Outreach and education practice as audience engagement strategy in the performing arts: An international perspective

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

School of Performance and Cultural Industries

September 2022

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

For my parents, who unconditionally support and encouraged me to chase my dreams and to explore the wonderful unknowns. And my grandparents, who overcame the difficulties in their lives and who taught me to be strong and courageous, and always look on the bright side of life. My memories with them are still a source of happy thoughts and inspirations for me.

For the co-pilot of my life, my loving husband, who crossed the ocean and land for me, built a family with me, and supported me from the very beginning of this journey to the end. I am very much looking forward our life together in the post-PhD era.

Special thanks to my supervisors, Professor Ben Walmsley and Dr Alice Borchi, who have always been there to support and guide me. Thank you for your patience, your kindness and your encouragement. Words cannot express my gratitude and appreciation to you.

Particular thanks to all those who helped me to disseminate the research requests and who agreed to take part in this research, without whose openness this thesis would lack its richness. Their willingness, generosity and cooperation was much appreciated. I would also like to thank those who rejected me, who made me question the meaningfulness of this research, and helped me regain confidence in my work.

Abstract

This thesis generates original insights into how performing arts organisations implement their outreach and education practices when engaging audiences. Its methodology includes an online survey, interviews with arts managers and practitioners, and case studies with the Barbican Centre in the UK and the Esplanade – Theatre on the Bay in Singapore. This mixed-methods approach aims to offer in-depth knowledge on what terminologies prevail in practice, the objectives of this practice, and how practice is being implemented, positioned, and valued in performing arts organisations. Findings suggest that outreach and education practice is on a trajectory from the democratisation of culture towards cultural democracy. In some organisations, outreach and education practice operates as audience engagement strategy, which plays a vital strategic and philosophical role. In others, it is marginalised, outsourced, or neglected altogether. The research reveals that outreach and education practice attempts to reconcile ideologically opposed objectives. A successful model of outreach and education practice that reflects the organisational missions and priorities requires coordination and effort from multiple departments as well as strong artistic leadership. Whether the practice is managed by a separate department or embedded within the artistic department, a balanced relationship with artistic programming is vital. The study argues that effective outreach and education represents an egalitarian approach and a reciprocal process that enables organisations to engage with their audiences and wider communities while co-creating meaningful arts experiences with them. The significance of this study is that it theorises and re-conceptualises the notion of outreach and education in the light of recent thinking in the areas of cultural democracy and cultural leadership in relation to cultural participation, which suggests there is an urgent need to recognise the leadership role that performing arts organisations can play in supporting cultural participation and promoting cultural democracy via outreach and education practice.

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List of Abbreviations

OEP	Outreach and Education Practice
PAOs	Performing Arts Organisations
ACGB	The Arts Council of Great Britain
NAAC	National Association of Arts Centres
NAC	National Arts Council (of Singapore)
NEA	The National Endowment for the Arts
SPPAs	Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts
SELL	Strategy to Encourage Lifelong Learning
ACCA	The Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (of Singapore)
VWOs	Voluntary Welfare Organisations

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Context

In the performing arts sector, several major forces and trends impact on the development and operation of performing arts organisations (PAOs), including: changes in consumer behaviour and patters of arts participation, shifting economic pressures on non-profit arts organisations, new priorities in economic and community development, and ebbs and flows in the sources of funds available to support the performing arts (Lambert and Williams, 2017). Over the last decade, the relationship between PAOs and their audiences has become considerably more complex. In this ever-changing environment, PAOs have to respond to shifting public expectations about what they should provide to their communities (Ibid.). As Bernstein (2014) emphasises, there are two major challenges that arts managers face today: firstly, reaching outward towards communities, "with a goal of creating relevance, understanding and accessibility and making art an integral part of people's everyday lives"; and secondly, looking inwards to advance their management and marketing according to the constantly changing environment, in order to become competent in responding to "the needs and interests of their public" (p.357).

Traditionally, from a marketing perspective, PAOs have operated on a product-led model, pushing their products down to their audiences. A paradigm shift from traditional conceptions and applications of marketing to relational notions and modes of engagement has taken place over the past two decades. The notion of engagement is increasingly seen as a psychological process that aims to develop intimate, meaningful and enduring relationships with audiences by involving them in interactive, co-created experiences (Walmsley, 2011). As Walmsley (2019) highlights, "engagement captures the more holistic and relational approach to marketing more accurately than the reductive and transactional notion of 'promotion'" (p.43). This relational approach offers a

distinct alternative to the ‘transactional’ models of marketing prevalent in mainstream arts management practice where one-way relationship and passivity of the audience was taken as a matter of course.

The last decade has seen a significant change in the discourse in the performing arts sector, with more practitioners and academics advocating an audience-centric approach which prioritises the needs of the audience (e.g. Brown and Ratzkin, 2011; Walmsley and Franks, 2011; ACE, 2012; Kershaw et al., 2012; Cuenca-Amigo and Biurrun, 2018; Hume, 2019). Butsch (2008) states that the notion of ‘the audience’ is usually employed as a generic term without much specificity or attention to the changing forms of spectatorship and participation. In publicly-funded culture, the public still tends to be seen in terms of ‘audiences’ or “attenders” and “non-attenders” (Holden, 2008, p.24). However, Zuboff and Maxmin (2004) argue that the individual is “the origin rather than the object of action” in contemporary society.

Some scholars suggest that the arts could play a more integral role in public and community life (e.g. Simon, 2010; Borwick, 2012; Lord and Blankenberg, 2015), as the arts are confidence-building, self-affirming, and identity-forming for individuals (McKernan and Mulchy, 2008) and can help society to create a sense of community and contribute to subjective, social, and economic well-being (McCarthy et al., 2004; Foster, 2009; McKernan and Mulchy, 2008). Given the potential benefits of the arts to both the individual and society, cultural organisations are encouraged to provide meaningful engagement for the general public not only as audiences but also as active participants involved in shaping the creation, presentation, and advancement of art in our society.

According to Jackson (2011), “participants derive enjoyment, aesthetic fulfilment, and often experience their involvement in cultural activity as part of their civic engagement – connecting to

neighbours, expressing their views and voice" (p.5). In addition, organisations also find that outreach to a wider public can expand their participant base and range of stakeholders, opportunities for partnerships with other institutions, and even opportunities for funding. Therefore, a wider understanding towards cultural participation can be beneficial for both the public and the cultural institutions. For this study, the term 'audience' refers not only to ticket buyers but also potential participants among the general public.

In addition, arts policy appears to be shifting its focus from influencing the supply and quality of the arts to increasing public access to and experience of the arts (McCarthy and Jinneett, 2001). Indeed, the relationship between the arts and the public has built in the language of cultural participation and policy. At the same time, pressure has increased on the publicly funded cultural sector to broaden in-house audiences and engage actively with external communities (Hewison, 2014). Many long-established arts and cultural organisations are thinking in new ways about how they not only present performances and exhibitions, but also provide new opportunities for members of the public to exercise their own creativity (Wilson et al., 2017). It therefore behoves PAOs to reconsider their missions and roles in cultural participation, by working towards enriching audiences' experiences and helping them to appreciate the value of the arts and culture in their lives and in society. This study argues that outreach and education practices (OEP) as an audience engagement strategy enables PAOs to support and facilitate cultural participation by opening up conversations and inviting everyone to take part in the arts.

Audience development becomes a solution to address the current dilemmas in publicly funded arts institutions across the world, as the audience tends to "increase in age and decrease in number". Some managers at arts and culture organisations are aware that the arts face challenges concerning diminishing and ageing audiences (NEA, 2012). A report of Canada Council for the Arts in 2002

warned that, “the ageing trend in Canada may have additional repercussions: there are no guarantees that the younger, less populous age brackets will adequately replace current arts audiences” (p.9). *Factors in Canadians’ Arts Attendance in 2010* reported that 33% of people aged 15 to 34 attended the theatre while 67% of those age 35 and above did so (Hill Strategies Research, 2012). In the US, the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts reported that the arts faces challenges concerning diminishing and ageing audiences (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). The Audience Agency chief executive Anne Torreggiani mentioned that, in the UK, while the average age of theatregoers is increasing, audiences are not being replenished with young people, who over the next decade could instead look to other art forms (Torreggiani, 2017). The Audience Agency’s research in 2016 suggested that the average age of theatre audiences will increase considerably over the next decade: the largest age group for theatre audiences was people between the ages of 65 and 74, with the average age of an audience member being 52 (The Audience Agency, 2016). Accordingly, audience development was prescribed to many arts managers as a straightforward remedy for declines in arts consumption (Stallings and Mauldin, 2016).

Similarly, audience engagement has become a prime concern of the contemporary arts industry and funding bodies, for instance, the Arts Council England, the Australia Council, the Urban Institute, the Wallace Foundation, and the RAND Corporation (Radbourne et al., 2013). The research reports commissioned or produced by these institutions drew two major conclusions:

> first, that building audiences is the key to the survival and well-being of the arts sector; second, that many audiences want to be more thoroughly engaged in an arts experience than is conventionally supposed (Radbourne et al., 2013, p.4).

However, as Borwick (2012) suggests, “any industry that demands growth of its consumer base for survival at a time when it is faced with what appears to be a saturated market must undergo fundamental re-evaluation of itself” (Chapter 2, no pagination). Attracting audiences to the arts and

developing new marketing strategies is not enough; as DiMaggio and Mukhtar (2004) suggest, arts organisations must become more inclusive and more creative about how they connect with the public. Thus, how to go about "broadening, deepening and diversifying" the audience experience become a fundamental concern in many arts organisations' audience engagement strategies (Wallace Foundation, 2012, p.4).

Brown and Ratzkin (2011) define audience engagement as "a guiding philosophy in the creation and delivery of arts experiences in which the paramount concern is maximising impact on participants" (p.5). Others refer to this kind of work as "enrichment programming" or "adult education" (Ibid.). In addition, other terms are deployed to describe similar works by different organisations with different priorities in their missions, for example learning programmes, learning and participation, taking part, educational and community programmes, creative learning, community engagement, and creative engagement. This thesis will explore how PAOs describe their OEP and what terms that are prevailing in practice.

Some people consider arts engagement as a correlate of community engagement (Stalling and Mauldin, 2016), specifically, a mission strategy of building deep relationships between the arts and their communities for the purpose of achieving mutual benefit in which the arts and community are equal partners (Borwick, 2015). It could be argued that community and audience engagement are two inter-related ideas existing on a single continuum, where the former aims to serve the broader community and the latter aims to serve those who already attend the arts. Robert Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, claims that: "The challenge is not whether to build communities or audiences but how to build communities and audiences together" (Bernstein, 2017, p.358). For this thesis, audience engagement will be defined as a meaningful process to build sustainable relationships not only with current audiences but also with a broader community – the

general public – and to improve accessibility by creating varieties and depths of engagement. As such, this study will frame engagement at the centre of a dialogue about mission and strategy (McDaniel and Thorn, 1997) in terms of participation-building and long-term development.

Holden (2008) asserts, "there has been a long and healthy focus on growing audiences by widening access and promoting diversity" (p.27). However, the problem is, as Jancovich (2015) notes, that arts organisations are trying to increase participation in their existing activities rather than being willing to change how they engage. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the quality of the processes for delivering and providing access to the arts and what quality outcomes might be. At present, there is no answer for questions regarding the quality of participation: "who is involved in defining what 'quality' might mean, what forms of value or outcome are generated, what criteria might be used to determine success or failure" (Price, 2015, p.27). Indeed, it behoves PAOs to reflect on whether the participation opportunity they provide is necessarily useful and worthwhile for participants and, furthermore, what other opportunities they can create, and co-create, with participants.

The primary focus of this thesis is to generate original insights into how PAOs utilise OEP as an audience engagement strategy in the performing arts sector from an international perspective. By understanding how PAOs implement their OEP when engaging audiences today and critically investigating the thinkings and ideologies behind such practice and how the factors of organisational structure and management as well as cultural policy affect OEP, the thesis explores the following questions: How do PAOs describe their practice in outreach and education? What are the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with outreach and education practice? How do PAOs perceive, position and value outreach and education practice in their organisations? What are

the implications for the future development of outreach and education practice in the performing arts?

1.2 Framing Outreach and Education Practice

This section will explore how the terms ‘outreach’ and ‘education’ are being understood in academic literature and understand how OEP is located in the context of cultural participation. To some, the terms ‘outreach’ and ‘education’ are outdated and problematic which represent an unequal relationship between arts organisations and people to be ‘reached’ and/or ‘educated’. It is the argument of this thesis that, it is not the terms that are problematic, it is the understanding towards such terms that are outdate, and the underpinning thinking that is problematic sometimes. Therefore, there is a need to better understand OEP and to re-conceptualise outreach and education.

As an umbrella term, ‘participation’ covers a broad taxonomy of engagement that is decided by different “intent, motivation, ownership and opportunity” which includes “community arts”, “outreach and education”, “socially engaged art”, “instrumental art”, and “amateur art” (Price, 2015, p.27). However, there are no clear definitions that emphasise the differences between the different practices. Among these categories ‘outreach and education’ is practised by many publicly funded arts organisations as a mean for justification and continuity of funding, or in some cases, as the requirement for arts organisations to build community relationships. This kind of activity enables a culture of artistic involvement where access was previously limited. At the same time, it augments school-based programmes and plays a significant role in improving the vibrancy and sustainability of the non-profit sector (Webb, 2017). Outreach and education practice (OEP) has become a responsibility that arts group have willingly and happily taken on, and the results have been impressive (Christiansen, 1994).

The history of arts education and community outreach programmes in the US can be traced back to the 1980s and 1990s (Conner, 2004), and in the UK they can be traced to the Theatre-in-Education movement in the 1960s and community arts movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The term 'outreach' is used to describe the efforts of orchestras, opera companies and other arts organisations to extend their work into the realm of education (Pitts, 2007). Over the last decade, there has been an expansion of 'outreach' or 'partnership' programmes by PAOs, working at local or national level to promote integration between arts providers and the wider community in the UK (Ibid.).

In the context of audience development, Kawashima (2006) describes outreach as bringing arts projects "outside" to "people unlikely to attend" and argues that it has an emphasis on social aims rather on the expansion of the arts audience markets; in her own words, outreach refers to "various projects to take the arts from their usual venues to places where those with little or no access to the arts live" (p.57). There is a broad range of activities under the umbrella of 'outreach' in recent practice; people may use the term to refer to different activities with varied goals, for example, outreach as a form of marketing (extended marketing), or as democracy, as social inclusion or outreach as a funding requirement. In this study, 'outreach and education practice' is used as an umbrellas term to refer to a range of engagement activities designed to reach out to the public (including potential audiences and non-audiences) and to enrich their arts experience.

Current outreach practice tends to target those on the margins of society, for example, people with disabilities and mental health issues, minority ethnic groups, the unemployed, and young people (Hayes and Slater, 2002). In this study, 'outreach' refers to engagement activities designed to reach out not only to 'harder to reach' groups mentioned above but also to the wider public who think that 'art is not for people like them'. Outreach seems to be less of a concern in recent literature, which sees it as a concept that "refers more to the tactical domain than to a kind of relationship between

audiences and cultural contents" (Bollo et al., 2017). Indeed, outreach is the first step in building a relationship and engaging with the public – this is why 'outreach' should be put before the next movement, 'education'. The word 'education' in the term 'outreach and education practice' in this study refers to 'audience education' or 'arts education' activities that offer a wide variety of arts experience designed to provide historical and/or cultural context for artworks as well as to develop skills of aesthetic perception and interpretation of art.

In Kawashima's theory (2000), as shown in *Table 1*, audience education means to enrich the experience of the existing audience, whereas taste cultivation is for broadening their cultural scope. It is arguable that taste cultivation is also a form of education. Even though audience education and taste cultivation come in different forms, they share the same educational function. Besides, they both "start from understanding what else the existing audience might be interested in" and "giving the existing audience some additional or enhanced benefits" (Kawashima, 2006, p.3). Thus, taste cultivation as a function of education should belong to audience education. However, as Bourdieu (1986) asserts, cultural tastes and practices could be powerfully discriminating social agents, therefore, the aim of audience education in taste cultivation could be risky in terms of producing inequality, which is on the opposite side of the aim of "reaching out and increasing access" in OEP. Therefore, it is worth noting that arts education is not limited to existing audiences in this research.

Table 1: Different Types of Audience Development
(Kawashima, 2000, p. 8)

Different types of audience development.

	Target	**Form**	**Purpose**[a]
Extended Marketing	Potential attendee, Lapsed attendee	The same product offered, but with improvement to cater for the target	Financial, artistic
Taste Cultivation	Existing audience	Introduction to different art forms and genres	Artistic, financial (and educational)
Audience Education	Existing audience	The same product offered with extensive education	Educational (and financial)
Outreach	People unlikely to attend (e.g., in deprived communities)	Bringing arts projects (often participatory) outside	Social

Note: [a]Only refers to the main one(s), but not excluding others.

The complexity of the relationship between 'arts' and 'education' can be seen in various ways. There has been a fair amount of confusion around the terms 'arts education', 'arts in education' and 'arts and education'. In *Through, With, and In the Arts and Education*, Modrick (2011) defines the different terms regarding the arts and education:

> "Arts education" applies to leaning in the art forms; "arts in education" refers to "a variety of strategies through which students are engaged in artistic or creativities to address other educational goals in addition to leaning in an art form", it represents "the skills development in the arts disciplines and the production of new works of art; "arts and education" extends to goals and values beyond "arts in education", and it includes ideas involving economic relationship and community development claims; "education through art" stands for "strategies that engage people in the creative process" to provide a mean of educational engagement, including arts organisations, with their different content and missions, as educational resources, as well as involving artists. (pp.169-170)

Accordingly, 'arts education' in this research includes 'arts in education' for students, 'arts and education' for communities, as well as 'education through art' for people engaging in the creative process. Therefore, 'audience education' is understood as a means to enrich the experience of not only existing audiences but the wider general public.

As Bauman (2012) claims, arts organisations are responsible for cultivating audiences' artistic growth. Whether as adults or as young people, the ability to engage in reflective dialogue about the arts experience is empowering, as it places the audience in the position of actively interpreting and actively constructing meaning (Reason, 2013). Regarding the pleasure of understanding, Feldman (1995) writes, "we get pleasure from understanding, from knowing what it is in art that causes our gratification… the satisfaction we get from art depends on two things: the quality of the object itself, and our capacity to use our experience in seeing it" (p.469). For participation to be effective, a process of education must take place, and this should be enjoyable and rewarding (Lowndes et al.,

2006; Cronin et al., 2003). This will benefit both the organisation and the individuals involved by nurturing and giving expression to people. Therefore, PAOs could use OEP as a means to fulfil the audience's experience.

1.3 Research Rationale

From a cultural policy perspective, state patronage of the arts had a long history and the ministries of culture supported museums, cultural centres and national performing arts companies on the European continent. In the middle of the 20th century, there emerged a national arts policy model that sought to remove politicians from direct influence and involvement in the funding decisions that support artistic activity (Upchurch, 2016). The UK, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, the USA, and Australia were the first countries to establish this national arts policy model: the arts council. The establishment of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies was the culmination of a 'movement' that sought recognition for culture and the arts as central to human life and society, which had grown internationally since the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Article 27 of the Declaration states that "everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of the community, and to enjoy the arts" (Upchurch, 2016, pp.1-2). This was the beginning of the 'arts council movement' or the 'clerisy movement'; the ideology of 'clerisy' was inherited from the 19th-century reform movements in England and emphasised the need for education among the middle and lower classes. It held that an educated, enlightened minority of men would instruct the majority, and that the health of society depended on the presence of this minority, who, by their knowledge of 'transcendent' ideas, theories and histories, could diagnose the causes of tensions in society, predict outcomes, and prescribe solutions to those who governed. Many believed that, as a class, they had a social responsibility: they were guardians of an inheritance of ideas that should be shared with future guardians and the wider public. To some extent, the policy model of the arts council and its

cultural thinking have influenced the inception of outreach and education practice and the development of such practice around the world. The decision to undertake this doctoral research in the UK and to mainly focus the literature of cultural policy in the UK was therefore based principally on its tradition and legacy in the field of cultural policy, the international acknowledgement of the country as a point of reference in this area (Upchurch, 2016).

A new segmentation of cultural consumption based on the Taking Part Survey data shows that "the two most highly culturally engaged groups account for only 15% of the general population and tend to be of higher socio-economic status" (The Warwick Commission, 2015, p.33). Even though many arts organisations have developed effective strategies to engage with people who do not usually participate in the recognised, legitimised and institutionalised arts, there remains a danger that the existing approaches of these organisations being an established part of the arts reinforces the inequality (Wilson et al., 2017). Widening cultural participation and engagement in the arts and culture sectors is recognised as an urgent priority for policy making. Many arts organisations are experimenting with a wide range of innovative programmes and activities to attract and retain audiences (Brown and Ratzkin, 2011). Recent research on audience segmentation and their communication preferences and habits is leading to new ideas about how arts institutions can reach the people they want to attract as attenders and potential ticket buyers (Sherwood, 2009). However, many arts and cultural organisations have yet to forge a truly concerted response to the challenge of embedding the values and practices of relevance and openness in the core of their organisations. In light of this, PAOs are required to consider what fundamental changes are needed to address the challenges. Therefore, this study aims to explore how PAOs can support cultural participation and create opportunities through OEP for the general public that open up conversations and invite everyone to take part in the arts.

Conceptions of cultural engagement and arts participation vary widely, while terms such as audience development, audience engagement and audience enrichment are rarely well defined. Moreover, the boundaries between arts marketing and these terms are blurring, and "the incapacity of old paradigms and models lead us into an uncertain scenario" (Bollo et al., 2017, p.49). There is a need for greater precision in interpreting the terms for a highly nuanced area of work as the practice changes and develops. For instance, marketing is no longer only about selling and using tactics to generate demand, and it should be considered as "the marketing of meaning embedded in the organisation's mission, vision, and values" (Kotler, 2010, p.45). Furthermore, as Bernstein (2007) suggests, audiences increasingly want to shape their own experience; therefore, PAOs should be focused on empowering audiences rather than targeting them.

Mauldin and colleagues (2016) assert that language changes over time and space, which is why terms that were once acceptable are no longer appropriate; terms that are acceptable in some communities are not in others; terms that are used in one country may not apply in other countries. Furthermore, the gap in perception of OEP between academia and practice is considerable. Terms that are discussed in academia may not be widely used in practice; similarly, the same terms might be used to refer to different things in practice. The change of terminologies is important, since words "shape, reflect and shape again how we think" (Matarasso, 2015, p.1), and this corresponds to the change in contemporary practices. As Brown and Ratzkin (2011) state, "there is an urgent need for a shared vocabulary and a coherent conceptual framework that makes sense of the many different approaches to audience engagement" (p.12). In the fog of meanings, the terminology raises an important point for arts organisations to consider: whether audience engagement is really about building a database of potential ticket buyers and donors as a long-term payoff. Therefore, this thesis will seek to refine terminologies and to understand how OEP is underpinned by core

concepts, such as audience development, engagement and enrichment, and to bridge the gap in perceptions between academia and practice.

The term ‘outreach’ has been heavily critiqued mainly by community arts movements for being patronising and suggesting that there is a kind of hierarchy and a call that needs to reach out. For some, outreach implies an old fashion method of cultural democratisation, and it assumes “a centre, a source and a destination or target” (Cleveland, 2012, p.348). Accordingly, the term ‘outreach and education’ suggests an unequal relationship which places the “outreacher” in the centre and the “reached” in the periphery and in need of service (Borwick, 2012, Chapter 3, no pagination) or to be “educated”. However, as Price (2015) acknowledges, the models of outreach represent a significant diversity of philosophy and practice. For example, audience outreach – “outreach to encourage broader participation” (Szántó, 2008, p.8); community outreach – outreach to build community connections and relationships with community (Glow, 2013); and “outreach to people of diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds” (Szántó, 2008, p.11). There is nothing inherently wrong with the term ‘outreach’ and it could be neutral. There are different philosophies and objectives behind these models. This research thus aims to explore the key objectives of PAOs in engaging people through OEP.

Modrick (2011) categorises educational programmes in the arts into three types: (1) instructional programmes, aimed at “those who intend to pursue careers as artists”; (2) enrichment programmes for “hobbyists”, and (3) programmes for children and young people. This typology is limited as it does not cover the wider public, including those who are not interested in the arts. Most arts organisations tend to attract people who have already decided to attend the performance or exhibit and typically do not reach those not already interested in or familiar with the art form. For example, a ten-year study of symphony orchestras funded by The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

found that “traditional audience education efforts, designed to serve the uninitiated, are used primarily by those who are most knowledgeable and most involved with orchestras” (Wolf, 2006, p.6). By exploring the perceptions of PAOs towards the audience, this research aims to analyse different ideologies of PAOs. As Lindelof (2015) argues, how arts institutions perceive their audiences affects how they imagine the relationship between the art form, the audience, and the institution. Thus, how arts managers/PAOs perceive their audiences, to some extent, determines and reflects the range of works carried out by PAOs.

In the beginning of the 21st century, the importance of creating more opportunities for engagement with arts events was neglected by traditional arts institutions, and while some community-building initiatives were invented to increase opportunities for people to enjoy the arts, these efforts were predominantly focused on school-aged children rather than on adults (Conner, 2004), with the creation of numerous programmes, camps, courses, events for young people. These include membership programmes and schemes for young people that give them discounted tickets to performances as well as exclusive events and creative opportunities. For instance, Student Pulse, a discounted ticket and loyalty scheme for classical music concerts, run jointly by nine of London’s orchestras and venues; and the Under 30s scheme at Opera North which gives 19-29-year-olds and full-time students access to discount tickets and special events. PAOs are offering considerably more educational programming, but programmes for adult audiences of arts organisations are still limited in scope and reach (Zakaras and Lowell, 2008). Therefore, this study aims to examine how PAOs complement school arts education for children and young people as well as create arts experiences for adults in building cultural participation through OEP.

In a study commissioned by The San Francisco Foundation and Grants for the Arts, Brown and Ratzkin (2011) suggest that a more holistic planning model of audience engagement is to see

engagement programmes and activities as a core component of artistic programming. In their study, some executive and artistic directors believed that "audience engagement is a foundational principle of artistic programming, not a by-product" (p.10); furthermore, around half of the respondents from the Bay Area acknowledged that "engagement and enhancement programmes and activities are considered in coordination with artistic programme planning, and can influence artistic decisions" (p.31). The research revealed the fundamental interdependence of artistic and engagement programming. However, based on my observation in the practical field, engagement programmes and activities are often designed and delivered by a single department (marketing or education) rather than a team working across a performing arts organisation. There are many initiatives "without much thought as to how they fit into a larger strategic framework" (Brown and Ratzkin, 2011, p.10). As Bernstein (2014) concludes: "in the climate of separation between departments, huge opportunities are potentially lost" (p.362). Furthermore, she suggests that organisations should create a collaborative environment that encourages interdepartmental initiatives and allows people to work together to realise the same goal, rather than having completely separate goals and budgets. Accordingly, this thesis aims to explore how different teams/departments work together on curating and implementing OEP, how PAOs position and value OEP in their organisations, what relationship between OEP and artistic programmes in PAOs, how different structures and models of OEP affect the effectiveness, and how PAOs can implement such practice more strategically.

Holden (2008) states that there are three integrated spheres of culture: publicly funded, commercial, and home-made. People's engagement with culture and art takes place in those different settings and through different models of provision, with the boundaries between them becoming ever more porous (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016). For the purposes of this research, the thesis will limit the discussion of OEP to the publicly funded sector, as reaching out to broader and larger audiences is often central to the mission of publicly funded arts organisations (Kotler and Schess, 1997). The

thesis will focus on large and mid-scale PAOs which have greater influence and responsibility to the local or national cultural landscape. That is not to say small-sized organisations can be ignored, but as bigger organisations are likely to have specific departments/teams and strategies dedicated to creating such initiatives, large and mid-scale PAOs will be the primary objects of this study. This study does not address the differences between different forms of performing arts, rather it is concerned with the nature of 'live-ness' (as an essential characteristic) as a shared experience that the performing arts offers. Therefore, performing arts centres are selected as case studies in this research. In addition, this research includes both producing and presenting companies in the performing arts, for example, theatres, music festivals, concert halls and opera houses, dance companies, and orchestras. The collected data from these performing arts organisations will be analysed and used to understand OEP today.

A lot of good practice in outreach and education work is happening around the world, particularly in the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Singapore and Hong Kong. These nations and regions are on the forefront of developing thinking, theories and practices in this realm. However, there are still many countries/regions in this area that have had little research conducted on them. Despite existing information gaps that hinder good practise to spread between different regions, some global professional networks, such as the International Society for the Performing Arts, the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, and the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, are helping to fertilise ideas and facilitate practices between countries. This thesis investigates OEP from an international perspective and covers the work of PAOs in 20 countries across six continents: Asia, North America, South America, Africa, Europe and Australia/Oceania.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study aims to generate original insights into OEP as an audience engagement strategy in the performing arts sector from an international perspective. The findings will seek to refine terminologies and to clarify the differences in how scholars and practitioners communicate and improve their understanding of OEP. Furthermore, the findings will conclude key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with OEP. By exploring the different structures and models of OEP, the research will consider the process of how OEP is being planned, delivered and valued in PAOs in different organisations. Finally, it will identify implications for the future development of such practice in the performing arts. This research theorises such practice and indicates a range of implications for the development of future practice that will help practitioners, researchers and policymakers understand OEP better, and encourage them to think more broadly, creatively and strategically about how the performing arts might go on engaging audience-participants in this form in the future.

To contextualise the research, the cultural participation debate around the Democratisation of Culture and Cultural Democracy is used as a conceptual framework. The aim of traditional outreach and education was "to reach out and educate people with a view to engaging them in the process of deciding about programming and direction" (Jennings and Jones, 2010, p.29). The thesis aims to re-conceptualise outreach and education and reclaim the practice away from an outmoded notion. The primary focus of this thesis is, therefore, an empirical investigation into how PAOs implement their OEP when engaging audiences, and subsequent analysis of its relation with organisational structure and management as well as with cultural policy, in order to gain an understanding of the broader rationale for, and implications of, the inception of the practice in the performing arts.

1.5 Overview of Chapters

This introductory chapter has framed outreach and education practice within the field of cultural policy and arts management. This chapter considered questions around cultural participation, audience and definition, the notion of audience development and engagement, and the role of PAOs in the arts and society, outlining the rationales and objectives for the research. This section concludes Chapter 1 with an overview of the remaining chapters.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The chapter opens with a brief outline of a discussion of the arts and culture. This provides the wider context within which to discuss the notions of arts participation, cultural participation and audience engagement in the arts and culture. The literature review then considers the policy model of the Arts Council and its cultural thinking, in terms of the origins of the practice in outreach and education. This section aims to examine how the concept of 'outreach' has been shaped in British cultural policy. The chapter proceeds with an overview of the Arts Centre Movement, to explore its relationships with the development of OEP in the performing arts and to highlight the changing roles of PAOs in society. The following section on understanding cultural participation provides a discussion about the different ways in which cultural participation has been constructed, understood and represented in the existing research. In doing so it highlights the problem of cultural non-participation and provides the wider context within which to analyse the relations of OEP with cultural policy, including topics of community arts, the discourse of access, participation and engagement, and arts education. In this section, the discussion of the cultural participation debate around the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy provides the conceptual framework for this research.

The literature review then moves to discuss the notion of the audience along with its associated concepts of audience development, audience engagement and audience enrichment. This discussion seeks to explore how OEP is underpinned by these core concepts, which aims to provide a basis for further discussions in the analytical chapters. The following section on the new role of cultural leadership in audience engagement highlights the changing relationship between PAOs and their public in terms of participation. It argues that outreach nowadays implies the leadership role that PAOs can play in societies and how reshaping the relationship between the arts and society has become a responsibility of cultural leadership. This would require new models of distributed arts leadership, leading to organisational renewal (Glow, 2012).

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological approach adopted by the study, discusses the research design and the criteria for choosing the participants and case studies, and outlines the methods of collecting and analysing data adopted to support answering the research questions. Finally, this chapter considers the limitations of this study as well as ethical issues and my position as a researcher.

Chapter 4 and **Chapter 5**

These two chapters are dedicated to presenting the empirical findings that emerged mainly from the online survey and interviews. The data from the case studies that are relevant to discussed themes in these two analytical chapters are also included. **Chapter 4: Understanding Outreach and Education Practice and the Audience** explores the origin and development of OEP from the perspective of arts managers, practitioners, and academics in this field; and discusses the terminology of OEP in practice and the paradigm shift from audience development to audience engagement. By investigating how performing arts managers perceive their audiences, it offers

deeper insight into the underpinning ideologies and philosophies of OEP. **Chapter 5: Strategy and Management of Practice in Performing Arts Organisations** examines the divergent objectives behind OEP in PAOs and explores questions including: where OEP sits within PAOs, what the relationship is between OEP and artistic programming, how the management and structural factors of the organisation have an impact on OEP, and what issues and challenges might occur when implementing OEP in PAOs.

Chapter 6 and **Chapter 7**

These two chapters focus on two case studies: the Barbican Centre and the Esplanade - Theatre on the Bay. The case studies aim to offer in-depth knowledge about how OEP is being implemented and positioned in each organisation, and to examine how their local cultural policy has shaped OEP. The two case study organisations are high-profile performing arts centres with widely acknowledged examples of excellent practice in engaging audiences. Both are the products of their times and policy contexts, and place audience engagement at the centre of their missions or visions, albeit with different models and focuses in their practices. This therefore allows for a consideration of what is unique and what is common across the two cases (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Chapter 8: Conclusions

This concluding chapter provides a summary of findings and further implications drawn from the study's research questions. It also includes a discussion of the study's original contribution to knowledge and recommendations for future research. A reflection on the methodological approach and methods, as well as on the research process in light of my research journey and professional experience ends the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To gain an understanding of the broader rationale for, and implications of, the inception of outreach and education practice (OEP) in the performing arts, it is important to examine the relevant literature on cultural policy and arts management. The chapter starts with a brief discussion on the correlated notions of ‘arts’ and ‘culture’, with the aim to provide a wider context within which to discuss the notions of cultural participation and audience engagement in the performing arts sector. The chapter then proceeds to examine the policy model of the Arts Council and its cultural thinking, and it aims to explore how the concept of ‘outreach’ has been shaped in British cultural policy. By reviewing the Arts Centre Movement, it will examine how this movement had an impact on the development of OEP in the performing arts as well as on the changing roles of performing arts organisations (PAOs) in society. The following section will provide a thorough discussion on how cultural participation has been constructed, understood and represented in the existing literature. In doing so it tries to situate OEP within cultural participation debates, and to explore how the topic of community arts, the discourse of access, the notions of participation and engagement, the concepts of the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy, and the correlations between participation and arts education are related to OEP. The literature review then moves to discuss the notion of ‘the audience’, along with its associated concepts of audience development, audience engagement and audience enrichment. This section seeks to understand how OEP is underpinned by these core concepts in literature, and how such initiatives are relevant to arts experience and the rising concept of co-creation. Finally, through reviewing the arts management literature on cultural leadership, it will discuss how PAOs can take the new role in cultural leadership to support cultural participation and to create a “taking part society” (Jennings and Jones, 2010).

