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Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need

CULTURE, ARTS AND SOCIETY



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CULTURE, ARTS AND SOCIETY

Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need

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You can join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtags [#SGSculture](#) and [#EducationPolicymakersNetwork](#) and see all your fellow Fellows on [Twitter](#).

If you're interested in writing either an op-ed style article for our website or the program report, or a personal reflection blog post while you're here this week, please email your submission to Salzburg Global's Communications Associate, Aurore Heugas: ahugas@salzburgglobal.org.

Whether writing articles or Tweeting, please make sure to observe the Chatham House Rule (information on which is in your Welcome Pack).

We're updating our Facebook page facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal and our Flickr stream flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal with photos from the session during this week and also after the program.

We will also be posting photos to Instagram instagram.com/SalzburgGlobal.

Use the hashtag [#SGSculture](#) on either Twitter or Instagram and we might feature your photos in the newsletter!



@AliAerosol: Britain, Bangladesh & Nepal collaborating here in a Nepalese kitchen in Austria for the @SalzburgGlobal immersive dining event -we speak about food/immigrant narratives & how we connect- whilst eating home-style dishes - & a taster of the beloved Chicken tikka masala!
[#sgsculture](#)



Arts and Culture Return to Schloss Leopoldskron

Salzburg, Austria – Monday, July 4, the latest Salzburg Global program in the Culture portfolio kicked off in person at Salzburg's Schloss Leopoldskron.

With over 60 participants coming from 28 different countries, from their twenties to their seventies, the main objective of *Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need* is to bring current and future leaders together to explore how exchanges between cultures locally, nationally and internationally, can provide a conduit to enable change. "For decades, the tenets and practices of cultural diplomacy have been shared by political leaders, diplomats, policymakers, and artists. As a career diplomat with a lifelong dedication to the arts as an opera singer and writer I embrace and share the pluralities of the many traditions of the lands where I live to seek an understanding of values, create empathy where it is needed, and to address the inequities

of our society. With the song, the word, and the human encounter, we can create communion and flourish", said Dr. Xenia Hanusiak, Senior Policy Officer for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Australia, and co-curator of the program. Erwin Maas, Educator, International Arts Advocate, and the other co-curator of the program, also shared his wishes for the ongoing week: "Having worked in Cultural Diplomacy both as an artist as well as a policy maker and global arts advocate in various international organizations, and having been a Salzburg Global Seminar Fellow myself, I am honored and excited to collaborate with SGS and my co-curator Xenia Hanusiak on this program. It will be inspiring to explore and discover what Cultural Diplomacy can look like for the future we need with the diverse and incredible group of people that will be gathering in Salzburg."



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Where is Cultural Diplomacy?

The opening panel at Salzburg Global's latest Arts and Culture program offered an examination of the state of cultural diplomacy

Aaisha Dadi Patel



Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need officially began with a scene-setting panel: “Between Past and the Future,” a conversation to review current thinking, practices, and experiences on cultural diplomacy, moderated by Magdalena Moreno Mujica, executive director of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies in Australia.

Featuring Daryna Zhyvohliadova, Ph.D. candidate at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine, Raj Isar, Education Director at Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Portugal, Teresa Indjein, Ambassador and Head of Section, International Cultural

Affairs, Government of Austria, and Oluwaseun Tella, Head of the Institute of Future Diplomacy, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, the panel unpacked what role cultural diplomacy has in the current world that we inhabit.

Coming from a range of backgrounds, the panel offered various perspectives and examples on how cultural diplomacy has and still is shaping cultural and political landscapes and framing the way forward to forge new understandings of the world.

Through examining the role of class and disparity, both globally – what is it that “culture” means to different people – and within local contexts – what can be said about the spaces in which there is more exclusivity

when it comes to cultural access – the panel also discussed the potential of digital diplomacy, and the importance of access to the arts in helping us to understand who we are as human beings.

It was highlighted how people doing cultural diplomacy work are central to transformation and are often not state actors. Instead, it is people involved in civil society, artists, academics, and other cultural workers. These contributors hold the ability to curate soft power, drawing from their unique experiences and sharing their cultural heritage. With that leverage, cultural diplomacy is a global force that bridges divides and connects people.

Connection through the Senses

Fellows spoke about their experiences, inviting collaboration through conversations about the feelings invoked by different forms of artistic engagement

Aaisha Dadi Patel

"Art can be violent; art can be racist. Art can be divisive, which is why we need to talk about the power that it holds." This was one of the first

remarks said by one of the panelists of The Sensate: Can the affecting power of the arts drive movement, action and change?

How do our senses drive

communication with one another, and how does that transcend and translate to the connections we make in the world?

"Art is a way of evoking emotion

– a sensory experience that when presented with, cannot be denied," said a participant.

Moderated by Johns Hopkins University Political Science professor Renee Marlin-Bennett, the panel consisted of Fellows coming from a range of backgrounds, offering their expertise and experiences as starting points to segue into breakaway discussions centered around the ways in which information flows and art evokes emotions.

