Association of Performing Arts Presenters

PLACING THE ARTS AT THE HEART OF THE CREATIVE CAMPUS

A White Paper taking stock of the Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program

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Executive Summary

Artists today are increasingly leaving their stages and studios to work in new ways. They are working with artists from other disciplines; with community partners; with health professionals; and with a broad range of educators at every level. This interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral work is partly the result of a change in the nature of artistic careers, with artists driven to opportunistically work in many capacities and in multiple jobs in order to piece together work. But it is also the result of changes in *how* artists choose to work and create, and changes in the nature of artistic projects being conceived by performing arts presenters and their campus and community partners. Paralleling the rise of the omnivorous arts consumer, we are also witnessing omnivorousness among artists and curators who are inspired to work outside of narrow disciplinary boundaries.

Against this backdrop, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, with a grant of $3.5 million from the Doris Duke Charitable Trusts, created the Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program. The grant program was designed to seed innovative, interdisciplinary programs that brought together artists with a range of community and campus-based partners in order to stimulate arts-based inquiry and elevate the role of the arts in academic life. Over a six-year period, fourteen campus based performing arts presenters received grants, all of which involved one or more artists-in-residencies.

The grant program yielded important insights into the nature of interdisciplinary arts-based inquiry and the challenges and possibilities such collaborations encounter on university and college campuses. This white paper unpacks these insights and raises the question of what might be next as artists and arts presenters explore and expand their role on campuses and in communities.

First, campus-based arts presenters are being pulled into interdisciplinary projects by the interests of artists themselves, the changes in audience expectations, and growing grant support for interdisciplinary work in higher education more generally. They are also being pushed into working in new ways in order to remain relevant in a 21st century world that increasingly requires interdisciplinary approaches to solving complex social, scientific and cultural problems.

Second, in spite of the incentives for campus-based arts presenters to work across disciplines and to become better integrated into the curricular and co-curricular life of campus, there are significant cultural and structural barriers that make such work difficult. Budgets, facilities, selection processes, and professional norms all work against innovative programming that places other goals (learning, engagement, conversation, community building) above more narrowly conceived notions of curatorial excellence. Furthermore, institutional structures and academic practices, from tenure to course review and scheduling and budgetary silos, also discourage faculty and other campus partners from embracing arts-based interdisciplinary inquiry. And, differences in language, culture, and styles of working complicate all interdisciplinary exchange on campus, and arts-based inquiry is no different.

In short, interdisciplinary work of any kind faces significant “transactions costs” – it is difficult, time intensive, uncertain, and risky. A third key finding of the white paper is that the arts, and

specifically the work of performing arts presenters, can help overcome these challenges and barriers.

The white paper distinguishes between cooperative projects and collaborative projects – the first involves multiple parties sharing a common goal but not integrating methods, tools, concepts or theories; the second involves more intense partnerships that require shared language, trust, and a "restructuring" of knowledge and practice. While Creative Campus projects fell into both categories, the truly collaborative projects proved most transformative for both participants and the larger campus.

The arts are particularly effective partners when it comes to deep collaboration because they create what scholars call "trading zones" – spaces where people can exchange ideas and learn from one another without the same external pressures tied to extrinsic rewards and strict disciplinary practices. The arts contribute to these trading zones in unique ways – they build "play" and improvisation into the creative process; they embrace ambiguity and uncertainty; they use story and metaphor to produce mutual understanding and bridge cultural differences. Moreover, artists are often project driven rather than discipline driven and process oriented rather than product oriented.

Few entities on a university campus can "own" interdisciplinarity. As a result, such work often happens in fits and starts and is rarely woven into the fabric of campus life. Campus arts presenters are structurally positioned to be brokers and catalysts because they often have an explicit mandate to work across campus boundaries. The Innovations Grants helped presenters take up the mantle of interdisciplinarity in new ways, crossing disciplinary boundaries, connecting new partners, building trust, and seeding the ground for future collaboration.

Fourth, arts-based inquiry not only creates spaces for new types of interdisciplinary collaborations, but it also fosters deep, reflective, and critical learning. Drawing on the learning sciences, the white paper discusses the diverse "modes of inquiry" fostered by the arts, including divergent thinking; careful noticing and pattern recognition; empathic reasoning; bodily and kinetic intelligence; and elaboration and imagination. The arts also promote "affective learning" by stirring passions and evoking emotional responses from students; they foster "epistemic curiosity" by embracing ambiguity and helping students work through puzzles where the final solution is unknown; they embrace "doing" and help students learn through active participation and experience; and they provide a platform for students to engage in difficult conversations around political and moral issues.

Fifth, arts-based interdisciplinary inquiry requires and encourages a more opportunistic, interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to artistic decision-making. 21st century curators will be called upon not only to select and organize arts programs, but to diagnose need in their communities, seek out new and unusual settings for their work, forge partnerships with a wide array of disparate stakeholders and, in some cases, cede a certain amount of artistic control in order to gain broader impact. In diagnosing community needs, curators must develop anthropological practices of deep listening, that include being sensitive to differing values, underlying tensions and conflicts, and differences in aspirations and motivations. The 21st century curator must be skilled in the art of translation, deploying the creative process to create multi-directional exchange between artists, scientists, doctors, engineers and other intellectuals. The curator must build and exploit network capital, developing dense and trusting relationships,

connecting people who do not typically work together – massaging egos, negotiating conflicting interests and managing ambiguity and uncertainty.

Most importantly, presenters must become more intentional, critical and creative about their own process of artistic decision-making. In short, 21st century curators must be open to new ideas, new networks, new technologies and new aesthetics. They must seek out critical feedback in order to continuously revise and update their programs to account for new artistic influences, changing community needs, and evolving ideas about what is working is what is not.

Sixth, while the type of arts-based interdisciplinary exchange described in the white paper requires arts presenters to recast themselves in a new role, it also requires a new breed of artists who are vitally engaged in research and discovery, mindful and articulate about their creative process, open to critical reflection, and who can bridge disciplines and interact with people from different backgrounds. Arts training programs, as well as those who manage artists' careers, need to rethink how they can best help artists expand their portfolio of skills to include facilitation, community engagement, teaching, and enabling the creative capacities of others.

Finally, while the 14 Innovation Grant campuses offer inspirational models integrating the arts into community, campus and academic life, they leave us with the all-important question of "what's next?" How can this type of exchange and deep creative exploration become more routine on college campuses? Answering this question will require more rigorous research into what works and doesn't work when it comes to arts-based interdisciplinary inquiry; it also requires a broader conversation among faculty and administrative leadership about what was learned from the Innovations Grants and how the arts, and the presenting field, can be partners in transforming learning on the 21st century college campus.

Introduction

This paper takes stock of the Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program, a six-year, $3.5 million grant initiative administered by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, the national service organization for performing arts presenters, with funding support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The overall goal of the program was to support exemplary campus-based performing arts presenters in developing programs and strategies beyond conventional practice that integrate their work across the academy, with the ultimate goal of elevating the role of the arts in academic life.

While the grant program focused on campus-based multi-disciplinary presenters, many of the lessons learned apply equally to presenters that are unaffiliated with higher education. In reading through this text, non-academic presenters may substitute “community” for “campus” to draw relevant analogies. In fact, many of the topics and ideas explored here will apply to artists and arts organizations across disciplines, both presenters and producers. The basic precepts of the creative campus – including interdisciplinarity, arts-based inquiry, and exploration of the creative process – can and must become central to arts organizations of all kinds, not just academic presenters.

Through a highly competitive award process, 14 campus-based performing arts presenters received funding for a diverse array of interdisciplinary projects. Grants of $100,000 to $200,000 were awarded in two rounds, one in 2007 and a second in 2010. All of the projects involved one or more artist residencies, and some involved commissions.

Over 170 campus presenters submitted applications for the second round of funding, from which panelists selected 31 semi-finalists, who were provided small grants to further develop their proposals. In exchange, Arts Presenters gained permission to publish profiles of the semi-finalist proposals. The resulting publication, *Creative Campus Sketchbook: 31 Proposals from Round 2 of the Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program*, available from the Arts Presenters website, illustrates a deep level of interdisciplinary thinking in the presenting field.

In preparing this paper, we drew from a number of sources, including scholarly literature on creativity, networks, collaboration, and the learning sciences, as well as an evaluation of the first round of grants.[1] Our charge was to address key questions arising from the grant initiative and consider the larger implications for the presenting field. What is the future of arts-based interdisciplinary exchange? What is the benefit of the artistic lens? How can the arts be used to build social capital on campuses and in communities? What does this say about how the role of the presenter has changed? What does it mean to be a 21st century curator of performing arts presentations?

[1] The full text of Wolf Brown’s evaluation of the first round of grants may be downloaded from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s website.

In addressing these questions, we hope to challenge the presenting field - including artists and presenters, both academic and non-academic - to forge new partnerships and make new connections between the arts and other fields of study, and to explore and awaken the creative process of students, faculty and community members.

Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program

2007 Grantees (Round 1)
Carolina Performing Arts, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Center for the Arts, Wesleyan University
Hancher Auditorium, University of Iowa
Hopkins Center for the Arts, Dartmouth College
Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture, Hostos Community College of the City University of New York
Lied Center of Kansas, University of Kansas
Lied Center for Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Stanford Live, Stanford University

2010 Grantees (Round 2)
Carpenter Performing Arts Center, Cal State University – Long Beach
Center for the Performing Arts, Penn State University
Cuyahoga Community College
Peak Performances, Montclair State University
University Musical Society
Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University

For more information about the Round 1 and Round 2 projects, see www.creativecampus.org.

What is a "Creative Campus?"

The creative campus movement places the arts at the center of academic life.[2] We use the term "arts-based interdisciplinary exchange" to describe the nature of dialogue on the creative campus, such as when a choreographer works with an environmental scientist to produce a new work about climate change. The 14 funded projects offer numerous other examples of "arts-based interdisciplinary exchange," including:

- A choreographer working with a hospital on new physical therapy software (Troika Ranch/University of Nebraska)
- A theatre company working with architecture and urban planning students on a play about neighborhood decay and renewal (The Builder's Association/The Ohio State University)
- Artists performing and working with history and philosophy students on issues surrounding censorship (California State University, Long Beach)

[2] The Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program grew out of the March 2004 American Assembly meeting at Columbia University, where more than 60 arts and higher education leaders gathered to examine the factors that characterize effective partnerships in education and the arts, and the projects, proposals, curricula, and creative forces that make such partnerships work. A report on the 2004 Assembly convening may be accessed here.

Are projects like this an intellectual extravagance afforded by an ambitious funder, or might they become the norm? Can the arts flourish in today's society without an interdisciplinary focus?

Arts organizations, if they are to remain vital, need to play a more central role in the intellectual, emotional and social lives of their communities (Brown, 2012). Multi-disciplinary performing arts presenters, because they are able to draw on a wide array of artistic resources, have a special role to play in this evolution, particularly those on college campuses. But arts groups of all sorts must rise to the challenge of increased relevance and responsiveness.

The imperative for change is equally strong from the perspective of education. Traditional modes of instruction are inadequate for helping students solve problems – economic, social, political, cultural – in an increasingly complex and interdependent world. Social and cognitive scientists find increasing evidence that the arts provide a way of exploring, perceiving, analyzing and transforming the world that is well suited to today's challenges.

Old Barriers, New Demands

For the past two decades, arts leaders and advocates have raised concerns about whether the arts, especially the nonprofit fine arts, are losing "relevance." Data show that young people are increasingly opting out of attendance at traditional art forms in favor of more homemade, community-oriented, interactive, and spontaneous forms of participation (Stern, 2011). Boundaries between artistic disciplines are breaking down, as well as boundaries between professionals and amateurs, audiences and artists, process and product, and between commercial and nonprofit sectors. Moreover, audiences are revealing a pent up demand to see the artistic process unfold in front of them (Connor, 2007).

As the very nature of participation shifts under our feet, performing arts presenters are increasingly called to rethink their role in community life, and to re-examine how they curate programs. Aside from the shifting sands of demand, other aspects of the environment in which arts presenters operate have also changed. Society is demanding interdisciplinary capacity and "whole brain thinkers" to innovate and solve complex problems (Mills & Ottino, 2009). The most vexing social and scientific problems such as population growth, poverty, education and global warming can only be addressed through multiple disciplinary lenses. As a result, the amount of grant funding for interdisciplinary work has increased in recent years,[3] and higher education is calling on scholars to do more interdisciplinary work (Tepper, 2004; Taylor, 2009). This is both a

[3] Typical of these grant programs are the National Science Foundation's various interdisciplinary research programs.

financial and political opportunity for artists and arts organizations, if they can be seen as voices in a larger dialogue.

Against this broader backdrop, there are new demands for campus presenters to forge curricular ties and justify their impact on campus, especially those that receive university subsidies. This mirrors a larger shift in the national funding ecology towards “creative placemaking” and other grant programs that reward arts groups for integrative programming that addresses social inequities and community development goals.

And while arts advocates assert that art plays a crucial role in the creative development of communities and the nation, our understanding of how, exactly, the arts contribute to creativity in other domains lags behind this assertion. While a small cohort of artists and university arts programs explore the intersections of art and other disciplines, a large majority of the country’s presenters and producers of performing arts programs – opera, classical music, jazz, dance, theatre and multi-disciplinary presenters – remain committed to finely tuned missions and business models that more or less exclude interdisciplinary work – much less work across artistic genres. There are notable exceptions to the disciplinary silos, especially in the realm of contemporary art centers. But the infrastructure of nonprofit arts groups, by and large, is well organized around disciplinary boundaries. In fact, when the different performing arts disciplines came together in 2008 to try to forge a collective action agenda, observers noted that differences in dress, language, style, and goals often stood in the way of effective collaboration (Long Lingo, Taylor and Lee, 2008).

If the arts sector is to play a leadership role in society, then a serious rethinking of the disciplinary organization of the arts infrastructure is needed. Multi-disciplinary performing arts presenters on college campuses, with their expansive artistic palette and access to intellectual resources, are uniquely positioned to take up the cause of interdisciplinarity. But many factors inhibit the efforts of presenters to be more responsive and more “present” in their campuses and communities:

- Financial imperatives often lead to the selection of artists and artistic works that are ill suited for deeper levels of engagement;
- The economics of touring can work against the needs of presenters to have artists spend enough time in communities to make deeper connections.
- The theaters and concert halls used by some presenters were not designed to promote social interaction or civic discourse;
- Some presenters are stuck in a decades-old programming formula that is difficult to break without sufficient risk capital or new creative energy;
- The processes by which artists are selected can be insular, especially when decision-making authority is overly centralized.

Others barriers to interdisciplinary work result from disputes over credibility and professional status. All professional fields are rife with what sociologists refer to as status competition—disagreements over who gets to “count” as a professional and whose work is deemed central and whose marginal. These status disputes are particularly acute in the arts (Becker, 1982) where there are fewer institutionalized standards (e.g. state licensing that determines who can practice). On campus, these status issues surface between presenters, faculty artists, and guest artists. They also surface when artists and arts presenters worry about losing artistic credibility if

the products of their collaborations with non-artists fail to meet professional expectations. And, of course, credibility issues arise between artists and other scholars, with lines drawn around what is considered "real" research.

Professional norms in the presenting field can work against innovative programming that places other goals (learning, engagement, conversation, community building) above more narrowly conceived notions of curatorial excellence. This is exacerbated by hiring practices overly influenced by peer recognition. In short, presenters have few incentives to upend conventions and invest in projects and collaborations that might not achieve needed recognition from other professionals in the field.

Finally, arts presenters and campus-based artists struggle with an institutional culture in higher education that is often at odds with their core beliefs and practices. Sociologists argue that different institutions in society are organized around different belief systems that influence how people act, what rules they follow, what goals they pursue, and what outcomes they value (Friedland and Alford, 1991). They refer to these systems as "institutional logics." As an example, the logic of capitalism – the accumulation and commodification of human activity – is different from the logic of government, which focuses on regulating and rationalizing human activity. In examining the arts and higher education, we see that we have two competing institutional logics. For example, the arts value novelty, personal expression, passion and emotion. Artists also embrace messiness and ambiguity and place great emphasis on the process of creativity, not just the final product. The arts resist quantification and measurement and they embrace craft and tacit knowledge more than rule-bound methods that can be easily written down in texts. Higher education, on the other hand, is organized around a logic of efficiency, quantification, and bureaucratic accountability. Rather than favoring novelty for its own sake, academics are much more interested in incremental discovery, repetition and variations on a theme. Higher education values a "scientific rationality" that dismisses emotion, passion and self-expression. Higher education values authority and hierarchy whereas the arts value independence and rebellion. These competing logics help explain the perceived "gap" between the arts and the rest of campus, with arts faculty and presenters often feeling marginalized and less valued than other disciplines and domains.

In sum, conditions are ripe for a new era in the presenting field, both on campuses and off. Despite increasing demand for interdisciplinary thinking, there are many cultural, economic, and structural barriers to working across disciplines. To address these barriers and gain a more secure footing, the presenting field urgently needs a new focus on creativity in programming and better approaches to interdisciplinary work.

What is Interdisciplinarity, and Why is the Artistic Lens so Important?

Within the academy, there is a growing awareness of the need to rethink our approach to knowledge and creativity. Many believe that academic and intellectual silos are simply not up to the task of meeting and addressing the pressing economic, social, and scientific challenges we

face. The creativity and innovation necessary to solve non-routine problems requires interdisciplinarity. Moreover, new technologies drive opportunities for exchange across disciplines that were not possible in the past. And, student learning and engagement thrive when teaching is organized around student interests and real world problems rather than narrow disciplinary perspectives. Finally, big grants from government and investments in research by industry increasingly require universities to assemble interdisciplinary teams. These forces have led critics and reformers to argue that universities must adapt, calling for the end of departments as we have known them for the past 100 years (Jacobs, 2009).