2.1 The Arts and Culture

In *Arts Management* (2010), Derrick Chong noted that in order to examine the treatment of 'art', it is instructive to include the complementary term 'culture'. These two terms are highly correlated: in the 20th century, one of the principal dual meanings of the word 'culture' was 'the arts' – "an established canon of art forms including opera, ballet, poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, music and drama" (Holden, 2011, p.181). In *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), culture is described by Matthew Arnold as "a study of perfection" by which he means a moral, intellectual and spiritual journey and process of civilising and humanising. In this sense, opportunities to achieve "perfection" should be available to "the raw and unkindly masses of humanity" and cannot be restricted to a privileged minority (no pagination). For Arnold, a 'cultured' person is educated and knowledgeable about philosophy, literature, painting and music, which he constitutes as the "best" that "has been thought and known" (Ibid.). However, Arnold's hierarchical view of culture is restrictive as it limits the meaning of culture to 'high' culture, scholarship and the arts, as opposed to 'low', 'popular', or 'mass' culture.

Raymond Williams famously extended the scope of culture and stressed its multiple meanings, providing three definitions:

> 1. a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development;
> 2. a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group or humanity in general;
> 3. the works and practice of intellectual and especially artistic activity. (1976, p.90)

In this regard, the traditional forms of the performing arts – classical music, ballet, opera, theatre and dance – are included in the third interpretation of the concept, and are sometimes considered as 'high culture'. Regarding the distinction between 'high' and 'low' culture, DiMaggio (1982) states that this is based on constructed principles of classification which first emerged in Boston between the 1850s and 1900s through "the effort of urban elites to build organisational forms that isolated

and differentiated high from popular culture" (p.374). There has been some prejudice against popular art, as Belfiore and Bennett (2008) write that "'high' art can be expected to improve people in a number of different ways", whereas 'low', 'popular', or 'mass' art is perceived to have the opposite effect and is generally charged with being "bad for you" (p.32). However, this opposition is a modern phenomenon, and the idea of positive/negative is not relevant when focusing on the intrinsic qualities of the art forms themselves; it is rather the result of intellectual elaborations and value-judgements (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008). Carey (2005) highlights that preconceptions and prejudice are dying very slowly:

> Taste is so bound up with self-esteem, particularly among devotees of high art, that a sense of superiority to those with 'lower' tastes is almost impossible to relinquish without risk of identity-crisis. (p.54)

As Bourdieu (1986) asserts, cultural tastes and practices are not neutral, innate or private but powerfully discriminating social agents. Culture defines who we are and who we might become by virtue of our "customary difference" (Martin and Wilson, 2014) from others, which is the terrain on which debates over 'high', 'low' and 'popular' culture have been fought (Wilson et al., 2018). The traditional art forms such as classical music, ballet, opera, and theatre were defined and enjoyed by a group of intellectual elite, including "the clerisy", those "intellectual generalists, grounded in classical philosophy and literature and inheritors of a canonical tradition who accepted their social responsibility to diagnose society's ills and prescribe its treatments" (Upchurch, 2016, p.113). Holden (2008) emphasises the dual meaning of culture in the late 20th century: it refers to "the high arts of opera, ballet, poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, music and drama"; and in a more common and anthropological context, to "encompass all of the practice and objects through which a society expresses and understands itself" (p.10).

There has been much debate around the role and value of the arts and culture in contemporary society, however, as Jennings and Jones (2010) reveal, "it has generally ricocheted between the closed walls of institutions, funding bodies and policy makers, failing to address and involve that crucial group – the public themselves" (p.26). Holden (2015) sees culture as an ecology which includes three highly interactive spheres – publicly funded culture, commercial culture, and homemade culture. He argues that the supply-side of culture often neglects the important role of audience, participants and the public who are the shapers of the cultural ecology (Holden, 2015, p.3). The arts should not be kept as the preserve of the few and be placed 'off limits' to anyone, because they are "simultaneously, inextricably and healthily" part of everyday life (Holden, 2008, p.16). Although no one should be obliged to enjoy the arts and culture, people should have an equal capacity to make choices (Holden, 2008). There have been increasing calls for the democratisation of culture, which is being compounded by the demands of the "Taking Part generation" and an increasingly diverse society that no longer shares the professionals' largely Eurocentric cultural values (Jennings and Jones, 2010, p.27). As the Warwick Commission report (2015) suggests, "low engagement is more the effect of a mismatch between the public's taste and the publicly-funded cultural offer – posing a challenge of relevance as well as accessibility" (p.34).

The formal arts and cultural sector has adopted a relatively narrow definition of culture which is prescribed by the art forms that are required by funders or authorities; because of this "arts and culture" is often regarded as "exclusive, not-diverse, not for everyone" (64 Million Artists, 2018 p.5). The policy practices and funding preferences ought to be changed to accommodate broader definitions of art and culture. This requires a conceptual shift in understanding of the arts and culture which recognises everyday creativity and participation. In 2020, Arts Council England (ACE) published its new ten-year strategy report, *Let's Create*, where 'the arts' rolled into 'culture' and 'creativity' – to express the emphasis on individuals' personal engagement; and the term

‘culture’ in the report refers to “all those areas of activity associated with the art forms and organisations in which ACE invests: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts” (p.12). ACE also recognises that the traditional boundaries between and around cultural activities are disappearing through the development of new technologies and societal changes; thus, it is necessary to become more flexible about the range and type of cultural activities that they support. However, the new definition of culture is still problematic. Although the new strategy aims to “recognise and champion the creative activities and cultural experiences of everyone in everywhere” (ACE, 2020, p.15), the new definition of culture did not move the focus away from a limited set of cultural forms, activities and associated cultural institutions of publicly-funded culture.

2.2 The Policy Model of Arts Council and Its Cultural Thinking

The method of distancing government from an institution that it created and financed became known in the 1970s as the “arm’s length principle” (Hewison 1995, p.32; Hutchison 1982, pp.16-17; Gray, 2000, p.41). It was a model used to fund academic research and was adopted and modified based on its effectiveness in distributing government funds (Upchurch, 2016). John Maynard Keynes, the first chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB), applied it to arts funding in order to distance the artist-recipients from possible political intervention in their work to maintain their intellectual and artistic freedom, and to consequently achieve institutional autonomy. This concept is explained by Madden (2009) as the combination of an autonomous funding agency and peer assessment decision-making processes, with ‘peers’ being individuals who know the artistic field or discipline under review but who are not civil servants (p.12). Although most of the arts policy literature maintains the ‘distance’ is sufficient to minimise government interference, Gray (2000) has clearly pointed to the consequences of isolation and marginality that can result from too much ‘distance’. Its resultant isolation from the political channels that influence other

areas of policy led to the arts policy becoming “increasingly dominated by a restricted group of political actors and increasingly introspective, thus centralising power within the arts system” (Gray, 2000, p.45). Cultural activists like Gray believed that what they saw as the self-interested motives of businessmen and politicians could result in debased art, even propaganda (Upchurch, 2004).

Peacock (1993) criticises that Keynes’s conception of the aim of government – “equality of contentment” for all citizens, and the opportunity for “all to enjoy the cultural benefits” – reflects Keynes’s privileged social position, which lead to his intellectual bias (p.23). Jordan and Weedon (1995) condemned the Liberal Humanistic idea of culture for all:

> That Liberal Humanism is a double-edged sword – a politics of freedom and a mechanism of control, a rhetoric transcending social divisions and a policy upholding the elite, an ideology of universalism and a practice of Eurocentrism. (p.64)

Furthermore, Upchurch (2016) commented on Keynes’s interest in providing access to those who were sufficiently eager to avail themselves of an arts experience, and his attitude can be interpreted as “class-based prejudice” (p.119). A 1998 examination of the ACGB membership since its founding revealed a shared social background among mostly male, middle-aged members who were highly educated, often graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, heavily professional, and very frequently had a relationship with the arts before their appointment to the Arts Council (Gray, 1988; also see Gray, 2000, pp.127-129; cited in Upchurch, 2016, p.117). Thus, the funding preferences for institutions and arts forms have been associated with particular classes of men with specific expertise and moral and ideological leanings like Keynes.

Jennie Lee, who was the first Minister for the Arts in the 1964 Labour government, called for the definition of the arts to be broadened to embrace the principle of universal access in her White

Paper: A Policy For The Arts (1965). It was an attempt to democratise the arts, but it ignored the more radical ideology of cultural democracy. Her assertion that "we should be trying to bring the best within reach of all; but at the same time […] broadening of opportunities should not lead to a lowering of standards" was a case of maintaining Keynes's "equation of culture, civilisation and 'high' Western art" (Black, 2006 pp.331-332). The aim was to get more people involved in existing arts and cultural provision, instead of rethinking arts and culture from the grassroots up and recognising other equally valid forms of cultural activities.

A key theme of Lee's White Paper was "the better alignment of 'excellence' on the one hand and 'greater engagement' on the other" – influences that remain "twin pillars" of Arts Council England's mission of Great Art and Culture for Everyone (Efunshile, 2015, no pagination). As Upchurch (2016) concluded, the notion of distance from government and the emphasis on professional standards are two characteristics of the policy model associated with Keynesian cultural thinking. Keynes intended that greater provision of professional arts would also improve public receptivity to the arts in general (Upchurch, 2016). However, he was not interested in supporting and stimulating creativity, but in building national institutions in the performing arts (Witts, 1988, p.146). Therefore, the emphasis on professional standards and excellence led logically to a policy preference to support the institutions of high culture over amateurs. This led commentators like Witts (1988, p.146) to criticise how Arts Council funding has benefited institutions instead of individuals.

For Jennings and Jones (2010), "engagement can be both a creative and mutually beneficial journey, an opportunity for cultural organisations to embrace the new spirit of exploration and travel with the public as enablers without lowering standards" (p.29). However, for some experts, engagement could be threatening the excellence that results from professionalism. Holden (2008)

claims that there has been a belief that only a small minority can appreciate and value art, and that quality of art needs to be defended from the masses; therefore it is worth acknowledging that "appeals to 'excellence' and 'quality' can be used as a cover for maintaining social superiority" (p.14). Furthermore, he insists that "cultural excellence cannot and should not be determined solely by a group of peers (who represent a producer's interest)" (p.23).

To make the arts an integral part of everyday public life and 'accessible to all' has long been part of the core mission of ACE, which strives to engage the public, to make excellent arts and culture flourish, and to engage as many people as possible (ACE, 2013). As the policy report *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* acknowledges, excellence is difficult to define, and it cannot be separated from the people who value it – the value that is generated by arts organisations is not only determined by the excellence of their works but by fully engaging with, challenging or connecting with audiences through these works (ACE, 2013). It is important to state the relationship between excellence and engagement because excellence could sometimes be dismissed as "an exclusive, canonical and 'heritage' approach" to cultural activity (McMaster, 2008, no pagination).

Jancovich (2011) argues that engagement in art of any kind may lead to more willingness to engage with other art forms in future, thus the challenge is the act of engagement itself, rather than the quality of what is engaged with. In the findings from the Castleford Project, Jancovich (2011) highlights that "the most successful artworks both in terms of artistic quality and audience engagement, were those with the greatest public involvement" (p.276). Accordingly, the artistic excellence of an art piece and the way it engages with its audiences are connected, and in these circumstances, increasing engagement opportunities becomes a means to achieve greater equality for the public in the arts and culture. In this case, arts organisations are encouraged to take the cultural responsibilities and create the conditions for the public to engage in the arts.

2.3 The Arts Centre Movement

Due to the significance of arts centres to the development of OEP, this section aims to review the Arts Centre Movement in relation to OEP. It will examine how arts centres had a remarkable impact on the development of OEP in the performing arts. By discussing the changing roles of arts centres from the 'perfect instrument' of democratising the arts towards having a grassroots focus and claiming a place in the cultural democratic process (Lane, 1978), it reveals the need for a better understanding of the roles of PAOs in facilitating and supporting cultural participation today.

The term 'performing arts centre' (PAC) and 'arts centre' are used interchangeably in academic literature. American literature talks more about 'performing arts centre', whereas British literature tends to use 'arts centre' more often. Since the inception of arts centres in the UK, they have been seen as central urban planning components (1940-1950s), and as tools for democratisation of culture and cultural democracy (1960s-1970s). Lane (1978) divides the history of arts centres in the UK into four periods: 'post-war idealism', 'sixties revolt', 'seventies explosion', and 'local authority involvement'. According to Wolff (2017), contemporary North American performing arts centres date back to the 1960s when New York City's Lincoln Centre opened its doors in 1962. In Australia, the arts centre movement emerged in the same decade, with the first arts centre considered to be the Canberra Theatre Centre, established through municipal funds in 1965 (Milne, 2004). Later, the Sydney Opera House opened as the first state-commissioned arts centre in 1973 (Milne, 2004). As a highly visible and complex enterprise, PACs have since become an important nexus of arts and cultural activities around the world (Wolff, 2017).

The concept of the performing arts centre has developed through several stages and has become a major force in the arts and cultural ecosystem. In *The Evolution of the Performing Arts Centre*, Steven Wolff illustrated four distinct phases as show in the following figure.

Figure 1: Evolution of the Performing Arts Centre
(Wolff, 2017, p. 21)

From being the ‘home’ of the traditional performing arts organisations, such as symphonies, operas, and ballet companies, to becoming relevant, authentic celebrations of cultural diversity of the communities, PACs are “leading the way in ensuring that the performing arts have a place in the cultural identity and expression of citizens and communities worldwide” (Wolff, 2017, p.21). This framework of performing arts centres’ evolution emphasises the changing roles along the path of their development.

The ideal of the ACGB to the democratisation of culture, the “aim to disseminate major cultural works to an audience that does not have ready access to them” (Evrard, 1997, p.167) through arts centres, was written into the establishment of the UK’s first arts centre, Bridgewater Arts Centre, in 1946. However, this commitment has been questioned as the ACGB threatened to close this centre in 1950 due to a lack of local funding source (ACGB, 1950). As Stark (1994) comments, the ACGB has always had an “ambivalent relationship with the idea of planning”, instead preferring to adopt a top-down approach and creating “prescriptive documents” (p.12).

According to Hutchison and Forrester (1987), the 1960s "witnessed a sea-change in thinking about arts centres and their place in the community" (p.7). At that time, there was a focus on the professional arts and excellence in arts policy, while the concept of amateurs and professionals working together was ignored by the ACGB until late 1960s/early 1970s (Evans, 2001), to the point that a conflict developed between what may be called the amateur and the professional point of view. The contradiction between 'high arts' and 'low arts' and access to the arts were addressed to a degree in the 1960s in what has been described as the sixties revolt (Lane, 1978). During this time, the White Paper was published, which called for the arts to be "made more widely available" and claimed support for arts centres (Cmnd 2601, 1965, p.5). Arts centres were considered the "perfect instrument" to democratise the arts, being relatively small, having a grassroots focus, and being flexible (Lane, 1978, p.8). The White Paper shows the Arts Council's support for both democratisation of culture and cultural democracy through arts centres. It was the first official acknowledgement of the change in perception of the role of arts centres and the 'opening up' of the arts, with the belief that "art should no longer be the preserve of a privileged minority but must be made more widely available to the population as a whole" (Lane, 1978, p.7). However, this ideal was not quite the same in reality: Evans (2001) argues that arts centres "generally did not achieve or sustain a cultural democratic role, and few if any, could claim a place in the cultural democratic process" (p.99).

In the 1970s, there was a further growth in arts centres, known as 'the seventies explosion' (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987; Lane, 1978). Fifty per cent of the arts centres in Hutchison and Forrester's study (1987) were founded in the 1970s. The report from the first national conference of arts centres and community arts groups proclaims that "a new generation's determination to make creative activity as well as the 'art object' available and accessible to the vast majority of the population who are currently untouched by the 'art' which is provided for their

consumption" and that "arts policy should begin with the human experiences", rather than what the NAAC considered as the 18th century thinking of the ACGB whereby art is for those of "well-formed taste" (NAAC, 1974, no pagination). It was a huge step away from the urban planning focus of the post-war years of the ACGB towards community engagement with a more transformative approach (Evans, 2001). Even though the audiences and attendees at many arts centres were largely middle-class, there has been a steady increase in outreach work – "work that is promoted or organised by arts centre staff but takes place away from the arts centre building, and often with those who are socially or culturally disadvantaged" (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987, p.10).

The increased involvement of local authorities since 1975 shifted the situation of arts centres being primarily concerned with the needs of artists towards targeting their activities to the interests of local communities or particular groups, such as ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. Arts centres were perceived to bring people together and to allow people to engage and participate (Baldry, 1981; Lane, 1978). At the same time, there has been an explosion in the volume and range of educational activities at arts centres (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987). In the early 1980s, the ACGB's new emphasis on the importance of education in the arts resulted in an increase in the number of arts organisations with learning teams (Tambling and Bacon, 2022). The arts subjects were included in England's first National Curriculum in 1988, which inspired many professional arts organisations to engage with the education sector for the first time (Ibid.). Arts centres play an important role in breaking down barriers by offering a wide range of art forms and events to appeal to a broad range of people from different backgrounds, incomes and interests, and by providing social spots often including activities and facilities for other leisure activities outside the arts (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987; Lane, 1978). This thesis aims to explore how PAOs employ OEP as a strategy in engaging audiences and supporting the arts participation of people from different paths.

In the 1990s, arts centres in the UK faced a more difficult era than previously as they no longer had an umbrella organisation or network. Findings from MacKeith's report, *Art of Flexibility: Arts Centres in the 1990s* (1996), suggest that "arts centres form an important part of the overall network of arts provision in England and are uniquely flexible in filling different roles in different communities at different times" (p.i). Furthermore, the report highlights the various issues that confront arts centres, including programming difficulties; lack of investment in infrastructure; lack of marketing activities; difficulty in the targeting of schools; complexity of different aims or vision from stakeholders, including funders; and under-qualified centre managers.

After the turn of the millennium, arts centres have facilitated extensive opportunities for cultural expression through performances, education initiatives, and community outreach programmes. Diverse activities and events enable audiences of all types to participate, and the role of arts centres has become collaborator, partner, and educator (Wolff, 2017). In *The Capacity of Performing Arts Presenting Organisations* (2002), Hager and Pollak discuss how a PAO that hosts or presents the performing arts is an organisation that "works to facilitate exchanges between artists and audiences through creative, educational, and performance opportunities" (p.9). This statement emphasises the curation role of PAOs in facilitating the relationship between the arts and the public, which leads into a discussion of what role PAOs can play in arts participation. As Robert Lynch, President and CEO Americans for the Arts, states, a performing arts centre today should "stand not as a temple for the worship of art, but as a centre for community and for arts participation" (cited in Borwick, 2012, Forewords, no pagination). Moreover, Andrew Keen in *The Cult of the Amateur* (2007) states that one of the challenges that organisations are facing today is becoming facilitators rather than gatekeepers of the cultural experience.

Maria Rosario Jackson and her co-authors' report, *Cultural Vitality in Communities: Interpretation and Indicators* (2006), identified three dimensions that are particularly helpful in understanding the new roles of arts and culture organisations:

1. Facilitating the presence of opportunities for cultural expression
2. Enable participation in arts and cultural activity
3. Providing support for arts and cultural activity (Jackson et al., 2006, p.14)

This report acknowledged that arts organisations are key catalysts that can perform the functions of cultural "pillar organisations" and play an important role in fostering different aspects of cultural vitality in communities (Jackson et al., 2006, p.15). There is clearly a need for better understanding of the roles of PAOs in facilitating and supporting cultural participation, and for research associated with current practices that help to identify keys to successes and draw out implications for future research and practice.

2.4 Understanding Cultural Participation

The origin of the arts participation debates stems from the community art movement, which is centred on the tensions between professional arts and the neglected amateur arts practice in the cultural policy making process (Hutchison, 1982). The term 'community art' was first defined in the late 1960s, and the debates about this movement were developed in the 1970s before flourishing in the 1980s across the UK, Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland and North America. The term 'community art' was used by Braden (1978) and McGrath (1981) to describe "a complex, unstable and contested practice developed by young artists and theatre makers seeking to reinvigorate an art world they saw as bourgeois at best and repressive at worst" (Matarasso, 2015, p.1). Goldbard (1993) refers to 'community art' as a wide range of art forms and creative mediums, whereby the interactions with the community are facilitated by the professional artists. This involves the participation of a group of people that share a collective identity and that work towards a goal that

is greater than (or equally important to) the art form itself, beyond the boundaries of traditional institutions (Trivic, 2021). Therefore, community art is inclusive, providing opportunities for people who have limited access to arts due to economic, social or other reasons (Ibid.).

Hutchison (1982) argued that as there was no justification for why the arts council focused on professional arts, cultural prejudice and elitism led to the direction of arts council policy instead of legal obligation. With development in both practice and policy, the debates have moved forward beyond the discussion between professional and amateur arts. As Ewell (2011) argues, community arts does not entail excluding professional artists, and involving 'non-professionals' as artists does not mean that community art is 'non-professional' nor 'anti-professional'. Nowadays, 'community art' is also called 'community-engaged art' or 'community-based art', which includes artistic activities that are based in a community setting. This understanding is echoed in Barraket's definition of 'community arts' as a "specific approach to creative activity that connects artists and local communities in using the arts as a means of expression and development" (2005, p.3). This approach often involves a community-oriented grassroots approach in which the communal artistic processes act as a catalyst for triggering events, positive social changes, and empowerment within a community (Adams and Goldbard, 2002; Madyaningrum and Sonn, 2011).

Cho and colleagues (2016) identify three main approaches to community arts: the first is arts for the people, where the arts are employed to emancipate and develop a specific community (Goldbard, 2006), and where art is created to animate local communities and engage them in larger dialogue concerning collective issues. The second is arts made with the community, where the practice intends to be more inclusive, allowing those who were traditionally excluded from the world of 'high art' to take an active role in the creative processes together with arts practitioners (Crehan, 2012). Lastly, they discuss arts by the community, which involves artistic practices initiated by the

people, with no or minimal influence of professional artists (Cleveland, 2008; Ewell, 2011). Despite the differences in approaches, Trivic (2021) argues, “all forms of community arts share similar broad goals, which are empowering people to creatively address issues within their communities and to make social changes while boosting arts beyond the institutional boundaries” (Chapter 1, no pagination).

2.4.1 The Discourse of Access

The rapid growth of technology is in theory making more forms of artistic expression and culture more accessible than ever before (Novak-Leonard et al., 2014). The term ‘access’ is frequently used by cultural organisations to articulate and demonstrate their social worth (Gross and Pitts, 2016). This is perhaps because it has a close relationship not only to “audience development” but also to “social inclusion” (Kawashima, 2006). Therefore, reaching out to wider communities and involving a diverse audience in cultural events seem to be overlapping concepts in cultural policy and arts and cultural management agendas (Ibid.). In the UK, in a policy consultative document the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2000) insisted that access is the first step, providing the basis for the second step – audience development – and then for social inclusion, the third step (p.12). Social inclusion in the arts revolves around the notions of participants and non-participants, and it is concerned with excluded people with little regard to whether they consume the ‘official’ arts or not. In practice, those excluded are most likely to have limited opportunities to participate in the arts and culture.

According to the work of Stark and colleagues (2013; 2014) and the findings of AHRC’s *Cultural Value Project*, “the operation of the formal cultural realm is implicated in the making of economic, social and geographical inequalities” (Miles and Gibson, 2016, p.155). The cultural dimensions of inequality were revealed by O’Brien and Oakley in their report, *Cultural Value and Inequality*

(2015), which connects inequality to the consumption and production of culture. They argue that "culture as a mechanism for the replication of inequality" (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015, p.7). Therefore, the models and structures that enable people to participate and engage with the arts need to be changed. As Jancovich (2015) notes, arts organisations are generally trying to increase participation in their existing activities rather than being willing to change the ways in which they engage. This echoes Bjørnsen's (2014) statement that effective results of social inclusion activities emanate not only from removing barriers but also from changing or 'adapting' the cultural offer.

The cultural policy primarily focused on increasing access to – and 'participation' with – professional arts, which overlooked the enormous diversity of cultural creativity. This is based on the assumptions that culture should and can be made accessible to all people, and culture will become accessible if barriers (physical, geographical, economic or psychological) are removed. However, as Kawashima (2006) argues,

> these assumptions reflect the Liberal Humanist tradition of British and European cultural policy, insisting on the rights and potential of all individuals to benefit from culture, and placing a faith in a common culture that transcends the social, political and cultural divisions of the nation. (p.64)

This ideological aspect of British cultural policy was highlighted as an issue during the community arts movement. The notion of one monolithic culture has been contested, and the priorities of cultural policy have changed and the definition of 'culture' that is worthy of public support has been expanded (Bennett 1997). In the last decade, cultural inclusion has aimed at extending access not only to consumption but also to the means of cultural production and distribution (Bollo et al., 2017). However, some scholars are against prioritising access to culture in the name of reducing social exclusion, as it is "part of a process of discrimination, marking out and marginalising those people and places that did not associate themselves with established culture as passive, isolated and

in need of attention" (Miles and Gibson, 2016, p.151). They hold an opinion that participation is a set of processes, relationships and structures of feeling, which enact, define and discriminate communities (Savage, 2010; Williams, 1978).

The UK project, *Understanding Everyday Participation – Articulating Cultural Values*, starts from the proposition that the orientation of cultural policy and publicly funded cultural programming towards cultural participation and value is in need of a radical overhaul (Miles and Gibson, 2016). It seeks to re-mobilise the central concept of participation, and to explore the dynamics of everyday participation as both a relational and a situated process. The authors argue that the narrow definition and understanding of participation that focuses on a limited set of cultural forms, activities and associated cultural institutions obscures the other forms of cultural participation which are situated locally in the everyday realm (Miles and Gibson, 2016, p.151). A broader notion about 'culture' rather than just the 'high arts' is needed when understanding cultural participation.

The concept of everyday participation was put forward by Elias (1998) on the opposite side of the "high culture system" (Warde, 2013), or the 'official' framework of cultural participation and value in the UK (Griffiths et al., 2008). The latter was described by Miles and Gibson (2016) as the largely formal and traditional practices, venues and institutions funded by government through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Miles and Sullivan (2010; 2012) argue that a decontextualisation of cultural value that was accompanied by the mobilisation of a 'deficit model of participation' was involved in the operationalisation of this framework, which reflects middle-class norms and understandings of what was to count as 'legitimate' culture. To some extent, the outreach and educational work of publicly funded cultural institutions "stem at least in part from the need for such organisations to justify their subsidy by reaching beyond 'elite' or class-specific

audiences" (Price, 2015, p.23). Therefore, the aim of OEP was built up within the ideology of the democratisation of culture in the consumption of the publicly-funded arts.

2.4.2 Participation and Engagement

The terms 'engagement' and 'participation' are widely used in cultural policy and in the practical field alike, and the terms are often used synonymously. In the academic literature, arts participation is generally described as a measure of arts engagement with individuals and communities, whereas engagement is synonymous with different types of 'involvement' (Jackson et al., 2003; Alvarez, 2005; Brown et al., 2008; NEA, 2015; Walmsley, 2019). However, as Keaney (2006) argues, to use participation, involvement, and engagement as synonyms lacks a focused or differentiated understanding of engagement.

Participation in the arts used to be measured as consumption – through ticket and product sales – and as numbers of people attending events. As the instrumental use of culture have been employed in many countries, consequently, attendance numbers at some pre-determined cultural activities is seen as a key indicator of cultural participation. In this sense, cultural participation becomes a goal of public policy. However, there has been a rising concern that the non-profit arts sector needs a much broader lens than arts-participation-as-measured-by-attendance (Novak-Leonard et al., 2014). Novak-Leonard and Brown (2011) challenge and advance the orthodoxy of representing overall participation rates merely as a function of visual or performing arts attendance by suggesting a more expansive framework for understanding arts participation. They divide arts participation into three interconnected modes: arts creation or performance, arts engagement through media, and attendance at a broader range of activities; furthermore, they deconstruct engagement into five types: ambient, observational, curatorial, interpretive, and inventive in terms of the degree of creative control

(Brown and Novak-Leonard, 2011). This framework includes a spectrum of participation that ranges from receptive participation to participatory involvement.

Today, participation has greatly expanded the range of activities that people engage in beyond attendance at "traditionally defined cultural events taking place in traditionally recognised cultural settings" (Novak-Leonard et al., 2014, p.29). The key issue is that 'participation' must go beyond 'attendance' and become a genuine dialogue with the public. More importantly, Price (2015) highlights the pivotal relationship between "participation as a goal or strategy in artistic process" and "participation as a democratic principle":

> Depending on circumstances or interpretation, participation and public engagement programmes can therefore appear either as a mask of power, deceiving people into believing that their interests are being served, or as the heartbeats of a vital democratic ideal. (p.23)

As Jackson and colleagues (2006) suggest, people participate in arts and cultural activity in many different ways and at different skill levels – "as practitioners (making and doing work), teachers, students, critics, supporters, and consumers"; "people also engage individually and collectively, sporadically and on a regular basis" (p.17). Therefore, it is vital to recognise a broader range of participation modes, and value participation as a democratic process rather than an end goal.

The concept and the measurement of 'engagement' in the arts have evolved over time, and the purpose of that engagement has changed. In some cases, engagement means "creating new inroads to existing programmes", whereas in other cases it could mean "developing new programmes to capture the attention of new audiences" (Stallings and Mauldin, 2016, p.3). Some extant studies on arts engagement aim to turn audience members and visitors into active participants (e.g. Brown et al., 2011; Brown and Ratzkin, 2011; Sidford et al., 2014). However, very few researchers have

studied the content of participation-building practice and examined engagement as a key indicator of success with equity of access (Reidy, 2014). Therefore, this study is designed to identify the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences through OEP and to explore how PAOs use OEP in participation-building to improve accessibility by creating the varieties and depth of engagement with people.

2.4.3 The Democratisation of Culture and Cultural Democracy

The discourse of audience engagement and cultural participation fits well with the concept of "cultural democracy" and "the democratisation of culture" (Hope, 2011, p.176; Jancovich, 2011, p.73). Price (2015) states that although both concepts include participation practice, each of them comes "ethically and politically from a different place": the democratisation of culture refers to a "top-down" process where the "mainstream" culture is made accessible to non-participating people and communities, typically represented by large and well-funded institutions; "cultural democracy" is usually "bottom-up" rather than "top-down", it occurs when "communities produce and communicate their own forms of critical culture" (pp.23-24). He also emphasises that the "crucial distinction is its reflective approach, producing questioning or 'wrong' forms of participation" (p.24), which echoes Hope's (2011) opinion about allowing participants to challenge and exceed the given frame of the participatory process.

Hadley (2016) argues that the policy of the democratisation of culture is based on the unspoken assumption (Langsted, 1990) that only one culture exists in any given society and seeks legitimation through education and outreach, social inclusion and audience development of arts organisations. Indeed, there are examples of projects that claimed forms of community and public engagement but did so for the sake of commissioners, funders and organisers instead of participants (Price, 2015). Many arts organisations operate in a "mature market", "with a fixed conception of the audience that

they are trying to reach, and a conventional and well-established way of delivering work" (Hewison, 2006, p.39). This model where 'professionals' in the art forms have defined and controlled public experience creates conditions for artistic excellence. Therefore, Jennings and Jones (2010) argue that power and status derive from artistic expertise and there is no scope for dialogue with the public in this "culture of professionalism", which results in a traditional one-way relationship between cultural professionals and audiences (p.27).

The arts and cultural sector has been slow to realise, as the former head of the Arts Council of England has admitted, that "it is hard to object to the view that people who use a publicly funded facility or service should have the chance to express opinions about it and be heard. But I do not see much in the arts" (Hewitt, 2005, p.17). There are limited numbers of organisations that allow audiences to play an integral part in their performances. For example, Improbable Theatre have built on their collaborative expertise and now regularly host Open Space events, where participants set the agenda and lead discussions on issues facing theatre and the arts more broadly. In addition, the 'top-down' process can also be critical and reflective: for instance, there are organisations and projects that are dedicated to democratising culture and arts, to listening to voices and stories of communities, and to building a sense of empowerment and ownership of the communities. As Wilson and his co-authors (2017) suggest, both 'top down' and 'bottom up' change-making are needed in combination. Thus, the gap in knowledge requires this research to explore whether OEP can be used not only as an approach to democratise the performing arts, but also as a more democratic approach in promoting cultural democracy.

In the UK, New Labour's vision of bringing democracy to culture has resulted in little change to the social composition of people who participate in the arts – who remain mostly white and middle class (Jancovich, 2011). A report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value in

2015, *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*, describes the same issue of arts audiences, overwhelmingly middle class and white, and "the wealthiest, best educated and least ethnically diverse 8%" of society, who make up nearly half of live music audiences and a third of theatregoers and gallery visitors (p.33). Even though there has been a long drive towards growing audiences by widening access and promoting diversity in the cultural sector (Holden, 2008), the lack of diversity in arts audiences revealed by the report is still striking. The problem is, as Jancovich (2015) notes:

> the existing funded arts organisations tended to define the participation problem as a deficit on the part of the public who need to be coaxed into engagement through education programmes or concessionary prices, rather than a deficit on the part of the cultural offer they provide. (p.5)

Policy attempts have thus far failed to shift access and engagement in publicly-funded arts. Despite all the considerable effort that has been put into it, the 'top down' approach to cultural policy has reached a dead end. Wilson and colleagues (2017) suggest that re-positioning the cultural policy agenda in terms of promoting cultural capability will help address issues of parity and fairness in a much more comprehensive way. This may require 'pillar organisations' (typically well-established, medium-to-large institutions, including arts centres, schools and community organisations) to go much further in co-creating cultural democracy and capability, and to do so more strategically. Thus, this thesis aims to examine the extent to which OEP could be a means of supporting cultural democracy and capability by PAOs, and how PAOs could implement such practice more strategically.

