, “we need to show causally that the arts create improved academic performance, and that improved

“World-class cities are world-class because of the arts and innovation...We try to lessen the impact [of the recession] in [the arts] because you can feel the vitality in Philadelphia when the orchestra is playing...There is an excitement in Philadelphia. More people come to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Barnes Foundation, the African American Museum, the Rodin Museum...than all of the sports teams combined. And we are rabid sports fans! They're going to our restaurants and shopping—the ripple effect is incredible.”

The Hon. Michael Nutter,
Mayor of Philadelphia

academic performance leads to higher GDP. The nation as a whole needs to be convinced of this: that the arts are important for education and therefore jobs. We need more hard research, and we need it to be broadcast.” Here, Graddy succinctly captures two key pieces of dialogue that would flow through the entirety of the Roundtable: the need for better data, and, perhaps even more importantly, the need for those outside the arts community to hear about it in a way that matters to them.

Indeed, as someone like Mayor Nutter knows, it is difficult to cut through the noise when there are so many competing claims: “There is a lot of pressure; we have been hit hard by the economy and all levels are on the margin,” he said in his opening remarks. Even so, he believes deeply in the power of the arts to provide real and lasting value to his city. Why? In his own words, the answer is fairly simple: “world-class cities are world-class because of the arts and innovation.” In fact, the arts & culture sector in Philadelphia has created 50,000 jobs—just behind education & health. That creates “a lot of economic vitality. The recession has caused Philadelphia to “pull back in a number of areas,” but Mayor Nutter noted that “we try to lessen the impact of the recession in [the arts]. You can feel the vitality in Philadelphia when the orchestra is playing...There is an excitement in Philadelphia. More people come to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Barnes Foundation, the African American Museum, the Rodin Museum...than all of the sports teams combined. And we are rabid sports fans! They’re going to our restaurants and shopping—the ripple effect is incredible.”

That “ripple effect” is exactly what Emily Pilloton counts on in efforts to apply Design Thinking to everyday problems she sees around her—whether that is in public education or the lack of a community space in a small town. In describing her desire to apply critical thinking *and* creative thinking to the world around her, Pilloton remarked that “Project H grew out of wanting to use design to solve problems. The mission was to use design as a form of creative capital for cities, and more recently, with Studio H, public education. The crux of it is that design is most powerful when it abuts everything outside of design—and has to push up against the world. Creativity is dominated by the right brain, but it is rigorous—it can be a codified process.” The goal, then, is not just to move through the process personally, but to document “what that process looks like in a small town, in a big city—and then *measure* that impact.”

The idea of measuring impact comes back to Graddy’s original assertion that the importance of



data and the story it can tell should not be underestimated. Jeremy Nowak puts this idea in the context of our shifting world,—as we all experience new ways of interacting with the intersection between the arts, entrepreneurship, and shifting ideas about participation in the arts experience itself—and what it means to us when we do. Nowak suggested that “economists missed a few things over the last couple of years. The idea that if we just have the right kind of economic data, we’ll be okay... It would be great to have the logic there, but there’s a yearning in

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America to not have the economy driving everything—a cultural need for *meaning*. Just because you’ve proved something in economic data—you still need a cultural shift. It won’t be mandated by economic papers. It’s something else going on here; it’s America’s search for itself.”

Mayor Nutter, himself a leader in integrating the arts into a vision of urban creativity and success, agreed: “Someone has to drive it. Political leaders should be part of the conversation; the religious community; young people.” Participant and Senior Director of Global Community Affairs at Microsoft Corporation Akhtar Badshah added that the inclusion of new audiences and new players through technology is precisely what will keep the arts vital as we move through the shifting economy. He suggested that although the arts might not be making a lot of money comparatively, the arts community “is creatively thriving because it is becoming

“Economists missed a few things over the last couple of years. The idea that if we just have the right kind of economic data, we’ll be okay... It would be great to have the logic there, but there’s a yearning in America to not have the economy driving everything—a cultural need for meaning. Just because you’ve proved something in economic data—you still need a cultural shift. It won’t be mandated by economic papers. It’s something else going on here. It’s America’s search for itself.”

Jeremy Nowak

extremely inclusive and going to places where people gather rather than the traditional way of getting people into a particular building just because someone decided it should be structured that way.” This speaks to a design sensibility that appeals to Pilloton: the idea is not to become comfortable in a specific way of doing things. Rather, design thinking leads to “always reminding yourself there’s always a better way to do it. Part of being a designer is being a contrarian: looking at things and saying, well, that’s good—but how could it be better?”

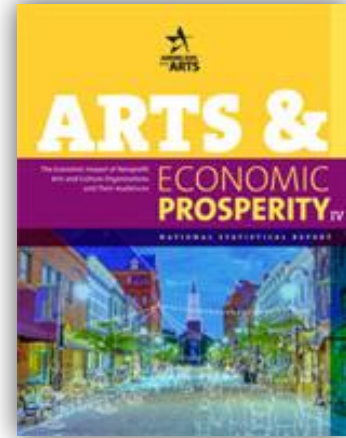
Nowak made a strong final case for why we should study the shifting economy—really, the shifting world—in which the arts are currently situated: “One of the things that has played out over the last dozen years is a new narrative; a new way to think about art. We’ve gone through a lot of different issues: arts as irreducibly human no matter what its functional value is; then there is the methodological way, with data; we can think through it as it relates to business. We’re in a world where there’s kind of a cultural reset going on, and we don’t know what it’s going to look like. We reach back to our cultural heritage and cultural future to be the authors of our cultural lives moving forward.”

V. Making the Case

1. [Arts & Culture... Food for the Soul, Fuel for the Economy](#)

With Randy Cohen’s first slide, depicting a hand-carved flute from the Paleolithic Period, he asserted his basic thesis that the arts have always been a fundamental part of our lives. The *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV* report by Americans for the Arts is, at its core, a way of getting at the elemental nature of the arts in our communities—specifically, through the analysis of 182

communities across the United States. Statistically speaking, Randy used an input-output model to determine specific and reliable economic data—a fairly conservative approach to measuring economic impact. What this amounts to is 4.1 million community-wide jobs supported by that arts activity. Significantly, these “arts” jobs are necessarily very local jobs—cleaning a theatre is not going to be outsourced, nor is securing a museum or directing a dance performance.



What does that mean practically speaking? Well, a number of things—the first of which is that for every arts event, there is a ripple effect, as the arts support various industries from restaurants (pre-theatre dinners) to transportation to tourism to clerical and security. While it is no secret that every industry has an economic impact—every time a dollar changes hands, there is a measurable effect on jobs and government revenue—but few industries generate the kind of event-related spending by its patrons that the arts do. Arts and culture are both a product and a generator of the livability of communities and the ability to draw people in who will then spend money in that community. The arts, then, play a dual role of creating better communities and more economically viable communities—they are, in short, good for local businesses. How good? According to the study, the arts generated \$22.3 billion in revenue for federal, state, and local governments.

