

Community Building through Co-Creation

ITAC THINK TANK: January 2022

Hosted by Place des Arts and Marika Crête-Reizes (Canada)

This is the transcript of one of ITAC Collaborative's monthly Think Tank sessions. Each session focuses on a new theme and is hosted by someone from a different country.

Co-creation is a powerful catalyst. It brings people together, breaks down barriers, opens up for discoveries and can contribute to a sense of belonging. Community building through co-creation is at the core of an innovative initiative undertaken by Place des Arts (Montreal, CAN) to build strong communities around arts education.

Instances in which the text is in ellipses in parentheses (...) indicate when the sound was indecipherable for transcription.

Aislinn Ryan 00:08

Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for coming. And I am Aislinn. I am the development manager for ITAC. And I'd like to welcome you all to our think tank. today. I'm going to run quickly through a few reminders before I hand you over to our wonderful hosts, who will introduce themselves shortly.

Aislinn Ryan 00:29

Firstly, this is one of a series of ITAC think tanks that we're hosting every month. Each one will be totally different hosted by a different teaching artists on a new topic each time. Please join us for as many of these sessions as you can and help us spread the word about these gatherings. The timings of the sessions vary to accommodate the timezone of our hosts, but they usually happen during the final week of each month, you can sign up to them all, or one by one by visiting the think tank page on our websites. It's also important to note that while today's session will primarily be in English, it will also include an introduction in French. The breakout rooms will be conducted in English. So please speak slowly and clearly as English is not everyone's first language. This may go without saying but we're all coming at this from a variety of cultures, countries and perspectives. So please be respectful and thoughtful in your interactions with and your responses to one another. It's possible that there may be some connectivity issues, or

some technical hiccups along the way. Please do bear with us if that happens. If we get cut off for any reason, don't panic, please just use the same zoom link that was sent to you by email and we will resume the session. There is a messaging tool on the right hand side of this window. So please feel free to use this throughout the session. I'd like to remind everyone that this is being recorded, and each of you gave consent to be included in that when you registers. That being said, You are of course welcome to switch off your camera when asking questions or just when you are listening if you would prefer not to be seen in the recording. Please also note that we will take some images of the group discussion to be used by clusters are in their marketing material. If you would prefer not to be included in any images, please switch off your camera for the first section of this session. Lastly, please mute yourself and make sure your name is showing up as your picture. I'd also encourage you to include your pronouns in your name. So with that all being said, let me warmly welcome you once again. And I will now hand you over to Clotilde and Marika to introduce the topic of discussion for today. Thanks so much.

03:02

Thank you

Marika Crête-Reizes 03:03

[Speaking in French]...these are your colleagues. Just to word in French to remind that the official language of the province of Quebec is French one of the two languages of Canada with English will continue in English as I understand most of the participant here better understand this language. It is with great pleasure that on behalf of plus design a major cultural center after the government of Quebec based in Montreal, that they will present you briefly our objectives as a national institution in the field of education, creating opportunities to put young Montrealers in touch with the performing arts as a major tool of the guidance of their own life. This is a philosophy to did we began classes our schools program, which has been offered in the city's schools since 2014. Working with our teachers, plus these are for sorry, working with our teachers a program gives students a chance to take part in true creative experiences. And inside enthusiastic artists mediator. This is how we call here in Quebec, our teaching artists so artists mediator, this is our we call them I'm a sad and insist on the fact that the practice of cultural mediation is very well established in Quebec, 8 million of people and that these artists mediator in their training are key in the ecology, and now part of our new government governmental cultural policy. Our school program was inspired by an aesthetic education approach as AP is funding that is full that it fully embraces this method aims to open participants view of the world around them and in the case of ours Will program as from now many, mainly sorry teenagers. Therefore, the ultimate goals here are to develop students critical sensibility, sensibility, a sense of empowerment and agency and to foster their love for learning. In 2016, we start exchanges with the Lincoln Center Education LLC, in order to deeply understand their innovative and root approach in aesthetic education. In addition, to nourish mutual understanding of what cultural mediation, mediation means, and how ascetic education can be applied in practice, we got the opportunity to deepen our understanding and reflection in the context of the development of our program. Our connection within ELS eteam was so strong, and our funding and observation of the impact for students teaching artists and teachers so promising that we initiate in 2018, a major project of national dissemination in the province of

Quebec, in its vast territory, to other educational groups adapted, adapting it, considering our cultural specificity, and alongside classes, our own adaptation from the start.

Marika Crête-Reizes 06:21

Before introducing out to you now, our Senior Advisor in your host today, Marika Crête-Reizes, let me mention that this ambitious project with the LEC would have not, would have been impossible without the support of Minister that I could sue and he couldn't cancel Quebec. And I deeply think it's representative today, John Simpson, the CG Engine developer, Miss Sarah Massey, tosspot have an ovary. And of course, thanks to ITAC for this great opportunity. Marika.

