

European Festival Research Project (EFRP)

Urban Impact of Artistic Festivals

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hosted by the Culture Department of the City of Helsinki

A report by Netta Noro
Edited by Dragan Klaic and Chris Maugham

Participants

Bengt Lidstrom, City of Umeå, Sweden
Ljiljana Radosevic, Univ. of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia
Diana Andreeva, Univ. of Economy, Sophia, Bulgaria
Joanna Ostrowska, Culture Studies Institute, Univ. A. Mickiewicz, Poznan, Poland
Chris Maugham, DeMontfort University, Leicester, UK
Peter Inkei, Budapest Observatory, Hungary
Franco Bianchini, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK
Satu Silvanto, researcher, PhD candidate, Helsinki, Finland / Brussels, Belgium
Maaria Linko, Sociology, Open University, Helsinki, Finland
David Dooghe, architect and urban designer, Lofvers, Rotterdam, Netherlands
Dirk Noordman, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Alba Colombo, Open University of Catalonia, Barcelona
AnneMarie Autissier, Institute of European Studies, Univ. Paris 8, France
Jerome Segal, ICCRSS Vienna, Austria & Monica Sassatelli, U. Sussex, Brighton, UK
Dragan Klaic, Leiden University, Netherlands/CEU Budapest (EFRO Chair), conveyor
Pekka Timonen, Marianna Kajante and Michaela Steenbaeck (City of Helsinki)
Netta Norro, journalist, Helsinki (report)
and several observers

The City of Helsinki runs, funds and encourages a great panoply of festivals. They are considered an important feature of the city's urban life and engage various constituencies. In 2007 the City of Helsinki published a book of studies on various Helsinki festivals (in Finnish) and is now developing a comprehensive festival strategy.

The premise of the EFRP Helsinki research workshop was that artistic festivals taking place in metropolitan areas

1. revitalize urban life and increase the social interaction of various groups of inhabitants
2. remap the mental image of the city that its inhabitants carry
3. attract inhabitants to less familiar zones and alter how they use the resources of their city
4. offset the traditional concentration of cultural resources and cultural events in the historic and commercial centers of the city by focusing on less prestigious, peripheral zones
5. seek, find, appropriate and test unusual locations and turn them to occasional or continuous cultural use
6. highlight some less popular neighborhoods and initiate their socio-economic regeneration
7. engage and reinforce the infrastructures of the civil society and especially local neighborhood associations
8. develop and implement actions that enhance cultural diversity and develop intercultural competence of citizens
9. develop the cultural memory of inhabitants by the evocative power of their cultural programs and highlight the dynamics of urban transformation
10. offer visitors unusual, unexpected and unconventional ways to engage with the specific features of the city, its neighborhoods, citizens and their resources.

The EFRP Helsinki workshop sought to feature and debate interesting research on festivals which reveal such impacts, focusing on the

- varying concepts of urban festivals, their formulae, content and spin off capacity of artistic festivals to include, engage and mobilize residents and their groups and associations, help them develop social capital and make them co-creators of cultural policies and cultural production
- public attention that is thanks to the festivals focused on specific neighborhoods and on public debates initiated on the sensitive issues of urban development, strengthening the intercultural and intergenerational dialog among residents and the development of new audiences
- strategies of conversion, renovation and recycling of dysfunctional and abandoned spaces and sites through cultural production and programming and site-specific events
- economic boost given by the festivals to specific neighborhoods
- cooperative engagement of existing cultural institutions within the festival concept and program.

Opening

In his introductory remarks, Dragan Klaić sketched briefly the development of the European Festival Research Project, its types of activities, thematic accents and research lines deployed so far, thanking the City of Helsinki for accepting to be the host and welcoming especially those colleagues who attend for the first time an EFRP event.

Presentations

Bengt Lidström, Umeå: How the festivals made Umeå bloom

Bengt Lindström, a former cultural director of Umeå, has seen the blossoming of the cultural life of his university city in the northern region of Sweden. According to Lindström, since 1970's Umeå has doubled its population, mainly because of the university. As a cultural director of the city, Lindström took part in organizing an international chamber music festival, and since it was a success, bigger plans were developed, combining the resources of the city, the university and the business community, resulting in a new foundation, Umeå Festivals of Arts.

Film and folk music festivals were added later. 150 000 euro of sponsorship money was raised already in the first year and new audiences reached. The foundation was able to invite big artistic names and in 1990s Umeå was declared the best Swedish city to live in. Employment in the field of culture increased 166% during the years 1974 to 1991. The city has a young population and a thriving economy despite its relative geographic isolation.