The panel included Paolo Petrocelli, Founder and President of the Italy-based, Euro-Mediterranean Music Academy (EMMA) for Peace; Ruchira Das, Founder of ThinkArts in India; Gantuya Badamgarav, Founding Director of the Mongolian Contemporary Art Support Association, and Aishah Alfadhlah, the co-founder of US-based Mera Kitchen Collective.

Diplomats and Dreamers

An interactive dinner-party-style conversation focused on how global issues can be mediated by the arts

Aaisha Dadi Patel

A dance solo by German-born Iranian dancer Raha Nejad paved the way for a long-table conversation, "Diplomats and Dreamers."

Chaired by Vishakha Desai, Senior Advisor for Global Affairs to the president and chair of the committee on global thought at Columbia University, the open-table approach invited Fellows to engage in discussions about how artists and diplomats connect and about the overlap in these fields. Fellows stepped forward to not only discuss these key questions but also to expand the conversation and speak from their respective fields and geographical contexts. Discussing a range of examples, criticisms, praises, and suggestions, a rich engagement around the table saw topics shift from environmental activism to cultural nuances, to the legacies of oppressive government systems and the ways in which indigenous people navigate their struggles.

A crucial point that emerged was social media's role in cultural

diplomacy. As a tool, it holds the power to transcend borders and change perspectives. For example, Raha, whose dance performance was in response to the treatment of women in Iran, highlighted that she had received enormous feedback through social media as a result of the performance becoming more publicly shared. While cultural diplomacy is taking foot as a tool and becoming revered for the soft power it holds, speakers highlighted that it is often relegated and not always utilized to its full potential. Art and artists can sometimes become co-opted by larger systems that use them as a means without fully respecting them for what they are. That said, a critical point that emerged from the discussions was how many more actors do diplomacy despite not holding the official title of a diplomat. The open-ended approach and invites to engage saw Fellows coming together around the table in ways that opened their eyes and minds, leading them to continue discussions over coffee breaks and in breakaway groups.

Salzburg Snapshots

Photos from Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need



Hot Topic: "How do you see cultural diplomacy for the future we need?"

Aaisha Dadi Patel

"I think that we live in an age where we are so connected by the internet but also so separated by the internet, and I think there are ways that we can find rabbit holes and stay in those holes. Art is a unifying thing that can happen across languages and cultures – even if you don't understand what is being said, you understand the way the art makes you feel. So I think that's the way that cultural diplomacy really helps us come together and figure out some of the solutions to the really terrifying problems we face right now. You can't do any of it separately, you have to work together."

Lisa Snowden-McCray,
Editor-in-Chief, Baltimore Beat, USA

"How can education and curricula be designed in a way to influence cultural diplomacy in the future. If we don't do the work now it's going to be the same in the future, and the diversity of perspectives included in the design of curricula is crucial. Diplomacy is seen as propaganda or to sell an image of a country that doesn't exist. Including diverse perspectives are going to then create a holistic perspective towards what cultural diplomacy will do for the future. I think if we take a multi-disciplinary approach it will create a holistic approach towards what cultural diplomacy could look for the future."

Christine Goussous
MENA Regional Director, Global Nomads Group, Jordan

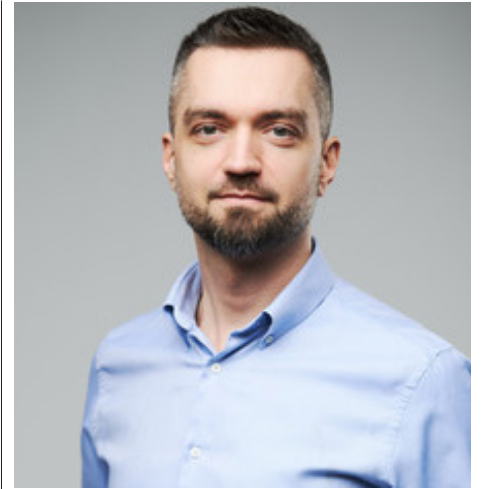


"Cultural diplomacy for the future that we need is biodiversity, it is diplomacy with our surroundings and ecology. That is the diplomacy we most need, for building a possible future for all of us. It's a matter of us, in correlation with everything we are part of. If we are diplomatic with the other types of lives that there are, we will for sure be able to be diplomatic with each other as humans."

Natália Machiavelli,
Artist and Producer, Outra Margem Productions and MITsp - São Paulo International Theater Festival, Brazil

"More solidarity for cultural diplomacy rather than conflict. We can make synergy from solidarity, rather than competition and conflict. I worked on a project with a minority tribe in Thailand and met so many international customers who contributed, and I met very spontaneous, kind, people, and I thought wow, we all had a common goal here and that is what comes from working together towards a common goal."

Donghee Cho,
Communication Designer, Peaberry Soop, Republic of Korea



#FacesOfLeadership

"For me, leadership is a way to enable other incredibly talented and capable people to excel at what they do best and to create a working environment where everyone can understand, appreciate and fulfil their creative and professional potential.