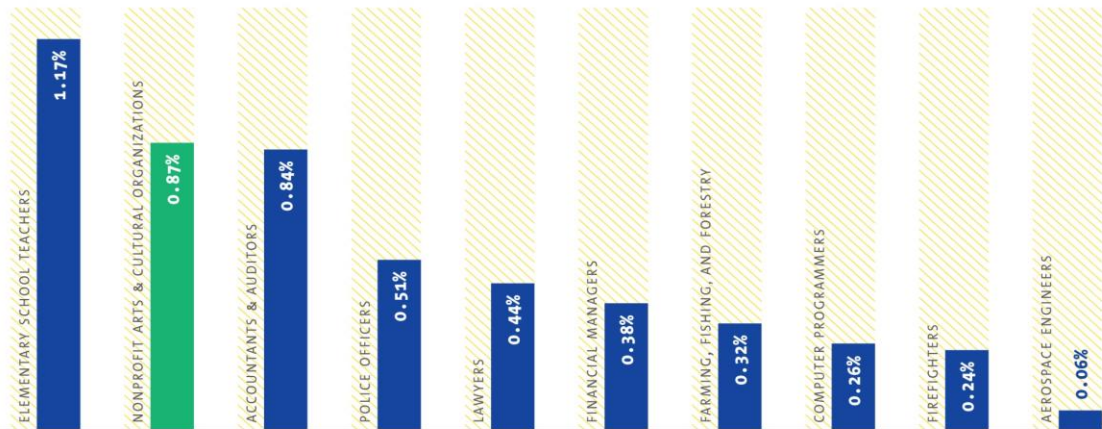
The arts are a formidable industry. Another Americans for the Arts-led research study, the Creative Industries Report, shows that 905,000 nonprofit and for-profit businesses are arts-centric (4.3 percent of all businesses) and they employ 3.3 million people (2.2 percent of the population). In *Ready to Innovate*, a report created in partnership with the Conference Board, an additional “millennial” measure was added, which showed that fully one-third of these arts organizations are only a dozen years old, but of all the money given to arts institutions, only 16 percent is given to this relatively large number of young institutions. In a theme that would return later on in the Roundtable, the newer organizations have a hard time attracting and holding onto the money in a system that disproportionately rewards legacy organizations.

In response to this information, there was one overwhelming response from the participants, echoed again and again: “*Why don’t more people know about this?*”

If there was one common strand across all presentations, it would be safe to say it was that very incredulity—that in the midst of our economic struggles at the highest levels, there is so much research, so much data to support the simple fact that the arts are good for the economy—and no one seems to know it...not even those present at the Roundtable; people who are already believers in the power of the arts. Cohen suggested that advocates need a full quiver of case-making arrows—a full arsenal of stories and data. Advocates need to be able to talk about how arts are not just food for the soul, but also supporting jobs and generating government revenue; that students engaged in the arts are performing better academically—findings that cut across all

socio-economic strata; that when the arts are part of our medical healing, our hospital stays are shorter, we have fewer doctor visits, and take less medication.

PERCENTAGE OF U.S. WORKFORCE (2010)



Source: *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV Report*

That comment was in response to a question by cultural consultant and former Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts Bill Ivey: “How do you square the circle if on the one hand—this is a big, dynamic, contributory sector, while at the same time, we’re saying please help us, we need more help?” This is where Cohen suggested that although we love the jobs and the economic impact that arts institutions bring, those in positions of power tend not to love the expense of arts programming. Regardless of the many benefits a vibrant arts community delivers to a community—to ensure broad accessibility to the arts for the public, they require contributed support to keep the arts affordable to the public. There are many examples of a theater or symphony selling most of its seats, yet that revenue only covers two-thirds of the production costs. To mine the social, educational, and economic benefits of the arts, we must figure out a sustainable way to meaningfully support them.

In that vein, Vice President for Corporate Social Responsibility at American Express and President of the American Express Foundation Tim McClimon noted an important distinction between styles of getting out the message; “Researchers like to be detailed, but communicators like to be simple.” From that perspective, the story we tell must find the simplicity from the complexity—another theme of the Roundtable as a whole. Participants seemed to agree on that, as writer and National YoungArts Foundation co-founder Lin Arison suggested a need for better “wordsmithing” to get people more excited, and arts patron Christine Forester asserted that the saving due to the arts never gets talked about—the real, human facts, such as the vicious cycle of high school dropouts ending up in jail, and the



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role the arts might play in keeping them in school. Arison concurred, saying, “The media that is out there just isn’t enough—we need to be doing it better.”

The Honorable Mayor Nutter, of Philadelphia who was the 2012 President of the US Conference of Mayors, summed up the session best when he concluded: “We know about infrastructure, auto, police, firefighters, teachers, energy, sustainability—the arts have been around forever. How do we break through that this is an industry? It’s a real business, it puts people to work, and it’s long lasting.”

2. Shifting Demographics as a Game Changer

Dr. Manuel Pastor, Professor of American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California, brought an arsenal of data of his own: not economic, this time, but demographic.

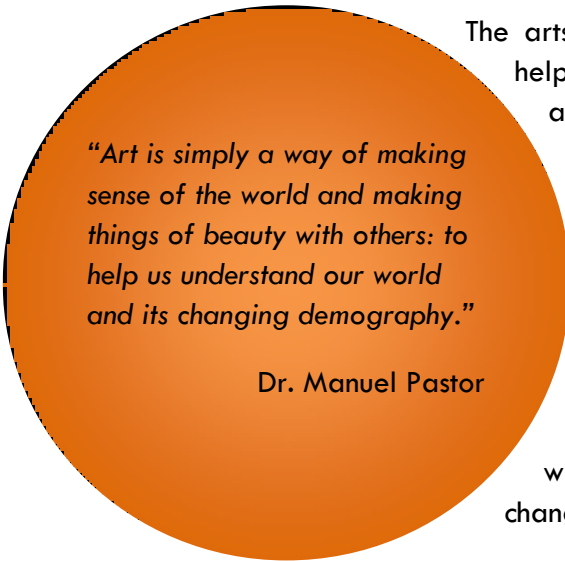
A self-proclaimed “economist by training and demographer by hobby,” Dr. Pastor shared a prediction that will come as no surprise to those who followed the 2012 election: he postulated that by 2042, the United States will be a majority-minority nation. Even earlier—by 2019 or 2020—he suggested that the majority of youth will be youths of color; and furthermore, last year (2011), the majority of births were to parents of color. You don’t need too many more numbers to understand Pastor’s main point, which was simple, but powerful: huge demographic shifts are on the horizon, and in fact have already begun. And while minority populations are growing in the expected places, such as California, they are also growing rapidly in less predictable places, such as Utah. Even in a place like California, the growth trends have shifted from extremely localized minority populations to a much wider settlement pattern, wherein the phenomenon of growth is not limited to a particular set of areas.



