

DISCUSSION WORKSHOP #4

THE 10TH AND 11TH OF JUNE 2009, IN THE PREMISES OF ZUTIQUE PRODUCTIONS – DIJON

ARTISTIC PROCESSES AND URBAN RENEWAL



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► SUMMARY

Artistic and cultural projects within the framework of urban development policy involve a large number of issues and a multitude of partners. Putting in place the conditions for real participation by sections of the population and sustainable collaboration between partner organisations is always a difficulty, especially as there is no established common law system provided for this type of project.

► CONTEXT

This workshop entitled “*Artistic processes and urban renewal*” took place in Dijon on 10 & 11 June 2009, in the premises of [Zutique Productions](#), with the following participants: Frédéric Ménard (Zutique Productions), Eric Chevance (TNT-Manufacture de Chaussures, Bordeaux), Dorine Julien (Comptoir de la Victorine / Les Pas Perdus, Marseille), Philippe Henry, Claude Renard & Chantal Lamarre (Culture Commune, Loos-en-Gohelle), Fred Ortuño (COUAC, Toulouse), Charlotte Sanchez (Théâtre de Chambre, Aulnoye-Aymeries), Marie-Laure Dubois (Cie Black Blanc Beur, St-Quentin-en-Yvelines), Patricia Pedrizet (Un sourire de toi et j'quitte ma mère, Paris), Philippe Foulquié (La Friche la

Belle de Mai, Marseille), Fazette Bordage (Mains d'œuvre, Saint-Ouen), and Quentin Dulieu & Fabien Gourrat (ARTfactories/Autre(s)pARTs).

► BRIEF SUMMARY

Giving priority to the local

Local and proximity are key words in projects reported during this workshop. Without proximity, it is impossible to put in place an artistic process that really takes into consideration the places, the partners and, of course, the local people to whom it is addressed in the first place. Therefore, when they haven't already been working in the neighbourhood concerned, arts operators and/or artists tend to move into it for the project. A steering committee also aims to enable the project's various leaders to meet so that they can keep each other informed of what they do and of the specific features of their field of action. As regards local people, naturally, the challenge consists in getting them to take part in the project, from its inception to its final completion. The difficulty is in getting them interested in the project when they may have other priorities (jobs, housing, etc.).

Building projects case by case

In this context, the legitimacy of arts players and artists is a recurrent question, revived by the interaction with the social players who are the main partners in this type of process. To address this issue, some conditions appear to be absolutely necessary: working with local people by getting them involved in creative work (for example, through collecting spoken word accounts); bringing external players into the neighbourhood, sometimes including well-known artists; enabling local people to get out of the place where they usually live. These are just major trends, since a makeshift “do-it-yourself” approach is the predominant way to make every project unique, to the extent that everyone agrees (even if some regret it when it is a matter of referring to making them last) that these projects are based on people rather than on organisations. The implementation

and the continuation of projects depends on the success (or failure) of the encounter and the interaction between people. Therefore we can understand that raising the question of the possibility of a model for projects of this kind creates strong reactions.



© *Le Jardin Diffus* in Marseille – *Bruit du Frigo* (Bordeaux) – In progress since 2006

The difficult relationship with institutions

The participants in this workshop all speak of their difficult position with respect to institutional funding bodies, and particularly the Ministry of Culture. For the latter, the official approval system, even if it is changing, still operates too much as the only means of evaluation for recognizing the quality of projects and subsidizing them. But the processes mentioned during this workshop have difficulty in fitting institutional pigeon-holes because they are at the cross-over of several fields (cultural, social, urban development policy, etc.). Two options were expressed by those who attended: either one should look for official approval while trying to keep one's specificity, or one should try to change the institutional evaluation criteria according to the more complex practices at work within neighbourhoods. Despite this opposition, all the contributors recognize that we have to return to more official partnership agreements and, in any case, to long-term financial support adapted to projects which themselves are only of interest if they take place over a period of several years. This would make it possible to transcend the culture of productive results (of which the attendance rate is the clearest expression), which is totally inadequate in such circumstances.

Beyond art and culture

Therefore it appears urgent for members of ARTfactories/Autre(s)pARTs to work on proposals for new forms of partnership agreements with official bodies which take into account the necessity for an inter-Ministry approach. Common law funds are like manna, of which the artistic and cultural sector can only benefit if it demonstrates the overall scope of its actions. In other words, only if it manages to gain recognition for the social and historical usefulness of artistic processes within the framework of urban development policy. Therefore it is important for ARTfactories /Autre(s)pARTs to approach players who are involved in the community enterprise, voluntary non-profit or sustainable development sector in which people are already striving to impose other indicators (e.g., of wealth) that prefigure another model of society.

Sébastien Gazeau

These texts are based on discussions in Dijon on 10 & 11 June 2009 during the workshop on "Artistic processes and urban renewal".

