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Report from the
Mini Summit on
New Media Arts
Policy & Practice
Singapore,
24th - 26th July 2008

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Preface

This report collates the process and proceedings of the Mini Summit on New Media Arts Policy and Practice which took place from 24 to 26 July 2008 at the headquarters of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Singapore in partnership with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) and the International Symposium of Electronic Art 2008 (ISEA2008).

Following an introduction by the Mini Summit's artistic director, the reports of the four Mini Summit workgroups, written jointly by group reporters and moderators, provide an overview of the diverse discussions and recommendations. These are interspersed by four case studies, which were presented during the plenary sessions of the summit.

The Results from the D'Art Survey close the report. The survey was conducted by IFACCA prior to the Mini Summit to sketch the situation of media arts funding in participating and observer countries. Although only seven countries returned the questionnaires, the survey underlines the heterogeneity of (media) arts funding structures and processes across the world.

The participants of the Mini Summit are listed at the end of the report. Without their outspoken and invaluable contributions, which led to intense – at times fierce – discussions both during the summit and while writing the policy recommendations and this report, the attempt to sketch the diversity of opinions and attitudes might have failed.

Rather than including illustrations in this report, discover the full presentations online on <http://prezi.com/358> and <http://prezi.com/388>. Prezi.com, a zooming image presentation tool, then still in a beta version, was used for the introductions as well as for presentations by participants and organisations and for findings.

For readers who want to know more about the Mini Summit than is covered in this report, I highly recommend the blog which proved to be a great resource for participants in the run-up, during and even after the meeting: www.singaporeagenda.wordpress.com

Annette Wolfsberger

1. Introduction

to Mini Summit on New Media Arts Policy & Practice

The preparations for the July 24–26 2008 ASEF–IFACCA–ISEA Singapore Mini Summit started in January 2008, when Kateljijn Verstraete (ASEF) synched the meeting with Sarah Gardner and Christopher Madden (IFACCA) and Gunalan Nadarajan, who directed ISEA 2008. For IFACCA it was important that there was a direct link to prior policy meetings that were held in collaboration with ISEA meetings, with a significant number of policy representatives, either from government funding agencies, arts councils or ministries.

Debate at the 2004 Mini Summit resulted in the publishing of the *Helsinki Agenda*¹, which outlined the values of new media culture, set out key principles for new media arts policies, and made recommendations for further action. It also linked to The *Delhi Declaration*² which acknowledged a new context for new media, a meeting of an 'International Working Group on New Media Culture' hosted by the Open Cultures Network – a network created by the Waag Society, Amsterdam, Sarai–CSDS Delhi and Public Netbase, Vienna.

For ASEF, the Mini Summit built on previous investments in new media arts, which manifested as a series of Art Camps on New Media for emerging artists. A balanced representation of Europe and Asia (the Mini Summit had participants from 10 Asian, 12 European and 4 observer countries) was another prerequisite. Regarding ISEA, we presented the findings of the Mini Summit at a public session during the ISEA conference. The foundation for a successful meeting had been laid.

The Content

We decided to keep the meeting flexible and to focus on four topics as a starting point without a larger theoretical framework. Those focal topics manifested themselves in four workgroups that seemed relevant for both Asian and European projects and frameworks – clear markers for new media policy and practice: locative media and ambient intelligence, creative research, open source models and media education.

The Format

We aimed to maximize the discussion time in the work-

groups and minimize the plenary lecture and conference component. During a 'Pecha Kucha' event (in our case 15 slides of 20 seconds) all participants introduced themselves on the first evening in a public venue. The presentations of the researchers and policy representatives turned out to be as visually attractive and powerful as the presentations by the artists. The concise presentations provided a good overview of an organization, the success and phases of a project, and/or the theoretical framework in which it was embedded. By selecting this format, we maximized the working time for the workgroups that consisted of up to 13 people. Each group had a moderator who had been chosen for his or her standing in the particular field, assuring that the end goal – recommendations for policy – would carry some weight with practitioners in the field.

Before the Mini Summit we sent a questionnaire to all participants with the following three questions:

- > What is your most urgent requirement?
- > What is the best or most interesting new media arts case or project you have recently experienced?
- > In your opinion, is there potential for change on and change through a policy level, i.e., has the status of policy as an accelerator/a meaningful factor for practice changed?³

The moderators were invited to read these short statements before the Mini Summit commenced to acquaint themselves with participants in their group. Each moderator could choose his or her own particular methodology. We had decided on a minimum of formal structure to start with, and it turned out that only one moderator had an outspoken plan for designing the structure beforehand.

The Participants

The variety in participants was relevant on three levels:

– *on a cultural and ethnographic level*

The level of technological saturation and policy history and administrative expertise built up over years in culture and media arts is very different in countries such as The Netherlands and Finland, as opposed to, for example, the Eastern Europe 'new start up' democratic nations such as

1 www.virtueelplatform.nl/helsinkiagenda

2 www.virtueelplatform.nl/delhideclaration

3 Quotes from participants responding to that question can be found throughout the report.

Poland. Even in Europe, conditions and discussions are not homogeneous. The heterogeneity of local situations became even clearer during the summit, where countries as diverse as Vietnam, Malaysia, China, the Netherlands, Scotland and Australia came together to search for and discuss common denominators and relevant local factors.

– in different mindsets and backgrounds of the participants
Artists who work with new media and researchers and theorists who contextualize actual practices do not necessarily speak the same language and often have different agendas. Debates and discussions between these two fields of practice often require a lot of time just to find a common language. Oversimplifying, one can state that by the very way policy makers define funding models and schemes, they define the contexts within which experiments are being recognized as such within a framework of the arts.

– concerning the level of personal energy that people invest in their practice

Naturally, for such a group of professionals, this is not a nine-to-five job, but a way of living (attitude) that is synonymous with their working practice. By including – at the last minute – Singapore activists in the Mini Summit, and also inviting representatives from Singaporean funding bodies we aimed to include a broad range of ‘attitudes’ within the summit. It implied taking risks on all levels, but only by asking credible representatives in the field would we be able to define key action points from the workgroups that could not be contested.

The Outcome

It is important to state that the four workgroup topics not were intended to exhaustively encompass the current field of new media arts practice and policy as, for example, notions of biotechnology and bio-arts were excluded.

Three main drivers for general policy-making can be identified from discussions during the meeting:

– Real dialogue is possible between media practitioners (old and new: video, web, sensor, locative) from very different local situations. This seems to point to a globalization that is so successful through the Internet and the ‘internet of things’ (RFID, ambient intelligence) that a hybrid mix of general global trends and very specific local circumstances characterizes local situations. This suggests the possibility of establishing global funds on new media art and practices that focus on the generic. It also implies that evaluating the urgency and quality of projects submitted to such a fund can only be left to a mix of local practitioners, theorists and policy officials.

– It became evident that policy is not always understood as a practice that supports, helps or frames. Several European policy representatives may have been confronted with this attitude for the first time. In many

ASEF countries there has never been a specific cultural, or (new) media policy. The media policy that representatives from these countries encounter and know has a very defensive outlook, and is centred very much on censoring specific content.

– There was a high level of reflexive quality of the artists’ presentations both during the ‘Pecha Kucha’-style evening and in the questionnaire that was sent beforehand. At the same time, the Pecha Kucha-presentations by the policy makers proved that it is possible to present a national policy in six minutes. The Mini Summit proved that early collaboration between artists, theorists and policy makers needs further exploration, as it provides them with a platform and the opportunity to voice their ideas and concretize their expertise to inform future design and decision-making processes for and about new funds, new funding models and new frameworks.

Rob van Kranenburg

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2. Recommendations ..

developed from the
Mini Summit on
New Media Arts
Policy & Practice

This document was written following the Mini Summit on New Media Arts Policy & Practice, held in Singapore in connection with ISEA 2008, the International Symposium of Electronic Art, hosted by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), and the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA).⁴ The aim of this document is to highlight current needs in local and transnational media arts practices and frame more informed arts policies.

The Singapore Mini Summit focused on four topics: creative research, open source models, media education, and locative media & ambient intelligence. The 50 participants (artists, practitioners and policy makers from 10 Asian, 12 European and 4 observer countries) worked in parallel groups with moderators on the respective strands to discuss issues, highlight case studies and distil recommendations and action points. The following recommendations are based on the dialogue at the Mini Summit, but also combine viewpoints from earlier practice and policy documents.

There is an appendix to this document that discusses the series of practice and policy meetings held since the mid 1990s leading up to the Singapore meeting. An extensive report on the Singapore Mini Summit, its processes, participants, workshop discussions, case studies, background research, and an event blog are available at www.singaporeagenda.wordpress.com.

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<http://singaporeagenda.wordpress.com>;
www.isea2008singapore.org; www.asef.org;
www.ifacca.org

New Media Arts

Culture for Networked ... Societies

New media arts are a vibrant, transnationally networked, interdisciplinary field in which artists, designers and researchers collaborate in contexts that are culturally plural and technologically diverse. There is an urgent need to bring new media arts funding and support mechanisms to a sustainable level locally, and to substantially increase the support for international collaborations through events, networks, residencies, and productions. This document emphasizes the critical, conceptual and innovative role of new media arts practitioners in today's world, in diverse settings.⁵

New media artists are for networked societies what painters and sculptors were for industrial society, and video artists have been for the television generation. Media art practices are often socially located and are produced in interaction with communities. Current work on environmental media practices and artistic open source and social software projects are producing new knowledge and insights into global and local transformations that need urgent attention. We emphasize that while artists are not social workers, when successful, they function as innovative practitioners who can change relations between and within communities, and benefit society by constructing empowering media- and technology literacy and diversity. While other art forms use digital tools for their production, staging, and distribution, they rarely address conceptual or critical questions around computing, media cultures, networks, or mobile wireless public spaces. New media arts do.