The leadership strategy that I'm trying to implement at the Ukrainian Institute is to give people as much space as they need without telling them and instructing them and having all those very tight frameworks of operations. I think the extraordinary circumstances that Ukraine is going through today and has been going for the past at least eight years are a major source of inspiration. It's incredible how a lot of people stepped up in this civil society, in public governance, in other sectors and spheres, particularly in the aftermath of the 2014 Revolution of Dignity, but especially in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this February. You see amazing examples of leadership, of activism, of mobilization of communities, and incredible unity this nation has demonstrated to the world and to itself. When I look at those people, each of them is an example of something that I would like to have for myself a little bit."

Volodymyr Sheiko,
Director General, Ukrainian Institute, Ukraine

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The Future of Cultural Diplomacy

Wednesday's opening "provocation" *Methodologies for Future Thinking Practice* opened the morning discussions, looking at the future of cultural diplomacy

Aaisha Dadi Patel



Gaming, democracy, ecology, and privilege. A conversation centered on "A new world order call relevance" brought a panel of Fellows together to present a dynamic range of perspectives and ideas about the ways that a future of cultural diplomacy can be thought about in an ever-changing world. The panel – Manouchehr Shamsrizi from Germany, Nancy Muigei from Kenya, Tomo Kihara from Japan, and Brandon Ferderer from the USA – spoke after opening remarks from Monica Sassatelli, of the University of Bologna in Italy: "Methodologies for Future Thinking practices."

Here is an excerpt:

"The future as it informs our cultures is at its core the capacity to imagine and aspire to a good life. To do so means shifting from a politics of

probability – the management of risks – to one of possibility – strengthening imagination and aspiration as a cultural capacity. Future conceived as a risk to be managed and a probability to calculate is perhaps the dominant notion of future in contemporary society – particularly from the standpoint of those institutions and agencies invested with the responsibility of risk management that has had so much prominence lately, also in matters of diplomacy. But there are dedicated institutions for the future conceived as risk management, and there are other institutions dedicated to creating new meaning, to the future as the realm of the imagination of the possible and to welcoming complexity and diversity as richness rather than sacrificing it to the altar of (national) purity, to

listen to stories and not only accord relevance to History.

I would say that this is the specific responsibility of cultural actors in society. The method we need here is its most literal sense: a way to go beyond (meta), a way that takes you where you don't know yet you want to go, a way that will transform you – and that method is culture. To move away from the future chained to ideas of progress, growth and development (what Arjan Appadurai calls *trajectorism*) – where the goal is set, the history is one and it is then just a race for who gets there first – and instead look for, explore ways to open up again to a plurality of stories, of definitions of the future, of good future, of 'the good life'. A method in this case becomes provocative."

Where do Our Worlds Meet?

During *At the heart of it: Globalization, Colonization and where do our worlds meet?* Fellows discuss the power of civic actors to engage with governments

Aaisha Dadi Patel

"You can be everything at once." On Wednesday afternoon, storytelling drove a powerful session where Fellows shared stories about their

work, journeys, and personal philosophies.

Drawing from their own lives, they shared with the group how the lessons they have learned have guided them

towards thinking beyond normative ideas of activism, work, and the role the arts hold in society.

Featuring Pandit Chanrochanakit from Chulalongkorn University in

Thailand, Mohammed Ali of Soul City Arts, UK, Rain (Trenton) Pierre of RainAwakens in Canada, and Aya Kasasa of the Organisation of ACP States in Belgium, the session opened with a silent visual round of introductions through drawings and the use of keywords.

Each of the presenting Fellows then stood forward and spoke about their experiences against the backdrop of a few prompt questions: What is the potential for cultural diplomacy to act as an instrument for strategic policy and as a decision-making influencer in policy areas, not only globally, across borders but also in our own communities? How do we explore the power of civic actors to engage with governments for mutual benefits, and how can cultural diplomacy be integrated to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Cultural Diplomacy and Politics

In a final panel discussion, participants consider the political power of the arts

Aaisha Dadi Patel

Can cultural diplomacy act as a political player? A final panel discussion led after a provocation by Lisa Snowden-McCray from the Baltimore Beat (USA) saw robust engagement amongst Fellows as they considered the political entanglements within cultural diplomacy.

Led by Avril Joffe from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, Fellows posed questions and discussed further in breakout groups in the final panel discussion of the program, before they moved to focus on the work they did in their embassy groups.

"Cultural diplomacy is a subsection of public diplomacy, which is a subsection of foreign policy, which is a subsection of politics," said Andreas Stadler, Austria's Ambassador to Poland. Alongside Ouafa Belgacem of Culture Funding Watch in Tunisia, Volodymyr Sheiko, Director of the Ukrainian Institute in Ukraine, and Khaled Barakeh, Founder of coculture

Multiple speakers highlighted the importance of self-acceptance and assertion within spaces, and, perhaps most importantly, the importance of community thinking, work driven by a need to build and connect communities, especially those that have encountered strife, hardship, persecution, and/or displacement throughout time.

