

ON
THE
MOVE

CULTURAL MOBILITY FLOWS

Parenting and international
cultural mobility

REPORT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



Co-funded by
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On the Move is the international information network dedicated to artistic and cultural mobility, gathering 66 members from 24 countries. Since 2002, On the Move provides regular, up-to-date and free information on mobility opportunities, conditions and funding, and advocates for the value of cross-border cultural mobility. Co-funded by the European Union and the French Ministry of Culture, On the Move is implementing an ambitious multi-annual programme to build the capacities of local, regional, national, European and international stakeholders for the sustainable development of our cultural ecosystems.

On the Move regularly commissions researchers to investigate different themes closely related to the network's activities and the work carried out by its members. Reflecting on transversal concerns and key areas of artistic and cultural mobility, the network tries to establish a clearer picture of the current movements and trends while formulating policy recommendations.

<https://on-the-move.org>

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Foreword

This publication follows a Mobility Webinar¹ organised by On the Move in March 2023 in order to explore the tensions between cultural mobility and parental responsibility in the EU and internationally. This online event was an opportunity to reflect upon an episode of the podcast Points of Entry² that was commissioned by On the Move and produced with the support of the French Ministry of Culture. It features a conversation with London-based journalist and critic Hettie Judah, author of the 2022 book *How Not to Exclude Artist Mothers (and Other Parents)*. She addresses how discrimination against parenthood in the arts is an international issue, what arts professionals with caregiving responsibilities might need when they travel for their work, and what cultural organisations could do to be more parent-friendly.

Considering that transnational collaboration and mobility is an integral part of the trajectory of artists and culture professionals,³ we want to

investigate how our ecosystem considers and manages parenthood, particularly for women, at the different stages of the creative value chain. Beyond summarising the key insights from past discussions, we aim to present various grassroots initiatives and measures to support the cross-border mobility of parents. An analysis of open calls for cultural mobility opportunities posted to the On the Move website, as well as the takeaways of an extensive desk research into the recent literature on the topic, complement the report. Finally, this publication outlines recommendations to cultural operators and decision-makers for providing contextual support to arts workers with care-giving responsibilities.

We wish you an inspiring read!

Yohann Floch,
Director of Operations

¹ The recording of the Mobility Webinar as well as its Key Resources are accessible on the On the Move website: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/mobility-webinar-parenting-care-and-cultural-mobility>

² <https://on-the-move.org/about/our-news/move-x-points-entry-podcast-episode-parenthood-and-mobility-arts>

³ See the updated definition of 'cultural mobility' from the i-Portunus Operational Study. On the Move (March 2019): <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/i-portunus-operational-study>

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Data Analysis

by John Ellingsworth

Overview

This document presents an analysis of calls for cultural mobility opportunities posted to the On the Move website during a two-year period from 1 Jan 2020 to 30 June 2023. The data therefore reflects our website's editorial policy and focus.⁴ In short, we concentrate on funded programmes that cover at least some of the costs of travel (or that offer remuneration in the case of online/remote programmes). The calls that are posted to the website are also generally one-off calls or relate to temporary or shifting programmes rather than permanent ones (which are separately listed in our mobility funding guides).

Out of the 2,204 calls posted to the On the Move website in the period from 1 January 2020 – 30 June 2023, there were just 21 that made an explicit commitment to covering additional costs faced by parent artists and professionals, with these commitments ranging from coverage of childcare costs, to extra travel funding for dependents or family members, to more open 'family allowances'.

From this subset of 21 calls, 19 (90.5%) had organisers based in Europe. 1 call had an organiser in the USA, and 1 other had co-organisers in Australia and Singapore. Looking at individual countries, UK and German organisations were both strongly represented, with each country being involved in 8 out of 21 calls (38.1%).

6 of 21 calls (28.6%) involved either online/remote only work or a hybrid of in-person and virtual activities – about the same proportion as for all calls posted to the On the Move website during the period under review.

Looking at the types of opportunities, Fellowships are more represented than usual, making up 5 out of 21 calls (23.8%). This reflects the fact that funding for parents is more often related to long-stay programmes, with fellowships sometimes spanning multiple years, as well as the fact that fellowship programmes are often organised by large institutions with more developed HR processes – with examples from our data including fellowships from Berlin University of the Arts, Clark Art Institute in the USA, and the FEINART network (a consortium involving several large universities, led by University of Wolverhampton).⁵

Most of the identified calls were open to all applicants, with support offered to parents/families if selected, but a handful of opportunities targeted this group in particular. A call from Passage festival in Germany in February 2022, for instance, offered two places on its residency programme, one open to any artist, and another withheld for 'a female artist who is also a mother' to attend with her child.⁶ Another notable example was the 'At Home with the Kids' residency organised by Mophradat in

⁴ <https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy>

⁵ Berlin University of the Arts Fellowship Programme:
<https://on-the-move.org/news/graduate-school-berlin-university-arts-fellowship-programme>
The Clark Fellowship Programme:
<https://on-the-move.org/news/clark-fellowship-programme-usa-0>
FEINART Early Stage Researcher Positions:
<https://on-the-move.org/news/feinart-early-stage-researcher-positions-socially-engaged-art>

⁶ <http://on-the-move.org/news/passage-artist-residence-programme-germany>

summer 2021, which saw its Athens venue open for three artists (and partners) with young children to live together in 'an experiment of communal living' that would 'allow for shared childcare and afford

working space and time to the residents'.⁷ In this case, travel costs were also fully covered for the families.

Concrete offers, case by case

As noted above, there were 21 calls in our data that made an explicit commitment to covering at least some of the costs faced by parent artists and professionals. However, even in this small subset there was substantial variation in what was concretely offered, and how the support was described, with some calls focused on childcare costs, while others more broadly offered a 'family allowance' or 'access grant'. Of the 6 calls that gave a value, in euro equivalents lump sum payments ranged from around 100-1000 EUR, and monthly grants from around 500-1000 EUR.

The most common framing was for childcare to be listed as one example within a larger budget for 'access costs'. One call in September 2021 from Leeds 2023 for their online/remote exchange 'For the Public Good' gives a sense of how wide-ranging such budgets can be: 'An additional accessibility fund is available to support you through the programme. Access can include interpretation, childcare, support workers, data packages and other support that ensures you can participate in the programme.'⁸

The broad nature of 'access costs' as a term likely reflects the desire of organisers to be flexible, remain open to situations they haven't foreseen, and welcome as many people as possible. Normally, there is no maximum figure given for a potential access grant, and several calls from our dataset explain that support will be allocated on a 'case-by-case basis' or 'based on needs'. This approach

has its benefits, but can obscure the scope of available support: 'access costs' is a term with no standard definition, and is more common in some countries (notably the UK) than others. It is not obvious that childcare would always be included under this banner – and indeed in our data subset we have not included calls that offered an access budget but didn't specifically mention costs related to parenting. For applicants, this is likely to cause some confusion, and organisers are sometimes unclear about their expectations and limits. One call from the British Council for curators to join a delegation to the Venice Biennale, for instance, narrows support to 'atypical childcare needs'.⁹

In the context of international opportunities, childcare seems higher up the agenda than travel costs, though a few calls from our data did offer additional support for family mobility. One of the most open examples comes from the Rewilding Cultures project and its 'Mobility Conversation' open call, which aimed to address some of the gaps in current funding by offering grants of up to 1400 EUR: 'Do you want to take the train instead of the plane or do you rather walk? Do you want to take your family with you or do you need to finance care while you are away? Are there difficulties of social or interpersonal reasons relating to, for example, diverse-ability, racialisation, or family situations? [...] Questions like these are interesting in the scope of this call.'¹⁰

⁷ <https://on-the-move.org/news/mophradat-home-kids-residency-caregivers-greece>

⁸ <https://on-the-move.org/news/leeds-2023-tech-public-good-online-residency>

⁹ <http://on-the-move.org/news/british-council-call-early-mid-career-visual-arts-curators-venice-biennale-delegation-italy>

¹⁰ <http://on-the-move.org/news/open-call-rewilding-cultures-mobility-conversation>

Soft commitments, flexible work

Alongside the 21 calls we identified with additional budgeting, there were other examples which made softer commitments – with organisers pledging to do what they could to accommodate access needs, or encouraging parents/families to apply to their programmes – as well as many calls that addressed parenting or particularly ‘care’ as a topic but without providing additional resources.