New media arts are characterized by intense research and development. In turn, these result in new means of expression by modifying and creating new software and hardware, new aesthetics and new ways of engaging with participants or audiences. These skills, tactics and strategies are of great value to societies at large, as they arise from deep cultural and social insights and a thorough knowledge of both new and old technologies. This document suggests that while there should be support for new media arts practice as part of the creative industries, there is a greater need to engage with new media practices that are informed by the diversity of citizens' social

and cultural imagination, and thus offer more sustainable strategies for fostering creativity in society at large. We also suggest that support for 'new' media arts should encompass both new technology and the transformative potentials of 'old media', thus creating possibilities for diverse re-appropriations.

It is vital to recognize that art forms and technologies co-exist in different conjunctions across diverse cultural and social settings. The aim is then to seek ways in which media arts practices can build bridges across digital and analogue divides. The Mini Summit in Singapore underlined that even though media arts practitioners in European and Asian countries have a lot of experiences in common, the political, economic and culturally specific conditions for production and sustainability may vary significantly. Infrastructure and support models⁶ cannot be copy-pasted from one country to another. Instead, they require 'localisation' in the cultural, economic and social senses of the term. For example, in some locales mobile media labs support practitioners better than do permanent centres. In other contexts strategic investments in centres are important for running larger festivals, for sustaining the technical and staff infrastructures needed for regional and transnational networks, and for maintaining long term research and production collaboration.

It is a challenge for us all to create dynamic policy that recognizes changes in media arts, locally and globally, and to create permanent yet flexible support structures. It is sincerely hoped that in each member country of ASEF and IFACCA these points and recommendations are debated thoroughly and action taken as a result. Continuous collaboration and support by the host organisations to develop this common goal would be highly appreciated.

5 New media culture was discussed already in the Amsterdam Agenda <http://www.virtueelplatform.nl/amsterdamagenda>. As a term, it suggests that new media cultural practices overlap traditional fields of art, even though media art is the most central part of its recent history. New media culture also encompasses creative software and media practices and new media activism, usually not part of arts policies. The vision has been that more integrative approach is needed within this vibrant cultural field than has been common in arts and cultural policy.

6 A well developed set of policy tools for media art and culture could include:
a) **productions** by individuals, collectives, associations, artist run companies, and transnational collaborations
b) **research** driven projects and programmes, often with transdisciplinary teams
c) **infrastructures** that include **organisations, networks** and virtual **platforms**
d) **physical spaces** such as media labs and exhibition venues

e) **festivals, exhibitions, conferences, workshops**
f) **mobility** support such as travel grants and shipping costs for **exhibiting**
g) **transnational collaboration** through **residencies**
h) **research & development**; and distribution of software and hardware
i) **documentation and publications** both on- and off-line
j) **policy** research and development, maintaining practice to policy dialogue

Recommendations.....

Education & Research

In most contexts arts education and research curricula and infrastructures lag behind changes that take place within media arts practices. Rapid changes in technologies used by media artists, and the transdisciplinary nature of production and research call for a more dynamic education and research policy.

Educational policies for media arts should take into account, and combine, formal and informal educational models, addressing different social and demographic groups. Research policies for media art and culture on the other hand should be based on transdisciplinarity, an ability to work with and develop collaborative projects with those trained in science, technology, social sciences and the humanities.

In line with a policy proposal from the Leonardo Education Forum during ISEA2008, it is recommended that funds should be granted for research projects that document and map out media arts research and education to better enable practitioners and policy makers to evaluate and redesign existing frameworks.

A more coordinated, effective action would be to explore the feasibility of establishing a transnational fund or collaborative funding programmes between several national funding bodies, so as to enhance the flexibility of support available to research-based media practice and its mobile, transnational and transdisciplinary nature.

Building Collective Knowledge

Centres, networks, and virtual platforms are useful ways to build collective knowledge about media art practices, and to effectively reach audiences locally and beyond. Networks and virtual platforms may also serve practical functions such as training and documentation, providing advocacy and creating connections, and advocate openness and accountability of practice as 'banks of media knowledge'.

Media arts and cultural policies should be sensitive to the diversity and the long-term impact of these forms of networks and organisations, and accordingly, recognize their funding needs as being long term and strategic rather than project based.

To foster sharing amongst translocally based initiatives, funders are endorsed to participate in helping to build 'com-

mon platforms' for the documentation of knowledge, ethical codes, terminology, resources, training and education, and policies and practices to inform and promote intercultural and transnational exchange, dialogue and policymaking. This could also be done through supporting collaboration between existing platforms.

Transnational Collaboration

Besides funding at the national level, we emphasize that art in the networked world requires flexible transnational funding programmes. This is critical if new media art is to sustain long-term, cross-cultural collaborative work.

It is recommended that national arts funding agencies, be they arts councils or ministries of culture, cooperate in developing pilot programmes that would support transnational collaborations free of restrictions based on the participants' countries of origin. The following concrete areas of support that should be undertaken over the next five years are especially highlighted:

- > *New media artist in residencies with an emphasis on networking and creating sustainable long-term translocal collaboration.*
- > *Research-driven media arts residencies & programmes with an emphasis on transdisciplinary collaboration with diverse institutions such as arts organisations, universities and companies.*
- > *Longer duration workshops and master classes.*
- > *Community arts and urban public space redevelopment projects.*
- > *Mobility of artists, researchers, art works and projects amongst festivals and organisations.*

Mapping & Evaluation

Mapping and evaluation of media arts, locally and globally, would benefit policy makers and media arts organisations in several ways. The results can be used to support practice: as a tool for advocacy, as a basis for policy development by observing trends and supporting strategy, and as a resource for knowledge sharing. In the past, relatively limited support for media arts organisations has had a strong impact on the arts, on research and development and on various local communities and international networks.

Funding bodies are encouraged to commission substantial further mapping of evidence of the impact of media arts practices and its organisations, and to help strengthen knowledge sharing and advocacy.

Open Source & Free Software

Open source and free software and DIY technologies are essential tools and platforms for new media arts and culture. Beyond functionality, open source often represents cultures of collaboration, sharing and promotion of access to tools and knowledge. The process of learning and development is as important as the technologies used and produced, often supporting innovative social practices.

It is recommended that art policies acknowledge the role of these software and hardware cultures as integral parts of new media arts, and also recognize their potential as tools for innovation and learning.

Crossovers & Mixed Economies

While government support for new media practices is absolutely vital, there is also a need to put resources into building a mixed economy of new media art funding, where foundations, larger institutions and, in some cases, the commercial sector contribute to supporting the field. Apart from arts funding agencies, other key players are supported by public funds, such as academic institutions, schools, broadcasting authorities, industry and IT development agencies that would benefit from greater engagement with new media arts practice. At the same time, the importance of informal exchange economies and practices of commoning should be acknowledged and fostered.

It is recommended that some of the existing collaborations between arts policy agencies and other government bodies with related agendas be documented for international distribution and evaluation. Policy actions should provide frameworks that aid forming mixed economies in addition to developing direct support tools.

Freedom of Speech & Intercultural Dialogue

In all instances, the freedom to articulate one's thought and practices without fear has to be supported and the autonomy of the artist, researcher and cultural practitioner respected. Policy makers should recognize the limits and, indeed the potential negative impacts of policy in special circumstances, and respect the 'arms length' principle. In some political environments the relationship between public funding and field of practice is highly problematic, and funding might therefore have to be more calibrated. In this regard, it may be important to create intermediary structures that operate between the government and media arts.

Policy should recognize the creative tension between independent and primarily state-supported practices, so as to ensure that marginalized voices find a space, and that practice that challenges the existing frameworks of knowledge generation and exchange – within and between national-cultural contexts – finds adequate support. Often in these situations the role of foundations that operate across borders has been crucial. National funding bodies should collaborate with, and learn from, these foundations.

Next Steps

The authors of this policy recommendation document embrace the dialogue that has taken place between policy makers, artists and practitioners during the past decade. However, there is a need to evaluate the impact of past policy and practice agendas as a means to improving future strategic collaboration, to inform and advocate ongoing sustainable dialogue.

It is recommended that a media arts practice and policy platform would be established, or that an existing one be supported. Its aim will be to share, inform and promote sustainable documentation as noted above and the range of developments occurring in this field, as well as providing public access to this information.

To ensure the success of these policies, it is recommended that IFACCA and ASEF consider hiring a media arts policy expert team for a period of up to 12 months to consult with key practitioner networks, funding agencies, policy networks and foundations in order to analyse, prioritize and implement actions recommended in this and previous documents.

It is recommended that this document be distributed to other key bodies that have had a significant impact on the development of this field. These may include bodies such as UNESCO (with regard to their digital arts and cultural diversity agendas), the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Hivos Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Open Society Institute and Soros Foundation Network, to name but a few. It is also recommended to continue media arts and policy mini summits in the context of future International Symposia on Electronic Art (ISEA), which because of its nomadic nature brings together different regional networks, organisations, academics and media arts practitioners.

This document, and other outputs of the Mini Summit in Singapore are important steps in an ongoing process of dialogue and collaboration between policy and practice. While this document should be widely distributed, the process is as important as the product; trusting that ongoing critical discussion will contribute to a more informed understanding between media arts policy and practice.

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Appendix: Background to the Mini Summit on New Media Arts Policy & Practice, Singapore 2008

Background: Practice to Policy

The Singapore Mini Summit built upon earlier occasions where practitioners and policy makers engaged in dialogue on new media art practices, and respective national and international policies. It also highlighted new emergent questions and integrated viewpoints from both Asian and European local contexts.