Quentin Dulieu (Af/Ap)

Coordinator of discussion workshops



© Summary - Discussion workshop #3 – *La place des local people dans la artistic approach*

► LONG SUMMARY

Artistic processes that are devised within the framework of urban development policy must deal with a multitude of constraints and requirements. Straddling several sectors – the arts, interculturality, social affairs, urban planning and education – that work in different ways, these processes suffer from the things that go along with them: a multitude of intermediaries who have as many criteria for the recognition and evaluation of such processes. Nevertheless, the complexity of these projects translates the main issue that is considered to be at stake in them: achieving collaboration between all these players producing a “common culture” of the sections of population concerned.

The example of Zutique Productions

The Director of Zutique Productions, Frédéric Ménard, presented several projects that involve music and sections of the population in Dijon’s neighbourhoods. He stressed the fact that his association was first of all an organiser of arts events before opening itself – at the request of local government authorities – to the concerns of urban development policy. For ten years, members of Zutique Productions have refined expertise which they did not originally have at their beginnings, and they have become key players in this field in Dijon. Its example provides a basis for reflection for all participants in the workshop.

Zutique Productions’ interest in world music and in concepts of cultural diversity and cultural mix explains why this organisation was asked to lead projects in Dijon within the framework of urban development policy in the late 1990s. The first experiment was not very conclusive: it lacked coherence and finally created few reactions by local people. The second experiment was conducted in liaison with the OPAC public construction and development agency after the demolition of a block of apartments in the Les Grésilles neighbourhood. It led to the collection of local people’s spoken word accounts by a writer, the involvement of musicians to write songs based on these words, and then the production of a CD that was distributed in the neighbourhood. This project was a success: it was well-received by the local people, who identified with it, and it created an encouraging precedent with OPAC. The third experiment (in

progress) marks a new stage for Zutique Productions, which made recommendations rather than simply carrying out work in the service of elected representatives. Again in collaboration with OPAC, which proposed that it should move into the Les Grésilles neighbourhood in 2005, it set up a steering committee comprised of various local associations. A long preliminary stage must continue until 2012. It was firstly a matter of establishing strong contact with people operating in the neighbourhood (the MJC community centre, youth leaders, etc.) before conducting several studies prior to recommending an urban development arts project. This project had to combine several aspects (cultural, social and economic) which took concrete shape through the construction of arts centres open to the neighbourhood and two original organisations: one focussing on economic and commercial dimensions, and the other for supervising the governance of this project. After mentioning the various systems and public partners that were approached, Frédéric Ménard observed that only one thing interests institutions in such a project: the participation of local people.



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Rooting a project in a geographical area

Conversely, this observation asks the question of the legitimacy of an artistic and cultural project related to urban development policy. To be legitimate, if not a success, such a project must earn the recognition of local people and get them involved in it. To do so, several contributors noted the importance of living on the spot, in other words, sharing the daily life and the geographical area of the people with whom these

projects are set up. One then has to offer local people the means to identify with a project and make it their own. This may be through a steering committee if it is the people and not the organisations who actually run it. However, the project leader or programme manager, who must not have any hierarchical superiority, must coordinate everything. The main thing is to maintain real interaction and dialogue between the various players and to give them recognition for their respective places. This is not without some interpersonal problems, e.g., between social workers and the arts players who may have the impression that people are treading on their toes, etc. This type of reaction or fear expresses a reality that is at work in these projects which involve people who belong to different cultures and who express diverse concerns.

Difficulty in identifying projects

This leads to the question of recognition by public powers. Who has the “right” to lead this type of project, which is always the product of a makeshift “do-it-yourself” approach, personal encounters and specific circumstances? The problem is that these actions often remain invisible, and it is difficult to assess their effects. The evaluation criteria usually used by public institutions, of which the main first criterion is the attendance rate, do not apply here. So the institution is simply not able to identify these projects, and therefore cannot support them or fund them. In this respect, the Ministry of Culture’s official approvals are symptomatic of this gap between reality and the institution, which has the result of the preventing ground work. There are two opposing approaches among the workshop’s participants: either you have to ensure that you have official approval so that you can then lead your projects as you wish, or else you have to pressurize institutions in order to have the specific nature of these projects recognised. Note that the assignment letter from Michel Duffour in 2001 recommended that these actions should be recognised without officially approving them. This recommendation has not really been put into practice, since agreements on objectives are replacing all three-year agreements and substituting project funds for operating funds, which amounts to putting a number of arts players in a really precarious situation. Despite this, all contributors agreed that the deafness of institutions does not prevent the reality of the phenomenon. But it is

a matter of again gaining recognition of the social usefulness (and urgency) of the processes that they experiment, perhaps by rehabilitating the history of arts policies and the role for which they were once recognised in the development of France and Europe.

