

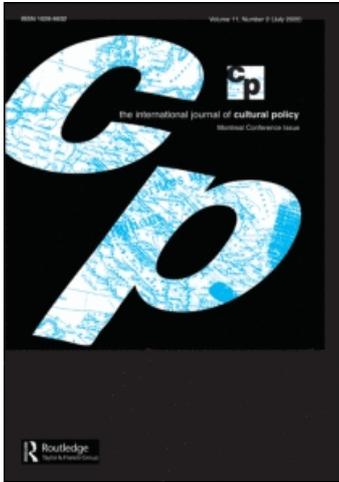
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PUTTING THE “ART” BACK INTO ARTS POLICY MAKING: HOW ARTS POLICY HAS BEEN “CAPTURED” BY THE ECONOMISTS AND THE MARKETERS

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Abstract: This paper explores the current discourse about arts policy and funding and its placement within an economic paradigm. The models of “cultural industry” and “creative industry” are explored and how they affect arts funding discourse. Similarly the impact of the introduction of the language of industry and business to the arts sector is considered. If bottom-line arguments are used by funders, governments and critics to argue the merits or otherwise of arts activity, how does this affect arts practice? In recent times arts funding agencies have been restructured to reflect a market-driven agenda rather than an arts-driven agenda. The impact of all these issues is considered in the context of Australian arts’ models in particular, but with reference to examples in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The paper concludes with suggestions for a reassertion of core cultural values in future discourse.

Keywords: Arts policy and funding; Economic paradigm; Cultural and creative industries; Managerial language and business values; Core cultural values

UNRAVELLING THE CURRENT DISCOURSE

WHEN ARTS funding agencies such as the Australia Council, the Arts Council of Great Britain and the National Endowment for the Arts were originally established, their missions were described in a different language and understanding from that characterising the present climate (Pick and Anderton, 1999; Gray, 2000; Stevenson, 2000). Raymond Williams in his essay entitled “Politics and Policies: The case of the Arts Council” cites four reasons for the establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1946. These were: “state patronage of the fine arts; pump priming; an intervention in the market; an expanding and changing popular culture” (Williams, 1989: 143). Dr H.C. “Nugget” Coombes, a critical force behind the establishment of the Australia Council and its first

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Chair, noted in 1969, that “The Council sees itself not as a source of direction, not as a source of artistic policy, but as a kind of enabling body...” (Stevens, 1998: 10). The idea that government arts funding bodies should just stand back and “allow” seems now rather quaint when governments expect “outcomes for their investments” (See Victorian Government, 1994; Nugent, 1999).

In more recent times government policy debates have been dominated by an economic paradigm. This has been accompanied by, in many cases, a radical conservative ideology that rejects the concept of the “public good” or policies that are argued on social welfare principles. Instead, the “arts”, like most other government-subsidised areas, has had to provide economic reasons for continuing its government involvement. Thus the sector has developed arguments about the economic value of the arts, giving this greater value than arguments about the intrinsic value or worth of the arts to society. In Williams’s model the justification for government involvement relates to ensuring the survival of a particular kind of arts activity which may not happen without that intervention and is usually not commercial by nature. Turning this concept on its head and funding only arts practice which is commercial and populist is certainly oppositional to the original justification for government intervention. In the long term it could also be a reason for governments to disengage from arts funding support, since it could be reasonably argued that the art product being produced does not need government assistance, as it is self-supporting, because it is commercial.

Defining art and therefore what is to be valued maybe contradictory to the market theory of what is commercially successful and therefore to be rewarded. It could be argued that in Australia, in the seventies, the emphasis was on the high arts and the notion of excellence, in the eighties the emphasis tended towards activities promoting access and equity (for example, community arts), while the nineties became characterised by the desire to support arts activity which was commercial, exportable and cost-efficient. Governments also determined that the needs of the audience were more important in the distribution of arts funding than the needs or desires of art practitioners. In managerial terms it could be said for instance, that Australian governments (federal and state) decided to put to one side the core business of the arts (arts practice) and concentrate on peripheral benefits as the justification for their government’s involvement. These benefits focused on such issues as employment creation, cultural tourism, cultural export, and the market-multiplying effect of cultural activity. These are all arguments for the economic benefits of the arts.