An event held in 1997, *Practice to Policy – Towards a New European Media Culture (P2P)*, produced the first extensive report and a set of policy recommendations entitled the **Amsterdam Agenda**.⁷ Organized by Dutch media arts organizations that later formed Virtueel Platform,⁸ P2P argued for grounding policy on experiences of practitioners in the rapidly changing field of new media culture.

A *Mini-Summit organized during ISEA2004* in Helsinki, hosted by m-cult⁹ and the Finnish Arts Council¹⁰ in partnership with IFACCA, recognized Finland's pioneering role in media culture and arts and in creating open access tools and accessible mobile communication technologies that broaden and deepen the role that media and information can play in civil society and knowledge creation. The **Helsinki Agenda**¹¹ further developed the ideas that emerged in the Amsterdam Agenda and particularly emphasized the need to shift new media arts and cultural policy to better support international, translocal, non-nation based cultural practices.

Subsequently, an International Working Group meeting on New Media Culture was held at Sarai-CSDS in Delhi, in January 2005 under the aegis of *Towards a Culture of Open Networks*, a collaborative programme developed by Sarai CSDS¹² (Delhi), the Waag Society¹³ (Amsterdam) and Public Netbase¹⁴ (Vienna) with the support of the EU India Economic and Cross Cultural Programme. The **Delhi Declaration**¹⁵ referred to the rich heterogeneity of forms and protocols in the communicative and media practices in contemporary South Asia, emphasizing active content creation and process over a simplistic notion of access to ICT in the global South.

While earlier practice and policy meetings also looked at viewpoints from the local context and combined these with discussions on transnational and national policies, local media and cultural policy was addressed only briefly in Singapore, as policy makers were absent from much of the meeting.

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www.virtueelplatform.nl/amsterdamagenda
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www.virtueelplatform.nl
9
www.m-cult.org

10
www.taiteenkeskustoimikunta.fi
11
www.virtueelplatform.nl/helsinkiagenda
12
www.sarai.net

13
www.waag.org
14
www.t0.or.at
15
www.virtueelplatform.nl/delhideclaration

3. Workgroup Reports & Case Studies

Workgroup 1

Ambient Intelligence,
Web 2.0 Location-based
Media, Leapfrogging

Moderator: Liesbeth Huybrechts (Belgium)

Group Rapporteur: Noora Zul (Singapore)

Participants: Ling Pek Ling (Singapore), Alexandra Deschamps-Sonsino (UK/Canada), Dr. Aditya Dev Sood (USA/India), WenKai Xu "Aajiao" (China), Prayas Abhinav (India), Maaike Lauwaert (Belgium/The Netherlands), Andrew Donovan (Australia), Martijn De Waal (The Netherlands)

Context

Technological networks are today almost invisibly integrated into objects surrounding us and our everyday space(s), and these objects and spaces steadily become more intelligent. This has some significant implications affecting our relationship to these spaces. Our entire environment is mediated, and contains mirrors and virtualisations. Therefore, our conception and production of, and interventions into these spaces can no longer be explained in dichotomies (such as virtual-real, public-private, global-local). Media artists, -producers and -designers do not limit themselves to formats of TV- or computer screens. The entire environment is a space for art. Our spaces are hybrid and thus artists create hybrid scenarios in our daily spaces, outside the framework of traditional art institutions.

Neither audiences nor private or public organisations have sufficient knowledge about the **technologies** that are crucial in these ubiquitous spaces. Therefore, the role of an artist who researches these technologies, visualizes its implications and demonstrates their alternative uses is of undeniable importance for our critical understanding of our (technological) society. Artists using contemporary technologies and media as tool and content are also described as media artists.

All of the above has important implications for the role of a media artist. By using our everyday environment as field of action, s/he works with communities that create these spaces as a daily routine. This forces artists to apply

new working methods and skills. Furthermore, working with communities also has ethical dimensions and implications. This calls for research into specific social, economic and cultural contexts within which art projects take place. One has to question whether communities are served by temporary interventions without sustainable impact.

Therefore, insight into good practices (already a precondition for scientific research and social work) is a prerequisite. Artists have to ensure that their projects contain feedback opportunities for the users of the spaces, and that users have access to 'their' data. Furthermore, a code of conduct for artists who choose to work in this environment needs to be developed. Policy makers can play a very important role in this, i.e., in initiating or supporting research programmes or by developing advice on how to carry out these kinds of projects.

At the same time, artistic projects can significantly determine the perception of our environment. The framework for such projects therefore should not be over-regulated but comply a kind of safe zone for experimental research. This last point was the most urgent starting point for discussion within the workgroup.

Working Process

The discussion started as a kind of open space. Each participant was invited to highlight a media arts project that s/he thought addressed ubiquitous space in an interesting way. The emphasis of the proposed projects was on supporting the community (sometimes embedded sustainably into the community), i.e., tactical projects (self-designed use of spaces) that intervened in 'strategic' spaces (formulated by an authoritative force and usually easy to locate): projects searching for gaps in space, mobilizing places, researching rules of localities, hacking and re-appropriating technological spaces and stimulating subjective experience and alternative perspectives on spaces.

The first question was to define our understanding of **(public) space** and which actors construct these spaces daily. The public space is not only public but also private, not only material and physical but also mediated, immaterial, thus to all intents and purposes **hybrid**. Furthermore, (public) space is very differently defined in varying cultural contexts. This emphasizes the need for high-quality research by artists into the context of their planned interventions.

As a next step we aimed to find a more precise definition of media arts projects that use this hybrid space as a field of action. We chose the term **Social and Locative Media Projects**, since working in hybrid space is interlinked with working with location and community.

How do these projects develop a relationship with their locations and communities? Hybrid spaces are produced as a daily routine by hybrid forces (public and private, social and cultural, etc.). Social and Locative Media Projects therefore search for hybrid contact zones with these locations and communities. The emphasis of projects is on processes and scenarios rather than on the production of objects or products.

To give an example, Prayas Abhinav (<http://cityspinning.org/>) works on collaborative community projects in India, in which self-grown/harvested food is hung in trees so that it becomes available to a broader community. The project is technological in its nature since it includes research into how food in trees can be protected, nourished and preserved. Clearly, such projects are process- and research-based, social and often ephemeral.

This has new and different implications regarding how such art projects should be subsidized and evaluated: not as a product, but as process and hybrid scenarios with many layers, partners and potential added values for society.

All of the above implies that Social and Locative Media Projects need to be approached with sensitivity and care. Artists must have decent research qualities as well as a network and the competence to be able to deal with this network in an ethically responsible way – otherwise they will need support from people willing to act as hubs. If artists have to focus too much on this act of balance and assessment, they risk hampering their artistic practice. This conclusion leads to several concrete action points and policy questions.

CASE STUDY

Tinker.it (Alexandra Deschamps-Sonsino)

Tinker.it! (www.tinker.it) is an innovative consultancy that helps its clients create interactive experiences through products, spaces and events that bridge the physical and the digital. Through their expertise in the latest technologies, manufacturing resources and their experience gained by working with design-

ers, Tinker.it! works hand in hand with creative businesses, organizations and individuals to achieve their goals. It thus helps clients build more meaningful relationships with their audience through experiences that exist outside traditional screen-based content and extend into the real world.

We are part of the Arduino project where we contribute to designing new hardware and engineering designs. Support is provided on the Arduino website. We believe in the open source philosophy and will release more Tinker.it! designs with Open Source or Creative Commons licenses. One of the services we offer is the ability to create custom versions of Arduino boards or engineer your Arduino based designs into finished products. The support of open source platforms is still something that lies under the surface of the political and policy-based spectrum. The world of open source software has proven its validity, also by the creation of business ecologies around it, but these are still only valid on an industry level. The OLPC (One Laptop Per Child) project is a first example of open source software being driven through a very politically motivated project.

We believe that open source hardware will become more and more instrumental in allowing people to construct and create their own answers to everyday problems, enabling rapid de-centralized innovation across industries based on grass roots knowledge sharing. With the international urgency around sustainability and global warming, we believe this might have an impact on helping us transition away from the industrial society that has run its course. Good provision needs to change, and enabling people through the creation of easy tools that use everyday technologies is a way forward.

Action Points

1. An international institution for networking and exchange that can show the way in the distribution of information about partnerships, ethical codes, knowledge- and other practical information for research-based, community-building and locative media arts projects.

This institution could collect answers to the following questions and support research and projects in their initial phase:

- a. How can one find and get in touch with a **hybrid set of partners** who are relevant to a Social and Locative Media Projects (companies, social, cultural partners)? What are good practices in setting up such cross-disciplinary dialogues? Is it advisable for these projects to preferably look for partners outside their own discipline?
- b. What is the best way to **document** these projects so that on a long-term basis they can be of added value for future projects? How important is **public access** to this information by the relevant community? What is the role

Prayas Abhinav

I believe that a liberal, open and inclusive national cultural policy can have an impact on the framework and context in which artistic practices operate. In India we do not have an understanding or consensus about how alternative/fringe arts practices are important for the national and regional cultural ecosystem. There is a possibility to create a broad, inter-disciplinary dialogue to understand how India's traditional and contemporary arts practices contribute to national and regional progress. For example, policies which require all publicly funded productions and publications to be openly licensed could set off a positive trend. This could on the other hand fill gaps in India's needs for educational and archival needs. Designing a policy framework in a participative manner, which evolves and adapts with the needs and readiness of the times might be an interesting challenge. A coherent national policy which encourages cultural entrepreneurs to develop new models, structures and distribution mechanisms for artists might generate a lot of interest in the area.

hybrid partners in Social and Locative Media Projects and ensure sustainability of projects, also after their artistic peak; to develop their sensitivity to local, human, inter-cultural and hybrid contexts.