For sustainable artistic and cultural development

How can we avoid this instability of organisations whose actions do not meet the evaluation criteria of public funding bodies? How can we manage to make these projects last without them being based entirely on the stubbornness of a few people? We suggest that two stable systems should be created, established on the basis of several points that are common to all these actions. It is then a matter of gaining recognition of the way of doing things, rather than a quantifiable result, that is, a way of seeing artistic and cultural development ratified by *ad hoc* agreements that ensure durable finance on the basis of ordinary common law funds (see interview with Claude Renard below). Obviously, the stake would be to define the limits of these common points where there are apparently only unique, singular projects. It is also necessary to have one single intermediary among the co-partner institutions – in other words, a priority wardship that guarantees the specific nature of such and such a project.

The members of ARTfactories/Autre(s)pARTs agree on the need to make their voices heard by public powers, and particularly the Ministries to which they propose arguments in favour of standard agreements corresponding to their actions. But they must also make their voices heard by players from other sectors (the social sector, sustainable development, and the community enterprise and voluntary non-profit sector) that share the same type of concerns and with which they must highlight certain spaces and certain actions that are not yet identified. The aim being to gain recognition for art and culture, perhaps somewhat like those indicators of well-being which, contrary to the conventional indicators of material wealth, recognize the value of that which seems invisible but is not.

Sébastien Gazeau

These texts are based on discussions in Dijon on 10 & 11 June 2009 during the workshop on “Artistic approaches and urban renewal”.

Quentin Dulieu (Af/Ap)

Coordinator of discussion workshops

The “common law funds”, or the place of cultural matters in urban development policy (interview with Claude Renard)

Sébastien Gazeau: What are “common law funds”?

Claude Renard: In the context of urban development policy, they are specific funds allocated by the State or local government authorities to projects that meet certain criteria. For the Ministry of Culture, the criteria in the past have been, to simplify, artistic excellence and cultural democratisation. During the period of major social development of neighbourhoods (1981/1990), the DRAC agencies [Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs] had a part of their budget reserved for projects located in priority areas. But, from 1991/1992, the project budgets were included in an overall common supply provided by other Ministries. This was potentially very interesting, as it was possible to obtain funding that was much greater than that obtainable from the Ministry of Culture, etc. But the DRAC agencies, particularly due to a lack of staff for following up these “urban (development) contracts”¹, had the feeling that they were losing control of things or losing their initiative. The circular entitled “*Culture de la ville, cultures pour la ville*” [“City culture, cultures for the city”] encouraged the signing of official agreements for culture in these contracts, and therefore it enabled the DRAC agencies to be associated with projects from the beginning.

What became of that circular?

It was signed in 2000 by Claude Bartolone, Catherine Tasca and Michel Duffour (respectively Assistant Minister for Urban Affairs, Minister of Culture & Communication, and Secretary of State for Heritage & Decentralisation) in order to clarify the situation. It validated the principle of multi-year agreements and specified that the contributions by the FIV (Cities Intervention Fund) had to be complemented by funding through normal common law channels. This would have enabled the FIV to give more recognition and better assistance to projects that participated in cultural democracy. But in 2002, the “urban (development) contracts” were reduced from 5 to 3 years, and the indicators of success gave priority to quantity over quality. Then, in 2008, the Ministry of Culture suddenly decided to stop allocating its common law funds. This position brought an end to the aim of urban development policy of making common law the rule for all geographical areas and of experimenting with a new public policy for culture that had a greater inter-Ministry dimension and provided more assistance, as recommended by Michel Duffour for the NTAs [New Areas for the Arts].

Can we still hope for change?

Nicolas Sarkozy and Fadela Amara have announced that they would like to bring back common law funding for projects as part of urban development policy... except that there is no more money and the DRAC agencies fall back on the Ministry’s past-established recommendations and missions; and except also that *Préfets* must apply the directives of the social cohesion plan, whose priorities do not at all include culture!... and so on... Nevertheless, since the beginning of 2010, discussions have taken place inside the DRAC agencies and the *Préfectures* [local civil administration headquarters], to again give culture its place in the CUCS [Urban Contract for Social Cohesion]. It seems that the mobilisation of some elected representatives who criticised this situation played a positive role. For ARTfactories/Autre(s)pARTs, it’s now or never: now is the time to influence these negotiations, to take part in them and to see culture returning to urban development policy.

*Telephone interview by Sébastien Gazeau on 11 March 2010
Claude Renard, who was in charge of the “New Areas for the Arts” mission in the Institut des Villes from 2002 to 2008. She is now a member of ARTfactories/Autre(s)pARTs.*



©Claude Renard and the *Micro projet en brouette* [Micro-project in a Wheelbarrow] during the occupation of the Friche la Belle de Mai (Marseille) - 2007

¹ Replaced since 2007 by the CUCS (“*Contrat Urbain de Cohésion Sociale*”) [Urban Contract for Social Cohesion]

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