In Australia various publications have emerged, either funded by the Australia Council or aligned to it, promoting the economic value of the arts (for example *What Price Culture, When Are You Going To Get a Real Job*). One of the authors, David Throsby, argues that this approach was taken deliberately, to draw attention to the deprivations experienced by artists. He notes that:

One reason for arguing the economic case for the arts is to focus attention on the professional status and working conditions of artists. In this way the role and functions of the individual artist can be brought to the notice of policy makers and the general public, and some progress might be made in rectifying the sorts of misapprehensions and inequities that artists must deal with in their professional lives (Throsby and Thompson, 1994: 1).

In this publication they also propose the view that the economic benefits which flow from the cultural industries to society as a whole, ensured the cost-effectiveness of government subsidy (Throsby and Thompson, 1994: 54). More recently Throsby has commented that

contemporary economic analysis focuses on issues of “efficiency” while issues of “equity” are ignored or given a much lower value (Throsby, 2001: 195–6). He notes:

Cultural value... has no common unit of account and is multi-dimensional, shifting and probably includes some components expressible only in non-quantifiable terms. But the difficulties of its articulation and evaluation do not diminish its importance in identifying the distinctive claims to attention of the cultural phenomena which embody or produce it (Throsby, 2001: 159).

Here he is noting both the unique quality that cultural value bestows and how problematic it is to measure in quantifiable terms.

In the eighties the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics devised employment categories for artists and artworkers on the census form for the first time, enabling a calculation of those actively engaged in the arts. From the mid-eighties on, figures were quoted which demonstrated the economic benefit to the Australian community of the cultural industries. They argued for instance, that the cultural industries were growing from a \$6 billion industry in 1988 to a \$8 billion industry by 1992 (Anderson, 1992: 86). However what was included in this definition of a cultural industry was very broad. The “arts” are a small player by comparison with the communications or media areas. Linking the arts to the broader cultural sphere has advantages and disadvantages for the arts sector. Certainly such a strategy provides more successful economic arguments in the context of employment creation, cultural export and so on. On the other hand it could also mean that the unique characteristics of the arts are lost within a much broader cultural canvas.

While Deborah Stevenson notes it was during the Hawke prime ministership that the concept of “art as industry” took hold (Stevenson, 2000: 34), Keating’s release in 1994 of *Creative Nation*, fully articulated it:

The ultimate aim of this cultural policy is to increase the comfort and enjoyment of Australian Life. It is to heighten our experience and add to our security and well-being. In that it pursues similar ends to any social policy... This cultural policy is also an economic policy. Culture creates wealth. Broadly defined, our cultural industries generate 13 billion dollars a year. Culture employs. Around 336,000 Australians are employed in culture-related industries (*Creative Nation*, 1994: 7).

Cultural activity therefore gives more value to the nation beside its social or spiritual contribution. Since the present dominant paradigm of our political policy-makers, whether they be Labour or Liberal/Conservative, is an economic one, the authors of *Creative Nation* felt it necessary to demonstrate the economic value of culture.

This emphasis on the economic justifiers for government cultural support becomes, by its nature, problematic for the arts community. When government or corporate cultural support is justified purely by economic criteria, there is the potential for real conflict in values between the suppliers (the artists) on the one hand, and the investors on the other (government, corporate donors and the general public). However, the needs or priorities of the funders may not necessarily be those public wants or needs. Furthermore, if artists are prioritising the perceived requirements of either their funders or their audience over the production of interesting and innovative work, then the actual work produced may in fact be less interesting. Rodney Hall, a writer and former Chair of the Australia Council comments that the

arts sector is obsessed with marketing and sales at the expense of new work (Hall quoted in Holgate, 2001: 11).