Interdisciplinarity can take many shapes, but a widely shared definition includes research, teaching or creative collaboration that "integrates content, data, methods, tools, concepts, and theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge in order to advance fundamental understanding, answer questions, address complex issues and broad themes, and solve problems that are too broad for a single approach." (Klein and Schneider, 2009). Two forms of interdisciplinarity include cooperation and collaboration (Richards, et al, 2001).

1. **Cooperation** is based on people working together toward a common goal, sharing information, but otherwise working fairly independently, each focusing on a set of tasks for which they have experience and expertise. Cooperation could involve computer scientists translating the sketches of an artist into an animated sequence -- the final product required the cooperation of people in two different fields, but it did not require them to integrate methods, tools, concepts or theories.
2. **Collaboration**, on the other hand, typically requires individuals from different disciplines to work intensively together. Collaboration tends to be more open-ended -- goals are often unclear, ambiguity is high, outcomes are unknown, and participants must develop shared language and ways of working together. Collaboration requires time, patience, openness and flexibility.

Collaboration is much harder than cooperation. Cooperation has been characterized as *bridge building* (connecting two or more areas that remain relatively unchanged by the connection), whereas collaboration involves *restructuring* (a new coherent whole).

Creative Campus projects fell into both categories. Those initiatives that were truly collaborative produced the most meaningful exchanges, innovative outcomes and enduring relationships – and also encountered the biggest challenges. Ultimately, working across disciplines requires disrupting routines in how we work – where and when we meet; how we develop and present ideas; our methods for sharing information; our criteria for selecting new ideas; and our styles of working. Additionally, interdisiplinarity faces significant language barriers as each discipline and domain of knowledge use different words and symbol systems to express their ideas. With time, most language barriers can be overcome. But, as Myra Strober argues, "What is much more difficult is coming to understand the way colleagues from different disciplines think—their assumptions; concepts; categories; methods of discerning, evaluating, and reporting "truth"; and styles of arguing— their disciplinary cultures and habits of mind." (Strober, 2010, p. 4)

While talking and working across disciplinary cultures is difficult under the best conditions, university structures and conventions pose additional challenges. A few notable problems include:

- An administrative structure that creates budgetary silos within departments (with less money to allocate centrally and across units);
- Inflexible guidelines and burdensome faculty review processes that inhibit approval of new programs, courses, and initiatives;
- Unfavorable policies for receiving workload credit for faculty who team teach or work on interdisciplinary projects;
- A rigid administrative and academic calendar that discourages open ended projects that don't fit within clearly demarcated time units - e.g., courses, semesters, academic year, summer month;
- General reliance of overload and volunteerism, with little work release for faculty to pursue new projects or collaborations;
- Tenure and promotion processes that punish junior faculty for working in non-traditional areas and for collaborative work for which they can not take sole credit; and
- Lack of central oversight for interdisciplinary work; no one on campus is responsible for continuously seeding the ground and cultivating collaborations; projects tend to be one-off initiatives by highly motivated faculty or staff, with little sustained follow up (Klein and Schneider, 2009).

Cooperation vs. Collaboration

Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture linked two major Afro-Caribbean cultural festivals to offerings of Hostos Community College's Office of International Programs and the College's Humanities Department. Students from the College's existing summer Study Abroad programs were trained to serve as "cultural guides" and docents for public school classes attending the Center's Afro-Caribbean cultural festival. This was a *cooperative* effort between the presenter and academic units to enrich the education of students and enhance the value of the public arts events.

Montclair State University's Peak Performances partnered with the University's Research Academy for University Learning to develop a Creative Thinking course with an interdisciplinary group of faculty to become an ongoing part of the university's curriculum. The course focuses on the process of creation and the commonality of creativity across disciplines. The project required faculty professional development in course methodology and the development of an artist residency model that established the presenter as a campus-wide resource for creative engagement – a good example of *collaboration* with a long-term outcome.

How can the arts, and specifically the work of performing arts presenters, help to overcome these barriers?

First, many interdisciplinary projects are motivated by the competition for prestigious grants and commercial investment, especially in the sciences. Such high stakes projects offer great rewards, but come with significant costs, including a high-pressure context that can undermine free and creative collaboration. On the other hand, the arts can create what scholars call interdisciplinary "trading zones" (Gorman, 2010). By focusing more on the creative process and drawing on participants' intrinsic motivation to participate (rather than external rewards of status, recognition, profit), arts-based interdisciplinary inquiry can produce a space where people can "exchange ideas, learn from one another, and, having traded, return to their disciplines, richer for the experience and bearing tangible rewards in the form of improved research and teaching practices and products" (Morreale & Howery, 2002).

The arts contribute to these trading zones in unique ways.

- **Artists build "play" into the creative process.** Whether drawing with free-form gestures or playing improvisational theater games, artists jump start creative work through activity that is fun, unrestrained, subversive, whimsical, and free of a specific goal. This type of playful environment is critical for the early stages of interdisciplinary work – it allows participants to role-play, develop trust, and learn different interactive styles without the pressure to compete and perform. This does not mean that arts-based inquiry is not serious or that it doesn't ultimately produce serious work. The point is only that artists and the artistic process offer a distinctive advantage in terms of creating the context for a successful *trading zone*.

- **Artists are open to experience and tolerant of ambiguity.** A defining feature of creative collaborative work is that the process is uncertain and the outcomes are unknown in advance. Artists routinely work under such conditions and, with some reflection, can help their colleagues see opportunity and creativity in the face of ambiguity rather than stress and anxiety.

Interdisciplinarity in Practice

Troika Ranch dance company was commissioned, as part of the Lied Center - University of Nebraska project, to research and develop a new work around a "resonance of violence" theme. The piece, "loopdiver," was highly influenced by the company's work with patients at the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital where researchers and staff used their combined expertise in technology and rehabilitation, to develop a new tool for recovery, A.R.T., which allows patients to express themselves artistically during rehabilitation exercises. Local Teaching Artists, trained in using Isadora by Coniglio and Stoppiello, delivered Community Academy courses to children in two community centers, focusing on visual arts, dance, music and movement in conjunction with technology.

Jazz composer/trumpeter Dave Douglas and filmmaker Bill Morrison visited the Stanford campus for four residency periods to collaborate on their new work *Spark of Being*. The artists worked with faculty and students in Stanford's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) to explore the relationship between neuroscience and music – a process which contributed to other interdisciplinary projects and activities as part of the overarching project theme of Art + Invention.

- **Artists are good at analogizing and using metaphor.** A key way in which groups can overcome language and cultural barriers is to develop strong metaphors and analogies that allow them to jointly understand a common problem or topic. Artworks often offer scenarios that are not "real" in the sense that they involve situations, imaginary settings, or invented characters. Moreover, critiquing an artistic presentation can be impersonal; we can have ideas about an artistic treatment without revealing deeply personal beliefs or without taking a difficult political stand. This "unreal" aspect allows us to be more playful when discussing a piece of art – to explore issues at one level removed from reality. In some ways, we can use art to rehearse our own ideas about things – our beliefs, values, judgments – that are still uncertain in our heads. Michael Gorman at the University of Virginia observes that the development of metaphors can "help groups of people from disparate backgrounds think about a problem in the same way." Through analogy and metaphor, the arts can provide a particularly supportive context and neutral ground for difficult conversations. Several of the Creative Campus projects used art to help constituents with differing views find a common language and outlook (e.g., UNC's season-long exploration *Criminal/Justice: The Death Penalty Examined* and Dartmouth's focus on *Class Divide*).

- **Artists are problem driven, rather than discipline driven.** Many artists are open to using a variety of resources to solve whatever artistic puzzle they are working on. They look laterally to other disciplines and fields and borrow tools, concepts and ideas. Artists, faced with limited funds and materials, are resourceful, often using whatever materials and space are available. They enter creative collaborations and are open to the possibility of imaginatively reusing and adapting other people's ideas, methods and materials. This type of openness and resourcefulness is extremely valuable when working on interdisciplinary projects, especially in the early phases.

- **Arts-based inquiry is often process oriented, rather than product oriented.** Scholars have found that interdisciplinarity requires time and trust. Participants must enter the process as explorers and take sufficient time to develop shared values and methods of inquiry, auditioning ideas, participating in continuous feedback loops, and allowing ideas to be radically reformulated. They must also be willing to take risks together and fail. Ultimately it is this process of struggle and affirmation that produces the greatest learning and builds the strongest foundation for future collaboration.