Even without supplemental funding, such projects can still provide good and flexible conditions for work. One interesting example from January 2021 was the ‘Care City’ call from zeitraumexit in Germany. It invited proposals for projects responding to US artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ 1969 ‘Manifesto for Maintenance Art’, in which she reflected on her roles as an artist and unpaid care worker: ‘I felt like two separate people... the free artist and the mother/maintenance worker.... I was never working so hard in my whole life, trying to keep together the two people I had become. Yet people said to me, when they saw me pushing my baby carriage, Do you do anything?’ Artists responding to the call were invited to make and present their work locally, without the need to travel, with the project then presented remotely at zeitraumexit’s festival WUNDER DER PRÄRIE.

The question of travel and the opportunities of online/remote work are of course central to

conversations in the mobility field. This issue was particularly sharpened during the pandemic, when the line between personal and professional lives became, for many more people, untenable. Has a shift towards online working helped to improve access? Perhaps in some cases – and the optimism with which virtual formats were viewed at the time can be seen in initiatives such as a call in early 2022 from artist-run platform The Union for a virtual residency: ‘The aim of this series of trainings and rehearsals is to question the existing boundaries between the physical and the virtual, between remoteness and closeness, between art and life. Thus, the virtual residency will run along with the artist’s life as it is; no relocation, no change of job, family responsibilities remain almost intact, and community involvement becomes part of the household fabric.’¹¹

Since the end of the pandemic, through 2022 and into 2023, there has been a reduction in the number of mobility opportunities with remote or online-only activities. However, there is still some recognition of the extra pathways such formats open up. After pivoting to an at-home version in 2020, Kone Foundation’s Saari Residence returned to a primarily in-person format but with home residencies still available for applicants who could justify a particular need, with listed examples including ‘family reasons (e.g. single parent)’.¹²

¹¹ <http://on-the-move.org/news/union-virtual-residency-nordicbaltic-based-artists-online>

¹² <https://on-the-move.org/news/kone-foundation-saari-residence-finland-remote>

Institutional support

Among the 21 calls we identified which provide support for parent artists and professionals, funders and large institutions were often organisers. One example is the CROWD project, an international dance exchange initiated by Goethe-Institut and developed in partnership with national and regional funders in the UK and Nordic countries.¹³ The period of our analysis also includes a first call to individuals from the new Culture Moves Europe mobility programme, which among other support lines offers 'top-up' funding of 100 EUR for applicants with children younger than 10 years old.¹⁴

Changing standards among institutions are a necessary shift at the base layer of funding. Independent organisations are often very alive to the pressures faced by individual arts workers, but

either lack resources to provide the needed support, or in some cases provide it thanks to supplemental funding which is vulnerable to cuts.

As more funders codify greater levels of support within their programmes, it opens the way for organisations to do more to reach a wider range of artists and professionals. But as always, funding for beneficiaries is only one side of the equation, and to be open to the largest diversity of applicants, organisers can also consider the need for simple application processes, longer application lead times, flexibility in the scheduling of activities, and, where appropriate, predictable cycles for repeat programmes. In this sense the ideal is a meeting of concrete support, clearly expressed, with flexible conditions of work.

¹³ <https://on-the-move.org/news/crowd-international-dance-exchange-finland-netherlands-uk-germany>

¹⁴ <http://on-the-move.org/news/culture-moves-europe-call-individual-mobility-artists-and-cultural-professionals>

Parenting, care and cultural mobility

by Katelijn Verstraete

This report describes the main challenges, issues, solutions and recommendations shared by speakers in the 'Parenting, Care and Cultural Mobility' webinar¹⁵ as well as culture professionals in individual interviews. Three speakers from different artistic fields were invited to contribute their lived experience to the webinar discussion: Cassie Raine, theatre actor and joint CEO of PiPA - Parents and Carers in Performing Arts¹⁶ (United Kingdom); Emeka Udemba, visual artist and founder of Project Space Lagos¹⁷ (Nigeria); and Louise-Michèle You, circus producer and co-founder of L'Avant Courier¹⁸ (France). Additional perspectives on the topic came

through interviews with Magnus Nordberg, owner, founder and producer at Nordberg Movement¹⁹ (Sweden), who also invited several artistic collaborators to the interview;²⁰ Michelle Browne and Leah Hilliard, artists and founders of The Mothership Project²¹ (Republic of Ireland); Charlotte Fouchet Ishii, director of the Ecole nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy and former director of Villa Kujoyama (France); Anna Galas-Kosil, manager of Art and Research Projects at Warsaw Observatory of Culture²² (Poland); and Antonia Kuzmanić, co-artistic leader of contemporary circus collective ROOM 100 and Peculiar Families Festival²³ (Croatia).

¹⁵ The recording of the Mobility Webinar as well as its Key Resources are accessible on the On the Move website: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/mobility-webinar-parenting-care-and-cultural-mobility>

¹⁶ <https://pipacampaign.org>

¹⁷ <https://project-space-lagos.org>

¹⁸ <https://avantcourrier.fr/lavant-courrier>

¹⁹ <https://www.nordbergmovement.se>

²⁰ Thank you to Zoe Poluch, dancer, choreographer and head of programme – Bachelor in Dance Performance at Stockholm University of the Arts; Anja Arnquist, dancer, choreographer and artistic director of OR/ELLER together with Madeleine Lindh; Robin Jonsson, choreographer and dancer; Lina Dahlgren, producer at Nordberg Movement; Elisabet Widlund Fornelius, general manager at Nordberg Movement.

²¹ <https://themothershipproject.wordpress.com>

²² <https://wok.art.pl>

²³ <https://room100.org> and <https://peculiarfamilies.org/en/home>

Background

The working conditions experienced by parenting artists and cultural professionals have been on the radar of On the Move for some time. While parenting issues have always existed in the arts, the level of awareness has recently changed, pushed for instance by programmes which address gender equality in the arts sector. Over the years, On the Move has collected a critical mass of testimonies concerning the conditions experienced by working artists, which serve to highlight how the arts ecosystem is not always well equipped to welcome multigenerational families. On the Move has also observed how other areas of trends within the field, such as green mobility, slow mobility, and a move towards longer experiences abroad, might collide with ways to support parenting artists. In monitoring the environmental, social and cultural characteristics of the open calls it publishes, On the Move has observed that information relevant for parenting artists is often not visible, even though arts organisations may provide support.

Eager to give more visibility to this topic, in October 2022, with the support of the French Ministry of

Culture, On the Move commissioned and produced an episode of the podcast Points of Entry²⁴ featuring a conversation with London-based journalist and critic Hettie Judah, author of the 2022 book *How Not to Exclude Artist Mothers (and Other Parents)*. In it she addresses how discrimination against parenthood in the arts is an international issue, what arts professionals with caregiving responsibilities might need when they travel for their work, and what cultural organisations could do to be more parent-friendly. After organising the Mobility Webinar, On the Move developed a parenting resource²⁵ and learned that most literature and resources, such as guidelines, manifestos, or other written guidance, come from the UK or North America, even though the topic is widely discussed around the world.