Discussion

Dragan Klaić considered Lidström's presentation to be a personal journey to cultural memory, and stressed the role of universities in running festivals in university towns. He asked Lidström if the university had a strong role in the community, especially since the festivals featured big names on the programme. Lidström stressed that the University benefited from an improved local context. Because of the festivals a local music school prospered and a jazz club was founded. Pekka Timonen, the Director of the Helsinki City Culture Department, said that a new Finnish law of universities requires them to interact with the local community. Further in the discussion, it was pointed out that cultural industry changed the cultural life in smaller and remote cities. It is not certain that the cultural employment growth rate has been sustained for long and it probably contained more of cultural industry jobs rather than traditional culture employment.

This case prompted a discussion how creative industry' changes the cultural life of cities and region.

Ljiljana Radosevic, Univ. of Arts, Belgrade:

BD Angouleme: delegation system – a key for success

Lilijana Radosevic wrote a master's thesis on BD Angouleme, a 4-day comics festival in France. Angouleme is a small medieval fortress city of 50 000 inhabitants.

Initiated in 1974, BD Angouleme aimed at promoting comics as a form of art. The festival faced censorship of the comics, prejudices about this medium and no heritage protection provisions since comics were considered as mass media. In her master's thesis, Radosevic traces a system of delegation of responsibilities that enabled the festival to achieve far reaching changes.

Now the festival has eur 4 million budget, 200.000 visitors annually and has made France the number one producer of comics in Europe. 80% of comics' media coverage is generated during the festival in Angouleme. Since 1991 it organizes the biggest world market of comics where the publishers, authors and agents trade rights.

Now that BD Angouleme has developed a complex and versatile comics infrastructure, including a documentation center, a museum, a bookshop, special educational programs and served as a magnet for the cultural industry relocated to the region, Radosevic raises a question of BD Angouleme's future: the festival cannot grow bigger in the city of Angouleme, so how to expand the functions further without the growth of the festival itself? BD Angouleme is now in contact with Shanghai – opening a perspective of a new global partnership or of relocation?

Discussion

It's exceptional that a comic festival, or any festival, has been able to impact an entire region as Angouleme has. A discussion followed of how it was possible. Radosevic argues that the key was the local politics that was strongly involved right from the beginning. The local authorities considered comics to be most interesting form of art for the development of the cultural life of Angouleme but the ultimate gains were of educational and economic nature, with the concentration of the image-related industry in Charente. Furthermore, the festival profited from the role of Jack Lang as a Minister of Culture from 1981, since he doubled the national culture budget, initiated large cultural events and included popular culture in the cultural policy realm. Lang became a minister after BD Angouleme had existed already for ten years. In 1982 he participated in a round table about education in comics, and became the festival's supporter. The censorship of comics was eliminated in 1983.

How a town of 50.000 inhabitants accommodates 200.000 visitors in four days? Everyone is a volunteer, there is a splendid civic spirit of absolute commitment to this festival. The formula remains open – everyone who has anything to do with comics can join in and contribute. In this way a major creative cluster has been shaped in the city and in the surrounding region.

**Diana Andreeva, Univ. of Economy, Sophia:
The role of festivals in the development of small towns**

In her presentation Diana Andreeva looked into four festivals in Bulgaria: Apolonia festival in the town of Sozopol, Kaliakra Rock Fest in Kavarna, International short film festival In the Castle in Balchik and Bansko Jazz Festival. All the festivals have significant public support and are located in tourist resorts: 3 on the Black Sea coast and fourth in Bansko, a mountain ski resort.

All festivals are NGO, except Kaliakra that is organised directly by the municipality. Apolonia, founded in 1986, is one of the oldest festivals in Bulgaria. One third of the GNP in Bulgaria comes from tourism, the share of tourism in the economy of Balchik, Bansko, Kavarna and Sozopol is 90-95%. Bulgaria has the lowest tax rate in Europe, and yet one third of the economy is on the gray sector. In her research Andreeva found that those four festivals have had a significant effect on the socio-economic improvement of their area by

- creating local entrepreneurship and business
- prolonging the tourist season with the festival events, with approximately 85-90% occupation of the local hotels and private rooms
- bringing 90-95% of income in the area from the festival events
- increased demand for local commodities and services.
- decentralizing cultural commodities and services.

Moreover, EU structural funds are becoming available for the for cultural heritage objects in the area but the access to them remains difficult and the local museums do not go along with the festivals in making their program more sophisticated.