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From the specific to the general, the broader point is that this change is “occurring all over the United States and all over our metropolitan areas,” said Pastor. “The two populations coming into closest proximity in metro areas are Latinos and African-Americans.” As cities re-attract young whites and young men and women of color, the suburbs also face real demographic shifts: all of this means big changes in our schools, and one of the most powerful ways communities can bridge these differences is through the arts.

And a significant gap it is, not only racially, but also in age. The median age structure of the United States is as follows: Non-Hispanic whites—42, Asian-Pacific Islanders—35, African Americans/Native Americans—32, and Latinos—27. This fifteen-year age difference is a full generation gap, and it is reflected in the politics playing out at every level of society, from ethnic studies in schools to housing and immigration policy. According to Pastor, where the generation gap is largest, education spending is lowest—which means that this is not just an ideological issue, but one that is rooted in a deep sense of inequality.



“Art is simply a way of making sense of the world and making things of beauty with others: to help us understand our world and its changing demography.”


Dr. Manuel Pastor

The arts, then, have an important and perhaps singular role in helping us to understand and mitigate some of this systematic and cyclical inequity. In Pastor’s estimation, a great deal of time is devoted to the economic arguments for the arts. He clarified that such arguments “should be made, and it’s good for the data to be out to make [them],” but he also pointed out that when he asked his son why he makes art, the young man responded, “I just want to make things of beauty with my friends.” Dr. Pastor succinctly spoke to the ways in which “art is simply a way of making sense of the world and making things of beauty with others: to help us understand our world and its changing demography.”

Apropos of the deep humanity of art-making, cultural consultant and former Chair of the National Endowment of the Arts Frank Hodsoll posed the question, “How can the arts help with young Hispanics, African Americans, and old white people as well?” The question really spoke to the breadth of demographic change in just about every American population, and Pastor responded by again speaking to the shared value of creation. “We thought it was a question of technological access. What we found out was that what attracted young people was that they felt unseen. They learned how to express themselves and their stories. The whole generation of people who feel unseen, unappreciated, and unforgiven—people have the opportunity to be seen through art.”

Pastor ended his presentation with four key points:

1. Keep pitching to the coming America and not simply the past America
 - a. Understand who these people are and what they want
 - b. Young people are renting, staying in cities, are more accepting of interracial experiences, and are involved in the creative economy
2. Understand that this is an aspirational, not an angry, constituency
 - a. African-Americans and Latinos in this country are more optimistic than whites
 - b. Unless we appeal to people’s aspirations rather than their anger, we don’t take advantage of their optimism
3. Frame around bridging generations and geographies
 - a. Race is a difficult topic—whites don’t want to be awkward, and minorities don’t want it to be the only prism through which they are seen, but Pastor argues that we should “just talk about it.”
 - i. The census says, “Hispanic is not a race.” But Latinos bring a conception of race that’s not



“The arts in our communities should be like a really finely-marbled piece of meat.”

John Michael Schert

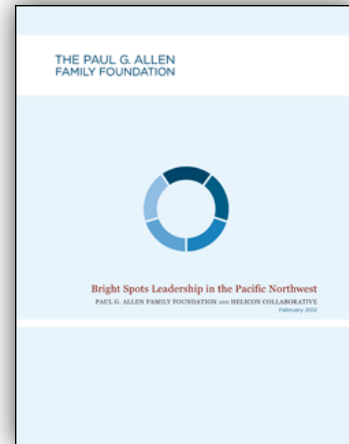
minor—you can be all of these things at the same time. They mark “other.” Not either-or, but both-and. They are both American and tied to immigrant roots, so race doesn’t matter—yet it still does.

- b. It is far more effective to talk about old and young, metro and rural, city and suburb to get through these kinds of differences
4. Build movements, not just organizations
 - a. Helping allies grow and be better winds up helping you be better as well

3. On the Trail of Innovation

“Like a really finely-marbled piece of meat.” This is how John Michael Schert, dancer, Executive Director, and co-founder of the Trey McIntyre Project (TMP), described his ideal vision of the arts in communities: interfacing with not only like-minded people, but also really engaging people in multiple fields to help drive change. “The arts have to be in everything, and not just in our separate facility.”

The panel, moderated by Susan Coliton of the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, included, in addition to John Michael Schert, Annette Evans Smith of the Native American-led Alaska Native Heritage Center and Michael Spring, Director of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs. Coliton outlined the findings of a research project, conducted by the Allen Foundation, that studied 43 arts organizations in the Pacific Northwest. The goals of the project were to understand which cultural organizations were achieving exceptional results without exceptional resources during these shifting times and whether they shared any common characteristics that are replicable. 16 “Bright Spot” cultural organizations were defined as those experiencing observable exceptions to the norm while working with the same resources as others. All were engaged in local practices and selected by their peers. Michael Spring, Director of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, though not part of the Allen Foundation Report, presents yet another organization whose work can clearly be identified as a cultural “bright spot”, having led the redevelopment of Miami and South Beach with the arts and architecture at its core.



The researchers hoped to identify two to three strategies that worked. What they found out was that the strategies were diverse, but a unified *set of beliefs and values* allowed these organizations to be successful. Five common principles were identified:

- Animating purpose
 - One overarching principle: RELEVANCE—doing less but doing it better. Had to have a reason to exist right now.
- Deeply engaged with community
 - Operating in and of communities
 - Deep understanding of selves as civic leaders—part of larger systems, state, sector of nonprofit orgs
 - Community goals not distinct from their own

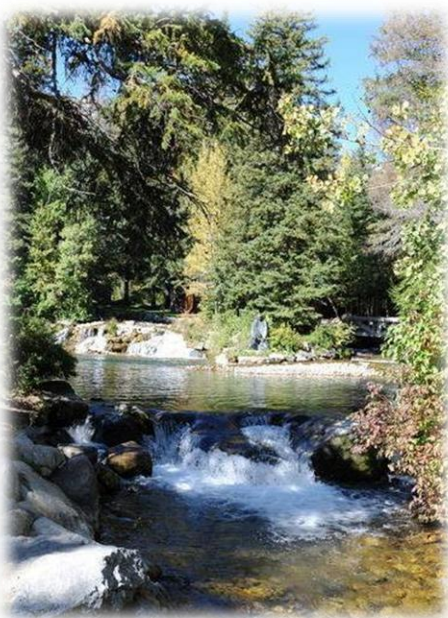
- Evaluation and analysis
 - Brutally realistic about circumstances—better and more sustainable balance of revenue streams and fixed-costs
 - Financially conservative but well-informed risks
- Plasticity
 - Nimble and flexible but don't stray from core purpose
 - In past, success was defined as growth—rejected that notion
 - Remaining fresh, vital, and RELEVANT—size has nothing to do with it
- Transparent leadership
 - Distributing authority across the organization
 - Defined clear roles for board, staff, and volunteers so all could contribute
 - Open about how making decisions

The panelists, as introduced by Coliton, may come from widely varying backgrounds, but all of them had something important to say about their experiences of changing dynamics in their communities and how they are responding to that change in sustainable and successful ways.