Marika Crête-Reizes 06:58

Thank you for this introduction. And thank you aislin Also, thank you. Thank you all for being here. Today. I am very grateful for this occasion to share this wonderful project crystal crystal has started to talk about. But before I'd like to start the conversation by acknowledging that Christina and I are presently located in the city of Joe jogging in Montreal, and then seated and indigenous land. So the ganja gay haga Mohawk is recognized as the custodians of the waters and the lens on which we are today. It's a place historically known as a place of gathering and exchanges for many First Nations. And it's in that spirit of encounters and of exchanges that we wish to meet with you today.

Marika Crête-Reizes 07:49

So as mentioned, my name is Marika Crête-Reizes says I work as an arts education consultant, which means that I accompany our organizations and thinking and implementing arts education and community engagement programs and projects. I give training in aesthetic education and cultural mediation to teachers, teaching artists, presenters and cultural workers. I also do research related to the field of teaching artistry. And I also act as a cultural facilitator. And I do many other things just like you, I'm pretty sure. Just to give you a little context, prior to my work as an arts education consultant, I have worked at plus these off for about nearly 10 years, where I played the role of Education and Community Engagement Manager, where I have initiated and developed the education program of classy Socrates was talking about, and where we have also initiated and developed other inclusive programs and projects. And it's in that context that we have put in place the initiative we will share with you today on community building true co creation in the specific context of a one week training camp in aesthetic education bringing together teaching artists, educators and presenters. It's an initiative that is still ongoing, and on which we continue to collaborate together.

Marika Crête-Reizes 09:13

So today, our agenda will be divided in three parts. We will start with a short cocreation activity altogether. And then we will connect this type of experience with the initiative of the one week training camp, and then we'll finish with an open discussion.

Marika Crête-Reizes 09:34

Is that okay? Do you have any questions? Until now? Good. Okay. So I'll ask you to grab a few pieces of paper. And a pen can be a marker colored pens, anything that we can see clearly on screen. So I'll just give you a few seconds to grab that.

Marika Crête-Reizes 10:05

And so we'll just try something together and see where it leads us. We'll see what comes out what happens individually, and also collectively. So no good or bad answers, just your answers for the benefit of yourself and of the group. Okay? Is everyone ready? You have what you need.

Marika Crête-Reizes 10:28

Okay. So I'll invite you to respond to the following questions. And when I'll give you this signal, I'll ask you to share it on screen. So showing it on screen, you won't have a lot of time to reflect every time you'll have about 15 seconds. So just go with what comes to mind.

Marika Crête-Reizes 10:48

Okay. So first question by drawing a shape, or writing a word, what is co creation for you? So you have about 15 seconds, what is co creation? For you? Thank you, aislin for putting it in the chat. Okay, so we'll stop here. So everyone can just share it on screen. And you can put your gallery view also. So you have a sense of the others are reflection. Wonderful. So I see collaboration, true collaboration, Discovery inspiration, I see drawings of shapes, kinds of flowers, stars, hands, circles, arrows, team, collaborate collaboration, again, dancing together, connection. Wonderful. And there are two pages. So I cannot see everything. But thank you very much.

Marika Crête-Reizes 12:01

Second question. So same, same modalities by drawing a shape, for example, or writing a word, what is community for you? Again, you have 15 seconds. So what is community for you?

Marika Crête-Reizes 12:36

So we'll stop here. And again, we can show it on screen. So I see community is diversity, relationship building. People with many arrows and different senses, I see kinds of waves and triangles. Dots, I see sharing people kind of in movements in empowerment, what else do I see inclusion essence, groups of people, arrows, bringing all the arrows that are going in the middle? Wonderful. Thank you so much.

Marika Crête-Reizes 13:20

And then we'll move on to a third question. Which is how do the two connect for you. So by drawing or writing how to community building and co creation Connect for you 15 seconds again.

Marika Crête-Reizes 14:01

And we'll stop here. can finish it up. And we'll show it on screen once again. So we can all see. So I see art making, I see inspiration that moves or that is linked to creativity. I see this kind of big shape or wavy shape. This star everything a lot of connection. I see a lot of connection and

alliances and arrows and movements. Wow. Building the Future I see. osmosis. Respect listening curiosity caring. Wonderful. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

Marika Crête-Reizes 14:54

I would love to be able to deep into each into each reflection In the Connection you've shared, what we'll do instead is that we will send you into breakout rooms to construct on the ideas you have shared so far. So Aislinn will send you into breakout rooms of four to six people, randomly. We asked you to remember the number of your team, which is the number of your breakout rooms. And when you're with your group, we invite you to create together in response to the following question, which is, what does community building true co creation? Look, or sound like for you? Your group? Okay, so we'll give you eight minutes to come up with a collective and creative answer. Have about 15 to 30 seconds maximum, to respond to that question. And we'll put that question in the chat. So you have it as a reference. So what does community building true co creation look, or sound like for you? So what does it look or sound like for your group? Okay, and we'll be back in eight minutes. Do you have any questions? Good. Okay, fun.