Discussion

The festivals have made the towns boom and have become a significant part of the local economy. But how to prevent the economic boost from destroying the cultural heritage sites and the charming specific character of those resort places, especially since there is a building boom without much zoning and with a lax permit policy? There should be a developmental strategy for cultural tourism, linking festival programming with appreciation, protection and reappraisal of the local cultural heritage. Maaria Laiko signals the ecological focus of a major conference in Venice: 'Arts and Sustainable Development' in November 2008. Abstracts are due by the end of April.

**Joanna Ostrowska, Culture Studies Institute, Univ. A. Mickiewicz,
Poznan:
How can theater festivals support urban development?**

Joanna Ostrowska introduced three case studies on theater festivals in Poland. All the festivals were directly connected with urbanity and the usage of the urban space as a festival venue, and took place in the cities of a

marked multicultural past.

1. Poznan has historically a strong German influence and is also considered to be one of the most conservative and bourgeois cities in Poland, with a tradition of commercial fairs. In the beginning of the Polish post-communist transition in early 1990's, the city authorities wanted to change that hard image into a more relaxing and inviting one. A recreational lake Malta was created at the outskirts for an international sport competition and subsequently infrequently used and neglected. Malta Festival helped to create a public space in the city. Through artistic activities this forgotten area was incorporated in the Poznan citizens' mental map and Malta lake became a popular area for leisure and arts.

2. The city of Legnica is a shabby city of 'former everything': a former German town, a former Soviet garrison town, a former capital of an administrative region and a former industrial town. More than 10% of inhabitants were Soviet military and their dependents who left the town in 1990's. To find a solution how to change this decaying urban area into a lively city, a street theater festival "City" was invented in 2007. All performances have their premiere during the festivals, also a summer theater has now started, and one building has been changed into a youth center.

3. Łódź – a "monument of understanding among four cultures"- was built to support the growing textile industry in the 19th century, and was inhabited by Poles, Germans, Russians and Jews, becoming the 2nd biggest city in Poland. During the WW I and II it lost a big part of its inhabitants, and almost all factories collapsed during 1990's. Festival of "Dialog Among Four Cultures" was founded in 2002 in Łódź to remap the city and make use of abandoned buildings in its centre. Through the festival the city authorities want to change Łódź's image, from an industrial city to a more artistic one.

Conclusions: Ostrowska is convinced that festivals can help to revive once neglected cities and improve their image, for the local inhabitants and for the outsiders. Festivals anchor the city identity in a specific historical context and activate the citizens.

Discussion

When cities with such marked historical background are affected by de-industrialization, large parts of the city remain without any use. In Poznań, no one wants to buy the old factory buildings and renovate them into a more fitting function.

It's also remarkable how one person can have a significant impact on the urban areas: the founder and director of the Malta festival in Poznan is also the driving force of the festival in Lodź, bringing much media attention to Łódź, the unhappiest city of Poland. With its festival of four cultures, Łódź acquired a direct airline connection with Tel Aviv. Legnica experience is only of one year's festival edition, so its is too early to claim beneficial effects. The abundance of abandoned ex-industrial buildings in some many European

cities, begging for some recycling, imposes quite similar revitalization strategies in different cities but the danger of gentrification remains common. In all probability, such mass conversion can take place only gradually, on a longer run, and festivals are only one potentially stimulating factor.

Chris Maugham, DMU Leicester: How Leicester could become more like Brighton or Salisbury

Chris Maugham was asking himself how Leicester, a city in England, could become more like Salisbury and Brighton: to have a strong status as a festival city, and to acquire a better visibility in the national and international context.

Brighton festival was established in 1966. It has strong international standing and is in fact a collection of festivals in the framework of the Brighton Festival.

Salisbury International Art Festival was established in 1973. It has 100 events at over 30 locations with a strong African programming.

Leicester is not lacking activities, with over 600 events taking place there per year. It has the biggest Hindu event outside India (100 000 Indians live in the Leicester area), 5 other religious events, beautiful riverside, parks and 18 principal venues. But it has not been able to establish its own successful festival. Why? This topic needs to be researched further.

Discussion

In the breakdown of the population profiles in the cities discussed, Maugham shows that Leicester's Asian population is almost 30%. It seems that Asians have just recently got into the arts scene, and they are not used to the festival culture of Western Europe. Also there is an inability of English urban policy to include the multi-cultural audience and turn some parts of it into festival goers and organizers. The talent is there, as someone is organizing the yearly Asian events, too. Perhaps an element of fringe could bring new audiences and educate the different type of audiences into celebrating together. It is not likely that a new performing arts center, an ambitious piece of architecture, built with much lottery money, will significantly alter the situation.