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In terms of “animating purpose,” John Michael Schert brought up what is really a key question for many arts organizations in this fiscal environment: “What is a dance company about [when it is] forming in the recession?” His answer to that question lies in the idea of “creating a movement more than an organization,” and it is about changing the community in which we live—the people who listen, but also the people you hope to *make* listen. When we really thought about it, it wasn't about the seed money in San Francisco or the built-in audience in Portland. What good would we do adding to that bounty?”



For Annette Evans Smith, tapping into the resources of her home community takes on an even greater significance. In 1990, Anchorage was Alaska's largest city; now, 45,000 Alaskans call it home. It is rapidly becoming the largest *village*. This rural to urban migration is changing where the native population is, which makes Smith's job of connecting people to who they are and where they come from an even more urgent imperative. With an increasingly diverse population of Native Americans who are thousands of miles from home, the very real prospect of losing centuries worth of traditional knowledge creates a relevance to the work that infuses purpose into the organization as a whole. When combined with the fact that, according to Smith, the “suicide rate is six times the

national average and the majority of students are not graduating,” the organization’s core mission of connecting people to where they are from takes on new significance. Smith said that, when asked the top two things young people thought would make life better, they responded: “Time with elders and language.” By speaking directly to the needs of their community—their youth population in particular—Smith gave an excellent argument for the power of purpose to propel an organization to success.

In many ways, Smith shows how purpose and community engagement are inextricable for many organizations. From her perspective in particular, “traditions are incredibly place-based—there is very specific knowledge in a region that might not have application in Anchorage as a city, but how do we keep our identity through them?” Smith noted that “indigenous culture and art is one of the most sustainable out there—it’s been around for thousands of years and if we do our jobs right, it will be around for thousands more. It’s the most basic creative placemaking.”

Schert also had important experience to share from the Trey McIntyre Project’s deep engagement with Boise, ID community. From Schert’s perspective—and from the city’s—the TMP dancers are more than artists; they are also cultural ambassadors. As far as the city is concerned, “the arts have to state their values: how the arts represent the best of who we are.” From the dancers’ viewpoint, “the role of the artist is to go out and earn the earned income,” said Schert. “The gift from the city goes on the balance sheet as earned income, not as a gift. To help lure business, and lure the creative class. To raise the profile of Boise to the world. It’s a role we take very seriously. It doesn’t just end with the Trey McIntyre project or this mayor—we will continue this method beyond. Don’t you want the Boise logo everywhere this company goes?” Most importantly, the company has become “part of the fabric of the city,” with one bar even naming a drink after each dancer, and many local restaurants welcoming the performers for impromptu lunchtime shows during the work week. As far as they are concerned, “it’s what it means to be part of the citizenry of Boise.” Founding Chair of the National Arts Policy Roundtable Marian Godfrey who is on the board of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation agreed, noting that “in rural communities, almost by definition, the only way you can do business and be a bright spot is to do more collaboratively in the community. A lot of the work in the Berkshires is based on the Bright Spots and it’s very durable in practice.”



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As far as analysis is concerned, Schert returned to the idea of raising the “brand” of Boise in every way. He asserted that such considerations “could or should be the case for every city across the United States—how do we monetize what we offer as artists and make sure we’re always at the table?” This idea of having the arts at the table came up repeatedly during the Roundtable, and Schert conveyed its urgency with the simple statement, “Power is decision-making.” Being at the table will allow the arts to cast light on things that are not being paid their due attention, and will allow the arts to get more than just the scraps of what’s left over. His

“This is the moment in time when artists will step forward with new business models... People want unique experiences and artists offer the most unique experiences. People want what’s authentic and real in that community.”

John Michael Schert

community engagement strategy and, therefore, place at the table has paid off—“now everyone has a vested interest in making sure it continues.”

Smith knows how important it is to make sure the traditional arts perpetuate, and so she acknowledged that “sometimes [their] role is facilitator, not producer.” By “investing in the field,” her organization can stretch its \$4 million budget to a much greater impact than it could have alone. This is precisely the model that Michael Spring espouses in Miami-Dade, as well, and he identified three core areas of focus that all center on creating a better environment for arts organizations in general:

“Strengthening cultural organizations and artists (investing over \$12 million); ensuring arts communities have outstanding spaces in which to engage audiences (better facilities); and encouraging audience participation (utilizing technology and bridging age gaps).

Spring claimed that what they have achieved in Miami is due not to anything “revolutionary,” but rather to reshaping a community-wide conversation in a positive way around the arts, becoming a conduit for opportunities, and “disseminating strategies for survival and vibrancy with a real focus on capacity.” This is where the value of plasticity in business models really came to light, and where Smith noted how much can be “gained through sharing and collaboration.” In fact, in their relatively short history (since 1999), Smith said her team “had to change our business model twice. We have to be able to respond to significant changes: federal funding shrinking, 9/11, tourism declining...you have to have the flexibility to change the business model. We’re doing it for a third time now.” And their greatest proposed need to ensure success? “Data.” Smith and her organization are asking, “What do our people need from us in order to learn language? Is a self-study model for indigenous language what’s needed? We have one year to answer it and then launch our plan. That’s guiding what we do in the future.” This kind of flexibility and willingness to work with the needs of the community as the driving force represents an enormously successful tactic for arts organizations in this changing world.



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Indeed, according to Schert and actor/performer, Kenyon Adams, this is the artist’s time. Said Schert, “This is the moment in time when artists will step forward with new business models. People want unique experiences and artists offer the most unique experiences. People want what’s authentic and real in that community.”

The day ended on an inspiring note, with a conversation between three “observable exceptions”: that is, exceptions to the presumed rule that arts organizations have been crippled by the

undeniable effects of evolving technology and increased competition for consumer attention; funds that are rapidly shrinking; and the maleficent impact of the lingering recession. These three “Bright Spots” showed that it is possible to not only survive under these conditions, but also, in fact, to thrive. And thrive in very different ways, in different environments, with very different kinds of organizational structures, at that.

4. The Arts and Cultural Tourism: An International Dialogue

The “authentic experience” is attractive not only to community members—it is also, significantly, a key driver of a major industry: tourism. In a conversation between Robert Redford and Robert Lynch, who was appointed to the United States Travel & Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB) by the US Department of Commerce in 2011, this concept of *authenticity*, as well as a community’s ability to tell its story with truth and presence, were vital to tourism—and to the arts, as ideal conduits for such storytelling.



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According to Redford, Sundance was always equal parts presentation and performance. “I had a community for the arts in my mind. I love all the disciplines. There was dance, there was music, there was film, there was theatre. I had the idea I could start all those things at the same time. It was also always a quintessentially nonprofit venture at its core. Yet the lesson Sundance teaches is that it is possible to create something authentic, something with a nonprofit heart and spirit, and still be both an economic driver and even, occasionally, a profit-making entity as well. In this changing economy, the flexibility to explore the options may prove to be one of the most important skills to attain as an arts community.”