Heightened by visual presentations, and dynamic speaking, the stories made Fellows consider the parallels with their own lives, communities, and work.

"For me, activism starts by standing up, taking the space, and being noticed," said Aya after the presentations.

e.V. in Germany.

By outlining broader questions around culture and diplomacy, panelists spoke to ideas challenging and reinforcing the ways that cultural diplomacy is thought of and practiced in different regions worldwide. The current global context, amid the backdrop of the war in Ukraine, paved the way for some panelists to highlight the lack of attention sometimes given to civil wars persisting in other parts of the world.

Pushing the boundaries further, panelists also considered to what extent cultural diplomacy is sometimes used to "polish" the images of some governments.

Taking the conversations to tables where everyone in the room could join opened the path for these topics to be further unpacked, leaving room for more nuanced perspectives and pushing the boundaries of their thinking as they headed into the last day of the program.

Salzburg Snapshots

Photos from *Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future We Need*



Hot Topic: "How does people-led activism contribute to cultural diplomacy?"

Aaisha Dadi Patel

"Well, I would say first by listening. Second, by asking the questions and getting outside the comfort zones and not getting scared to tell their opinions and to challenge the established narratives. Where I got into activism is by opening up to other horizons, by discovering other artistic scenes, by traveling. That's why I'm a fierce advocate of artistic mobility. I'm a privileged person and I still have to do a lot of work and always look and always challenge the space where I'm sitting."

Khadija El Bennaoui,
Independent Consultant; Researcher & Curator, Art Moves Africa, United Arab Emirates

"You cannot have cultural diplomacy without people. It's human centered. And in that sense, you need to let people play a major role, especially when they are collective and they come together for a common good. They can be very powerful in terms of being able to work together to achieve a particular goal, and especially like the use of arts and culture. It does amplify voices, but it also builds bridges between the different communities."

Nancy Muigei,
Governance Adviser, FCDO, Kenya

"For me, it's a no brainer. There has to be people. Because if we're talking about issues of a place and the



people, you have to be of the people to understand what those issues are. Too often people place community and people as almost an afterthought or secondary, which is ludicrous for me. As a street artist, the spirit of what I do is about the voice of people. The street soul is where things are alive. That should be the first place and should be the foundation of everything.

Mohammed Ali,
Artistic Director, Soul City Arts, UK

"To those involved in the work of social change, it goes without saying that when inequity persists, everybody suffers ... nobody escapes the consequences of systemic inequity. If diplomacy—the act of building bridges between different cultures—is to address the great challenges in the world, everybody, and I mean everybody, needs to take an active role in leveling the playing field and creating change by cultivating meaningful, authentic relationships. We cannot count on governments or institutions to shepherd us into the future. We must roll our sleeves, and do the work."

Guy Ben-Aharon,
Founder, The Jar, USA



#FacesOfLeadership

"Leadership for me is understanding that I represent my community and I rely on a network of people to show me when I do something wrong. Being a leader is understanding that you do make mistakes often and you need to understand the truths that you are required to take or the tools that you need and steps you need to take in order to fix those problems. And that's one big thing. The next one, is risk management. How do you approach a situation instead of having a sense of urgency? Can we approach that risk before it occurs? Any good leader should be able to see that risk well before it's going to occur. Leadership for me is also being able to understand that everything is complex. Once you understand complexity thinking, once you understand that things are part of a system and that systems overlap, I think being a leader becomes a little bit easier because if you're trying to find a simple solution to a complex problem, you're never going to get anywhere. So for me, leadership is really understanding that we live in a really dynamic, diverse community, and being able to account for that difference in diversity is what really matters."

Tui Raven,
Creative Director, Tui Raven, Australia

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THE HALLS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Music is often called a universal language and can create a collaborative space that goes beyond linguistic divisions. Given this role, it has played an important part in the cultural diplomacy of countries across the globe writes DC's Adam Ratzlaff from Salzburg, Austria.

Adam Ratzlaff

This article was first published on Diplomatic Courier.



In the 1930s, the Von Trapp family toured Europe performing and introducing baroque, renaissance, and Austrian folk music to a broader audience until they fled occupied Austria following the Nazi invasion of the country.

In 1965, the dramatized version of their story was made into the Academy Award winning film, *The Sound of Music*—which not only introduced Salzburg to new audiences, but focused on the powerful role that music plays in national identity. Today, one of the buildings used as the Von Trapp family home in the film houses Salzburg Global Seminar—an apt organization and location to host a conference on cultural diplomacy. Just as the Von Trapp family and their film counterparts used music and

Austrian culture as a tool for good, cultural diplomacy, properly used, can bring people together and embrace the diversity of the world.