Peter Inkei, Budapest Observatory: Miskolc against the odds: the chances of urban arts festivals in Hungary

Peter Inkei introduced Miskolc, an old industrial city in Hungary, northeast from Budapest. Sociologists did a research for the Hungarian Ministry of Culture in 2006 on how culture can contribute to the development of selected cities of Hungary. The research didn't create much discussion, but Inkei found it interesting and analyzed Miskolc development and perspectives through this research data.

The research showed that:

- 27 % of inhabitants long to go away from their home town (don't want their children to grow up in there)

- 10% of the inhabitants of Miskolc are Roma
- 65% inhabitants dislike Roma
- 73 % have no competence in a foreign language.

The first permanent theater venue in Hungary was in Miskolc, so it was historically a lively cultural place. But now it is culturally not lively at all. To change the situation, an opera festival was launched in 2000, with a focus on Bartók and with an ambitious goal of creating a new festival tradition and putting Miskolc on the cultural map of Europe, by encouraging cultural cooperation between Hungary and the EU. Verdi stood in the festival focus in 2001, Puccini in 2002, Mozart in 2003, Tchaikovsky in 2004, Bel Canto in 2005, Verismo in 2006, French composers in 2007, and Slavic composers 2008.

Research indicates that the festival has become a success (78% of people were satisfied), and is quite well funded. Especially the people from Budapest like it. The audience saw an improvement in the festival scene. In Miskolc, some 70% of inhabitants cheered the improvement of city's cultural life, 19% of the audience thought that culture builds the city, which was more than in the other cities covered by the survey. The festival succeeded in changing the image of the city but the inhabitants still do not have a habit of attending festivals regularly. Most audience comes from Budapest and even from Austria.

Conclusions: On the whole, Miskolc showed, that if you try hard, even in difficult circumstances, culture can change the image of a city, which will hopefully be followed by changing cultural habits. Still, there are big obstacles to be dealt with: lack of infrastructure for arts, of good hotels and restaurants, no strategic cultural vision in the city politics, no sophisticated sponsorship management, and no tradition of voluntary work as a long lasting negative effect from the time of Communism.

Discussion

Sustainability of such a festival is problematic if - as in many other small countries - it is an imposed initiative of the elites, with little sense for the interests and needs of the inhabitants. Also, the low level of foreign language proficiency is preventing the Hungarians from taking part in the international discourse and engaging in more intensive international cooperation. On the other hand, Hungarian cities have grown slower, so there haven't been such devastating changes of the urban scene as Ostrowska described in Poland. Yet culture remains concentrated in Budapest and not much trickles down to the regional centers. The government had to make a regional city the Cultural Capital of Europe 2010 but Pecs - that won over Miskolc - seems to be incapable of dealing with the assignment. Inkei claims that the festival nevertheless has changed the image of the city. People are proud of the festival, it is seen as high culture but not elitist. The festival was initiated from Budapest, accepted by the people of Miskolc, especially by the those living in the centre, but still, the people in the outskirts were not easily affected. And the funds are also chiefly coming from the Ministry of Culture.

A discussion on the role of festival voluntaries took place. The former socialist countries have common problem of slow and difficult decentralization, with slow development of local capacities. In Hungary, people think that now, in the market economy, no one wants to do anything for free, but the young people are now changing the voluntary scene. Same case of enthusiastic volunteer engagement in Poland (Malta festival) and in Bratislava were mentioned. Diana Andreeva, who has worked as volunteer in many countries, thinks that initiations of volunteers requires a different strategy in every country. But she also notes the exploitative aspect of voluntary work, in the UK and Barcelona at the moment.

**Franco Bianchini, Leeds Metropolitan University:
The role of festivals in revitalizing the public social life and the urban public sphere**

Franco Bianchini has done a research on 11 festivals in England. Still few important questions remained:

- How do festivals relate to a notion of urban mindscape?
- Is there a festival strategy in civic politics?

Bianchini's presentation was about asking some questions around these subjects. He argues that there is a crisis in social life in European cities, therefore festivals have an important role, as they reconstruct and enrich the social life.

Cities are becoming themed, merged into the 'experience economy', where retail is turning the market place into festive or staged experience, borrowing the form from drama. There is also a danger of 'museumization', with cities such as Salzburg and Venice turned into large urban museums. Going out zones become "alcoholic agoras" of mass binging with huge social and government costs for police, first aid and clean up.

Other current trends include contraction of the leisure time and its concentration in specific places and zones, speeding up of life and spending all free time at home. How to encourage people to go out again? The less they move, the more obese they become.

