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SUMMER 2019

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS PROFESSIONALS

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REVOLUTION

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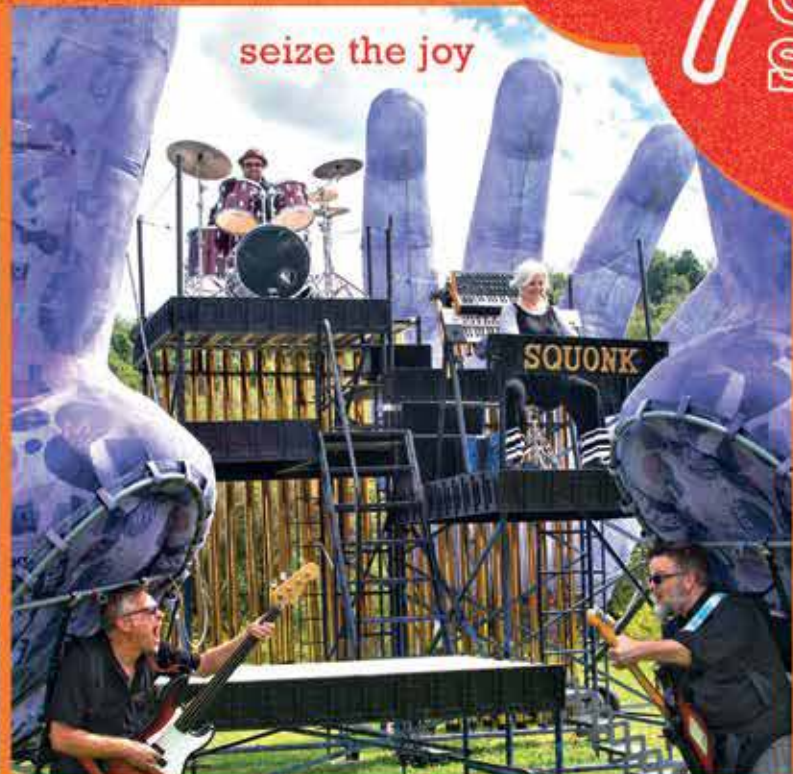


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INSIDE ARTS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS PROFESSIONALS

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COVER: From the APAP | NYC 2019 showcase of *Kids*, Kuan-Hsiang Liu's piece for the Japan Society's Contemporary Dance Festival: Japan + East Asia. Photo: Adam Kissick/APAP

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



With our days measured in clicks rather than conversations, how do you stay up to date with information that is vital for growth and connections in the field? This conundrum was on our minds when we developed the annual Knowledge Issue of this magazine four years ago. What could we offer you, our members, that would give you a chance to encounter what other arts leaders were thinking — and be a good summer read as well? You are holding the answer in your hands. Welcome to our fourth annual Knowledge Issue.

In these pages, you will encounter offerings culled by our guest curators in the last year or so. (Read about the curators on page 14.) As we read these stories, we found that they get to the heart of our everyday

conversations at APAP. We, too, are interested in keeping pace with the growing professional knowledge in our field. We've also been giving deep thought to the broad strokes of Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion — REDI — and how our actions and programs can continue to meaningfully reflect and lift this work to a higher level.

So much of what we think about is the future. How will we be the builders of sustainability, succession and best practices for the next generation — and the one after that? Many arts centers have been the beneficiaries of generous patrons, but a wider culture of giving has been on my mind. I think about the legacies each one of us can cultivate, whether it be funds, real estate, a library or mentoring. What is the unique gift you can give the field, one that will enhance the world for our inheritors?

We hope you find the time to sit quietly and read the stories in these pages. Let the information inspire you to think, to share and to belong to the story of the performing arts.

Mario Garcia Durham, PRESIDENT & CEO

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Work-life integration in the field

A vision for Classical Connections

Lessons learned from Building Bridges

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VOICE

Young audiences learn by viewing in the Chicago Children's Theatre staging of *The World Inside Me*.

Oh, Baby!

If the audience for Spellbound Theatre's *The World Inside Me* could talk, here's what the reviews might say: "I laughed. I cried. I crawled out of my seat." "So good, I skipped my nap!" Designed for the youngest of theatergoers, the interactive experience uses play, live music, dance and visual effects to explore the inner life of growing bodies. It was developed as part of New Victory LabWorks, the New Victory Theater's program to develop new work for young audiences, and co-produced with Chicago Children's Theatre, where the show made its world premiere in February.

"There is no more exciting audience to work with than children under 5," says the play's director, Lauren Jost, who is the founder and artistic director of Spellbound Theatre. "They explore with their whole bodies and imaginations, so we as artists are tasked with making work that is just as imaginative and exploratory as they are."

Spellbound Theatre specializes in creating original, multi-disciplinary performance for the very young, with the intention of sparking a lifelong relationship with the performing arts. Now in its sixth year of operation, the company produces original plays for audiences ages 5 and younger and conducts early childhood education

programs and community events for families. The performance was developed through LabWorks, an incubator that fosters collaboration and creation among performing arts professionals including artists, educators, presenters, producers and other practitioners committed to producing work for young audiences. And the audiences for *The World Inside Me* are *really* young: One iteration of the performance is geared toward the under-2 set, while another is geared toward toddlers ages 2 to 4, and runs 45 minutes with no intermission. That said, there's a snack break built into a scene about the stomach.

“When we were developing *The World Inside Me*, our ensemble tried to see through children’s eyes, to discover how they understood their bodies and how they grow and develop,” Jost says. “We structured the narrative of our performance around human development from 0-5 years, each scene becoming more mobile, more imaginative, more playful. This show is really a celebration of young children and how we all learn and grow together, of what makes us unique and what ties us together.”

The version for older toddlers allows pint-size audience members to play doctor when performers suffer bumps and bruises, while the show for infants focuses more on sensory moments such as peek-a-boo and shape-sorting.

“We built into the performance opportunities for the young children in the audience to become a part of the show, to join us on stage, touch the props for organs and cells, to sing along with the performers,” Jost



says. “We hope that we have created a performance that blends the best of musical theater with sensory play in a way that honors how young children want to engage and play, but also introduces them to live theater in a supportive setting.”

If the review by writer Hillary Bird from *Chicago Parent* magazine is any indication, Jost and her team were successful.

“From introductions at the door to cozy props that kids can play with,” Bird writes, “*The World Inside Me* is the perfect introduction to theater for early learners. The constant action will keep them engaged when they aren’t invited onto the stage and when they are, they can dance and squirm under the lights on the bright floor.”

LITTLE EARTHQUAKES

The ground is shifting under the music industry, driven in part by seismic shifts in technology. In response, Dmitri Vietze, one of the co-founders of the Wavelengths: APAP World Music Pre-Conference event, and his PR firm rock paper scissors are launching the Music Tectonics Conference, Oct. 28-29, 2019, in Los Angeles. The conference will take place at the Skirball Cultural Center. Following the themes of rock paper scissors’ Music Tectonics podcast and blog, the conference will focus on the “rapid and topsy-turvy changes taking place beneath the music industry,” according to Vietze, the press agent for globalFest. The organizers expect between 350 and 500 attendees in year one, including



Dmitri Vietze

representatives from music startups, labels, publishers, streaming services, social platforms, concert companies and investors. The conference will focus on the latest business-to-

business trends in music technology and opportunities for networking among innovators in music. To learn more (and receive a conference discount) visit: musictectonics.com.