The use of the economic cultural industry model as the justifier for government arts support could lead to a perception that the sole purpose of the arts is to assist the economic growth of

the state. Undoubtedly this could be a compromising role for artists since serving the state as an economic generator is very different from taking risks artistically, or being innovative and creative generally. It could be argued this objective is little different from the expectations of a totalitarian state, in which its artists serve the state's political aims. There are of course positive aspects to the public recognition of the economic advantages produced by the cultural industries. Artists are likely to receive more respect for their work in a society dominated by capitalist values, when the capacity for income generation is emphasised. Promoting the arts as cultural export also highlights the value of cultural production to the wider world. This is important when other countries give a higher social value to the arts, than perhaps Australia historically has done.

There is no doubt that the desire to legitimise the "arts" by describing it in economic terms was based on good intentions—essentially there was a desire to provide the same status to the arts sector as that afforded other sectors of society (Throsby and Thompson, 1994). However using a form of rhetoric to provide better lines of communication to the rest of the society, is one thing; when this language and policy become the entire *raison d'être* then the discourse itself becomes self-defeating. Adopting the language and ideology of a market-driven approach presents a very real danger that arts activity should only be pursued for market-driven objectives. The corollary to this is that government would only favour the sort of activity which is market-driven and let fall by the wayside any activity that is "art for art's sake". Suzy Freeman-Greene noted in the Age that:

Last year the general manager of Musica Viva, Jennifer Bott, warned that the language of economic rationalists was dominating the arts and there were too few passionate debates about excellence and meaning in art (Freeman-Greene, 1997: 30).

THE CULTURAL OR CREATIVE INDUSTRY MODELS

When it became increasingly difficult in the early eighties to successfully "argue the arts" to government purely on the basis of the community welfare model, bureaucrats, practitioners and academics began the shift towards using a language that described the arts as an industry and developed the economic/cultural industry model. This led to the use of the terms "cultural industries" in Australia or in the United Kingdom, "creative industries" to describe all activities connected with the arts, as well as sectors far removed. The creative model can include a broad range of activities including broadcasting, fashion, multi-media, journalism, publishing, the popular music industry and both commercial and not-for-profit arts activity. The British definition of "creative industries" does exclude the heritage and museum sector however (Roodhouse, 2001: 502). The "cultural" model embraces a broader definition and can include heritage and museums, tourism, events, cooking, the information technology (IT) industry and sport.

In the United Kingdom, the then Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith (Press Release, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 6 November, 1998a), when launching the Major Creative Industries Report, announced that 1.4 million people were employed in the creative sector industries and that they generated an estimated 60 billion pounds per year. He also noted the employment creation potential of this sector predicting another 50,000 jobs would be created within the next three years. This situation coupled with the government support for the Millennium Dome at Greenwich identifies the government expectation of culture and the arts

in the United Kingdom—as generators of entertainment and employment rather than pursuing goals of say artistic excellence (Tusa, 1999). The subsequent public failure of the Millennium Dome arguably demonstrates the shallowness of the rhetoric and a lack of understanding of what is meant by creativity.

Liz Greenhalgh (1998: 84) argues that, while the Arts Council of Great Britain may have outlived its usefulness by not keeping abreast of new developments in the cultural sector, New Labour's approach to the creative economy is more aligned with populist management theories rather than the provision of an in-depth analysis of cultural policy. Jim McGuigan further notes that the policies of New Labour relate more to form than to content and use the cultural sector to promote national/political objectives (McGuigan, 1998: 68). The recent British Government publication, *Culture and Creativity: The next ten years*, begins with a statement by Tony Blair which acknowledges a connection between creativity and production and then makes an economic justification for his government's investment in supporting creativity in its broadest sense. Blair, when referring to culture and creativity, says,

They also matter because creative talent will be crucial to our individual and national economic success in the economy of the future (Smith, 2001: 3).