Conclusions: As the cities are becoming fast and packed with too much information, festivals have a transformative power, some festivals are even applying the notion of slowness as a thematic essence. Festivals are promoting positive image, attracting tourists, investments, social participation and enjoyment, their artistic component expands the mental and spatial horizon, but they also create space for public debate. Bianchini argues, for a qualitative research of festivals, beyond numbers.

Discussion

The notion on feast is often mixed up with all kinds of carnivals and fiestas. Franco's poses the question: when there is no link between popular culture and the community, would a fiesta be able create it? Who are the change

agents in turning the city into a festival city? What the research is not looking at is the mindsets of key decision makers, characteristics of a dialog in the cultural sector. This kind of discussion needs to be intensified.

The really innovative cities have always had a dialog between the culture and the political elite, between politics and economics. Festivals activate the subterranean, they re-discuss the collective memories of cities. But there is a visible decline of political participation in European cities and thus also the emergence of 'anti-politics' movements that exploit the gap between political rhetoric and socio-economic reality. Emergence of criminal economies and lawless cities is also noted. It is doubtful that festivals can alter those structures of gray power and invisible control. Transformative power of festivals is conceivable if they are really festive, if they disrupt habits and routines of behavior, movement patterns and rise the frequency of specific spots. The discussion turned to Liverpool, European Cultural Capital 2008, and its ability to abridge the low and high culture and engage in a dialog cultural producers and politicians, to internationalize cultural program and create some long range benefits. Liverpool commissioned a complex study to assess its process and impact.

**Satu Silvanto, researcher, PhD candidate, Helsinki/Brussels:
How can we participate? The role of city residents in festivals**

It is claimed that festivals have much urban impact, but only if the people living in the city participate in them. However, participatory roles offered to city residents are often either passive or too specific, lacking exchange and interaction. Satu Silvanto introduced a research done on the Helsinki festival scene, looking into various participatory roles that are available to city residents and analyzed them through a diagram of Suzanne Lacy.

Primus motor is an artist or other expert who assumes the role of a civic activist in starting up the event. Primus motor most often becomes the director of the festival and bears primary responsibility over the event.

Close **collaborators** have invested time, energy, and identity in the festival work and partake deeply in its ownership. These people are often art professionals, art students or art amateurs.

Most of the festivals could not be organized without the active participation of **volunteers**. They are often art students and amateurs.

Performers are the local and global artists, they form a bridge between the festival and the audience.

There are also new kinds of participation, e.g. **the media audience** that connect with the festival through different kinds of media: by reading articles, watching TV, participating in the on-line discussions etc.

And finally there is the **audience of myth and memory**, those who were not at the festival events but have absorbed narratives about them.

Conclusions: Many art festivals in Helsinki are created from the bottom up by active residents. They are developed as a fora of loose social networking and out of a need of belonging and offer multiple participatory roles for city residents. Helsinki is a festival city because of its active residents, and active participation in festivals creates positive urban impacts.

Discussion

The discussion centered around the concepts of the media audience and the audience of myth and memory. People want to feel belonging to a city and their own neighborhood. Social networks are an essential part of the feeling of belonging, nowadays some of the networks are on-line, as are also some of the festivals presented only through the Internet. In general, festivals have a role in enriching people's identity.

There was also discussion on the impacts of the Helsinki 2000 Cultural Year on the festival boom Silvanto stated to have started in the mid-1990s. According to Pekka Timonen and Silvanto, the program and the label had an influence in the development of the festival scene, even though the impact of Helsinki 2000 was not exclusively positive for the cultural sector.

Maaria Linko, Sociology, Open University, University of Helsinki: Enjoying excellence in the 'fun city': looking at festivals from the point of view of the audiences

There is a festival boom in the Helsinki area, as in many other capital regions of Europe. Cities are turning into 'experience machines', packed with multiple types of events and activities. In her presentation Linko's emphasis was on questions based on an Internet survey conducted among residents in Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The questions were: Why do people choose to visit festivals and how large part of the residents attend them? And furthermore, do residents consider festivals meaningful for themselves or important to the city and why? 25% respondents found festivals important to themselves, and still almost all of the people who didn't consider festivals important for themselves, considered festivals important for the city. People think that festivals are important because they bring experiences and joy, relaxation and creative excellence, but also revitalize the community spirit. People attend festivals quite spontaneously and do not plan their visit long time beforehand. Festivals are developed as a forum for loose social networking and respond to a need of belonging.