Taking in other's perspectives, what scholars called empathic learning, is especially important for helping students deal with difficult issues and engage in difficult conversations. A recent study funded by the Teagle Foundation indicates that students are hungry to engage in conversations about difficult political and moral issues, but find that the norms governing campus life and classroom behavior often discourage such conversations (College of St. Benedict/St. John's University, 2007). Moreover, many students do not have the disposition or the skills to engage in such discussions -- they are apt to take things personally, or to enter conversations in a spirit of competition rather than cooperation; others are stuck in a spiral of silence and exhibit "flight behavior," avoiding difficult conversations or changing the subject. Still others are so sensitive to norms of civility that they avoid confrontation and produce instead an "inauthentic" consensus.

Emphasis on Creative Process

Several of the Creative Campus projects were notable for their emphasis on the creative process.

- At Cuyahoga Community College, composer and violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) wrote a songbook based on themes from The Epic of Gilgamesh intertwined with the stories of people from Cleveland. Local artists and performers were invited to reinterpret songs in Roumain's Project Gilgamesh Songbook, which served as a creative platform upon which others would create new work. Submissions included all forms of performance, written, multimedia and visual art. Chosen participants had the opportunity to perform on stage in a public performance hosted by DBR.

- At Penn State University, faculty and students in the departments of architecture, engineering, and dance, realized that their methods of inquiry, discovery, development and application were not in sync with the soon to be produced culminating performances on campus and in the community. As a result, the presenter at PSU established a team of departmental representatives from across the academy to produce guidelines for interdisciplinary projects and programs going forward.

One of the biggest challenges for sustained cross-disciplinary work on a college campus is that "no one owns interdisciplinarity." Innovative interdisciplinary work emerges in fits and starts on a campus based on funding opportunities and enthusiastic faculty who rise above the routine and the institutional barriers to pursue an idea with colleagues from other departments. But these efforts are not built into the daily fabric of a campus. They are almost always "extra" and difficult to sustain. Scholars have found that some central oversight is necessary to keep the current of interdisciplinarity coursing through campus life (Klein, 2009). In short, there needs to be a campus leader who wakes up everyday with the goal of connecting new people across campus and seeding and fertilizing innovative cross-disciplinary projects. Many of the Creative Campus grantees stepped into this role on their campus, working with scholars from a wide range of disciplines from philosophy to medicine. In some ways, campus presenters are structurally positioned to be brokers and catalysts. While some campus presenters report directly to the provost, others are based in schools of art or in student affairs, but have an explicit mandate to work across campus boundaries. In short, presenters are one of the few actors on a university campus that can take up the mantle of pushing the interdisciplinary boulder up the hill everyday.

When advancing interdisciplinary work, past scholarship suggests a few strategies to increase the likelihood of success. First, work with faculty and staff who have already demonstrated interest in interdisciplinary work. In spite of the challenges to work outside of one's discipline, Klein finds that ''if you look beneath the surface you often find people who have been covert boundary crossers all along. The complexity of their lives and interests belies the ''relative linearity of their departmental careers.'' Creative Campus grantees discovered many such "boundary crossers" in high-level administrative positions as well as in academic departments as diverse as mathematics, environmental sciences, and medicine. Future creative campus and

community leaders must search out the "covert boundary crossers" on campus and in the community.

Similarly, presenters should look to existing interdisciplinary programs as core allies and resources. Likely candidates for fruitful collaboration include such interdisciplinary programs as women's studies, American studies, Jewish studies, African American studies, digital humanities, health and society, environmental studies, science and technology studies, and media and communication departments. Several of the creative campus projects drew heavily on such partnerships, such as the Carpenter Performing Arts Center's collaboration with the Center for the First Amendment, and Peak Performances at Montclair's partnership with the Research Academy for Universal Learning (RAUL).

Finally, given that interdisciplinary work is often an "add on" for faculty, presenters should consider strategies to create relatively easy alternatives for faculty to try out arts-integrated learning. In other words, where possible, creative campus programming should "meet" an existing pedagogical need or interest of the faculty member. For example, presenters could assemble a group of artists to serve as a "swat team" – working with faculty to introduce arts-integrated instruction into ongoing courses. Several of the Creative Campus grantees, including Tri-C Presents at Cuyahoga Community College and Penn State's Center for the Performing Arts, successfully engaged faculty by providing simple ways of experimenting with arts-based inquiry. "Lowering the bar" in this fashion can attract new enthusiasts for longer, more sustained collaborations in the future.

The Unique Value of the Artistic Lens

The arts not only facilitate interdisciplinary exchange but they also have profound effects on learning. What do the learning sciences say about arts-based inquiry and arts integration?

As presenters seek partnerships across campus, they implicitly build on the assumption that the arts can enhance learning and discovery in diverse contexts, an assumption not always shared widely by colleagues across campus. As an example, in an early Creative Campus Task Force meeting at Vanderbilt University, a professor of physics and member of the committee was asked if he would be willing to give up one class period to bring in a dancer who could offer students a novel approach, using techniques of dance, to explore a class-related theory or empirical puzzle. His negative reaction was revealing. He said that he would not work with an artist because his challenge was to get his students to master a body of knowledge in a short amount of time. He remarked, "We need to focus on rigor, not on artistic flourishes." This underscores former NEA chair Bill Ivey's prescient observation that the arts are often seen as "grace notes," – decoration – rather than "bass notes" – essential elements (Ivey, 2008).

If arts presenters are to make lasting inroads into the curriculum, they need to draw upon the growing body of research in the learning sciences suggesting that arts integration can catalyze learning and accelerate higher order thinking. Scholars have provided definitive evidence that the arts produce educational benefits for students, especially for younger children. But much of this work is grounded on the theory of "engaged learning." In short, the arts add fun, play and sizzle. When subjects like math, science and history are infused with the arts, students stay more engaged in the material and are more likely to persist, stay focused, and learn. But this type of "bait and switch" approach to arts integration – get students hooked with the arts and

then delivers the important information – does a disservice to the arts and ignores mounting research that suggests the arts do much more than engage students with bells and whistles.

Research suggests that the arts spur deep, reflective, creative and critical learning in several important ways:

1. **"Connections in all directions."** In 1983, Howard Gardner advanced a new theory that challenged the prevailing idea that there is a single general intelligence. Instead, he argued that there are multiple forms of intelligence and that different students learn using different mental muscles. These forms of intelligence include: logical-mathematical, spatial, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential. But, rather than thinking of students as endowed with different capacities, Gardner's theory also helps us consider the possibility that deep and critical learning requires all students to draw on multiple forms of knowledge, often simultaneously. The arts, as it turns out, often draw on multiple forms of learning, forcing students to make connections in all directions and thereby enhance higher order thinking skills. A comprehensive review of arts integration finds: "In essence, our data suggest a picture of thinking in the arts wherein a set of cognitive competencies such as elaborative and creative thinking, fluency, originality, focused perception, and imagination demand the ability to take multiple perspectives, layer relationships and construct and express meaning in unified forms of representation" (Burton et al, 2000, p252). Many of the Creative Campus grant projects engaged student participants in such tasks as seeing and noticing; making and crafting; expressing and persuading; collecting and connecting; organizing and collaborating; and critiquing and revising. These diverse modes of discovery are staples of the type of "inquiry based" learning that rigorous arts integration provides. From philosopher John Dewey to arts education specialist Elliot Eisner, the past 50 years of research has demonstrated that learning is strengthened by such diverse and layered experiences and modes of inquiry.

2. **"I can't learn it if I don't feel it: Affective learning and the power of emotions."** In *Phaedrus*, Plato argued that emotions stood in the way of the pursuit of knowledge and truth (Jaggar, 1989). Since, educators have largely ignored emotions and focused on "reason and rationality" as the primary way students learn about the world. More recently, however, advances in neuroscience, psychology and cognitive science have found that "emotion and affect" are critical dimensions of learning, not only because they are sources of motivation, but also because they guide rational thinking, memory retrieval, decision-making, creativity, and reasoning. As Picard has written, "When basic mechanisms of emotion are missing in the brain, then intelligent functioning is hindered" (Picard et al, 2004, p1).

   It goes without saying that the arts have a distinct capacity to produce powerful emotions, an asset that other disciplines can effectively draw upon. Emotion is often triggered by empathetic imagination (putting oneself in other's shoes), by vivid and aesthetically strong images, by compelling narratives that reveal human struggles and by placing students in "flow" like situations where they are focused, motivated and personally engaged in a challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Several of the Creative Campus programs provoked strong emotional responses from audiences and participants, including medical students at the University of Michigan and students involved in the creation and performance of *Eye*

Piece at University of Iowa, who gained a new appreciation for the challenges that society offers to the visually impaired.