Another aspect of the “cultural industry” dilemma is that when it comes down to dollars, the arts cannot in any way compete with many other components of the broad cultural industry spectrum such as the communications or IT areas. This lack of financial muscle is then reflected in other ways. Currently the “arts” in Australia straddle two Federal ministers, Senator Richard Alston and Senator Rod Kemp who both claim the “arts” in their portfolio. For bureaucratic purposes the “arts” are part of the large federal government Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DOCITA). This is a major government department and its minister (Alston) has cabinet status indicating a higher profile for the arts than previously occurring at the federal level. However, essentially the “arts” are the responsibility of Kemp (who is also the Minister for Sport) and who is not in Cabinet. Thus the advantage gained by being part of cabinet and being linked to a larger portfolio becomes a disadvantage when the “arts” part of the portfolio is marginalised. Arts bureaucrats recognise that the arts portfolio has a lower status in all negotiations with its communications or IT partners.

This trend to make the arts invisible in the wider picture in Australia is now compounded by recent appointments to the Australia Council. It was announced in June 2001 by the Federal Government that an IT expert would head up the Australia Council backed up by a deputy chair who is a banker (Strickland and Albert, 2001: 11). This situation did not last however because the IT expert, Terry Cutler, announced on the 12th April 2002 that he was resigning after only nine months in the position, amid rumours that he was frustrated with the complexity of the portfolio (Dramatic Online, April 15, 2002). The Federal government then replaced him as Chair with David Gonski on April 15th, a successful businessman and corporate director (Lawson, 2002). Whilst there has been a change in the incumbent, the same paradigm of bringing in a business person to teach the arts how to manage, still applies.

Over the past year many of the people appointed to head up the Australian State arts funding agencies, are either senior civil servants or corporate specialists with little or no arts background (for example, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland). These appointments could be interpreted as an attempt to make the arts “respectable” by making it part of the mainstream, or alternatively giving the arts “defenders” who have mainstream credibility and muscle. However it could also be seen as a way of removing what is individual and unique about the arts, when art specialists are given no place in the front row of negotiation

with government. For instance Roger Wilkins, a career public servant and now the new Director-General of the Arts in New South Wales (while keeping his previous portfolio of Cabinet Secretary), notes that:

The arts is [sic] no different from a lot of areas of policy which I see from where I sit (Gallasch, 2002: 1).

Clive Gray notes that, in the first 45 appointments to the Council of the Arts Council of Great Britain, 22% were from the arts and 5% were from the world of business, whereas of the last 45 appointments, 26% have a business background and 15% are from the arts (Gray, 2000: 129).

CHANGES IN LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURES

Will Hutton, describing the progress of radical conservative and economic rationalist policies in the United Kingdom comments: “This language is but the first step in the construction of a sealed thought process impregnable to criticism or evidence from the outside world” (Hutton, 1997: 9). Language is a powerful tool for re-invention of a world order where former valued ideals have disappeared and new ones given precedence. The arts sector is no exception; for instance, “artists” have become “clients”, “arts practices” have become “programs”, and “grants” have become “incentive, investment or marketing schemes” (refer to Victoria’s Arts 21 Grant Schemes and Arts SA Grant Guidelines). The federal arts funding agency, the Australia Council, was restructured in 1996, and the autonomous artform boards were removed. Instead of eight specialist boards with their own specialist designated staff, council was re-structured into four divisions called “arts funding”, “audience development”, “strategy and policy” and “corporate services” (refer Australia Council Support for the Arts Handbook, 1999). This was modified in 2000 to “arts development”, “audience and market development”, policy and communications” and “finance and services”. In the new structure arts funding was seen as just one of the four functions of council rather than the central function. In addition, the “major organisations fund” is now called the “major performing arts section”, eligibility of which was granted by size of turnover rather than artistic merit. This removes all large performing arts organisations from the peer assessment process and instead treats them as businesses (Australia Council Handbook, 2001a). This is reflected by both the membership of the board of the “major performing arts fund” and the performance indicators used to judge their success (Australia Council Handbook, 2001a).