Whether one looks at U.S. Jazz diplomacy or the portrayal of Bossa Nova as representative of Brazilian culture and modernity, music has often been a central tool used in cultural diplomatic efforts. One U.S. ambassador to Ecuador even made news for his regular Blues performances in Quito. Artists also engage in cultural exchanges that are not led by the state that see them engage and collaborate with artists abroad. Even when directed by governments or artists that are actively reaching out to others, music crosses borders and bring people together—whether in the form of

“Bieber Fever” or “Beatlemania.”

It is often said that music is a universal language—and one that can bring people of all backgrounds together in song and dance. Listening and dancing to music allows us to communicate in ways that go beyond words. As we listen to music from other places it has the ability to transport us and create an understanding of the cultures of other parts of the world. It can even create a desire to learn more about the culture of other countries and impact how we see others from across the globe. These can create opportunities to create spaces where individuals “speak” to one another through song and dance.

“There is something so visceral

about the human voice.... We each have our own voice, and we all know what it is like to speak or sing... It can be cathartic, it can be angry, it can be joyful. So, when you hear it connects directly to you as a listener. I'm always trying to communicate the feeling. That's what drew me in, the feeling, that's what allows people to engage with a culture that is not their own.

Music has the power to cross borders and create shared communities that take from and create new musical forms. By crossing borders, music can also create collaborative spaces in which it influences the music of other societies and creates something new and beautiful. Even Jelly Roll Morton, a founding father of New Orleans jazz music, acknowledged the "Spanish Tinge" in his own music that was incorporated from Cuban musical traditions.

This fusion of different cultural elements from across the globe highlights the ability of music to shared experiences and to integrate one's own culture into the global fabric of shared experience. This process of musical fusion and transformation can serve to highlight the beauty of cultural diversity while also showing their appreciation for the culture of others.

Given the power that music has to bring people together and engage global audiences, musical expression can be an important tool in the diplomatic playbook. Because music can speak to audiences of any

language and the collective ability to create and dance regardless of linguistic barriers, states have often used musicians. While the U.S. Jazz ambassadors are a frequently cited example of this, countries from across the globe invite musicians to play traditional and modern music representing their country at both embassies and to popular audiences.

"I think Hip Hop diplomacy works for many reasons... when you look at Hip Hop as a culture you know it's not just music. It's music, but there are important other elements to it—the DJ, or the beat maker, the MC, the dancer, the beat boxer and also the aerosol artist. When you put all of these elements together... you have this orchestra of goodness... It's not about one person. It's about the family... about every single individual that makes care and progress in their community work. I think that that model of community is what Hip Hop culture was built on. - Junious Brickhouse, Director of Next Level.

While many musical programs continue, today, Hip Hop has become one of these universal languages— influencing and being influenced by musicians and musical traditions from across the globe in both dance and song. To reinforce these connections, the U.S. State Department, in addition to other cultural diplomacy programs, supports efforts to connect Hip Hop cultures from across the globe. Encouraging individuals from different background to engage through these types of cultural exchanges can break down barriers

and emphasize the shared experiences of individuals across countries—this builds communities of practice that bring people together despite their differences.

"Hip Hop is evolving as the world is changing... Hip Hop culture is wired to let that happen. If we all have access to a thing, we are going to say something different with it. As we all have different experiences, we are going to say different things.... We are all working towards the promise of Hip Hop."

- Junious Brickhouse, Director of Next Level.

While at the Salzburg Global Seminar, one need not look far to see the power of music to connect people of different backgrounds. After engaging conversations and workshops, Salzburg fellows of an array of different backgrounds could be found most evenings either dancing to music from around the world or joining together to play songs that have crossed borders and engaged artists and listeners across the globe.

The Future of Cultural Diplomacy

Salzburg Global Seminar last week wrapped up its Redefining Cultural Diplomacy series. Attendees reconsidered the roles of artists, governments, and tech in cultural diplomacy, coming to some moving conclusions for the future, writes DC Editor and event rapporteur Adam Ratzlaff.

Adam Ratzlaff

This article was first published on Diplomatic Courier.



More than 60 individuals from 28 different countries came together from July 5-8 at Salzburg Global Seminar’s “Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future we Need.” Participants included artists and policy makers, funders and activists, members of civil society and international organizations, academics, and futurists.

Many of the Fellows approach cultural diplomacy differently, even in terms of what is meant by “cultural diplomacy,” but they still agreed on important insights which can help us to better understand the potential of cultural diplomacy and how to employ it in order to create a better world.

“As a curator of Currents of Change

we invited cultural, government, and institutional leaders from twenty-eight nations to envision a new inclusive model. We learnt that if Cultural Diplomacy is to have a future, then, we must emphatically embrace the diversity of perspectives of nations and peoples... Cultural diplomacy can no longer be considered as an addendum. It is an imperative to bridging divides.” - Dr. Xenia Hanusiak, cultural diplomat and Co-Curator of “Currents of Change.”