2.4.4 Participation and Arts Education

According to Rabkin and Helberg (2011):

> arts participation requires capacities for understanding and appreciating the modes of expression, symbol systems, aesthetics, and the cultural context in which the arts are

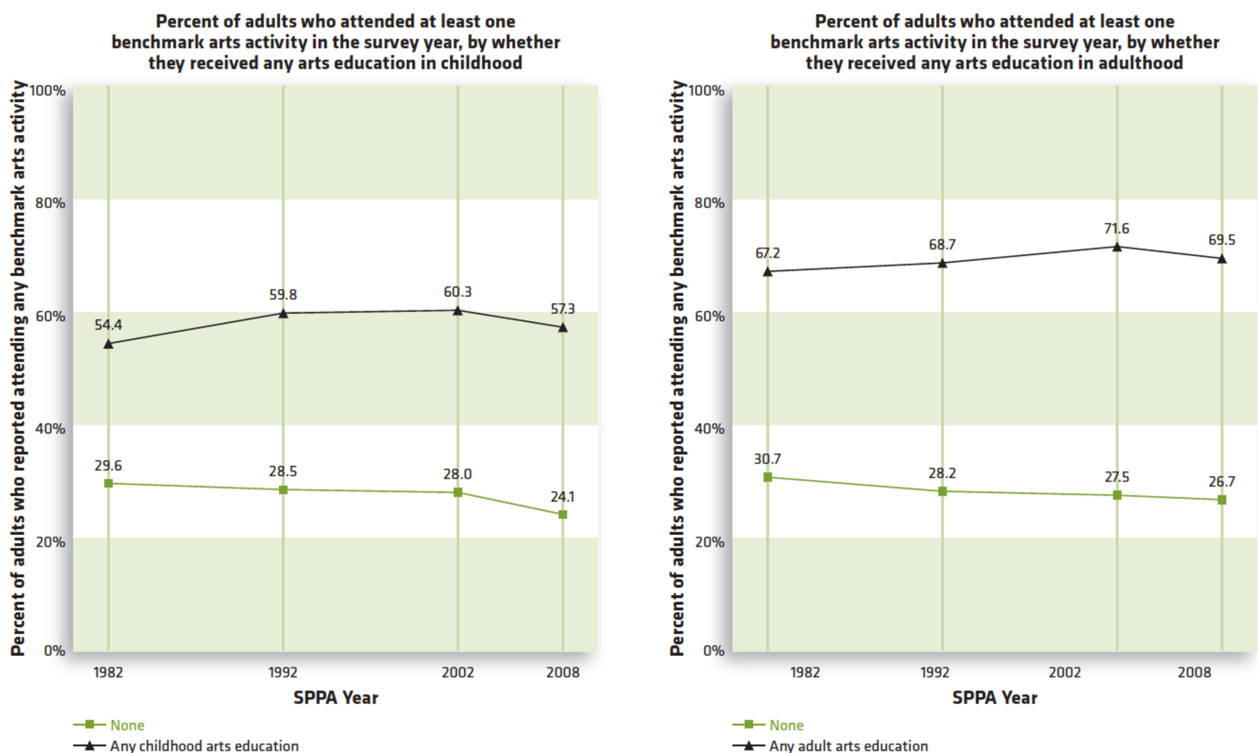
> embedded. People who have not cultivated and developed these capacities are less likely to find arts experiences rewarding, and they are less likely to invest time and resources in the arts. (p. 20)

Similarly, Colbert (2003) suggests that there is a strong association between arts education and participation in the arts. Furthermore, Bennett and colleagues (1999) find that "education increases rates of participation across pretty well the whole field of culture" (p.246). Many empirical studies have demonstrated that adult attendance at arts events is influenced by adolescent exposure to the arts, educational attainment, gender, age, race and current income (e.g. Orend, 1988; Kracman, 1996; O'hagen, 1996; Van Eijck, 1997; Bergonzi and Smith, 1996). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the US has tracked adult arts participation through a series of Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPAs) since 1982 – it is the US's largest periodic survey of adult involvement in arts and cultural activities. The surveys have focused principally on adult attendance at 'benchmark' activities or events and visits to art museums and galleries. A study of the 1992 SPPA explored the relationships between arts education and adult arts participation. It found that "arts education was the strongest predictor of almost all types of arts participation. Those with the most arts education were also the highest consumers and creators of various forms of visual arts, music, drama, dance, or literature" (p.19).

Furthermore, it is worth noting that, in SPPAs' surveys, arts education includes not only school-based settings but also community-based settings; these include lessons for beginners through virtuosos, in private individual lessons and group classes, in homes, arts institutions, community centres, parks, and storefronts (p.41). The findings from 2008 SPPA indicate that arts education has a powerful positive effect on adult benchmark arts attendance and is more powerful than any other measurable factor, including "overall educational attainment, socioeconomic status, race, parent education, or gender" (p.26); more arts education predicts more arts attendance; and arts education

has similar effects on other forms of arts participation. More importantly, the survey proves that adult arts experiences have an even stronger association with benchmark activities such as jazz, classical music, opera, musical theatre, non-musical theatre, and dance performances. The following figure shows that people who have taken any adult arts classes or lessons are also more likely to attend a benchmark arts event than adults who do not take arts classes or lessons.

Figure 2: Benchmark Arts Attendance by Childhood and Adult Arts Education and SPPA Year



A report by Wilson and colleagues (2017), *Towards Cultural Democracy*, also highlights the fact – all too easily overlooked – that "cultural learning is a life-long pursuit. To this end, opportunities for adult (cultural) education and learning are vital too" (p.10). There is a limited understanding of the use of the word 'education' in the arts, as the primacy of academic learning or school-based programmes for children and young people is still predominant in the cultural sector. Knowing how

to engage and respond to an arts experience, including sharing and talking about the experience, is something that should not be limited to classroom learning (Modrick, 2011). Furthermore, both arts and education concern establishing and maintaining a lifelong relationship with learning, so that experiencing teaching and learning outside of the school building is an essential element of creating the capacity for lifelong learning (Modrick, 2011, p.178). Accordingly, education programmes should go beyond the present scope, and it is important to have a broader understanding of 'education' to include not only formal/school settings but also informal education settings. Additionally, "the importance of lifelong learning and the fact that much important and necessary learning, for people of all ages, occurs outside the classroom or school setting" (Modrick, 2011, p.173) should be given more attention in this sector.

Compared to arts education for children and young people, there is no formal and compulsory system of arts learning for adults (Zakaras and Lowell, 2008, p.55). As Hayes and Slater (2002) conclude, young people (16-24-year-olds) appeared to be the focal point of most activities in the educational programmes of arts organisations. For the next generations of arts attenders, more and more arts organisations are providing child-centred (or youth-centred) arts programmes to expose, educate, and entertain them, as they "hopefully will become appreciative and avid arts attenders later in life" (Bernstein, 2014, p.363). It is understandable that some of these arts organisations are "investing" and waiting for a time "when these people will have more leisure time and more discretionary income to pay higher ticket prices and make substantial contributions" (Bernstein, 2014, p.367). However, educating children is costly, and targeting younger audiences is likely to imply short term tactics (Bernstein, 2014).

More importantly, as Rabkin and Helberg (2011) emphasise, there are two different understandings of arts education in its relationship with arts participation: as a mode of arts participation and as a contributing factor to other forms of arts participation. Beyond its role as a strategy for revitalising participation in the benchmark activities or events, arts education itself may be at risk. Therefore, arts education should not be seen only as a pathway to further participation in the arts; it is by itself a vital mode of arts participation. As Rabkin and Helberg (2011) state:

> The future of the arts may not lie in the restoration of higher levels of "benchmark" attendance at traditional performances and exhibitions. Rather, it could lie in new kinds of arts experiences and participation that are more active… which, for some people, hold more personal value than sitting in an audience. (pp.52-53)

For this reason, this study aims to examine how PAOs use arts education as a means of creating arts experiences rather than as a process to produce future attendance.

2.5 Development, Engagement and Enrichment of Audiences

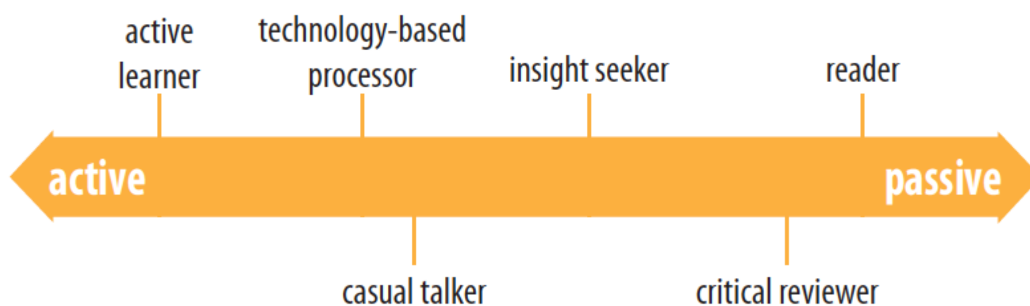
Butsch (2008) states that the notion of 'the audience' is usually employed as a generic term without much specificity or attention to the changing forms of spectatorship and participation. In publicly-funded culture, the public still tends to be seen in terms of 'audiences' or 'attenders' and 'non-attenders' (Holden, 2008, p.24); for many, 'audiences' excludes participants, readers, listeners, viewers and visitors. In English-speaking contexts, the term 'audience' (from the Latin word 'auditorium', which means hearing place) is generally interchangeable with spectator. However, the audience are not merely 'receivers' and the active nature of the audience needs to be addressed.

Many theatre researchers, including Richard Schechner, Victor Turner, and Jane Goodall, regard the audience as "a tangibly active creator of the theatrical event" (Bennett, 1997, p.9). In Conner's earlier written work, *In and Out of the Dark: A Theory About Audience Behaviour from Sophocles*

to Spoken Word (2008), she drew on a brief history of arts engagement from a period of active audience in ancient Greece to a period of a more passive audience in the 19th and 20th centuries. From the beginning of the 21st century, the perception of the audience's role has changed from primarily passive (Wheeler, 2004; Boorsma, 2006) to what Lusch and Vargo refer to as "co-creation of value" (Etgar, 2008, p.97).

In terms of the audience's relationship with a specific arts provider and other arts providers, there are six audience typologies (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1995; Kotler and Kotler, 1998): existing audience, switchers, intenders, attenders elsewhere, indifferent, and hostile. Among these, Hill and O'Sullivan (1995) define "indifferent" as "those who have no strong opinions on the arts and no strong desire to attend either" (p.43). Those people are disinterested in the arts and perceive intellectual and emotional barriers to participation. However, this typology is based on the transaction relationship between arts organisation (as provider) and the audience (as receiver). Therefore, it neglects that in contemporary society the individual is "the origin rather than the object of action" (Zuboff and Maxmin, 2004).

Figure 3: Map of Audience Typologies from Active to Passive
(Brown and Ratzkin, 2011, p.28)



According to different levels of engagement, Walmsley and Franks (2011) contend that audiences could be "consumers, opinion-makers and creators of art" (p.8). When discussing audience

involvement, they claim that there are active participants – "those who want to try out or join in arts activities themselves" – and passive participants – "audience members who may be highly engaged and loyal, but prefer to spectate rather than take part" (p.5). According to the range of involvement levels, Brown and Ratzkin (2011) categorise the audience members into six different types as shown in *Figure 3*.

This audience typology recognises different levels of involvement of the audience, but it does not consider the 'non-audience'. To understand the roles of today's arts organisations in facilitating the presence of opportunities for cultural expression, enable participation in arts and cultural activity, and provide support for arts and cultural activity (Jackson et al., 2006) as discussed in previous sections, there is an urgent need to acknowledge a broader notion of the audience rather than the ticket-buyer. The audience could be "participants and public advisors, engaged, trained and nurtured by the organisation and developed as advocates and critics, supporters and protestors, collaborators, confidantes and challengers" (Jennings and Jones, 2010, p.30). Therefore, it is important to explore the different understandings of the notion of the audience from the perspectives of PAOs in this research.

2.5.1 Development, Engagement and Enrichment

The conceptualisation of audience development started in the late 1950s, and it was used to describe the activities aiming to broaden and diversify audience groups (Chamberlin, 1960; Morison and Fliehr, 1968; Reiss, 1970). As a moral imperative, audience development embodies a series of egalitarian objectives concerned with the widening of access to culture and the arts (Hadley, 2016). There are very different understandings of the term 'audience development' in the cultural sector. It can be considered as a certain democratising intent (Romanello, 2013), as well as be seen as a strong participatory spirit (Simon, 2010) which "goes beyond the concept of just audience building"

(Bamford and Wimmer, 2012, p.9). Sometimes, it is seen as a set of short-term publicity tactics (Walmsley, 2011); for instance, Borwick (2013) claims that audience development consists of strategies and tactics designed for immediate results.

A report entitled *Not for the Likes of You* (ACE, 2004) suggests that it is not the audience, but the institutions that are in need of development. Arts Council England (ACE, 2010) uses the term audience development to describe:

> activity which is undertaken specifically to meet the needs of existing and potential audiences, visitors and participants and to help arts organisations to develop ongoing relationships with audiences. It can include aspects of marketing, commissioning, programming, involvement in decision making, education, customer care and distribution. (p.3)

Furthermore, ACE explains that "as an ethos audience development places the audience at the heart of everything the organisation does" (Ibid.). The Audience Agency (2016) defines audience development as a planned, organisation-wide approach to extending the range and nature of relationships with the public, it helps a cultural organisation to achieve its mission, balancing social purpose, financial sustainability and creative ambitions. Audience development has been considered as a process-oriented technical function of marketing management, which at the same time has a wider social remit.

Some scholars claim that audience development has been constrained within the confines of a marketing discourse for too long (Chong, 2010). As such, Hadley (2016) argues that audience development should be considered as an ideological project situated within the wider policy discourse of democratisation. He further elaborates that the relationship of ideas of democratisation

to audience development is contextually dependent upon an a priori set of beliefs he calls “the Arts Lover Tradition” and “the Social Justice Tradition”:

> The Arts Lover Tradition conceives of Audience Development as primarily being about sharing their love of great work and thereby broadening taste; The Social Justice Tradition is strongly connected in the participant’s belief systems to ideas of social justice. As such, this tradition considers the outcomes of engagement to be more important than the art form. (Hadley, 2016, p.195)

There is no concrete and theoretical definition of what ‘audience development’ should be. Thus, there is a degree of conceptual ambiguity in such terminology (Maitland, 2005), which can be a way to avoid having to deal with the deeply-held and deeply-felt positions that policy actors have adopted (Gray, 2014). Hadley (2016) argues that functional ambiguity was key to the rapid adoption of audience development practice in marketing, education and outreach, as it was useful in requiring funding through these practices for cultural organisations; meanwhile, these practices played a role in creating ambiguity. Accordingly, functional ambiguity has also been used to conceal ideological conflicts and tensions within the practice of outreach and education. This research aims to explore the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with OEP, as well as the ideological complexities of OEP results in the different objectives of the practice.

For some, audience engagement belongs to the semantics of audience development, and it highlights the dimensions of involvement which is “less explicit in the concept of ‘development’ and more mechanistic in that of ‘building’” (Bollo et al., 2017, p.55). In other words, audience engagement draws attention to the process of creating meaningful, long-term connections between people and an arts organisation, rather than to the result of increasing visitor numbers. From an operational perspective, audience engagement is seen as one of the two phases of audience development – the *reach* phase (ways to get in touch with the audience) and the *engage* phase

(engagement actions based on relations and mutuality). As such, audience engagement is a phase made up of diverse and articulated processes, actions and organisational behaviours that may include:

> activities and mediation devices; active involvement through workshops, educational activities, digital devices, intercultural approaches; public participation in the planning of cultural activities and creating expressive, artistic and creative content (co-creation, active spectatorship); outreach. (Bollo et al., 2017, p.55)

Table 2: The 4E Model: A Paradigm for Audience Enrichment
(Walmsley, 2019a, p.43)

Aspect	Experience	Exchange	Environment	Engagement
Definition	The nature and quality of an audience member's artistic encounter	The nature of the marketing and the relationship created between audience members and between the art, artist and producer/host	The place, space and context which house the artistic encounter and the impact the elements have on audiences; the impact of the event on the location/locale itself	The nature and legacy of the interaction between an audience member and the wider audience, community, media, artwork, artist(s), producer and/or host organization
Examples	A cathartic experience at a play; an immersive encounter during a piece of live art	A teaser campaign that generates a social media buzz and attracts younger audiences to an arts venue	A light festival which enables audiences to discover hidden bits of a city and raises its cultural profile but impacts negatively on its transport and infrastructure	The development of an online platform which facilitates creative insight, empathy and collaborative meaning-making between audiences and artists
Rationale	The creative industries deal in experiences rather than products and in relationships rather than transactions. (Rifkin, 2000)	Art can transform the aesthetic project from an object to an encounter and thus unite artists and audiences in a common aesthetic endeavour. (Bourriaud, 2002) Arts marketing involves stimulating exchange with audiences and co-creating artistic experiences. (Boorsma, 2006)	Articulations of cultural value need to take more account of the social relations and local contexts of participation. (Miles, 2016) The historical and relational aspects of space and place reveal the specificity and contingency of cultural participation. (Gilmore, 2013)	Effective engagement establishes intimate bonds, which culminate in enduring relational exchanges between producers and customers. (Sashi, 2012)

Radbourne (2013) highlights that arts marketing has reached a state of 'convergence' between creators and consumers, artists and audiences that is so marked that it demands a

reconceptualisation of the entire arts marketing paradigm. Traditional arts marketing theory and activities are still based around the 'marketing mix': the '4Ps' of product, place, price and promotion. As Fillis (2011) suggests, "a contemporary interpretation of arts marketing should acknowledge its foundations in the application of the marketing mix but […] move forward on its own terms" (p.13). Walmsley (2019a) captures the need to fundamentally reconfigure and reconceptualise the arts marketing mix, by suggesting the 4E model: Experience, Exchange, Environment, and Engagement (p.43, see *Table 2*).

The new 4E model highlights a holistic focus on audiences and their aesthetic experiences. It shifts the notion of arts marketing away from "neoliberal processes of consumption" to "relational and collaborative practices of engagement" (Walmsley, 2019a, p.42). As a new paradigm, it provides new ways of thinking into how arts organisations might go about building long-term relationships with their audiences and wider communities while creating or co-creating meaningful aesthetic experiences for and with them.

Brodie and colleagues (2011) trace the theoretical roots of engagement back to relationship marketing's focus on interactive experience and value co-creation, that they argue offers "a transcending view of relationships, which contrasts with a more traditional, transactional view of marketing relationships" (p.253). As Grönroos (2011; 1994) maintains, relationship building should precede marketing exchanges with consumers rather than develop through them; this is because consumers are demanding an increasingly participatory and co-creative role in both artistic production and meaning-making. However, the audiences in the performing arts sector cannot be seen solely as consumers. As Ohlandt (2015) reveals:

> The communities of people that surround and support institutions of theatre – their neighbours, as well as their audiences – are eager to engage with them as partners, collaborators, and stakeholders, even to participate in the art being made and the cultural and educational work being done. (p.146)

Furthermore, Ohlandt (2015) notes that engaging the public as stakeholders in the process of making theatre, rather than merely as consumers, makes the audience more willing to support the institution in its artistic risk-taking. Therefore, as Thibodeau and Rüling (2015) contend, the successful non-profit arts and cultural organisations of the future will embrace a community-wide process that encapsulates internal and external stakeholders; nurtures relationships with them; and strengthens social and emotional bonds. There is a growing consensus that "successfully engaging audiences on a broader scale is strategic to the long-term health of the field and to the cultural vitality of our communities" (Brown and Ratzkin, 2011, p.35).

From a strategic management perspective, the term 'engagement', as highlighted by Ashley (2014), refers to a process of "generating, improving or repairing relationships between institutions of culture and society at large" (p.261). For Stallings and Mauldin (2016) engagement is a process "through which arts organisations can ensure that the benefits of the arts are available to everyone" (p.28). However, as Ashley (2014) argues, engagement activities might also risk reproducing relationships of power, subordination or control if participants are not given the opportunity to "assert their own agency, and to make their own choices in the way they use culture and heritage as a resource" (p.263). It is therefore important to acknowledge that "citizens actively connect to art – discovering new meanings, appropriating it for their own purposes, creatively combining different styles and genres, offering their own critique, and, importantly, making and producing art themselves" (Tepper, 2008, p.363). This echoes Walmsley's (2019b) understanding of engagement, which considers engagement as part of a process leading to spiritual and aesthetic enrichment rather than an end goal. As he explains, engagement is "essentially a series of psychological and

psychobiological processes that emancipate and empower audiences and generate deep connections by enabling audiences to become an invaluable part of the art-making process" (Walmsley, 2019b, p.231).

For some organisations, engaging audiences is embedded into their mission, rather than deploying the task to a separate department such as marketing or education. Rogers (1998) suggests that audience development is an integrated function, and typically this involves projects between marketing/education, programming/education and marketing/programming, with such collaboration occurring on an informal basis. He advocates a holistic approach requiring the interdisciplinary skills of marketing, education and programming, however, this arrangement is rarely formalised or does not involve all three departments in practice, given the lack of co-ordination and inherent difficulties of managing a cross-functional approach (Rogers, 1998). While there can be some overlap between functions of different departments, it was acknowledged that there might be some difficulties in agreeing budgetary contributions to projects, organisational structures and communication channels, different philosophical viewpoints and priorities (Hayes and Slater, 2002). This research aims to explore how PAOs implement OEP in terms of management and strategy, including how different teams work together, where OEP sit in organisational structures, and how different structures affect the implementation of OEP.

2.5.2 Arts Experience

Dewey (1934) states that a work of art is not the thing or object itself "in its existence" but rather what the actual work of art does with human experience (p.3). Based on Dewey's statement, Matthew Reason further developed this concept into the context of a theatrical performance, stating that "the performance does not rest just with the thing itself but also with the audience and the process by which experiences are communicated, interpreted and made meaningful as experiences"

(2010, p.24). He stresses that audience experience in the performing arts resides not only in the moment of the performance itself, but also within "multiple, durational and enduring post-performance experience" that has been neglected in performances studies (p.33). Similarly, Conner (2013) defines the audience experience as "a broader construct in which a full measure of the interpretive process/journey is considered – not just in the moment of reception but also what happens when the spectator leaves the arts venue" (p.11). Furthermore, she emphasises that artists, artistic objects, and audiences are three discrete components of an arts experience, and its core meaning is the active and engaged interplay of all these elements.

The audience experience can range from passive engagement through to co-creation of the product itself (Walmsley and Franks, 2011). Conner (2004) believes that the opportunity to co-author meaning of the arts is the experience arts audiences most want from an arts event nowadays; they want the opportunity to participate in an intelligent and responsible way, instead of being told what the art means. Moreover, Radbourne and colleagues (2009) insist that providing the audience with relevant information about the performance is an essential part of the art experience, as there are audiences who want "to know more about what they were viewing and to be given information relevant to the performance as a part of the viewing experience" (p.23). Similarly, Brown (2004) stresses that audiences are seeking more interactive experiences and that the more information provided to them, the better.

Jacob (2000) points that the experience of art can produce anxiety for audiences, particularly around the realisation that "there is something in an arts performance that demands to be figured out" (p.139). As Radbourne and colleagues (2009) found, "there are hidden knowledges within the experience of viewing live performing arts that challenge those not 'in the know' (non-attenders)" (p.23). They suggest that to some extent audience engagement is a function of learning because the

experience can ‘expose’ the audience to its educative message and develop their understanding of what is being listened to or watched (Ibid.). Based on the above analysis, Radbourne and colleagues (2009) propose a new framework for measuring quality in the performing arts, identifying knowledge, risk, authenticity and collective engagement as the key elements of audience experience.

Kemp and Poole (2016) explored the direct effects between relationships involving opportunity, motivation, ability, and arts enthusiasm. Their research conceptually built on the MAO by demonstrating how MAO variables, Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity to participate, influence audience development initiatives and facilitate participation in live performing arts experiences. They found that enhancing opportunity could increase the availability and accessibility of artistic offerings, such as providing more engagement activities to the public, to heighten and foster motivation for engaging in the arts. Furthermore, they state: “the more opportunities individuals have to participate in artistic experiences, the greater the likelihood that they will acquire the knowledge and skill necessary to appreciate the art form” (p.59). In this sense, engaging audiences through arts education activities not only offers participation opportunities for the public, but also nurtures existing audiences by providing more context about the artistic work to help them prepare for and process the experience of a live performance.

Prendergast (2004) acknowledges that a performance event can be divided into three parts: pre-performance, performance, and post-performance, and the task of audience education is to assist the audience in “placing themselves ‘en route towards the orient of the text’ by engaging in predictive, reflective, and evaluative activities in relation to an experience of performance” (p.45). Although she is dealing explicitly with young people/students, her suggestion resonates well in the context of audience education in general. Pre-performance and post-performance activities can enhance the

audience experience by strengthening the connection between the audience and performers and create "a sense of empathy" between them (Walmsley, 2011, p.7). The same theoretical foundation could be used to improve the relationship between arts organisations and their audiences by providing different kinds of activities and experiences for them to engage with the arts. An important consideration for arts organisations seeking to enrich the arts experiences of their audiences is to understand what tools are necessary "for including the audience more effectively in the total arts experience" (Conner, 2004, p.15). As Bernstein (2014) also stresses, apart from arts attendance, educational opportunities, contributions and social events are all part of one total experience.

Ohlandt (2015) maintains that engaging the public begins with enriching the audience member's experience. In the theatre sphere, Ohlandt (2015) identifies different types of audience enrichment programmes which include: programme notes and materials designed to provide audiences with the historical and stylistic contexts of the performances; lectures and panels of invited speakers; pre- and post-performance talks and other forms of facilitated discussions; conventional or multimedia/ interactive lobby displays; and online resources. These activities are designed to enhance, contextualise, and enlarge the experience of the audience from the dramaturgical aspects that comprise "historical context, character development, parameters of style and genre, textual and stylistic references, and so on" (Ohlandt, 2015, p.140). Furthermore, a certain degree of transparency in the production process, for example, information on the design, production, and rehearsal processes of the shows, could be used as enrichment materials. However, these enrichment activities are designed from an expert perspective which might risk assuming "knowledge and learning flows from experts to people who are dependent or in need […] the aim is to define what people lack – what they need or want that they have not got – and then deliver it to them (Leadbeater, 2009, p.3). What is more important is to place the audience in the position of

actively interpreting and actively constructing meaning (Reason, 2013) rather than neglecting the "capabilities and potential" of people (Leadbeater, 2009, p.3). In this respect, PAOs might need to think more strategically about how to engage with audience on a meaningful basis and in co-creating experiences with them through OEP.

2.5.3 Co-creation

Leadbeater (2009) sees co-creation as "the art of with" (p.5), and reveals organisations tend to do the arts of 'to' and 'for' people, which stems from deeply-rooted assumptions:

> Knowledge and learning flows from experts to people who are dependent or in need. Organisations are hierarchies based on the power and the knowledge to make decisions. Authority is exercised top down. The aim is to define what people lack – what they need or want that they have not got – and then deliver it to them. (p.3)

This echoes Heim's (2012) opinion:

> Most Western theatre companies that hold post-performance discussions follow either a question-and-answer or expert-driven model, both of which perpetuate an "expert agenda" that can be seen as didactic and to devalue any audience contributions. (pp.189-190)

As Arnstein (1969) emphasised, participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless; it is the redistribution of power that enables the non-participants, who are "presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" (p.216). Leadbeater (2009) elaborates his vision of the culture of with, a world in which collective thinking and collaboration with the audience are seen as riches to be mined. It reveals the lack of genuine engagement opportunities in the arts sector: participation practice often geared to the needs of the experts, funders and organisers rather than the participants.

Fun Palaces offers an insightful example in terms of co-creation. It is a campaign for cultural democracy, which promotes placing culture at the heart of community and community at the heart of culture. It aims to "equally value everyone's creativity and every community, through working together, handing over control and challenging the status quo" (Fun Palaces, 2019, p.21). Therefore, the community members are involved in different levels and processes of engagement, such as decision-making, design, production and performing. Furthermore, Fun Palaces embraces a much wider range of cultural activities and embraces and values everyone's cultural participation. Through a community-led approach which is "co-created: with, by and for all" (Ibid.), this initiative enabled community members to become producers and organisers of artistic events. In this way, the ownership was shared and community members were encouraged to influence and shape the arts and culture in their communities. This example demonstrates 'co-creation' as a model of participation in the arts that prioritise the needs of the participants and democratises the arts experience. Much can be learned from the model of co-creation for performing arts organisations; as Rudman highlights, co-creation is "a new form of 'organisational porosity' – a mindset that allows for a free exchange of creative energy between an arts organisation and its public" (cited in Brown et al., 2011, p.18).

2.6 The New Role of Cultural Leadership in Audience Engagement

The term 'cultural leadership' characterises the current thread of concern across the broader cultural sector. Cultural leaders are confronted by a set of social and technological changes (Holden, 2011), as well as the changing expectations of the audience, which affect how all organisations operate. According to Price (2017), cultural leaders should ask questions about what purposes they want to pursue, and therefore what structures are necessary for the future, rather than being limited to questions of how to manage and maintain the existing organisations. To achieve this, cultural

leadership is no longer only about leading the people within the organisation but taking the roles they can play in the public sphere and in society.

As Holden (2011) maintains, the relationships between organisations and their publics, and between leaders and staff, are at a point of fundamental re-negotiation (p.193). Reshaping the relationship between the arts and society has become a responsibility of cultural leadership. Traditionally, in publicly funded culture, cultural leaders are gatekeepers who define the meaning of culture through their decisions (Holden, 2011). Glow (2012) acknowledged the pre-existing “dominant patrician power relations” between many arts organisations and their audiences or communities. However, culture no longer lies solely in the hands of professional critics and gatekeepers. As audiences become much more interested in “participating, joining in, and influencing what happens to their organisation, including its programming”, cultural leaders’ expertise will have to be practised by “working with people, not just for them” (Holden, 2011, p.185). Therefore, cultural leadership plays an important role in reshaping the relationship between the arts and society, and has become an essential element in creating a culture that involves everyone.

There is a new generation of cultural leaders emerging with a deep belief and commitment to a more inclusive culture, and an inclusive, curious leadership style which reflects “audience focused leadership” (The Audience Agency, 2016, p.12). The term “inclusive leadership” was used by The Audience Agency (2016) to describe an inclusive approach to leadership that “makes an organisation more relevant, more vibrant, more entrepreneurial and creates greater social, creative and financial value” (p.11) whose results could include “more creative and connected communities” and “create more diverse and committed audiences” (p.10). There is a need for inclusive leadership to play a role in cultural organisations and in today’s societies if an inclusive culture is to be

achieved. Similarly, Jennings and Jones (2010) proposed the concept of a "taking part society" which "gives individuals the freedom and power to do more for and by themselves" (p.26).

Crane (2012) argues that arts organisations have physical, social, political and creative capital that can be applied to communities without altering their artistic mission or diverting too many resources, and they have opportunities to bring these assets into their communities and play a valuable role within communities. Mintzberg (2009) sees a key role for new models of leadership to enhance the possibilities for networked organisations: "a robust community requires a form of leadership quite different from the models that have it driving transformation from the top" (p.142). In this sense, an arts organisation should be an active participant in the life of the community and act as a community leader (Borwick, 2012). Outreach today implies the leadership role that arts organisations can play in communities, and it is concerned with how arts organisations can support communities and grassroots organisations through 'communityship' with what they are doing in creativity and culture. From an organisational perspective, PAOs should act as community leaders instead of a position of authority and see themselves "as being in the centre, reaching out rather than down" (Mintzberg, 2009, p.142).

Glow (2012) argues that "the task of facilitating and developing the engagement of audiences in the performing arts requires new thinking around networking and public participation which in turn requires new models of distributed arts leadership, leading to organisational renewal" (p.132). The concept of distributed leadership has encouraged a shift in focus from the attributes and behaviours of individual leaders to a more systemic perspective, whereby 'leadership' is conceived as a collective social process emerging through the interactions of multiple actors (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Bennett and colleagues (2003) argue that:

> distributed leadership is not something "done" by an individual "to" others, or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organisation… [it] is a group activity that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action. (p.3)

Distributed leadership allows for new ideas and information to flow in and through the organisation. In this sense, the leadership role facilitate connections between people and ideas. With the rise of a generation that expects to play a more active role in the shaping of its own experiences, the cultural sector is well placed to develop this new type of open, responsive and connected leadership (Jennings and Jones, 2010). PAOs need to recognise 'communityship' and act as community leaders while co-creating meaningful engagement with communities. Therefore, as Mandel (2019) suggests, a revised mission regarding engaging communities in PAOs might involve not only producing and presenting high art, but also being responsible for social issues by activating their artistic and creative resources and infrastructure.

2.7 Summary

This chapter undertook a review of both academic and sectoral literature in the fields of cultural policy and arts management. By examining different definitions of culture, the discussion revealed how the notions of culture and the arts were restricted to a limited set of forms and activities that are associated with publicly-funded cultural institutions and defined by a group of intellectual elites. It suggests that the narrow definition and understanding of participation that focuses on a limited set of cultural forms, activities and associated cultural institutions obscures the other forms of cultural participation that are situated locally in the everyday realm (Miles and Gibson, 2016). Therefore, in order to create broader cultural participation and solve the mismatch between the public's taste and the publicly-funded cultural offer, there is a need to recognise a broader notion about 'culture' and 'the arts' rather than just the 'high arts'. This requires a conceptual shift in understanding of the arts and culture which recognises everyday creativity and participation when engaging audiences. This

thesis aims to explore the extent to which OEP as a means of audience engagement can support cultural participation by engaging with people in a way that facilitates their own creativity and the co-creation of meaningful experiences.

The chapter briefly reviewed the policy model of the Arts Council, and it analysed how Arts Council funding has traditionally benefited institutions instead of individuals due to an emphasis on professional standards and excellence in its policy. Furthermore, it explored how the notion of outreach was associated with the cultural thinking of people like Keynes in the Arts Council system. The interest in providing access to people who were sufficiently eager to avail themselves of an arts experience represented the Liberal Humanistic idea of culture for all, which is an ideology of universalism and a practice of Eurocentrism (Jordan and Weedon, 1995; Upchurch, 2016). The discussion further highlighted the divergence between excellence and engagement in the arts and cultural sector. As Holden (2008) argues, cultural excellence cannot and should not be determined solely by a group of people who represent a producer interest, and it should be connected with the audience, participants and the public who are the shapers of the cultural ecology (Holden, 2015). Thus, engagement should not be seen as opponent of excellence, instead, it is an essential component of cultural excellence. As such, this study aims to examine the relationship between artistic and OEP programmes in PAOs and to explore how PAOs utilise OEP as a means to strike a balance between excellence and engagement.

The chapter also analysed how OEP was developed during the Arts Centre Movement, along with the evolution of the performing arts centre. Moreover, it highlighted the changing roles of arts centres from the ‘perfect instrument’ of democratising the arts towards having a grassroots focus and claiming a place in the cultural democratic process, which emphasised the need for better understanding of the roles of PAOs in facilitating and supporting cultural participation today.