It is against this backdrop that this report highlights stories and information on how structural limitations, combined with lack of knowledge and awareness, lead to unequal access to international work opportunities in the arts and cultural sector for parenting artists/arts professionals.

Inclusive scope

Parenting and care in the arts is multifaceted as it can touch on many different issues, personal or professional, locally and internationally. While a lot of these challenges are connected to the local/national context of the artists/art professionals, the focus for On the Move is on how being a parent artist or art worker reduces opportunities for **international** mobility, which is essential for the majority of artists and arts professionals, whether to broaden their professional network, get out of their comfort zone to find inspiration, engage in interdisciplinary dialogue, or develop specific

knowledge of the techniques and practices that can vary from one culture to another.

On the Move explored the realities **not just of artists, but also of other cultural professionals** such as producers, agents, managers, and managing directors from different disciplines, engaged in different formats from residencies to festivals and international networking events. The whole ecosystem needs to be involved as the conversation has to be holistic and supported by policy and action.

²⁴ Available at: <https://on-the-move.org/about/our-news/move-x-points-entry-podcast-episode-parenthood-and-mobility-arts>

²⁵ Available at: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/mobility-webinar-parenting-care-and-cultural-mobility>

To have a more inclusive conversation and reflection on the issue, it was decided to focus on **'parents', not just 'mothers'**. While women are overwhelmingly the ones taking responsibility for childcare, and are physically and psychologically impacted by pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum recovery, and breastfeeding, other parents were included in the conversation too, whether fathers or other primary

caregivers. Everybody agreed to this approach even though, according to Emeka Udemba, the general perception is still that women do the parenting. The notion of parenting needs to be expanded, says Louise-Michèle You. This is especially relevant for artists or artistic companies who work together in a collective.

Issues and challenges

While parents in all economic sectors generally share the same issues of reconciling the demands of private and professional life, there are a **set of unique challenges parenting artists and arts professionals** face due to the demands of their artistic careers. The conditions they experience can vary based on factors like the nature of their work (**artistic discipline or employment status**), **structural barriers and conditions in their national context, personal circumstances/family structure**, and the **specific logic of the arts sector** (e.g. the logic of residencies, evening shifts, touring conditions, poor pay) as well as the **funding situation for the arts in their country**.

Conditions can be different depending on the artistic discipline. In the circus and dance field, there are the physical challenges women face to be able to recover quickly enough to perform again after giving birth. 'For a woman dancer the onus is on yourself, and the pressure is completely on yourself. It is a very competitive sector for individual dancers,' remarks Antonia Kuzmanić. The structure of the performing arts sector and contemporary dance in particular often requires artists to move to where opportunities (that are often scarce) present themselves. 'From the outside, these opportunities might look like luxurious opportunities and rare possibilities to experience the world. However, when considering family, private life and parenting in all forms, it is almost impossible to reconcile expectations of presence in events, on tour, or for

residencies. Many may choose to leave production and touring altogether and sometimes move into other fields,' says Magnus Nordberg. Touring is undeniably important to spread new work, build careers, establish more solid finances, create professional opportunities and to develop one's work. The collaborative nature of the performing arts – as opposed to most situations in the visual arts where artists work alone – means that the impact on others in a collective or an artistic company might be substantial in cases where a member with a child finds international touring too challenging to participate in, or needs to be replaced for a while.

International mobility is **particularly challenging for individual freelance artists**, who often want to get back to work as soon as possible since they often cannot financially afford to take several months of non-mandatory maternity or paternity leave, or they justifiably fear putting their career on hold in a competitive environment. By comparison, their peers who are stably employed by an institution, or who are core members of an established collective or group, may have access to better structural support for temporarily replacing them during a longer leave of absence. Individual freelance artists often need to piece together their professional activities from many different sources of support, which might include festivals, venues, residences, foundations, collectors, galleries, publishers, etc. This demands continuous monitoring of possible opportunities and regular attention to maintaining

and expanding one's professional network. When important professional events mostly take place in evenings and on weekends, this can often clash with parental responsibilities and/or the availability of affordable childcare.

Many barriers for international mobility are **structural and connected to local contexts**. The situation of parental leave and childcare varies widely across Europe. While the duration of maternity leave in Croatia is good, mentions Antonia Kuzmanić, the quality and availability of childcare is not and nannies are expensive, a fact which prompted her and her partner to move to Spain where, she says, public support makes it easier for her to combine her career with parenthood. Many artists relocate to France too, she continues, as the conditions are much better there for parents. 'One can clearly see individuals in our sector choose to start a family based on where in the world they have their home base,' says Magnus Nordberg. While parental leave and childcare might be good in Sweden, the 'skolplikt' (the obligation to attend school) means that home-schooling is not an option for parenting artists who want to take their child on a work tour. That is different in France, where, for example, a circus company whose members collectively have a certain number of children under a certain age would be in a situation where the state is legally required to support them by providing a public school teacher on their tour. Sometimes **personal circumstances** mean you have little community support, no family nearby, and cannot easily afford paid childcare. Cassie Raine, for example, felt that, in the UK, parents of young children are not really treated equally. The challenge can become even greater for artists who are single parents. These local and personal circumstances greatly influence the feasibility of travelling internationally for artists and culture professionals with primary caregiving responsibilities.

The need for childcare, physical spaces that are adequately safe for children, and access to paediatric healthcare in emergencies are also important factors for accessing professional international mobility for parents in the arts. **Financial support** certainly

can help. Parenting artists and art professionals need to have solid, well-financed support to thrive as makers and private individuals. In the current climate, where the arts sector continues to be dismantled in many countries, questions around support for parenting artists and host organisations seem not to get enough attention.

But the topic of parenting is not just about money. The **logic of how things are organised in the arts** (e.g. around application guidelines, residencies and creation timelines, networking events, festivals, touring) also creates barriers for parenting artists where **time** is one of the biggest challenges to deal with. Timelines for applications are often too short or appear during school holidays. Rehearsals can be scheduled at times which are very child-unfriendly. Travelling long hours by train to participate in a festival or networking event can be more environmentally friendly, but perhaps not ideal when one has small children. The fixed duration of residencies stops artists from applying, as what is on offer may not fit within their family's schedule. 'It is about the elasticity of the offer and making it discussable,' says Michelle Browne. As a parent it can be hard to plan, as many unexpected things can happen when young children are present. There is currently a lack of conversation between organisers and artists to discuss this. There is a need for support, dialogue and flexibility in the planning, financing and execution of projects, as multitasking between the demands of administrative, creative and parenting work, some of which is often underpaid or not paid at all, can lead to burnout. Therefore, there is a need to discuss the logic of how things are done with organisers and policymakers.

Depending on the age of the child(ren) and when, in the arc of their careers, artists choose to have them, the challenges will be different. But overall, **the demands on parenting artists are so high that 'a lot of people who work in the arts just don't have kids'** says Michelle Browne. Or, suggests Magnus Nordberg, **family life needs to be a low priority to achieve success**. But, according to Emeka Udemba, the perception of having to choose between being an artist or being a parent should not

be there anymore: 'We should be able to combine this and make it work.' Parenting puts many artists in a dilemma, as an audience participant in the webinar commented: 'I don't want to be away from my family but still want to focus on my artistic work.' To get assurance and be confident that things will be taken care of is key to international mobility.