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Robert Redford

For Redford, the process was slow: “I realized this was working. We are developing artists, and their films are getting made. But the mainstream still had them frozen out. Then I had the idea of a festival, to show one another our work, and talk about it in much this style. Park City, UT had infrastructure I didn’t have here [in Sundance], so we decided to do it there. It had a slow start. Well, maybe that’ll make it interesting (Mormon-country) and weird (winter). Borders dissolving around the world allowed us to bring films from other countries and other places, and then we could use films as a form of cultural exchange. That way, people could see how other people are

really living. There might be more truth in that than the propaganda coming out of governments around the world, including our own. This was all nonprofit. It was working. How can we put more out there so more people are aware of how effective this is? Sundance Channel, Sundance Cinemas...all were outgrowths of the original idea. You're now setting yourself up for how nonprofit and for-profit can exist in the same place. Why can't we create something that shows they can coexist? We're still in the throes of it; the resort makes money—revenue from skiing, food, beverages, etc. And the Institute thrives through its programs, while sitting on top of a revenue base. We can succeed in suggesting that profit and nonprofit can coexist, but in my heart, the important thing is the art of it all. I want to substantiate the idea that art is important—and that leads to why we cultivate partnerships with YoungArts. Who's going to be part of that future?"

Keri Putnam, Executive Director of the Sundance Institute, added some hard data. "Our festival takes place for 10 days in January in Park City. Every year we do an economic impact study with University of Utah. In 2012, we had 47,000 visitors and generated \$80 million for Utah. Out of the visitors, 66 percent were nonresidents of Utah—Canada, some neighboring states, and international comprise 5,700 visitors—so we still have a ways to go. We generate \$6.9 million in taxes, and \$63 million spent by visitors. In telling this story, the clarity and specificity of story of what this event is and what the festival is for: it's the authentic vision and out of the way. Authenticity and specificity of vision has allowed for us to connect with audiences over time. The place we struggle a lot is in the political environment: it took a while to learn how to build relationships with local and state government—that has been a huge learning experience for us. There is a certain amount of skepticism about the content, but the economic story and community work has helped make some inroads there."

"There is always danger in growth: in building a festival event, one of the challenges has been—as we have gotten more celebrities, sponsors, etc—it really was a challenge to stick on that vision and retain that authenticity and connect it back to the nonprofit vision we keep all year with new artists." Still, Cara Mertes, Director of the Documentary Film Program and Fund at the Sundance Institute, believes that the artists maintain that authenticity through the "impact and the power of nonfiction. That's true on the level of the stories themselves and the themes, but it's also about taking the values of the arts and risk-taking, and through the festival, we tell the story of the artists in our society imbuing our society with power."



Redford maintained that it is not always easy—but it is always the right path to stick to the authentic voice of the organization and the event: "the integrity of our vision had to stay, or it wouldn't be worthwhile. Sometimes people who came had nothing to do with who we were. As a result, the media began to focus on that, and they came to be seen in a different light from what we were. We've been blurred with what

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attracts the media. It is hard to maintain who you are, and it's important to maintain that humility throughout the process. It has been hard to maintain that initial vision.”

Particularly when adding a for-profit venture on top of the initial vision. Redford admitted to some anxiety in bringing on a for-profit layer to the organization, but Putnam asserted that there is “not much difference between running a good nonprofit and a good business. The innovative spirit of artists and innovation you can do when you're not tied to a big corporate concern—you can work in surprising ways. There are things we have been able to look at—distribution, sustainability, etc—these are areas at Sundance we've been able to make public-private collaborations. I love it—it's incredibly entrepreneurial. I hope no one in the room thinks working at a nonprofit is somehow more staid than working for-profit: I think quite the opposite.”

A highly apropos example of just such a hybrid organization is Brand USA, a public-private entity “established by the Travel Promotion Act in 2010 to spearhead the nation's first global marketing effort to promote the United States as a premier travel destination and communicate U.S. entry/exit policies and procedures.”¹ Brand USA has been a highly visible component of TTAB discussions on how to best promote tourism within the United States, and Lynch outlined some preliminary ways in which TTAB has thought it might be deployed.

Ty Stikorius, Founding Partner of Get Lifted Film Company, was particularly captivated by the opportunities such a partnership could create. She suggested the possibility of “tapping into that campaign, getting information, and packaging what we all have to offer in the arts and offering unconventional arts experiences. Packaging and marketing is a whole separate skill-set—a lot of us can create wonderful arts experiences, but the salesmanship of telling people outside our immediate communities can often take skills and money we don't have. So leveraging Brand USA is a great idea, and it's something a lot of us here could tap into.”

Lynch concurred that Brand USA has a great deal to offer to arts organizations, and went further to suggest that the conversation must include “the 100 national arts organizations we work with [at Americans for the Arts]. They come together around national Arts Advocacy Day—that's the group we need to work with to put collective energy behind it. There's also a trade association for tourism, and they do a massive conference for tourism worldwide. Every country, every state, and many different kinds of recreational activities are represented, but the arts aren't at that conference: should we all throw some money together and have a national US presence there?” It seemed clear to all involved that, as Lynch concluded, the “conversations here are just beginning.”

5. Screening and Conversation: *If You Build It (Formerly, Studio H)*

Moderated by Cara Mertes

The documentary *If You Build It (formerly referred to as Studio H)*, by Patrick Creadon, follows Emily Pilloton and her business partner and fellow designer, Matthew Miller, as they bring design

¹ Excerpted from the “About” Section of www.thebrandusa.com.

thinking and actual building skills to a high school in rural Georgia. The screening was followed by a spirited discussion and pushed the conversation late into the night. Many participants were captivated by the idea of the design process as an educational tool and a local economic driver: how we can imbue our children with the creativity to work through problems, simply by thinking about their structures or, as Emily put it, by finding what works and then asking, “How can I make that better?” The overwhelmingly positive message seemed to be that we are all capable of such thought—but it does not necessarily come naturally. Some things, we have to be taught, but the capacity for creative thinking is there—if only it can be unlocked.

VI. Breakout Sessions



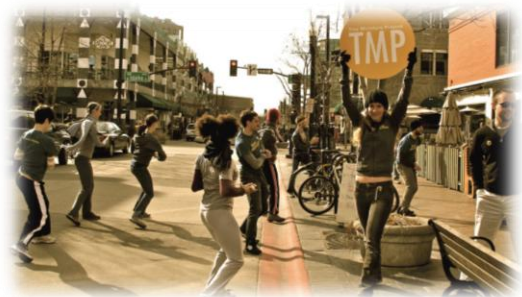
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So how can the arts, both old and new forms, help us to understand and leverage these changes in a meaningful way? Out of the Roundtable presentations, including sessions on metrics for arts impact, analysis of demographic shifts, and a ‘Bright Spots’ report from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, participants self-organized around themes that they identified as most pressing. Some were directly related to the question of economic impact embedded in “the remake” model and all were linked to the furthering the role of the arts as a powerful tool to achieve communities that thrive. These Breakout Sessions and Action Items unleashed the to-do spirit, and in rapid-fire fashion, each group developed a plan and suggested next-step strategies as follows:

Supporting Artists

This group focused on independent artists, the “sustainability of individual artists, and the creative process—as well as making it possible for them to create their art.” John Michael Schert, part of artist-led The Trey McIntyre Project, served as the facilitator for this group. The group suggested that a key first step would be building a consortium of organizations representing independent artists and bringing them together with a unified goal and brand.