3. An independent public knowledge base gathering information on new technologies that are important to our daily environment (and thus for Social and Locative Media Projects). It could also provide an overview of standards and of accessible and ecological alternatives for frequently used technologies.

of open management of the data collected within communities? Which role do technological infrastructures play?

c. How can one engage end users (the researched communities) of all socio-cultural-economic backgrounds in dynamic and iterative feedback during the artistic research process?

d. How can artists, together with their peers, develop a valid **research code** for working within communities? Can such a code help to protect the autonomy and freedom of arts projects? Can it assist in gaining the trust of communities or authorities, so that autonomy and freedom become more obvious for these actors? Is there a need for a council of experts of some sort to review these kinds of projects? What can such a code include?

- > Ethics and privacy standards;
- > Checklist for self-compliance;
- > Protocols that prevent art projects from irreparably damaging existing ICT networks;
- > Mechanisms for feedback for communities.

2. An international research fund to support Social and Locative Media Projects, taking into account the specific characteristics of such projects, i.e., longer duration, collaboration with hybrid partners, etc.

A training programme for people (such as producers, project managers, etc.) who can serve as a hub between

Workgroup 2

Creative Research,
Iterative Design Cycles,
Academic Research &
Creative Communities ...

Moderator: Bronac Ferran (UK)

Rapporteur: Annette Wolfsberger (Austria/The Netherlands)

Members: Adam Somlai Fisher (Hungary) / Tapio Mäkelä (Finland) / Anne Nigten (The Netherlands) / Debbie Esmans (Belgium) / Isaac Mao (China) / Hyunjin Shin (South Korea) / Judy Sibayan (The Philippines) / Awadhendra Sharan (India) / Kamal Sabran (Malaysia) / Andreea Grecu (Romania)

Observers: Sarah Gardner (Australia) / Karmen Franinovic (Croatia)

Context

How can artists and designers take on a different role? How can they become part of a multi-disciplinary team that works from the beginning with scientists, planners, policy, educators, citizens and specific content researchers? What support structures exist to facilitate this new way of working? Where are the models of good practice? How can these best be documented?

Fast changes in information architectures and rapid innovation prototyping make it difficult to apply old methodologies, which impacts on academia and other spaces where innovation was traditionally housed. The specific cycles of iteration used by designers and artists (brainstorms with very different people, concepts, prototypes, scenarios of prototypes with real users) have to be taken into account and combined with expertise and knowledge from technical specialists and content producers. Knowledge of the past is still useful and is drawn on intuitively by artists and designers.

Working Process

The group decided upon the design process collectively. Points made by members of the workgroup in the questionnaires beforehand were used as the starting point for discussion. The following issues were identified as common or important:

Transdisciplinarity:

- > What models of development exist both in education and in more informal settings that can best support contemporary processes of innovation?
- > What documentation has been done relating to existing structures and best practice models?

- > How can we identify models? Where has this been done previously? How do we make this public?
- > What research topics or areas need and deserve a transdisciplinary approach?

Sustainability:

- > Current context - many environmental challenges.
- > Also, a lack of sustainability across time for best practice media models – a loss of know-how.
- > Lack of a cumulative evidence base – whose responsibility is this?
- > Lack of a long-term vision or development strategies lack of sharing and recognition.
- > Lack of appreciation of shifts over time – lack of documentation, no overview or timeline.

New kinds of research challenges:

- > Users: as co-creators/participatory production models (links to social sciences).
- > Unclear and under-recognized role of alternative/independent autonomous spaces.
- > Ubiquitous computing means media tools are now commonplace – so what research role can artists play?
- > What kinds of research can and do involve social networking?
- > Media culture – research is often emergent, bottom up.
- > Shifts in methodologies – iterative over time.
- > Research will often be collaborative, sometimes collective – requiring models, teamwork.
- > Emergent and unpredictable nature of media: evolving nature of questions – e.g., around ownership.
- > Big question – how to define this research in a way that can be understood?

Freedom of expression:

- > Importance of space for expression, e.g., non-censored media

The group arrived at a series of recommendations and potential actions summarized below. *We have also included the arguments leading to the recommendations, which can be made more concise for any published paper.*

Isaac Mao

In different countries, the potential of changing on/through policy must be different from each other. In China, specifically, it's a very twisted situation for media creation and surviving. The public policy is acting both as a hurdle to new media creation and as a catalyst of alternative solutions.

Despite previous efforts such as the Helsinki Agenda, there has been little political will or political conviction at the apex of arts and cultural agencies to redistribute funding from more traditional forms to new and contemporary forms. There is now an urgent need to make stronger arguments that can (a) show how this failure to respond to movement within practice will be damaging in the long run to audiences and to the position of the funding agencies, and (b) to show the benefits of the small investments that have happened as contributions to the broader creative economy (and other important social and environmental agendas).

1st Recommendation: support for the creation and development of a shared and distributed Common Platform to document support and catalyse media arts research practice and discourse.

Action: set up a group to create platform and find funding to pilot this. This action will showcase and suggest ways of implementing support, drawing on innovative and emerging examples from across the world. It could demonstrate how small amounts of support at different stages have had massive transformative effects over time.

Objective:

A Common Platform could create a **common language** and help in many ways to show, demonstrate, argue, provide advocacy, brokerage, documentation of practice and leverage as well as create connections. It should be online and network based: While not duplicating existing tools and methods it would provide a space between different processes and offer the missing conceptual framework for new media practices & policies. If it existed it could act as a missing bridge, offering a space for creative research and lead to a broad(er) critical, more diverse, discourse. It should include the critical blogging sphere.

What is needed is a supportive framework for global discourse and support (a 'safe zone') with constructive feedback mechanisms that allow for, include, encourage and embed emergent and new voices and initiatives.

This platform would be a good opportunity to create **space for collaborative exchange**, i.e., a bank of media knowledge that uses good and interesting practice as

a currency of exchange (similar to what Bricolabs has started to do regarding labs). This would further increase an awareness of how media arts organisations now work – within a mixed ecology.

It could also address the **lack of discursive practice**: there is a need for more extensive peer review systems. This lack makes it hard for practices outside traditional forms to be understood and evaluated effectively (see Sarai models¹⁶ for good examples of autonomous publishing). At the same time, the platform could act as a voice of media arts that communicates, translates and interprets within a broader cultural, social and scientific environment/discourse.

The group discussed **issues of in- and exclusion** and asked would it be possible to create a space of absolute openness, or if it would be more supportive of free expression if it were partly protected. This issue requires further discussion.

2nd Recommendation: demonstrate media culture's key role in addressing cultural diversity, innovation, social cohesion and environmental issues.

Action: strengthen advocacy by collecting leading examples of effectiveness from different contexts and use the critical framework as an advocacy and development resource by including knowledge sharing. So, use the platform to collect narratives of useful and interesting practice for global sharing and advocacy.

The group were strongly supportive of the role of new media in expressing cultural diversity and expression. New media practice is clearly in an advantageous position to mediate in this area, as it is diverse in essence. Media arts practice and research (in both production and dissemination) exceed the boundaries between sectors, disciplines and political systems. Demonstrating this effect using the platform as an advocacy tool could help generate arguments for support. Transdisciplinary and international funding are required for cultural, innovative, scientific and artistic research and projects that are transdisciplinary and transcultural.

Linked to all of this, in the context of the environmental crisis are also many examples of media culture's role in informing debates with an environmental and ecological context. More work at research level is essential.

We suggest that notions of ecological sustainability that are linked to ethics could be transferred to an idea/concept of cultural sustainability (i.e., referring to distributed means of working within media arts).

See things as cyclical – in the arts these cycles are generally iterative – so steps may be short-lived but part of the long-term emergence of innovative developments, which require long-term thinking and documentation over time of the results.

Critical example,

Open Source project led by the Brazilian government – great impact but not long lasting – needs to be seen relative to other examples in other countries. These processes and projects have intrinsic transnational and translocal importance.

3rd Recommendation: enhanced flexibility in funding (for transdisciplinary research & development and to allow more mobility of artists and ideas)

Action: collect examples of good funding and support practice to inform advocacy document(s) and publish these to show how things can work. Make arguments to funders based on analysis and collective work – demonstrating the difference additional funding of the correct sort can have on, e.g., collaborative research, practice-based PhDs, etc. Develop the concept of research residencies as a way forward on a practical level to embed it into existing residency and exchange programmes. Collate research and media-based PhDs to show value across different contexts.

There is a sense of urgency for collaborative projects, particularly in the area of environmental media practices as well as artistic open source and social software informed by local expertise and contexts. Currently, a clear lack of funding prevents projects that are not nationally based from becoming sustainable. Funding programs should be established both locally and through international foundations to support translocal initiatives.

The new schemes should **allow for flexibility in funding. There is a need for short, medium- and long-term transdisciplinary funding schemes** taking into account the different cycles, duration and scope of projects; i.e., strategic, application-based research, prototyping/implementation focus, the differences between project-based and (artistic) research processes; the nature of disciplines, sectors and teams involved; the mobility of artists, researchers and ideas; cross-disciplinary and internationally distributed work; and collaborative social projects embedded in communities.

Debbie Esmans

I think policy can be a meaningful factor in the development of practice. Policy and practice need, however, to work in a dialogue and communicate with each other in order to create that potential acceleration or change. But as I noticed in Flanders, policy developments have led to new policy initiatives which will or can have an impact on the development of practice.