Many of the challenges are interrelated and indicate that there is a need to create more awareness around the issues, and to effect a change of mindset among artists, organisers, policymakers and funders. Whilst the conversation has evolved in the last 10 years in some countries, there are still a lot of parenting artists and arts professionals who don't talk about it, live with the challenges in isolation, and aren't tuned in to the networks that might have the information they need. Louise-Michele You recalls that 'artists were talking about it among themselves because, when talking about

it with others, there was a **sense of trauma, for parents, of not being heard about their issues.** 'When the situation in the arts is already so precarious, artists don't want to expose themselves even more,' says Antonia Kuzmanić, 'as it would perhaps diminish their opportunities.' 'We have to fight this feeling of lack of legitimacy or lack of credibility, because **as soon as you are a parent, it feels you suddenly start again from scratch,** you have gaps in a resume,' mentions Cassie Raine. And talking about these issues with policymakers might compromise artists' relationships with funders, says Michelle Browne and Leah Hilliard. Overall, **there is a lack of evidence and data to build awareness and raise arguments with policymakers.** Many venues, festival organisers or residency hosts are not aware they should consider how they can support artists with children and artists themselves often forget to ask, or feel they can't ask.

Solutions-oriented takeaways

The above-mentioned issues and challenges require a multifaceted approach to raise awareness and change the mindsets of all stakeholders. In the Mobility Webinar and in interviews, there seemed to be a consensus that parenting needs to be seriously acknowledged and made visible in different ways (e.g. through research and publications, networks, projects, conferences). The international arts and culture sector needs avenues for constructive dialogue on the topic.

Out of her own frustration for the lack of support and conversation around these issues in the performing arts sector in the UK, Cassie Raine in 2015 co-founded a grassroots movement. They began by gathering information from their peers, and then started talking to the actors' union, which supported a gathering of parent-artists and

arts organisations on the impact of caregiving responsibilities on career progression. This led to research on the needs of the sector, which gathered evidence to develop arguments for support from the government. This resulted in the creation of PiPA - Parents and Carers in the Performing Arts,²⁶ a platform for research, advocacy and collaboration. PiPA established a best practice charter with guiding principles for organisations on working practices, childcare, communication, policies, etc. Over the last 6 years the landscape for actors in the UK has changed fundamentally through this initiative. For similar reasons, The Mothership Project²⁷ was set up in 2013 as a network of Irish parenting visual artists and art workers. Based on research, publications, workshops, and 'show and tell' events organised by the collective of artists running the network, issues facing parent-artists such as visibility, time, money

²⁶ <https://pipacampaign.org>

²⁷ <https://themothershipproject.wordpress.com>

and precarity are addressed. Despite the name, it is not gender-specific or even parent-specific but welcomes all artists who are primary carers of children.

These initiatives have inspired other people in the arts in Europe, including Anna Galas-Kosil from the Warsaw Observatory of Culture, who mentioned how her organisation wants to initiate research to address those issues in Poland. In March 2023, the performing arts sector in Poland published an Open Letter²⁸ to express how **arts workers who are parents felt rejected and humiliated by the way they and their needs were treated** at the 3rd Dance Congress organised by the NIMiT - National Institute of Music and Dance.²⁹ Anna Galas-Kosil explains that one mother could not attend the event with her child, while one panellist who wanted to talk about care policies was dismissed from the panel on unfair grounds. The performing arts sector is setting up a conference next year to address policies in the arts for primary caregivers.

Very few organisations offer opportunities for family residencies and make them visible on their websites, but international networks play an important role in raising visibility for the opportunities that do exist. The Res Artis database,³⁰ for example, makes it possible to search for residencies that are open to artists who would like to bring children. Some organisations like 'Mothers in Residence – Supporting artistic practice during motherhood',³¹ a project based in Sweden, discuss these issues as a membership organisation. In addition to the need to have organisers explicitly state if calls are open for families, artists should feel they are able to bring forward their individual needs within applications.

A sector-wide shift in mindset towards parenting is required through considerable dialogue between artists, cultural organisations and policymakers. Many of the aforementioned propositions demand

rethinking the predominant way of doing things in the arts. In this process it is important to ask about and listen to the needs of artists and other culture professionals, to be open and flexible with regards to possible solutions that are financially, ecologically, and emotionally sustainable, and to advocate for working conditions that adequately support multigenerational families. 'There is often a discrepancy between what can be offered and what is needed, but the importance is that there is a conversation about it which includes private foundations and public authorities,' says Charlotte Fouchet-Ishii.

Venues, festivals and conferences for example could offer childcare. Recently Anna Galas-Kosil was able to attend On the Move's Cultural Mobility Forum in Tunis, Tunisia because the network's leaders supported her in securing on-site childcare. Funding should be increased to allow any member of a touring team to bring young children or their co-parenting partner with them, or to provide support for paid childcare. Fees could be adjusted to include the extra cost of childcare at home and/or on tour, suggests Magnus Nordberg. Networking opportunities can be organised digitally and be better structured to accommodate more parent-friendly scheduling, including organising them midweek rather than on weekends.

Festival or residency hosts can signal a more open approach with the organisation of a welcome pack and access rider with all the necessary information. A dedicated person should be available for emergencies or questions. Residency programmes should not have deadlines taking place during holidays. Conditions need to be more tailor-made and adapted to the needs of the artists. The duration of residencies should be flexible. Of course, such solutions will not resolve all the issues, as every family has different needs. Some parents have difficulties leaving their child behind with a complete stranger, and it often

²⁸ https://secure.avaaz.org/community_petitions/pl/narodowy_instytut_muzyki_i_tanca_otwarty_list_srodowiska_osob_opiekunczych_w_tancu_i_sztukach_performatywnych/?fRtCbhb&fbclid=IwAR35BoopW3HdVZ-KBmI_vN8ma59mq0N4CI0e-2guC3Ho01q3ttDIvHPoesO

²⁹ <https://nimit.pl/en>

³⁰ <https://resartis.org>

³¹ <https://mothersinresidence.se>

takes time for children to get accustomed to new individuals.

EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) **policies of cultural organisations should include concrete parenthood support** and guidance on policies should be made public so all stakeholders can refer to it. Processes need to be reviewed and adapted. Contracts need to include clauses for support, and budgets need to be ringfenced.

Support also needs to be given to artists who deal with physical recovery after giving birth. Louise-Michelle You points to the example of the French circus school CNAC - Centre national des arts du cirque, which offers recovery training for artists that recently gave birth to rebuild their body to be fit for performing.

Changes in policies and more funding is needed locally and internationally to support the international mobility of parenting artists and arts professionals, for instance by allowing access costs to be part of the budget, by having shared parental leave and flexible childcare, or by being clear about what can and cannot be applied for.

In a nutshell, it is important for artists to speak up, connect to a wider community, and create networks for peer support and advocacy. For organisations it is important to be welcoming and flexible by rethinking if what they offered is parent friendly. Platforms and networks should advocate for this cause by doing research, conducting conversations at national, EU and international level, and requesting funding support from governments. On the political level, as Cassie Raine emphasises, accessible, affordable, flexible, childcare is an absolute necessity for every government, but so is parental leave, which is not just an issue for women.

This complex topic needs to be brought to the forefront in the cultural sector and at European level, remarks Antonia Kuzmanić, as has been done with diversity, gender-equality issues, and green mobility.

It is only with strong collaboration in the arts ecology that the needle can keep moving in the right direction, that awareness can grow, and that a changing mindset can improve the landscape for parenting artists and arts professionals.

State of the arts

by Yohann Floch

When researching the working conditions proposed by cultural stakeholders to parents and other primary caregivers, we quickly see that there is limited literature available on the topic, even if several local or national initiatives started to be implemented from the 2010s, mostly in Western and Northern Europe as far as accessible documentation shows. Data is even scarcer when focusing on the cross-border mobility of artists and culture professionals with caregiving responsibilities.