Marika Crête-Reizes 16:19

So welcome back, everyone. I know it was a very, very short time. So I hope you had fun. Since we're quite a lot of people today, I'll invite three groups to share their creations have about 15 to 30 seconds. And for the ones who just joined us, for the benefit of their whole group, we have passed the the person who arrived to reflect on the same questions you reflected on at first, so that everyone has a sense of what we're working with. So when I call up your group, I invite you to raise your hand with the reaction buttons that you will find below your screen on the right. So that every one of your team can be seen at the top of your screen when you're in gallery mode. Okay, so is that, is that clear for everyone how that works? Just raise your hand. And when you're done, obviously, you you raise down your hand.

Marika Crête-Reizes 17:30

Someone asked a question. I'm not sure who, yes. Madsen.

17:34

Yes. Could you say again, how we want to present our screen?

Marika Crête-Reizes 17:40

Yes, it's, it's more interesting, I think if you put it in gallery mode. So you have that option on the top right. And your team is called up, you just press you just raise your hand using the reaction butter button at the top down at the at the bottom right of your screen. Okay, so when if you're called up, you just jump in whenever you're ready. No need for any big explanations. We're just here to share and share our explorations. So I'm saying no explanations just because we're keeping the time counted. So we'll go today with group eight. And group one. And the reason for that is just because the initiative we're sharing started while this summer camp started in August, well, in 2019, so we'll go with the two and the one from the 2019. So we'll start with group eight, so all members can raise so we can see them on top of this screen.

18:55

Well, actually, we didn't. We didn't do any creation. We just had time to, to talk about how we how we decided how we chose the images and the words we chose. And so we talked about how community and arts can can can be built together. So if you if you if you folks want to add some more about what I said.

19:28

I said that the occasion community too big, too vague, because a community to now the world the issue community, in indigenous culture, community in another culture difference. So it's very, very difficult to make the finish and this is UNESCO problem.

Marika Crête-Reizes 19:49

So different perspectives on the word community. Absolutely. Thank you for that. Anyone else want to add something from your team?

20:02

I think a recurring theme when it comes to co creation and community work is computing is this, you expect the unexpected. So I think that's the thing that we talked about.

Marika Crête-Reizes 20:16

expecting the unexpected, well, uniform, beautiful. So you know,

20:22

the most important thing is we have a same objective, same aim, or same interest, we need a common aim. Without the debt, we cannot say this is a community or we can say community, but the notion of community, the different from society. So we need a kind of a common aim, while universal value or objective interest.

Marika Crête-Reizes 20:48

Absolutely. So it also brings together similar interest, or sometimes we're united true interest, and that may be creates a new community or a new sense of community. So to that question, how does it sound or look like? It can sound like all these words, right? So thank you for that. So we'll pass on to a group one. So group one, you can raise your hand and just jumped Great. Great. So you go whenever you're ready.

21:38

Well, one of the things that we that I specifically appreciated about the question was that you didn't just ask, what does cocreation look like? But also what does it sound like? And we had a bit of a discussion about it really like, what our various understandings of the sound of co creation is. And whether it's if that triggers is like a memory of chaos, or of creation, or generation or whether, you know, it's a gesture and dance versus spoken word, like we have had a very different sense of how community co creation comes across in sound. silence or not?

Marika Crête-Reizes 22:27

Wonderful.

Marika Crête-Reizes 22:28

Thank you. Anyone from the team wants to add to that.

Marika Crête-Reizes 22:33

We had also a very big discussion about the sound and for the what looked like, there was like such a command thing about circles who meet, like in the center are many circles. We didn't see a spoke about that. But there's a very like, the circle thing, who are meeting each other, like in the center.

Marika Crête-Reizes 22:58

So meeting point, like common ground at one. Yeah, I see. Yeah. You want to share your drawing again. Now just for everyone to see. So the two circles like this, like Yeah, so common ground at the middle? Great. So thank you so much. Group one. And now we'll move on to group two. Hello, good to whenever you're ready to share.

Marika Crête-Reizes 23:52

thing, one group member? Good point. Oh, there's Jeff. Okay. We also didn't manage to specifically create something and had really amazing conversation. I'd be happy to say that there were many many interesting ideas, which the other groups have began to speak of, including the the nature of the definition of the word community. I appreciate that man brought that up. And it was a really great really great problems raise.

Marika Crête-Reizes 24:39

Absolutely. Anyone else from the group wants to add on, or share something else?

24:54

I just appreciate the people in the group we're talking about the shared responsibility of community. That's just an idea. I don't think we've voiced in the reporting back yet.

Marika Crête-Reizes 25:04

Absolutely, responsibly. Yeah. Jeff

Jeff Mather 25:11

I had a comment about place. There's a community, right near where I live here in Georgia, that is a refugee relocation town. People from 30 countries live in this town, and I was asked to be the artist in residence at the community center for a year. So to talk of the community in a town like that, it's, it was a it was a steep learning curve just to move around in that town and, you know, be in conversation about what we wanted to do together.

Marika Crête-Reizes 25:40

It's, it's such a great start, actually, that that question of community and many different levels or perspectives we can bring to it, depending on where we stand from. Also. Thank you so much

for that. It's, it is nourishing my own reflection in my own work, and hopefully, we can build on that all together. today. Thank you very much, group two, for sharing that with us.