The vital and political relationship between the arts and the public highlighted by the cultural democracy movement has incorporated the language of cultural participation into cultural policy. Increasing engagement opportunities becomes a means to achieve greater equality for the public in the arts and culture. In this sense, publicly funded arts organisations are encouraged to take responsibility for creating the conditions for the public to engage in the arts. As Chong (2010) maintains, publicly funded arts organisations have a more challenging mandate, because the inclusion of non-attenders can be an important target to satisfy public funding bodies, and a part of the ethical mandate that the arts matter to all. However, as discussed in this chapter, there should not be such a distinction between 'participants' and 'non-participants' based on the cultural deficit model. It is the definition of 'culture' that needs to be broadened, rather than the taste of 'non-participants'. This would require an ideological shift in understanding cultural participation. As Mulcahy (2006) argues, cultural democracy provides a stronger legitimisation of the principle of state subsidy, either as an alternative or complement to the democratisation of culture, while Langsted (1990) argues that, in practice, both concepts should be employed in a "double strategy cultural policy" (p.69). Thus, the gap in knowledge requires this research to explore whether OEP can be used not only as an approach to democratise the performing arts, but also as a more democratic approach in promoting cultural democracy.

As discussed in the thesis introduction, there are different philosophies and objectives behind different models of outreach. There is evidence in practice that outreach work is no longer only about bringing arts projects "outside" to "people unlikely to attend" (Kawashima, 2006) or "who are socially or culturally disadvantaged" (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987). It seems outreach is less considered by the recent literature as a concept that "refers more to the tactical domain than to a kind of relationship between audiences and cultural content" (Bollo et al., 2017, p.72). As practice

changes over time, research is required to re-conceptualise the notion of OEP. Moreover, there is a limited understanding of the use of the word 'education' in the arts, as the primacy of academic learning or school-based programmes for children and young people is still predominant in the cultural sector. Wilson and colleagues (2017) argue that "cultural learning is a life-long pursuit. To this end, opportunities for adult (cultural) education and learning are vital too" (p.10). As Rabkin and Helberg (2011) emphasise, arts education is a mode of arts participation rather than just a contributing factor to other forms of arts participation. As such, this study aims to examine whether and how PAOs utilise arts education as a means to create and co-create arts experience with the audience rather than as a process to produce future attendance.

In discussing the notion of the audience, it was acknowledged that audiences are not merely 'receivers' and the active nature of the audience needs to be addressed. Thus, it is vital to recognise a broader range of participation modes, and value participation as a democratic process rather than an end goal. The current typology of audiences tends to ignore the 'non-audience' and draw upon the transaction relationship between arts organisation (as provider) and the audience (as receiver). Therefore, there is an urgent need to acknowledge a broader notion of the audience and to examine the different understandings towards the audience from the relational perspectives of PAOs. The concepts of audience development, audience engagement and audience enrichment are often used in literature but are rarely well defined. There is a need for greater precision in interpreting the terms for a highly nuanced area of work as the practice changes and develops. To understand how OEP is underpinned by these core concepts, this chapter has analysed the interconnections between these terms and how such initiatives are relevant to arts experience and the rising concept of co-creation in the performing arts sector.

The relationships between organisations and their publics, and between leaders and staff, are at a point of fundamental re-negotiation (Holden, 2011). Cultural leadership is no longer only about leading the people within the organisation, but taking on roles in the public sphere and in society. Mintzberg (2009) identifies a key role for new models of leadership as being to enhance the possibilities for networked organisations which see themselves "as being in the centre, reaching out rather than down" (p.142). Furthermore, to facilitate cultural participation and to better engage audiences, new models of distributed arts leadership are required which will lead to organisational renewal (Glow, 2012). It is the argument of this thesis that outreach today implies the leadership role that arts organisations can play in cultural participation, and it is concerned with how arts organisations can support communities and grassroots organisations through 'communityship' with what they are doing in their creativity and culture; education is a mode of arts participation that places the audience in the position of actively interpreting and actively constructing meaning (Reason, 2013), with the aim to create and co-create the arts experience for and with the audience. Thus, there is a need to re-conceptualise OEP in light of the new role of PAOs in cultural participation and audience engagement. In addition, as the literature review shows, there is no literature or empirical research which gives consideration to the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with OEP, how OEP is perceived and implemented in PAOs, and how different organisational structures and management may affect OEP. To bridge the historical gap between academia and practice in OEP, it is necessary to conduct empirical research on such subject.

By employing the notions of the Democratisation of Culture and Cultural Democracy as a conceptual framework, it enables the study to explore the theoretical relationship between cultural policy and outreach and education practice, and to analyse the inception of such practice as a democratisation tool within the publicly funded arts sector. Within the available literature on OEP, much of the discussion has considered that such initiatives stem from the need for publicly funded

cultural institutions to justify their subsidy. As the literature shows, OEP was used with the aim of providing access to – and 'participation' with – professional arts and designed to increase and diversify audiences for publicly subsidised art. The conceptual framework will further guide the empirical research to examine the development of OEP and to explore the extent to which OEP could be a means of supporting cultural democracy and capability by PAOs. The next chapter will outline the methodological approaches adopted to undertake the empirical research and consider questions and issues that arose during the research process.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The primary focus of this thesis is an empirical investigation into how performing arts organisations (PAOs) implement their outreach and education practices (OEP) when engaging audiences today. Due to a lack of research in this area within the field of arts management, the cultural participation debate around the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy is used as the theoretical framework for this study. To gain fresh insights into how OEP is being implemented in the performing arts sector from an international perspective, this research engages in in-depth discussion with practitioners from different countries to investigate their perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards OEP.

To achieve the research objectives, this empirical research was guided by following research questions:

- How do PAOs describe their practice in outreach and education?
- What are the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with outreach and education practice?
- How do PAOs perceive, position and value outreach and education practice in their organisations?
- What are the implications for the future development of outreach and education practice in the performing arts?

As interpretive research, this study is an "iterative, intertwining processes of access, generation and analysis" (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2013, p.204). From a methodological perspective, this does not mean simply collecting data, as in the positivist paradigm, but accessing the sites at which data can be generated in one of three ways: reading, talking, and observing (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea,

2013; Jager and Maier, 2009). The epistemological basis of interpretive research demands an acknowledgment of the researcher's status as a positioned and active agent within the debate and the degree to which this may also have shaped both the data generated and the conclusions reached. The philosophical position – 'I' is "not a unified subject, a fixed identity, or that solid mass covered with layers of superficialities one has gradually to peel off before one can see its true face. 'I' is, itself, infinite layers" (Trinh, 1989, cited in Conquergood, 1991, p.184). To some extent, taking this methodological approach means that the researcher "transcends their acculturation" (Rorty, 1991, p.13) and in this process the researcher will assimilate a multiplicity of world-views, attitudes, beliefs, and values. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2013) suggest that it is important for researchers to remain alert to their ideological imperatives, epistemological presuppositions, and subjective, inter-subjective and normative beliefs about the area under investigation. As a former practitioner who previously worked in OEP, I acknowledge the possibility of being biased. To ensure that I could uncouple my roles as researcher and former OEP professional, I kept reminding myself to wear 'the researcher hat', 'think as a researcher' and maintain a neutral perspective. To achieve this, I kept a daily journal, as well as making field notes, to help reflect on my behaviour and status while working in the field.

In interpretative research, "the reliability and generalisability of research findings can be enhanced by combining different types of research materials, interviews, and written texts, and by contextual triangulation" (Talja, 1999, p.473). Thus, mixed methods that combine quantitative research (questionnaire survey) and qualitative research (interviews, case study, and content analysis) are employed in this thesis. According to Walmsley (2019), a "mixed-method approach can circumnavigate the biases and limitations of single methods and triangulate data in a way that offers a meaningful and complex response to the underlying problems and questions" (p.134). As Agar (1996) elucidates, the analogy of the six blind men and the elephant can be applied to the mixed-

method approach – there is no particular view or method that is ever complete or true, rather the integration of information from different observers or different methods provides a better understanding (p.124). Each method has its own special strengths and limitations and provides a different viewpoint from which to observe the elephant (DeWalt and Dewalt 2011). Thus, the use of different techniques with different strengths and limitations allowed for the cross validation of conclusions by comparing them using data collected in different ways. The matching of research methods and data resources with research questions is illustrated in the following table.

Table 3: Research Questions and Matching Methods

Research questions	Research methods and data sources
How do PAOs describe their practice in outreach and education?	Desk research: Performing arts organisations' websites, and printed booklets. Survey: Performing arts organisations' responses Interviews: OEP Professionals
What are the key objectives of PAOs in engaging audiences with outreach and education practice?	Survey: Performing arts organisations' responses Interviews: OEP Professionals Case study: two performing arts centres
How do PAOs perceive, position and value outreach and education practice in their organisations?	Interviews: OEP Professionals and other performing arts professional Case study: two performing arts centres
What are the implications for the future development of outreach and education practice in the performing arts?	Interviews: Performing arts professionals, critic academics Analysis and conclusion from all data collected

3.1 Research Design

To achieve the aforementioned research objectives, a quantitative–qualitative mixed approach was employed in this study. The research started with an exploratory investigation through an online

survey with performing arts organisations within the sample framework of the International Society of the Performing Arts (ISPA). Later, as part of the main study, an ethnographic method, semi-structured interview, was used to test and further explore the preliminary findings. It included interviews with arts organisation managers, OEP managers and staff working in the sector. Meanwhile, content analysis was conducted on publicly available material, for example, performing arts organisations' websites, annual reports, written plans, programmes, and brochures. In addition, a multiple-case study approach was employed to take a closer look at the OEP in each chosen institution to expand on the themes explored in the online survey and interviews, and to illustrate best practice and raise emerging theory. As outlined early in the thesis, this study does not address the differences between different forms of performing arts, rather it is concerned with the nature of 'live-ness' (as an essential characteristic) as a shared experience that the performing arts offers. Therefore, performing arts centres were selected as case studies in this research. Given the time restrictions of a PhD, this research involved two case studies of performing arts centres from different countries. At least two weeks were spent at each institution so that participant observation and semi-structured interviews with executive managers, OEP managers and staff, participants and critical academics could form part of this research.

ISPA as a "sampling frame" (Mason, 1996) was used for the survey distribution. It is an international network of more than 500 practitioners in the performing arts, with representation from more than 185 cities and all regions of the globe. Its members include performing arts organisations, artist managers, funders, consultants, and other professionals working in the performing arts. The shortlist of potential respondents involved in this research was compiled based on the list of member organisations online on ISPA's website and from my own professional contacts within the network. Therefore, a stratified random method (Gill and Johnson, 2005) was used to make random selections within performing arts organisations in the ISPA.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to elicit information from a large sample, an online survey was designed to cover a wide geographic spread of performing arts organisations. It was launched before conducting interviews and case studies. Therefore, the survey not only provided preliminary insights for the following steps but also functioned as a sample pool of interviewees. In this sense, the survey served as a scoping study, which allowed me to explore perceptions of outreach and education and to understand how such practices are articulated and applied. For more accurate results, surveys can be easily combined with other methods of data collection. As such, the interview sessions provided opportunities for me to ask follow-up questions from interviewees' survey answers and to get a deeper understanding of their responses; allowing respondents to express themselves freely may reveal new paths to explore further. Moreover, it opened up the possibility to discover 'why' and 'how' questions that had not been presented in the survey. Lastly, the case study method extended the depth of the chosen topic as case studies are very focused and narrow by their nature; this counterbalanced the kind of data that was gathered through the of survey, which instead offered a broad range of international perspectives on the topic of my research.

3.2.1 Online Survey

Survey research is a quantitative approach that features one of the primary approaches to collecting new data. According to Pollfish, a professional corporation that specialises in online surveys, "quantitative survey questions that offer limited answer choices and quick responses tend to yield better data quality than open-ended responses that involve typing and more concentration" (Pollfish, 2021). In this study, a quantitative survey was ideal for gaining a general picture of the attitude of contemporary performing arts organisation towards OEP. Thus, it was designed as an exploratory piece of research to gain ideas about issues that could be developed throughout the later qualitative

data collection stages. It contained 26 close-ended questions under the categories (1) Background and Information, (2) Human Resource and Leadership, (3) Strategy, and (4) Finance (see Appendix A).

These questions provided preliminary findings about current terminologies and taxonomies of OEP that prevail in the field. In addition, it assisted in choosing interview participants and refining the research design for the following stages. It contained a section at the end where participants could tell me if they were interested in taking part in interviews at a later stage. Potential interview respondents were contacted and given information about the interviews. I asked a small group of professionals and academics to provide genuine and honest feedback so that I could make adjustments before the survey was officially launched online.

Because of the University of Leeds regulations, the tool used to design and conduct the online survey was Bristol Online Survey. The survey required approximately 15 minutes to complete, and it can be completed in any location with internet access at respondent's convenience. The survey was distributed to members of the ISPA network through email with relevant information on the study, clearly stating that participation in the project was voluntary. After two weeks from the original email, recipients who had not completed the survey would receive a second email as a reminder.

Sampling and Selecting

Spatial or geographical dimensions were an important element in this research. As the thesis intended to gain an international perspective of OEP, the sample had to include not only countries/ regions that are perceived to be at the forefront of developing thinking, theories and practice in the field, for example the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Scandinavia,

Singapore and Hong Kong, but also other places that are in different stages of development. As mentioned earlier, I used ISPA as a "sampling frame" (Mason, 1996) to gain further information for making selections. As a paid student member of ISPA, I obtained email addresses through a directory of member organisations' contact information on the ISPA website. I attended three ISPA Congresses during the first two years of my PhD study and gained a network of practitioners who were interested in my chosen topic or practising OEP within the industry. Bryman (2008) suggests that researchers could make initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then use these to establish contacts with others. Thus, this network allowed me to establish rapport with a group of practitioners at ISPA congresses, consequently providing me with information regarding best practice in my research area and introducing me to key people involved in PAOs. In this sense, a snowball sampling method facilitated the stratified random method in order to get a statistically representative sampling.

Representativeness of the sample is one of the most frequently discussed and contentious issues of survey methodologies. Therefore, I tried to collect as many responses as possible. The sampling strategy was reviewed twice when I noticed the low response rate. I launched the survey at the end of May 2019 and there were only 10 responses over the first three months due to many of the potential respondents being away for summer vacations during that period. Therefore, I decided to extend the survey closing date to generate more responses. Furthermore, I made adjustment to the sampling strategy by reaching out to another two networks of PAOs. One of the two networks, the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres, agreed to distribute the survey to its members through its mailing list. In addition, I conducted face-to-face surveys and distributed physical surveys at the ISPA congress site in New York in January 2020.

Informed Consent

The participants were advised that participation in the project was voluntary; by completing the survey they agreed for their data to be included in the project; and they were able to withdraw from the project up until one month after their participation. As mentioned earlier, data from the online survey was collected through the recommended provider of Bristol Survey Online, this means that data was collected in a way which complied with the Data Protection Act. Sensitive information such as names and titles of participants were not collected in the survey. Therefore, the survey data is anonymised, and participants are not identifiable.

3.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in this research with a set of prepared questions to provide a basic structure and to ensure all topics were covered. This approach allows researchers to tailor-make each interview based on the dynamics of each interaction (Mason, 1996), and this flexibility enabled me to follow up the interviewees' specific responses, to allow for the development of the interviewee's ideas, and give them a chance to "speak widely on the issues" (Denscombe, 2003, p.167). Furthermore, the interviewees were identified through purposive sampling (Silverman, 2006), to ensure that they included practitioners from different professional backgrounds. The interviewees were mainly recruited through the responses to the survey, and the sample included senior-management representatives from performing arts organisations, OEP managers, and artists who work in the field with audiences. I selected participants according to their professional role, level of industry experience, regional location, and decision-making influence (Harvey, 2011). Ten outreach and education practitioners from different countries, including Columbia, Singapore, Switzerland, Finland, Chile, Australia, the UK, and Japan, who held first-hand knowledge of their OEP were interviewed. I was interested in how practitioners articulated their experiences, ideas, and perspectives of OEP towards audience engagement. In gathering data, the practitioners were asked about their specific roles in OEP to understand their current priorities

and challenges, as well as their understanding of different terminologies in this field, organisational structure and leadership, evaluation practice, and the local, regional and national policy context. In addition, follow-up questions based on their survey responses were asked.

The interviews in this study were administered through online communication platforms (Skype, Zoom and Teams), owing to the global pandemic. The interviewees were sent an information sheet by email outlining the project and providing my contact details if they had any questions before or after the interview. They were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix E) specifying if they wished to remain anonymous or whether they were happy for their name to be used in the research. To retain a full, uninterrupted record of what was said, audio recording was used for all interviews after obtaining consent from the interviewees. The signed consent forms reassured the interviewees and encouraged openness in the interview. In the event several of the participants asked for their names to be anonymised, but for consistency all names except academic critics' have been removed from the analysis.

3.2.3 Case Studies

To gain in-depth insight into the research questions, case studies were used in this research as they provide descriptions of chosen case (Dixon et al., 1987) with the ability to gather evidence from various sources providing "rich and detailed" findings (Burton, 2000, p.225). According to Yin (2018), the case study as an empirical research method allows researchers to focus in-depth "on a 'case' and to retain a holistic and real-world perspective" (p.5). It is especially preferable "when "how" or "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 2003, p.1). As an exploratory study, this research aimed to explore how OEP is developing and evolving in the performing arts, specifically to include how outreach and education practice is being planned,

delivered, perceived and valued by performing arts organisations in their audience engagement strategies.

A multiple-case approach was adopted as it helps to gain in-depth understanding from multiple perspectives (Simons, 2009) which was critical for this research. As Herriott and Firestone (1983) suggest, evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, therefore, the a multi-case study is regarded as being more robust (cited in Yin, 2018, p.102). Meanwhile, adopting a multi-case study allows the researcher to compare and contrast the findings derived from each of the cases (Usunier, 1998) and to consider 'what is unique' and 'what is common across cases' (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). According to Goodrick (2014), the number of cases included is usually limited since a deep understanding of each case is needed and this requires intensive data collection and analysis. Therefore, "the larger the number of cases examined, the less depth can be achieved" (Ibid., p.4). Similarly, Yin (2018) states that the conduct of a multi-case study can require extensive resources and time beyond the means of a single researcher. Given the nature of a PhD study and the time restriction, this research involved two case studies.

Goodrick (2014) contends that comparative case studies are well suited "when there is a need to understand and explain how features within the context influence the success of programme or policy initiatives" (p.1). This is because they tell us "why and how particular outcomes were produced" (Ibid., p.7). As this study sought to understand how OEP is created and functions within performing arts organisations in different countries and regions, identifying features of the contexts within which they operate may explain the relative achievement of successful outcomes. As Goodrick (2014) continues, "comparative case studies involve the analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences and patterns across two or more cases that share a common focus or goal"; in addition, they allow for "explanatory evidence to be collected and tested iteratively" (p.2).

Furthermore, analysing the collected data and drawing conclusions from different cases can inform future practice in an evaluative way. Accordingly, the comparative case approach offered a good match with the objectives of this study.

3.3 The Two Case Studies: Barbican and Esplanade

The Barbican Centre

The Barbican Centre is a performing arts centre in the Barbican Estate of the City of London, and it is the largest of its kind in Europe. The centre hosts classical and contemporary music concerts, theatre performances, film screenings and art exhibitions. To inspire more people to discover and love the arts is a crucial part of Barbican's mission. Since the Barbican Centre and the Guildhall School launched a creative learning partnership in 2009, more than 42,000 people, including children, young people, teachers, families, artists and communities, have participated in their learning programmes and activities, while more than 300,000 have enjoyed their programme of free events produced alongside their partners (Barbican, 2017). Young Creatives, Communities, Schools and Colleges, Emerging and Practising Artists, and Public Events are five key areas in their creative learning work. Barbican has been working to connect its local East London communities with their world-class arts and learning to break down social and economic barriers and improve everyone's access to the arts. In Barbican's strategic priorities for 2019-2024, "Audiences – Build lasting relationships" and "Learning – Develop creative skills for life" were highlighted among four other strategic priorities (Barbican, 2019). Accordingly, the Creative Learning team draw on a new plan for their work that is underpinned by three core pillars: education, employability, and enrichment.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

As Singapore's national performing arts centre, Esplanade is one of the busiest arts centres in the world, producing and presenting about 3,500 performances and activities every year (Esplanade, 2018). Its diverse programming is guided by its social mission: "to entertain, engage, educate and inspire" (Ibid.). The centre's year-long calendar of arts performances and activities span different cultures, languages and genres, including music, dance, theatre and visual arts, with a special focus on community access and arts education. Esplanade is dedicated to creating new ways for the arts to impact communities who may not always have the opportunity to encounter the arts or visit Esplanade. Seventy per cent of their shows offer free admission, which aims to make the arts at Esplanade accessible to all. In addition, communities in need are a key area of focus for Esplanade's community engagement efforts. Every year, they work closely with artists and voluntary welfare organisations to bring arts experiences to over 10,000 beneficiaries in Singapore (Esplanade, 2018). These include senior citizens, children, young people, and under-served/under-represented communities.

Criteria for Selection the Case Studies

In a multi-case study, the selection of the cases should be based first on the anticipation of the opportunity to learn (Stake, 1995). Given the exploratory nature of the study, it aims to generate insight into how different policy contexts, structural and management factors may affect the practice. Thus, the cases should be selected based on different models of operating OEP in different countries. As such, the institutions were selected based on the purposive sampling method (Seale, 2012) to determine whose OEP was regarded as exemplary in the field. As Campbell (2012) reveals, to find comparable sites is challenging in any context. To select case studies for this thesis, preliminary background research was conducted on the major international arts centres in different countries and regions. Meanwhile, consultations with field experts and practitioners were undertaken during the ISPA congresses in order to select sector-leading outreach and education

programmes. Based on experts' knowledge in the field and institutions' reputations in the industry, three potential cases were selected, including the Barbican Centre, the UK, Esplanade - Theatre on the Bay, Singapore and Arts Centre Melbourne, Australia. These three institutions were identified as potential case studies as they are high profile performing arts centres with widely acknowledged examples of excellent practice in engaging audiences. The cases' selection also considered institutions' willingness to act as the researcher's gatekeeper. Through approaching the potential case study organisations, Barbican and Esplanade agreed to take part in the research.

The reasons for selecting the two case studies comprised in this research lie first and foremost in the contrasting factors/natures of OEP in each of the institutions. They are established organisations with specific strategies for audience engagement: both of them put audience engagement centrally in their missions and/or visions, but with different focuses in their practice. Even though they are located in different parts of the globe with different cultural traditions, different institutional structures, and different policy contexts, they are both situated in a large multicultural community of people from various racial and ethnic backgrounds. The following section will discuss in detail the comparison between the two cases in terms of context, architecture, mission and focus, and institutional structure.

Comparison of Two Cases

Context

Both institutions' cities are considered among the world's most important global cities. According to the Institute for Urban Strategies at The Mori Memorial Foundation in Tokyo, which issued a comprehensive study of global cities in 2018, London and Singapore were included in the top 10 power cities. The ranking is determined through the lens of six functions: economy, research and development, cultural interaction, liveability, environment, and accessibility, as well as through the

viewpoint of five urban actors including managers, researchers, artists, visitors and residents. Furthermore, both cities enjoy a diverse range of people and cultures. In London, 36.7% of its population are foreign-born, making London the city with the second largest immigrant population in the world (Office for National Statistic, 2011). Whereas in Singapore, about 74.1% of residents are of Chinese descent, 13.4% of Malay descent, 9.2% of Indian descent, and 3.3% other (including Eurasian) descent (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2010). Therefore, as regards the multicultural population, Esplanade and Barbican should be experienced and specialised in catering to diverse audiences.

Furthermore, both cases are publicly funded arts centres which operate within a national arts policy structure – the arts council model. Esplanade acts as one of the agencies of Minister for Culture, Community and Youth in Singapore, whereas Barbican is listed as a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England. Similarly, the cultural policies in the two countries appear to share a common agenda on cultural participation, and promote the outcomes of both artistic excellence and audience development, but with different aims and priorities.

Architecture

Both of the centres are world-class arts centres and iconic architectural entities in their respective regions. But they are very different in terms of architectural structure and design philosophy. One is a relatively ‘closed’ brutal concrete-clad complex which hide its gems inside, while the other is more ‘open’, with its most prominent feature being the transparent facade which appears to welcome people passing by. Having opened 20 years apart, they represent iconic performing arts centres from two different generations and eras.

Barbican's architecture is Brutalist, and it is classified as a Grade II listed building in London. It was developed as part of a utopian vision to transform an area of London left devastated by bombing during the Second World War. The centre took over a decade to build and was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1982. Its stunning spaces and unique location at the heart of the Barbican Estate have made it an internationally recognised venue and the building is seen as a landmark in terms of its scale, cohesion, and ambition.

Esplanade opened officially on 12th October 2002. The building comprises two rounded glass domes fitted with triangular glass and a system of champagne-coloured sunshades that offer an optimised trade-off between solar shading and outward panoramic views. Its eye-catching spiky twin domes became an iconic addition to Marina Bay. The arts centre became unofficially known as 'durian', the notorious Southeast Asian 'king of fruits'. In 2013, the centre came to be featured on Singapore's five-cent coins. Esplanade explores the continuity of public and performance space; thus its programme is designed to engage both the casual visitors and those actively seeking arts experiences, and its offerings are arranged throughout the site across a variety of formal and informal stages.

Mission and focus

Both venues stress the belief of 'arts for all' and recognise the transformational power of the arts for people. Esplanade's vision statement describes it as "a performing centre for everyone" (Esplanade, 2018). Esplanade's mission is to bring the arts closer to the lives of different individuals – to entertain, engage, educate and inspire them (Ibid.). Similarly, Barbican's mission is "to inspire more people to discover and love the arts", alongside its artistic vision: to "attract new arts audience and participants, creating inspiring arts experience for all" (Barbican, 2019).

Barbican's Creative Learning programme aims to support people of all ages and backgrounds to discover their creative voice, with a special focus on young people. Activities range from workshops, events and talent development programmes, such as Young Poets, Young Photographers, Barbican Box, and Chronic Youth. In addition, in September 2016, Creative Learning launched the Associate Schools programme that focuses on a whole-school relationship, involving senior leaders, teachers, students, and their families. Whereas at Esplanade, 'Esplanade Presents' and 'Community Engagement' are two major parts of its OEP. Throughout the year, Esplanade presents a diverse range of festivals and programmes, hence the name, Esplanade Presents. For example, Esplanade organises cultural festivals that celebrate the heritage and artistry of Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures, curates series for developing local audiences and artists, and hosts concerts that are performed by community groups. Communities in need is a key area of focus for Esplanade's Community Engagement; such practice aim to engage underserved communities through activities tailor-made for their diverse needs, which includes people with different learning or physical abilities, senior citizens who are vulnerable and lonely, and young people who are at risk.

Institutional structure

Barbican and Esplanade have very different institutional structures in terms of implementing outreach and education work. Barbican is mainly founded and managed by the City of London Corporation. Its Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Department is the leading team of OEP within the organisation. The partnership is an alliance between an arts centre and a conservatoire (the Guildhall School of Music and Drama), pioneering new models for creative and cultural learning across art forms. The Creative Learning team works closely with the Art Forms team, and the Director of Creative Learning sits at the same level as the Artistic Director, who reports directly to the Managing Director. Apart from Creative Learning programmes and projects, there are also

non-ticketed programmes of free events, architecture tours and other activities in the publicly-accessible areas and the foyer of Barbican, which are curated and managed by other teams, such as, the Audience Experience team (front of house) and Incubator team.

Esplanade is operated by Esplanade Co. Ltd., which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered charity, and an Institution of a Public Character. Unlike most of the other performing arts centres in the world, there is no Artistic Director in the organisational structure. Instead, the CEO makes programming decisions along with five heads from the Programming department, including 'Community (Cultural Programmes)', 'Community Engagement', 'Dance and Theatre, Music', and 'Visual Arts & Children/Youth', five units. Instead of separate teams, one core team curates both artistic and OEP programmes.

In a sense, Barbican and Esplanade are comparative case studies with examples of excellent practice. They are both established organisations with specific strategies in audience engagement and they both place audience engagement as central to their missions or visions, albeit with different models and focuses in their OEP.

Case Study Design

A case study embraces all methods of gathering and analysing data (Merriam, 1998a). As Yin (2018) notes, no single research source has a complete advantage over others, thus a good case study need to rely on as many source as possible. The case study research in this work consisted of the following elements:

- An analysis of the arts centres' documentation (e.g. websites, business plans, annual reports, internal documents, etc.).
- An analysis of the national cultural policy context and industry contexts.

- On-site participant observation of the arts centres' OEP events.
- Semi-structured interviews with the arts centres' executive directors, OEP managers and staff members, and key external stakeholders (academic critics).

As "one of the most important sources of case study information" (Yin, 2003, p.89), interviews were used again in this research for in-depth investigations into how each institutions employ and value OEP in their audience engagement strategies, and how each institution is creating and developing their OEP. Semi-structured interviews with executive managers, OEP managers and staff members provided different perspectives on OEP from different managerial levels. A list of standardised questions provided a structure to guide the process, while the unstructured section with open-type questions enabled me to obtain adequate information regarding different cases. These questions were derived from the relevant documentation and my own on-site observations. Furthermore, interviews with OEP academic critics were needed as a way to triangulate the findings. Audrey Wong, LASALLE College of the Arts, and Professor Helen Nicholson, Royal Holloway, University of London, were identified as academic critics for the case studies of Esplanade and Barbican respectively.

Yin (2018) emphasises the importance of using multiple sources of evidence to increase the reliability and validity of the data in the case study method. In addition to interviews, detailed content analysis of various types of documentation was thus required, which included annual reports, short- and/or long-term plans, and other archival records. I collected several internal documentary sources to provide information on issues that could not be readily addressed through other methods, which helped to check the validity of findings and information that derived from other methods. Furthermore, the interviews in the case studies gave me the opportunity to expand on themes/concepts that I gathered from the documents.

Research Perspective

I employed an emic and etic perspective for the two case studies respectively, due to the different levels of access which were permitted to the case study organisations. The terms 'emic' and 'etic' were first conceived by the linguistic theoretician Kenneth Pike in 1954 and were subsequently expanded in anthropology as two different means for referring to the perspective of the native informant and the observer. As the use of emics and etics became more prevalent, the application of these perspectives has grown and now spans numerous fields of study and genres of qualitative research (Olive, 2014). According to Harris (1979),

> Emic operations have as their hallmark the elevation of the native informant to the status of ultimate judge of the adequacy of the observer's description and analysis. […] Etic operations have as their hallmark the elevation of observers to the status of ultimate judges of the categories and concepts used in descriptions and analyses. (p.32)

The emic perspective encompasses an internal view which "attempts to capture participants' indigenous meanings of real-world events" (Yin, 2010, p.11) and "looks at things through the eyes of members of the culture being studied" (Willis, 2007, p.100). In contrast, the etic perspective constructs an external view which comprises "structures and criteria developed outside the culture as a framework for studying the culture" (Ibid.).

Even though, as Yin (2016) suggests, the two perspectives can produce different versions of events, they share the same aim and research questions. It is noted that the differences may affect the way that qualitative research is conducted and reported (Yin, 2016). To eliminate difference as much as possible between two perspectives, the principle of triangulation is applied throughout the two case studies. The original principle of triangulation comes from navigation, where the intersection of three different reference points is used to calculate the precise location of an object (Yardley, 2009). It has been recognised in conducting qualitative research in several fields, such as evaluation

research and sociology (e.g., Greene et al., 1989; Jick, 1979; Patton, 2002). According to Patton (2002), triangulation could be applied for:

1. data sources (data triangulation);
2. investigators who have worked on the same study team (investigator triangulation);
3. perspectives about the same dataset (theory triangulation); and
4. methods (methodological triangulation). (p.247)

Flick (2016) further highlights that the "systematic triangulation of perspectives, the integration of the diverse perspectives of all of the study's key stakeholder groups" (pp.54-55). Accordingly, I employed data triangulation, methodological triangulation and perspective triangulation in this study. As Yin (2016) suggests, the ideal triangulation would try to rely on three different kinds of sources in data collection. Thus, I gained access to a variety of sources in my fieldwork and chose to use grey literature from the organisations, my own observations, and interviews with employees as three different sources. Furthermore, the three sources represent different methods: content analysis, participant observation, and interviews. In addition, perspective triangulation was implemented by interviewing academic critics Audrey Wong and Helen Nicholson who were 'outsiders' to the case study organisations for a third party view.

Participant Observation

In order to critically investigate OEP in individual institutions, participant observation was used as a data collection technique within the case study method. Participant observation is commonly used as the primary method for researchers taking a more interpretive approach to the study of ethnography (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Some researchers, such as Agar (1996), see participant observation as providing the context for the research. Spradley (1980) used the term participant observation to refer to the general approach of fieldwork in ethnographic research. DeWalt and Dewalt (2011) define participant observation as "a method in which a researcher takes part in the

daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture" (p.1). The "explicit" aspect is "a level of knowledge people can communicate about with relative ease" (Spradley, 1980, p.7), whereas the "tacit" part of culture mainly remains "outside our awareness or consciousness" (DeWalt and Dewalt, 2011, p.2). Therefore, the information collected through participant observation is critical to social scientific analysis as it provides a unique perspective that other methods, including semi-structured interviews, surveys and content analysis, could not achieve.

Participant observation includes 'participating' with and 'observing' the people and communities with whom we are working (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011), and these two parts could compose four variants on an active (participant) to passive (observer) spectrum:

1. being a participant only;
2. being a participant who also observes;
3. being an observer who also participates; and
4. being an observer only. (Gold, 1958; Schwartz and Schwartz, 1955)

Only the middle two of the four variants can be called participant-observers, since these two have some participation and some observation instead of neglecting either one entirely (Yin, 2016, p.129). In the Esplanade case study, I was 'a participant who also observes', whereas in the Barbican case study I was 'an observer who also participates'. DeWalt and Dewalt (2011) reveal that the practice of participant observation provides several advantages to research as follows:

- It enhances the quality of the data obtained during fieldwork.
- It enhances the quality of the interpretation of data, whether those data are collected through participant observation or by other methods (participant observation is thus both a data collection and an analytic tool).
- It encourages the formulation of new research questions and hypotheses grounded in on-the-scene observation. (DeWalt and Dewalt, 2011, p.10)

While I was conducting fieldwork at Esplanade, I was attached as a trainee to the Programming department. Coy (1989) contends that the apprenticeship experience results in "ways of knowing" and "learning to see" that are distinct from less participatory approaches (cited in DeWalt and Dewalt 2011). There are many ethnographers who have apprenticed in the field in order to gain new perspectives, for instance, Robert Desjarlais (1992) trained to become an apprentice Yolmo shaman in a study of Yolmo healing. Tedlock (1991) argues that successful formal and informal apprenticeships are ways of undergoing intensive enculturation, because enculturation (Schensul et al., 1999) happens at the same time as the participant observer spends time and carries out activities with members of communities in which they are working (DeWalt and Dewalt, 2011). Consequently, enculturation is an apprenticeship in the 'culture' and social life of the communities in which the participant observer is working (Ibid.).