This report aims to describe the difficulties of parents who work at an international level in the culture field. We use the term 'parents' intentionally, in order to include artist fathers or anyone with

primary caregiving responsibilities who doesn't identify with the term 'mother'. However, we also feel the strong need to acknowledge that, in many countries, the vast majority of parenting is done by women. To quote British journalist and critic Hettie Judah, 'it's also important to acknowledge the fact that there's currently a huge gender pay-gap, there's a huge gender care-gap and that (particularly as we saw during the pandemic) the bulk of childcare still falls to women'.³² These gendered parenting responsibilities echo largely both expectations and discriminations, encountered throughout testimonies we have collected, in the professional environment that artists and culture professionals navigate in their home countries and abroad.

Societal pressure

Increasingly, it seems that arts workers with parenting responsibilities share their personal and professional experiences with the hope of supporting their peers, troubleshooting issues with each other, and shaping a narrative for their needs to better taken into account. Female arts workers have often been told that they can't combine motherhood with a successful career.³³ Circus artist Mariana de Sanctis recently published a statement on social media saying: 'You can't ask me to choose between having a child and working. These are two things that are part of my identity. You cannot take 'only

half' of my identity (...) In 2023, motherhood can no longer be a reason for women to stop working.'³⁴

Beyond the psychological and physical challenges of conception, pregnancy, birth, postpartum recovery, breastfeeding, and the daily labour of raising infants and children, mother arts workers are speaking up about the societal pressure put on their shoulders when navigating their professional trajectories. In contrast, male arts workers are rarely asked if they have parenting duties that would impact the delivery of their tasks, their participation in

³² Interview in Kheriji-Watts, K. (3 November 2022). A Podcast Episode on Parenthood and Mobility in the Arts. Paris: On the Move/Points of Entry. Available at:

<https://on-the-move.org/resources/articles/move-x-points-entry-podcast-episode-parenthood-and-mobility-arts>

³³ 'Through art, we want to unpack and shed light on stereotypes and assumptions that women cannot pursue their creative goals when raising children' says Dyana Gravina, ProCreate Project founder and Creative director. See <https://www.procreateproject.com/about/>

³⁴ Translation by the author. Mariana de Sanctis (18 June 2023):

https://www.facebook.com/Marianna.De.Sanctis/posts/10227043065157414?ref=embed_post

a cultural project, their contribution to an artistic project, or their career.

A comprehensive study on mobility patterns and career paths of EU researchers carried out by IDEA Consult seems to echo a general feeling observed in the culture field: 'Several researchers with family obligations many of whom were women, noted that having a family forced them to consider only short research visits of no more than a few weeks. Some respondents discussed the specific obstacles facing female researchers with children stemming

from expectations or demands about their role as mother and sometimes from the fact that husbands or male partners are less flexible about mobility: "International mobility is not always easy to pursue for women (who mostly are supposed to follow their husbands and not the other way around) and especially not with children". It was also suggested that male-dominated academic systems can pose a further barrier to mobility for women researchers. (...) Some respondents specifically mentioned that single parenthood had prevented them from considering mobility.'³⁵

Industry assumptions

Many problematic perceptions and assumptions pollute parents' professional lives, including: the feeling of having to prove again one's artistic value³⁶ and managing the risk of being forgotten after having a child;³⁷ the assumption that women will be the on-call parent for day-cares and schools;³⁸ the fact that children and babies are often not allowed in rehearsal spaces; and the fear of imposing one's family situation on an employer or a cultural organisation.³⁹ Belgian theatre-maker Stéphanie Mangez declares: 'We are in a hyper-competitive environment. There are too many of us. We are

actresses, so we know that if we are not on stage, there will be someone else to take our place.'⁴⁰ Jo Harrison, co-founder of the Art Working Parents Alliance, comments that if 'people feel that if they don't accept bad treatment there is somebody else who is going to snap up their job'.⁴¹ Hettie Judah comments that 'there's a really bad culture in the art world of demanding an awful lot of unpaid labour from artists – expecting them to be available and present 24/7, making last minute demands of artists, which is particularly difficult if you have caregiving responsibilities'.⁴²

³⁵ Researchers also find that: 'Female respondents with children were still more likely to see personal and family factors as a highly important influence in considering future mobility'; 'making childcare arrangements and other caring responsibilities also remain important concerns for many, with childcare in particular a severe obstacle to a share of applicable researchers only slightly lower than that of mobility funding concerns'; 'childcare and other caring responsibilities are a significant issue. Finding the right schools for children and sometimes disrupting their education can be a major consideration (...) However, the older the children are, the greater the flexibility of the researcher.' See IDEA Consult (April 2010). Study on mobility patterns and career paths of EU researchers. Brussels: European Commission, Research Directorate-General, Directorate C – European Research Area Universities and Researchers. Available at: https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/policy_library/more_hei_report_final_version.pdf

³⁶ See The Mothership Project (16 September 2013). Minutes from meeting held on 3 September 2013. Available at: <https://themothershipproject.wordpress.com/category/perception-of-motherartist>

³⁷ See Abu ElDahab, M. (ed.) (2020). Why Call it Labor? On Motherhood and Art Work. Berlin: Mophradat/Archive Books. Available at: <https://www.archivebooks.org/why-call-it-labor>

³⁸ Latitude 50, pôle des arts du cirque et de la rue in Marchin, Belgium. 'Reconciling the life of an artist and parenthood, quite a challenge!'. Available at: <https://latitude50.be/23-24/creation/parentalite>

³⁹ 'Parent ou artiste: faut-il choisir?'. Debate in Mont des Arts programme, BX1. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4pOf7BOF-M>

⁴⁰ Translation by the author. Stéphanie Mangez from compagnie MAPS, Belgium in 'Finding solutions to childcare in the performing arts industry' (18 September 2022). Brussels: The Brussels Times. Available at: <https://www.brusselstimes.com/290867/finding-solutions-to-childcare-in-the-performing-arts-industry>

⁴¹ The Thinkers (29 May 2023). 'Why parents in the art world are fighting for a fairer future'. London: Critical Edge. Available at: <https://www.criticaledge.art/briefings/art-working-parents-alliance>

⁴² Interview in Kheriji-Watts, K. (3 November 2022). A Podcast Episode on Parenthood and Mobility in the Arts. Paris: On the Move/Points of Entry. Available at: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/articles/move-x-points-entry-podcast-episode-parenthood-and-mobility-arts>

Mirroring the comments gathered during the Mobility Webinar and in the interviews conducted by Katelijne Verstraete, academic researchers focusing on the practices in the dance field acknowledge that 'the fact that work and employment may occur outside of "regular" business hours, in addition to the intense focus and drive required to succeed in dance present exceptional challenges for those who dance and teach dance while parenting'.⁴³ Also, 'some of the primary factors contributing to parents' experiences in dance include: timing of a pregnancy, fostering or adoption within the context of the fields of dance and dance education; undertaking parenting responsibilities within the frameworks of inflexible job requirements and promotion systems; making space for dance and family life to coexist; negotiating career, family expectations and roles throughout a child's lifespan; and negotiating bodily changes occurring as a result of pregnancy or parenting in relation to the physicality and of learning and teaching dance'.⁴⁴

Stakeholders repeatedly observed a general lack of knowledge and understanding in the culture field of the specific needs of parent artists and cultural workers. This is somehow unexpected since, on the one hand, the field seems to perceive itself as a progressive and caring environment ('the art world is brilliant at talking the talk but not walking the walk'),⁴⁵ and on the other hand it demonstrates a solid ability to propose services for audience members with young children (e.g. Festival de la Cité Lausanne offering festival-goer parents a childcare service for evening performances).⁴⁶ Dyana Gravina, co-founder of the Mother House Studios, says 'It just doesn't fit within this patriarchal capitalistic system that we live in. So, it's definitely about proving a need to somebody that doesn't want to listen, really. And, that goes really across different sectors when it comes to space because then you're not just talking about the art world and the inability to see that there is a lack of representation and space and inclusivity, when we are structuring and designing platforms for artists – and in my case, artists who care for children'.⁴⁷