Marika Crête-Reizes 26:13

So I would invite you to reflect our continued your reflection on what stood out for you about co creation. When thinking about everyone, everything that was shared so far, you can write it in the chat if you wish to add something or if there's something that comes up that you didn't think of before or on paper, if you prefer no problem with me.

Marika Crête-Reizes 26:44

So that was a very short short time, online, eight minutes, it's really, really short. The idea was to start that conversation and referring to that idea of sharing and sharing and CO constructing and of openness to others realities, perspectives and ideas. And some of the things you've shared are to me totally in line in line with that.

Marika Crête-Reizes 27:11

So now, imagine this type of experience, sometimes true conversations, sometimes true creation, but during a full week with fellow partners from arts education projects, and so it's that posture that's at the core of the one week training summer camp anesthetic education that brings together teachers, presenters and teaching artists, and cultural facilitators from different regions of Quebec, and that we are sharing with you today. The objective of this summer camp is to have them work together and to co construct workshops in aesthetic education that their students will eventually experience around a work of art from the presenters season, a work of art they all work on in their respective roles as teaching artists or cultural facilitators, presenters, and teachers. The objective of their summer camp is also to have them share and better understand their respective realities and roles in such projects and build a community that can continue to work together in aesthetic education and cultural mediation, once de camp is over.

Marika Crête-Reizes 28:22

But before I go further, and we dive into this initiative, I just want to point out that you may have noticed me using the term cultural mediation, so the equivalent of that term would probably be the field of teaching artistry, but in a broader sense. So the expression teaching artistry usually refers to school settings. Cultural mediation includes many different settings community based in schools, health, sex and health sector, for example. But in the context of the summer camp, we're talking about school settings. Also, you can hear me say teaching artists are cultural facilitators, because in Quebec, we use both terms to refer to a person working with a group of individuals in building bridges with art or works of art. So the teaching artists usually have a professional artistic practice. And the cultural facilitator works in the arts and culture sector but doesn't have necessarily professional artistic practice. So that said, just to share with you a little bit of the background history of it, the whole adventure started back in 2015. When I came back from the summer from an aesthetic education at Lincoln Center, I was deeply moved by what I experienced there. It resonated with me personally and also it resonated with me professionally with what we had started to put in place in the education program at that is all that fitted talked about earlier, but in a more intuitive manner. And after I came back, we installed a partnership

with Lincoln Center's education team, to co create and co host a one week training camp in aesthetic education in Montreal, with professionals from the arts and education sector. And so that partnership started in 2017, and is still effective, it's effective until next summer in August 2022.

Marika Crête-Reizes 30:25

It made total sense for us because aesthetic education responded to what we were doing and implementing without calling it that way. And as we had started giving training in cultural mediation with a flavor of aesthetic education prior to that partnership, this new collaboration really helped us grow our expertise. And it actually led up to a co learning relationship between our team and a wonderful team at Lincoln Center. And I know Jane was on the call. So a special hello to her. And so this one week, training camp started with that disaster team of teaching artists with specific days bringing together TAs and teachers to meet, explore and CO create together in order to be ready for the projects held during the year. In that specific context, plastisol was the presenter of the works of art involved. And for us bringing both t both of them together TAs and teachers was a necessity, it made a huge difference in the way their projects were led. And in the way they were working with each other in class. And with students, they got to know each other, they got to better understand each other's realities and means and better understand their respective roles when in action. And it actually changed everything.

Marika Crête-Reizes 31:50

While we were giving training to TAs and teachers on our own, and still are, we then put in place a one week summer training camp in aesthetic education for regional teams in partnership with Lincoln Center. And that was in August 19. So when I say regional, I mean outside of Montreal. And when I say teams, I mean composed of teaching artists, our cultural facilitators, teachers and presenters for a maximum of 6% per team. Until now, we have worked with 18 regional teams from all over the province of Quebec. And I will share my screen just to show you to give you a sense of the territory covered. So this is the you should probably see my screen well, yes. So this is the province of Quebec, all the the purple pins are regional teams who have participated in that camp. And if you see here that the the orange band is Montreal, where class is always located. So 10, some teams are very close by others are further away. And some are very, very far as this one here in the Hoyne is winning the big demo and this one in desperate. So it's just to give you a sense of the territory in the in the context of that of that project.

Marika Crête-Reizes 33:24

When we were thinking and developing these training camps, some of the key questions getting then I discussed were, how can our learnings and findings be shared with the big arts education community in the province of Quebec? How can we make sure the experiences and learnings from the training can resonate locally for everyone in their region, and who are the stakeholders part of the equation and who are the stakeholders that are needed at the camp to reach to reach this type of local resonance. What we came up with was the necessity to bring together the participants I previously name teaching artists and cultural facilitators, teachers and presenters. And it made total sense for us to have them all together because their roles are complementary because through arts education projects, they are in touch and collaborate with

each other. And plus they are all part of an involved in the social dynamic of their own community. They represent and are their community. So having them united for one week period to experiences that education and see how it can nourish their existing practice, to learn and CO learn and to think and to share and CO create their arts education projects together has been the beginning of a well at to my point of view to have a small revolution in the way to approach and collaborate on such projects. And when I continue are asked you Aislinn to share a few pictures of the training camp so you have a sense of the activities. We are we are doing and the essence of it. So thank you Aislinn for that.