The group’s most urgent action item is to “negotiate a group plan with a national healthcare provider” to cover independent artists. Artists may not be able to afford healthcare or are covered only because they have day jobs—and are not, therefore, able to sustain a life supported by art. The group also suggested future goals, including branding training for independent artists, supporting allocation of funds for the creative



Originally published in the Bright Spots Report,
Paul G. Allen Family Foundation

process rather than focusing on a deliverable, and sharing measurement techniques to provide a common understanding of how to gauge “success.”

Messaging: Choir and the Non-Choir

Facilitated by Marty Albertson, Chairman, Guitar Center, this group had the daunting task of taking a core question of the Roundtable—namely, “What do we want to say to the world about the arts community?”—and suggest how we can begin to address the issue of messaging. The group began with Americans for the Arts, and the power of its large umbrella. Because of the “tremendous number of constituents,” the group felt that Americans for the Arts holds a uniquely powerful role to “bring about a consistent message so that when we do speak, we speak with a simple and consistent brand.” To get to such a message, Ed Henry, President and CEO of the Doris Duke Foundation, suggested using an outside source to help the arts community get outside the norm of how we approach our problem-solving and our messaging.

The group also noted that it is not just about *what* we want to say, but also *to whom*. While they agreed that we do not want to just “preach to the choir,” it is equally unhelpful to doggedly lobby “non-choir members who are absolute nonbelievers, and who have no chance of considering what we want to tell them.” The key, then, according to the group, is to “reach out to the non-choir members who want to believe, and tell them that *they* can move the needle.” By using the talents of an outside agency, the group felt that we could employ voices that we have not reached over the past decades.

They found this to be particularly important in light of Dr. Manuel Pastor’s presentation on the changing demographics of America, and they internalized his message by bringing forward the idea of integrating more of those new voices in all levels of messaging about the arts, including at meetings such as this Roundtable.

The group was also clear about reaching out to those who do not already understand the vital impact the arts have on the economy. They noted that when people spoke at the Roundtable, there was “a lot of head-nodding. But we need more people saying, ‘No, I don’t understand—how does this have an impact on my economy?’” Consequently, the next question was one of delivery: how can we get this message out? One specific recommendation was to put together a group of influential people—people with the power to get others to listen—and have them get out and travel, speak to people, send emails, and “put them in front of audiences who have not yet heard the message, but who can help us advance that message.” They also asked the group to consider: “If you ran into someone in the hallway who would you really like five minutes with to hammer home the message?” These are the people we want to reach—the people with a “sphere of influence who can help us expand the message.”

Technology

The Technology Group was introduced by its facilitator, Senior Director of Citizenship and Public Affairs of the Microsoft Corporation, Akhtar Badshah, as “the smallest group—and that is the



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problem.” He noted in particular the “fear people have in embracing technology,” despite the fact that it is rapidly becoming the major “structure around us.” Instead of fighting against technology as a perceived destructive agent, the technology group suggested that a national discussion be convened, including creators of technology, funders, artists, and curators of art who “really need to embrace this technology so that they can better understand how the way art is displayed can be supported by technology.”



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Badshah was joined by his two other group members, Paul Lehr, Executive Director of The National YoungArts Foundation, and Dr. Ivor Royston, MD, Managing Partner of Forward Ventures, in volunteering their respective spaces for such a convening: Badshah offered Microsoft in Seattle, Lehr offered The National YoungArts Foundation’s space in Miami, and Royston a museum space in San Diego. Additionally, the group suggested that there is a need for research, analysis, and, most importantly, promotion of the Bright Spots in the field—in other words, specifically identifying and making available the good work that is already being done in both legacy and non-legacy institutions. The group also noted that the education space seems particularly ripe for technology training—not just in K-12 education, but also in college, when career decisions are made.

Research

Dr. Kathryn Graddy, Chair of the Department of Economics at Brandeis University, facilitated this discussion with the express assertion that “research has to have a purpose.” Her group’s recommendations stem from the need to get clear data which needs to be easily accessible—both in location and in the story it tells—to a broader demographic.



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This recommendation requires a few steps. First of all, the group would like to see a complete scan of current research, and then synthesize it into areas. These areas might include, broadly: Economy, Education, Society, Quality of Life—or they might be more or less specific, depending on the information that is found. Within those areas, the key points would be summarized, and a bibliography presented. The next step would be to create a database that could be analyzed by economists, and, simultaneously, a more vernacular media bank that would translate the information into lay terms for easier and wider messaging. The next steps would be dependent on the research that is found, but might include: identifying gaps and enlisting researchers to fill them, and continually doing new research and identifying successful new methods for messaging.

Education

Facilitated by Bill Kerr, President and CEO of Arbitron Inc., the self-directed charge for the education group was to “look to local arts support in the schools.” Rather than further

marginalizing arts education by asking for an essentially siloed subject (the “more and better” approach), the group hoped to tie their call for arts education into “fundamental changes in the nature and delivery of education in our society. They were careful to note that humility about what we can achieve is important, and that the Roundtable was not about a massive overhaul of the US education system. Instead, they took inspiration from the Bright Spots approach in their specific focus on “identifying a finite number of outstanding success stories and examples,” and noting how arts education serves to “energize and engage the unengaged by requiring individual choice and responsibility.”² The group recommended that such Bright Spots research be developed into a “set of best practices to be used by others,” and especially thought that such an effort required the “imprimatur of a major foundation or institution to bring credibility.” Returning to the idea of local support for the arts, the group felt that one of the best unexplored avenues is “successful engagement with a target group of mayors who would support these efforts in their own cities.” Bill Kerr committed to writing up the group’s findings, and all group members were eager to be involved in next steps.

Cultural Tourism

Inspired by Robert Lynch and Robert Redford’s discussion on Cultural Tourism earlier in the Roundtable, Ken Fergeson, Chairman, NBC Oklahoma, facilitated this group. Like many of the other groups, it suggested that research is the necessary first step. With Bob Lynch involved with Travel and Tourism Advisory Board which was created by the US Department of Commerce in 2011 coupled with the recently announced Brand USA CEO Christopher Thompson hailing from Florida, the group felt that Brand USA represented an ideal partner in promoting the importance of cultural tourism. Indeed, Redford noted that the word “brand” can be hard to deal with from an arts perspective, but he encouraged the general group to view it “as a positive thing,” and noted that we should not “be afraid of the word, ‘marketing.’”