Five separate discourses, inspired by Dorte Skot-Hansen, were found in residents' answers to a question why festivals are important. These discourses were often intertwined with each other and they assign a central role to the experience and that of enlightenment, empowerment and entertainment. Excellence as a pursuit for artistic quality is our (Linko & Silvanto) addition and it proved very important to the respondents. This applies to individual performers and performances as well as to the artistic quality and ambition of the whole festival.

Conclusions: There are many ways of participation. Most of the residents of the Helsinki metropolitan area participate in art festivals at least occasionally. Participation also enhances the sustainability of festivals. There are multiple ways of participation, but what Linko found interesting was that the attendance is not dependent on socio-economic status, except in classical music events. Residents see festivals as an integral part of urban life, and an interesting program is the main reason for participation. A meaningful experience is an enlightening or empowering one. These aspects do not prevent one from having fun. Therefore: excellence is what counts in creating a "fun city".

Discussion

The participants discussed the experiential and the emotional side of going to festivals. People want to feel belonging to a city and their own neighborhood. In general, festivals have a role in enriching people's identity. Attending a festival of your favorite genre is 'ein Erlebnis', a life-enriching and strong experience. As Linko was presenting the Helsinki Festival, Pekka Timonen enlightened the historical significance of it: Helsinki Festival is under close economic supervision of the public authorities and in the focus of the public interest because of the historical event in 1995, when the minister of economy had to resign due to hugely exceeded festival budget.

Already 10% of people in Helsinki work in the cultural sector. It's more than the double of the average in the EU. But, Pekka Timonen adds, Helsinki has 41 festivals in a year, so there is somewhere a clear limit to growth in relation to a city that is a modest size capital only. But the attitudes of loyalty to festivals and practices of public affiliation could develop further, get more intensive and combine various roles.

David Dooghe, architect and urban designer, Rotterdam: Festival City Rotterdam

David Dooghe introduced an architectural and urban design point-of-view and presented two events as cases from Rotterdam. He argues that cities are in competition with each other. To support their identity, they use slogans as "I love NY" and "I am Amsterdam". Dooghe asks: How do you create the identity for a 'festival city'? Events as EXPO or the Olympic games create a hub in the city, but do not lift the urban and cultural growth on the grass-root level, or in the long run. Still, there is a tradition of good co-operation of festivals with their city. Changes in a city affect the festivals as well. Festivals attract middle class to live in the city and a typical festival goer is a middle-aged person presenting middle-class interests and taste.

Case 1: Summer Carnival in Rotterdam, a little brother of the Carnival in Rio. It holds a calendar of the community with its temporary program & permanent program activities. Dooghe presents an urban plan for the community of the carnival in the Afrikaanderwijk, a quarter in the south of Rotterdam. The plan has two phases, of which there is first an experimental phase, where the

festival seeks to create a needed buzz, and another phase where people accept the festival in their yearly repertoire of events to attend.

Case 2: Rotterdam Marathon (attracts 700.000 people) & other major festivals. Dooghe's urban plan for the event venues, as visualized in the pdf version of his presentation, seeks to shape a multi-purpose space in the city center, which can have multiple usages for urban life in between the yearly events.

Conclusions': Multi-functional urban planning is the way to help people use the urban space and to create a more functional community. Since festivals are celebrations of the community, Dooghe promotes a symbiotic cooperation between the festivals and the city. Urban planning works as a tool for developing the urban areas into 'urban theaters' and therefore more festival-friendly cities. Creative zones, shaped by urban planners, should be capable of absorbing a variety of events but remain a vibrant public area between them.

Discussion

Klaic noted that Dooghe is stretching the notion of a festival into any kind of big event. He thinks that as an architect Dooghe is able to see the challenge of space in festival production and spatial organization of sociability. A festival can be used as a catalyst between the social and the urban structures of a city.

Dirk Noordman, Erasmus University Rotterdam: The rise and fall of the multi-culti festivals in the Netherlands

Noordman adds a 2nd subtitle of his presentation to reveal his point of view: "And urban influence as a cause"

According to Noordman, cultural diversity emerged as a concept only in the 1990's, was a prevailing concept in the cultural policy discourse around 2000 and started fading around 2005. After 2005 the policy discourse shifted to the notions of a 'creative class' and experience. Simultaneously, after 2005 the number of multi-cultural festivals has decreased from 15 to 12 (450 festivals in the Netherlands).