During my three weeks with Esplanade in October 2019, apart from participating in and observing the events and performances of Esplanade, "being there" (Becker, 1970) allowed me to participate in a working environment and shaped the way in which I interacted with others and how I interpreted what I observed. As Bernard (2006) points out, participant observation "puts you where the action is and lets you collect data" (p.343). It provided context for constructing interview questions, identifying people to interview, and selecting events to observe. In a sense, participant observation supported and complemented the other types of data collection methods in the case studies. I gained cultural knowledge of Singapore through casual talks in the pantry and lunches with colleagues; these interactions shaped my understanding of the company's culture and values, and gave me a greater understanding of 'what they do', 'how they do' and 'why they do what they do'. It allowed me to understand nonverbal communication, the tacit culture and knowledge within the organisation. Furthermore, observation of events allowed me to be "able to speak to people

informally – before, after and during the events" (Gross and Pitts, 2016, p.8), which provided valuable additional insight into participants' experiences and opinions.

At Barbican, however, I did not gain access to observe from the position of an apprentice; instead, I conducted participant observation through a two-week research placement in November 2019. This opportunity allowed me to participate in and observe nine events of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning from the perspective of an outsider of the institution. The fieldwork at Barbican was conducted according to a pre-arranged schedule with the researcher embedded in the events to watch what happened, listen to what was said, ask questions through informal and formal interviews, and to collect documents and data relevant to the research question. The schedule was provided by staff from the Creative Learning department, and included a list of events at both on-site and off-site locations over the two-week period.

3.4 Data Analysis

The mixed methods approach to data collection aimed to increase the reliability of the data by allowing the triangulation of findings from different sources at the analysis stage. Data collected through the online survey was first analysed through the production of charts and tables on Bristol Online Survey with the assistance of the Numbers tool to gain an overview of OEP in the performing arts sector. Bristol Online Survey provided a traditional academic form of data analysis and offered a useful first visualisation of the results. The preliminary findings of survey data were used in conjunction with the findings from the literature review and analysis of the interviews, in order to identify key themes and terminology used in practice, to aid the analysis of the more detailed data from the case studies. Interviews conducted during and outside of the case studies were transcribed and analysed in line with the process applied to qualitative data through coding and grouping recurrent themes that emerged from the interview data, considering the quantitative-

qualitative mixed and interpretivist approaches employed by this research. Similarly, observations of case studies were examined using the same elements to identify similarities and differences across different datasets.

According to Reeves and colleagues (2008), ethnographic data analysis tends to follow an inductive process of identifying and categorising key issues that emerge from the collection of the information itself. Thus, thematic analysis was used for "identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes')" within the collected data in this study (Clark and Braun, 2017, p.297). Mills and colleagues (2012) describe this as "an analytic approach and synthesising strategy" used as part of the meaning-making process of many methods (p.926). As an organic approach to coding and theme development, thematic analysis emphasises the active role of the researcher in these processes. It provided accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from qualitative data (Clark and Braun, 2017). According to Clark and Braun (2017), the aim of thematic analysis is "not simply to summarise the data content, but to identify, and interpret, key, but not necessarily all, features of the data, guided by the research question" (p.297). In a sense, the themes provided a framework for organising and reporting the researcher's analytic observations. In addition, it facilitated the research question evolving through coding and theme development (Ibid.).

In this research, thematic analysis helped in identifying patterns within and *across* data that was collected through different methods. It allowed me to combine and compare quantitative and qualitative datasets: in-depth interview results were compared with survey results to validate convergence and discover contradictions, as well as to explain statistical patterns generated from survey analysis. Furthermore, as Clark and Braun (2017) suggest, thematic analysis can be used within a 'critical' framework to interrogate patterns within personal or social meaning around a

topic, and to ask questions about the implications of the categorised themes. Therefore, this approach helped to generate the implications of creating effective OEP for the performing arts in the future according to different themes.

3.5 Limitations

One of the difficulties of this research was to identify individuals responsible for OEP. Very often this is a shared remit across a number of departments, as Rogers (1998) revealed. Typically, those with an interest include marketers, educators, outreach officers and to a lesser extent those involved in programming. Therefore, building contacts with practitioners who involve in OEP was not a straightforward process. To some extent, this affected the response rate of the research request in this study. Some of the contacts I made through the ISPA network who are not directly involved in such practice in their organisations they agreed to help me pass on the research request to their colleagues. However, responses were not guaranteed. Qualitative research has the limitation of having only a small number of participants, which cannot ever represent the general situation (Walmsley, 2011; Griffin, 2004). Although this research adopted a quantitative-qualitative mixed approach, the number of participants in this study was limited. There were 33 responses for the online survey and ten interviews, and these numbers were lower than expected. But the collected research data covered the work of OEP in 20 countries across six continents.

It is acknowledged that the method of interview itself has a certain limitation: as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argue, “the spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity; no matter how carefully we word the questions and how carefully we report or code the answers” (p.361). Nevertheless, qualitative interviews can provide in-depth investigations, especially when the research is related to personal experience and opinions; in this case, the research focused on practitioners’ personal experiences and opinions towards OEP. In addition, it is worth noting that

using semi-structured interviews risked asking different questions to different interviewees, and the points of comparison were therefore unlikely to be directly sited at the level of differences or similarities in people's answers.

There are also a set of limitations in the case study approach that needs to be acknowledged. Firstly, generalisability is cited as the most common downfall in this approach (Firestone, 1993; Gomm et al., 2000). Yin (2013) considers case study generalisation as "an effort to generalise from a small number of cases to a larger population of cases" (p.325). However, as Yin emphases, case studies are not intended to generalise "from samples to universes" (p.18). Rather, they build theoretical premises which function as tools to make assertions about situations akin to the one studied. Firestone and Herriott (1983) argue that multisite case studies allow cross-referencing between multiple cases, therefore providing better generalisability than single-case studies. Secondly, multi-case studies are time and resource-intensive due to the inclusion of iterations between propositions, evidence collection and analysis. Furthermore, transferability could be an issue, as what works for one organisation might not work for others, which might limit the resonance of the findings and ensuing conclusions. As Guba (1981) suggests, the transferability of research addresses the question of whether the findings are "context-relevant" or subject to non-comparability because of situational uniqueness (p.86). To provide a context for evaluating the transferability of the findings, according to Zach's (2006) recommendations, I used purposive sampling and developed a thick description of the data that can be reviewed by others.

In addition, due to the different levels of access I was given by the two case study organisations, I collected different depths of information for the two cases, which caused difficulty when conducting data analysis. Observation within an organisation allows the researcher to 'see for oneself' and collect reliable primary data; for example, what is the actual activity designing process,

how do people work together in different departments to create OEP. However, for the Barbican case study, I was neither able to conduct participant observation in the working environment, such as to observe how different teams work together and to sit in on meetings, nor to conduct participant interviews with the audience, as I did with Esplanade. Thus, different perspectives led to different depths of understandings towards the two case studies. After realising this issue, I planned to conduct follow-up research with Barbican to include a few more interviews with staff from the Art Form and Creative Learning teams, however, this was not permitted due to the lockdown and Covid restrictions in London. Although my attempted interview requests were refused, I managed to communicate with a team leader of the Art Forms department who provided me further information through emails. To critically investigate OEP in individual institutions and to mitigate the difference of research perspective between the two institutions, I obtained reports from the Creative Learning to the City of London as well as a few external reports, such as Lewis Silkin LLP External Review Final Report (external report on the issue of Barbican's institutional racism), as supplements for primary data. Nonetheless, to avoid a bias towards positive evaluation in the case studies, I paid close attention to the silent data – "what had not happened" or what might have been "incidentally excluded" from the activities observed and the interviews conducted – to provide rigour to the research (Johanson and Glow, 2015, p.258).

3.6 Ethics

The study was conducted according to the Ethical Codes and Policies on Good Research Practices of the University of Leeds. The application for the Ethical Approval of Research began after the PhD transfer process and was granted by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Culture Research Ethics Committee in February 2019 (see Appendix B). Although the study did not represent risk to the participants, to minimise any inconvenience, an information sheet (see Appendix C and

Appendix D) stating the research purpose, methods, and general impact of the study was given to all participants of survey and interviews.

Ethical issues always arise in the course of conducting empirical research. Firstly, as a former practitioner, I might be unable to consider my research subject objectively. While insider bias may be a concern, I attempted to mitigate this as much as possible with the notes and reflections I made. In analysing the data collected, I recognise that my own background as a practitioner may influence the thinking and underlying assumptions I bring to the subject. It is therefore important to reflect on theories outlined in the literature review rather than my own assumptions (Alasuutari, 1995). Furthermore, discussion about the participants' workplaces may raise sensitive issues or result in conflicts of interest in terms of people potentially raising concerns about practices. Therefore, I proposed the option for anonymising necessary information provided by the participants in the findings of this study. For example, participants' names and gender were removed, as was any information which, together with other data in the public domain, could identify the participants. As mentioned in section 3.2.2, several of the participants asked for their names to be anonymised, but for consistency all names were removed from the analysis. Interview participants are referred to in this thesis and in any subsequent publication with letter-based Participant Identifiers, which were developed for the transcription process. Interview transcripts remained confidential and only I had access to the digital recordings or transcripts of interviews.

It is recognised that genuine anonymity is very hard to achieve in the case of interviews in case studies. Thus, I provided research participants with guarantees and made them aware of any limits to anonymity or confidentiality. Informed consent and participant information sheets were sent to prospective participants prior to taking part in the research, which explained as fully as possible about this research. Research participants should be fully informed about the research process and

should be given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision about whether or not they wish to participate in a study (Bryman, 2008). During the process of conducting the interviews with the participants, I made it clear whether they were talking as individuals or as representatives of an organisation. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, the letter-based participant identifiers were also used in the case study analysis where sensitive information (such as negative comments) was provided by staff of the case study organisations.

Yin (2016) warns that there is a possibility of losing appropriate research perspective when a fieldworker "become a full-fledged member of the setting or group being studied" (p.125). Thus, 'going native' might have a negative effect on the research findings. As an antidote to avoiding this complication, interviews at Barbican and Esplanade were conducted during my off-duty time. This enabled me to maintain the researcher's mindset throughout the fieldwork process. Moreover, before each conversation started, I made clear to the participants that the conversation was part of the fieldwork research of my study and would be used for research purposes.

Chapter 4: Understanding Outreach and Education Practice and the Audience

4.1 Introduction

Despite the proliferation of outreach and education activity spearheaded by pioneering arts and cultural organisations and supported by sporadic policy initiatives, outreach and education practice (OEP) remains an under-investigated area within the academic literature. As an object of study, research about OEP is largely absent from the arts management and cultural policy literature. As academic interviewee Helen Nicholson confided, OEP is "really hard to evidence" as "it could probably live in archives, minutes or notes of theatres". The notion of outreach and education has been driven by cultural policy and it involves a complicated set of sector debates. To better understand OEP in the contemporary context, it is important to know where it came from and how different traditions and ideologies have influenced the practice over time. Therefore, this chapter starts by exploring and tracing the origin and development of OEP from the perspectives of arts managers, practitioners, and academics in this field. It will then move to discussions of the terminology of the practice and the paradigm shift from audience development to audience engagement.

Furthermore, this chapter aims to understand how the audience is defined by performing arts organisations (PAOs) today. As highlighted in the literature review, the term 'audience' appears to be ambiguous, even confusing, and often contested. The word 'audience' is a "vexed term" (Machon, 2013, p.98) that is nevertheless used widely in the performing arts, but the notion of 'the audience' is usually employed as a generic term without much specificity or attention to changing forms of spectatorship and participation (Butsch, 2008). As discussed earlier, this thesis does not address in detail the assumed differences between theatre audiences, dance audiences, or music

audiences, for example. Instead, it considers the audiences of the performing arts as a collective. By investigating how performing arts managers perceive their 'audience', it offers deeper insight into the underpinning ideologies and philosophies of the practice.

4.2 Understanding Outreach and Education Practice

The first section investigates the origin and development of OEP from the perspectives of research participants. The aim here is not to focus purely on tracing the historical development of the practice, but rather to understand how OEP has evolved into today's practice. It sets out the issues and debates that need to be considered to understand OEP in the performing arts. The second section moves on to discuss the terminology of the practice based on the data from the online survey and interviews. As one senior manager revealed in interview, the terms that are used by PAOs in relation to OEP are "something that we have every now and then these kind of big philosophical discussions about" (Senior Manager M). After analysing the terminology of the practice, it further explores the paradigm shift from audience development to audience engagement in the field of the performing arts.

4.2.1 The Origin and Development (Problem) of Practice

As discussed in the literature review, the traditional approach to outreach and education has been based on the Liberal Humanistic idea of culture for all (Kawashima, 2000) and was a product of the notion of the democratisation of culture. According to Mulcahy (2006), the objective of cultural democratisation is the aesthetic enlightenment, self-improvement, and educational development of the general population. As Borwick reveals in *Engaging Communities, Not Audiences* (2012), "most people involved in the arts want to reach people with their art; they want a better world for all and they want everyone to experience the inspiration and uplift that, as they see it, the arts can best provide" (no pagination). One of the outreach and education practitioners echoes this ideology in

their interview: "I think an opera or a theatre or a music performance should be part of what gives meaning to your life, part of what might help you look at your life both spiritually and psychologically" (Practitioner A). This reflects the idea Belfiore (2009) refers to as "the alleged transformative power of the arts" (p.343).

> There was a moment, kind of about 10, 15 years ago, I think. But it still exists to a certain extent where theatre people thought that they could change people's lives. I'm very resistant to the idea that theatre people will go and run a 10-week project, and everybody's lives will be transformed at the end of it. Because it doesn't work like that…
>
> (Interviewee F)

The idea of the power of art and its transformative effect occurs frequently in the interview data. Other interviewees also describe OEP as "giving people an experience that is unusual to them, a life-changing experience in some way" (Arts Manager P), and "using that form [OEP] as a way to create and using the art form to provide a platform for creating better people" (Arts Manager R). The above interviewee quotes reflect their ideological stance that adheres to the tradition of Enlightenment, which stresses the need for a transformation in the individual (Stevenson et al., 2017).

Hadley (2022) argues that the affective attachment of some arts managers in PAOs to audience development as a model for the democratisation of culture risks producing a form of ideological precarity. Hadley's research revealed that some arts managers choose audience development as a vocation, as explained by Been and Keune (2019): "the sincerely intrinsically motivated people" see their careers in the audience field as a vocation (p.13). Hadley further proposes the question of "how a passionate advocate of the democratisation of culture adapts to a policy of cultural democracy, of reconciling the personal with the ideological and the potential precarity engendered by a new policy paradigm" (p.154). To some arts managers who have a core belief of "the Arts

Lover Tradition" (Hadley, 2016, p.195), outreach might be a tool of the democratisation of culture and a tool for disseminating the products of European 'high culture'. There is a risk of OEP being about sharing their love of 'culture' and thereby broadening the tastes of people.

Traditionally, arts policy in many Western countries inordinately privileges Eurocentric arts (e.g. in the UK, the US, Germany, and Denmark). And the policy model in these countries, as Borwick (2012) explains, "is a policy that systematically (even if not purposely) excludes much of our population from access to the benefits provided by reflective artistic expression derived from a cultural language with which they are familiar" (Chapter 3, no pagination). One interviewee traces this back in history:

> There is a history of the Arts Council in the UK, which emerged in the Second World War, that the work to do with taking high arts to the people. So places like Dewy and Bernie, where is the same places they have this Creative People and Places scheme now, in 1942 and in 1943 […] they were having classical music taken to those communities for them to go and see… it was seen that high arts was good for people.
>
> (Practitioner A)

This idea is based on the universality of value associated with European High Art (Evrard, 1997). It assumes that the works of Shakespeare, Mozart and Michelangelo "speak to all" (Shaw, 1985, p.27), and takes for granted that the cultural needs of all society's members are alike (Langsted, 1990a). Therefore, traditional outreach was employed by PAOs with the aim of democratisation of culture 'for' the people. As highlighted by Ewell (2012) art 'for' people refers to "an offering, or to outreach"; in this sense, "the people are given access to works of art, presumably in order to appreciate them, learn about them, perhaps to be influenced or changed by them" (p.317). However, the problem is, as Borwick (2012) argues, that most outreach activity is done 'for' the community, assuming that the arts organisation understands what art the community needs. This echoes Matarasso's (2019) assertion that cultural managers tend to put themselves at the centre of their

ideas about society and its needs, and cultural organisations are often dedicated to their own survival (p.22).

Sometimes, the traditional outreach was mostly a marketing tool for the arts organisation (Borwick, 2012). As Practitioner A, who has been working in OEP for several decades, concluded:

> [Outreach in the past was] on the more sort of pedestrian side, then a lot of organisations will just say 'go and introduce the play that we're doing and do a workshop in schools about Shakespeare' […] or whatever to encourage people to come along and see the production and to know more about the play and obviously that's got a function.
>
> (Practitioner A)

Bourdieu and Darbel (2007) argue that cultivated taste is not a natural gift but is, rather, a socially inculcated disposition which is also unevenly distributed. As such, outreach and education acted as part of the mechanism for taste cultivation.

The problem of "cultural non-participation" (Stevenson, 2019) engendered an abundance of outreach efforts to "broaden, deepen, diversify" audiences (McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001). On this basis, there are various forms of OEP that are ideologically underpinned by the notion of democratising culture, but that in practice are problematic (Hadley, 2021). As Hadley (2016) argues, the policy of the democratisation of culture is based on the unspoken assumption (Langsted, 1990) that only one culture exists in any given society and seeks legitimation through the various external-facing outputs of arts organisations, which include education and outreach. This echoes the view of Stevenson and colleagues (2017), who suggest employing a narrow understanding of 'culture' when it comes to identifying 'non-participants'.

The ‘non-participants’ are understood as individuals from certain demographics that do not interact with specific types of publicly subsidised cultural activities and organisations. It was believed that those who do not “participate” suffer from a “cultural deficit” that limits their capacity to be a fully cultivated and included citizen (Stevenson et al., 2017, p.102). Accordingly, this is where policy actions came in, for example, the subsidy of theatre tickets for certain demographic groups, time-limited outreach projects with certain communities, and financial support for touring work to remote areas. As such, OEP was used for altering the demographics of publicly funded cultural consumption.

The essence of ‘the democratisation of culture’ is concerned with providing access to those cultural activities and objects that had historically been seen as the preserve of the elite (Stevenson et al., 2017). The subsidised cultural sector is one in which those receiving funding would need to turn to the public to gain the necessary support for their continued subsidies. Therefore, as Price (2015) argues, outreach and education practice of publicly funded cultural institutions stems at least partially from the need to justify their subsidy “by reaching beyond ‘elite’ or class-specific audiences” (p.23). OEP thus became a funding requirement and played a role in the contemporary “crisis of legitimacy” (Holden, 2006). As one interviewee reveals: “it would be very unusual not to have that [OEP], because their [arts organisations’] funding depends on it” (Interviewee F). This has become an outstanding issue carried over from the past, as other interviewees explained:

> Seventy per cent of our funding [is] from the government. This funding has some strings attached, of course. Not really in terms of contents. But there are some goals that we have to get to every year. And those goals are particularly in terms of the amount of activities we offer to the people, the amount of programming in here, and also how many people we bring into the space.
>
> (Arts Manager P)

> Around 60% of our budget is coming from the government… so they are setting some goals together with us, how many people we should reach per season within different groups.
>
> (Interviewee S)

Funding requirements are certainly not the only reason some PAOs are doing OEP, but it was admitted by one respondent to the survey that the core aim of their OEP is to respond to their funder's requirements. When OEP is a funding requirement, it might be the reason some PAOs are engaging with a lot of people but only on a minimum level. As one interviewee suggested:

> You could measure in numbers of people reached and so on, but just counting numbers is not the best way to do it… it leads you in the direction of having a lot of interactions on a rather minimal level with people. Whereas what we want to do is really relationship with people going forward.
>
> (Executive Director K)

How to engage with audiences in a meaningful way and to build a long-term relationship with them become a goal for some PAOs. Engaging with audiences is not only about increasing numbers of activities and attendance. This issue will be discussed further in Section 5.3.2.

In this section, I have discussed the ideology of traditional OEP and its embedded issues. In short, the traditional outreach employed by PAOs with the aim of democratising culture 'for' the people was used as an instrument for taste cultivation, marketing, and to justify public funding. The thinking and ideology of some arts managers and practitioners today still reflects the Liberal Humanist tradition of British and European cultural policy, which insists on the rights and potential of all individuals to benefit from culture. However, the Liberal Humanistic idea of culture for all is problematic, as it assumes the universality of value associated with a narrow understanding of 'culture'. The works of certain types of art form do not actually 'speak to all'. There is a risk that OEP becomes about sharing the love of 'culture' and believing in 'the transformative power of arts'. There should not be such a distinction between 'participants' and 'non-participants' based on the

cultural deficit model. It is the definition of ‘culture’ that needs to be broadened, rather than the taste of ‘non-participants’. As seen in the literature review, most scholars agree that distinctions between participants and non-participants are unhelpful. The repercussions of this idea will be presented in the following sections, which explore what this means for PAOs by moving beyond the deficit model, and how this reflects on the idea of people who participate.

4.2.2 The Terminology of Practice

Figure 4: The Term(s) that PAOs Use to Refer to Their Outreach and Education Practice

Figure 4 is a word cloud that illustrates the responses to the survey question: “Which term(s) do you use to refer to outreach and education practice in your organisation?” The bigger the font, the more PAOs used the word. It can be observed that ‘education’ is the most used term, followed by ‘outreach’, ‘engagement’, and ‘learning’. Nearly one third of organisations use ‘education’ and related terms such as ‘educational programme’, ‘long-term educational activities’, ‘*formación de*

públicos' (audience education in English), '*actividades de formación*' (educational activities or learning activities in English) in their practice. Furthermore, seven out 33 organisations use 'outreach', for example, 'outreach and cultivating', 'youth outreach programme', 'outreach and community development', 'community outreach', and 'audience outreach and education'.

It is worth highlighting that two organisations from Finland state in their answer that they use the word '*yleisötyö*' in their language, which combines outreach and education in one word. It is used to refer to 'audience outreach' and/or 'projects that have a pedagogic focus'. While the terms 'outreach' and 'education' are popular in the survey, they are not favoured by some practitioners. One respondent to the survey stated: "we do not prefer the terms 'outreach' or 'education' [instead we use] engagement events/activities". This section discusses the terms that are used most commonly by PAOs in this study – 'education' and 'outreach' – and explores the debates and theoretical underpinnings surrounding these terms.

Education

In the answers to the question: "What do you call the department that looks after OEP?", 'education' is the most used term. There are ten answers including the term 'education': five of the organisations only use the term 'education', and other organisations use terms including 'art education and participation', 'education and community engagement', and 'educational programme section'.

Although 'education' is one of the most commonly used terms by PAOs to refer to their OEP and related department/team, academic critics Helen Nicholson suggested that the word 'education' presents a narrow range of activities. Nicholson explained that as 'education' mainly indicates works in formal education or school-based work; furthermore, the idea that people need to be

educated by arts organisations can be perceived to be patronising. As mentioned in the literature review, education is equally valid for adults and children, and it does not necessarily only refer to school-based activities, as there is much more of that learning component and learning dimension where people gain something. For instance, in the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts in the US, arts education includes not only school-based settings but also community-based settings that include lessons for beginners through virtuosos, private individual lessons and group classes, alongside activities in homes, arts institutions, community centres, parks, and storefronts (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012, p.41).

Following Kawashima's theory (2000, p.8), audience education should aim to enrich the experience of the existing audience. While Kawashima's theory has a limited scope for audience education, it acknowledges that education is not a term only used in formal education settings. Indeed as Toffler (1964) and Zakaras and Lowell (2008) suggest, arts education can help individuals develop the skills necessary for appreciating the arts. This echoes the research of Radbourne and colleagues (2009) who perceive the audience experience to be educative, arguing that it can 'expose' the audience to its educational message and develop audiences' understanding of what is being seen or listened to.

Accordingly, the term 'education' also refers to 'audience education' or 'arts education' activities that offer a wide variety of arts experiences designed to provide historical and/or cultural context for artworks as well as to develop skills related to aesthetic perception and the interpretation of art. As one arts manager stressed in their interview, there is a way for arts organisations to contextualise and modernise their works in order to "serve people, not to lecture them about the art, but giving them some sense of tools that they could use for decoding art works" (Arts Manager R). However, these kinds of educational activities are designed for people who are already interested in the arts,

and there might be an issue of serving the same people. This will be explored further in the following sections.

As highlighted previously, arts education nurtures existing audiences by providing more context about the artistic work to help them prepare for and process the experience of a live performance; moreover, it offers participation opportunities for the public. As discussed in the literature review, there is a limited understanding of the word ‘education’ as it is used in the arts, and the primacy of academic learning or school-based programmes for children and young people is still an issue in this sector. In this study, 84.8% of surveyed organisations see school-aged children and young people as their core target audience, followed by ‘children and family’ (75.8%). The findings of this study confirmed that these efforts are predominantly focused on school-aged children rather than on adults (cf. Conner, 2004).

The research data proved that there are two different layers of education within OEP. The first is in the formal education context – work with schools to provide programmes for students; for instance, education in Barbican’s context is one of the three strategic foci of Creative Learning, and it means supporting creativity in the classroom through arts-based learning programmes and tailored partnerships with schools and colleges, locally and nationally (Barbican, 2019). However, education in Esplanade’s context means not only developing age-appropriate programmes for students in different age groups, but also includes educational activities of different art forms for adults which aim to develop people’s literacy in different art forms and provide opportunities for them to “pick up a skill or learn it even as an amateur” (Tham, 2019). Thus the second layer of education is for adults, outside of a formal education context. And this would include programmes for current audiences as well as for the general public. This suggests that the understanding of education in the

context of audience engagement needs to be broadened. The term ‘education’ should not only refer to formal education and should not be limited to school-aged children and young people.

Outreach

Some people believe the term ‘outreach’ is outmoded (Borwick, 2012) as it assumes “a centre, a source and a destination or target” (Cleveland, 2012, p.348) and implies an unequal relationship which places the ‘outreacher’ at the centre and those ‘reached’ at the periphery and in need of service (Borwick, 2012). One of the interviewees held a similar view:

> Once upon a time, when you have outreach, it was assumed that there was a theatre offer that you should go out and get people into, and it’s predicated on that kind of idea, that became outdated… when I think of the word ‘outreach’ which then I think of high arts and rather patronising artists and cultural organisations, thinking they need to go out and educate people who don’t have their cultural privilege.… outreach was deemed patronising. Because of that very patronising idea that you go out from the theatre and encourage people to reach in…. the reason why it was dropped was because it assumed a centre from which the great and the good would go out and try and encourage people to come in… it’s got that centrality, which was considered to be politically unacceptable.
>
> (Interviewee F)

There is nothing inherently wrong with the term ‘outreach’; it was the stereotype of the traditional outreach practice that led to the term becoming tainted. Reaching out is ostensibly a good thing to do for PAOs, as one of the interviewees described: “it’s quite a beautiful thing when venues do reach out to the community… for me, ultimately the connection is actually the most important thing.” (Practitioner E). This research found that there are people within arts organisations who fundamentally believe in the democratisation of culture, and also some who fundamentally believe in cultural democracy. Accordingly, the strategies and practice of outreach and education are played out by different ideologies of arts managers within PAOs. The following interview extracts highlight the different understandings and interpretations of the term ‘outreach’:

> Outreach is more like public outreach where you try to target either specific communities or the public at large.
>
> (Interviewee W)

> Outreach is more about communications, communicating to the public or different segments of the public.
>
> (Marketing Manager K)

> Outreach is to actually reach out to audiences who may know or may not know the arts through very accessible means. It could be tailor made for a specific group of audience that we want to reach.
>
> (Programming Manager Y)

> …when I think about outreach, it has an action from a company to a person exit […] it's about the process of connection.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

As the development of the practice, outreach work is no longer only about bringing arts projects 'outside' to 'people unlikely to attend' (Kawashima, 2006) or 'who are socially or culturally disadvantaged' (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987), or extending organisations' cultural offerings to more diverse people. Many of the participants in this study acknowledged the importance of individuals' creativity and were aware of the notion of everyday creativity. They believe in the value of sharing cultural experiences, but at the same time, they recognise that creativity is embedded within everybody. As one director of outreach and education explained:

> …a lot of our work is about supporting and empowering people in their own creativity. It's not coming from a place of assumption about that. It's about creating, I suppose, creating the conditions for individuals or communities to support them in their own creativity actually to showcase and then embrace their creativity and culture.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

Another example of this was provided by an arts manager in Australia, who stressed:

> We try to provide something different. And the way the difference we looked at was around creative practice. So a lot of the dance schools are really good at teaching […] but we wanted to have more of a youth voice and focus on using the young people to develop their own choreographic practice.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

Many interviewees used the term 'working with communities' and 'working with young people in the next generation' instead of 'working for'. This reflects a concept discussed in the literature review: co-creation understood as "the art of with" (Leadbeater, 2009, p.5). As Ewell (2012) highlights, "art of, with and by people – in which the people can be the creators of art as a part of the process of deepening democracy" (p.318). This interpretation also echoes Holden's assertion that cultural leaders' expertise will have to be practised by "working with people, not just for them" (2011, p.185).

It was also noted in the literature review that under the cultural deficit model, arts organisations are generally trying to increase participation in their existing activities rather than being willing to change the ways in which they engage (Jancovich, 2015). The case studies in this research found that both case study organisations, Barbican and Esplanade, have been working towards not only changing and 'adapting' their cultural offer, but also changing how they engage with their audiences. This will be explored in detail in the case study chapters.

As emphasised in the literature review, outreach seems less considered by the recent literature as a concept that "refers more to the tactical domain than to a kind of relationship between audiences and cultural content" (Bollo et al., 2017, p.72). It is problematic to consider outreach as an end rather than a means. This study suggests that from the perspective of a performing arts organisation, outreach represents the first step in building the relationship and engaging with the public. In this sense, outreach is part of the process for PAOs to build relationships with their people. In

Mintzberg’s (2009) theory, organisations need to recognise ‘communityship’ as a social process. As Gurteen (2018) further explains, ‘communityship’ is an important process of social influence in which everyone in a community exercises leadership and works together towards a set of common goals. An arts organisation should be an active participant in the life of the community and act as a community leader (Borwick, 2012). Therefore, from an organisational perspective, instead of a position of authority, PAOs could see themselves “as being in the centre, reaching out rather than down” (Mintzberg, 2009, p.142).

In this sense, outreach represents an egalitarian approach, despite academic detractors, a reciprocal process that facilitates PAOs in building meaningful relationships with their audiences and wider communities while creating or co-creating meaningful aesthetic experiences for and with them. It is therefore getting closer to cultural democracy than to the democratisation of established culture. As one arts manager insists: “There is a resistance to change the ideological practice because of tradition and hierarchy and all those kinds of long-standing problems […] but there is the capacity for it to change this” (Arts Manager R). Thus, outreach has been reinventing itself and moving into cultural democracy space, as some PAOs are trying to take a more authentic approach that is more aligned with cultural democracy than the democratisation of culture.

4.2.3 A Paradigm Shift from Audience Development to Engagement

Audience development and audience engagement are two umbrella terms that cover a wide range of meanings and thinking, and there is a degree of conceptual ambiguity in both concepts. As one arts manager comments: “it’s hard to see the differences between those terms unless you understand really the theoretical framework that each author or each country really promotes behind that”. To some people, they are interchangeable in practice:

> We try to use audience development or audience engagement in the same way… but we used to try to align the concept of audience development informing concepts behind the structures of or strategies.
>
> (Arts Manager P)

Audience development is not a commonly used term today, according to the survey responses, but it is a term that was mentioned by the interviewees. It was acknowledged by some of the interviewees that although engagement and development are used in the same way sometimes, there is a different emphasis between them: audience development emphasises a certain democratising intent (Romanello, 2013) and "implies something that might be more of a marketing endeavour, or something about developing an audience for the purpose of the organisation in order to increase sales" (Senior Manager M); whereas audience engagement means "not just giving an audience something, but engaging them with the process of getting involved in it" (Executive Director K). This echoes the discussion in the literature review around audience engagement, which highlights the dimensions of involvement that are "less explicit in the concept of 'development' and more mechanistic in that of 'building'" (Bollo et al., 2017, p.55).