Example,

One example, the Interact scheme in UK, placing artists in business contexts to develop joint R&D, has been very effective and could be used as critical exemplar as documentation is underway. Other countries also have interesting problems and challenges with some good examples but there is insufficient documentation and evaluation.

Funding structures and conditions often imply the need for long-term projects to develop 'something'.

It is crucial that more time is allowed for research evaluation so as to provide evidence for sustainability in a research structure/context. At the same time, for short-term projects (i.e., the initial R&D phase) existing funding is too slow and rigid. Also, the understanding between sectors needs to increase, since methodologies used by artists (i.e., rapid proto-typing) and the value that artists can contribute as researchers might not be recognized in, for example, the scientific arena.

Across and within countries, there often is very little dialogue and coherence and collaboration between different national policy strands (e.g., government information/technology and national commissions for culture and arts failing to work with each other). This non-dialogue between European, governmental and non-governmental funding bodies and policy bodies is an important area to address.

Media culture has to understand it is not always understood.

However, if there were more emphasis on openness and transparency, then the ground for understanding would be there. Thus, if public money is used then it should be open/knowledge based and outputs and processes should be shared. This could become part of public policy, and increase media arts role in a broader cultural and social environment.

Sustainability arguments can also be leverage – e.g., funding results should be assessed, monitored and understood over a longer time period. Whilst media arts can act as a catalyst, as temporary window and be intervention-based, it can also, over time, have very good results. There is thus a need to evaluate in the long-term even if the project or process is temporary.

Collaborative projects can take many forms and transcend art forms/disciplines as well as sectors. Further research should be done into the methodologies that can be applied to transdisciplinary projects to better understand the needs and requirements.

Open methodologies, for example, Anne Nigten's PhD research on defining artistic methodologies (process-patching), artistic techniques or methods – also from other disciplines – using a defined methodology processes.

CASE STUDY

The Patching Zone (Anne Nigten)

The Patching Zone (www.patchingzone.net) is a transdisciplinary laboratory for innovation where master, doctor, post-doctorate students and professionals from different backgrounds create meaningful content. In their laboratories students and researchers work together, supervised by experts, on commissions requiring the creative use of high-tech materials, digital media and/or information technology.

The Patching Zone brings together people who are interested in building a shared practice. The participants come from a range of educational programs such as art schools, design schools, social and computer sciences, technical programs, and industry.

The Patching Zone applies the 'Processpatching' approach that is defined by its initiator's (Anne Nigten) PhD thesis, as its main methodology for creative research and development, and builds on the knowledge and expertise from V2_Lab, the research and development department of V2_ (www.v2.nl).

V2_ is a widely acknowledged centre for art and media technology, based in Rotterdam. V2_ produces, presents and distributes media art. Furthermore, we build on shared expertise from the network of collaborators and experts from the field.

Research Themes

The Patching Zone's first year projects focus on two major themes, which are both approached from a transdisciplinary perspective and include a strong focus on playfulness and a dialogue between the makers and the participants:

- > Social interaction in public spaces; audience participation in art and cultural applications in (urban) public spaces.
- > Ecological and physical computing; wearable computing that is charged and activated by alternative, environment-friendly energy.

Products

Because the Patching Zone is a praxis laboratory that is assignment driven, it delivers products. The products are the outcome of commissions from socially engaged organisations, governments (national, local) and industry. These commissions are executed according to very original interpretations by the talented teams.

The deliverables and the outcomes of the commissions represent the sum of the involved education programmes and disciplines and the surplus value of their collaborative effort. During the development process, the gained knowledge will be disseminated and shared in seminars and conferences.

4th Recommendation: Stronger arguments for supporting research-based media practice and its mobile, transnational and transdisciplinary nature

Action: Set up a pool of people (i.e., from this initiative and others) who can develop specific methodologies and case studies to support this call and ensure recommendations from this meeting underline the transdisciplinary and transcultural nature of the practice, underlining mobility, etc.

The interpenetration between media arts practice and media arts research (as is happening in academia) has been badly documented and poorly understood, so more work needs to be done to ensure that this occurs. The critical framework and advocacy may enable this to happen. It is very important to put more bridges in place between these fields to maximize possible outputs and create more effect.

Safeguarding and supporting the **mobility of artists, researchers and ideas** (as well as safeguarding freedom of speech and a non-censored environment) is crucial to new media arts practice and research. While the media arts sector is hybrid, organizational transformation also takes place in the outside world (e.g., funding), but the practice changes much quicker than the policy response or the law. However these changes can have huge impacts on media arts.

5th Recommendation: There is a need for substantial further mapping of the evidence of the impact of media arts organisations – this has to be ongoing, dynamic and iterative.

Action: this work is to be commissioned alongside platform documentation as above outlined in Recommendation 1 and encouraged as part of the work of main festivals, conferences etc., including a review of the past 10–15 years.

Why should this occur?

Mapping could lead to an acknowledgement and a further understanding of diversity as well as increase dissemination. It can be used to support practice for the community as well as being a basis for policy development, by observing trends and supporting strategy.

In the past, the relatively little support for media arts organisations has led to a disproportionate impact of media arts on the broader cultural field, R&D and innovation, and the broader society. The **lack of empirical data** might be partly explained by a lack of tools and instruments (though these might be applied from other disciplines, i.e., social sciences), but has **led to a lack of advocacy** for new media culture. This dynamic survey/documentation should acknowledge the (local) hybridity, complexity, topical diversity, and areas of practice and communities that are structured around certain top-

ics and changing vocabulary, as well as document transitions, maturation and heterogeneity of the sector.

While recognizing that the field is transformatory and dynamic, and mixed economic models should be tested and encouraged, it will always need specific (public) support. Continuous mapping could provide the necessary argumentation to underpin this claim.

Example: Virtueel Platform's project observatory for models of innovative practice in the Netherlands shows how to increase visibility and dissemination of good practice, and the development parameters for accountability (and success).

6th Recommendation: Develop a framework for continuous professional development & training

Action: Highlight the responsibilities of many different agencies – use a platform to make the case, find examples, etc., and initiate meetings between possible actors and partners to investigate possibilities for international collaboration.

There should be structures in place that enable the development of knowledge networking to create knowledge framework for policy makers, administrators/managers, cultural practitioners, knowledge exchange and skills sharing, and networking and professional development. It should include all types of skills and professional development – peer-to-peer learning, opportunities for placements, internships, mentoring, etc., in legal, technical areas as well as in the artistic and critical discourse.

Awadhendra Sharan

There is indeed immense potential for change in the domain of cultural creativity and new media art through policy. However, for this to happen, certain reorientations become necessary. In countries such as India, with their rich tradition of arts and crafts, there has been a natural inclination to focus on the 'traditional' sectors and how new design tools and marketing could enable their future growth. New media practices, when they figure in policy domains, are within a larger rubric of 'culture industries' with a marked focus on cinema. These focus areas need to be reevaluated.

New media and art policies in countries such as India have been obsessively concerned with providing access. These would now have to enter the post-access scenario and ask 'after access, what?' This may take a number of routes – a move away from 'lack' to 'authorship'; from transmission of knowledge through experts to policies that enable dialogic contexts; and a shift from receiving ideas and concepts to processes through which many of these might be generated.

Policy must also recognize that media and art works are produced and circulated not only by professionals but also within communities that inhabit rather fragile living/working spaces between the cracks of the legal and the illegal, formal and the informal. Only through such recognition, would they be able to address the needs of these other producers.

Workgroup 3

Open Source and Open Network, the Role of Small Independent New Media Labs

Moderator: Jaromil Denis Rojo (Italy/The Netherlands) / Rob Van Kranenburg (The Netherlands)

Rapporteur: Emma Ota (UK/Japan)

Members: Konrad Becker (Austria), Petko Dourmana (Bulgaria), Maja Kuzmanovic (Belgium), Gustaff Harriman Iskander (Indonesia), Atteqa Malik (Pakistan), Doan Huu Thang 'Tri Minh' (Vietnam), Stephanie O'Callaghan (Ireland), Michelle Kasprzak (Canada/UK), Francis McKee (UK), Ngalimecha Ngahyoma (Tanzania), Tan Sei-Hon (Malaysia)

The subject of open source can be approached on many different levels, i.e., technically, politically, economically and culturally, but the social approach that appears to be pivotal to openness is frequently overlooked. Open source is not just about software or the Internet – it is more of an attitude or culture of collaboration, sharing and promoting access to tools and knowledge; here we must emphasize the role of people and the relations between them, not just the means of production. Open source is a question of empowerment, freedom of speech and enfranchisement, none of which can be taken for

Jaromil

Adapting current policies on media practices to the digital age is crucial. A policy system that respects rights and freedoms in the digital age, rather than calling them piracy, can avoid a harsh conflict that is both economical and generational. The world connected by digital technologies, and the philosophies elaborated by the free software movement, offer an important step to humanity, leading to new development models based on cooperation rather than competition. While corporate interests have globalized their exploitation strategies and are facing the failure of their sustainability, a plan that opens access to existing infrastructures and fosters the creation of independent local economies can provide an organic solution to depressing crisis scenarios.

granted, not even in today's world. This group examined the role of new media labs or 'hubs' (as we prefer to call them) in the promotion of open source/open network and its benefits for communities.