Marika Crête-Reizes 35:14

Community Building. True co creation was from the beginning at the core of the experience in building our learning community during the camp in building community within the teams, and so it resonates locally and with sustainability. And in participating in building the arts education community, in a broader sense, in Quebec. And as you know, creation implies participation. And by its very nature, art making in the participatory mode, cuts across boundaries, conceptual boundaries, administrative boundaries, fields have dots, policies, practices, activities, realities, for example. It's both its challenge, but also its turns. And I believe it is by reaching across these boundaries. And by opening up the space for multiple realities, to coexist and nourish the act of creation and reflection, that we invite to new collaborations and to new encounters, that we invite to the creation or consolidation maybe of our communities.

Marika Crête-Reizes 36:29

Through co creation. We create spaces in which we can speak and be heard in which all can express themselves, in which we can build common grounds common languages in which we can share realities, visions and reflections, and can collectively imagine new ways of seeing, hearing and collaborating. And besides the approach of aesthetic education, which is the very essence of the camp and at the basis of its establishment, to nourish professional practices, I believe one of the key elements of this initiative of this initiative to be bringing together all these members are stakeholders. Their presence together opens up to building a dialogue and a common language and an understanding between them opening up to creating and enlarging our community and under understanding it. When, when talking about participatory art of house with Matt Besser, who, as an author you you may know, in a community artists Camino says art is power, not a good meaning art is in the act, and not the thing. And by approaching this training camp with the lens of community building, true co creation, I truly believe we are sharing power, and acknowledging the expertise and experience in the room, I believe we are creating a space for them to connect, to dig deeper into make connections with their professional practices, but also simply as human beings. I believe we create a space for human relations to exist and grow and for them to be allies, in their practices projects, but also in their visions and values.

Marika Crête-Reizes 38:23

Over the years when analyzing and debriefing every year's experience, I realized that the community building is taking place on many different levels. And it it echoes with what some of you have been sharing in the beginning, so about like what what is the sense of community and

what community are we talking about? So in that context and the name of the person who said artists power Yes, as you will see, I always have a hard time managing the chat and talking in the same time. So here it is. Also, um, so. So, yeah, I realized that I when analyzing in debriefing every years experience, that community building was taking place on many different levels. One is the communities by professional practices, Tas teachers, presenters. Another one is the regional teams who are small communities themselves, and some of them don't know each other before they arrive. Another one is the learning community, the big group during the camp, and yet another one is to local communities when members of the regional teams go back to their environments and work within their schools within their theatres and venues in their artistic disciplines and practices.

Marika Crête-Reizes 39:54

I also realized that co creation is also taking place on many different levels. Why? level is co creation in art making two different activities related to our workshops. Another one is co creation in the elaboration of the arts education project. So the planning the regional teams are doing are working on. And another level is a co creation between us, the professionals leading this training camp, as we are co creating, co hosting co leading into learning together. But more than that the cool learning also takes place with the participant, we are co learning with them. And I must say that this idea of CO is one of the element that really nourishes our own experience and expertise, and makes this journey a truly incredible and profoundly rich experience.

Marika Crête-Reizes 40:51

So the process of co creation itself moves the group forward, the different profiles bring different points of view different experiences, there's always someone who has experience and expertise on a specific subject and everyone helps each other in the experience, it moves the group forward, but it also moves the experience forward. And those of you who know the philosophy of maximum dream or of John Dewey's will recognize this idea that when we ourselves, experience something enables us to a better and profound understanding of that process. Because we can find personal resonance to it, we can find ourselves into process or place into process, make it our own, and be better equipped to transpose or try something in our class in our workshop in our new work collaboration. And we learn a great deal by doing as humans, we need personal resonance for sense making to emerge. And this brings me back to the idea of of power, when I was referring to what Hassan matassa has said, to the power everyone holds. And that can be shared and triggered true co creation. That posture of co creation is presenting the work we have done at pass this over the past years in the way programs, projects, and many initiatives are undertaken, and the way they feel led today.

Marika Crête-Reizes 42:25

Did someone ask something? Okay.

Marika Crête-Reizes 42:30

And the way the other projects are still, like today, for example, when programming participatory activities, organizations, artist, partners are invited at the table to discuss, imagine and CO create these activities that are part of the adventure from the start.

Marika Crête-Reizes 42:52

So the principles of community building true co creation are good for all data, as you know, or can imagine. And I think that, yeah, I think that societies life, you know, ways the conversation about everything that concerns its members, you know, I think it's crucial to our lives that that conversation cures, because it shapes how we think and act. And I think arts and culture play an important role in that conversation. And in different ways, our contact with art and culture and with creation and co creation and that. And that posture of participation, permits us or invites us, I think, to discover, to understand, organize, share, act, and compose our experience in relation to the world we live in.