SHIPPING OFF TO BOSTON

Socially engaged public art can give voice to those who have been silenced for too long. It can transform public spaces. It can engage — and define — a community. These are just some of the findings in New England Foundation for the Arts’ recently released report on its Creative City pilot program, which launched in Boston in 2015. The report focuses on the transformative power art can play in civic life and the importance of investing in artists as community leaders. Creative City projects extended into Boston neighborhoods, including East Boston, Allston, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Dorchester, Chinatown and more, and feature creative expression of many disciplines, including theater, music, dance, visual art and multidisciplinary art. As a companion to the report, NEFA has released a national field scan, *Programs Supporting Art in the Public Realm*, by the Animating Democracy program of Americans for the Arts. This field scan of 30 public art programs across

Creative City grant recipient Ifé Franklin’s *Indigo Project* honors the lives and history of formerly enslaved Africans and African Americans in the American and the African Diaspora who labored in the harshest conditions to produce materials that generated the wealth of nations.



the country, including Creative City, highlights approaches and challenges each program faces. The full report, the national field scan and a series of videos highlighting artist projects, are available at nefa.org/CreativeCityLearning. Following the success of the pilot, NEFA has created Creative City Boston, a new grant inspired by the initial Creative City program. This new iteration of the program is funded by a grant of \$950,000 from the Barr Foundation. Of Creative City, San San Wong, Barr Foundation’s

director of arts and creativity, says: “Creative City projects activated Boston neighborhoods as public art studios. Over the last few years, residents from nearly every Boston neighborhood gathered in public spaces to co-create with artists, share cultural stories, and reflect on their neighborhood’s history. We learned that investing in socially engaged artists is a powerful way to spark dialogue and drive community change, contributing to a stronger city overall.” More information about the grant can be found at: nefa.org.

POWER TO THE (CREATIVE) PEOPLE

Minnesota-based Springboard for the Arts and the Helicon Collaborative have released a new report and framework called *Creative People Power*, which begins from the premise that arts and culture are “a renewable natural resource for building communities.” The report and its accompanying toolkits serve as companion pieces to more traditional research on the economic impact of the arts and

creative placemaking. “What’s missing,” says Springboard for the Arts’ executive director Laura Zabe, “is an exploration of the conditions that make those valuable projects, and their impacts, possible. In particular, what are the systems that support artists, culture bearers and creative thinkers’ ability to thrive, dream up, and deliver these projects?” The



research is driven by two core questions: “How do we understand the value of an ecosystem?” and “What is the infrastructure that enables systems change?” The report, along with toolkits that cover everything from how to write an RFP to how to create mobile, interactive art projects, can be found at: springboardforthearts.org/creative-people-power.

ECONOMIC DRIVER

The economic impact of the arts is (slightly) up. According to the latest report of the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, produced by the National Endowment for the Arts, the arts and cultural sector contributed \$804.2 billion or 4.3 percent to the nation's gross domestic product in 2016. This represents an increase of 1 percent from 2015. The ACPSA tracks the annual economic impact of arts and cultural production from 35 industries, both commercial and nonprofit. Those 35 industries range from architectural services to sound recording and in whole or in varying percentages are considered to be a distinct sector of the nation's economy. The ACPSA reports on economic measures — value-added to GDP as well as employment and compensation, revealing that five million people are employed in the arts and cultural sector. Those five million wage-and-salary workers earned \$386 billion in 2016. "For the past five years, the partnership between the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Endowment for the Arts has yielded invaluable information about the economic impact of arts and culture," says acting chair Mary Anne Carter. "The data has consistently demonstrated the value of the arts to the nation, to individual states, and to the lives of the American people." Key findings include the value-added to GDP by arts and cultural production is nearly five times greater than that of the agricultural sector. Arts and culture adds nearly \$60 billion more than construction and \$227 billion



more than transportation and warehousing to the U.S. economy. Arts and cultural goods create a trade surplus. In 2016, the U.S. exported nearly \$25 billion more in arts and cultural goods and services than it imported, a 12-fold increase over 10 years. The average annual growth rate for arts and culture outperforms the growth rate of the total U.S. economy. From 2014 to 2016, the average annual growth rate in the contribution of arts and culture was 4.16 percent, nearly double the 2.22 percent growth rate of the total U.S. economy. Consumer spending on performing arts has risen significantly. Between 1998 and 2016, the rate of consumer spending on performing arts admissions more than doubled, rising from 0.12 percent of U.S. GDP in 1998 to 0.26 percent, totaling \$32.7 billion, in 2016. For the full report, including interactive dashboards, state-by-state analysis, and data visualizations, visit arts.gov.



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Transitions

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts has appointed author, innovator and #GivingTuesday co-founder **HENRY TIMMS** as its next president and chief executive officer. Timms comes to Lincoln Center from New York City's 92nd Street Y, where he served as president and CEO. During his tenure, he was responsible for launching and executing the Y's first major capital campaign of the 21st century, securing more than \$160 million in capital gifts. The campaign was praised for its use of virtual reality to showcase the potential transformation of the Y. Timms also worked to balance the Y's budget and develop new relationships with major corporations and foundations, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Templeton Foundation. He co-created a dynamic innovation center with Asha Curran, which grew into the award-winning Belfer Center for Innovation and Social Impact. At Lincoln Center, Timms is charged with developing collaborative initiatives, attracting and engaging new audiences, and preparing for the redesign of David Geffen Hall. "The performing arts transform lives, forge mutual understanding and strengthen societies," said Timms. "The vision and commitment of Lincoln Center's board, and the talent of the leaders and organizations on campus, are unparalleled. The privilege of collaborating with these remarkable individuals and of leading this unique institution is an extraordinary honor." Timms is the co-author of the international bestseller *New Power: How Power Works in the 21st Century – and How You Can Make It Work for You*, with Jeremy Heimans. He previously served as international director of the Louise Blouin Foundation in London, developing cultural programs around the world. Timms is a visiting fellow at Stanford

University's Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, a Hauser Visiting Leader at Harvard Kennedy School and a senior fellow at the United Nations Foundation.

MARGARET LAWRENCE has been named director of programming for the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech. An award-winning arts administrator and performance curator with a track record of organizing and presenting culturally inclusive arts projects, Lawrence comes to the Moss Arts Center after serving



Margaret Lawrence

as director of programming for Dartmouth College's Hopkins Center for the Arts for 23 years. At the Moss Arts Center, she will lead performance season planning, integrating community engagement and student learning with a focus on diverse voices and meaningful experiences. At the Hopkins Center, Lawrence curated a dynamic program of national and international artists that served both the Dartmouth campus and its surrounding communities, led commissioning efforts, and secured significant national funding for program initiatives. "We're extremely excited to welcome Margaret to Blacksburg to lead our programming team," said Ruth Waalkes, executive director of the Moss Arts Center and Virginia Tech's associate provost for the arts. "As a colleague of Margaret's over the years, I have admired her work and always looked to 'the Hop' as a significant benchmark program. I look forward to working closely with her in this new position for the Moss Arts Center, to continue building on our successes and to increase our impact on all the communities we serve."