Losing international experience and exposure

The impediments and obstacles described by stakeholders have a direct impact on the international professional development of artists and culture professionals. Artist-parents explain that the responsibilities of having young children reduces their access to international networking

and industry events – including fairs, conferences, openings, premieres, training opportunities, seminars, and talks – that would allow them to stay connected to artistic discourse, to exchange with peers, and to grow artistically and economically.⁴⁸

⁴³ Duffy, A., Risner, D. and Pickard, A. (28 Feb 2023). 'Editorial, special issue: dancing, parenting and professional challenges' in *Research in Dance Education*, Vol. 24, N°1, 1–4. London: Taylor & Francis Group. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2023.2176036>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ The Thinkers (29 May 2023). 'Why parents in the art world are fighting for a fairer future'. London: Critical Edge. Available at: <https://www.criticaledge.art/briefings/art-working-parents-alliance>

⁴⁶ Day care at the 2023 edition offered from Tuesday to Saturday from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. A team of volunteers supervised by a professional educator take care of children, offering them a range of fun and creative activities. See: <https://2023.festivalcite.ch/en/practical-information>

⁴⁷ In 'Talk – The Studio as a Site of Community and Collective Action With Dr Charlotte Bonham-Carter, Dyana Gravina, Jane Morrow and Rosalind Nashashibi'. London: Freelands Foundation. Available at: <https://freelandsfoundation.co.uk/event/talk-the-studio-as-a-site-of-community-and-collective-action>

⁴⁸ See for example The Mothership Project (16 September 2013). Minutes from meeting held on 3 September 2013. Available at: <https://themothershipproject.wordpress.com/category/perception-of-motherartist>

These workers have thus difficulties to experiment and access an international practice and inform, direct or inspire their creativity, to develop or deepen their international professional relationships, to participate in non-formal learning. Moreover, many artists and culture professionals note that it is easy to slip off the international radar.⁴⁹ Several studies have in fact noted the drop in artists' applications for residencies when they become parents, a drop which is even more pronounced for female artists.⁵⁰

According to these studies, artists often appear to practice self-censorship, considering that their application will not find conditions compatible with their lives. When they go beyond this self-censorship, they may come up against situations which sometimes reveal a lack of consideration of family life, a lack of clarity in the description of the hosting conditions and arrangements or a rigidity in the very organisation of the stay.⁵¹

European working environment

The European Parliament's Draft Report on an EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors highlights the well-understood – but ongoing – precarity they experience across Member States: 'regardless of their role or their status as a worker or self-employed person, the living and working conditions of CCS professionals can be characterised by precariousness and instability, with unpredictable incomes, short-term contracts, weak or no social security, and a lack of access to unemployment support; whereas the extent of social security coverage of CCS professionals varies

between countries, sectors and types of work within the sectors and may lead to differences in living and working conditions'.⁵² Without mentioning parenthood in detail, the Draft Report underlines the variance in the national rules and regulations that exist. Research shows that Member States have a diversity of measures to accompany parents in their work life. However, these are not always known to individuals and organisations,⁵³ are not consistently applied, and don't always protect workers as intended, especially those with a freelance status.⁵⁴ At a recent professional gathering, ARTCENA's head of the Support to Professionals department Louis

⁴⁹ At the Res Artis Conference 2023 in London 'Mind the Gap: Designing residencies for everyone', several parent-artists shared examples of situations where their needs were taken into account, as well as those where they were not. The Egyptian choreographer Shaymaa Shoukry told the story of being selected by the Prohelvetia Studio residency/Dansometre Vevey in Switzerland, and arranging the travel of her child. Prohelvetia reimbursed all costs incurred afterwards when the situation was made known. Shaymaa Shoukry commented that the positive news came despite a lack of transparency and communication on the conditions proposed. Programme of the conference: <https://resartis.org/res-artis-conferences/upcoming-conferences/london-2023/>

⁵⁰ In its 'fiche-ressource', Arts en résidence quotes the research project [Re]production led by artists Emilie McDermott and Nour Awada where more than half of the 250+ mother artists interviewed declared they gave up an artistic residency because of maternity. See Jouvancy, E. (2023). Fiche-ressource 'Pour une meilleure prise en compte de la vie familiale des résident-es'. Rennes: Arts en résidence. Available (in French) at: http://www.artsenresidence.fr/site/assets/files/1484/fiche_famille_4_avril.pdf

⁵¹ See also SINIGAGLIA-AMADIO, S. and SINIGAGLIA, J. (2017). Temporalités du travail artistique : le cas des musicien-ne-s et des plasticien-ne-s. Paris: Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Secrétariat général - Service des politiques culturelles et de l'innovation Département des études, de la prospective et des statistiques. Available (in French) at: <https://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Etudes-et-statistiques/Publications/Collections-d-ouvrages/Questions-de-culture-2000-2022/Temporalites-du-travail-artistique-le-cas-des-musicien.ne.s-et-des-plasticien.ne.s>

⁵² European Parliament, Committee on Employment and Social Affairs & Committee on Culture and Education (13 June 2023). Draft Report with recommendations to the Commission on an EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors. (2023/2051(INL)). Available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CJ28-PR-746742_EN.pdf

⁵³ Listen to the testimony of Tatiana-Mosio Bongonga, co-artistic director of the circus company Basinga, at the professional gathering "Parentalité et cirque: exprimer les besoins, partager les solutions" hosted by Territoires de cirque, France. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngQcXEnZ4Is>

⁵⁴ The Draft Report mentions that "more than double the number of CCS professionals is self-employed than in the general population (32 % compared to 14 %)". Ibid.

Logodin declared that 'legal frameworks are not always suitable for a parenting project'.⁵⁵

For cultural workers, motherhood is a disadvantage in jobs and opportunities, as small organisations often avoid women whom they suspect might imminently take maternity leave. Mariana de Sanctis states: 'As an artist, it's even worse: if I stop, I lose my job, I lose opportunities, I "miss the train". If I'm pregnant, I'm an obstacle to artistic creation, schedules, everything. All of this makes me feel inadequate. And I lost my job. **Each time,**

I lost my job when I was pregnant.'⁵⁶ Mophradat's book *Why Call It Labour?* includes a conversation with one of the few cases in the art world where a mother successfully challenged an institution for discrimination. In 2017, Nikki Columbus entered into negotiations for a curatorial position at New York's PS1 Contemporary Art Centre, part of The Museum of Modern Art. She was at that time pregnant, though the museum was not aware. By the time the start date and salary were finalised, she had given birth, and the museum withdrew its job offer. Nikki Columbus sued and received a settlement in 2019.⁵⁷

National working contexts

At European level, the will to better the status and working conditions of artists and culture professionals is quite high in the political agenda. However, the Report of the Open Method of Coordination group of EU Member States' experts recommends the creation of a transnational tool on various issues including social security ('providing information on access to benefits such as unemployment, sickness, healthcare, parental leave, pension, accidents at work and occupational diseases') as well as the set-up of an EU framework to provide guidelines and minimum standards, including on social protection schemes.⁵⁸ Despite the significant progress such an initiative would represent, one can wonder how it would meet the sustainability needs observed on the ground, or

better the career prospects that tend to worsen with parenting duties.