Marika Crête-Reizes 43:49

So I'll stop here, for today. So that was the idea of sharing that initiative and putting it in the perspective of co-community building on many different levels through co creation as the posture at the core of the experience that is proposed or to which we invite all the stakeholders to take part of I'm sure you have many examples about co creation, and community building and how the two are connected in your work and your experience. Or you may have questions. I would be very interested in hearing how to help a patient community, building our community specifically resonate for you or take form in your own experience. I think we can all learn a lot from it. So we have about what 10 minutes I think ahead of have us. So yeah, let's let's hear you out if you have anything to share Liz, yes.

45:24

Thank you, Marika. I really appreciated your presentation. So many interesting and good ideas. I have a question. And so I I'm calling I'm in from Toronto, Ontario, and I'm the drama school director at young people's Theatre, which is a professional theatre, for theatre for young audiences. And so we talk we think a lot about community building all the time. And for the drama school, in particular question I have is, Oh, I'm so sorry. My son has just come into the room. Okay, just, um, a question I have is, it's actually like something we talked about in our group about not sort of just opening your doors and saying, Come, we want to make a community, but the importance of going to people and I think, I think, again, Beth, and it was Stephen that said, you know, meeting them where they're at. So I'd love to hear more about your experience with community building. You know, there's a very Western sense of what art is and where art should be in society. And in a child's life. For example, I should say, I'm coming at this from the perspective of working with babies, children and youth, not adults, so much. So I'd love to hear more about how, you know, whether you're working with marginalized communities, racialized communities, just different cultures altogether. How you approach that work? And how do you encourage participation, because I love this idea of participation. But you can't say, you know, what's really important, you got to do this thing. It's a, it's, that's the, you know, turn upside down.

Marika Crête-Reizes 47:22

Absolutely. And I will talk about and Jetsons, or even deny sound Nicole Can, can jump in whenever they want. When working at best is off, that's one of the thing we kind of shifted. So at first, and we were like, back 10 years ago, we were like, the posture was a little bit more like, wow, come this is a great activity, you know, but we kind of switched it and to have all to have everyone at the table from the start so that the projects can be discussed together. So it really meets their real at their realities and needs. For example, we have, we have well, it's still an initiative that is ongoing. There were workshops, a program for adults living with different kinds of disabilities or you know, what are its physical limitations for examples or mental health issues and you know, so, so different profiles are like that. And we sat down with the, with a community organization to co create that project with them. So that their reality was taking into account. So that project ended up being workshops in, in poetry, writing, music, and painting. So one part was taking place at the community center and other part was taking place at Plaza and all the workshops led by our teaching artists, but also teaching artists from the community center, were put in together and we were built on each other, so that the whole experience was significant for the participants and that it was scaffolded in the way that the whole posture of participation was fully for them. And by them, I would say, and it ended up in like, this big event at Plaza with a bigger exhibition opening of their works. It was it was truly transformative, I think, for them, but also for us, you know, in a way to to work with the community and to be in resonance with them. More recent example Have a project I have in mind. And it gets it encased and I can maybe jump in on on that one is a project with indigenous, with the with Indigenous artists and community here in Montreal. And the way to build that project was to have an Indigenous artists as a curator of the whole event I'm talking about Nico, Viva Dr. Nick Jetson and Christina. And so. So that whole event was built with the flow with the community, basically. So that it was in respect with their values, visions, needs, way of addressing certain issues. So those are ways that have shifted over the years if I compare to the way the work was done before, so I don't know if it answers your question a little bit. With the teachers. When we work with the teachers, there is a in the education program, there's a I would say format, but there's an accompaniment with all teachers, whether they're teaching to newcomers, for example, are in a math class to see if the tools that are available meets their needs or not. Or if you know, if we can, yeah, co create with them a way to make sure they're not well, they have all the tools enhance to participate fully. And and be and be an embrace to projects with their with their, with their students. Does that answer a little bit for?

52:01

It does, and it raises a whole bunch of other questions. But I know there are other people that have more questions. So I thank you very much for starting that conversation with me. I appreciate it.

Marika Crête-Reizes 52:10

Thank you. Anyone else...

Aislinn Ryan 52:15

There was a question earlier in the chat from Brianna, which was, What did you find were the biggest barriers as you developed a co creation project? And what were the surprises?

Marika Crête-Reizes 52:29

That's a good question, I would say depends on the projects. I think and I will speak more about teachers and teaching artists because it's my main field of work. What I have found that's really common is that there's a big gap about the perception of arts and culture, and the relationship they have to arts and culture influence a great deal how they relate to it, obviously. And so I think one of the biggest resistance is linked, that I have you encountered is linked to, to that guy to that gap of perception. But that said yeah, when I see those gaps, and they're in the posture of CO creating something, and especially, you know, like, during a long period of time, it transforms completely their, their understanding of the other's reality. And it really, I was thinking I was talking a little bit earlier about reaching across across boundaries. And I'm always amazed how true the arts that happens, you know, and I truly believe in it, but every time I'm, it fascinates me, you know, because it's another form of, of language and it's about choice making and you know, that space of expression if and if that space of expression is is fully how can I say possible I have the word beaver young in mind is Yeah, I mean, we can imagine together you know, and that, that happens, you know, I, I see resistance, and I see connections. And, you know, like, I have this memory of workshop we did with teachers and teaching artists', and it was like a workshop of about 4040 minutes. They didn't know each other before. And they were to be working together for a whole school year. And honestly, in 40 minutes, like the reinvented their world, and I, and I'm sure you've witnessed that so many times, you know. But yeah, I told myself well, if, if we can do that in 40 seconds, imagine what we can do, you know, over time. So. Yeah. And surprises also like very factual things, but like I've seen teachers join, you know, boards of theater venues after having a co creation experience with them, you know, I've seen like very specific impacts like that are two, you know, teachers and teaching artists and presenters talking to each other in the, in the following year, when thinking about projects are in planning or implementing projects to have a feel of the field, you know, so, also very concrete thing, but also, I think, very transformative or personal components to it.