'Engagement' is the third most popular term that PAOs use to refer to their OEP, and it is usually linked with a specific target group or focus, as in the survey data, for example, 'community engagement', 'members engagement', 'student engagement', 'youth engagement', 'education engagement'. Only two organisations use 'development' and 'youth development' to describe their OEP activity. This research found that there is less use of audience development and more of audience engagement in the field of the performing arts. As academic critics Audrey Wong revealed:

> Now people tend to say audience engagement a lot more than audience development […] in our teaching, we find ourselves saying audience engagement like 99% of the time. So I think that's also grown out the recognition that it's not so much about developing an audience,

> which suggests growing your audience… it's more about having more of a two-way relationship. So I think that's really how things have evolved… development is still very important… But I think people tend to see it more broadly in terms of how do I engage the public?
>
> (Interviewee W)

Another interviewee tried to explain the reason behind this shift:

> Audience development is quite a problematic term because it just seems that an audience needs to be developed usually by the cultural elite. There's a kind of hierarchy implicit in that term… in my experience it's usually related to the economics. So the artists want to put on a particular kind of work. They feel that they need to develop the audience and their appreciation. [The idea] comes from quite a long history of culture being regarded in a limited definition.
>
> (Interviewee F)

In this sense, the term 'audience development', as described by Hadley (2016), is "both a practice and ideology of democratisation, embodies the aspiration of cultural policy to fundamentally alter the demographics of consumption of the publicly-funded arts" (p.193). This change of terminology in practice reflects a shift in paradigm from a democratising intent to a more democratic approach. As the interviewees expressed:

> Engagement is a mode, and it actually should always be two-way. So we're also at a stage where in developing a community, you can engage that community […] listening to what the community wants. And then also sharing with the community what you have. So it's always a two-way engagement.
>
> (Executive Director T)

> It's about better understanding ourselves and how we can be relevant in order to do that [engagement]. We need to understand both our existing and our future and potential audiences… that should be about two-way dialogue, a genuine exchange and understanding.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

The research data suggested that at the heart of the strategy of audience engagement should lie 'a two-way process' or 'a two-way exchange and learning' between the audience and PAOs. Instead of

seeing the audience as “the ‘imperfect’ audience in need of ‘development’” (Lindelof, 2015, p.203), many PAOs in this study actually see the audience as active participants. As practice changes over time, the relationship between arts organisations and their audiences changes as well. As one arts manager explained in the interview:

> previously we’ve understood ourselves as being the experts and participants being the non-expert […] so it’s flipping it into a… or at least balancing so that we’re equal participants in the engagement space.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

It is the argument of this thesis that by understanding the origins and development of OEP we can better understand the current debates and issues surrounding it. This would facilitate the adoption of the practice not as the assimilation of new practice to perpetuate old ideologies, but rather as the adoption of new ideologies. Drawing on the research data, outreach has reinvented itself: it is no longer simply a way of fixing the problem of ‘non-participation’ (Stevenson et al., 2017). As Kerr (2013) points out, the aim is not for institutions to reach out, but to empower communities through the use of theatre methodologies and using their own language and culture to strategize solutions to their problems. Outreach today implies the leadership role that arts organisations can play in communities, and it is about how arts organisations can support communities and grassroots organisations through ‘communityship’ by tapping into what they are doing in creativity and culture. Furthermore, the understanding of ‘education’ in the context of audience engagement needs to be broadened. Since the term ‘education’ not only indicates activity in formal educational settings but also refers to ‘audience education’ or ‘arts education’, which includes a variety of activities for people of all ages, it should be understood under the broader goal of unlocking people’s creativity. Therefore, the term ‘outreach and education’ needs to be re-conceptualised to keep pace with the changes in practice.

"Of course terms matter, but it's more important how you define it for your organisation" (Executive Director T). Although the terms 'education' and 'outreach' prevail in practice, there is no better or worse option in terms of what PAOs should call their practice. Every PAO has its different approach to OEP based on its unique resources and philosophy. The terms that PAOs use should be related to their own strategic objectives. As one interviewee admitted:

> Different institutions and different cultures use the terms very differently. Regardless of how they are being termed, the institution needs to know what goes behind these terms that they are looking at and talking about.
>
> (Programme Manager Y)

4.3 The Audience

When arts managers from various performing arts organisations were asked the question "how do you define your audience?", unsurprisingly, each of their answers was unique. Apart from different ideologies, arts managers' positionalities within different departments and levels of organisations may also have affected their perceptions. Through coding interviews and thematic analysis under the theme 'definition of audience', divergent understandings were categorised into the following typology: audience as ticket-buyers, audience as active participants, audience as encounters, audience as communities, and audience as public. Below I explore each of these audience categories in more depth to explicate the diverse perceptions of audiences in the field.

4.3.1 Audience as Ticket-buyers

There is a long tradition in the performing arts that links audiences to publics through participation in live events. For many, 'audiences' are people who attend performances, either regularly or occasionally. As one interviewee notes, "audiences are people who would attend performances", and these attenders include "core audience" and "peripheral audience" (Interviewee H). From this

perspective, audiences exclude participants, readers, listeners, viewers, and visitors who do not attend performances. Some arts managers hesitated to use the term or even avoided using it altogether, not only because of its slippery nature but also because it somehow makes the relationship sound very transactional. As one executive manager noted:

> We've avoided using the word 'audience' for a long time because that seems to suggest that the only value and only interest we have in a person is if he bought a ticket and sat in the seat. And that wasn't true to what we intend, whether you bought a ticket or you didn't, however you come to encounter us or encounter the arts. We didn't think the goal of what we do is to build an audience, to turn people into ticket-buyers, audiences. That's not our goal […] the term 'audience' somehow makes it very transactional and so we hesitated using it.
>
> (Executive Manager A)

However, audiences have also been defined as co-creators, co-performers, and co-conspirators (Heim, 2016). Therefore, audiencing does not always represent a transactional relationship. Radborne (2013) suggests that since arts organisations have learned more about engaging with their customers, there has been a shift from the transactional marketing of ticket selling and purchasing to relationship marketing and loyalty marketing. However, sometimes it is a change in form but not in intention. Although relationship marketing and loyalty marketing represent progress from the product-oriented approach to a customer-oriented approach, the goal of marketing is still about increasing in-house numbers. What is more, the customers' desire for greater personal involvement in the artistic experience was not recognised by arts organisations. In this context, some people see and conceptualise 'the audience' without realising that they are anything more than simple spectators.

4.3.2 Audience as Active Participants

Several interviewees felt that the term 'audience' suggested a passive mode of listening, viewing, watching or observing. Furthermore, some felt it can suggest "a static way of seeing participation",

whereas the term 'participants' implies "an endless possibility of being able to generate an exchange of one artistic process" (Senior Manager P). As another senior manager explained:

> There is a grey area between audiences and participants, and arts managers mix between the two quite a lot […] The term 'audience' always kind of makes me a bit nervous, because there's something about it that implies something quite passive, coming in and sitting and watching something, and actually a lot of our work is about people taking part in things. So I would say it [the audience] is anybody who's engaging or has the potential to engage with our work.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

Accordingly, the two terms 'audience' and 'participant' might refer to different modes of engagement in an art work in practice. There are active participants and passive participants in terms of audience involvement and with the development of artistic practice in participatory art and community art, the role of the audience is changing dramatically, from being a passive spectator to taking part in the artistic process (Walmsley and Franks, 2011). The boundary between the performer and the audience is being emancipated (Rancière, 2009). As Helen Nicholson suggested: "I don't think the audience is ever passive", which echoes Rancière's view that performance "requires spectators who play the role of active interpreters, who develop their own translation in order to appropriate the 'story' and make it their own story" (2019, p.22). Nicholson went on to explain that people are participants and actively engaged in making theatre rather than just watching it.

In addition, the expectation of audiences in arts experiences is evolving, therefore it requires arts organisations to change their roles from privileged gatekeepers to facilitators to co-create the meaning of the arts. As one senior manager mentioned during the interview: "People are wanting to participate right now, which is in the mode of prosumers, being able to be part of something instead of just buying a ticket" (Senior Manager P). This reflects Conner's (2004) argument that what

today's arts audiences want most out of an arts event is the opportunity to co-author meaning, and the audience wants the opportunity to participate in an intelligent and responsible way instead of being told what the art means.

4.3.3 Audience as Encounters

Apart from being seen as ticket-buyers and active participants, some performing arts professionals see audiences as people who come to the arts organisation and bring their physical presence there to encounter the space or the art. As one interviewee noted:

> We will define audiences as someone who is really participating in the activities that we've created, being physically here, whether they are watching a performance and engaging in some workshops, attending a talk, or even just walking by, and standing at where they are for maybe a few minutes to listen to a set.
>
> (Marketing Manager K)

This quote suggests that an audience member could be anyone who is at an arts venue, whether or not their intention is to attend or participate in the events there. As one programme manager related in the interview, "audience is anyone who actually walks into the centre […] the moment they walked in here, it's already a form of engagement" (Programme Manager Y). It is the engagement with the arts organisations that is the determining factor of audiencing and therefore some organisations recognised the importance of creating an open, accessible, and welcoming public space for people to connect with their venues.

It is increasingly vital to recognise the digital encounters as part of the audiences. As one marketing manager stressed:

> [the encounter] could be that their first touch points to start their journey with us, when they first see a post on social media, or it could be something that their friends have shared through an advertisement that they saw or read, a shot of streaming that we've put up.

(Marketing Manager K)

The interviewee further highlighted the changing notions of audiences as well as PAOs' relationships with them:

> I guess these days we are looking at audiences in different ways, that you know with the digital media, opportunities and getting them online through streaming, through the content articles that we have created. Really. Do we need them to be physically here? So that's a question. And if not, do we still consider them as audience?
>
> (Marketing Manager K)

Especially after the outbreak of Covid-19, arts organisations around the globe have realised that it is important to engage with their audiences through online platforms. One interviewee advocated that:

> I think through innovation through just by the fact that we're in this context now of the coronavirus, that everyone has worked out that we can use online means to connect to audiences differently […]. There's always an inherent creativity within the sector. We've got to find really good ways of working and doing by connecting remotely or digitally or virtually.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

During the pandemic, performing arts organisations were constantly trying to engage people with their digital content and activities through open archives, podcasts, video interviews with artists and interactive Zoom sessions. Many people watched online streaming performances, and many actively participated from the comfort of their living rooms. According to findings from the April 2022 wave of the Cultural Participation Monitor, 45% of UK residents said they had participated in an online cultural activity during the pandemic (The Audience Agency, 2022). Even though some digital audiences might never have been to a performing arts venue, they encountered the organisation's content in digital form. To some extent, this opens new opportunities for PAOs to engage with a wider audience. At the same time, it challenges PAOs to be more creative and strategic about how they connect to the public digitally.

4.3.4 Audience as Communities

There has been an increasing awareness of the importance of building involvement in the community and enriching the community through engagement activities in PAOs. Based on the survey data, 72.7% of PAOs have implemented community programmes for different community groups and some of the organisations use the term 'community engagement' to refer to their community-related practice. Moreover, different organisations and professionals may have their own definitions of community/communities, and they use the term differently. For example, as one of the artists explained, community is understood as a "collective of people" (Practitioner E); in other cases, community is understood as local residents/citizens; in addition, communities could be identified by age, ethic, language, location and other demographic characteristics.

As discussed in the literature review, the challenge of the performing arts today is not whether to build communities or audiences but rather how to build communities and audiences together (Bernstein, 2017, p.358). Regarding this significant point, it is important to relate to audiences and communities as an organic whole. Scholars such as Doug Borwick (2015) suggest that arts organisations should switch from audience-building to community-building as, he argues, community engagement is a mission-based strategy designed to build deep relationships between the arts and communities for the purpose of achieving mutual benefit in which the arts and community are equal partners. This will be discussed in much greater detail in Chapter 5.

4.3.5 Audience as Public

For some, audiences exist as a proxy for society, a connection that is explicit in many European languages: publikum, public, publiek, pubblico (Reason et al., 2022, p.7). However, only a few professionals recognised the 'audience' as the public. In theory, 'public' refers to a common

understanding of the world, a shared identity, a claim to inclusiveness, a consensus regarding the collective interest (Livingston, 2005, p.9). When the concept is reflected in practice, many prefer the term 'public engagement', believing that it better reflects a democratic process in which both citizens and artists are involved in an exchange of ideas, opinions and skills. This amounts to linguistic differences, for example, the survey responses and interviewees from South America (Argentina, Chile and Colombia) use the term '*público*' to refer to their audiences. What these countries have in common is a more collective approach. In this sense, the audience includes those who may not have bought a ticket for a performance, those who have not even stepped inside any arts organisation, and those who may not have encountered professional live arts in their lives. As the following quotes illustrate, audiences are ubiquitous:

> Our audience is everywhere… It is part of musicians' job to work on audience outreach projects. Every musician needs to do four days audience outreach work which equates to eight visits each year […] It's embedded in the orchestra's history, what they've been doing for people outside of a concert hall.
>
> (Arts Manager I)

> Maybe ideological, as far as I'm concerned, [audience is] everyone. From a baby to somebody with dementia in a residential home. Everyone is the potential audience. As much as possible, they should have equal access.
>
> (Practitioner A)

The important thing is not only to welcome people to come in and draw them into the artistic experiences that the organisations provide, but also to engage with them in a way that supports and facilitates their own creativity and meaning-making processes; to increase the understanding of art and broaden ownership of the arts to as many people as possible. Some of them may never become a member of the 'core audience', but they have the opportunities to choose whether they want the arts to be part of their lives. In this sense, organisations make the arts a social service for all the people. As one of the interviewees stated:

> I think as we see the audience, we see that more broadly because we engage with people who may never come to a show. They never become a ticket purchaser. So for us, audience is people.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

Drawing on the interview data, it is important to note that even at the same PAO, different departments have different understandings of the audience. This reflects what was discussed in the literature review about different philosophical viewpoints and priorities in co-ordination between functions of different departments (cf. Hayes and Slater, 2002). *Table 4* concludes the diverse understandings of the audience in different departments of the PAO one arts manager works for.

Table 4: Different Understandings of the Audience at Different Departments of an Anonymous PAO

Department	*Understanding of Audience*
Marketing	Ticket buyers
Philanthropy	Donors/Private donors
Development	Corporate sponsors
Outreach	Public

As the interviewee explained:

> I think we have very different understandings of audiences. Obviously within marketing, audiences are certainly the ticket buyers. And that is a significant focus […] Within the philanthropy department, there's a good understanding, a similar understanding of them in there. They're very similar people, obviously, of donors or private donors. And they are getting better at shifting them from a ticket buyer to a donor. I think they wouldn't recognise somebody who hasn't purchased a ticket as their audience… Sponsorship, in terms of audience, as they understand audiences is what benefit would come for corporate sponsors in terms of who their market is and the benefit of being connected to [PAO's name] in the networking potential […] And to us, the access department… the audience is people.

(Arts Manager M)

The different notions of the audience have “become interconnected because they each serve a different purpose”, according to the interviewee. Therefore, it is clear that different understandings about the notion of audiences would lead to departmental discrepancies and tensions, which would result in inconsistency when implementing OEP. As one interviewee highlighted:

> What’s interesting about audiences, I think that is an organisation-wide endeavour… And it’s about the arts division, marketing communications, and so on… which is why the audiences piece is always the most complex, because everybody has a view […]
>
> (Senior Manager M)

Thus, a holistic understanding of audiences within organisations is absolutely necessary and fundamental for PAOs’ strategic success with audiences. As Holden and Hewison (2011) conclude:

> if everyone in the organisation holds, or conforms to, shared values there is likely to be consistent behaviour and responses. This means that staff can anticipate reactions, and have a reasonable expectation of what others in the organisation will do. This in turn leads to greater efficiency. It also gives everyone in the organisation not only a common set of goals, but a shared means of achieving them. (p.58)

4.4 Summary

This chapter explored and traced the origin and development of OEP from the perspective of arts managers, practitioners, and academics in the performing arts. The findings highlighted the problematic ideology of traditional OEP and its embedded issues. It revealed that the traditional OEP employed by PAOs with the aim of democratising culture ‘for’ the people was used as an instrument for taste cultivation, marketing, and to justify public funding. Thus, the findings helped to understand how OEP has evolved into today’s practice and filled the theoretical gap between academia and practice.

By investigating the terms that PAOs use to refer to their OEP and exploring the debates and theoretical underpinnings surrounding these terms, it is revealed that outreach and education are still popular terms in PAOs among other terms such as learning, creative learning, and engagement, but there is an urgent need to re-conceptualise such terms. The findings reinforced that the current efforts around arts education are predominantly focused on school-aged children rather than adults (cf. Conner, 2004) and suggested that the understanding of 'education' in the context of OEP needs to be broadened to include adult audiences as well as a broader public. The findings also suggest that the aim of arts education in PAOs is not to lecture the audience about the art, but to create and co-create meaningful aesthetic experiences for and with them. Meanwhile, outreach has been reinventing itself and moving into cultural democracy space, as some PAOs are trying to take a more authentic approach in building meaningful relationships with their audiences and wider communities. It is therefore problematic to consider outreach as an end rather than a means. Thus, OEP could represent an egalitarian approach and a reciprocal process in audience engagement under its new meaning.

Furthermore, this chapter found that there is less use of audience development and more of audience engagement in the field of the performing arts. This change of terminology in practice reflects a shift in paradigm from a democratising intent to a more democratic approach. As the research data suggested, engagement emphases 'a two-way process' or 'a two-way exchange and learning' between the audience and PAOs, which present an equal relationship.

In addition, by analysing the perceptions of arts managers towards the audience, this chapter concluded an audience typology based on the perspective of field experts which revealed the different ideologies in PAOs. As Lindelof (2015) argues, how arts institutions perceive their audiences affects how they imagine the relationship between the art form, the audience, and the

institution. Thus, how arts managers/PAOs perceive their audiences, to some extent, determines and reflects the range of works carried out by PAOs. Nonetheless, it is unclear whether these understandings are consistent at an institutional level. The research data revealed that the different understandings about the notion of the audience could lead to departmental discrepancies and tensions, which would result in inconsistency when implementing OEP.

Chapter 5: Strategy and Management of Practice in Performing Arts Organisations

5.1 Introduction

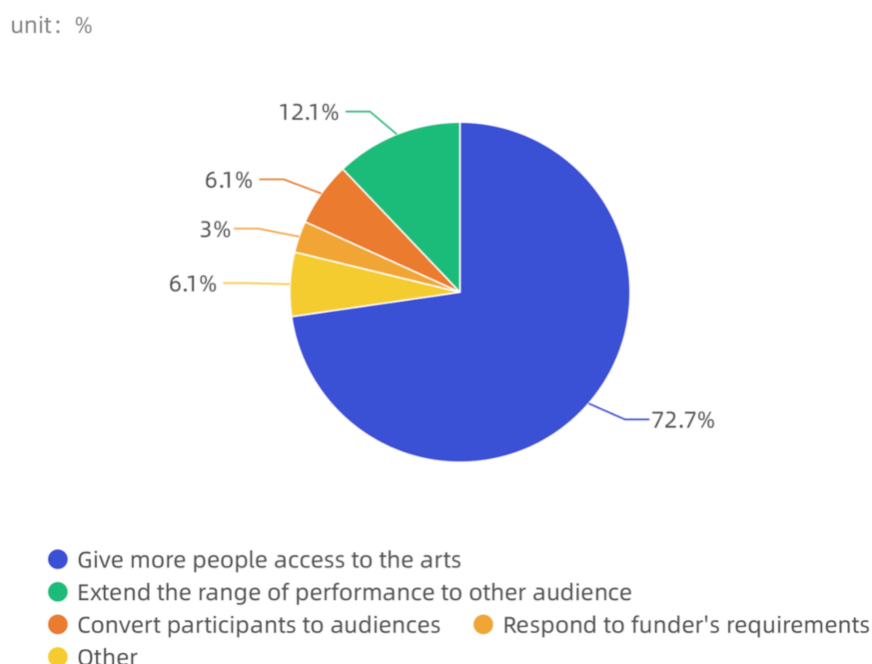
This research aims to generate original insights into outreach and education practice (OEP) as an audience engagement strategy in the performing arts sector from an international perspective. The previous chapter examined OEP from a conceptual and ideological perspective based on the empirical research data. This chapter continues to deconstruct OEP from a strategic and managerial perspective. As discussed in the literature review, functional ambiguity has been used to conceal ideological conflicts and tensions within the practice of outreach and education. This chapter aims to analyse the key objectives of performing arts organisations (PAOs) in engaging audiences with OEP, as well as how the ideological complexities of OEP result in the different objectives of the practice. Furthermore, it aims to explore how such practice is being implemented in PAOs and what factors and issues are employed in strategically engaging audiences through OEP.

5.2 Key Objectives

As highlighted in the literature review, there is a consensus that publicly funded arts organisations should take cultural responsibilities by increasing engagement opportunities and creating the conditions for the public to engage in the arts in order to achieve greater equality for the public in the arts and culture. For the survey question "what is the core aim of your outreach and education work?", as *Figure 5* illustrates, nearly three quarters of PAOs chose "to give more people access to the arts", and a few PAOs consider that the core aim of their OEP is extending the range of performances for the current audience. These two core aims present two entirely different starting points: one is improving social inclusion by creating a variety of experiences for all people; the other one is enriching the experience of the current audience. In addition, some PAOs see the core

aims of OEP as a way to "convert participants to audiences", or to address the requirements of the organisation's funder(s). One respondent wrote in "other": "all of the above". During the interview, one arts manager from Australia also mentioned that there might be various aims behind one organisation's OEP: a state company's OEP aims to help the company connect to different regions and serve local communities; to build knowledge about the company and to build an audience for the company's tours; to satisfy funding bodies; as well as to support arts and cultural development in the form of facilitating different modalities of learning and expressions (Arts Manager R). Accordingly, OEP serves the very different and mixed objectives of the arts organisations. As Hadley (2016) suggests, the functional ambiguity of audience development can serve to reconcile ideologically opposed practitioners' perspectives. In a similar vein, functional ambiguity might exist in OEP as well. By examining different objectives of OEP, this section aims to explore the tensions and issues behind them.

Figure 5: The Core Aim of Outreach and Education Work in PAOs



5.2.1 Social Inclusion

As discussed earlier, OEP has often been used to reduce social exclusion and reach larger parts of the population. Through analysing the survey responses, it was revealed that one third of PAOs in this study list 'minorities' as the strategic priority of their target audience. This includes "under-privileged populations and those at social risk", "those with limited or no access to culture" and those from a "low socio-economic background" or with a disability. In another respondent's terms, OEP aims to provide "equitable access for communities traditionally underserved by the arts". In light of these answers, it can be seen that some PAOs see these groups as people "unlikely to attend" or people in deprived communities who "have limited opportunities to participate in the arts and culture […] for apparently social reasons" (Kawashima, 2006, p.58; Kawashima, 2000, p.8). Therefore, significant effort is put into removing the 'barriers' for these groups. For example, OEP effort for disabled people includes captioned performances and sign language interpreted performances for the deaf and hard of hearing, audio-described performances for blind and partially-sighted audiences, and relaxed and sensory adapted performances for those with dementia, anxiety, an autism spectrum condition, epilepsy or learning disability.

In other cases, PAOs assume that socio-economic background is a factor in why certain people do not attend performing arts venues. Therefore, free performances/events have become a standard approach in outreach (Arts Manager R). As one interviewee mentioned:

> It is recognised that sometimes people do not go to theatre because there is an economic barrier. Therefore, theatres are trying to address this by offering free tickets and so on. Even though people have been involved in their taking part programmes, it's still got quite a long way to go.
>
> (Interviewee F)

However, offering free performances/events is still based on the idea of democratisation of culture and a product-led approach (Kawashima, 2000). In this sense, removing barriers appears to be insufficient for overcoming the socially selective effects of high culture events. As discussed in 4.2.1, the notion of cultural deprivation is based on a patronising view that the 'official' culture and arts need to be democratised, as the following quote indicates:

> [There are] places where people don't go and see theatre and music and things. And therefore [some people would think] they are culturally deprived. They're not culturally deprived at all. Just because they don't go to the playhouse or opera house does not mean that they are culturally deprived. It's just a way of looking at culture and what culture is there.
>
> (Practitioner A)

As Holden (2010) argues, social justice cannot simply be achieved through an increase in the numbers of people accessing a pre-determined 'legitimate' culture. Effective results of social inclusion activities emanate not only from removing barriers but also from changing or 'adapting' the cultural offer (Bjørnsen's, 2014). This study found that some PAOs have not only been changing or adapting 'the cultural offer' but have also been changing how they engage with people from a top-down approach to a more democratic approach. A good example of this is provided in one of the case study organisations, Barbican. As its former Director of Creative Learning emphasised:

> It is really important not parachuting in or going in with any kind of assumption. [We try to] ensure that there isn't this sort of slightly colonial view that "we're coming in and we assume that people need our help". Actually, every kind of local ecology is culturally rich. And how is there a role that we can play to catalyse something in that area? Or to convene a conversation in that area, or to produce new work in that area.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

It is therefore important for PAOs and arts managers to recognise and respect the different cultures and arts of people and not to bring any assumptions when engaging with them. This echoes a finding of the conference report of the Wallace Foundation Arts Grantee Conference in 2008:

> Earning the interest of more diverse audiences demands good listening skills and avoiding assumptions: "it's not always the case that people of colour cannot afford to see a show. Maybe they just didn't know the value of it, or that value wasn't translated to them."
>
> (Maurine Knighton, quoted in Szántó, 2008, p.11)

"Change programming to include more diverse, interdisciplinary, and participative programmes" was proposed as one of the promising ways to engage "difficult-to-reach target groups" (Mandle, 2019, p.126). This highlights how the relevance of the artistic and OEP programmes to the audience is critical when engaging with them.

5.2.2 Engaging with Communities

Based on the observation of the two case study organisations, community engagement takes various forms, for instance, hosting events and inviting community groups to visit, which might include community conversations, interactive sessions; facilitating local people to produce art, in community-led or artist-led projects; involving community members in the design and development of the arts programme, and engendering a feeling of ownership. These practices represent two different approaches: democratisation of culture and cultural democracy. Combined with the analysis of the interviews and survey data, community engagement initiatives are undertaken for a variety of reasons. They may aim to build community relations, to create communities, to connect people to others, to develop community pride through the arts, to dismantle the barriers to arts participation, to develop awareness of PAOs' activities, to increase awareness and change perceptions of the arts, to create opportunities for arts engagement, to draw new audiences or to reach into the diverse communities. Sometimes they are undertaken for the requirement of funding bodies, as arts funding priorities increasingly incorporate 'community impact' as a key measure (Crane, 2012).

For PAOs, the agenda of engaging with communities is inevitably a development strategy. However, as Borwick (2012) stresses, "communities are not resources to be exploited in the interest of furthering the health of the organisation or even the arts as a sector" (Chapter 27, no pagination). As such, communities should not be seen as "a collection of market segments to be tapped in an effort to sell tickets" or extend "reach" (Ibid.). In essence, it is not the arts that are central in community engagement, but the community. However, as Crane (2012) argues, the term "community" has become "a euphemism for the non-traditional arts audience, whether in terms of class, race, ethnicity, or age" (p.100).

During the ISPA Congress in 2019, the participant group discussed how arts organisations can engage with their communities on a meaningful basis. One of the professional participants reported that sometimes communities do not appreciate organisations coming into their community, delivering a project, and then leaving. The disconnect that may nonetheless exist between the community and certain cultural institutions has to be rethought. As Price (2015) puts it:

> Whatever process might be attempted to overcome this has to be a genuine two-way street. If the institution wants to see a change take place in its relation with the community, then it has to be prepared to change itself in the process, perhaps in fundamental ways. (p.10)

The projects must be "for and with the community not something that happens to the community" (ISPA, 2019). A community engagement project was successful because it was not developed 'for' a community but 'by' and 'with' a community and a group of dedicated community members. In this instance, community engagement should be carried out in a way that is responsible, and this requires partnership working, clarity of purpose and collaboration with the community. As one arts manager highlights in the interview, whatever the intentions of a particular project, community

engagement practice should always strive to be relevant to social life and the specific context or community in which it is created (Senior Manager M).

Reflecting on the successful co-creative model of Fun Palaces discussed in the literature review, PAOs should see the communities they engage with as equal partners and work with them to co-create meaningful engagement that allows for a free exchange of creative energy. As there are few examples in this study that employed this particular approach, there is clearly still a long way to go for more organisations and arts managers to work towards a more democratic and dialogical engagement through OEP. As discussed in Section 4.2.2, PAOs need to recognise 'communityship' and act as community leaders while co-creating meaningful engagement with the communities. Therefore, as Mandel (2019) suggests, a revised mission regarding engaging communities in PAOs might involve not only producing and presenting high art, but also having a sense of social responsibility by activating their artistic and creative resources and infrastructure.

5.2.3 Enriching the Experience of the Current Audience

It was acknowledged by some arts managers in the interviews that a whole arts experience is not only about the performance (cf. Reason, 2010; Conner, 2013). As one of them explained:

> … you actually start prepping people, feelings and atmosphere from the beginning when they step into the hall, all the way to the show and then all the way out. So it's not just about the show… when people engage, they naturally feel something rather than sit there. When that happens, this is where they will take the initiative to come and understand more, because they have crossed the bridge. So you need to create the bridge for them first. And to do that, you have to see how it [OEP] can be presented [in a way] that will relate better [with people].
>
> (Arts Manager J)

To this end, some PAOs aim to fulfil the experience of current audiences by engaging them through OEP. As Walmsley (2019) suggests, the ultimate goal of engagement is enrichment. In some cases,

audience enrichment activities become an extension of the ‘main stage programme’. As one interviewee indicated:

> audience enrichment specifically suggests to me about a wrap-around offer so it’s just about adding value to the experience, the experience of coming to an event as an audience member. And what you can do to add value to that, to enrich that, to deepen the audience’s experience? If you’re coming to an event here, what else might be the secondary offer. What might be the things that are going to deepen your experience of the building, all of the artistic work that you're experiencing.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

In this regard, some organisations have designed ‘members’ events’ exclusively for audience members who purchase performance tickets or pay for annual membership fees. The focus on maximising opportunities for the existing audience’s involvement and learning might limit the potential of engaging a wider audience. Furthermore, the idea that OEP can come after the artistic programme or as a service to an art form presents a real danger in the development of OEP (see Section 5.3.1). It can be seen that for some arts managers, enrichment is only for the existing audience, with the aim to build attachment to the organisation. As Hayes and Slater (2002) suggest, audience enrichment is concerned with enhancement of the experience for audience members with the aim of satisfying their needs and aspirations. One example of this in practice was presented by one artistic director during the interview:

> We see the concepts [of OEP] as a package experiment for experience… For the audience to come to a concert is not only about getting into the concert hall and listening to the music, it’s also about the pre-concert talk, the post-autograph session, meeting the musicians, and so on. Getting it down to earth, and then also giving them some educational inputs of the pre-concert talk. I know all orchestras do it. But we really try to integrate it with the concert, and also have maybe the conductor or the soloist to be there to talk about the subject.
>
> (Interviewee S)

As Caroline Heim asserts:

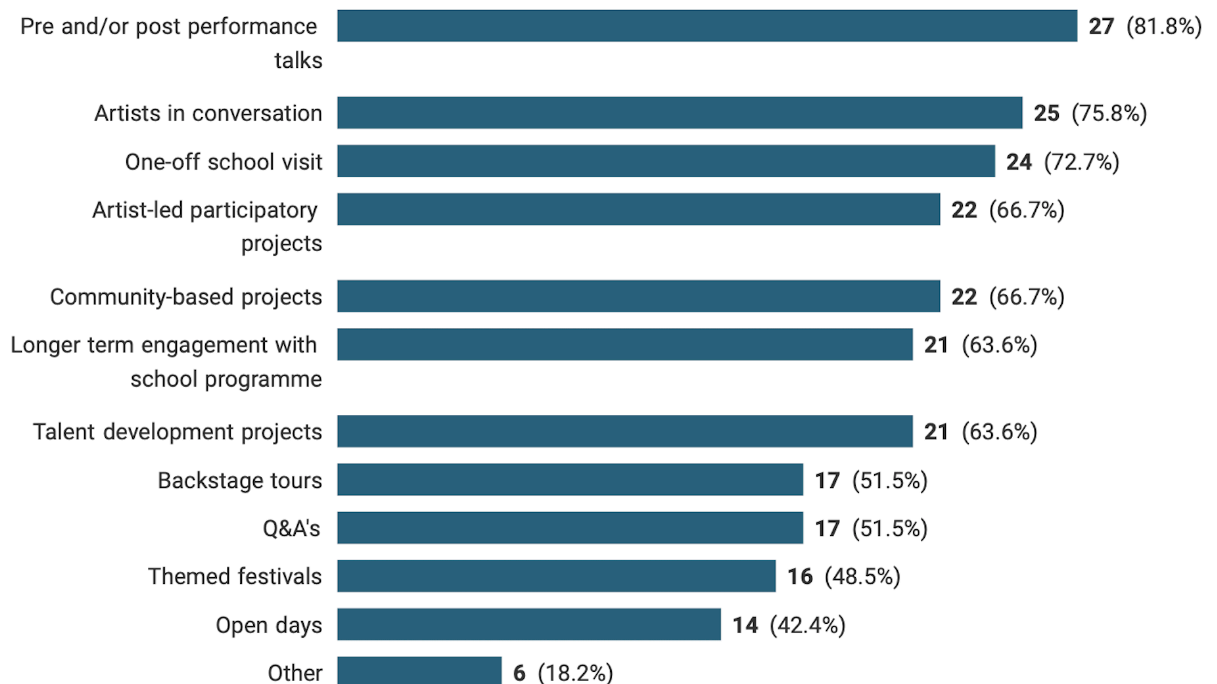
> Most Western theatre companies that hold post-performance discussions follow either a question-and-answer or expert-driven model, both of which perpetuate an "expert agenda" that can be seen as didactic and devalue any audience contributions. […] The expert-driven model fosters an intellectual environment in which audience contributions, if encouraged at all, are expected to conform to the cerebral thoughts of the expert in both expression and content. A large percentage of the audience, daunted and intimidated by the expert environment, are hesitant to contribute to the discussion or even ask questions. […] Post-performance discussions have been relegated to educational or entertaining events that perpetuate a hegemonic hierarchy. (2012, pp.189-190)

A power relationship clearly exists in the process of engagement and involvement (Price, 2015). As Heim (2012) argues, 'the expert environment' perpetuates a hegemonic hierarchy. The expert-driven model seems to prioritise 'excellence' over 'engagement', since this model is usually didactic and devalues any audience contributions. And this model implies an assumption that involvement in these activities is useful and worthwhile for the audience. Instead of seeing enrichment as an opportunity to co-create the arts experience with an audience, enrichment is used as an instrument to further audience interest, understanding and appreciation of an art form which will result in an enduring 'aesthetic contract' (Pick and Anderton, 1996).

In addition, in enriching the experience of existing audiences through "pre- and/or post-performance talks", "artists in conversations" and "Q&As" has become very common in PAOs. As one arts manager pointed out, "this behind-the-scenes kind of information has become a pretty standard approach" (Arts Manager R). As the survey result revealed in *Figure 6*, "pre- and/or post-performance talks" and "artists in conversation" are the top two most popular forms, with more than 75% of surveyed organisations supporting these activities; furthermore, half of the surveyed organisations hold "backstage tours" and "Q&As" as part of their OEP. However, these activities tend to be designed for existing audiences instead of reaching out to new ones. Therefore, as one

arts manager claims, these activities are developing and engaging audiences who already have a pre-existing interest in an art form.