Why the multi-cultural festivals have decreased in number? Noordman asks: How can you theoretically explain that the multi-cultural festivals lost their appeal and some even disappeared? Noordman looks at both internal and external aspects: boards, personnel policy of cultural institutions, audience policy and marketing, and programming (producers and artists presented are also expected to be multi-cultural). Since 2005 there has been more interest in nurturing and attracting the creative class than advancing cultural diversity.

Conclusion: Those multicultural festivals that have survived had a strategic attitude, long term view, specialization, development means from special funds, and a good network (local stronghold) and they sustain it because they

have a strong effect on the city. Festivals that were only following the fashion of multiculturalism faced a crisis or oblivion.

Discussion

A discussion focused on the importance of a local stronghold. Nowadays, there is much hyping of the community art concepts and practices, so the focus has changed to some extent. If multi-culti orientation of the festivals is just a fashion or a flirt, they will be discredited at some point. That we are in the Year of Intercultural Dialog, declared by the EU, helps us very little to understand how festivals boost the intercultural competence of citizens, achieve the cultural diversity of their audience and in programming, and how they reduce the cultural distance among various urban groups.

Alba Colombo, Open University of Catalonia, Barcelona: The cultural impact of film festivals in the multicultural cities: the case of Barcelona Asian Film Festival

Alba Colombo presented a case of Asian film festival in Barcelona, a city that has become a popular migration destination of the Asians after 2001 (16% inhabitants are foreigners and 41% of them have come from Asia). Colombo argues that nowadays the cultural dialog is a key point in the European multi-cultural cities. She asks: Are the film festivals a tool of this cultural dialog? Have they a cultural impact? On which groups of population? Colombo considers events as tools for increasing cultural impacts and discussion. She defines 'cultural impact' as one of the social impacts. In her research she aims to analyze the cultural impact of a cultural activity.

Conclusions: Colombo is recommending that the festival should

- have more parallel activities relating the festival to the Asian cultural associations, institutions and enterprises
- present some co-production programs of Spanish and Asian producers during the festival
- relate the festival to other Asian cultural activities of the city throughout the year
- create an audience loyalty platform (friends of the festival)
- collaborate with the local communities, turning their activities into inter-cultural activities.

Discussion

Klaic points out that there is practically no research done yet on specific film festival niches or film genres festivals. He also argues about the typology of ethnic festivals: they are most often multi-cultural in their programming but hardly intercultural in terms of their audiences and their participation. One of the festivals that consciously and systematically explores interculturalism is Kunstenfestival desarts in Brussels. In general, exotic cinematographies have their subcategories on some film festivals, and people go to see them, too. But it's mainly the white Europeans who are attracted. Barcelona Asian film festival has not tried to program in outdoor locations and is run as a private

enterprise, thus has no board to enhance representativeness and links with the Asian communities – and yet it receives public subsidy.

Marianna Kajantie, the Vice-Director of Helsinki Culture Department gave an example of Ourvision, a sub-event of Eurovision Song Competition, held in Helsinki in 2007. In Ourvision, the ethnic Finns presented the songs of other national cultures. The final competition was held in the big and fully booked Finlandia House.

**Anne Marie Autissier, sociologist, Univ. Paris 8:
Smart cities EU: festivals as part of new urban media interventions
throughout Europe**

Anne Marie Autissier presented a case of Dedale, a platform promoting production and experimentation in the field of new media. It is also a European resource center, holding workshops and conferences and has an artistic residency program. Since 2002, Dedale has initiated and organized the “Emergence” digital arts festival in Paris. The idea behind Smart Cities EU is to organize a set of workshops, conferences, selected projects’ production and lectures in a cooperative manner, including the universities and with some festivals, as occasional peaks of activity, reaching out to a larger public, in Paris and partner cities in EU.

Conclusions: New media festivals and organizations are not getting enough funding and enough audience. They are losing their national subsidies but fail to activate the support of the local politics and public. They also seek to hold international, experimental new media festivals in the poorer suburbs instead of the center of the city.

Discussion

Art forms derived from the new media culture are new, so the audience has to be educated in taking part in this sort of events. There is a digital literacy barrier to the participation of many potential audiences that should be particularly invited to participate in a certain ‘new’ way as is usual for new media art events. Activating the locals is a slow process and needs long-term commitment & grass-root level work.

**Jerome Segal, ICCRSS Vienna, & Monica Sassatelli, U. Sussex,
Brighton:
Art festivals and the European public cultures**

Jerome Segal and Monica Sassatelli introduced a new festival research they are planning to conduct with the support of the EU research funds. The project is carried out by an international consortium of 8-10 researchers, and co-financed by private and public sources. In their research, Segal and Sassatelli examine the role of festivals as sites of trans-national identifications and democratic debate.