There are few examples of Member States providing articulated guidance, through institutions, agencies or project funding, to arts workers in order to inform them on their rights and circulate reliable information on national rules and regulations.⁵⁹ Artist unions and sectoral federations also support their members with parenting duties. Moreover, several initiatives were launched to encourage cultural players to better accommodate artist parents' needs (e.g. the artist-parent Canadian project MOTHRA Manifesto,⁶⁰ the ProCreate Project Manifesto,⁶¹ the PiPA Charter programme,⁶² or the guidance provided by the French network Arts en

⁵⁵ Translation by the author. Louis Logodin, Head of the department Support to professionals at Artcena, French National Centre for Circus, Street and Theatre Arts, at the professional gathering 'Parentalité et cirque : exprimer les besoins, partager les solutions' hosted by Territoires de cirque, France. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngQcXEnZ4Is>

⁵⁶ Translation by the author. Mariana de Sanctis (18 June 2023): https://www.facebook.com/Marianna.De.Sanctis/posts/10227043065157414?ref=embed_post

⁵⁷ Read the testimony in Abu ElDahab, M. (ed.) (2020). *Why Call it Labor? On Motherhood and Art Work*. Berlin: Mophradat/Archive Books. Available at: <https://www.archivebooks.org/why-call-it-labor>

⁵⁸ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (2023). *The status and working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals – Report of the OMC (Open Method of Coordination) group of EU Member States' experts – Final report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/01fafa79-1a13-11ee-806b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁵⁹ See for example ARTCENA's Guide de la parentalité dans le cirque published in November 2022 and available at: https://www.artcena.fr/sites/default/files/medias/Guide%20de%20la%20parentalit%C3%A9%20dans%20le%20cirque_WEB.pdf

⁶⁰ <https://mothra.ca/manifesto.html>

⁶¹ <https://www.procreateproject.com/procreate-project-manifesto>

⁶² <https://pipacampaign.org/charter-programme>

résidence for residency-hosts to welcome resident parents)⁶³ and/or to create networks of arts workers with a plethora of knowledge and experiences that can be shared and learned from through meet-ups, newsletters, sector-based WhatsApp groups, etc. (e.g. AWP - Art Working Parents Alliance with

150+ members).⁶⁴ Jo Harrison says: 'caregivers in the art world are the least visible people to one another because they're the people least likely to be going to the networking and social events (...) I went through my whole active parenting span not knowing anybody else in my position'.⁶⁵

Information provision and paradigm shift

Echoing the testimonies of the Mobility Webinar and the interviews conducted by Katelijn Verstraete, the literature review shows the need for access to (legal) information at national level with specific guidance for cultural organisations as employers, for arts workers in relation to their parenting rights, and for the field to increase the level of awareness and lead to a better adaptation of practices. Sector representatives at national level call for the creation of sibling networks and information portals across Europe to further accessibility and inclusion on the one hand, and to improve access to information, troubleshooting and opportunities on the other hand. Players expect that the circulation of translated documentation and good practice examples could fast-track improvements in other countries and contexts.⁶⁶ 'Models such as Mother House and V22 (both in London) aim to support people who bear children to practice during and beyond their pregnancies. Mother House⁶⁷ is currently developing a toolkit for studios with similar aspirations.'⁶⁸

Cultural organisations and institutions should be expected to help reduce the excessive mental and organisational burden of arts professionals working internationally. Artist-parents overwhelmingly ask for more flexibility in terms of (international) creation, production and distribution/touring conditions by, for example, adapting the length of mobility experiences, segmenting them over time, or adapting them to schooling obligations. But the current lack of flexibility mirrors societal pressure and industry assumptions recalled above. For example, Belgium artist Foucault Falguerolles indicates: 'People who are sedentary tell us that they don't come to the office with their children either. They don't understand that, for us, it's not the same, we're in another city, another country.'⁶⁹

Hettie Judah describes how creation spaces and artist-in-residence programmes could adapt: 'There are residencies that can be child-friendly that will invite an artist to come with their child (or children) and possibly also with a partner or with another supportive adult that can come and help care for

⁶³ Jouvancy, E. (2023). Fiche-ressource 'Pour une meilleure prise en compte de la vie familiale des résident-es'. Rennes: Arts en résidence. Available (in French) at: http://www.artsenresidence.fr/site/assets/files/1484/fiche_famille_4_avril.pdf

⁶⁴ <https://artworkingparents.wordpress.com>

⁶⁵ The Thinkers (29 May 2023). 'Why parents in the art world are fighting for a fairer future'. London: Critical Edge. Available at: <https://www.criticaledge.art/briefings/art-working-parents-alliance>

⁶⁶ Guidelines and testimonies touch on many aspects such as: communication boundaries, spaces to breastfeed and changing facilities, emergency contacts, options for remote attendance, flexible working options to accommodate child illness, covering travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of supporting adults, etc.

⁶⁷ <https://www.motherhousestudios.com>

⁶⁸ Morrow, J. (2022). 'Taking Up Space: How Studios Can Support Artists across Intersections' in Dr Bonham-Carter, C. (ed.). Representation of Women Artists in the UK During 2021. London: Freelands Foundation. Available at: <https://freelandsfoundation.imgix.net/documents/Representation-of-Women-Artists-in-the-UK-Research-in-2021.pdf>

⁶⁹ Article 'Finding solutions to childcare in the performing arts industry' (18 September 2022). Brussels: The Brussels Times. Available at: <https://www.brusselstimes.com/290867/finding-solutions-to-childcare-in-the-performing-arts-industry>

the children. But there's also the potential for a residency to be flexible in the way that it addresses the needs of the parents. So that it's not necessarily bringing the children on-site but that it can offer a residency that allows a parent actually to have time away from their children, that can be flexible around the needs of that parent as a caregiver. So, rather than saying quite dogmatically, "our residency is for

a month, it has to take place all in one go and that's that", it can perhaps work with the artist to create a residency that accommodates their needs. (...) it might be quite difficult for a parent to leave their children with someone for an entire month, but they could maybe divide that month up into, let's say, four weeks spread over the course of a year.⁷⁰

International mobility funding

Many stakeholders have called for changes in funding models that take into account the realities of cross-border mobility for artists and culture professionals with parenting duties. For example, travel costs for children, partners, or other supportive adults are almost never eligible. During its post-pandemic data collection work for the publication of its Cultural Mobility Funding Guides,⁷¹ On the Move has observed that almost no regular funding sources at local, regional, national, European or international level, whether public or private, cover parenting-related costs for applicants. Moreover, the majority of venues, creation spaces or festivals don't have resources to accommodate such needs. When they do have resources, these are mostly provided on a case-by-case basis, and organisers don't necessarily communicate the financial and human support they provide – which makes it difficult to measure and encourage change. Finally, cultural organisations point to a lack of understanding from funders when it comes to allocating budgets to parenting-related measures for guests. **Increasing attention on the intersections of 'artmaking' and 'parenting'**

could help strengthen accessibility and inclusion policies and support schemes.⁷²

At the European level, Culture Moves Europe⁷³ provides mobility grants for artists and culture professionals in all 40 Creative Europe countries. With a budget of 21 million EUR, Culture Moves Europe aims to offer mobility grants to around 7,000 artists, cultural professionals, and host organisations from 2022 to 2025. In 2023, open calls for both residency hosts and artists and cultural professionals included a 'family top-up' of 100 EUR that was available for applicants. This fixed amount would support persons with children below the age of 10, regardless of the number of children. This does demonstrate an attempt to consider the individual situations of arts workers, but the low value of the grant demonstrates a total disconnection with the reality of international mobility costs for traveling families. Foucault Falguerolles provides a glimpse of the childcare costs of touring with two young children: 'There is a salary that goes for babysitting. We tell ourselves that when we both work, there is

⁷⁰ Interview in Kheriji-Watts, K. (3 November 2022). A Podcast Episode on Parenthood and Mobility in the Arts. Paris: On the Move/Points of Entry. Available at: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/articles/move-x-points-entry-podcast-episode-parenthood-and-mobility-arts>

⁷¹ <https://on-the-move.org/resources>

⁷² The Mothership Project (7 July 2019). The Launch of The Mothership Project Satellite Findings on 16 May 2019 at The Lab in Dublin, Republic of Ireland. Available at: <https://themothershipproject.wordpress.com/2019/07/07/the-launch-of-the-mothership-project-satellite-findings-may-16-2019-the-lab-dublin>

⁷³ Funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, Culture Moves Europe is implemented by the Goethe-Institut. It covers the sectors of architecture, cultural heritage, design and fashion design, literary translation, music, performing arts, and visual arts. The scheme follows the successful i-Portunus pilot project that took place between 2018 and 2022. Call for individual mobility of artists and cultural professionals (Deadline: 31 May 2023): <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/calls/call-for-individual-mobility-of-artists-and-cultural-professionals> and Call for residency hosts: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/calls/culture-moves-europe-call-for-residency-hosts>

one who does not really work. It quickly comes back to 400 euros a week, and we must also continue to pay for the nursery in Brussels.⁷⁴ We wonder

what the basis was to establish such inadequate conditions for this 'family top-up'... and if they actually favour participation.