3. **Epistemic curiosity.** Educators often overlook the importance of curiosity in the learning process. If students are not curious about a topic or subject, it is nearly impossible for them to get beyond mere information transfer to deep and reflective knowledge (e.g. moving from knowing to understanding). In the learning sciences, psychologists refer to the desire for new information that motivates students to explore and seek answers and new meanings as "epistemic curiosity" (Berlyne, 1954). Scholars have found that epistemic curiosity is associated with the positive feelings associated with the <u>anticipation</u> of learning something new and is aroused by "novel questions, complex ideas, ambiguous statements, and unsolved problems, all of which may point to a 'gap' in one's knowledge, and reveal a discrepancy between that which one knows and desires to know. John Dewey's *Art as Experience* reminds us that the essence of the aesthetic experience is this sense of "undergoing" and exploration – suspense and uncertainty. And, cognitive scientists, examining images of the brain, have confirmed that the power of artistic response comes about in part because the brain is in an "anticipatory state" – seeking some harmonious resolution, asking itself such questions as "What will happen next?" "Will I be surprised?" "How will this be resolved?" (Grafton and Cross, 2008). Creativity scholar Barry Kudrowitz has found that engaging in theater exercises, like improvisation, can lead people to come up with more creative ideas (Kudrowitz and Wallace, 2010). We can safely conclude that epistemic curiosity and exploratory activity are spurred by art and humor (Berlyne, 1954). Many of the Creative Campus projects engaged students in anticipatory learning – working through a puzzle where the final solution was unknown and where students were continuously surprised and motivated to keep exploring. These included the Lied Center of Kansas' *Tree of Life: Creativity – Origins and Evolution* project, and The Wexner Center's HOUSE / DIVIDED project with The Builder's Association, which pursued questions around foreclosure and displacement in an era of economic malaise. Curiosity is not the exclusive domain of the arts, but in many of the Creative Campus projects, artists helped stoke curiosity about a topic, theme or creative process -- keeping students engaged and "wanting to know more" or "what's next."

4. **Doing <u>is</u> Learning.** Education has suffered from the false division, popularized by Descartes in the 17th Century, that the mind is distinct and independent from the body. This Cartesian dualism (mind verses body) provides the justification for our belief that knowledge is best gained when students sit quietly and motionlessly at their desks for hours on end. Learning is about thinking, not doing. Of course, an alternative exists. Two hundred years after Descarte, Immanuel Kant remarked, "The hand is the window on the mind." Richard Sennett's recent book <u>The Craftsman</u> explores this link and shows that we possess an "intelligent" hand – by working with materials we activate our brains and we embed knowledge (Sennett, 2008). Learning is deepened when we have to demonstrate something, build something, and struggle to bring into alignment an idea with the physical world. Sennett argues that epistemic curiosity (see above) is motivated by our interest in changing things. As opposed to passive classroom learning, when we learn with and through the arts, we have the opportunity to "change something" – to use our bodies, along with our minds, to transform an object or a space.

> Creativity scholars Robert and Michele Root Bernstein (1999) call this type of kinetic intelligence "body thinking." They write, "We humans tend to over intellectualize, forgetting that our bodies 'know' how to do things that we understand only after we have done them" (161). The Root-Bernstein's then go on to profile artists, scientists, engineers, and mathematicians whose physical engagement with materials helped them make creative and imaginative leaps by honing their intuition, critical thinking, and ability to detect patterns while responding and adjusting to continuous feedback through the use of their bodies. In fact, sometimes just observing physical activity, like watching dancers, can activate the same areas of the brain that are activated when we creatively solve problems. Scott Grafton, a scientist who has worked with the Dana Foundation, believes neuroscience is increasingly demonstrating that creativity, motivation and social intelligence can be bolstered by physical learning in the classroom and that the arts can be a key player in this regard.
>
> At Wesleyan, the incorporation of dance into academic pursuits enabled students to 'embody' learning about a topic through movement. Other Creative Campus grantees and their partnering artists used a variety of physical experiences to aid learning and research, such as Anne Galjour's work with Dartmouth students on the *Class Divide* theme, and media artist and Isadora software developer Mark Coniglio's work with physical therapy patients at the University of Nebraska.

In some ways, interdisciplinary exchange is antithetical to the deeply entrenched structures and mores of academia. It requires power sharing and a certain element of risk, which some faculty members are unwilling to wager. But a rising tide of research and practice suggests that the benefits of interdisciplinary work are too large to ignore.

Curating for the 21st Century

As arts groups look more deeply into their communities for legitimacy and creative material, they will require artistic leaders (i.e., curators) with different skill sets.[4] Curators will be called upon not only to select and organize arts programs, but to diagnose need in their communities, seek out new and unusual settings for their work, forge partnerships with a wide array of disparate stakeholders, and, in some cases, cede a certain amount of artistic control in order to gain broader impact.

This "new model" of curation is not universally understood or accepted, and is frequently dismissed as inevitably leading to the "dumbing down" of art. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Some have said that the shift towards crowdsourced artistic content will obviate the need for curators (Shirky, 2008). To the contrary, we believe the need for skilled artists and curators

[4] We use the term "curator" to refer to any artistic decision-maker within a nonprofit arts organization. In a performing arts presenting organization, this would typically refer to the programming director (in a larger organization) or executive director (in a smaller organization).

with deep knowledge of their art forms – and their communities – will only grow. Old and new approaches to curation can live side by side. What seems clear is that the old value system in which the authority of the curator is prized is being replaced by a new value system that invests more authority in the collective wisdom of crowds, and that requires a more opportunistic, interdisciplinary, and collaborative approach to artistic decision-making.

What does "curating differently" look like in practice? Creative Campus grantees used different strategies to engage campus and community partners in arts-based interdisciplinary projects. These included:

- Using extended planning periods to cultivate interest
- Convening advisory groups and committees to explore themes and consider programming alternatives
- Pairing visiting artists with faculty and community artists
- Facilitating exchange between artists with non-artist faculty
- Integrating artistic elements into existing campus-wide teaching initiatives
- Using RFPs to solicit campus-wide involvement in contests and other activities
- Integrating off-campus community involvement into artistic projects
- Leveraging media resources (e.g., film students) to broaden participation

Building a more creative campus, or a more creative community, is the 21st century curator's new job description. We see five skill sets as central to their success.

1. Diagnostic Skills

The 21st century curator is both a diagnostician of community need as well as a researcher of artistic possibility. To remain relevant, arts organizations must be increasingly facile making artistic choices in a community context. This requires a new level of organizational listening skills, an ability to diagnose and prioritize issues, and an ability to consider and shape artistic programs through this community lens.

A curator might ask, "What issues present a challenge to a high quality of life in my community? What are some of the key problems that different people in my community face? What values and aspirations motivate people in my community? What conversations are missing from civic discourse? What artistic resources can I bring to these conversations?" There are as many contexts as there are arts presenters.

The needs of a community, of course, can be endless, and can easily overwhelm an arts presenter with limited resources. Moreover, a community's needs can change literally overnight. Consider, for example, how Carolina Performing Arts' community context changed on March 5, 2008, when Eve Marie Carson, the popular president of the student body, was murdered.

How can arts presenters balance their artistic aspirations - and the financial realities of their marketplace - with community need? Balancing these often competing value systems is a constant give and take, and is at the very heart of the curatorial process. The strength of the

process depends on a shared and fluid articulation of community context. What is your process for understanding community context? Who is doing the listening? Where, on your campus and in your community, are your receptors? How responsive can you be to changes in context?

The Creative Campus grants provided a rare opportunity for a cohort of 14 campus presenters to further understand and cultivate a larger context for their work on campus. Gaining this level of context, however, does not necessarily require a large grant, but does require curators and their colleagues to spend time in the community asking questions and building networks, much as anthropologists work to understand a culture or community.

In order to assure the relevance of their organizations, 21st century curators must develop the skills to diagnose and understand community need and then refract that knowledge through their artistic vision and core capacities.[5] This is not to ask the community what it wants, but to frame programming decisions in a community context, and to position the institution at the heart of civic discourse. Everyone in an arts organization, from ticket sellers to senior staff, and from board members to advisory committees, can play a role in this diagnostic work.

2. An Interdisciplinary Perspective

The 21st century curator is a thought leader who can make interdisciplinary connections and who is facile in working with artists, researchers and scholars in different ways.

In order to be fully realized, arts-based interdisciplinary exchange must be at least bi-directional if not multi-directional. Artists not only provide insight to scientists, doctors, engineers and other intellectuals, but artists must also learn from them. This two-way process is passionately described by Harvard engineering professor David Edwards in his 2009 book Artscience: Creativity in the Post-Google Generation (Edwards, 2009). At their core, scientific and artistic research processes can be quite similar and can enhance each other. Artists' work can be enriched by incorporating a scientific perspective, and creativity is an important element in scientific inquiry. The creative process is at the heart of arts-based interdisciplinary exchange – being open to new ideas and new ways of looking at things.

Interdisciplinary exchange necessarily involves people with different perspectives looking at their work through different lenses. The process of refracting one's view of the world through someone else's view, particularly when the 'refracted view' is unfamiliar or challenging, can open up new vistas and fundamentally advance knowledge. When the refracted view is that of an artist, creativity is at the center of the dialogue, and learning is possible on multiple levels. To this end, the 21st century curator will be a catalyst of intellectual discourse on campus and in the community.