Example of good practice: Bandung – Common Room

Common Room was identified as a key model of good practice amongst new media labs or 'hubs'. 'Common Room' is a media lab based in Bandung, Indonesia, exploring underground culture and media art. It was established in 2001 as an open space to pursue artistic and cultural aspirations, which were being sidelined by politics and had no public infrastructure or policies to support them, and was thus unable to accommodate the public needs. It is necessary to have relevance to the local situation. Gustaff expressed the opinion that media can really change people by distributing information and allowing people to create their own content. Common Room was therefore established as an inclusive space that can engage with pressing issues, inform and share opinions and create a point of advocacy or counter campaigns. He urged us to consider the strategic positions of media labs to raise issues and accommodate public needs. We need to create spaces where there is no space, where people do not have a voice; such spaces are thus born from need.

Focus point:

In the context of countries with strong government regulations there is little space for independent initiatives and alternative voices. This reality is reflecting an underlying global concern about the ways contents are shared, and the exact knowledge about who is controlling and participating, within the public domain. When governments or large corporations monopolize ownership of the sources of information, there is less space for underground culture and alternative information and perspectives. It is therefore vital that independent initiatives try to promote access to these alternatives and create a space for cultural diversity. In order to create such spaces, collaboration or at least a dialogue between government initiated, high-end and grassroots cultural activities, is required.

Action points

In considering the development of new media hubs and their promotion of open source strategies the following action points were recommended.

The space for new media creativity needs to be opened-up and encouraged, supporting the initiation of media hubs. Particular conditions have to be in place to activate this, including support for catalysts of such initiatives, protecting their autonomy and funding the initiatives.

It is then the responsibility of the initiative to further its development in close communication with the local community.

CASE STUDY

Mapping the Change (Atteqa Malik)

Mapping the Change introduced the four founders, Yasir, Amar, Nameera and Atteqa, their art backgrounds, their hopes for social change and their thoughts behind the media arts collective, MAUJ, in Karachi, Pakistan.

<http://maujmedia.blogspot.com>

Yasir and Atteqa's contact with Bricolabs and encouragement from Rob van Kranenburg were shown as important factors in the realization of MAUJ. Earlier e-discussion amongst Bricolabs members on the common goals and objectives of media labs had resulted in the LIFTS (Learning, Inspiration, Futures, Tools and materials, Services) concept defined by James Wallbank.

A local context for setting up MAUJ was then elaborated upon through the ideas of MAUJ founders. They intended a dynamic initiation of MAUJ through simple activities in the next 24 months. Proposals by MAUJ members for some of the projects were shown in 'Mapping the Change'. MAUJ would ideally become a link for cultures, people and ideas using technology.

Questions from the audience included

What happens when we assume:

- > The individual as a media lab?
- > The immediate environment as a media lab?
- > The city as a media lab?
- > Virtual worlds and Invisible networks as media labs?
- > What are the different criteria leading to the successful integration of these media labs in the environments they have emerged from?

Technology can be used a vehicle to share views, find common ground and advocate action on certain issues. In considering the role of media labs we must examine how

people can be gathered around these spaces, how they can express their opinions and how we can enrich the culture by protecting open channels. Diverse voices and alternative approaches must be protected, the right to express and try different things must be central to any policy.

This strategy and progress towards sustainability requires a network of communities/media labs, etc., with a common ground, offering mutual support and hospitality, sharing infrastructure and advice. In order for media space initiatives to be successful there needs to be a strong knowledge of the local social context, to which the space itself can contribute. Such space needs to accommodate various groups and may be multi-functional, combining many facilities important to the community, for example, education, health as well as art. The support of the local community is most significant to the function and progression of the space – they will function as your most important policy makers.

When working with community groups it is important to consider how to win their trust and promote your action and discover their needs in clear communication. It is essential that this dialogue is continuous and that a critical engine is established to facilitate analysis of what you are doing and why you are doing it, and the response of the local community.

The role of education here is very important – education which should be promoted by the media hub with the view to disseminating learning throughout the commu-

Gustaff Harriman Iskandar

In the past 10 years, a lot of things have started to change in Indonesia. This is a good sign for the emerging civil society that is being cultivated by new technology in the Internet era. The birth of new and emerging creative practice in Bandung has been always connected with new information and knowledge that is woven together by the Internet. At the institutional level, public policy is still part of the problem and an obstacle to further development of a more open and independent society in Indonesia. Sometimes there is conflict and friction caused by different ways of understanding problems in our country. I think that is why, in some cases, an informal network and open environment could become an accelerator and a meaningful factor for changing practice. We have high hopes for the rise of a new generation who engage with globalization and new technology.

nity and wider public.

Communication

Communication is central to the function of the media hub and to the open source network. Key necessities of communication in this context are to identify the benefits of the activity, with outlined measurables that can identify the success of a project.

In the process of communication there needs to be more dialogue between formal and informal organizations, between governments and independent initiatives. In such a strategy a toolkit for communication through the cultural/political hierarchies would provide a useful methodology and structure. Such a toolkit would have to be developed according to different contexts, but it should challenge bureaucracy and allow for innovation.

Economy

Economic models for the promotion of these activities must also be considered, models not based only on the established economies of public funding or corporate sponsorship, but other alternative models, which must also be considered by authorities and practitioners. Economies of sharing and exchange must also be considered in this case. Open source by nature supports such alternative models and is an important consideration in the sustainability of these initiatives.

Openness

Finally, underpinning all of these recommendations and discussion is the need to promote and protect open channels in which there is transparency and freedom of expression. Independence must be protected while firmly participating in network, sharing and collaboration.

This openness must be attained at many levels between the media hub and the community, between similar hubs/peers and between the independent initiatives and other formal structures. Access to information and diverse perspectives is also essential in this approach.

Summary

The crux of the matter is the need for recognition by authorities and communities of the existence of these media hubs and the good work that they do. By promoting education and dialogue in the field of emerging technology and creativity, especially open source culture, people can be informed of the many different possibilities available to them, how they can participate in this, create their own content and address community needs. Media hubs can function as activation points in which people are enfranchised and empowered, but further support is required to make this successful and sustainable. This support must take many forms, including policy, which the initiatives create for themselves, including their relation to their surrounding communities and other media hubs in translocal collaboration, as well as support from government authorities.

Atteqa Malik

Policies when implemented over a long period of time affect practice, but not always in a beneficial way. However, policies can act as watchdogs over those who want to find loopholes and take advantage of systems. At this time, when developing countries are witnessing multinationals from developed countries assisting in the large-scale expansion of media related services, consumer products and pharmaceuticals, countries need to look beyond their own boundaries and into the areas where their corporations expand to ensure they are as sensitive to the environment as they would be at home. If a cartoon in one country can lead to the loss of lives in another, then policies should also be created to address issues that cross borders. All stakeholders should be considered, inside and outside the country, before policies are created to influence practice.

Workgroup 4

Media Education, Civil Society, Media

Moderator: Fatima Lasay (The Philippines)

Rapporteur: Jerneja Rebernak (Slovenia / Singapore)

Members: Venzha Christiawan (Indonesia), Elinor Nina Czegledy (Hungary/Canada), Peter Tomaz Dobrila (Slovenia), Isrizal (Singapore), Muid Latif (Malaysia), Sally Jane Norman (UK/France), Thasnai Sethaseree (Thailand), Floor van Spaendonck (The Netherlands), Alek Tarkowski (Poland), Ampat V. Varghese (India)

The deliberations of WG4 must be placed in the context of certain comments made in the introductory session where it was mentioned that the objective was to move from policy and discourse to policy as action. It was also reflected that education lags behind practice; more specifically new media education lags behind the practice of new media arts (Tapio Mäkelä). Some direction for the future lay in the hope that contemporary new media arts can bridge the gap between the transnational/translocal (Rob van Kranenburg). So the meta-question before WG4 was how contemporary media education could bridge two types of divides – the transnational/translocal and the gap between contemporary new media arts practices and media education.

From the outset, the process of creating policy documents at international conferences determined the dynamics of the workgroup. The moderator Fatima Lasay emphasized that the setting does not necessarily require the concretization of a policy document nor exert pressure on the participants individually or collectively to reach such an outcome. This provoked a sharp response from some participants who asserted that attending the workshop was concomitant with bringing out a policy document. This led to another critical question regarding whether or not such workshops are actually negotiating tables between conflicting cultures.

In other words, there was a certain underlying, palpable tension which must be seen in the light of Rob van Kranenburg's apprehension that if such conferences do not 'script solidarity into the systems, we will end up with very little space for social relationships and lots of messy things'. Such 'messy things' are obviously a problem for the Occident, which seeks a 'stable environment' for new media arts practice/education in a situation where the 'tables are turning towards the East, which has an ability to deal with insecurity, messy circumstances, the lack of safety... in short, an ability to deal with life'.

The participants began with a storytelling disclosure of the implications of the political, social and cultural dynamics embedded in the sole act of greeting in their respective cultures followed by an exercise in which each participant wrote out on meta-cards their central thoughts about media education, civil society and media. This helped map the commonalities, divergences and directions in relation to their individual and cultural positioning as well as broader concerns in media education.

The group agreed to address (new) media education (as different from mass media education – Thasnai Sethaseree) as looking at new directions, new perspectives, and the process of critical discourse. There was a felt need to define (new) media as a concept that includes digital and analogue ('temples are also media' – Peter) and manifold distribution channels such as the Internet (also convergence). Contemporary media education must take into account user-generated media as differing from media under the ambit of institutional regulations (government/corporate) and therefore incorporates do-it-yourself attitudes of open access with a consequent disregard for intellectual property.

Alek Tarkowski

In the field I am interested in – free culture – there is great potential for the promotion of this model and of innovative practices at policy level. Free culture (licensing, production and distribution models) should constitute an important mechanism included in publicly funded cultural projects, and policy should reflect this. The main challenge that policy should address is the broadening and democratization of the role of cultural producer, as well as other roles in the cultural sphere (for example, that of the distributor, the archivist or the critic). Policy should take into account this new diversity and empower these new actors active in the cultural sphere alongside commercial or public institutions.