Visas and cross-border cultural mobility

Depending on where artists and culture professionals are based in the world and how 'powerful' their passport is, the struggles described above can be amplified. Many testimonies, including the ones collected by the MIPs - Mobility Info Points,⁷⁵ show that arts workers willing to travel with their child/children – e.g. to the Schengen Area – face more visa rejection, as such a situation can be seen as a 'risk of settlement' and makes it harder to prove future return to the country of origin. If accessing mobility funding can be even more difficult, workers also meet with extra challenges to develop and maintain international collaborations.

Another revealing example, provided this time by Mophradat's book *Why Call It Labour?*, comes from Lebanese writer Mirene Arsanios, based in New York, who shares her personal story and stresses her need to maintain her income so she does not violate the terms of her O-1 artist's visa. She raises questions about visas and passports, as well as the work done to secure a child's citizenship somewhere with better economic opportunities than one's home country.⁷⁶ The classic 'visa issue' in the culture field, well studied for over two decades, impacts parenting workers, weakens international cultural relations, and reinforces unfair practices and exchanges.

⁷⁴ Article 'Finding solutions to childcare in the performing arts industry' (18 September 2022). Brussels: The Brussels Times. Available at: <https://www.brusselstimes.com/290867/finding-solutions-to-childcare-in-the-performing-arts-industry>

⁷⁵ <https://on-the-move.org/network/working-groups/mobility-information-points>

⁷⁶ See Abu ElDahab, M. (ed.) (2020). *Why Call it Labor? On Motherhood and Art Work*. Berlin: Mophradat/Archive Books. Available at: <https://www.archivebooks.org/why-call-it-labor>

Policy recommendations

The following recommendations have been derived from the above data analysis and takeaways, combined with insights from mobility stakeholders and desk research. We formulate here a set of observations and recommendations for public authorities at different levels, as well as for stakeholders in the culture field. These recommendations aim to offer a better and fairer system of support for those accessing artistic and cultural mobility opportunities.

Recommendations to all culture stakeholders

All European culture stakeholders should:

- **Acknowledge that cultural mobility is a central component of the professional trajectory of artists and culture professionals.⁷⁷**
- **Engage with international artists and culture professionals with parental duties.**

Cultural mobility effectively contributes to a sustainable and fairer ecosystem, mitigating inequalities, allowing fruitful interactions between contexts and cultural expressions. The opportunity to engage in mobility allows culture professionals to benefit from and contribute to multiple opportunities and strategies.

European networks and platforms, alongside all operators, should review their Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policies, where they exist, and their practices in order to better take into account the precarious situation of artists and culture workers with parental duties.

Festivals, venues and other creation spaces, including artist-in-residence programmes, should adapt their hosting practices and conditions as much as human and financial resources allow.

All players should pay particular attention to this group when proposing networking events, including international conferences, fairs, workshops and seminars.

⁷⁷ See the Updated definition of 'cultural mobility' from the i-Portunus Operational Study. On the Move (March 2019): <https://www.i-portunus.eu/wp-fuut/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/OS-final.pdf>

- **Develop accessible information and guidance.**

Cultural stakeholders should collectively establish guidance for individuals and employers to map social benefits and other measures, where they exist, in their country as well as to fight discriminations against parent artists and culture workers.

Local and national networks, unions, federations or information project holders should highlight and circulate existing documentation and help share good practice examples from other contexts to help formulate guidelines.

- **Develop data collection and research.**

Given the general scarcity of data focusing on the specific situation of parent artists and culture workers, all stakeholders should lead surveys and produce sectoral or transversal knowledge.

Recommendations to European Union institutions

The European Union institutions should:

- Further and regularly consult with artists and cultural organisations, and their representative platforms, to articulate or adjust cultural policies and support schemes, including Culture Moves Europe, to parental needs, in line with other needs for systemic change (disability, ecological transition, gender equality among others).
- Focus their attention on discriminations against parent artists and culture professionals, particularly when developing measures to fight gender inequalities, and propose minimum standards in relation to working conditions in the sector.
- Support the circulation of legal and sectoral information on the topic, considering that this particular workforce is structurally precarious and ill-equipped to fight such discriminations.
- Assist and encourage all Member States to provide information and exchange on social benefits and other measures accessible to parent artists and culture workers, including through the Open Method of Coordination.

Recommendations to local, regional and national authorities

The local, regional and national authorities should, in their respective areas of competence:

- Further and regularly consult with artists and cultural organisations, and their representative platforms, to articulate or adjust cultural policies and support schemes to parental needs, in line with other needs for systemic change (disability, ecological transition, gender equality among others).
- Contribute to providing and aggregating legal and sectoral information and/or support information providers in creating reliable guidance for parent artists and culture professionals, whether holding freelance or employee status, as well as cultural organisations.
- Support cultural players in adapting their operations and hosting activities to the specificities of (international) arts workers with parental duties, including by providing adequate funding.
- Develop and/or adjust policies and support schemes dedicated to cultural mobility in order to provide the necessary conditions to favour all forms of international engagement of parent artists and culture professionals.
- In their participation in the Council of Ministers and OMC working groups, Member States should share knowledge about obstacles and difficulties encountered by artists and arts organisation professionals and take adequate measures.

About the authors

John Ellingsworth works as a writer and editor in the cultural field. As an editor, he has worked on projects and publications for Kulturrådet (Sweden), IETM - international network for contemporary performing arts (Belgium), Dansehallerne (Denmark), ELIA - European network for higher arts education (the Netherlands), Flanders Department of Culture, Youth and Media (Belgium), EDN - European Dancehouse Network (Spain), and others. John is data analyst for On the Move and co-authored the last editions of the Cultural Mobility Yearbook.

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Katelijan Verstraete is an independent cultural consultant with over 20 years of experience in the business sector, the creative sector, and international relations between Europe and Asia. She moved from the business sector in China to co-found the (then) first independent arts space in Shanghai (BizArt), and developed training, information provision, and communication for IETM, the international network for contemporary performing arts, and On the Move. She led Asia-Europe cultural exchange programmes in ASEF - Asia Europe Foundation, and led the work of the British Council in the arts and creative industries in 14 countries in East Asia, developing innovative country and regional programmes to strengthen networks between the UK and Asia through artistic exchanges and skills development, and by strengthening the role of arts and culture in sustainable development. Katelijan is the founder of ReflAction Works, a cultural consultancy focusing on research, writing, evaluation and project management in artistic and cultural relations for organisations such as IETM, EUNIC, On the Move, ASEAN Foundation, British Council, Dutch Culture, Cultural Relations Platform, AVPN and Flanders Arts Institute.

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