Centering the Artist in Cultural Diplomacy

Art—whatever the medium—has the potential for immense political power. It can bring people together or highlight the challenges that a society

faces. However, for art to reach its potential, we must not only look at the role of the art itself. We must also ensure that artists are centered within the conversation. Ensuring spaces in which artists can openly create without fear their art may be misused can help the power of art to flourish and for cultural relations to expand.

Furthermore, artists can do things traditional diplomats cannot. Traditionally, diplomats must carefully articulate points to avoid harming their government’s interests. Cultural diplomacy allows for discussing difficult topics while bypassing bureaucratic, political hurdles faced by other forms of diplomacy. However, this can only be done when art and artists are adequately valued, which is only

possible by centering the role of the artist in the process.

Countries Must Represent and Leverage Their Diversity

Countries should embrace their own diversity in their cultural diplomacy to highlight the similarities that they share with countries across the globe as well as the values of pluralism. For large countries this could mean highlighting the diversity of their domestic populations. For smaller countries, this could often be done by highlighting their diaspora communities situated elsewhere. By recognizing the diversity of one's own population and actively highlighting this within their cultural diplomacy, countries move from trying to present a homogenous "national culture" toward one that is more inclusive and representative of the array of lived experiences of their country. This creates more critical art that can speak to the reality of lived experience and bring people together in more meaningful ways.

Cultural Diplomacy Goes Local

While we often focus on the international aspect of cultural relations in framing discussions around the power of cultural diplomacy, cultural relations at the domestic level are important as well. Although it is important for countries to recognize the diversity of their populations in their own cultural diplomacy, many countries continue to ignore and marginalize portions of their own societies. These can include ethno-racial minorities, indigenous peoples, or immigrant populations.

In pushing to ensure that the voices of these groups are heard and recognized within the national political and cultural scene, cultural actors—whether chefs, musicians,

or artists—and cultural institutions can play a critical role in amplifying these voices and their stories. Such amplification is critical not only for representing the shared humanity of societies and the role that all play in the "national culture," but for reducing polarization evident in countries across the globe.

Moving Beyond Borders

For some, state-led cultural diplomacy is primarily about propaganda. As societies become increasingly interconnected and realize that the most pressing challenges often cross borders, it is important to lean into the important role that cultural relations—as conducted by non-governmental actors—can play in bringing people together in meaningful ways. Non-governmental actors are uniquely positioned to create communities of practice that challenge contemporary modes of thinking and recognize shared humanity and experiences across the globe.

"I am even more convinced that the future of Cultural Diplomacy is about relinquishing power and the need for a radical rethinking of the structures we currently know and work with... With the next generation, as well as various non-Western cultures, thinking radically differently about structures, power, and silos/borders, it might be time for them - artists and civic actors - to lead us into entirely new ways... systems-thinking for the future they, and all of us, need." – Erwin Maas, Theatermaker and Co-Curator of "Currents of Change."

The Power of Technology

Technology has the power to both bring together communities across borders as well as expose individuals

to cultures other than their own. While we have seen the polarizing potential of technology, it also has immense potential in the cultural diplomacy space to alter the conduct and reach of cultural diplomacy. By creating spaces that allow artists and creators to engage with audiences across borders, we can radically increase the ability of cultural relations to reach new audiences and a larger global impact. This has the power to pressure governments as art transcends borders through the internet and individuals call for change across the globe.

Technology also serves another important purpose. For many "digital natives," the world of national borders is rapidly becoming an out-of-date concept. As young people engage with one another across borders, new communities of practice—both within sub-cultures like gaming as well as artistic communities—can create new worlds in which national origin matters less than their shared digital connection.

Conclusions

While there are many important lessons that can be drawn about cultural diplomacy and how we can improve it, the first step is to ensure that the different actors that are involved in the process of cultural diplomacy and relations are talking to one another. All have important ways of thinking about the future of cultural diplomacy and only by looking at the way forward collectively will we be able to "redefin[e] cultural diplomacy for the future we need."



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DEFINING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND RELATIONS

Cultural diplomacy has traditionally been defined as the government-led practice of leveraging the arts and culture within a nation's foreign policy for the pursuit of particular goals. This definition has important implications in that it reinforces the central role of the government as the leading actor in cultural diplomacy and existing national boundaries and borders.

However, the term is also used more broadly to discuss the ways in which artists from different countries and cultures engage with one another. These processes often involve not only individual artists, but collectives and associations, along with other non-state actors and civil society groups. This is often referred to as cultural relations.

While the terms are often used interchangeably, we recognize the important differences between cultural diplomacy (as part of foreign policy) and cultural relations or collaboration, while acknowledging the need for both forms of engagement to coexist and reinforce the goals of the other.

Currents of Change: Redefining Cultural Diplomacy for the Future we Need was held from July 4 to 8, 2022, by Salzburg Global Seminar and brought together over 60 artists, diplomats, policymakers, and academics, representing 30 countries. Together, they considered the potential for art as a force to improve the world and provide recommendations for reimagining the role that cultural diplomacy and relations can play in bringing us closer to the future we need. We, the participants of this seminar, call for new models of cultural diplomacy and relations.