Michael Orlove

The National Endowment for the Arts has named **MICHAEL ORLOVE** director of states, regionals and locals partnerships,

a new position at the agency. Since 2012, Orlove has served as NEA director of artist communities and presenting and multidisciplinary works. In this new position, Orlove will oversee the agency's work with the state arts agencies and regional arts organizations as well as grants to local arts agencies. In addition, Orlove will continue his work in overseeing international activities with International Activities Specialist Guiomar Ochoa. Of Orlove's new and expanded role, Mary Anne Carter, acting chair of the NEA, says: "I believe it particularly fitting that an individual who has in-depth knowledge of our agency and its priorities, coupled with a broad knowledge of those organizations we serve, be named to oversee a portfolio that is responsible for distributing more than 40 percent of our grant dollars."

Congratulations to our members with milestone anniversaries: **KRANNERT CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS** at 50, which celebrated with a Come Home to Krannert weekend, and **LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS** at 60, which celebrated with a block party.

We mourn the loss of 2010 APAP Award of Merit winner **JOHN O'NEAL JR.**, a civil rights activist, playwright and actor who co-founded the Free Southern Theater in 1963 and Junebug Productions in 1980. He was 78. **17A**

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VOICE



Lula Washington Dance Theatre participates in World Refugee Day in 2018 as part of a project with Anchorage Concert Association and Catholic Social Services Refugee and Immigration Services.

Follow Spot: THE NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

In Anchorage, an innovative project builds community through the arts.

BY KRISTEN ANDRESEN

They say it takes a village to raise a child. But what about the spirit — and prospects — of a community?

That's the driving question behind *HOME | Connecting Communities & Breaking Down Walls*, an ongoing artistic collaboration among the Anchorage Concert Association, Los Angeles-based Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Catholic Social Services Refugee and Immigration Services, Boys & Girls Club Alaska, Alaska artists and Anchorage community members.

Although the project has been in the works for nearly two years, the idea took root in 2015, when Anchorage Concert Association executive director Jason Hodges and Lula Washington Dance Theatre associate director Tamica

Washington-Miller participated in the inaugural Leadership Fellows Program at APAP.

"Through that work, we were exploring the meaning of community, and what it means to be the community's presenter," Hodges says.

The meaning became even more focused when Anchorage Concert Association participated in the New Pathways program through EmcArts.

"One of the questions that arose was, 'How do we as an arts organization bring greater public value to our community?'" Hodges says. "The traditional work of a presenter is valuable, but it's also very limited. We're focused on selling tickets and getting a season to come together. But what can the impact of the arts truly be on a community? What are the different avenues or spaces where the work could happen? What does it look like to co-create art? What are the different issues that need to be addressed and how does art help solve that problem?"

So Hodges and his colleagues surveyed the community to discover what those issues were, and in the process, they found that the needs were even more acutely felt among the refugee population that calls the city home. Anchorage is home to RAIS, the state's only refugee resettlement group, which serves some 550 clients from Somalia, Sudan, Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, the former Soviet Union, Mexico and other places. The city's Mountain View neighborhood is the most diverse census tract in the U. S.

Hodges and his colleagues sat down with leaders of other nonprofits to hear their goals for a community arts project, and it was an eye-opening experience.

"As an arts organization, we know a performance has impact if we've sold 80 percent of the house, but when we asked what their goals were, it was so far outside of that paradigm of what we do — selling tickets, filling a hall," he says. "The greatest

challenge in doing something so different from what you've usually done is understanding and knowing what the impact is. How do you know you made a difference?"

For some partners, the goal was to help Anchorage residents feel safer. For others, it was to build a positive image of Mountain View, making it a neighborhood people wanted to visit. With that in mind, Anchorage Concert Association and artists from Lula Washington Dance Theatre created a host of events — including workshops, interviews, music and dance exchanges and the culminating celebration and performance *The Global Village Experience* — that directly responded to issues such as isolation and lack of access to transportation, especially at night and in the winter.

"We need creative solutions to solve social service issues, and we need basic support from community in order for arts to thrive. We need each other," says Lisa Aquino, executive director of Catholic Social Services Alaska.

Over the course of 18 months, Hodges and his collaborators evaluated and tweaked the work to ensure that it was, in fact, making a difference. In that time, Washington-Miller visited Anchorage a half-dozen times, building deep relationships along the way.

"She's opened doors in our community in ways we haven't been able to do," Hodges says. "Artists have the capacity to do things that we as arts leaders can't."

The project, which culminated at the end of April, challenged the traditional model of presenting for Hodges. And the lessons learned are powerful: Find the right partners. Ask the tough questions. Survey and measure. Align the work with your organization's strategic goals. Give yourself a long timeline. Be unafraid to commit resources — both human and financial. (Hodges added a community coordinator position to his staff to facilitate the work.) Most important? Dig a little deeper.

"If you genuinely want to work to connect and use community as a source for inspiration for your work, the old models of engagement don't apply," Hodges says. "You have to show up in a different way, think differently. You have to commit to it in a way that's different from the way we've done our work for the last 20 years." **I/A**

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Meet the curators

Each year, the *Inside Arts* editorial team reaches out to a handful of leaders in the field to ask what they have been reading in the last year, what stories have stayed in their thoughts and what articles, research, studies or graphics they believe would be meaningful and inspiring to the field at large. They submit more than we can reprint, of course, but our team reads all of the stories and chooses one from each curator. The most resonant of their stories fill these pages. Their own bios follow.

— Alicia Anstead, editor



► **ZEYBA RAHMAN** joined the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, an extension of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, in 2013 as senior program officer for the Building Bridges Program. Rahman manages the Building Bridges Program's national grant making to support projects that advance relationships and increase understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim communities for mutual well-being. Before joining the foundation, Rahman led internationally and nationally recognized projects as a creative director/producer to promote understanding between diverse communities. The roles she has undertaken include: director, Asia and North America, Fes Festival of World Sacred Music in Morocco; artistic director, Arts Midwest's Caravanserai: A Place Where Cultures Meet; curator, BAM's Mic Check Hip Hop; creative consultant, Public Programs, Metropolitan Museum of Art's Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and Later South Asia Galleries; chief curator, Alliance Francaise's World Nomads Morocco Festival; project director, Mid Atlantic

Arts Foundation's Global Cultural Connections; and senior advisor, Muslim Voices Festival. She is an advisor to Artworks for Freedom, serves on the steering committee for the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's Music Awards and the nominating committee of the Civitella Foundation in Italy. Twice honored by New York City's government, Rahman is the subject of two TV profiles as a global arts leader.



► **CAITLIN STROKOSCH** was appointed president and CEO of the National Performance Network in 2016. Her work there has focused on building a more just and equitable arts presenting field. Most recently, she served on the Alliance of Artists Communities — an international association of artist residency centers — from 2002 to 2016, and served as executive director as of 2008. A frequent public speaker and recognized advocate for artists of all disciplines, Strokosch has written and spoken around the world on artist- and community-centered practices, organizational sustainability and leadership development, and she has served as a grant panelist for

local, state and national funders. As a member of the board of directors of Grantmakers in the Arts, she serves on the Racial Equity committee. Strokosch has an undergraduate degree in music performance from Columbia College and a master's degree in musicology from Roosevelt University, where her research focused on arts as a tool for building communities of resistance.