Specifically, the group noted that it falls well with Americans for the Arts’ purview to push for research in this area, as well as in leading the charge to encourage the US to ratify a UNESCO Convention on Intangible Properties.³ The group recommended that the final product be a searchable online database that includes both sites and calendars for cultural events all over the United States.

² “Bright Spots Leadership in the Pacific Northwest.” Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and Helicon Collaborative, February 2012. <http://www.pgafoundations.com/Content/Reports/BrightSpotsLeadership.pdf>

³ “Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as [oral traditions](#), [performing arts](#), [social practices, rituals, festive events](#), [knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe](#) or the [knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts](#).” Excerpted from “What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?” (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00002>). For more information, see *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003* (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

The Lifespan of Legacy Institutions

Co-moderated by founding chair of the National Arts Policy Roundtable Marian Godfrey and Jeremy Nowak, this group discussed the problematic “frozen” quality of legacy institutions: that they are stuck in the past while others are innovating and actively engaging with the shifting expectations of audiences. Contributing an additional level of complexity, Thelma Golden added that a second generation of legacy organizations are nearing 40 or 50 years of age, which places yet another pressure on the oldest institutions—as well as sapping even more attention from the younger members of the organizational field.



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The group felt that the systemic problems are vast, but they saw value in philanthropic investment into: 1) Case studies of emergent solutions, including rethinking the canon, governance, business models and leadership, possibly using the Bright Spots model presented at the Roundtable and 2) A visioning process considering what the long-term future might look like. Marc Bamuthi Joseph proposed that only by looking out as far as 50 years- almost as an exercise in fiction or science fiction—will it be possible to truly mobilize the creative imagination and get beyond the limitations of our current thinking about the arts sector.

Diversity & Design Thinking

While there were no specific breakouts charged with these two topics, it is worth noting that almost all groups were deeply inspired by the concepts brought forth by Dr. Manuel Pastor and Emily Pilloton, respectively, as they considered their charges. Most everyone mentioned the need to expand our reach through messaging, which touched on the shifting world we are currently experiencing, and, more importantly, the decades yet to come. “Design thinking” is somewhat less concrete, but no less significant in the development of new ideas. Indeed, group members felt that thinking through problems with the design-mindset of “How do I make this better?” helped not only to formulate ideas within the Roundtable, but also provided a useful methodological framework for how the arts community can and should move its agenda forward on an increasingly complex economic terrain.

VII. CONCLUSION



“Shock and awe. We hear these words and phrases. I tried to take that apart and say, well, what is shock and what is awe? Shock: things are changing so fast that we can’t keep up—things are getting ahead of us, and it leaves us stunned. We’re not sure what to do with that. So what comes out of it is awe. The awe is using art as a positive agent for change. Art can play a

significant role in change—we're all committed to making that happen.” So began Robert Redford in his closing remarks at the Roundtable, and they serve as a powerful reminder that the arts still hold a unique place in our cultural consciousness. They help us deal with not only economic shifts, but also the seismic shifts in our social and cultural landscape that are both inevitable and immediate. Redford continued to break down into simplest terms some of the key issues brought up at the Roundtable. Specifically, that “we’ve all had to suffer the notion of art being treated as trivial pursuit or luxury. How do we break that apart? Randy Cohen, Trey McIntyre Project, and many others are in place—they’re telling us this incredible story about art as an economic developer, yet that word hasn’t gotten out to enough people. The story is sitting right in front of us with all the substance in the world. That leads to the role design can play: if you can draw a picture for people to see, sometimes that picture can get beyond words. Design is a positive thing, and it helps direct us on how to move talk and theory into action. This is the value of simplicity in the process—we all see the value of that—the simpler it can be stated, the better.”

The essence of the Roundtable truly came back to Jeremy Nowak’s original charge. Through the larger conversations and the smaller breakout groups, there was clearly no dearth of ideas—and no lack of complex, layered issues that will require a great deal more research and commitment before they will be solved. Yet the key issues of messaging and reaching new voices—and new ears—are, at their core, simple yet powerful manifestations of the idea of storytelling.

Jeremy Nowak, in his closing remarks, concurred. He noted that the group “did a pretty good job with the design problem,” but was also quick to say that there is still much to be accomplished and “a lot more to get done with the next steps. This conversation is really a conversation not just about the future of our culture, but about the future of America.”



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In this statement, Nowak suggests unquestionably high stakes for finding solutions in the arts community. In order to do so, he suggested, we need to “take ourselves even more seriously, certainly more than others sometimes take us.” In fact, it is imperative that the arts assert their essential role in the shifting economy, because that shift spans far beyond the narrow scope of the economy, ranging from demographics to technology and beyond. As such, the core of this changing world is not strictly tied to a dollar value; rather, it opens the door to a whole new conception

of what it means to engage with the world around us. Nowak asserted that the work done at the Roundtable was crucial “in terms of the issues of economic development, but more importantly, it showed how the arts are essential in constituting meaning, which is at the heart of all of this.”

In some ways, Nowak’s words can be applied not only to the Roundtable as a microcosm of the conversation, but also to the value of the arts as a whole. In speaking about the value of the arts,

Redford noted that “To make the creative process work—the future is with young people. They’re already speaking. We all owe it to young people to give them the reins, because they’re more than capable of taking them.” The value, then, is not just in how the arts can help us deal with the shifting world—the truth is that the arts are shifting too. The powerful idea that came out of the Roundtable is that we *do* have the power to direct that shift in a way that is fundamentally more involved than our ability to transform the economy or demographics. We can work with the world as it is, but the arts can be led to newer heights all the time. There is nothing fixed—only stories to tell and new ways to think through old problems. There is no more fitting place to end than on Robert Redford’s closing words: “Finally, what is it we can leave here with? The country is so wounded, bleeding, and hurt right now. The country needs to be healed—it’s not going to be healed from the top, politically. How are we going to heal? Art. Art is the healing force.”

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARTS POLICY ROUNDTABLE

The National Arts Policy Roundtable was launched in October 2006 by **Robert L. Lynch**, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, and **Robert Redford**, founder of the Sundance Institute, on the premise that issues important to the arts are also important to society. Since its inception, the Roundtable has convened more than 175 top level decision makers and thought leaders from the fields of business, government, the social sector, education, and the arts in a unique cross-sector forum designed to discuss issues and propose solutions critical to advancing American culture and vitality.

Each Roundtable yields a series of recommendations on public policies and private sector practices that are necessary to move the issue from thought to action. Past topics addressed include the future of private sector funding for the arts, the role of the arts in building a creative and internationally-competitive and 21st century workforce, fostering civic engagement, and in strengthening global communities.