[5] One such effort to build a process for "deep listening" and collaborative programming is currently underway in Brooklyn, NY, through the Heart of Brooklyn consortium's Building Strong Community Networks initiative, funded by The Rockefeller Foundation and Institute for Museum and Library Services.

The 21st century curator will curate not only artists, but also community dialogue. Many of the Creative Campus projects served the goals of interdisciplinarity by using the power of "themes" to motivate and engage a variety of perspectives on campus. A powerful theme can help students expand their "semantic networks" or idea space – the association and connections of ideas and understandings we bring to an issue or topic (Ogle, 2007; DuGay, 1997). In the case of UNC, offering multiple perspectives on the death penalty helped the community get beyond a relatively narrow set of political positions in order to understand the historical context of the death penalty: issues of inequality and race; philosophical and ethical treatments; depictions of the death penalty by artists and writers; and the economics of the death penalty. But, to serve the goals of exposing people to a wider semantic network, individuals must participate in multiple programming threads.

Themed programming is not only a powerful tool to expand thinking, but also an effective strategy for quickly taking an interdisciplinary initiative to scale, as was demonstrated so clearly at UNC, but also at Dartmouth, CSU-Long Beach, and Kansas. Themed initiatives provide hooks on which a variety of departments and individuals can hang their own intellectual robes. Without the long and difficult work of creating a potentially transformational, collaborative project, campus partners can still feel like they are part of a big undertaking and the entire set of programs benefits from the publicity generated by the sum of the parts. Deploying a widely relevant and engaging theme can create an ethos of collaborative learning and generate a shared-sense of exploration and discovery.

3. Knowing How to Build Network Capital

The 21st century arts presenter is a central node in a vast network of creative thinkers. A primary role for the curator is the ability to forge and sustain partnerships both inside and outside of the arts. This requires a broad knowledge of community resources and a diffuse and diverse network of colleagues. At the heart of the 21st century presenting organization is a network of institutionalized relationships that the curator can activate to create new programming and strengthen the social fabric of the community.

Developing, sustaining and mobilizing networks for creative purposes requires what Long Lingo and O'Mahony describe as brokerage work or "nexus work." (Long Lingo and O'Mahoney, 2010) Importantly, brokers help bridge "structural holes" (Burt, 2004). A structural hole is a missing link in a social network – if no one in sociology knows anyone in the art department, then it is unlikely that sociologists and artists on campus will find one another to collaborate, unless of course someone who knows people in both departments fills the structural hole. According to Long Lingo and O'Mahoney, brokers "1) make parties on either side of the structural hole aware of each other; 2) transfer knowledge from one group to another; 3) draw analogies from one group to another; and 4) synthesize ideas from multiple sources."

Synthesizing ideas into a larger whole requires careful relational work. Collaborators always risk losing something -- power, resources, freedom, reputation -- when they work with others. Brokers or nexus workers massage egos, negotiate conflicting interests, manage ambiguity and ultimately move the creative process forward, balancing the challenge of both generating new ideas and having to synthesize, edit and select among them.

Managing "networked creativity" within an organizational context can be extremely difficult, and requires a delicate balance of emotional, political, and managerial intelligence. Working collaboratively takes a lot more time and effort than working singly, and it is easy to underestimate the level of effort required (i.e., what some have called "the collaboration tax"). But it is a critical skill of the 21st century curator. As arts presenters learn to work with diverse partners from different corners of their campuses and communities, they will accumulate "network capital." This work of bringing together people who might not otherwise work together creates social traces across campus, pathways along which other work and ideas can flow in the future. Ultimately, the 21st Century curator must measure success by the social and intellectual exchange they foster, not just by the tickets they sell, the press they receive, and the quality of the performances they present.

A New Resource for Curators

Recognizing a need for professional training in performing arts field, Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts, under the direction of Pamela Tatge, established the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance (ICPP) in 2010. The program brings together artists, curators, scholars, presenters and cultural leaders to encourage innovative and relevant curatorial approaches to presenting time-based art.

The ICPP Professional Certificate Program encourages emerging curators to enrich their understanding of intellectually rigorous, innovative and artist-centered curatorial models. Instructors provide theoretical and practical tools for students to deepen their research methodologies through reading, writing, viewings and discussion.

For more information, see http://www.wesleyan.edu/cfa/icpp/index.html

4. Being a Student of Creativity and Innovation

At the heart of arts-based interdisciplinary work is the creative process: artists sharing their creative process with others; students learning about their own creative processes; faculty learning how to expose and integrate creative thinking into curricula; businesses seeking more robust creative approaches to product design; and arts presenters seeking a higher understanding of creativity in programming.

In his 2009 monograph, "Thriving in an Uncertain World: Arts Presenting Change and the New Realities," Ken Foster argues that arts organizations should behave more like artists: "...we need to let go of the rigid businesslike approach that so many of us have adopted (strategic planning, systems of efficiency, linear thinking, quantitative evaluation) in favor of creativity, experimentation, flexible organizational structures and systems that respond more easily and more quickly to a changing environment, intuitive thinking and qualitative evaluation." (Foster, 2009) Just as an artist's success lies in the strength of his or her creative process, an arts presenter's success lies in the strength of its curatorial process.

Often, however, discussions about the *process* of artistic decision-making are sensitive, awkward or taboo. In fact, these discussions are potentially the most important ones that arts groups can have – providing opportunities for board members, staff and other stakeholders to talk about the curatorial process at a high level without getting inappropriately involved in day-to-day decisions. To what ends do we offer programs? What is our process for generating new

programming ideas? Is our pipeline sufficiently full? How are different alternatives evaluated? What is the process for identifying and evaluating potential partners? How are conflicts and disagreements negotiated? What types of feedback loops are in place? What capitalization structure will support our curatorial process? These are essential policy level questions in any arts organization.

Chief among the curator's skills is an ability to manage a healthy programming process – a robust and inclusive process of artistic decision-making, the product of which is a full pipeline of creative programming ideas. This is the stock in trade of any arts organization, just as any successful business relies on a healthy product development pipeline.

The creative output of a performing arts presenter goes well beyond the artistry of hired artists. There are many layers of creativity: creativity in the way that programming ideas are generated through peers and community networks; creativity in the way that artists are sourced and engaged; creativity in matching artists with audiences; creativity in designing enrichment activities that support artist engagements, etc. Too often successful curators and producers resort to notions of instinct and "gut feeling" when defending their decisions. But, stronger conceptualization of the curatorial process is needed if the presenting field is to reach its next level of relevancy and public support. Presenters must be intentional, critical, and creative about their own process of artistic decision-making.

If arts presenters are to behave more like artists, as Foster suggests, then curators would be well served by studying the creative process of artists—a process that includes listening and gathering data, idea generation, evaluation and feedback, synthesizing concepts, revision, communicating ideas to relevant collaborators and supporters, advocating and defending one's ideas, and gathering necessary resources and support to see a project through to the end. The Creative Campus grantees designed many opportunities for artists, students, scholars and community members to reflect on their creative processes and share insights. Of particular note was Montclair State University's effort to design a new course on creativity, with the aim of exposing students from all disciplines to the underlying principles of creative thinking. These include: divergent thinking; being able to make unlikely associations or links between ideas; empathetic reasoning; metaphorical reasoning; tolerance of ambiguity; receiving critical feedback and radical revision.

The 21st century curator seeks a deeper understanding of the creative processes of artists, audiences and arts organizations.

5. Openness to New Ideas and Critical Feedback

The great impresarios of the 19th and 20th centuries such as Sol Hurok and Rudolf Bing amassed power through their ability to dominate the marketplace through exclusive relationships with artists and presenters. Presenters, by virtue of their relationships with key artist representatives, became impresarios in their communities. To be successful, they didn't need to diagnose need, build networks, or study creativity. They just needed enough influence and money to score dates on the touring calendars of famous artists. "Curating" was for museums. The only feedback that mattered was the box office.

Of course, not all presenters idealized the impresario role or had deep enough pockets to buy top-level artists. As the presenting field became better organized in the 1960s and 1970s, initially through the efforts of college and university presenters, a new value system emerged that prioritized educational and community outcomes, and the development of artists. The number of professional touring artists proliferated, as well as the number of artist managers and booking agents. As artist fees increased, presenters increasingly looked to their communities to support engagements by artists without familiar names, and found themselves in a far more dynamic exchange with stakeholders. Success was defined not only in terms of securing dates with established artists, but in developing audiences for a wider range of artistic experiences, often through campus and community partnerships.

As information is democratized, “experts” in fields as diverse as medicine, economics, and culture are increasingly open to challenge. How does the expert preserve legitimacy in this flattened information economy? The 21st century curator derives power and legitimacy not only from knowledge in a scholarly sense, but also from a socially validated definition of “expertise” in line with current thinking about communities of practice (Wenger, 1999). In this new sense, legitimacy grows from an ability to facilitate group action, and expertise is a function of knowing how and when to activate one’s networks.