▶ **AMANDA BANKSTON** is communications and development manager for National Performance Network, where she oversees communications efforts for a network of 74 organizations and hundreds of cultural leaders working toward building a more just and equitable world through the arts. Prior to joining NPN in 2017, she was director of marketing and public affairs for ArtOps in Detroit, where she managed marketing and community engagement programming for eight nonprofits. Bankston is the founder of Community heART Highland Park, an arts program that uses creativity as a community building tool in Highland Park, Michigan. She studied journalism at the University

of Minnesota and began her career as an award-winning newspaper reporter in the Twin Cities and her hometown, El Paso, Texas.

▶ **NATE ZEISLER** envisions a world where arts majors have a path to a sustainable career, creative minds are empowered to rule the workforce, and access to the arts is not just for the privileged few, but for all. As the dean for community initiatives at the Colburn School in Los Angeles, Zeisler is building a pipeline of sequential arts learning so that children of all backgrounds may experience a performing arts education. He supports the careers of world-class artists and passionate entrepreneurs, offering career advice and learning opportunities that prime them for the 21st century workforce. Previously, Zeisler was founder and executive director of the Envision Chamber Consort; co-founder and executive director of Arts Enterprise; assistant professor of bassoon and entrepreneurship at Bowling Green State University in Ohio; and principal bassoonist of the Ann Arbor Symphony and second bassoonist with the



Michigan Opera Theatre in Detroit. Zeisler earned his doctorate of musical arts and master's degree from the University of Michigan, and bachelor's degree in choral and instrumental education from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.



▶ Recently named a "Rising Star in Classical Presenting" by Musical America, **SAMANTHA POLLACK** is the director of programming at Washington Performing Arts in Washington, DC. With WPA since 2004, Pollack programs more than 65 performances in a dozen venues throughout the DC region each season in the genres of classical (orchestral, chamber and recital), jazz, global music, modern dance and gospel. WPA, established in 1965, is best known for presenting both star and emerging artists across genres and identifying young talent on the way to international prominence. Pollack received a bachelor's degree in music performance from the University of Cincinnati/College-Conservatory of Music, followed by a master's degree in arts management from Carnegie Mellon University.

ART

and the Fourth Revolution

BY ANDREA BANDELLI
Executive Director, Science Gallery International



Editor's note: Zeyba Rahman submitted this article because it takes a "broad and big picture about the needs for arts graduates." The APAP team had a similar response, identifying with the call to name and emphasize the skill sets that the practice of the arts develops. Even for those who are not artists, our proximity to the arts gives us access to the empathy, imagination and creativity cited in Andrea Bendelli's piece. We reprint his article here in full because, as he points out, understanding the cross-industry, cross-cultural, cross-function world gives us hope.

SURPRISING AS IT MAY SOUND, art finds itself right at the core of the activities shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Here are four ways it's helping to shape our future direction.

Reducing the skills gap

T Arts and humanities are fundamental pillars of any education system, and in today's technology-dominated world their contribution to the school curriculum is more important than ever.

While education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths — STEM — is paramount, the changing nature of the skills required to enter or re-enter the job market shows that STEM education is not enough.

Generations of today and tomorrow need to become versed in abilities such as empathy, imagination, creativity, and the key to develop these abilities is a lifelong education that is interdisciplinary, cross-functional, cross-industry and cross-cultural.

Integrating the arts into STEM education is therefore a laudable and necessary strategy to reduce the skills gap that the next generation is facing, and to prepare the leaders of tomorrow.

But empathy, imagination and creativity are necessary not only for tomorrow's leaders and jobs, we need them right now to ensure that science and technology are developed in a human-centered way.

Today we need to balance incredibly advanced technical competences with an unprecedented level of moral complexity that these technologies entail. And we can't offload today's problems on tomorrow's education.

The nature of work is changing, and the function of having a job is going to be radically different in the near future. The *Minimum Wage Machine* by Blake Fall-Conroy is a reflection on the value of work, and on the paradox of maintaining human work despite obvious automation. It allows anybody to work for minimum wage. "Turning the crank will yield one penny every 4.00 seconds, for \$9.00 an hour, or NY state minimum wage (2016)," their website states. What does a minimum wage mean, when the job itself is meaningless?

Being prepared to deal with the controversial technologies developed now is the only way to make sure we can fully engage in the conversations that shape the future of our societies. The technological breakthroughs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution can make our society more sustainable and inclusive, or they can exacerbate the fractures in our

world. But there's no easy "yes/no" or "good/bad" switch; it's not a single decision that will determine the impact of technology on society, but rather an unfolding process based on dialogue with a multitude of stakeholders.

This is why we need the power of arts and humanities right at the core of technological processes, to enlighten, guide and support these dialogues. Yo-Yo Ma makes it very clear: "It's not enough to outsource culture to the artists and musicians, and receive it as a passive audience. We must engage the full spectrum of human understanding, and every one of us needs to participate in strengthening our cultural resources, all the time."

Trust in technology

2 Today more than ever, art is necessary to build an emotional framework to make sense of the dialogues at the core of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Art and culture build trust; the trust we need to bridge conflicting views and interests, to overcome current barriers and obstacles with dynamic and innovative approaches, and to understand the values that are embedded in any process of technological innovation.

Art triggers us to have those "calm, constructive and even uncomfortable conversations on the kind of future we want," as advocated by Professor Klaus Schwab. Art and culture are a catalyst for these conversations, constant reminders that we need to engage in them; and a reason, a reminder, and sometimes an excuse, not to shy away from them.

Embedding art and design into prototyping

3 Art and design enable us to leapfrog the shortcomings of current technologies and give us the possibility to deep dive into the consequences of futuristic “what if” scenarios. An example of this was at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Dalian, where Science Gallery International curated, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and Wellcome, the “4IR Bio Lab,” a selection of artworks that brought together cutting-edge science and pioneering technology with artists’ understandings of the future. Putting art and design at the heart of the meeting catalyzed conversations on the long-term global systems for health and medicine, culture and society, sustainability, and food and consumption.

Building on this successful experience, Salesforce and Science Gallery International joined forces to embed art and design into the rapid and iterative prototyping of new approaches to technology, policy and governance currently developed at the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in San Francisco.

For six months, a series of artworks are unleashing the capacity to express and to critique values before they are embodied in technology. Installed in the working spaces of the Center, these artworks provide cognitive and emotional tools to design the future and make creative breakthroughs in unexpected, emotional and sometimes even ironic ways.

The artworks currently at the Center are remarkable beacons

of some of the most important conversations about science and technology that took place at the World Economic Forum’s last annual meeting in Davos. For instance, if you followed the session “Future Shocks: Rogue Technology,” you will appreciate “Ad Infinitum” by Pedro Lopes. This is a parasitic entity that lives off human work, a sculptural machine that embodies what automation can lead to. Is it a dystopian view of our future, or a warning sign of what can happen when intelligent machines become the “users” and humans become “used”? The beauty of its design conceals a questionable reality.