Figure 6: Forms of Outreach and Education Activities in PAOs



Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent all respondents chose that option)

Through enriching the experience of their audiences, some PAOs hope to develop loyalty and build deeper relationships with their audiences. As one arts manager expressed:

> building loyalty among audience members […] loyalty means having a base of people that are principally participating with you, not only attending things, for instance, right now people cannot attend [activities in our] space, but we still feel they're participating with us in the different activities that we're actually trying to programme.
>
> (Arts Manager P)

Morison and Dalgleish (1993) highlight the importance of enrichment as a device for retaining and developing audiences in the Strategy to Encourage Lifelong Learning (SELL). In this sense, audience enrichment becomes “an attempt to develop loyal, committed and open-minded

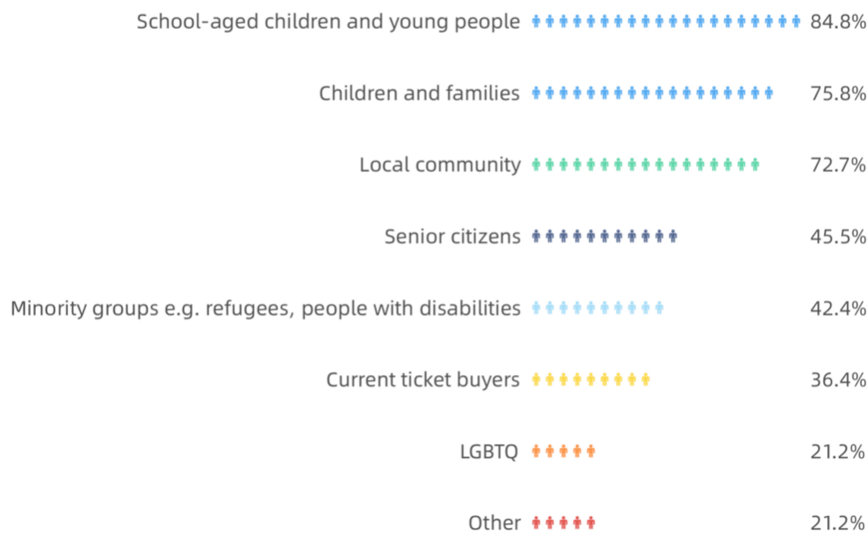
audiences" (Hayes and Slater, 2002, p.3). Audience enrichment can thus contribute to replicating the existing inequalities if the notion of audience is limited to existing audiences.

5.2.4 Arts Education for Young People and Children

As the survey data revealed, children and young people are the most targeted audience of OEP. As *Figure 7* illustrates, 84.8% of surveyed organisations see school-aged children and young people as their key target audience, followed by children and family (75.8%). This confirmed the finding in the literature review that young people appeared to be the focal point of most activities in the educational programmes of arts organisations (Hayes and Slater, 2002). The responses to the online survey prove that some PAOs are eager to target this group of audience, as when asked to "list the strategic priority of your target audience", respondents said: "we tend to offer most activities aimed at children and youth", "a younger and more diversified audience", "building a new and younger audience", "children and young families – convert to ticket buyers and long-term audience". As discussed in the literature review, for the next generations of arts attenders, arts organisations are providing child-centred or youth-centred arts programmes to expose, educate, and entertain them, so that they "hopefully will become appreciative and avid arts attenders later in life" (Bernstein, 2014, p.363).

In addition, the survey data in *Figure 6* (see previous section) shows that more PAOs provide a "one-off school visit" (72.9%) rather than "longer-term engagement with school programmes" (63.6%). This seems to suggest that arts education for young people and children is often a 'shot-gun' approach, and it reveals a concerning lack of strategic planning in PAOs. This issue will be explored further in Section 5.3.2.

Figure 7: The Target Audience for Outreach and Education Work in PAOs



Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent all question respondents chose that option)

Some arts managers and PAOs in this research do not see arts education as a way to build participation, or a means to cultivate future donors of the arts, but rather seek to engage and 'empower' young people though arts and culture. For example, the case study organisation Esplanade's programming for young audiences is guided by their firm belief that the arts plays an important role in the holistic development of a young person (Esplanade, 2015). As the CEO explains:

> We do a lot of education work already, but it's not just about making sure that students attend the performances… It's [about] how the arts can be integrated to the curriculum. What can we do for a young person at age fifteen to sixteen? So developing very clear and specific interventions where a young person at fifteen to sixteen is forming their identities. How is the arts part of that development? As an art centre do we have a point of view? […] And then for young people who are seventeen to nineteen and about to enter in university thinking about their future. Can we mentor them for who are facing challenges in life? What is the role of artists? Are there artists whose work is specifically about shaping these young folks? Well, then can we champion these artists? Can we partner them to do so?
>
> (Tham, 2019)

Furthermore, some PAOs dedicate substantial resources and effort towards arts education with the aim of achieving a range of educational goals that the formal education system may have overlooked or failed to address:

> what I see as the big issue is how do art centres relate to the whole question of cultural education in the country? And particularly at a time, when schools are trying to get more and more difficult to include cultural education and arts education and so on in their offer. What's the role that art centres and arts organisations should play in providing that?
>
> (Executive Director N)

While many arts organisations and artists around the world are working hard to reach the next generation, it seems that they have very different motives for doing so. As highlighted in the literature review, there are two different understandings of arts education in its relationship with arts participation: as a mode of arts participation and as a contributing factor to other forms of arts participation. The implications of the RAND study suggests that there is first and foremost a compelling need to build appreciation and demand for the arts (Zakaras and Lowell, 2008). In this sense, some PAOs aim to build participation through arts education. This will be discussed in the following section.

5.2.5 Building and Cultivating New Audiences

Building and cultivating new audiences appears to be a core tradition of OEP. As discussed in Section 4.2.1, OEP was seen as an instrument for taste cultivation, marketing, and to justify public funding. All of these functions are based on one common goal: building and cultivating a broader audience. In practice, many PAOs are still trying to engage audiences who have never been to their venues before, and to convince them to become ticket buyers, subscribers, patrons, trustees and/or donors. How do people go from a participant of OEP to being an audience of their main stage programme and pay for it? That is a 'problem' some PAOs have struggled with for decades.

However, the important question here is whether OEP is the right place and way to achieve this. As one interviewee argues, “I don’t think there’s a relationship between attending outreach and education events and buying a ticket to see a performance. I think the Arts Council thinks there is” (Practitioner A).

As mentioned in the previous section, many PAOs consider how to engage younger audiences. They see the next generation as potential new audiences. This is because, as revealed in the literature review, studies have proven that arts education has a strong relationship with arts participation. One interviewee brought this to light:

> To some extent, arts education has become another way of building the audience, as the NAC and arts organisations are hoping that, by doing arts education, as they grow up they will be interested to bring their family to the arts.
>
> (Interviewee W)

Furthermore, another interviewee expressed the idea to develop a strong audience base through arts education:

> … for children and young people, [the programme] is in a way quite closely tied to audience development because we want to develop this audience also from a very young age. So at every stage when they are with us, we are hoping that they would love what they see and they will love the experience so that when they grow up, they would just come back.
>
> (Programme Manager L)

This reinforces the finding from the literature review that some PAOs are ‘investing’ and waiting for a time when the younger generations “have more leisure time and more discretionary income to pay higher ticket prices and make substantial contributions” (Bernstein, 2014, p.367). However, there might be an issue in seeing arts education as a pathway to further participation in the arts as it is a costly investment; furthermore, the instrumental use of arts education might pose a real danger in creating “a mechanism for the replication of inequality” (O’Brien and Oakley, 2015, p.7), which

aims to create the social habit of theatre and thus generate a group comprising a certain type of 'educated' and 'well-off' crowd to participate in arts events. As one interviewee revealed:

> At the beginning, [our venue] was perceived as a space for only people with a better acquisition reality to participate… we have basically people that come from a certain area of the city that have a certain type of job, that having a certain amount of income reality.
>
> (Arts Manager P)

In this sense, some PAOs hope that by providing opportunities for people to get into the arts and cultivating an arts legacy among them, some of them may ultimately become their 'core audience'. However, as some arts managers expressed in interviews, it is difficult to identify the new audiences they hope to find. As one arts manager disclosed:

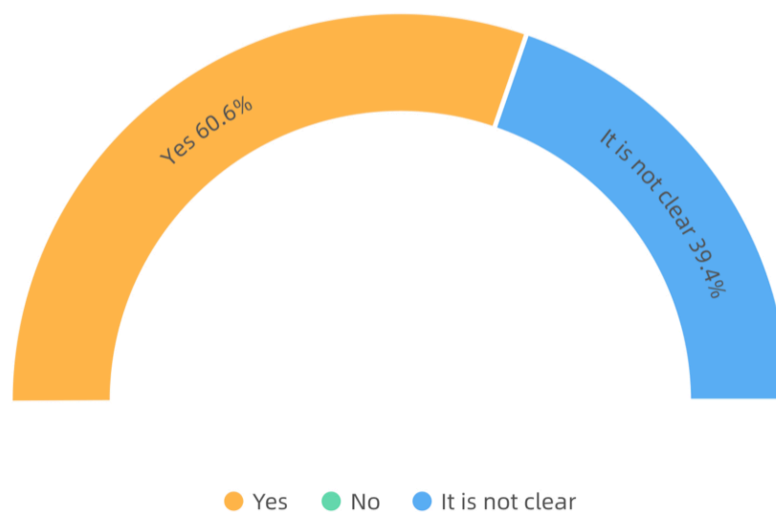
> We know our ticket buyers, our existing ticket buyers, very well. We know where they are, who they are, and how we can get more of the same people. So in terms of that audience, we're very good at understanding those people who we think will buy tickets… Other programmes, we're very specific about the pathway that we want to take them through. So we want junior members to become master class students. We want master class students to go to training and so on and so forth… [but] this thing around the strategy behind connected to new audiences is harder to identify for us.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

The interview data suggests that some PAOs are good at engaging the same people but not developing new audiences, which confirms that most arts organisations tend to attract people who have already decided to attend the performance or exhibit and typically do not reach those not already interested in or familiar with the art form.

In addition, the survey suggested that OEP actually has a positive impact on performance attendance numbers. As shown in *Figure 8*, around 60% of PAOs have seen the impact of OEP on performance attendance numbers, whereas 40% of PAOs think this impact is unclear. It is worth noting that no PAO thought that OEP does not have any impact on their performance-attendance.

This can be understood as almost all PAOs in this study believe that OEP has some influence on performance attendance, but the effectiveness is difficult to measure. Reflecting the research of Chung (2022), it is difficult to quantify the impact of OEP on the box office and measure the effectiveness of OEPs in terms of audience-building. As Chung suggests, OEPs' impacts on building audiences may only be measurable in the long-term rather than immediately.

Figure 8: Impact on Performance-Attendance Numbers as a Result of Outreach and Education Activities



There are contradictions in the objectives of OEP, for example, the instrumental benefits as opposed to intrinsic benefits. As one interviewee shared:

> It's not all about the artistic quality. It's also about social processes […]. So there's a strong social aim to do with people, socialisation, people being together and mixing and understanding each other. The creative arts is a means to an end usually rather than an end in itself. Sometimes it's an end in itself, but mostly it's a means to an end.
>
> (Practitioner A)

What becomes evident from the research data around the objectives of OEP is that there are multiple and divergent expectations about what OEP can, and should, be aimed at, and that there is no method by which these expectations can be drawn together into a coherent and cohesive whole.

Evidently, there is no consensus or one-size-fits-all blueprint of OEP for all PAOs. This implies that OEP ultimately depends on organisational ethos and philosophy, which affects vision, mission and strategy.

5.3 Practice in Performing Arts Organisations

As discussed in the literature review, OEP requires significant effort from multiple departments within an arts organisation, and it often involves programming, marketing, communication and arts education. This section aims to explore where OEP sits within PAOs, what the relationship is between OEP and artistic programming, how the management and structural factors of the organisation have an impact on OEP, and what issues and challenges might occur when implementing OEP in PAOs.

5.3.1 Position within Organisational Structure

An analysis of the survey data shows that two major models of OEP exist in PAOs in terms of the relationship with artistic programming team within organisational structure: one is OEP as an individual department (over 50% of PAOs); the other is OEP within an artistic department (1 in 3 PAOs). These two models represent a fundamentally different approach in managing and operating OEP. The case study organisations, Esplanade and Barbican, present these two different models respectively. Esplanade does not have a separate team that looks after OEP – the integrated Programming team curates OEP as part of the artistic programming; Barbican has a dedicated Creative Learning department that works in parallel with the Art Form team, and the emphasis on Creative Learning is theoretically as important as the artistic programming. This will be analysed in more detail in the following individual case study chapters. Despite the different structures, both organisations try to adopt an integrated approach, where they see OEP as equally important parts of their artistic programmes.

However, this is not the case for many of the PAOs in this research as well as in the field of performing arts. As one interviewee commented:

> The general observation is when you work for large organisations as an outreach worker, however good they are, that activity is always seen as a secondary to their main programme. It's always seen as supporting their main programme.
>
> (Practitioner A)

As mentioned in Section 5.2.3, OEP is used as a means to enrich the experience of current audiences. There is a notion of OEP being in service to the art forms and being seen as a 'secondary offer'. In some organisations, activities of outreach and education become an extension of their "main stage programme", or "wrap around offer" to "the core product" (Senior Manager M). In this sense, OEP is about adding value to the experience of a performance. However, this notion is problematic. Firstly, it excludes 'new audiences' and limits the 'audience' to only the existing audience; secondly, it represents an ideology that supports 'excellence' over 'engagement'. As discussed in the literature review, engagement is as important as artistic excellence, therefore, OEP as an audience engagement practice should not be placed after the artistic programming.

In practice, however, it is often the case that OEP is neglected and seen as side work to the artistic programmes:

> A lot of their [PAOs] energy is going towards their main productions. And often the outreach of this is a small office somewhere in the building […] it's so easy to be marginalised within the organisation, like to get the director of the main house production or the director of the company in a large organisation to come out and work with you in the school or with the community even for just one or two occasions, or to being involved in what you're doing is almost impossible.
>
> (Practitioner A)

Sometimes, the focus of the artistic programming department is putting on high quality performances on stage, whereas the focus of the OEP department is having people engage with and value the arts. Therefore, a disconnect often appears between the work of the two departments. The following two examples were given by interviewees:

> They were giving free tickets to some of the organisations that they were working with in Little London in Leeds, the African Caribbean people. But in a sense, there was a separation between their outreach work. So [the outreach officer] might have been doing a really interesting piece in Little London with that community. When they bring them into the main house, they just give them free tickets and provide a minibus. There's no real connection between the community work and what they're watching. They need mediation then, the two things are too separate.
>
> (Practitioner A)

> There are programmes which connect the two, for example, we [the OEP team] spend a week in a primary school and develop a little thing with them [professional artists]. They do a performance at the school. Then students get on a bus and come to see Sleeping Beauty or something like that… And then in the theatre, we have sort of an engagement with them [artistic team] where we talk directly before the show to the audience. Similarly in the interval, we have a little chat and then the audience go home on the bus. And then we follow up with some kind of engagement after that. So there is, in terms of a practical connection, a step-by-step where you kind of follow an audience member from initial engagement, see a show. So connect into the artistic main stage programme and the kind of follow-up. But it's the only way.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

What is more, there is often a lack of artistic leadership in OEP:

> You don't in general get the directors of the main shows being an integral part of the community projects. You have the main shows there and then you have a team doing community and outreach work. So it's a very different relationship.
>
> (Practitioner A)

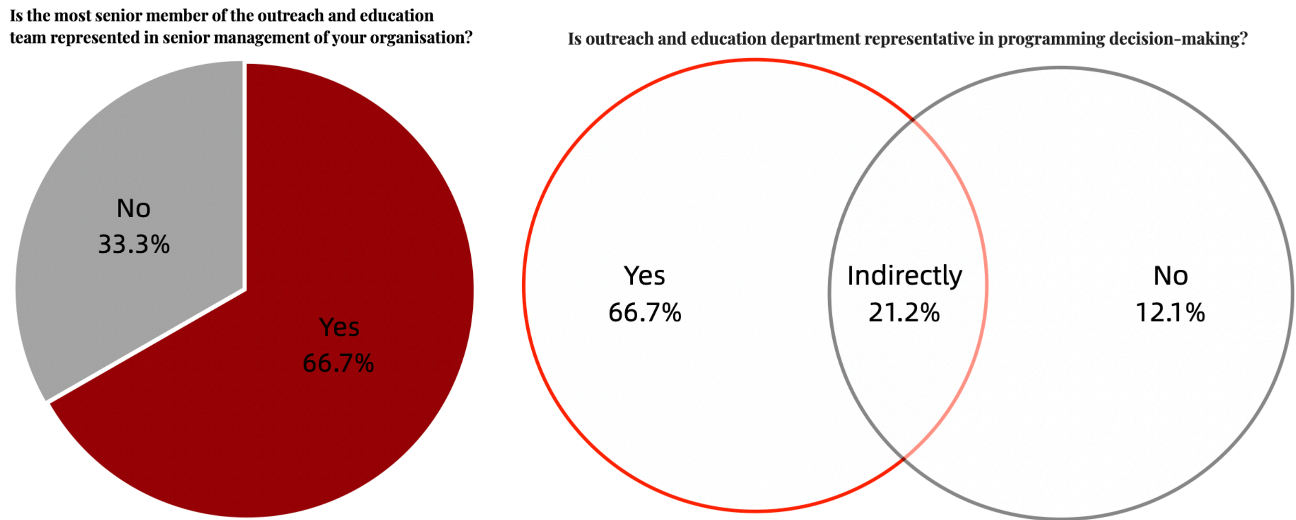
> That's a functional problem that the investment from the artistic leadership is not as significant as it needs to be at the conceptual development of the programmes. I don't think they understand the potential of the [OEP] programmes for connecting more broadly and growing that audience […] I don't think they are as invested as they could be.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

To achieve integrated goals in OEP, as Hays and Slater (2002) suggest, requires organisations to have a senior representative ‘championing’ the cause to ensure that tactics are pursued within a strategic framework reflecting the organisational mission and priorities. In the survey results, as *Figure 9* indicates, 2/3 PAOs have a senior member of OEP represented in their middle management team; similarly, 2/3 PAOs have the OEP team represented in programming decision-making. This means, among the survey sample, 1/3 PAOs’ OEP staff are under-represented on a management level and they do not have a voice in programming decision-making. This may cause a structural imbalance between artistic and OEP teams and consequently affect the balance between artistic programming and OEP programming as well.

Even when there is a practical connection, there can be a philosophical disconnection, as one arts manager revealed:

> The artistic director is not interested in what we are doing… the focus of the artistic team is around putting good ballets on stage, and it’s fun. But our audiences are dying, literally dying… if we don’t invest something where we look at ballet differently and really think about what is the relevance? It’s terrible […] if we are not on the same page, which we are not, about the deep value and purpose of ballet, which isn’t about performance on stage and entertainment and it’s about something other. There is a philosophical disconnect between the [OEP] department and the artistic team.
>
> It’s a really big divide […]. It’s quite separate… the ability for us to do really awesome programmes that really use arts as a mechanism for experimentation and self-understanding and community development and all those things which the arts are really good at doing […] we end up being a little bit more cornered in getting people to like the art form. I really couldn’t give a shit whether people like ballet or not. But what I care about is whether people engage with the arts…
>
> (Arts Manager R)

Figure 9: Leadership of OEP Staff within Organisational Structure



The need for artistic and OEP teams to build clarity and consensus around audience engagement objectives is clear. A successful model of OEP requires strong artistic leadership. Whether OEP is an individual department or embedded within an artistic department, a balanced relationship with artistic programming is vital. The issue of 'the core product' and 'the secondary offer' is clear, as OEP might become a service to artistic programming. In addition, the issue of disconnection will result in those actively involved in OEP projects continuing to show little interest in 'regular' programmes in arts organisations (Mandle, 2019). As one interviewee commented on the issue of the structural disconnect: "there's always gonna be that separation as long as you don't integrate that work" (Practitioner A). Therefore, connecting artistic work to OEP is crucial, and a philosophical connection is much needed for an integrated approach. This would require changes to the overall mission, programming, and structures of PAOs, and all staff being aligned.

5.3.2 Strategically Engaging with Audiences

When asked "how do you curate your OEP?" in interview, one artistic director answered: "It's kind of put in the season plan here and there. But in the end, the last part of the season plan, you can see

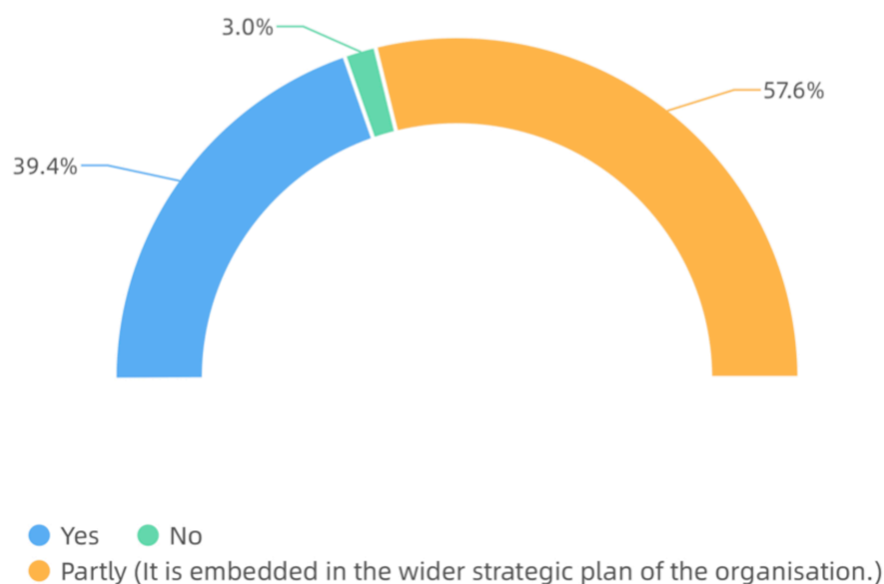
some of the outreach projects" (Interviewee S). This implies a lack of strategic planning when designing OEP in some PAOs. As one interviewee pointed out:

> I've been thinking a lot about audience, strategic audience development versus just engaging with audiences. When I think about the programmes that we run… they are really good for engaging with an audience who already has some interest in the company. The [OEP] programmes that we deliver aren't […] or least effective in engaging new audiences. And apart from our education, they [are] kind of incidental engagement through our education programmes. We may generate new fondness for dance, ballet and [company's name] though incidentally through those programmes. But I don't think it's strategically targeted.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

Around 70% of surveyed PAOs have a strategic priority for their target audience in this research. However, as shown in *Figure 10*, only 39.4% of PAOs have a clear written strategy/plan for their OEP. This contradiction is worth reflecting on. It is possible that many institutions do not consider OEP to be a key part in their future artistic strategy and engagement strategy. Accordingly, they do not have a written strategy/plan for OEP, and the projects tend to be one-off or short-term. As Hayes and Slater (2002) argue, this lack of strategic planning encourages short-termism and consequently projects are conducted on a tactical rather than strategic basis and do not necessarily achieve organisational goals. This can be linked back to the discussion on Arts Education for Young People and Children in Section 5.2.4, which revealed 'one-off school visits' to be the third most popular activity in PAOs' OEP, with more PAOs are adopting a 'shot-gun' approach rather than a longer-term approach. The short-term or one-off projects in the short run may satisfy the 'box-ticking' mentality of some funding bodies. However, it does not support a long-term strategic direction. For example, in practice, some PAOs assume that socio-economic background is a factor in why certain people do not attend performing arts venues. Therefore, free performances/events have become a standard approach in outreach. As one interviewee confesses:

> …we're supporting audiences to come to see our performances. So we have community matinees which we provide free of charge or subsidised, not free, but subsidised by corporate sponsorship for paying to see [the performances] through different groups of people, whether it's like women's refuge or disability groups or stuff like that, to have those kind of outreach programmes, which are really about just bringing people to watch performances. I don't think it's really audience development. It's just audience exposure.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

Figure 10: PAOs that Have a Clear Written Strategy/Plan for Outreach and Education Practice



This kind of minimum level of engagement provided by PAOs to some specific group of audiences is not hard to find in practice. However, the impact of this type of 'hit and run' practice might be minimal and ineffective. According to O'Neill (2011), unless sufficient time is spent understanding the environment and engaging with local communities, the possibility of having any lasting effect after the artist leaves the project site diminishes. The impact of engagement is difficult to measure; it is about how to complete and deepen the experience of the audiences not just about how many people have been exposed to a cultural production. As one programme manager suggested:

> If we are very concerned about building new audiences, this is just chasing a number. And that number will just get bigger and bigger and might not be very meaningful. Really it is about how we could extend that journey and experience.
>
> (Programme Manager J)

From this perspective, to engage with audiences on a meaningful basis a higher level of strategic thinking and implementation as well as a longer-term approach are needed. In this sense, a written OEP strategy/plan is a vital component of a long-term strategic direction that involves the effort of the whole organisation. Meanwhile, building a coherent understanding and an effective communication between departments and teams towards engaging audiences is also imperative.

5.3.3 Collaboration through Co-creation and Long-term Partnership

As discussed earlier, this thesis argues that there is an urgent need for PAOs to reclaim 'outreach' as a process to build relationships with their people and to act as community leaders. The importance for PAOs of practising 'communityship' and playing a leadership role in supporting communities and grassroots organisations was acknowledged. In this sense, outreach represents a democratic and holistic approach and a reciprocal process that facilitates PAOs in building meaningful relationships with their audiences and wider communities while creating or co-creating meaningful aesthetic experiences with them. The research found that collaboration through co-creation and partnership has become a strategic approach for some PAOs. As Borwick (2012) notes, collaboration needs to be rooted in a mutuality of respect and benefit. In a sense, it implies an equal relationship between a PAO and its public.

As highlighted in the literature review, Leadbeater (2009) sees co-creation as "the art of with" (p.5), and he reveals the lack of genuine engagement opportunities in the arts sector. In this light, an arts manager raised the notion of 'genuine engagement':

> Genuine engagement is when the organisation is understanding its audience as much as it's wanting to reach that audience so that it's not a transactional thing… It's about we want to better understand ourselves and how we can be relevant, and in order to do that, we need to understand both our existing and our future or potential audiences; that should be about two-way dialogue, a genuine exchange and understanding.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

This echoes the study of Borwick (2012), who stresses that successful engagement must be done 'with' the community, based on reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships with the organisations or communities being served. Genuine engagement, therefore, starts from understanding the audience, which includes the need to recognise what culture means to them. As discussed in Section 5.2.1, it is important for PAOs and arts managers to recognise the different cultures and arts interests of different people and not bring any assumptions into play when engaging with them. Based on the survey data, the art forms of PAOs in this study are not limited to music, dance, theatre, visual arts, literature, film and video, but also include circus, architecture, sound art, Chinese opera, and aboriginal culture and art. However, the notion of 'everyday participation and creativity' is still under-represented in the researched organisations.

One of the interviewees noted:

> We use creative approaches to bring out what people have and that active creating is enabling people to realise… the potential that they already have within them. I think that there's something about the arts… because the sense is that we are all creative, and culture and creativity do not belong to arts organisations.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

The quote highlights that creativity is embedded within everyone, and it is vital to recognise people as active participants and to see them as equal partners in the co-creation of arts. Consequently, it requires changing the role of arts organisations from creating engagement opportunities 'for' the audience to become facilitators in order to co-create 'with' them. Therefore, PAOs and arts

managers need to have "a mindset that allows for a free exchange of creative energy between an arts organisation and its public" (Rudman, cited in Brown et al., 2011, p.18).

The importance of adopting a longer-term approach in order to create meaningful engagement was highlighted in the previous section. Similarly, one interviewee also noted that long-term partnership is a key element in successful OEP programmes:

> Successful programmes often work in partnership with an extended partnership with organisations. So the worst, probably what we used to call flash and dash, where the theatre makers would turn up, do something flashy and then they go away. I think the quality of the good ones is where partnership is really long-term and sustained. It involves mutual learning, so that the theatre will learn as much from the partnership.
>
> (Interviewee F)

To some extent, this would explain the issue that Borwick (2012) highlights: that there is generally no substantive engagement or mutuality that develops between the participating organisations in short-term and one-off projects. As he further explains:

> It is hard for arts organisations and funders to forge equitable and successful partnerships with constituencies with whom they are unfamiliar [...] Numerous well-meaning 'outreach' efforts have failed because the initiating partner has underestimated the complexities of the environment in which they were attempting to work. (Borwick, 2012, p.348)

This reveals the importance of building long-term collaboration with partners as a strategy for ensuring meaningful and context-appropriate engagement.

5.3.4 The Issue of Resource Limitations

The research data suggests that resource limitations of OEP remains a major concern in PAOs. As one of the interviewees shared:

> There's reduced public subsidy, there's reduced resource […] as a department, I think we've probably at the place where we are most able to make the greatest impact at the moment. I think we've got the strongest team… the strategy is clearer than ever. I think we're really well set up to be delivering really outstanding work, but actually, we're also doing that within the context of ever diminishing resource… what we're really looking at at the moment is where is the potential to generate greater income without compromising our social aims.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

Several interviewees mentioned the tension between increasing expectations and unmatched resources. Even though some organisations are operating in a context of reduced funding, there is always an expectation of doing more. The challenge of limited resources is discussed in terms of financial resources, human resources, and physical space.

Financial Resources

The survey data suggested that PAOs tend to have a small core budget to spend on OEP. This is consistent with the findings from the interviews:

> Usually it [OEP] takes a very small amount of their finance. For instance, [organisation's name] I think is very good at outreach activities and I've got a lot of admiration for them. But the main thrust of their work is to spend a lot of money on large operas in opera houses. So inevitably, that means that for the outreach activity they'll have to raise money from charitable trusts.
>
> (Practitioner A)

Among the 33 surveyed organisations, only two could achieve break-even, and 15 organisations replied '0' or 'N/A' to a question about the income of their OEP. Although OEP is not fundamentally about making money, a sustainable business model would certainly help to develop the practice. Furthermore, the financial resources of OEP are mostly reliant on funding or grants, and sometimes these are time-limited projects that are funded by trusts and foundations, or corporate sponsors. However, as one arts manager reported, the funding for OEP is often unstable:

> The funding that comes for any regional programmes we apply for separately. And it's on a competitive funding basis […] if we don't get the funding, then there's no expectation from the state government. [But sometimes] they will also suddenly reallocate funding to make us go.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

One practitioner also mentioned that "sometimes [when an organisation has] got a lot of public money behind it, that's another example of 'we have to sort of like outreach and find people who would like to take part'" (Practitioner B). This highlights how some OEP activity is still very funding-driven rather than mission-led.

In consequence, sometimes the unstable funding affects the continuity of the practice or results of short-term projects. However, the impact of OEP takes long-term effort to achieve, but the funding is usually short-term. Another interviewee noted the problem of funding from this aspect:

> Most of the funders are usually more short-term, for most arts centres, your funds are three years, four years, if you're lucky, five years. But the truth is, what we do is about ten, twenty years. […]. So I think being able to demonstrate long-term impact on having your funders understand that, that's one challenge.
>
> (Executive Director T)

Regarding the mismatch between expectations and funding resources, one arts manager complained that "the government and the city are asking us to do more audience outreach work, but they don't connect the funding to that" (Arts Manager I). Another arts manager described the funding challenges as follows:

> My feeling is that the state government talks about regional engagement as being an aim or a core value or core principle of funding to our organisations. In reality, it's not funding much […] there's no way we could do it if we went in the current way the organisation is established and the level of funding that we get, there's no way that we can do it without additional funding, without changing our programmes.
>
> (Arts Manager R)

This research data suggests that funding has a remarkable impact on OEP and this is why problems of policy might affect the implementation of the practice dramatically. Policy-makers will have to adjust the input to PAOs to the changes of policy requirement accordingly. There is one suggestion for PAOs regarding this issue, which is revising the financial model of OEP to become more sustainable and resilient in this ever-changing environment. Without generating stable financial support for OEP, the practice will never be able to achieve the long-term goals and objectives of PAOs.

Human Resources

The survey data found that only a very small percentage of staff are involved in OEP. This result echoes Reason and colleagues' (2022) finding that outreach and education workers have been disproportionately impacted by redundancies, particularly in larger organisations. There were some shocking numbers revealed by the survey about the proportion of staff involved in OEP within PAOs, from 0.8% to 2%. Among the 33 responses, nine PAOs (27.2%) have only one or two staff working on OEP, and ten PAOs (30.3%) have three to four. Even worse, in a PAO which has 48 staff, only one part-time staff member was involved in its OEP activity. In some other cases, there are no full-time staff contracted in this area and only freelance staff and volunteers look after OEP.

Some arts managers expressed their shared concern over the issue of the shortage of staff:

> For us as a team, trying to meet all the different expectations without losing sense of the priorities […] and over-stretching the team, they work incredibly hard. They are brilliant at what they do, but they are at absolute capacity. So how we can do more when the resource isn't really growing?
>
> (Senior Manager M)

An arts manager from Finland revealed that if they had more resources dedicated to OEP, they would build a dedicated team to work on it. It seems that the lack of human resources in implementing OEP is a recurrent issue for the PAOs in this research. Presumably, this is why some OEP work becomes the sole responsibility of practitioners/artists that are sometimes hired by PAOs. As one dancing artist claimed:

> There was a project about disabled people getting into dance, but they didn't have them… when they gave me the commission, I had assumed that they had already had a group [of participants]. Instead, they had like a few different ideas of people… but it was kind of up to me to build this dance show and recruit. So that process felt quite unsupported.
>
> (Practitioner B)

Physical Space

Several venue-based organisations conveyed the issue of limited physical spaces to use for their OEP in the interviews, as they do not have a dedicated space for the practice:

> I think we need a dedicated learning space which is a laboratory and home for testing and developing new ways of approaching a new project, but also that's a home for young people and our audiences and participants in groups that we work with.
>
> (Senior Manager M)

Another arts manager also mentioned the lack of a medium-sized venue for their OEP. Therefore, it can be seen that the spaces affect the range of programmes that OEP team can develop; to some extent, it also limits the potential of reaching more people. As Senior Manager M explained: "We live in the spaces in-between. We use the space, we get the space that's available when it's not needed by commercial teams". This revealed that there are tensions between ideas of inclusivity and participatory processes, and maximising income for the sake of financial sustainability (Stefania, 2021). It also suggested that OEP is not a priority when it comes to the use of the spaces in the organisation.

By analysing the issues of resource limitation of OEP from the perspective of organisational management and operation, it can be noted that OEP is often undervalued in institutional contexts. This signals a shift that Mark Robinson referred to as a “pivot to purpose and people”, which requires PAOs to make a strategic move towards civic and community engagement and to explore its responsibilities to communities by distributing the resources to such work. For example, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, UK, transformed its spaces from retail to community engagement during the pandemic: the centre’s café was repurposed as a community space in order to involve the centre in “corporate social responsibility” projects rather than “just for the sake of transactional benefits” (Walmsley, 2022, p.52).

5.4 Summary

OEP reconciles ideologically opposed objectives, which can be summarised into a typology of five core categories: social inclusion; engaging with communities; enriching the experience of the current audience; arts education for young people and children; and building and cultivating new audiences. The survey and interview data suggests there are multiple and divergent expectations about what OEP can and should be aimed at. As such, the implementation of OEP depends on organisational ethos and philosophy, which affects vision, mission and strategy.