The mind-set that the arts are really the same as any other business and should be managed similarly, arguably informed a review of all of the major performing arts organisations nationally in Australia in 1999 (Nugent, 1999). This review operated on the premise that the large organisations, by their size, are the most important and ignored the role of smaller, but in many cases, more artistically successful arts organisations. While recommending additional funding and triennial funding for the organisations concerned, the review also demanded changes to the way the organisations were managed so that they more accurately reflected business entities (Nugent, 1999: ix–xiv, 75–7). In several cases they also recommended the amalgamation of arts organisations with others, as a cost-efficiency (for example, Musica Viva and the Australian Chamber Orchestra) (Nugent, 1999: xiii, 99). In this the review failed to recognise the entirely different mandates or visions of the organisations concerned. Understandably this recommendation has met with little success. In other instances

additional funding was recommended with the proviso that the funding would cease entirely within a limited time frame, say three years (for example, Circus Oz) (Nugent, 1999: 53, 99). This is premised on the notion that, with an injection of some start-up funds, the organisations can become purely commercial within a designated time-frame. The risk here is that the strategy may lead to the demise of the organisation concerned if it fails to become self-supporting.

State agencies such as Arts SA in their organisational re-structure in 1998, established two tiers of arts organisations: lead agencies (that is, organisations with a high turnover) and second-tier companies (everyone else). Both artform categories and specialist staff were removed. The funding programs were re-described as “industry development”, “project assistance” and “lead agencies”. Again the major performance criteria were linked to economic imperatives. At Arts SA a lead agency can receive additional funds if it increases its income, not because it does outstanding artistic work (Refer Arts SA Arts Industry Development Programs, 1999). Performance or funding agreements are now part of the transaction between the funding agency and the client (the arts organisation) and the performance criteria of these agreements are generally economically driven (for example, “major performing arts section”, Australia Council or “lead agencies”, Arts SA).

In Australia a trend to tender services rather than give direct grants has also emerged (for example, Arts SA’s recent theatre company tender won by Brink Productions and Arts Victoria’s recent tender for a contemporary dance company won by Chunky Move). The successful tenderer agrees to undertake a particular service for an agreed fee and time period. If the tenderer reneges on part of the agreement then, theoretically, the commission can be withdrawn. This places additional pressure on arts companies to guarantee a form of service within a constantly changing environment. It can also commodify the product. In addition it has become increasingly popular to give money for marketing schemes or export initiatives, rather than arts practice (e.g. Australia Council, Arts Victoria, Arts SA, 1993–2001).

This change in structure and form was echoed in the 1995 restructure of the National Endowment of the Arts in the United States, when artform disciplines were replaced by new category headings. These were called “education and access”, “creation and presentation”, “partnership, planning and stabilisation” and “heritage and presentation”. It was argued that these changes were necessary to make the decision-making processes more open and accountable (Kimbis, 1997: 139). Decisions about funding were then made by multi-disciplinary committees under these category headings. Specialised staff and specialised committees disappeared in this process. Arguably also in this process of generic categorisation and non-specialised staff, in-depth knowledge of art practice also disappeared, thereby causing greater reliance on fewer individuals to provide expert advice.