Read more online: salzburgglobal.org/go/743

The Salzburg Statement on the Future of Cultural Diplomacy

CASE FOR ACTION

Given recent geopolitical conflicts, the rise and subsequent mistrust of globalization, contentiousness of borders, the climate crisis, and the global pandemic, there can be no more pressing time to assess, recalibrate and identify new approaches to address shared problems and challenges. The arts and culture can offer new imaginaries and hope when the unimaginable transpires. Cultural diplomacy and relations can be used as conduits for change and unifiers to connect peoples. However, we must move beyond a superficial instrumentalization of the arts and culture to pursue shared understandings and shape a better world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For cultural diplomacy and cultural relations to be leveraged to their fullest potential and for cultural diplomacy to offer long-lasting impacts towards attaining the futures that we want to see, important changes are needed in the ways governments and artists think about and engage in these practices. To this end, the purpose and design of cultural diplomacy and relations should focus on:

Bridging Divides: Authentic connections require recognizing the different ways in which artists, cultural producers, and government and non-government officials view the world. It is thus necessary not only to talk across cultures, but across professions. While the worldviews of artists and officials may differ, both can use cultural diplomacy and relations to promote a more just and peaceful world. All stakeholders share responsibility in creating the necessary networks to ensure that multiple viewpoints and participants are engaged in the process.

Valuing Integrity: In the past, as well as in today's world, cultural diplomacy has been misused to achieve adverse, aggressive, or harmful foreign policies, and to advance disinformation and manipulation of public opinion. It is crucial that governments and independent agents refrain from practices that affect integrity of cultural diplomacy as a discipline and a profession.

Centering the Artist: Cultural diplomacy must serve the arts while responding to contemporary values of society, preserving cultural heritage, and engaging with contemporary art-making practices. For art to reach its potential as a tool for cultural diplomacy, we must not only look at the role of the art itself but also ensure that artists are centered within the conversation. To do so requires creating inclusive spaces in which artists can openly create without the fear of their art being misused. Centering artists can help the power of art flourish and expand cultural relations.

THE CONTENTION BETWEEN THE CULTURAL PRODUCER AND THE POLICYMAKER

There are two core challenges to the use of cultural diplomacy:

1. the difference between policymakers and cultural producers as users and creators of art and;
2. the potential of art being used for purposes not desired by cultural producers or even as misinformation to divide society.

For policymakers cultural diplomacy, and by extension art, may be seen as a means to an end—a tool for portraying the benefits of one side or another in an effort to convince others to pursue your preferred policy. This instrumental purpose behind art is less often at the heart of artistic creation. This can create tension between the two groups over the purpose of art. While governments and policymakers should work with cultural producers in cultural diplomatic activities, it is necessary that they do so in ways that are transparent in their purpose and objectives.

Art can be a unifier and bring people together however, those who wish to sow division can also use culture and the arts to drive a wedge between different groups of people. While this can take the form of misinformation and propaganda leveraged by governments, it can also result from how cultural products and art are interpreted by others. Protecting cultural production as a form of free expression while balancing the rights of artists and the role of the state is no easy task.

These areas highlight the contention and balance between artistic freedom and the role of government in cultural production and dissemination. While there may be tension between cultural producers and governments, the ability of culture to transcend boundaries and speak to the human condition makes cultural diplomacy a powerful tool and one that governments may abuse. It is the hope of participants that governments and artists find the proper balance to promote a more just and equitable world.

Being Self-Critical: In relations between artists and between governments, it is important that all parties recognize their own positionality and flaws. Critical self-reflection is central to all inter-cultural exchanges. Cultural diplomacy must be self-aware to be impactful. So, governments must allow for a space in which artists can express a critique of their own societies, if so desired. Being self-critical is only available within free and democratic societies where governments allow for free artistic expression.

Utilizing the Power of Democracy: Democratic governance and rule of law remain central to the international system and for promoting the wellbeing of society. Cultural diplomacy is an important tool for the promotion of democratic ideals and norms across borders and an area where democracies can collaborate to promote these objectives

Aiming to be Reciprocal: Because of the traditional power dynamics and resource imbalances between and among the nations of the Global North and South, there is often an anticipatory obedience of the Global South and other marginalized communities. However, cultural diplomacy and relations rely on collaboration and reciprocity between actors. As such, it is critical that these relationships promote inclusive debate, fairness, and empathy. It is also critical that both parties feel as though their voice has been heard and benefit as equally as possible.

Representing and Leveraging Diversity: We often focus on the international aspect of cultural relations in framing discussions around the power of cultural diplomacy, however, cultural relations at the domestic level are important as well. In the age of globalization, nations are becoming increasingly diverse. Rather than attempting to create a homogenous or singular culture, they should embrace their own diversity in their cultural diplomacy to foreground the similarities that they share with others across the globe and promote the values of pluralism. This may mean highlighting domestic diversity or embracing diaspora communities elsewhere.