The discussion highlighted the following extant, dominant and dormant realities in contemporary media education:

- > a preponderance of deep-rooted hierarchies of power in cultural policy-making and practices disseminated through the stakeholder theory
- > the paradoxical availability of funds for both new media arts and education, but few takers in lackadaisical societies
- > the commonplace of higher education institutions basing curricula on the creative economy to position students into selling points for cultural capital in Thailand and India
- > the effect of media practitioners following the latest trends, resulting in the dilemma of practitioners and educators not questioning or changing the framework of society per se
- > the lack of mobility of media education across the formal and non-formal sectors where the exchange of knowledge could be used to empower community
- > the lack of infrastructure and shortfall of knowledge bases generated in communities that could be available in crisis situations
- > the lack of a mechanism for protecting rights of open source practitioners who have encountered censorship issues
- > the need to support media education and sensitivity by using open source tools and methodologies, providing free public access to the Internet and eliminating the no-copy policy that protects the commercial contents of industry
- > the fact that media education is seldom linked to the broader contexts of human rights, and the creation of alternatives to existing notions of civil society
- > cases of 'no-policy' where media arts practitioners were forced to find solutions on their own and focus on self- or collectively generated infrastructures for interdisciplinary programmes
- > little or no development of creative competences and appropriate tools much earlier in the school education system, which only focuses on knowledge creation

Venzha Christiawan

The constant changes in new media culture make policy creation and implementation a challenging task that can only be addressed through an ongoing dialogue between policy-makers and practitioners. The Helsinki Agenda took forward the ideas that emerged in the Amsterdam Agenda and particularly emphasized the need to shift new media arts and culture policy to better support international, translocal, non-nation based cultural practices. It does mean that adequate support by the authorities should not be a constraint in order to mainstream its policy on practicing those issues. In theory, the status of policy as an accelerator can be factors that influence the practice. The potential for change on and change through a policy level is how to inform and communicate its issues in such a way that the authorities share a mutual understanding about this issue. Continuing the search for suitable approaches should be considered as a crucial issue to mainstream new media culture policy

Given the above identification of areas of need/lack/want, some action points suggested were as follows:

1. Open up new practices in the direction of critical discourses in media education. For instance, media education/new media are tools to promote national identity as something that can be sold/traded. New media art practices keep the same framework in place and hence the need for a critical discourse.
2. Mobile research units can be envisioned in places where there is no infrastructure yet for media education. Examples: The Container project (Jamaica) and Mediashed as best practices.
3. The situation of no-policy underscores the urgency for incorporating media education practices in early education. Media art becomes a tool for educating others, cultural practices and the process of interaction becomes the tool, which goes beyond access. For example, House of Natural Fiber, where who is teaching and who is learning is not important, but the most important issue is its long-term programme where concerns about sustainability are being addressed.
4. Collaborative media research takes place outside the university, where there is no prescriptive environment and a wide selection and diversity of tools and practices can generate insight and public debates, articulating questions about the critical structures of the civil soci-

ety. New dynamics of discourse can become templates for people to try to develop different categories of media arts, such as, for example, mobile education, and to learn how to appropriate technology. There is a need to talk about ideas, not in technical terms, but in terms of how to hack them. These practices should then be transmissible and documented in order to facilitate access.

5. Design multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural collaborative projects, which work locally and produce new forms and bodies of knowledge that have universal values. Incorporate feedback mechanisms because technology is seen as a tool, but one that redefines our culture and people. Use technology and new media approaches to revive/relocate the craft or traditional sectors. Initiate funding for initiatives that strengthen local cultures, which cannot be sustained on a national level, but come into being only through international funding.

6. Institute transparent methods and processes so the implementation of media knowledge such as open source is transferred to institutions. Examples of best practice are FLOSS manuals, which are easily accessible and explain simply how to use open source tools.

Sally Jane Norman

There would be a potential for change through policy if policy were less conservative. Yet there is also a potential for change through policy if, as in most places, policy remains conservative. In the latter case though, change takes the form of underground, alternative, backlash energies which are harder to accommodate in policy frameworks. Realistically this may nevertheless be how real change occurs: if we accept that policy is permanently outdated (the institutional visions it embodies inevitably imply a degree of inertia), the challenge in trying to make it an accelerator or meaningful factor for change consists of using it to tighten the gap between conservative and innovative forces. This requires open minds, courage and a taste for risk – qualities often lacking in institutions – and processes which are more demanding than the normative processes of conservative policy, but it offers high returns on investment as a reduced gap can allow significantly deeper changes.

CASE STUDY

The Arts in Civil Society

A philosophy of the functioning society (Fatima Lasay)

‘The Arts in Civil Society – A philosophy of the functioning society’ is a critical look at the global process of policy making and development in culture and the arts. My criticism is based upon three (neo-colonial) conditions under which current policy and action has been shaped in the name of culture: First is the use of culture as a tool in the implementation of the nation state and the state-centred culture in creating rules of cultural exclusion. Second is political exclusion through the use of culture and cultural cooperation as a Laundromat for dirty politics at national and international levels. The third condition is the cultural integration of new media technologies and the ‘network society’ through media education, so that the processes of social appropriation, integration and acceptance will appear simply to be ‘social’, creating conceptual and historical exclusion.

As a constructive critique, I proposed a vision of aesthetics as methodology where there can be no global agenda or universal system of patronage for the arts simply because both the definition of art, the role it is intended to play within the community and the way it should be funded are an integral part of the aesthetic dialogue within the community itself. Aesthetics gives back power to the community, not through the drafting of international policy recommendation papers by a panel of so-called experts, but through that delicate but durable bond that grows among people who discover that their core identities intersect with those of others.

These are the recommendations by Workgroup 4, as presented at the final Mini Summit session and the public session at ISEA.

The policy advisors are invited to read the background documents (Amsterdam Agenda, Helsinki Agenda, Delhi Declaration).

1. Looking for new directions and new perspectives that include a process of critical discourse which appreciates many histories and many voices and takes into account voices that are being drowned by media and lack critical space or platforms for expression in new media forms.

2. Addressing issues about how informal, technology-driven media works, and the osmotic process by which media arts education can incorporate informal media into pedagogy, thus enabling new directions and new perspectives in education.

3. Offering new media arts as a challenge for education and cultural practices and production beyond much-discussed issues like 'access'. If one speaks of access, it must be focused through mapping and identifying specific groups that do not have access and the results must be transparent, transmissible and documented for action (refer to Delhi declaration – going beyond access).

4. That media education is also linked to informal education and that ASEF explore how this can be brought about through new media arts.

5. That provision is made for funding and providing resource components where it is identified that there is a lack of infrastructure for trans-disciplinary and cross-sector actions in new media arts, including the creation of short-term and temporary spaces for media education, and mobile media education.

6. The spread of new media tools and practices and processes to school-level education to develop more creative thinking and competencies, including open and free access to educational resources.

7. That media education is framed within the larger context of human rights and mechanisms of social dynamics, dialogues and debate, allowing local communities to determine their own priorities.

8. The development and delineation of concrete examples and methods for transferring media knowledge of transparent and open source processes for people, communities and institutions involved in media education.

4. Results of D'Art Survey:

Policy and the Agency of Policy in the Network

Introduction

The D'Art Survey was initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) prior to the Mini Summit in Singapore in July 2008. It was intended to identify policy issues and to locate key personnel to invite.

The term 'new media arts' is used in this D'Art to cover a range of terms such as 'new arts', 'media arts', 'electronic arts' and 'digital arts'. Whatever term is used, new media arts in this context is understood to represent artistic practices that use innovative or 'new' means for artistic expression. The term is often used for art that uses electronic technologies. However, other 'non-traditional' platforms are also recognized as new media, such as biomass materials and other media imported from sciences and non-arts domains.

Compilation of D'Art Questionnaire results

What follows is a compilation of the D'Art Questionnaire results, which sketches the situation in those countries – Denmark, England, Finland, Australia, Tanzania, Ontario (Canada), and Cuba – whose arts councils returned the questionnaires. Interestingly, they represent the full spectrum of the current situation.

Denmark states that it does not have a separate category for 'New Media Arts'. They are supported within the categories 'Visual Arts', 'Music', 'Literature' and 'Performing Arts', or as projects that cannot be categorized within any of these.

The *English* questionnaire lists as a definition for new media arts: Visual art devised for electronic and networked media 'platforms'. It can be on or off line and often makes use of new technology. The emphasis is on expanding the potential for new forms of visual arts activity, visual language and communication. It is noted that this is 'a corporate definition, but officers will use their discretion and include non-visual art forms, e.g., sound, or interdisciplinary forms and contexts.' The main vehicle for support is through ongoing regular funding for agencies throughout the United Kingdom dedicated to digital/new media practice. In addition, they also provide a funding scheme called 'Grants for the Arts', which allows arts individuals and

organisations to apply for the abovementioned activities on a time-limited basis, and a major ACE-funded strategic initiative called 'AmbITion'¹⁷ which was established to support and develop IT and digital infrastructure for our Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) across the art forms at different stages of IT literacy.