The hypothesis is:

- Festivals are sites to analyse trans-national identities and gain a better understanding of the meaning of 'Europeanization'.
- Festivals can be seen as places enhancing democratic debate.

The research will consist of historical analysis of a sample of selected festivals, case studies, analysis of the results and a comparison between the festivals. In the case studies, the researchers will use interviews, focus groups, media analysis, fieldwork and analyze the organization and its networks. As a result the researchers hope to bring new insights for tourism, urban studies and some suggestions of how to promote European cultural production and a sense of European cultural identity. Their web site is www.euro-festival.org. They plan 2 research conferences, Arts and Cultural Sociology, 26-27 February 2009; [and Creativity, Culture, Democracy in 2010](#).

Discussion

An intensive discussion focused on the choice of festivals to be studied in detail. They are all geographically positioned in the Western and Central Europe. The general objection was: why are northern and south-eastern European festivals missing? And is this then a research on former, pre-enlargement Western European identity? Other questions were also raised: what is meant by trans-national identification? What is meant by democratic debate? Is the usage of the European identity/identification as a key concept productive at all? Since the authors are at the very beginning of their research process, they did not have much opportunity yet to test their key research concepts in practice.

Peter Inkei offered an impromptu summary of the research workshop

Peter Inkei summed up the workshop that in his view has reached a broader range of issues than was originally expected, and ended by making excursions into new areas of festival research. What he found as a discovery was that most festival phenomena are relatively new. He learned that much of the research is much livelier and has more history than he thought.

But for whom the festivals are done for? There was a great emphasis on festivals in cities and communities themselves. It seems that outsiders are the central authorities. As a conclusion: The festivals are made for the audience.

Despite huge migration in Europe, most live events still focus on the white majority of inhabitants. The aims, goals, and functions of urban festivals are to redefine the city and local parts of the city, such as specific neighborhoods, and to redefine the social capital in them. Also to reposition the city in the perception of the residents and outsiders, as demonstrated in several presentations.

Forthcoming EFRP activities

A book *Festivals in Europe*, edited by Anne-Marie Autissier in English and French, a co-production of Institute of European Studies, Univ. Paris 8 and its

publication Culture Europe International with the Editions Attribut, is due in the summer. AM Autissier presented the content of this book, consisting of contributions by the EFRP researchers.

Chris Maugham demonstrated his online tool kit for the festival professionals, a project in development.

The workshop ended with a discussion of possible future topics, context and location of the forthcoming EFRP research workshops. Several possible topics were discussed, such as

Museums as instigators of festivals

Festivals and their legacy

Festivals in the context of cultural heritage

Europeanization of the local dimension

Public and private financing of festivals – with a focus on sponsorship

Volunteering in the festival organizations

Among initiatives discussed were;

a special issue of the International *Journal of Cultural Policy*

a book of interviews with festival directors with a common core of questions

an oral history of festivals in Europe with some veterans.

Dragan Klaić informed about the research workshop on the festivals of theater for children, planned in Moscow within the Big Break festival (Oct 31-Nov 1, 2008) and urged participants to distribute the call for proposals.

At the end, the City of Helsinki and its culture officials were warmly thanked for the hospitality offered to the EFRP researchers.

A note on the EFRP

The European Festival Research Project (EFRP) is an international, interdisciplinary consortium, which is focused on the dynamics of artistic festivals in contemporary life. One of its principal aims is to understand the underlying causes of the current proliferation of festivals and its resource implications and diagnostic perspectives. EFRP focuses on those festivals that are driven by a firm artistic vision, involving international programming and which benefit from substantial support from public authorities.

The consortium instigates research papers, studies, trainings, publications and debates and articulates tentative conclusions, trends, forecasts and recommendations for festival operators, public authorities (as subsidy givers) and potential sponsors. All research outcomes are being made accessible in a public depository at the web site of the European Festivals Association (<http://www.efa-aef.org/efahome/efrp.cfm>). Periodically EFRP organizes intensive research workshops on specific topics where the results of research are presented and discussed. Such workshops have taken place in Nitra (2005), Leicester and Le Mans (2006), Barcelona (2007) and Helsinki (2008). Further workshops are being planned for Moscow (autumn 2008) and for 2009 and 2010. An edited book on festival politics, programming, impacts and governance will be produced by the consortium and associated researchers in 2009/10. Contact: Dr Dragan Klaić, Leiden University, EFRP Chair, draganklaic@gmail.com or Chris Maugham, DMU, EFRP Coordinator, ccm@dmu.ac.uk.

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