The current changes in both form and function are potentially confusing for arts practitioners because they no longer know where they belong or who to talk to. The disappearance of specialist art form committees and staff and the introduction of generic committees and categories have left many practitioners disenfranchised. Unless they learn the new language and conform to the dominant culture, they are totally isolated from the power base and deprived of any financial support. It could be argued that the dominant market-driven values are foreign to the basic *raison d’être* of many artists. Artists are trained to experiment, to use their imagination and to move into the unknown to create new and different solutions. If they now have to operate within an environment where whatever is created must be

“popular” or “saleable” or “efficient”, then the very notion of the experiment maybe defeated. It could also be a recipe for producing bad art. Pick and Anderton note:

Real artists did not—and never could—constitute an “industry”. Composers, painters, dancers and jewellers did not work in similar production lines, with similar materials, assembling different parts of the same product. What linked artists was not their similarities in production methods, but the high significance which the public has historically given, and continues to give to their distinct and separate works (Pick and Anderton, 1999: 266).

An increase in cultural support announced in the United Kingdom by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (Press Release, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 14 December, 1998, 1998b) while laudable, was also accompanied by the establishment of a new watchdog committee (QUEST—Quality, Efficiency and Standards Team) focusing on economic performance indicators. This concept is completely opposite to peer assessment or the “arm’s-length” principle. The philosophy behind such a committee is that of the “policeman” rather than the “facilitator” and could potentially, in the context of arts practice, play a censorship role. In addition, the members of this committee as announced by the then Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, are all civil servants. Thus there is no evidence of any desire to include artistic judgments in the process of overseeing. It is also noted that, in announcing this committee, Chris Smith is quoted by David Lister as saying,

We will give direction; we will set targets and chase progress, and where appropriate we will take direct action to make sure that *our objectives* [my italics] are achieved (Lister, 1998: 7).

There is no equivocation here. The government is clear that the transaction between the government and the arts sector is about the artists pursuing the government’s objectives, in return for the arts organisations receiving the money they want.

WHERE IS THIS LEADING?

Certainly the relationship between government and arts practice has become increasingly complicated with seemingly different needs for its justification. Creative Nation stated specifically in its section on the Australia Council that:

...the Council, as a matter of urgency, has to turn its attention away from the “supply” side of the arts equation to the creation of a higher level of demand from arts consumers (Creative Nation, 1994: 13).

There is no doubt that artists need an audience or appreciative collectors. But whether the resources of the major government providers of arts support should be refocusing their resources entirely to finding the audience is questionable. There is a real danger that this approach will lead to the production of safe, consumer-orientated arts product which, in the end, may not be what the audience either wants or needs.

In 2000, the Australia Council, in a reaction to a statement made by Prime Minister Howard about the lack of importance of the arts to mainstream Australia, determined that its present priority should be to find out what the Australian public felt about the arts. “Australians and the Arts is about how Australians see the arts today and how they would like to see the arts tomorrow” (Costantoura, 2000: 4). The advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi was commissioned, it is rumoured at great expense, to seek out the “real” Australians and find out what they thought of the arts. When they had completed their work, they concluded that the Australian population was generally very supportive of the arts with 77% supporting the statement that “we should all learn more about the arts”

(Costantoura, 2000: 11). Those who were not tended to be country dwellers were more likely to be men than women (Costantoura, 2000: 78). The Australia Council, during a series of nation-wide seminars, essentially threw the problem back to the arts community—having by then run out of money to implement any new initiatives. The Saatchi and Saatchi approach implied that the arts community was at fault in this equation, and were not doing a good enough job. In my view this misses the point and does not seriously address the statements which prompted the survey in the first place. It seems a little like “blaming the victim” and puts the arts community into a defensive position, rather than acknowledging, that despite the ill-informed opinions of a few politicians, the majority of the Australian community has a very positive attitude to the arts.

Certainly, there has been an attack from conservative quarters over the past few years, on any form of government support for the arts. For instance in a recent Australian Federal election campaign (October 1998) two political groups argued for either reduced government support to the arts citing elitism (Coalition parties—Advertiser, 2 October 1998: 6), or the withdrawal of such support entirely to save taxpayers money (One Nation Party, Electoral Platform September 98). Yet a recent survey of public attitudes to the arts in Australia conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australia Council demonstrates that the majority of Australians support the public funding of the arts (ABS and Australia Council, 1997). Essentially this is reinforced by the Saatchi and Saatchi study where 66% of their survey population accorded the arts a high value (Costantoura, 2000: 35).