Aislinn Ryan 56:31

Yes, Marika, you just mentioned, impact. And actually, I see, Jeanette has raised her hand and also asked a question in the chat, which I think relates to that. Jeanette, do you want to ask yourself,

Jeannette Brossart 56:44

Hi, Marika!

Marika Crête-Reizes 56:45

Hi, Jannette!

Jeannette Brossart 56:46

Thanks for your presentation today. And I'm wondering, if and how you are collecting data about this topic, it's always challenging to figure out how to correctly and accurately document some of this information.

Marika Crête-Reizes 57:10

Good question. For the specifically for the training camp, there was a research project that was led that started in 2018, I think, trestle, you can correct me if I'm wrong.

57:27

We did so many studies and research, but I am happy to take questions.

Marika Crête-Reizes 57:34

So we have, yeah, we had a research project led to follow all the participants of that training camp, so that the teachers, the teaching artists, the presenters, and also the students to see, you know, what effect that training or that approach in aesthetic education was a, an add on to their practices. It was more of a quantitative research. We had a qualitative data too, but it was more of an idea of of seeing, you know, like on in the region of Quebec, is this approach, genders approach? meet the needs and realities? And, and if so, how? Are two? What? What adaptation, for example, does it need, and I'm working now on another research project on a very smaller scale. And it's a qualitative research project. And we're more about it's, it's a training, it's a training that goes on during the full year. So it's intense, but there's a company men throughout the year to really have the feel of what gesture is changed by that? accompaniment. So what's the level of you know, like, the personal part and the I was talking about perception of your role, you know, as a TAS or as a teacher, or the perception you have on, you know, how art can be our culture can be a, a catalyst for change in teaching, for example, in schools, you know, so there's that perspective, but also specifically, if we talk about inquiry, you know, and you deepen that with them. What, what, like, do gestures in class change? If so, how and what triggered that? But it's hard. It's hard because everyone is different, right? Like we all we all come from a different we all have our different backgrounds, and come from a different place. And there's also, you know, talking about community to school is a community itself. So, that also influences you know, what? What's the range sometimes that you have to really change things or act? So it's not an easy question to answer. But there are ways I think we cannot cover everything in one research project. That's one thing. Thank you kind of have to, to Yeah, to to focus on what's really like your, you know,

1:00:35

We had a challenge ourselves with this. And since the beginning, and Monica says the last camp would be effective in this August. So at the end of this five years, we will have with us, who has made four camps plus a pilot year, so more or less 30 teams. And it's our ambitious to bring them beginning of October to one day, two days of, you know, of reflection, again, just to try to, and we curiously equation just arrived right on because we start the session, we have a meeting and we start this, this, this reflection, not only the reflection, but with our teams with the concentric with the with us in this reflection. So next August, we may be more in a position to really have a survey of what real impacts it has, at least on the teens, but it won't cover the

children, of course, and the teenagers, because they weren't part of the camp. But at least this project of camp, we will see if over the years, the community what they have achieved, and if they if they what stays from that learning. So it's really something we we and we embark in this afternoon, as promised. And so some of the information is available of what we have mentioned this morning in English. In French, of course, if you do want to ask us to have more information, please write us and we will be very pleased to share whatever we are able to share with you. And if this is something positive for you. Let's go so, so I'm sorry, Malika. Do you want to add something about planning in the future?

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:02:52

I would say no, but I was kind of curious to see Jennette, if you have any reflections on that, on that question of research.

Jeannette Brossart 1:03:03

I guess I was just wondering, really the the methods that you were going to be using to collect the data if it was surveys or interviews or if you were using more of a creative approach. So I think it was more of a very, how are you going to do it?

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:03:26

To answer that then further training camp, it was mostly surveys that were led. I think there might have been a few interviews, I'm not sure...

1:03:38

We interviewed both

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:03:40

Teachers and teaching artists, I think. And in the research project I'm in right now we're doing three interviews. So one, before the project started one in the middle and one at the end. We're also observing in class, so TAs and teachers, there is a journal that we invite each participant to, to fill up during the during the year, but it's really their own reflections. We don't have like, prompt questions in it. And yeah, maybe

1:04:16

Jeannette we can handle so that these are external, external research and led by people working in university mainly. So it's just as she wants to do this kind of, she wants to raise the communication about what you're doing. And don't see how you can do it without researcher and so you have to build partnerships with universities, local university, this is what how we work actually, as an institution takes times and you need money and you have to have some funds and condition that, you know, but it's really I think it takes time as I just mentioned, but I think it's the only way to choose have data on what we're doing actually, in numbers, but also, you know this on navels things that the real impact you want to have in your community and to the state, for the stakeholders and your of your project. Not only indication, but in all the all the other program we have classes are.