Increasingly, curators are distinguished not by how much they know, but by how quickly they learn and adapt. Once again this points to the growing importance of interdisciplinarity in making sense of the complex world we live in. Twenty-first century curators, working at the intersections of art forms and disciplines, will be open to new ideas, new networks, new technologies and new aesthetics - even while they work to preserve old ones.

As presenters interact with a wider array of campus and community partners and become more dependent on a wider circle of stakeholders for legitimacy and support, a strong critical feedback loop becomes essential. This goes well beyond the funder-driven accountability requirements typically associated with grants. Presenters will increasingly depend on high quality feedback from audiences, programming partners and community stakeholders to enhance their public value. “Are we meeting your needs? How are you impacted by our programs? How could our creative process be improved?” High quality feedback loops are not only a good management technique, but are essential to a healthy creative process (Milliken, Bartel and Kurtzberg, 2003).

The Changing Role of Artists

This paper focuses on the evolving role of university presenters and new, more engaging approaches to curating artistic programs. Any discussion of these ideas, however, would be incomplete without considering the implications for artists.

The 14 Creative Campus grantees used artists to explore and engage a wide variety of topics, themes and constituencies. Artists co-designed and co-taught courses with faculty members from other disciplines. They set new work on student ensembles. They collaborated with faculty artists. They received feedback on work-in-progress from students. During sustained residencies

of up to several years in length, they visited campuses repeatedly, often staying for a week or longer, researching, teaching, creating, performing and interacting with all sorts of constituents.

Throughout this work, artists were asked to talk about, demonstrate, and reflect upon their creative processes. At Kansas, visiting artist David Balakrishnan, founder of the Turtle Island Quartet, played excerpts and talked about his musical ideas in front of an audience as his *Tree of Life* work was being created. At Dartmouth, Hostos and Iowa, students were deeply engaged in the artists' creative process, and often embraced as collaborators. This kind of access to the innermost thought processes of an artist offers a rare and valuable opportunity for young artists in search of a better understanding of their own creative process.

Fostering this sort of dynamic exchange can be tricky. There are layers of vulnerability and bona fide privacy issues. It's one thing to ask an artist to talk about the inspiration behind a new work. It's another thing entirely for an artist to be openly questioned by other artists about a work-in-progress, especially when the outcome of these discussions may change the work.

Should artists be expected to openly share their creative process? This is a deeply personal matter, in part because it places artists in the potentially awkward position of having to explain the unexplainable, such as why they made certain creative choices. Explaining one's creative choices is at the very heart of artistic collaboration, and therefore a core capacity. Even amongst artists who collaborate, however, the degree of negotiation and vulnerability to each other's ideas varies a great deal. As with any other type of human relationship, the boundaries and terms of engagement must be discussed and negotiated.

If creativity is the future of the American economy, then where can young entrepreneurs, scientists, and artists learn about the creative process? The urgency of this question has yet to impress academia, although there are some encouraging signs.[6] When the conditions are right, professional artists who share their creative processes can change the course of a student's creative development. This high level of impact was observed among the student cast of *Eye Piece*, Rinde Eckert's theatrical work mounted at the University of Iowa, where the students played a central role in Eckert's creative process.

If the 14 Creative Campus projects foretell the future of what the presenting field needs from artists, then a new day is dawning. The ability of presenters to engage their campuses and communities will increasingly depend on a new breed of artists – artists who are vitally engaged in research and discovery, mindful of their creative process, open to critical reflection, and who can bridge disciplines and interact with people from different backgrounds. This signifies a radical transformation in the role of artists from virtuosos to enablers and facilitators. To be successful in this new landscape, artists must achieve not only technical mastery, but must also speak and write about their work, and, ultimately, learn to awaken the creative voices of others through innovative approaches to teaching, collaborating, curating and engaging. Similarly,

[6] ArtsEngine, begun at the University of Michigan in 2006, is an example of the emerging, but still nascent, focus on arts-based interdisciplinary exchange.

presenters must shift from a philosophy of "bringing great art to people" to "enabling the creative capacities" of students, faculty and other members of the community.

This shift will slowly break down historical relationships between artists and booking agents, as presenters learn how to engage and employ artists in new ways. Presenters will learn to act more like producers. And the training programs that prepare young artists for professional careers will need to substantially re-think their curricula, much as the New England Conservatory of Music has done with its Entrepreneurial Musicianship initiative.

A Call to Action

The need for arts-based interdisciplinary thinking is not just an academic mandate. Shifting patterns of cultural tastes are deconstructing long-held definitions of art forms. As culture becomes more and more of a mash-up of genres and forms, the public has become more interested in artistic work that crosses boundaries (e.g., Cirque do Soleil). This is a wonderful but scary opportunity for arts groups, especially multi-disciplinary presenters, who must now consider breaking free of organizational and disciplinary silos and grow more comfortable programming cross-genre and inter-disciplinary work.

The Creative Campus initiative represents another milestone in the long arc of evolutionary change in the presenting field. Conventional approaches to presenting touring artists will continue to serve presenters and their audiences. But an alternative approach to presenting, one in which artists and curators become partners with leaders in other fields, continues to rise. In short, we see interdisciplinary work as a way that presenters can build stronger ties with their communities and claim more legitimacy in their authorizing environments.

Looking forward, and with the benefit of the experience gained from the 14 grantees and other early champions of arts-based interdisciplinary work, we must ask tough questions. Is arts-based interdisciplinary exchange always going to be a resource-intensive proposition, and therefore dependent on large-scale funding, or are there less expensive approaches for addressing creative campus goals? Assuming there won't always be resources for presenters to bring in artists for extended residencies, how, then, can creativity be made more visible on campus? Several of the Creative Campus projects achieved significant scale of impact through local partnerships and by offering fun, widely accessible but inexpensive activities like contests. Some grantees accomplished much through one-off projects, while others used their grants to establish more ongoing relationships that continue to pay dividends.

Are performing arts presenters the ideal vehicle for advancing interdisciplinary work? How can arts-based interdisciplinary work be moved into the mainstream of academic life? While arts presenters can play a catalytic role in the creative life of campus and community, they are not the only place where the Creative Campus ideals can take root. Arts-based interdisciplinary exchange may be championed by faculty, as with the Stanford Institute for Creativity and the Arts (now the Stanford Arts Institute), or by a policy center or research institute such as the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University, which sponsors an integrated, ongoing Creative Campus initiative to elevate the role of the arts in academia.

Creativity, of course, is not a domain to be owned by any single player on a campus or in a community. It is a common ground where diverse people from different backgrounds and scholarly fields can meet to cross-fertilize each other's questions and ideas. Solving the most vexing economic and social problems, and innovating the products and services that will raise our quality of life, requires "whole brain thinkers" who are capable of understanding the world through different lenses and from multiple vantage points. Arts presenters, if they wish to be regarded as indispensible partners in academic and community life, can and must take up the challenge of arts-based interdisciplinary exchange and in order to become catalysts of creativity in the 21st century.

# # # # # #

About the Authors

Alan S. Brown, principal of WolfBrown, is a leading researcher and management consultant in the arts and culture sector. His work focuses on understanding consumer demand for cultural experiences and on helping cultural institutions, foundations and agencies to see new opportunities, make informed decisions and respond to changing conditions. His studies have introduced new vocabulary to the lexicon of cultural participation and propelled the field towards a clearer view of the rapidly changing cultural landscape. He has written extensively about audience behaviors, trends in cultural participation, and the value system surrounding arts programs.

Steven J. Tepper, Ph.D. is associate director of the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and associate professor in the department of sociology at Vanderbilt. Prior to Vanderbilt, Tepper served as deputy director of the Princeton University Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies. Tepper's research and teaching focuses on creativity in education and work; conflict over art and culture; and cultural participation. He is author of *Not Here, Not Now, Not That! Protest Over Art and Media in America* (University of Chicago, 2011) and co-editor and contributing author of the book *Engaging Art: The Next Great Transformation of America's Cultural Life* (Routledge 2007). As a leading writer and speaker on U.S. cultural policy, Tepper's work has fostered national discussions around topics of cultural engagement, everyday creativity, and the transformative possibilities of a 21st century creative campus. Tepper also serves as director of research for the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, a national initiative to track the lives and careers of arts graduates in America.

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Critical Response: Thor Steingraber

Blurring Boundaries

Whether on a college campus or in a major city, presenting organizations find themselves at a perilous moment. Every aspect of the performing arts business is undergoing seismic shifts, and only those organizations that are agile and able to adapt are likely to persevere.

Brown and Tepper make a thorough and compelling case identifying the forces pushing and pulling along the fault lines. They also illustrate that solid ground can be secured in adopting interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration. But their analysis is not only relevant to the Creative Campus. It is relevant to the sector at large. In fact, their article surveys the terrain on which the entire arts sector is built.

Time-honored definitions no longer suffice in guiding the work of arts professionals. *High* and *low, presenting* and *producing, participatory* and *observational, professional* and *amateur, art* and *entertainment, formal* and *informal* – these dualities are baked into organizational practices, but they no longer suffice in a marketplace in which cultural consumption and tastes have left these old models behind.