There are between 65 and 70 full-time ACE staff members who are responsible for visual arts, of which approximately 10 per cent have specific knowledge of new media. British government support for new media art practice is generally geared towards those practices that are most closely related to what is termed 'Creative Industries' and the creative economy. The benefits of this include more opportunities for artists to collaborate with industry and for organisations to find new solutions for business sustainability, but a disadvantage may be that experimental practice that is not 'entertainment' or business-orientated is less well supported. More could be done to encourage the contemporary arts constituencies at large to embrace art practices that use new technologies. Either that or allow a new hybrid 'public' context to emerge that operates beyond the established contemporary art ecology.

| | All applicants | New media art applicants | New media art applicants % | All grant receivers | New media art grant receivers | New media art grant receivers % |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2003 | 5422 | 117 | 2,2 % | 2 111 | 49 | 2,3 % |
| 2004 | 5756 | 95 | 1,7 % | 2 427 | 35 | 1,4 % |
| 2005 | 5896 | 148 | 2,5 % | 2 491 | 55 | 2,2 % |
| 2006 | 6006 | 154 | 2,6 % | 2 580 | 67 | 2,6 % |
| 2007 | 6004 | 159 | 2,6 % | 2 605 | 69 | 2,6 % |
| Average | | | 2 % | | | 2 % |

| | Sums in euros | | | | |
|------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | All allocations | For new media art | For new media art % | Growth / all allocations | Growth / new media art allocations |
| 2003 | 16 950 977 | 197 794 | 1,2 % | | |
| 2004 | 18 676 976 | 198 461 | 1,1 % | 10 % | 0 % |
| 2005 | 19 419 097 | 245 049 | 1,3 % | 4 % | 23 % |
| 2006 | 20 185 998 | 354 856 | 1,8 % | 4 % | 45 % |
| 2007 | 20 368 195 | 356 017 | 1,7 % | 1 % | 0 % |
| | Growth in average | | | 5 % | 17 % |

Arts Council England support for New Media Art 2003-2007

In **Finland** new media arts has been included as a category in funding applications since 2002. The applicant ticks the option 'new media art'. Three per cent of the Finnish agency's overall grants budget was dedicated to new media arts in the last financial year.

The Arts Council of Finland comprises the Central Arts Council and the nine National Art Councils, each representing a specific field of art. The Arts Council is an expert body attached to the Ministry of Education. For media arts, the Central Arts Council has established a subcommittee that is appointed for a period of one to three years at a time. The Subcommittee for Media Arts consists of members of the National Art Councils and experts in the field. The subcommittee has been active since 1996. The Subcommittee issues statements and makes proposals promoting media art. It issues a statement on subsidies and grants on applications of new media arts. Since 2002 new media art has been an option in the application form. The following figures refer to those applications where the applicant has ticked the option 'new media art'. It has to be noted, though, that in addition to the figures below, new media artists and new media art projects (especially video art) also receive grants from other art forms' funding. They have no statistics for that, estimating the total amount of new media art grant receivers to be around 3 per cent.

The most urgent need of Tapio Mäkelä, the co-host of the previous new media policy meeting in Helsinki in 2004, which resulted in the Helsinki Agenda, was concrete moves towards sustainability of internationally networked, interdisciplinary media arts and research practices. As best case study he highlights the work by the 'Critical Art Ensemble, and the recently concluded court process by the US Government against Steve Kurtz from CAE. CAE has for years used com-

mon science materials to examine issues surrounding the new biotechnologies. Practice by CAE is a good example of how art and science can operate so that the actions by the artists are discussed in different media and made accessible for various audiences. I am quite critical of media arts that are about technology, and about art and science that merely translate data from one field of perception to another.'

Asked if there is a potential for change on and change through a policy level, Tapio says: 'in many countries policy has become a means to make practices understandable by policy makers through a dialogue between practitioners and officers in funding bodies. It functions well as a forum for preparing decision-making. Whether it succeeds in changing cultural politics though, depends on how dynamic cultural policy is in action in given countries.'

Australia has been supporting media arts since 2005 across all art form boards of the Australia Council and through the Inter-Arts Office. The Australia Council encourages artists from all art forms to explore technology and media arts practice within their art forms. Work that does not easily fit into the guidelines of the existing art form boards (Visual Arts, Music, Dance, Theatre and Literature) is considered for funding by the Inter-Arts Office, which supports interdisciplinary arts. There is no dedicated staff member to manage support for new media arts.

In **Tanzania** the Programme Officer Operations covers all cultural sub-sectors. Assessment of projects has to satisfy criteria listed under 'Film and Audio Visual and Productions'. The 'Programme Officer for Operations' is in charge of all projects supported by the fund. However, he is supported by the Trustee who represents the 'Film and Audio

| MFUKO WA UTAMADUNI TANZANIA (Tanzania Culture Trust Fund) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| GRANTS SUPPORT 1999 TO 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CONST. | Performing Arts | | Fine Arts & Crafts | | Language & Literature | | Cultural Heritage | | Cultural Industries | | Film Audio Visual | | TOTAL | |
| PERIOD | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % | Tshs. | % |
| 1999 | 21413.136 | 14 | 37.101.400 | 24 | 4.214.000 | 3 | 57.615.391 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 33.639.400 | 22 | 154.092.457 | 100 |
| 2000 | 29.252.000 | 12 | 65.800.000 | 26 | 46.390.000 | 19 | 43.006.000 | 17 | 18.700.000 | 12 | 46.000.000 | 18 | 249.458.164 | 100 |
| 2001 | 30.705.136 | 13 | 102.701.430 | 25 | 50.874.000 | 13 | 100.921.291 | 25 | 18.700.000 | 5 | 79.639.400 | 20 | 403.540.458 | 100 |
| 2002 | 34.275.000 | 12 | 61.576.400 | 21 | 43.906.000 | 15 | 77.500.000 | 26 | 12.244.900 | 4 | 67.139.464 | 23 | 297.671.765 | 100 |
| 2003 | 12.956.900 | 5 | 64.002.400 | 27 | 79.476.760 | 33 | 37.432.600 | 16 | 26.490.000 | 11 | 19.990.000 | 8 | 238.349.660 | 100 |
| 2004 | 96.306.225 | 23 | 111.412.620 | 26 | 56.969.750 | 13 | 39.221.300 | 14 | 34.059.000 | 8 | 64.192.200 | 15 | 424.391.394 | 100 |
| 2005 | 87.059.000 | 21 | 89.940.867 | 17 | 50.373.000 | 12 | 71.451.240 | 17 | 74.833.900 | 18 | 63.230.000 | 15 | 416.866.867 | 100 |
| 2006 | 66.167.000 | 21 | 65.000.000 | 20 | 39.978.300 | 12 | 42.244.720 | 13 | 36.543.600 | 11 | 71.000.000 | 22 | 320.939.719 | 100 |
| 2007 | 90.982.900 | 37 | 45.066.450 | 18 | 5.886.000 | 2 | 23.139.100 | 9 | 56.000.000 | 23 | 23.240.000 | 10 | 244.314.549 | 100 |
| TOTAL | 491.356.197 | 18 | 622.301.397 | 23 | 377.357.810 | 14 | 513.261.942 | 19 | 277.571.200 | 10 | 467.088.464 | 17 | 2.748.937.094 | 100 |

- Tshs = Tanzanian Shillings
- Exchange rate 1 USD = Tshs: 1190.00
- 1 Euro = Tshs: 1870.00
- Media Arts falls under column marked "Film Audio Visual"

Visual & Multimedia Production Constituency'. Actors and experts from this culture sub-sector also assist by providing advice, monitoring funded projects, recommending which activities should be considered for funding, as well as screen applications.

In *Ontario, Canada*, media arts encompasses, but is not restricted to, the work of artists who are using film, video sound/audio and digital media as independent artist-controlled art forms. The artist must be the driving creative force of the proposed project and must maintain complete creative and editorial control over the work. In some cases, the creative process is as important as what may be produced. Media arts sometimes employ new, cutting-edge technologies, and sometimes employ technologies that may have been around for decades; sometimes the artwork involves the creation of new technologies. Approximately 5.3 per cent of the agency's overall grants budget was dedicated to new media arts in the last financial year. Ontario has assessment processes for new media arts. For specific practices of media artists, final reporting procedures have also been adapted to acknowledge the length of time projects take – i.e., media artists are allowed two years instead of one in which to complete their projects. 3.0 staff members are employed specifically for media arts. Apart from this, Ontario hosts three important funds:

- > The Daniel Langlois Foundation
(514) 987-7177; info@fondation-langlois.org;
www.fondation-langlois.org
- > Harold Greenberg Fund
(416) 956-5431; hgf@tv.astral.com; www.tmn.ca
- > Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund
(416) 977-8154; bellfund@ipf.ca; www.bell.ca/fund

In *Cuba* the Ministry responded that there is a dedicated unit for new media arts, defining it as 'artistic practices that generate new forms and innovative processes associated with technological development'. It lists as activities:

- > Scholarships
- > Direct contributions (e.g., spaces and technologies);
- > Special rebates in taxes or other types of fiscal encouragement;
- > Other measures (e.g., including protection of copyrights);
- > Providing information (publications, web sites, training);
- > Strategy activities (e.g., research, public debates, legal support, advocacy, interagency representation, information hubs);
- > Other: promotion of and touring completed artistic productions or artistic productions in progress. Please feel free to add any extra commentary that allows us to clarify the state of government support to the New Media Arts in your country, or any other ideas you might have in relation to this subject.

This governmental aid is used to support financial and economic resources, granted according to the priorities to provide facilities and protection, as happens, for instance, with digital art, the showcase of young creators (filmmakers?) or the training of professionals at the Instituto Superior de Arte (University of the Arts in Cuba).

It sees its role as: promoting activities and events; facilitating the material conditions and the necessary human resources required to achieve the development of the action and of material support; recognizing professional works, both individual and collective; encouraging and supporting the training of artists and creators in new practices and technologies.

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