Jeannette Brossart 1:05:26

Yeah, just as an independent artist, it's even extra difficult to get that going. And so I have something that I've started just collecting a small amount of very simple data, in hopes that at some point, that can be the fuel for something else to grow, because I don't have Well, I do have some connections. But you know, everyone wants to see that it that you're doing something, even if it's just a little seed of something to start. And so I feel like surveys are not always effective tools in gathering that data, but you have to start somewhere. So I appreciate your information today.

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:06:10

We can talk about that more tenet in another group discussion. Any other questions or reflection or experience? Maybe you would like to share? I know we're like, it's, it's 1218?

1:06:31

Well, I'd like to come in highs only that as independent artists. In Pennsylvania, they have a leeway Foundation offers grants to independent artists. And you can look into other foundations to serve women who are who need funding. And another thing I learned through my years of experience, it's nice to be independent. But sometimes it's even better when you can plug into a nonprofit club into a nonprofit that has your same vision, your same purpose, and work within that nonprofit. And oftentimes, they can have funding and write you in their grant writing. And so that's what I've done over the years to just keep, keep my keep my programs going and keep functioning as an independent artist, I that's what I do. I work with nonprofits, I plug in with them. So that's just an idea, Jeanette, that maybe you could give them where you can fit in girlfriend. Because there's a lot of nonprofits that are doing it are interested in which your your work, and can put you into different environments that will benefit you and the children or the adults that you want to work with. And teach. Thank you. Thanks, this was great.

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:08:02

Anyone else?

1:08:06

Better yet start your own nonprofit? About that.

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:08:17

Thank you for that. Anyone else? Or should I let you all go? Well, thank you very much for being here. Yes, go ahead.

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:08:39

Well, thank you so much for being here today for taking the time. It's always like the beginning of a conversation. It's never the end. Right? So let's, let's continue. And when another thing thing, or, you know, we can share emails and continue the conversation, I would be very, very happy about that. Thank you so much for being here. Thank you aislin. Very much ITAC. And thank you klutzy. And also,

1:09:10

there would be nice, it would be nice to get a list of who everybody is. Oh, who's the organizer of this event? Is that Marika?

Aislinn Ryan 1:09:20

No, it was it was ITAC. And yeah, I'm just going to share with you the link to that the various think tanks that we have coming up at ITAC. So they are monthly. We would love to see you all again. And I think it's a bit too difficult for us to share any personal information just because of privacy and whatnot. GDPR rules I know they're different in every country that I will share this with you here now in the chat and you're all very welcome at our monthly think tanks going forward. And just one last note Marika and tables I know you invited people to maybe contact you if they had further questions that you happy to share some contact details and the chats

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:10:08

That exactly what I am doing at the moment, amazing email, if you ever want to continue

1:10:20

I think it's important that we collaborate with each other. Absolutely. Zoom meetings, I'm getting burnt out, just just fly by made zoom meetings, never to see the people again, you know, never to really, you know, interact again. So, if you if you're artists out there, we have some called artist standing strong together, it will meet on Mondays Eastern Standard Time. It is a group of artists who came out of COVID You know, the lockdown. And they're mostly educators, storytellers, professional, people who gather on Mondays called artist standing strong together. And we support other artists as well, with funding and artists that are in need during these times that we're living in. So you can join us it doesn't costs you can go to the website are standing strong together dotnet. And I'm not on the board or any official I just enjoy it as the artists to Yeah, it's called artist in strong. And we have all kinds, we just had a workshop on how to on the Fleming fleshing museum up in Maine, they came on and had a webinar, not a webinar, but some, just like this open forum, on artists in the museum's and how they're trying to change the landscape of some of the artwork that's very racist and biased. Art, artwork. And this is a major museum and in America, so we have workshops and things of that nature. It's artist in the store together that neck Art Center. And I think they would benefit from you all, you know, getting involved just as much as you might benefit from getting involved with artists that are strong. Together. Okay, that's my, that's my two cents, no change.

Aislinn Ryan 1:12:19

Thank you so much for your contribution.

1:12:24

And welcome, peace or love everyone, be safe.

Aislinn Ryan 1:12:28

And see you. Marika. And was there anything that you wanted to add? Well, thank you so much, again, for all of that. Wonderful insights. I know you put a lot of work into that Marika, really

appreciate you being here. And thank you to everyone who joined us, then we hope to see you again at our other think tanks. So take care everyone stay safe. And we'll see you next time.

Marika Crête-Reizes 1:12:59

Thank you. Thank you.

1:13:02

Oh, like maybe I didn't, but can I just say thank you to the Lincoln Center as well. And to Jean and her team. So without them, nothing would have happened. So thank you very much. And thank you all colleagues and say thanks, take care.

1:13:15

Bye bye.