It appears that a similar trend in the early nineties in the United States, of conservative politicians attacking government arts support and thereby reducing it, is now beginning to be reversed—after the sector endured considerable cuts. The threatened withdrawal of support by Congress for the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) in July 1998, was vetoed by the President (NEA website, July 1998) and supported by the Senate. While it is noted that the NEA lost over 40% of its funding from 1991 to 1998 (Reis, 1998: 3), the strong recent support for the agency by both the previous President and the Senate would suggest that the cycle is turning. This changing attitude is also reflected in the NEA's national survey of public participation in the arts which shows an improvement of 7% (or a total of 97 million people) in public attendance of arts activity by Americans from 1992 to 1998 as quoted by Bill Ivey, former Chairman of the NEA in Cleveland on 1st Jan 1999 (Ivey, 1999: 181). The present US administration did finally appoint a new chair, Michael Hammond in late 2001, which would suggest ongoing support for the agency (Trescoot, 2001). Hammond's premature death in January 2002 has no doubt created additional uncertainty for the NEA's political positioning.

While Throsby and Thompson (1994) argue that government support for the arts is seen as a means whereby the state is able to support impoverished artists, in Williams's model (1989) there is also a recognition of a wider social role in the transaction. However it could be argued that the new premise for government support is to see its eventual removal. The emphasis on developing alternative sources of income via the box office, retail sales, donations and sponsorship, could be interpreted as reflecting an ideology that the arts should be aiming to be self-supporting. Thus from this perspective either the arts becomes like every other industry and focuses on the bottom line, or they disappear. Louise Stevens argues:

Investment in marketing is critical as the arts shift from being predominantly funder driven to being more audience driven (Stevens, 1996: 112).

The extension of this position would be that every sector of society is the same and that the market place should be the final determinant of what survives. Chris Smith states,

...DCMS will sign funding agreements with each sponsored body that focus on delivery of a few key strategic outcomes and in particular customer satisfaction (Smith, 2001: 37).

In this transaction therefore government is prioritising the needs of the audience over the needs of the artists,

The increase in cultural funding in the United Kingdom is encouraging by comparison with the recent climate of cuts in the USA and the stagnation of arts funding in Australia. Changes to the form and the purpose of the transaction however, the development of economic performance indicators, and the process of decision-making, all suggest that the relationship between the arts sector and government is now based on a different paradigm. This becomes more stark if you recall Raymond Williams's earlier statement about the purpose of the Arts Council of Great Britain when it was originally established. Furthermore, the British example becomes even more extreme in the context of a government decreeing where that funding will go and monitoring its effectiveness—on the basis of a political/economic agenda, rather than a cultural one.

SOME FUTURE OPTIONS

While there should be an expectation that “not-for-profit” or “government-subsidised” arts organisations are run in a businesslike manner, their purpose is, after all, to produce art, not profit for their shareholders. Therefore I would argue that aesthetic and cultural considerations must have greater value in performance measurement, than the financial return realised by the organisation. Cost-efficiency is important but it has to be placed within the context of the arts. Industry models that have no direct relevance to the arts should not be used to monitor/evaluate this sector. Business plans, marketing plans, performance contracts, objectives and key performance indicators are all now expected of arts organisations if they want to receive government support. The intervention of managerialist, government or political policies into the arts organisation's objectives and practices, is problematic. The measurement means for evaluating these policies are generally quantitative in nature and emphasise economic or political outcomes (Pick and Anderton, 1992; Cohen and Pate, 2000; Evans, 2000). Arguably transferring mainstream managerial structures to arts organisations has the potential to destroy the *raison d'être* of the organisation (McDaniel and Thorn, 1993).