Shaping the future of health

4 The Fourth Industrial Revolution is transforming health with the potential to make it much more patient-centric, affordable and accessible. *Circumventive Organs*, by Agi Haines, is a series of speculative designs that imagine which parts of various animals could be used in combination with human tissue to solve common health problems. When these breakthroughs are real, the diseases they cure won’t be dysfunctions anymore: they become the testimonies of those lacking access to the technology. *Circumventive Organs* show the messy reality behind commoditizing biological material, and its potential to help people in need.

The future of health is precision medicine, and individualized treatments will revolutionize healthcare. *Memory of a Brain Malformation* by Katharine Dowson is a laser

Being prepared to deal with the controversial technologies developed now is the only way to make sure we can fully engage in the conversations that shape the future of our societies.

etching in glass of a brain tumor. The malformation was successfully lasered out of the brain, and the artist has used a laser to recreate it.

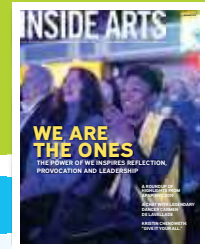
The images of the delicate vein scaffold that feeds the brain tissues are reminiscent of a tree, supporting a nest within the branches. It is a part of the organism but alien at the same time, like a parasitic ecosystem. The life-size lasered glass tumor and veins are delicate and ephemeral, like a memory and the echo of the real thing.

These are just four examples of bold art experiments. They will help us gain a new competence and fluency to become comfortable with the unknown; to remain both hopeful and alert about what comes next; to be creative in how we respond to the complexity of the systems around us; and to be humble enough to know that we cannot understand it all.

This story is reprinted with permission from Science Gallery, a university network dedicated to public engagement with science and art through unique, transdisciplinary exhibitions, events and educational programs. Find out more at sciencegallery.org. 

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Can an opera by Scott Joplin be made to sing for today?

BY PETER MARKS

Editor's note: Samantha Pollack and Nathaniel Zeisler, representing the leadership of the APAP Classical Connections Committee, directed us to a story by Peter Marks published in January in the Washington Post. The APAP team immediately liked the story because it connected the past to the present and showed the value of imaginative collaboration around representation in the arts. Pollack and Zeisler saw additional value in the story. They wrote to us: "This article draws our attention to the fact that new life can come to works of art when artists and presenters mesh artistic intent (in this case Scott Joplin's opera) with the context and relevance of reimagining a work through the lens of contemporary thought. As arts leaders, part of our job is to identify, produce and perform works of art that in some way further the public discourse around a particular subject area. The reimagining of Joplin's opera outlined in the Post article is exactly the type of work the Classical Connections Committee would like to highlight in its goal to ensure a future where classical music is celebrated, innovative, representative and collaborative. The current work on Joplin's opera embodies the values which the Classical Connections Committee believes are necessary for classical music to thrive, and we hope you will follow the artists in the process of bringing this work to life over the next several years until its premiere in April 2020." The article is published in full here with permission from the Washington Post.

THE THEMES THAT COMPOSER SCOTT JOPLIN WAS EXPLORING

in his masterwork *Treemonisha* — feminism and black aspiration — struck Leah-Simone Bowen as so ahead of their time that the opportunity to give them a new context for 21st-century audiences struck her as impossible to pass up.

"That it's essentially a conversation within an African community," the playwright said. "That it's about a black woman leading — and that she's *chosen* to lead? It's really subversive."

And that these ideas were planted in a musical piece 108 years ago by an African American

composer who never saw it blossom made the challenge for the Canadian writer and colleagues in the United States all the more irresistible.

As a result, arts institutions from across the continent and the Atlantic — among them, Washington Performing Arts — have invested in an endeavor that Bowen and like-minded artists are now developing: an expansively reimagined *Treemonisha*, for which only a piano and vocal score exists, in the Library of Congress. Although the work finally reached the stage in 1972 and is occasionally revived with its

schematic original story, no one has tried, the creative team says, to significantly alter its narrative infrastructure in hopes of reaching a wider audience.

That's the mission originally staked out by the Toronto theater company Volcano, with a goal of unveiling the revised *Treemonisha* next year in San Francisco and then taking it on tour to other cities, including a production hosted by Washington Performing Arts in fall 2020.

"I wanted to stick closely to Joplin and create an entirely new story that furthers those themes that resonate with today," said Ross Manson, Volcano's artistic director. "As far as I can find, the libretto has never been touched. We're just giving Joplin the help he was denied."

The next step in *Treemonisha's* binational evolution comes in a 12-day workshop beginning Jan. 14 in Toronto, where 15 singers and a full orchestra will reveal the progress in the three-act work, which Joplin called an opera but Volcano's leaders say defies easy categorization. The group's big-umbrella ethos affirms that notion.

"I define theater as, well, anything," Manson said.

"This is a very unique opera," added Jannina Norpoth, who, with Jessie Montgomery, is arranging the jazz, blues, barbershop and gospel-inflected score, and interpolating into it other Joplin songs. "It lies outside the classical realm, even though it's classical music."

However you define the outcome, this ambitious overhaul, with commissions from WPA, London's South Bank Centre,

Canada's National Arts Centre, and arts organizations in California and Alberta, signals an upgrade in efforts to underline African American accomplishments in the fine arts. Joplin, who died penniless in 1917 at age 48, made his reputation as a composer of rag, but his forays into other musical forms went underappreciated. His fame faded as he lapsed into illness and dementia, and it wasn't until a new popularization of his rag compositions, such as *The Entertainer*, featured in the 1973 Oscar-winning movie *The Sting*, that a major Joplin resurgence occurred.

Manson got the idea for the *Treemonisha* project after seeing it in a Toronto concert hall. "The music was unlike anything I've heard," he said. "As a document, it's visionary. He was putting into classical form an American folk form."

It tells the story of a founding named Treemonisha, discovered under a tree by a former slave on the Texas-Arkansas border in the late 1800s. She grows up to lead a black community living on a plantation, espousing education as a means to achieve. Joplin's forte, however, was not narrative structure. "As an opera, it is naive, with a libretto virtually devoid of tension or literary ability," *New York Times* classical music critic Harold C. Shonberg wrote, after the premiere in Atlanta in 1972. "Joplin thought naturally in small forms, and his opera is a collection of set pieces rather than a work with any kind of thread running through it."

Bowen, Norpoth and Montgomery, aided by stage

director Weyni Mengesha, have set about inventing a story with a stronger spine to support the music, while retaining Joplin's vision. A critical pivot in their version presents *Treemonisha* as the tale of a fractured community of former slaves, half of whom stayed after the abolition of slavery and turned to the land and their Christianity. The others fled into the forests, embracing what Volcano describes as an "ancient spirituality." It becomes Treemonisha's crusade to bring the two communities together — to move forward together in a reconciliation with the past.

This has required not only a meticulous rewriting of the text, but also a sifting through Joplin's other compositions to bolster the integration of song and story.