The National Arts Policy Roundtable is the pinnacle convening of more than 100 meetings sponsored annually by Americans for the Arts—conferences that enable government and business leaders, scholars, funders, arts agency directors, and others to network, share knowledge, and proffer policies for consideration by the Roundtable. Policies recommended by the Roundtable are, in turn, circulated back to these networks for implementation.



For more information, visit www.artsusa.org/go/policyroundtable

About Americans for the Arts

With over 50 years of service, **Americans for the Arts** is the leading nonprofit organization committed to advancing the arts in America. Americans for the Arts believes that all the arts are critically important; that the arts are essential to the health and wealth of our communities; and that every American should have opportunities to experience the arts and arts education. Americans for the Arts works to achieve three “ends:” supporting the development of locally appropriate environments in which the arts can thrive; advocating for increased resources for the arts and arts education throughout America; and working hard to foster individual understanding of and appreciation for the arts. Americans for the Arts has four key program areas: research and policy; advocacy; professional development; and visibility. This work embraces a rich array of activities, including studies of the arts’ impact on our economy and the workforce; online networks and software tools that enable arts professionals to share knowledge with one another and citizens to communicate with their elected officials; conferences and specialized training workshops; and visibility programs. Americans for the Arts is committed to the excellence of its services and to their breadth and reach across all geographies, ethnicities, ages, educations, and levels of arts experience. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York, Americans for the Arts provides tailored services for its more than 26,000 members as well as free information, online advocacy tools, and research data to thousands of additional stakeholders all across the country, including local, state, and national arts organizations, government agencies, business leaders, individual philanthropists, and educators.



www.AmericansfortheArts.org.

About Sundance Institute

Sundance Institute is a global nonprofit organization founded by Robert Redford in 1981 to promote independent storytelling to inform, inspire, and unite diverse populations around the world. Through its six artistic development programs: Feature Film, Documentary Film, Theatre, Film Music, Native and Indigenous Program and the Sundance Film Festival -- the Institute seeks to discover and support independent film and theatre artists from the United States and around the world, and to introduce audiences to their new work. What began as a retreat for a handful of artists has today expanded to serve composers, directors, editors, playwrights and screenwriters worldwide. Each year, the Institute brings international artists to the United States to develop their work in uniquely creative ‘labs’ alongside American artists and under the guidance of acclaimed advisors, all experts in their fields. The Institute has also adapted this model for use in other countries, working with local partners to engage artists on their home soil. Internationally recognized for its annual Sundance Film Festival, Sundance Institute has nurtured such projects as *Born into Brothels*, *Son of Babylon*, *Amreeka*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Precious*, *Winter’s Bone*, *Spring Awakening*, *Light in the Piazza* and *Angels in America*. Institute alumni have gone on to win Academy Awards, Tonys, Emmys, Grammys, and the Pulitzer Prize.

SUNDANCE
INSTITUTE

www.sundance.org

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The 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable was facilitated by David Grant.

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APPENDIX A: National Arts Policy Roundtable participants

Kenyon Adams, 1999 YoungArts Winner in theater and US Presidential Scholar in the Arts

Marty Albertson, Chairman, Guitar Center, Inc.

Lin Arison, Co-Founder, National YoungArts Foundation

Akhtar Badshah, Senior Director of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Microsoft Corporation

Neal Baer, Producer, If You Build It; Baer Bones, Inc.

Kathleen Broyles, President, *The Milagro Initiative*

Randy Cohen, Vice President of Research and Policy, Americans for the Arts

Susan M. Coliton, Vice President, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation; Board member, Americans for the Arts

Anita Contini, Arts and Culture, Bloomberg Philanthropies

Patrick Creadon, Director, "If You Build It"

Christopher J. Daggett, President and CEO, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Ken Ferguson, Chairman, NBC Oklahoma, and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Americans for the Arts

Christine Forester, Principal, Christine Forester Catalyst

Marian Godfrey, Founding Chair, National Arts Policy Roundtable

Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator, Studio Museum in Harlem

Dr. Kathryn Graddy, Chair, Department of Economics, Brandeis University

David Grant, National Arts Policy Roundtable facilitator

Nora Halpern, Vice President of Leadership Alliances, Americans for the Arts

John W. Haworth, Director, National Museum of the American Indian- New York; Board member, Americans for the Arts

Edward P. Henry; President and CEO, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

Harry Hersh, Board of Trustees, National YoungArts Foundation

Frank Hodsoll, Principal, Hodsoll & Associates; former Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts

Bill Ivey, Principal, Global Cultural Strategies; former Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts

Stephen Jordan, Senior VP and Executive Director, Business Civic Leadership Center, US Chamber of Commerce

Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Artist, spoken word and performance; Director of Performing Arts, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

William T. Kerr, President and CEO, Arbitron Inc.; Board member, Americans for the Arts

Kelley Kessell, 2012 YoungArts Winner in voice and U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts

Joe Lamond, President and CEO, National Association of Music Merchants

Paul T. Lehr, Executive Director, National YoungArts Foundation

Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO, Americans for the Arts

Timothy J. McClimon, President, American Express Foundation; VP for Corporate Social Responsibility, American Express Company; Board member, Americans for the Arts

Cara Mertes, Director, Documentary Film Program and Fund, Sundance Institute

Matthew Miller, Studio H Instructor, ProjectHDesign

Olivia Morgan, President, OM Strategies

Da'Shawn Mosley, 2012 YoungArts Winner in writing and Presidential Scholar in the Arts

Christine O'Malley; Producer, "If You Build It"

Jeremy Nowak, Chair, 2012 National Arts Policy Roundtable and President, William Penn Foundation

The Honorable Michael A. Nutter; Mayor of Philadelphia

Dr. Manuel Pastor, Director, Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California

Emily Pilloton, Founder, Project H and Instructor, "Studio H"

Keri Putnam, Executive Director, Sundance Institute

Robert Redford, Founder and President, Sundance Institute

Colette Carson Royston, Partner, Carson Royston Group

Dr. Ivor Royston, MD; Managing Partner, Forward Ventures

John Michael Schert, Executive Director, Dancer & Co-Founder, Trey McIntyre Project

Dennis Scholl, Vice President/ Arts, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Rona Sebastian, President, The Herb Alpert Foundation

Annette Evans Smith, President and CEO, Alaska Native Heritage Center

Jon Spector, President and CEO, The Conference Board

Michael Spring, Director, Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; Board member, Americans for the Arts

Gary P. Steuer, Chief Cultural Officer, City of Philadelphia, Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy

Ty Stiklorius, Partner, Get Lifted; Board member, Americans for the Arts

APPENDIX B: Featured Reports

Arts & Economic Prosperity IV, Summary Report. Americans for the Arts, 2012.

http://www.artsusa.org/pdf/information_services/research/services/economic_impact/aepiv/AEP4_NationalSummaryReport.pdf

“Bright Spots Leadership in the Pacific Northwest.” Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and Helicon Collaborative, February 2012.

<http://www.pgafoundations.com/Content/Reports/BrightSpotsLeadership.pdf>