Over the past few years alternative forms of measurement have been developed in reaction to a single bottom line approach. Significantly the development of the “triple bottom line” is shifting mainstream managerial debate (Elkington, 1997). In this model there is a triumvirate of performance indicators holding equal value—financial, environmental and social capital. Extending this model, Hawkes argues that cultural capital is also as important as social, financial and environmental, hence the concept of the “quadruple bottom-line” (Hawkes, 2001). Whilst this is still essentially an economic approach to performance measurement, given the concept of “capital”, it does introduce “sustainability”, “community contribution” and “cultural value” which broadens the paradigm. Another measurement model which attempts to broaden the performance indicators is the “Balanced Scorecard” which argues for both qualitative and quantitative approaches in management performance measurement (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

From a sociological perspective there are other ways of approaching performance measurement which emphasise community values and involve active participation by all the stakeholders. Cohen and Pate for instance suggest that a “social audit” approach may be more useful for measuring outcomes in the arts sector (Cohen and Pate, 2000). McDaniel and Thorne talk about using “action research methodology” as a tool for understanding how organisations are performing, so that the participants have ownership of the outcomes (McDaniel and Thorne, 1997).

Whatever the approach adopted, it is time that performance measures for government intervention in the arts sector, reflect the nature of the enterprise rather than forcing arts organisations and arts practice into oppositional paradigms. Certainly the development of a “cultural model” for government intervention which would include community and economic values, but is not dominated by them, is long overdue. This “cultural” model would be an alternative to the “community welfare” model or the “economic cultural industry” model and would require, a different set of performance criteria than those presently dominating government arts agencies’ agendas. Arguably there are limitations in adopting methodologies from other disciplines such as sociology or economics, as different paradigms still naturally apply. The “quality of the art” criteria would need to be given the highest priority in this discussion. Certainly the inherent difficulty in all measurement or audit approaches in the arts, is that it is possible to develop excellent skills in managing a measuring instrument, be it economically focussed or community focussed, yet still be doing “bad” art.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have outlined the problems created by using the “arts” and “arts policy” as a means to an end, rather than the end in itself. Over the past twenty years the need to justify government support for the arts has been dominated by the desire to prove that “art” has other benefits, particularly economic ones. It has been used as an instrument to justify investment into cities (e.g. the Cultural Capitals of Europe), boost employment, encourage export, support innovation and demonstrate leadership. By taking this approach the arts sector has arguably been diminished, divided and confused. Equating the making of the art with the selling of art undermines the process of the doing. The unique value of art as a tool for interpreting the world in which we live and as a means for providing transformational experiences needs to be nurtured rather than reduced to a set of figures. In 1998 UNESCO stated in its Charter of Cultural Rights that:

(we)...agree to promote the idea that cultural goods and services should be fully recognised and treated as being not like any other form of merchandise (UNESCO, 1998).

Despite the economic tone of this language, the point is clear—cultural and artistic practice is unique and must be recognised and valued as such.

To conclude it is time that artists, and advocates for arts and artists, reframe the debate to emphasise the centrality of art itself in our lives. Bill Ivey, the former Chair of the National Endowment of the Arts talked about a Cultural Bill of Rights for the American people, listing six rights within his charter (Ivey, 2000). He comments that

If we are to connect citizens with art and art making, culture and creativity, and observers of society suggest we must, we must begin a new conversation (Ivey, 2000).

Certainly a new discourse is overdue. This discourse needs to acknowledge that the arts are different and that this difference should be celebrated, rather than ridiculed. Governments need to be reminded again about why they are involved in the arts and what their role is in that transaction. By wanting to control, manage and rationalise the arts sector, governments are in danger of perverting the very practise of art itself. Thus future communication about arts policy and practise needs to be initiated by artists and arts workers in their language and imagery, rather than within the context of the economic/managerial jargon currently in vogue.

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