"Jessie was the one who said [Joplin] had written dozens of marches," Bowen recalled. "And all of these marches lend themselves to all this drama, more of a tense feel." One of the pieces, *The Great Crush Collision March*, about a staged train crash in Crush, Tex., in the 1890s, was adapted for the new *Treemonisha*. Norpoth and Montgomery also added African instruments to incorporate more traditional sounds.

The next step, in what has become a painstaking reclamation process, is the Toronto workshop, to hear how these elements have coalesced and how firmly they fulfill Joplin's artistic blueprint.

"Joplin never had his day with his opera," Norpoth said. "It really was his life's work."

"In a way, we are resurrecting it," Bowen added. "But he was the orchestrator, 100 years ago." ■



Reclaiming Native Truth

A project to dispel America's myths and misperceptions

Project co-leaders: First Nations Development Institute and Echo Hawk Consulting

Editor's note: Reclaiming Native Truth: A project to dispel America's myths and misperceptions came to the attention of APAP through Caitlin Strokosch and Amanda Bankston at the National Performance Network. Each piece they submitted came from the NPN mission of "building a more just and equitable world through the arts." They selected articles

that were "daring investigations that unearth the victories and challenges of our colleagues working across the country" and that were "thought-provoking and fueled by powerful human narratives." APAP related in particular to the study reprinted here. At the last several conferences, APAP has strived to acknowledge indigenous land in rituals and

recognition throughout the convening. We know there is still much work to be done in creating a respectful environment for Native Americans, and that's why we include an excerpt from this research. It may not seem to have a delineated connection to our work in the arts, but we believe awareness is the first step toward change. Therefore, we encourage



you to read the full report, created by First Nations Development Institute and Echo Hawk Consulting, and use it to inform your work and community life. We present an excerpt here.

Introduction: Context setting

Reclaiming Native Truth is a national effort to achieve equity, inclusion and policy changes that will improve the lives of Native families and communities.

For the first time ever, we know what different groups of Americans — across

socioeconomic, racial, geographic, gender and generational cohorts — think (and don't know) about Native Americans and Native issues. We have learned how biases keep contemporary Native Americans invisible and/or affixed to the past and are holding back Native Americans from achieving political, economic and social equality, as well as accurate and respectful representation. We have also learned what types of messages will begin to shift public perception.

The diverse methodologies employed by a highly respected research team now provide Indian Country with an arsenal of data and findings to use as we work toward new narratives and social justice, fighting bias and structural racism. As you read the findings in this research, we expect that a few will feel like a confirmation of what we have always known, felt and experienced, but finally we have evidence and a frame of reference.

Some findings are surprising and invite us to continue to dig deeper to understand what they mean. Several findings give us hope and shine a light on opportunities we can immediately seize to create a path forward. In its totality, the research provides us with rich information we need to create strategies to shift the public dialogue so it is reflective of who we truly are. It empowers us to take control, exert tribal sovereignty and shape our own destiny. And it could not come at a more vital time.

The fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock, which coincided with the launch of *Reclaiming Native Truth*, built powerful momentum upon the heels of other local and national efforts and campaigns led by Native organizations.

Tension: Unity and Distinction

Americans value the “melting pot” and blend tribes into a homogeneous culture.

Native Americans are viewed as a homogeneous group, without an understanding of Native peoples as citizens of hundreds of nations with different languages, customs, traditions and laws. The number of sovereign nations within the United States is unknown to many focus group participants.

In media and social media, references to Native Americans rarely differentiate between tribes. Meanwhile, many Native peoples identify first as a member of their tribe, then as a Native American. They often don't relate to photos or stories about other tribes and are skeptical of any images or messages that use one tribe to represent all Indians.

Complicating and reinforcing this view is the fact that among non-Natives, “assimilation” is not a bad word and the mythology of the American “melting pot” is strong.

Among other communities of color, assimilation does not carry the same threat of cultural extinction and so is not perceived to be negative. Even if all Koreans in this country fully assimilated, for example, there would still be a Korea in Southeast Asia that would maintain their culture. Americans are almost instinctively inclusive, seeking sameness and working to find commonalities across cultures. They are proud that their nation represents so many different cultures. “Native Americans are just like us” was a phrase repeated often in focus groups.

This movement engaged Indian Country in new ways, from tribal leadership to the grassroots. And our research shows that it increased attention on and support for the rights of Native peoples from non-Natives across many sectors.

Yet coexisting with this positive force is a nationwide period of intense division, debate over identity and rights, and questions about the direction of our country. On a daily basis, tribes and Native individuals experience fallout from negative stereotypes in the media and the general public's misperceptions. Ignorance, bias, stereotyping, overt racism and outright invisibility fuel attacks on tribes. They limit our ability to protect sovereignty and treaty rights, shape and inform public policy, celebrate cultural identity, access resources, and protect the dignity and humanity of Native peoples.

In the face of immense challenges to fundamental tribal and individual rights, we have a historic opportunity to understand

and transform public perceptions of tribal nations and Native peoples across society. We have a chance to create a new narrative and support cultural shifts that can advance social and policy change to support racial equity and justice for Native Americans and tribal nations.

Shifting the narrative about Native peoples demands that we fully understand current public perceptions and the dominant narratives that pervade American society. These narratives, or stories, create people's overarching perception of Native Americans and inform their interpretation of new facts and experiences. Until we shift the broad public narrative, we cannot move hearts and minds on the issues that shape current reality for Native Americans.

On this journey, we stand on the shoulders of those who have been working diligently before us. It is our sincere hope that *Reclaiming Native Truth* provides the data, expert insights and collaborative space needed for organizations and movements to work together toward designing a collective vision, goals and strategies to shift the public narrative and create societal change leading to more opportunities for Native peoples.

From the Executive Summary

The research for *Reclaiming Native Truth* included multiple projects, used varied methods to engage broad groups of people, and generated detailed and specific findings. Across all of this, some overarching themes emerged — both those that confirm our assumptions and provide more detail about the challenges of the current narrative, and those that point us toward a path for change.

Inside Arts excerpts elements of the summary here. To read the entire report, visit:

rnt.firstnations.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/FullFindingsReport-screen.pdf

Romanticized Past, Invisible Present

Contemporary Native Americans are, for the most part, invisible in the United States.

Across the education curriculum, pop culture entertainment, news media, social media and the judicial system, the voices and stories of contemporary Native peoples are missing. Into this void springs an antiquated or romanticized narrative, ripe with myths and misperceptions. Focus group participants admit that they do not think about Native American issues and largely believe the population is declining. Many people outside of Indian Country lack personal contact with a Native American and even put the onus for this on Native Americans, describing them as insular.

As a result, people fall back on media tropes of the savage/noble warrior or reports of negative outcomes such as poverty and alcoholism rather than seeing Indians in everyday roles. They underestimate the degree of current discrimination. Even in Congress, most members have little knowledge of Native issues and rely heavily on peers with greater interest and expertise when casting votes. In the research sector, from academia to philanthropy, few notable studies in the public realm have been done about perceptions of Native peoples.