Recognizing the Power of Technology: While technology can be used to polarize, it also has the power to bring together communities across borders—exposing individuals to cultures other than their own. Technology has immense potential to alter the conduct and reach of cultural diplomacy. Technology has the power to allow art to pressure governments as it transcends borders through the internet and individuals call for change across the globe.

CALL TO ACTION

For cultural diplomacy and relations to thrive we need not only to talk to one another, but to listen. We all benefit, regionally, nationally, and globally when the power dynamic is non-hierarchical. Cultural diplomacy for the future we need should also represent and champion people, communities, and voices that do not necessarily make it to mainstream cultural relations but that constitute the breadth and richness of our world.

Call to action continues overleaf

We call on **governments, policymakers and diplomats** to:

- Adopt cultural diplomacy as a strategic tool to influence geopolitical and geoeconomic objectives in a manner that recognizes and bridges the divide between officials and cultural producers.
- Recognize the diversity of their own population and actively highlight this diversity within their cultural diplomacy, to move from trying to present a homogenous “national culture” toward one that is more inclusive and representative of the array of lived experiences of their country.
- Avoid misuse of cultural diplomacy that aims to push an agenda, exercise cultural domination, mislead or misinform audiences, or instrumentalize culture to achieve policies that undermine peace, international cooperation, and integrity of intercultural dialogue.
- Situate the role of art, culture, and the artist in the process of cultural diplomacy especially when discussing difficult topics that need to bypass bureaucratic and political hurdles faced by other forms of diplomacy.
- Collaborate with cultural institutions and actors to develop systems of networked governance and open space for cultural exchange.
- Embrace democratic norms and ideals, promote rule of law, and use cultural diplomacy to emphasize the importance and power of democracy and collaborate with other democratic governments to promote these ideals and shared lessons, particularly when facing the challenge of authoritarianism.

We call on **artists, cultural producers and cultural institutions** to:

- Support and engage with others to multiply opportunities for artistic collaboration.
- Amplify the voices and stories of ethno-racial minorities, Indigenous peoples, and immigrant populations to represent the role they all play in “national culture.”
- Challenge conventional hierarchies and structural inequalities while making programming and funding choices.
- Use technology to engage with audiences across borders, reach new audiences and have a larger global impact.
- Facilitate the ability of artists to travel and have their art and voices heard and seek to make the right of movement equitable.
- Work with locally embedded cultural actors that assist in translating not only across languages, but between different cultural practices and value systems to ensure that cultural diplomacy and relations promote more inclusion and equity.
- Leverage their artistic expertise and ways of thinking to engage in positions outside of the arts. More artists in leadership positions—within government, business, service institutions, education, and healthcare—can generate new and unique ways of addressing the world’s most pressing challenges.

We call on **NGOs and civil society** to:

- Create communities of practice that challenge contemporary modes of thinking and recognize shared humanity and experiences across the globe.
- Encourage the development of communities of practice that go beyond North-South norms of cultural diplomacy to embrace and empower horizontal connections between other countries and actors.
- Develop mechanisms for forging more equitable relationships—both within funding structures as well as through capacity-building programs.

We call on **researchers and academics** to:

- Set themselves the goal of bridging the gaps between research, policy and practice.
- Identify successful models of collaborative cultural diplomacy and relations that have resulted in meaningful political and societal change.
- Employ interdisciplinary and decolonial approaches and methodologies to the study of cultural diplomacy to better understand the impact and implications of these practices.

We call on **all people** to:

- Listen—not just to hear, but to feel. All people must acknowledge that they interpret information through their own frame of reference, but that you best understand others when you transcend your own lens, to understand others through their own perspectives and frames of reference. To do this, one can increase their cultural awareness and take an interest in the diversity of the world’s cultures.

Together we can take action to ensure that our cultural diversity is neither a burden nor a boundary, but instead builds the foundations of inclusion and collectively build the future we need.

SALZBURG GLOBAL SEMINAR

Salzburg Global Seminar is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1947 with a mission to challenge current and future leaders to shape a better world.

Together with our world-spanning network of 40,000 Fellows, we have been at the forefront of global movements for change for 75 years, with significant impact on individuals, institutions, and systems.

Whether at our home of Schloss Leopoldskron, online, or in locations around the world, our programs inclusive, interdisciplinary, international and intergenerational, and are designed to provide a global lab for innovation and transformation.

We convene cohorts of passionate changemakers across diverse fields and backgrounds. We develop and curate networks that support collaboration, share innovations with new audiences, and expand our impact by working with partners around the globe.

We are supported by a combination of institutional partnerships, generous individual donations and revenue generated from our social enterprise, Hotel Schloss Leopoldskron.

CULTURE, ARTS AND SOCIETY

The Culture, Arts and Society series harnesses the transformative power of the arts to shape a better world. Through future-focused programs and projects, it raises the profile of culture and the arts in policy agendas, catalyzes exchange across disciplines and sectors, and sustains a unique creative community across continents.

For more info. please visit:
www.SalzburgGlobal.org