At The Music Center, we constantly strive to erase the boundaries that define presenting. As the Vice President of Programming for The Music Center in Los Angeles, my job is chiefly to oversee presenting in five distinct programmatic areas. However, our most successful days at The Music Center rarely resemble arts presenting in any traditional sense. As an early adopter and leader in participatory programming, The Music Center's Active Arts program engages individuals who would never otherwise visit our venues. As the operator and programmer for Grand Park, 12 acres of outdoor venue, every program addresses new audiences with new formats. And even the program most closely aligned with traditional presenting, Dance at The Music Center has constructed its current season to include an exhibition, a symposium, and an interactive digital installation.

In Search of an Economic Model

Interdisciplinarity is alive and well at The Music Center. But we've only begun to unearth the many possibilities. Why?

Many of the same obstacles that Brown and Tepper describe in their article present similar challenges in non-academic settings. And certainly the challenges inherent in bringing together individuals from varied disciplines are reality anywhere. But there is another reason that interdisciplinary projects are not more ubiquitous – a reliable economic model is unclear at best, and not viable at worst. Here are three facts that support this assertion:

1) The most successful arts presenters have long relied on a combination of earned revenue and contributed funding. Organizations with a favorable ratio of earned over contributed dollars have long been deemed the most stable and successful. In fact,

many arts organizations have purposefully changed their programmatic mix to include more popular entertainment with the sole purpose of generating more earned revenue.

2) Arts organizations are chiefly non-profit entities with scarce capital for innovation and a low tolerance for risk. There is no such thing as venture capital, and an "investment mindset" is anathema to experimental program development.
3) Funders are typically drawn to specific types of projects -- individual funders to art forms they love, and institutional funders to programs that have specific outcomes. The most innovative interdisciplinary programs may not easily trigger support along these traditional lines.

In short, investing in risky programs without clear funding sources or a reliable revenue stream will stress even the sturdiest organization. Without diminishing the success or importance of the projects funded by Creative Campus, a single project or program can only make a finite impact in shifting the paradigm. Building a long-term and robust set of interdisciplinary offerings requires a broad institutional foundation capable of supporting risk, investment, innovation, a new mindset, and new funding sources.

Responding to the Imperative

Some days at The Music Center we are emboldened, and some days we are not. But we are not deterred by these many obstacles. Why?

We must keep up as the marketplace of cultural consumption races forward. That means building a bigger tent. Many arts organizations historically focused a disproportionate amount of their attentions on a small slice of their communities. Art-making and art-presenting that demand a high ticket price or a high degree of intellectual capital misses the majority of a community's population. In committing to innovative and interdisciplinary programs, and in re-defining what it means to be a "presenter," The Music Center engaged a broader array of audiences, increasingly activated its campus, and overall, built a more robust value proposition to its constituents and the citizens of Los Angeles. Working for an organization with significant operational funding from public sources, this is not just a good idea, it's an imperative.

At the epicenter of the 21st century arts shake-up is the curator. According to Brown and Tepper, the curator is convener, diagnostician, and builder of social networks. Personally, I consider myself a civic actor and a creative fundraiser, and view the performing arts center as the new Village Green.

Creative Campus asks us to also consider the artist/curator relationship. Here too I am certain the boundaries will be blurred. Working together, the artist and curator can forge new relevance for the 21st century arts organization, with curators inspiring artists to stretch their work beyond the stage and into the community, and artists infusing the management of arts organizations with creativity.

Thor Steingraber is vice president for programming of The Music Center in Los Angeles.

Critical Response: Daniel Bernard Roumain

> *"The 21st century curator is both a diagnostician of community need as well as a researcher of artistic possibility."*

Location, Logistics, and Life: A Composer's Response and Dialogue of Engagement to the Creative Campus.

As a Creative Campus program grantee, working in collaboration with Cuyahoga Community College, our work on-line, on campus, and off campus was greatly informed by my work as a composer, coordinator, artist, and administrator.

My response to the *Creative Campus White Paper* (*Draft)* is that I see this initiative as one with limitless potential for artists, curators, and their personal audience, encapsulating an exciting set of processes, procedures, and product for all involved. The success of any future Creative Campus program depends on a unique formatting of ideas, or the *location* of the program; the relationship between curator, artist, and their personal audience, or the *logistics* of the program; and initial, on-going, and future funding, or the *life* of the program.

I'm organizing my response based not only on my experience as a grantee working within the Creative Campus program, but also on past experiences with an array of curators, presenters, and arts organizations including PACE University; the Harlem School of the Arts; Arizona State University; the American Composers Orchestra; the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company; the Orchestra of St. Luke's; and most recently with the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Based on these relationships and others, I have observed some recurring themes, as well as massive differences, in how organizations work within, for, and sometimes even against (yes, against!) a community, and the role and responsibilities of the artist as one part of an on-going, ever-shifting, dialogue of engagement with a personal audience.

The Artist, The Curator, and Their Personal Audience

The artist, however defined, is the holder of all of the creative ideas for the project. The curator, however defined, presents those creative ideas. Their personal audience is the audience they mutually locate, define, and work (actually, hope) to develop.

However the term is to be defined (curator, presenter, programmer, artistic director, etc.) and wherever the work is to occur (on-line, on-campus, off-campus, urban or rural town, city, or locale, etc.), the creative campus process actually *begins* with the dreams and determination of the curator. The curator is the initial force for any Creative Campus project to succeed, even if the initial idea, impetus, or invitation derives from the artist. Without the full force and support of the curator, and their unwavering, guiding hands and curatorial vision (*not artistic vision!*), most Creative Campus projects will, in all likelihood, fail.

The artist, as an exponent of timely ideas and relevant artistic expressions, can in the best case offer the curator an art form (their product) that includes an openness and willingness to reveal their process of creation, and all of the procedures required towards that process. Just as not all artists are qualified, or interested, in this type of revelatory collaboration, so too must the curator be open, and willing, to work within the confines of the artist's procedures of process. Different from any generic or poorly-defined audience, a *personal* audience involves continuous, on-going, and arduous work of a variety of audience development techniques, including out-reach, social networking, local and public radio and television, advertising, and marketing in full collaboration between the curator and artist. More than merely targeting, a personal audience is the out-growth of a mutually agreed upon need, a deep and firm belief in serving an under-served community, and a response to that need, from the curator to the artist or vice-versa, to target and develop a personal audience together. Ideally, the need, and the curatorial and artistic visions, are all aligned.

A personal example might prove illuminating: as a composer, I expect my music to be heard by an audience. As a Black composer, I want my music to be heard by a more diverse audience than traditionally presented. As a Haitian-American composer, I feel a need for my music to be heard by a young, diverse audience, one that I am personally committed towards cultivating and developing, side-by-side with any curator who shares my ideas, beliefs, and most importantly, my need.

In the best case, the creative ideas of the artist for the project are informed by the practical realities of the curator. These practical realities require a deep, sincere, and continuous relationship between curator and artist, and without constant, often daily communication, any Creative Campus project will in all likelihood, fail.

The artist is a captain upon a ship of ideas. The curator, a humble passenger on their ship. The personal audience their port-of-call---one of many destinations---upon a sea of oscillating ideas, ever-changing tastes, and warm, welcome uncertainty.

Location, Logistics, Life

The location of the Creative Campus program is paramount towards any future success. Is it an on-line website? An app? A actual place where curators and artists go? A book or manual? A classroom or course of study? All of these things? It's unclear. Without clarity and certainty in the future location of the Creative Campus program, it seems bound to exist only by reputation, our memories, and conversation.

I think the Creative Campus program, like TEDx or other multi-tier initiatives, has unlimited potential to exist as a unique system of collaboration and creation, unified by an on-line website; a supporting set of applications for curators, artists, and audience; an actual place of study on university campuses and as a part of other arts organizations; an annually published book or manual responding and informing art- making on small and grand scales; and as part of a annual retreat offering classes and courses of study for curators, artists, staff, and the general public interested in the totality of the creative process, from conception to production and thereafter. We need a national, unified model collectively known as the Creative Campus Project.

The most difficult aspect of this, the relationship between curator, artist, and their personal audience, or the logistics of the program, has ably been demonstrated by the success of the program itself. Its success, however, is complex in that each project, indeed each curator, artist, and their personal audiences, were unique to and within themselves. Though the Creative Campus program had a set of rules and regulations, the boundaries were not and are not as clear as they need to be to ensure the most positive and productive outcomes. This clarity is best achieved through the location of the program, as outlined above. More is needed. Now is the time.

In the stark, final analysis, without clarity of location, leading towards a clarity of logistics, future funding for the Creative Campus program appears uncertain. Indeed, the life of the program may be at stake.

Daniel Bernard Roumain is an acclaimed composer and performer. He worked closely with Cayahoga Community College's Division of Creative Arts, a Creative Campus grantee, on The Gilgamesh Project.