This lack of visibility and relevance in modern culture dehumanizes Native peoples and



erodes support for Native issues. As an example, college students unaware or in denial of the prejudice, bias and discrimination faced by Native Americans are less supportive of Native issues. The good news is that when people are exposed to accurate facts about Native American history and contemporary life, they believe the information, feel cheated that they didn't learn it in school, and quickly become more open to a new narrative. This effect is even more powerful when delivered by contemporary Native Americans.

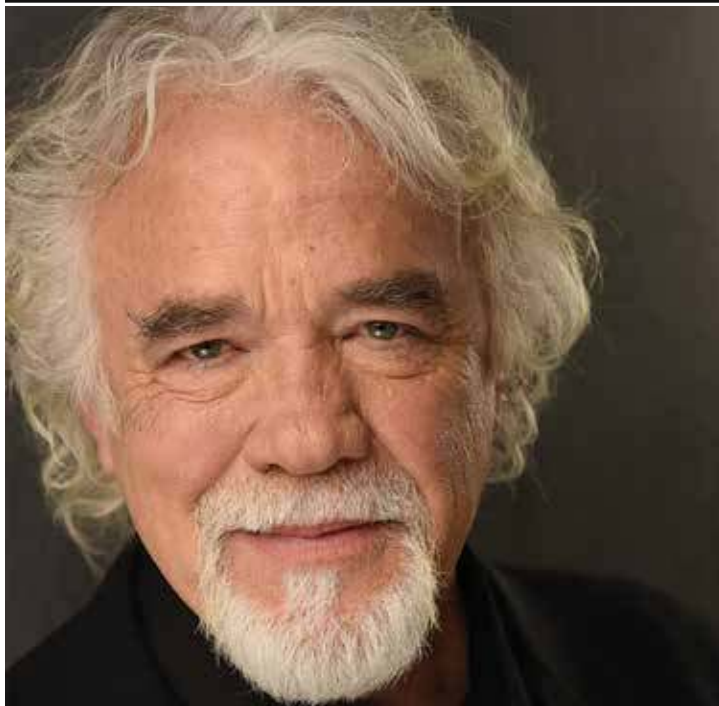
Limited personal experience and pervasive negative narrative set by others cement stereotypes

It is no surprise that non-Natives are primarily creating the narrative about Native Americans. And the story they adopt is overwhelmingly one of deficit and disparity. The most persistent and toxic negative narrative is the myth that many Native Americans receive government benefits and are getting rich off casinos. Another common narrative focuses on perceptions of unfairness, in particular around false perceived government benefits to Native Americans that are not offered to other racial and ethnic groups. This narrative can undermine relationships with other communities of color.

This persistent narrative has a complex origin. Certainly there is the impact of entertainment media and pop culture, as well as the biased and revisionist history taught in school. Layered on top of these factors are the effect of limited — or zero — experience with Native peoples and the confusion between tribal benefits and government benefits. Even within Indian Country we have adopted and reinforced this narrative. In court cases and philanthropic funding requests, we play up our deficits and disparities to make the case for support — an approach that is essential in these instances but that bleeds into the dominant narrative. This deficit framing reinforces negative stereotypes among the dominant culture and can harm the self-esteem and aspiration of our own people, and especially our children.

Excerpts from Reclaiming Native Truth were published with permission from First Nations Development Institute and Echo Hawk Consulting. !/!

...With each song,
Morris paints a vivid picture in the minds
of his listeners.
His voice is like a quiet storm...
- *Digital Journal*



“There are voices that transcend
seasons and settings.
Gary Morris has one of those voices.”
- *Dallas Morning News*



Les Miserables Recording Soundtrack
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“La Boheme”

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- *Rachel Worby, music director and conductor, Pasadena Pops
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BUILD THE NETWORK

group

A new preliminary report points to the need for listening more deeply to small and mid-sized presenters. The report's collaborators talk about the takeaways and next steps.

BY LINDA L. NELSON



The Association of Performing Arts Professionals is preparing to take the next steps around *Small and Mid-Sized Presenters in the United States: Stories and Perspectives*, its new report commissioned with support from the Wallace Foundation and shared in draft form with attendees of APAP|NYC 2019. This initial pilot study gives a first look at the realities and major changes small and mid-sized presenters are weathering.

Identified in collaboration with Western Arts Alliance and Arts Midwest, the 19 study participants included colleges, small universities and independent presenters. Half of the study group had budgets between \$1 million and \$2 million dollars. Of the 19, the majority have experienced substantial changes in their environment over the last five years including rapid community diversification, tensions related to partisan divisions, gentrification and audience evolution not keeping pace with demographic changes. The participants noted that the annual APAP|NYC conference was often cost prohibitive for them, yet, despite that, they continued to find ways to attend parts of the conference.

Some of the most successful programming strategies include partnerships with other organizations that aid in cultivating and retaining audiences and create programming that, for them, was ambitious or innovative. They reported challenges such as attracting younger and more diverse audiences, and agents' sometimes narrow perceptions and understanding of their venues, budgets or programming aspirations. Overall, the theme

of “small and mighty” emerged throughout the focus groups and most interviews. While the “small” notion reflected participants’ limited organizational capacity, the “mighty” idea reflects these presenters’ abilities to manage budgets, know their communities, present successful events and navigate their challenges.

The report was funded as part of an ongoing communication partnership between APAP and the Wallace Foundation through which the organizations develop and share audience development resources for the presenting field. The following interview is with the report’s author Suzanne Callahan, of Callahan Consulting for the Arts, and Krista Bradley, APAP director of programs and resources.

What are the key takeaways from this report?

Krista Bradley: We need to learn more and listen more deeply to small and mid-sized presenters. We need to find ways to raise up their voices, share their stories and serve more of their needs. This is not new for us. It’s been something that has bubbled up in membership and conference surveys over the years. The report underscores the need and inspires us to take some concrete action.

Suzanne Callahan: As the researcher, I highlight two takeaways. First, we must remember that this is only a beginning study, sharing the perspectives of 19 presenters. It is the first chapter in what will be a longer story about these presenters, as APAP continues its dialogue and research. Second,



Read the entire report on small and mid-sized presenters at: smallandmid-sized.apap365.org

I was struck with presenters' perceptions of being, as many of them said in the report, "small and mighty." They function as entrepreneurial forces who stretch their small budgets to pay artists and produce performances, wear multiple hats to do all of the work needed to present artists, and sometimes navigate polarized political environments in their communities.

What are the surprises in this report?

SC: I was surprised at these presenters' passion that their stories be told, and their urging that APAP advocate for their value. The extent of their local impact is not commonly known in the national arena. During the conference, when sharing findings from this study in two back-to-back sessions, I looked out at packed rooms where — with each slide presented and story told —

heads nodded and hands shot up. I sensed that small and mid-sized presenters are beginning to feel validated and heard by APAP.

KB: As a former small/mid-sized presenter, I was surprised to hear that so many others in the field felt the need for a special cohort, or a way for "like-sized presenters to meet, share information, discuss similar issues and solve common problems." One cannot underestimate the value of connecting with others sharing similar challenges and situations. There's much learning to be gained from each other. I also thought that the call for agents to rethink how they perceive and work with this constituency is important for our field and our performing arts ecosystem in general.

One of the report recommendations is about piloting a cohort for small and

mid-sized presenters, and you did this at APAP | NYC. Will this continue?

KB: Definitely. We piloted a number of affinity group meetings at this year's conference and all were well-received, especially the small and mid-sized presenters group. I like to say that the power of membership is the *collective* power of the membership: connecting with each other and the power of convening. We are now exploring how we might facilitate these affinity cohorts so people are connecting with each other, not just at the conference but year-round. How do we raise up the leadership and energy released in those sessions to create some working groups to help advise APAP and drive the work? The small and mid-sized presenter constituency is an important one in our field and for audiences in communities nationwide. I think we realize that,

and we want to raise the visibility of those organizations and what they're accomplishing as well as their needs.

What are your next steps based on the findings of the report?

KB: Because this study was formative, we know that its findings cannot be applied broadly to draw conclusions about the presenting field or all small and mid-sized presenters. Hence, we want to pursue a larger scale quantitative study of small and mid-sized presenters across the country. This is part of an effort to help us gather info about the field for the field. A wider study can help us identify further issues and themes, highlight the diversity of this constituency and inform further investment of resources and programming. We are also

looking at how to support and facilitate year-round affinity group networking for small and mid-sized presenters this year. And we'll be looking to program more sessions and tracks for this constituency at our 2020 conference. We're thankful for the support of our partners, particularly the Wallace Foundation, that funded the focus group study and realizes the importance of research and data to better inform decision-making. Readers should stay tuned, and we want folks to be involved in helping shape the next steps.

SC: Because one of the big takeaways is raising the visibility of small and mid-sized presenters, we'll also be sharing this report at South Arts' Performing Arts Exchange regional booking conference this fall.

KB: And we have webinars and future stories planned to share with the field. As mentioned in the final pages of the report, we are continually thinking of the ways that additional research could build on what was learned, to help determine if the initial findings hold true for the larger population of small- and mid-sized presenters.

We want to be sure we are deploying this information and raising up voices while simultaneously mining the field. **IA**

Linda L. Nelson is the deputy director for Portland Ovations in Maine. She was the founding executive director for Opera House Arts at Maine's 1912 Stonington Opera House for 17 years and most recently served as assistant director for the Maine Arts Commission. Her journalistic and new media roots date back to her 13-year tenure at Village Voice Media in New York City.



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FAIR GROUND



Practicing the elements of a liberating ecosystem

A look at five practices that can effect positive change.

BY AJA COUCHOIS DUNCAN, ELISSA SLOAN PERRY AND NATASHA WINEGAR

Alongside the painful and heart-wrenching events of the last few years, there have been a number of positive developments — many of which are culminations of efforts that began long ago. Movement actors are increasingly working in networked ways across issues to provide opportunities for systems-level change. Cross-movement collaborations between immigrant rights and economic development groups have resulted in promising opportunities for integrating immigrants' experiences into regional economic plans. Racial justice has become foundational to strategies for change among reproductive rights organizations, climate justice advocates, and

philanthropic institutions. These are just a few examples of the positive developments that bring us hope.

In *Emergent Strategy*, Adrienne Maree Brown, social justice author, facilitator and healer writes, “If we accept the scientific and science fictional premise that change is a constant condition of this universe, then it becomes important that we learn to be in right relationship with change.”

Through our work with nonprofit organizations, grantmakers, movement networks and other partners in the field, we have had the opportunity to work collaboratively with people deeply engaged in these efforts toward positive change. Through these partnerships, we are getting

increasingly clear that both deep and wide-scale change is found in the interconnected practices that weave together a set of five elements.

Continuous and synchronous attention to these elements is foundational to being in “right relationship” with change — to advancing transformation toward love, dignity and justice.

This excerpt is printed with the permission of Management Assistance Group, which works to strengthen individuals, organizations and networks to bring about transformative change. To read the entire article, visit: managementassistance.org/blog/practicing-the-elements-of-a-liberating-ecosystem

ELEMENTS

of a **THRIVING JUSTICE ECOSYSTEM**

THE PATHWAYS TO JUSTICE

Transformative change requires significant shifts in what we do, how we do it, and who we are while we are doing it. That means tending to five overlapping and mutually supportive elements critical to shifting all levels of systems toward love, dignity, and justice. It is in the interplay of these five elements that we find the roots of a thriving justice ecosystem.

ADVANCING DEEP EQUITY

Deep equity is being in the continuous and ongoing practices necessary for people and the planet to experience love, dignity, and justice. It is not a destination. Deep equity draws on recognizing and healing the negative impacts of our identities, stepping into the positive impacts of our identities, as well as the power of difference to access deeper understandings, approaches, and ways of being to transform people, institutions, and systems.

EMBEDDING MULTIPLE WAYS OF KNOWING

Multiple ways of knowing include the many ways we understand and engage with the world such as through our experiences, art, ancestral wisdom, learnings from the natural world as well as more rationalist approaches often overprivileged by U.S. dominant culture.

CULTIVATING LEADERFUL ECOSYSTEMS

Leaderful ecosystems are mutually supportive and highly equitable. They are systems where power is continuously built, shared, and moving. They recognize and grow leadership that supports, complements, and supplements toward a desired future state.

INFLUENCING COMPLEX SYSTEMS CHANGE

Complex systems change is change that is advanced when we are able to see both the whole system and its details, and embrace experimentation and emergence as principles of moving forward.

CENTERING INNER WORK

Inner work is our individual and collective practice of nurturing health, vitality, clarity, and wholeness in ourselves as people and as a people. It is what keeps us connected to our ability to be our better selves.





2017 Justice Parade, *Performing Statistics*, Richmond, Virginia. Photo by Mark Strandquist appears in *Creating Place: The Arts of Equitable Community*.

PLACING THE ARTS

An organization driven by equity uses a multimedia format to present artist stories about placemaking.

In 2018, Alternate ROOTS — the member-driven arts service organization that champions social and economic justice — published *Creating Place: The Art of Equitable Community Building*, a multimedia collection of explorations, reflections, challenges and offerings to the national dialogue around creative placemaking. Created by ROOTS' multidisciplinary member artists and cultural organizers who live across (and some, beyond) the U.S. South, the online project is a compendium of stories — articles, podcasts and films — about creative placemaking.

Within the national dialogue on creative placemaking, ROOTS sought to make a human-to-human connection, the alchemical sense of shared humanity that art can inspire and that inspires artmaking. Community power, unimagined possibilities and collective brilliance arise when we honor and make space for everyone's full selves to arrive, to be seen and valued. Stories such as *Creative Placetaking: It's a Thing!* and *Azule, a Place for the Arts: A Journey Towards Creative Placemaking* are among the multifaceted lineup in *Creating Place*.

The mission of ROOTS is equity, with a call for social and economic justice and the dismantling of all forms of oppression everywhere. It's a bold vision, and throughout the storytelling of the *Creating Place* collection, the organization shows its members living it out, on the ground, in their home communities, in creative and committed ways.

To read *Creating Place: The Art of Equitable Community Building*, visit: alternateroots.org/creating-place.

Adapted from the Creating Place introduction by Nicole Gurgel-Seefeldt, ROOTS manager of communications strategy. ||

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