In some performing arts organisations, OEP operates as audience engagement strategy which plays a vital strategic and philosophical role. However, in others it is marginalised and perceived as a secondary-level activity. The research found that there are two major models of OEP in PAOs in terms of the relationship with artistic programming team within organisational structure: OEP as an individual department and OEP within an artistic department. As revealed by this research, there is a notion of OEP being in service to artistic programmes and being seen as a ‘secondary offer’ in some organisations. This reveals the unequal relationship between OEP and artistic programmes,

and represents an ideology that supports ‘excellence’ over ‘engagement’ in PAOs. To achieve integrated goals in audience engagement, building connections and relevance between the works of OEP and artistic teams is vital – a philosophical connection is much needed. This would require the involvement and commitment of artistic leadership in OEP, the representation of OEP staff at senior management level, and in programming decision-making.

The findings revealed a lack of strategic planning when designing OEP and a lack of stable resources when implementing OEP in some PAOs. Many PAOs do not have a written strategy/plan for OEP, and the projects tend to be tactical rather than strategic, therefore, they do not necessarily achieve organisational goals (Hayes and Slater, 2002). Based on the analysed research data, this thesis suggests that in order to engage with audiences on a meaningful basis, a written OEP plan is a vital component of a long-term strategic direction that involves the efforts of the whole organisation. Thus, it requires PAOs to ensure appropriate time and resources are in place, changes to the overall mission, programming, structures of PAOs, and to take a whole-of-organisation approach.

This chapter also highlighted the importance of partnership working through co-creation with the audience and collaboration with external partners on a long-term basis for ensuring meaningful and context-appropriate engagement. There are few examples in this study that employed a co-creative approach, and the notion of ‘everyday participation and creativity’ is still under-represented in the researched organisations. This indicated that there is a long way to go for organisations and arts managers to work towards a more democratic and dialogical engagement through OEP. Moreover, there is clearly a need for PAOs to recognise ‘communityship’ and act as community leaders while co-creating meaningful engagement with the communities. To achieve this, it will require PAOs to

have a sense of social responsibility by activating their artistic and creative resources and infrastructure.

The key issues arising from this exploratory research, concerning the management, positioning and priorities of OEP within PAOs, have been discussed in this chapter. The next two chapters will look at two case studies, the Barbican Centre and the Esplanade - Theatre on the Bay. Both of the case study organisations place audience engagement at the centre of their missions or visions, albeit with different models and approaches in their OEP. Analysing the two case studies will further knowledge about how OEP is being implemented and positioned in each organisation and how their local cultural policy has shaped their OEP.

Chapter 6: A Case Study of the Barbican Centre

6.1 Overview

The Barbican Centre (Barbican) is an international arts and learning centre with a 40-year history. "To inspire more people to discover and love the arts" is a crucial part of Barbican's mission (Barbican, 2021). It is Europe's largest multi-arts centre, and it comprises two theatres, a concert hall, three cinemas, two art galleries, a library, a glasshouse conservatory, conference facilities and public spaces. The centre is home to a resident orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, and resident theatre company, the Royal Shakespeare Company. Barbican hosts classical and contemporary music concerts, theatre performances, film screenings and art exhibitions, and it is committed to arts without boundaries. Since the formation of the Creative Learning department in 2009, Barbican has been working to connect its local East London communities with their world-class arts and learning to break down social and economic barriers and improve everyone's access to the arts.

The Creative Learning department is a joint division between the Barbican Centre and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (the Guildhall School) – its official full name is "Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning". Both Barbican and the Guildhall School are run and core-funded by the City of London Corporation. Since the creative learning partnership was launched, two institutions came together with a shared vision about what is possible when an international arts centre collaborates with a world-leading conservatoire to shape and deliver new approaches to engagement with the arts. When the fieldwork was conducted at Barbican in 2019, Creative Learning celebrated its tenth anniversary.

The Barbican Centre is located on the Barbican Estate of the City of London – the ancient heart of London's working capital and the primary central business district of London today. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre. The original design for the Barbican estate deliberately envisaged a separation between its residents and the street level; as a result, there is little outward sign of the rich culture and heritage of the area or sense of welcome (City of London, 2017). The name Barbican comes from the Low Latin word 'Barbecana' (City of London, 2020), which referred to "an outer defence of a city or castle" or "fortress" (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2006, no pagination). The meaning of the word 'Barbican' captures the issues surrounding the ways in which the Barbican Centre attempts to engage with and diversify audiences from outside the fortress (Mackney, 2018). The physicality of the centre is very fortresslike – it is hidden away and difficult to get into. Therefore, it has to deal with a lot of challenges with branding the centre as the opposite of what it is of its physicality.

The Barbican Centre was built on an area that was destroyed by bombs during World War Two, and the City of London decided to build an urban utopia instead of replacing the low-cost housing that was there before. The Barbican Estate was designed and built for affluent City professionals and their families, with all flats let out at high rents by the Corporation of London, aiming to repopulate the district with middle class professionals. According to Heathcote (2004), the Barbican Centre as part of the Barbican Estate, therefore, was designed for the benefit of its middle- or higher-class residents. He explains:

> Barbican was designed to be experienced as a resident, to reflect their sense of self and to be convenient to them. These factors go some way to explaining what became perceived as the awful pedestrian experience of public access to the arts centre. In reality it has become a shibboleth, since what can be objectionable about walking to the arts centre above the formal lake and gardens of the Barbican interior? (Heathcote, 2004, p.38)

He further describes the design concepts which were employed by the architects:

> A vision of gracious living was the dramatisation of space, the transformation of space into performance area, or put more simply the design of spaces that fostered social interaction and made people look good. (Heathcote, 2004, p.136)

The socio-economic landscape of the area changed dramatically following the development of the Barbican Estate. However, this led to a considerable discrepancy between the affluence of the City of London and the poverty that also exists in the surrounding boroughs. When the Barbican Centre opened in 1982, critics commented on the contrasting socio-economic make-up of the surrounding areas. Heathcote argues that this situation created a divided community:

> …most damagingly critics made hay with the central tension of the Barbican – the uneasy relationship between public and private spaces. Critics rightly contrasted the wealthy exclusivity of the estate with the residential deprivation surrounding it and the hidden isolation of what was supposed to be an international arts centre. The idea that the Barbican was a ghetto of high culture trapped in a beached liner accurately reflected the public experience of the development. (Heathcote, 2004, p.37)

When the arts centre first opened its doors, its programming was intended to complement the other "high class" amenities the complex provided (Heathcote, 2004, p.184). Therefore, the programming choices reflected the artistic excellence of the venue, and appealed to international audiences, but were not always balanced by events and performances that were accessible to local audiences and families from the surrounding boroughs (Mackney, 2018). To some extent, the Barbican Centre was an example of a period in Britain's cultural history in which the priority was not increasing access to arts activity but rather to celebrate 'high art' for élite audiences (Ibid.). This reflects the emphasis of cultural policy on professional standards and excellence at that time, which led to a policy preference to support the institutions of high culture over amateurs. In this case, 'excellence' and 'quality' were used as a cover for maintaining social superiority (Holden, 2008). As the architectural historian Reynor Banham pointed out, the Barbican Estate had become inward facing

and the Barbican Centre was a venue which appealed to cosmopolitan tastes: "[Barbican] is a cosmopolitan business club with extensive residential accommodation […] a council estate for the rich" (Banham, 1974, p.79). In addition, as Jen Harvie states:

> Barbican brought tower blocks of expensive private apartments and an arts complex where programming is arguably aimed less at comparatively poor immigrants still neighbouring the Barbican to the north and east and more at those on its southern flank: comparatively wealthy city workers. The issue is not just that monumental theatres literally displace already dispossessed urban citizens - though that's bad enough. What these theatres reinforce is a set of ideological priorities that legitimate so-called free market economies and priorities, even where those might not be best for all. (2009, p.31)

It was not only an architectural point of exclusion for the many, but more significantly, an 'exclusive' space for the few. As Harvie (2009) argues, although monumental theatres like the Barbican Centre demonstrate a city's investment in the arts and a commitment to its citizens' cultural participation, the cultural success may not be accessible to everyone. The challenge for the Barbican Centre in attempting to engage with a diverse audience is how to break down barriers that lead to "behaviours of social exclusion" and "hierarchies of social difference" (Bourdieu, 1996, p.141). The role of Barbican as "an institution of legitimation" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.144) has had an impact on how its programme is perceived by its local communities. This explains why the Barbican Centre historically struggled to engage with diverse local audiences in the surrounding boroughs. According to Mackney (2018), the previous focus on 'high art' for certain groups of people resulted in a perception among some local communities that Barbican was not 'for them' and led to a difficulty in appealing to wider audiences. Barbican has been making an effort to shift people's perceptions. As former Managing Director Nicholas Kenyon said:

> What we are doing is to show that it is not a threatening thing to come into a building like the Barbican and enjoy it. That is a very positive experience and nobody needs any qualifications to come in. They don't need to know anything to come in. We want to welcome them in and draw them in to the richness of the arts that we provide.

(Kenyon, 2019)

The embedded issues of the history discussed in this section are important to understand as part of the context wherein the Creative Learning department was created to make a difference. The next section includes a brief history of how Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning was created, a transformation from the separate Barbican Education to 'a golden thread' that connects two institutions.

6.2 History of the Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

The Barbican Centre established Barbican Education in 1999. Prior to this there was neither access nor provision for arts education at the Barbican Centre, nor any immediate intention to source funding from the City of London to develop this field of work (Mackney, 2018). Barbican was seen as a "troubled artistic institution" and was described as "off-putting on the outside, labyrinthine on the inside and underperforming all-round" in a critical article in *The Independent* (Popham, 2011). Then Artistic Director Graham Sheffield recognised the need to change, commenting: "I feel we need to turn the place inside out by using the approaches to the building, and making what goes on inside more visible". He was conscious that the centre was not doing everything it could to draw people from the surrounding boroughs in, as he explained: "I feel the lack of an education and audience development policy. We need to reach out to audiences in the surrounding boroughs, to animate the Centre" (Ibid.).

New Labour policy in 1997 emphasised the importance of culture as a tool for achieving wider social inclusion (Hayes and Slater, 2002). Accordingly, in order to reach local people in its neighbouring boroughs and to respond to late 20th-century shifts in the cultural agenda from excellence to access, Barbican started to develop an education programme. The intended idea of the

education strand was not seen as separate from, or inferior to, the main arts programming at the centre. However, this was arguably not achieved in practice: the education department was described by one of the interviewees at Barbican as “a separate little area [which] mainly did talks and activities around the art forms” (Arts Manager N).

In 2009 Guildhall Connect and Barbican Education merged to form Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. Both Barbican and the Guildhall School have had a complicated history with engaging local communities. As Director of Learning and Engagement Sean Gregory and former Head of Research and Development Peter Renshaw state:

> Historically both the Barbican and Guildhall School’s learning and participation programmes have been constrained in their ambition to work more collaboratively across the arts. They have tended to lack the diversity of those that take part. They have not always embraced the knowledge and best practice of their partners and have been limited in their connection to the Barbican’s art programme. This common organisation divide perhaps reflects in microcosm the gaps that can exist in the professional arts and learning sectors. (Renshaw and Gregory, 2013, p.4)

This quotation partly explains the intentions behind the collaboration between the two departments. In an interview with then Managing Director Nicholas Kenyon, he explained that when he arrived at Barbican in 2007, there was a lot of discussion about what the Guildhall School and Barbican could do together:

> There was some thoughts about running the finance department together, and the HR department together. And it just seemed a natural thing to do, to say, could we run education and outreach together? Because we had completely the same aims [which is] sort of working beyond the walls. And the aim [of the partnership] was to really put our resources together and to focus on the areas that we wanted to develop in terms of community relations, families, young people […]
>
> (Kenyon, 2019)

The collaboration between the two institutions towards working in strategic partnership was "structurally easy to do", according to Kenyon. Because the Guildhall school and Barbican are equal departments of the City of London, they operate next to each other both geographically and logistically. They decided to combine and share resources in artistic, educational and physical ways. Thus they share three departments: Finance, Human Resources, and Creative Learning.

Historically, Barbican and the Guildhall School have supported art forms favoured by the middle classes and they arguably played a role in legitimising tastes through the curriculum provision for students and artistic programming for audiences. As Bourdieu (1979) argues, the link between "unequal stock of cultural capital for members of different classes" and the process of taste-making is legitimised and embedded in arts organisations and educational systems (p.xx).

Barbican and the Guildhall School recognised that in order to engage a diverse audience they needed to support a wider array of art forms and integrate their participatory work alongside their main programme of activity. Barbican and the Guildhall School are 'two neighbours of such a kind' and with all their shared aims and challenges, the two institutions decided to work together to find their combined strength. Therefore, "a golden thread" was created which aimed to provide "a flexible and dynamic life-long learning continuum for audiences and artists, from the first point of access through to professional practitioner training. It aimed to establish learning pathways across all art forms, styles and genres, with multiple entry and exit points for all" (Gregory and Renshaw, 2013, p.4). "Across all art forms, styles and genres" refers to the idea of cross-arts, describing "the practice which encourages cross-fertilisation between the creative arts, technology and multi-media with the aim of developing an artistic language which relates to wider audiences" (Gregory and Renshaw, 2013, p.12). This concept was used as an approach in blurring the boundaries between different art forms, as well as in challenging the traditional 'high' art forms.

In this section, I have explored how the Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning was created and developed from a 'separate little area' to a joint division that provides platforms for engagement among diverse communities of artists and participants through the multi-arts approach. The next section examines the context of the cultural policy in which Barbican operates and explores how Barbican and its Creative Learning have responded to the wider cultural policy shifts in both the City of London and the UK.

6.3 Policy Context

To better understand the practice of Creative Learning in terms of its egalitarian ethos, the reasons underpinning its strategies and the requirements of the funding bodies, it is important to examine the wider cultural policy in which the Creative Learning department is situated. I analysis the policy context from the previous 10-year strategy of Arts Council England up to the new 10-year strategy, *Let's Create*.

The strategic objectives to make the arts an integral part of everyday public life and 'accessible to all' have been part of the mission of Arts Council England (ACE) since 2008. In 2010, ACE published *Achieving Great Art for Everyone: A 10-year strategic framework for developing the arts and cultural sector*. Three years later, a new version of the strategy, *Great Art and Culture for Everyone*, was launched. The objectives to engage the public, to make excellent arts and culture flourish, and to engage as many people as possible comprised its core mission. ACE emphasises that the value of arts organisations is generated not only by the excellence of their work but also by fully engaging, challenging, or connecting with audiences through these works. However, changes in policy agendas do not necessarily equate to more people attending the funded arts and there remains a strong correlation between taking part and socio-economic status (Jancovich, 2017). The

deficit model of cultural consumption positions those who do not consume as lacking or having a deficit (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015) and non-participation is constructed as a policy problem in need of correction (Stevenson, 2016). Previous policy measures and the official provision of culture exclude everyday forms of culture activity, such as amateur arts (Miles and Sullivan, 2012), informal, domestic and subversive cultures of participation. Understanding everyday participation in the context of place relocates values and modes of cultural participation that might exist outside of funded and institutional frameworks (Gibson and Miles, 2017).

In recent years, cultural funders and policymakers have become increasingly aware of the role that creativity and arts participation can play in multiple agendas, from mental health and well-being to job creation and supporting young people (Carnegie and Drencheva, 2019). For instance, in 2019, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport announced a £250m Culture Investment Fund in the UK. However, the funding for the arts has diminished at local level (NAO, 2018). This is because funding of the arts is not a mandatory service for local authorities who are struggling to support deprived communities and to fund essential services (Mendoza, 2017). Although some local authorities might appreciate the value of arts and cultural activities, they often feel unable to offer a sustainable level of support (Carnegie and Drencheva, 2019).

According to the former Director of Creative Learning, Barbican's financial model is currently in "a state of flux", where continuing change is going to constantly impact funding and challenge priorities (Carnegie and Drencheva, 2019). According to one of the interviewees, the core percentage contribution of Creative Learning from Barbican and the Guildhall School is quite small. Creative Learning finds itself in the context of reduced funding from the City Corporation. The rest of its financial model is very much based on funding from ACE National Portfolio Organisations, trusts and foundations, and corporate sponsors. There has been a need to become

more "entrepreneurial" and "resilient" within an increasing complex and fast-changing political and funding climate (Ibid.). As former Director of Creative Learning Mollica said, "we're having to think quite creatively and out of the box about where potential could be for income generation without taking too much of the team's capacity to deliver what we're here to do". What they are really looking for at the moment is the potential to generate greater income without compromising their social and strategic aims.

ACE's new 10-year strategy, *Let's Create: Strategy 2020-2030*, was published in January 2020. Based on the need to recognise and celebrate everyday participation, the new strategy aims to redefine creativity and culture. In the new strategic plan, culture refers to "all those areas of activity associated with the art forms and organisations in which ACE invests: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts"; and creativity describes "the process through which people apply their knowledge, skill and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn't there before" (ACE, 2019, p.12). Given the importance of creativity, there is a mismatch at the moment between the policy messages regarding the acknowledgement that creativity will be one of the most needed skills of the future and the damaging policy intervention at school level. Changes to school curriculums since the introduction of the EBacc[1] and a strong emphasis on STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) have placed a greater strain on arts provision and teaching in schools. As Mollica (2016) states, engagement with arts teachers is increasingly challenging as arts subjects become squeezed at levels 2 and 3, and resources are reduced. Entries for GCSE and A-Level arts subjects in England have fallen since 2010: according to results from Ofqual, there was a 37% decline in arts GCSE entries and 30% decline in arts A-Level entries between 2010 and 2020 in England (Ofqual,

[1] The English Baccalaureate, an accountability measure in England. It measures the proportion of children who secure a grade 5 or above in English, Maths, Science, a humanity and language at GCSE.

2020). This invites arts organisations to continually re-examine the role and impact that they can and should play in the cultural life and creative development of young people in schools. In response to this, Creative Learning launched the Schools Partnership Programme in September 2016 to explore this role in a meaningful and dynamic way. By the time of the fieldwork at Barbican, the evidence suggested that schools were operating in a context of diminishing resources. For example, among the schools that Creative Learning work with, around 90% of school leaders predicted that they would not be able to present a balanced budget within the next 12 to 18 months. Thus for schools to invest in the arts or to continue to support a creative curriculum is very challenging.

The new 10-year strategy aims to recognise and champion the creative activities and cultural experiences of everyone, everywhere. It also stresses that "its success will depend on our ability to understand and champion a wider range of culture than we have before, including in the amateur, voluntary and commercial sectors" (p.18). Furthermore, it recognises the historic imbalances in cultural provision: "there are places and people who have been disadvantaged by historic patterns of public funding" (p.26). Therefore, to widen and improve opportunities, ACE encourages cultural organisations to develop their practice together with their local partners, communities, creative practitioners and local education providers. It may require pillar organisations to go much further in co-creating cultural capabilities with different partners.

However, the strategy does not address the role that publicly funded cultural organisations might play in supporting grassroots organisations and communities to thrive, and what they can do to support everyday creativity and participation. This perceived gap is critical to strengthening cultural ecologies, otherwise it might lead to the risk of further divergence between grassroots and pillar organisations. As one staff member at Barbican echoed in their interview:

> The danger is there could be an increasing divergence, and actually the very thing that the Arts Council want to achieve […] the opposite could be achieved – the arts organisations become even more the domain of the elite, and that there is this whole world of everyday creativity…
>
> (Arts Manager M)

The staff further explained: "I think the philosophy of it is something that I totally support. But as yet, I'm not seeing enough around how". The 10-year plan does not really discuss what large arts organisations' roles are within it, but one of the positive impacts is that it opens up some fundamental questions, which include: who gets to make culture; who gets to participate in culture; who gets to define what culture is; and who gets to define what and who cultural spaces are for? To some extent, the plan presents an existential crisis and invites arts and cultural organisations to ask themselves where they sit within the new ecology, what role they might play to support grassroots organisations and communities to thrive, and what they can do in supporting everyday creativity and participation.

6.4 The Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Model

Since the formation of the Creative Learning department in 2009, the last ten years has been an exploratory journey for the team, as Jenny Mollica, former Director of Creative Learning explains:

> … we've been really finding ourselves in a way the same as… in child development terms we're exploring. And we've tried lots of things to trial and error, trial and error… we're sort of coming into our teenage years now, if we put in that kind of metaphor. As we come into ten years of age, we are kind of more confident about who we are and where we're going.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

In this section, I examine the model of the Creative Learning department from its underpinning ideology to its departmental strategy. I investigate how Barbican and the Guildhall School

collaborate in terms of developing the Creative Learning division. Then I explore the structure of the department and its programming approach from an operational perspective.

6.4.1 The Underpinning Ideology and Strategy

The notions of 'creativity' and 'learning' underpin the work of the Creative Learning department. In the Creative Learning department, 'creativity' is regarded as:

> A critical and social process, founded in social relations. We do not define creativity as an isolated and individual 'act of genius' […] but as rooted in interaction – the notion of the creative milieu is important here (Landry, 2000): the need for places where relationships can be formed, connections can be made, collaborations can occur and resources can be obtained. (Gregory and Renshaw, 2013, p.4., cited in Jeffery, 2005)

When it comes to 'learning', the former Director of Creative Learning, Jenny Mollica, stressed the need for a two-way exchange which is genuine and dynamic:

> we come at learning from the point of view the fact that learning is not something to be received, and creativity is something that we already have within us, and that we use creative approaches to bring out what people have and that the active creating is enabling people to realise something and realise their potential that they already have within them.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

Mollica acknowledged that creativity lies within everyone, and the role of Creative Learning is to create the conditions for people to support them in their own creativity. She passionately believes that "we are all creative, and the culture and creativity do not belong to arts organisations". This is a strong egalitarian ethos, which is embedded in the department. A lot of their work was designed to support and empower individuals or communities in their own creativity and for them to embrace their creativity and celebrate their culture.

It is worth noting that 'learning' means two things in the Creative Learning team: "learning *in* the arts" and "learning *through* the arts" (Mollica, 2019). The former learning refers to skills development within a particular art form. In the case of the Creative Learning team, this represents specialists in an art form or a wide range of art forms, working with young people, adults, and community groups to develop their artistic skills. As Mollica indicated, when people develop their artistic skills, they may or may not want to be an artist, but they will develop a whole host of skills that are relevant to how they work in the world. This is where another learning, "learning *through* the arts" comes from. For Creative Learning, it is related with the questions of how arts-based approaches can support the teaching and delivering of a wide range of subject areas, and how that can improve and increase attainment for children and young people. Therefore, the department has been working with schools and exploring creative ways of delivering the curriculum. Examples of this practice will be discussed later in the chapter. It seems quite an instrumental approach to arts and culture. As Bloom (1980) stresses, "as the arts begin to demonstrate their value in meeting broad educational goals, they must also begin to make a much stronger case for their own intrinsic value to schooling" (p.205). But Creative Learning also emphasises the importance of creativity in and of itself.

"Creative Skills for Life" is the mission of Creative Learning as a department, which was created as part of the current departmental strategic plan (2019-2024). This is an external message – they want people to know what Creative Learning stands for: it aims to provide opportunities for everyone to discover and engage in a lifelong love of the arts, and to develop their own creative skills for life. The mission of Creative Learning aligns with ACE's *Let's Create*, which emphases the importance of an individual's creativity. The previous strategic plan (2014-2019) was written in 2014 and revised in 2016. The revision was a significant transition for Creative Learning, as its strategic plan was devised in conjunction with those of Barbican and the Guildhall School, thus giving it a much

stronger sense of coherence than before (Renshaw, 2017). Since then, Creative Learning's strategic plan has been put together in response to both Barbican's strategic plans and the Guildhall School's strategic plan. In addition, the department's strategic priorities also align with the City's in terms of creating experience for learning and participation. As Mollica explained:

> We [Creative Learning] situated our strategy within the context of the Barbican strategic, part of the Guildhall school strategic plan. And then the Barbican and the Guildhall School situated their strategy plan within the City of London Corporation's strategies. So we are within a family tree of strategies.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

In this sense, the department aligns their mission and objectives with the organisational vision, mission and values across both institutions so that the Creative Learning Strategic Plan is developed in tandem with the organisation-wide developments of the two institutions. The revised Strategic Plan commits Creative Learning to meeting organisational goals, particularly around the following areas: Connecting Arts and Learning, Cultural Hub and Audience Development (at Barbican); and Exceptional Students and Exceptional Opportunities (at the Guildhall School). In Barbican's strategic priorities for 2019-2024, "Audiences – Build lasting relationships", "Learning – Develop creative skills for life", and "Artists – Enable artists to realise their vision" were highlighted among three other strategic priorities. Accordingly, the Creative Learning team drew up a new plan for their work which is underpinned by three core pillars: education, employability and enrichment (the three Es). This will be explored later in this chapter.

Creative Learning organises its work into five core strands according to different participant groups: public events, schools and colleges, community, young creatives, and emerging and practising artists. For each of these strand areas, Creative Learning has articulated a goal which directly links to Barbican and the Guildhall School's strategic goals (see *Table 5*). The five strands represent an

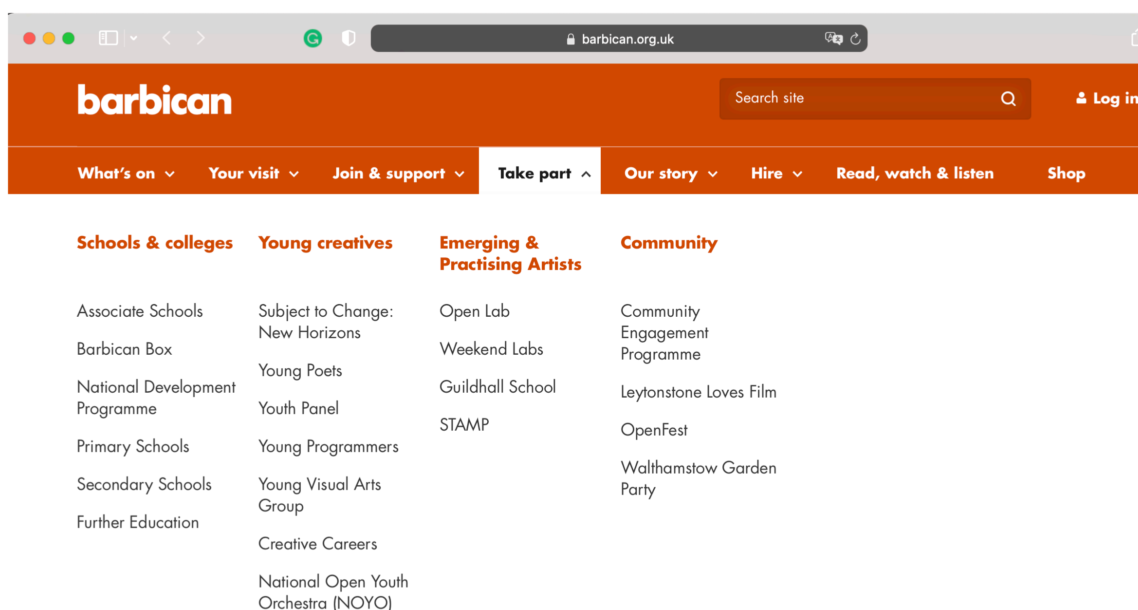
intentionality in the way they work, because previously, Creative Learning did not really have a clear structure and agreed way of working, underpinned by core principles around depth of learning, richness of artistic experience, inclusivity and diversity, and widening access and reach (Barbican, 2016, p.13).

Table 5: The Strands of Work in Creative Learning Department and Their Respective Goals

	Strands	Goals
1	**Public events** On site events for families and adults	To deepen and enrich the experience of visiting the Barbican, Guildhall School and City of London cultural hub for our audiences, empowering them to be creative and to discover more.
2	**Community** Community engagement projects with local City and East London communities	To nurture and develop relationship with local East London communities, widening access to the arts for everyone.
3	**Schools and Colleges** Creative and cultural education programmes with primary, secondary, and further education pupils and their teachers	To create relevant and engaging learning experiences for local and national schools, empowering them to value and embed the arts and creativity across the national curriculum.
4	**Young Creatives** Talent development opportunities for young people aged 14-25	To equip young people with the skills and progression routes they need in preparation for careers and training in the performing, creative and cultural sectors.
5	**Emerging and Practising Artists** Training, laboratory and research pathways (formal and informal) for the creative and professional development of early to mid-career artists	To support and develop artists in their creative and professional development, through a range of formal and informal pathways with the Guildhall School, Barbican and our partners.

Although the new strategic plan has already been developed and deployed, these strands are still in use on the main page of Barbican's website (as seen in *Figure 11*) under the category 'Take part' in order to guide participants to choose activities under different strands. According to Mollica, these strands are useful for external people to navigate, but the three Es are more about their own strategic focus as a department. The five strands focus on 'what' and 'who', but the three Es (as shown on the next page) are more context-driven. As she further explained, "sometimes we organised our work before by the who, so young people, community groups […but] that could be quite reductive. And actually what this [the three Es] is saying is about the needs". The three Es are the new strategic focus of Creative Learning as a department, and they became the key shaping forces that needed to be considered when whey conduct their work.

Figure 11: Screenshot of the Main Page of Barbican's Website



On one hand, the transition from five strands to three Es is an important one for the department. The new strategic plan is about refocusing and reflecting their previous work, and it provides a more refined articulation of purpose of intent for future work. To this extent, Creative Learning utilises strategic planning as a tool to help the team focus their energy and ensure that team members are working toward the same goals (Tetreault, 2018, cited in Stein and Bathurst, 2008). On the other hand, the transition is vital and timely in terms of the need for arts education today. Thus, the strategic planning of Creative Learning both reflected the environmental context and proposed a developmental response to it (Hadley, 2019).

> **Education**
> Supporting creativity in the classroom through arts-based learning programmes and tailored partnerships with schools and colleges, locally and nationally
>
> **Employability**
> Delivering talent development and work-based learning programmes with and for young people looking to access higher education and break into the creative industries
>
> **Enrichment**

> Producing participatory programmes for families, and collaborating with charity and community organisations to create meaningful art experiences that support the wellbeing of people of all ages and backgrounds
>
> (Barbican, 2019)

In this statement, education is about developing arts learning programmes in a formal education context; employability is about their talent development programmes, and supporting skills and work-based learning for young people which includes apprenticeships and work experience; whereas enrichment is about producing participatory programmes for families and communities, as well as creating arts experiences for people from all ages and backgrounds (Arts Manager M). The 3Es reveal that school-aged children and young people are the core focus in the work of Creative Learning. As Mollica indicated, one of the reasons why the focus is very much placed on children and young people today is that they have to align limited resources with where they can make an impact. Another reason is the nature of being a joint division of Barbican and the Guildhall School, which has meant the priority of Creative Learning is situated within the areas of common priority for both institutions. Supporting the next generation of talent has been the strategic priority and Creative Learning is the specialist provider within both organisations doing that work. Even though adults are not a priority in Creative Learning's work, they aim to make their work become increasingly inter-generational and to develop more activities with adults within the enrichment strand.

6.4.2 Collaboration with the Guildhall School

> Creative Learning is the intersection of Guildhall School's strategic vision for the "artist in society" and with Barbican's "arts without boundaries". (Guildhall School, 2021)

Creative Learning is an alliance between an arts centre and a conservatoire, and the unique nature of what they do has always emerged from this dynamic meeting point. To some extent, the department

serves a dual purpose to fulfil the mission of an arts organisation as well as an education institution. Mission fulfilment might be challenging since one serves an educational mission by existing as a training conservatoire for students enrolled in theatre, music, opera, dance, and technical production programmes; the other serves a public mission by existing as an arts space for people and ideas to connect (Barbican, 2019). This alliance encouraged the two institutions to put their strengths together and create new models for creative and cultural learning. This section analyses the different aspects of collaboration as well as the divergence of creative learning partnership between the two organisations.

Barbican and the Guildhall School have used their physical proximity and shared cultural and social goals to forge a long-term collaboration. This collaboration functions through sharing artistic resources and expertise in educational and socially engaged practice and by conducting action research together. Creative Learning harnesses its artistic resources (e.g. visiting artists or arts groups) of Barbican's seasonal programme to curate workshops and master classes for students in training at the Guildhall School. Some of the staff at Creative Learning actually teach and lead on the socially engaged modules and projects at the school. This includes the BA PACE (Performance and Creative Enterprise) degree programme which was established in 2015 as a joint initiative through the shared Creative Learning division, with the aim of training visionary, socially engaged, multi-disciplinary, autonomous artists. Moreover, the department facilitates opportunities for students to explore a wide range of education and socially engaged contexts through their work and creates opportunities for work placements and experiences for students to practise what they have learned.

In 2016, a doctoral research studentship was launched as part of the ongoing development of the partnership. This studentship offers the opportunity to work full-time for three years on a research

project in Barbican and the research project is supervised by a team of senior staff from both organisations. According to the Guildhall School, this is "a product of the longstanding partnership between the Guildhall School and Barbican". This studentship represents their shared commitment to preparing and supporting creative practitioners to engage with the social context in which they operate. In this initiative, the two institutions work together to explore themes, such as the role and value of arts and cultural institutions, understanding audiences, and understanding participatory, socially-engaged, community and applied arts practices. Through this, the Guildhall School expanded its research activity while providing evidence-based practice and change at Barbican. According to Mollica, conducting research with the Guildhall School raised the question of "how we can be working more closely with the school on action research and thinking about a stronger evidence base for what we do". Thus, research became one of the shared strengths in this partnership.

Despite the shared points of alignment, both organisations naturally have some different drivers. The core purpose of Barbican is to bring the wider public in to engage with what they offer, whereas the Guildhall School has a more internally-facing priority with its focus on the preparation of students for the industry (Renshaw, 2017). As Sean Gregory, Director of Learning and Engagement, noted:

> There's so much rhetoric about the need for the world of higher education and arts organisations to work in close partnership, whether it's through formal courses, projects or research, without giving any consideration to the time it takes to understand the different cultures and rhythms at play within these two core business… Higher education works to a slower rhythm than an arts centre with its strong public-facing imperative. (Gregory, 2016)

Different working paces and agendas made the partnership work rather complex. In interviews with the directors and managers of Barbican, it is acknowledged that complications and issues do exist in this partnership:

> although we have a very good alliance as a world class conservatoire and a world class venue, we are doing different things. What is the purpose of the education and outreach work that we do? In the case of the Guildhall, it is very much to do with being part of student training and expanding their training into areas that will be useful [for students] in the future of being able to work with families and communities, not just as performer, but as catalyst… the emphasis for the Guildhall school, not for us, has shifted a little bit, because of the requirements of the higher education funding for the Guildhall School, which is to say that these things are deliberately targeted at getting new students from a more diverse background to come to the school. We've never really thought of it like that, because we do it for its own sake.
>
> (Arts Manager A)

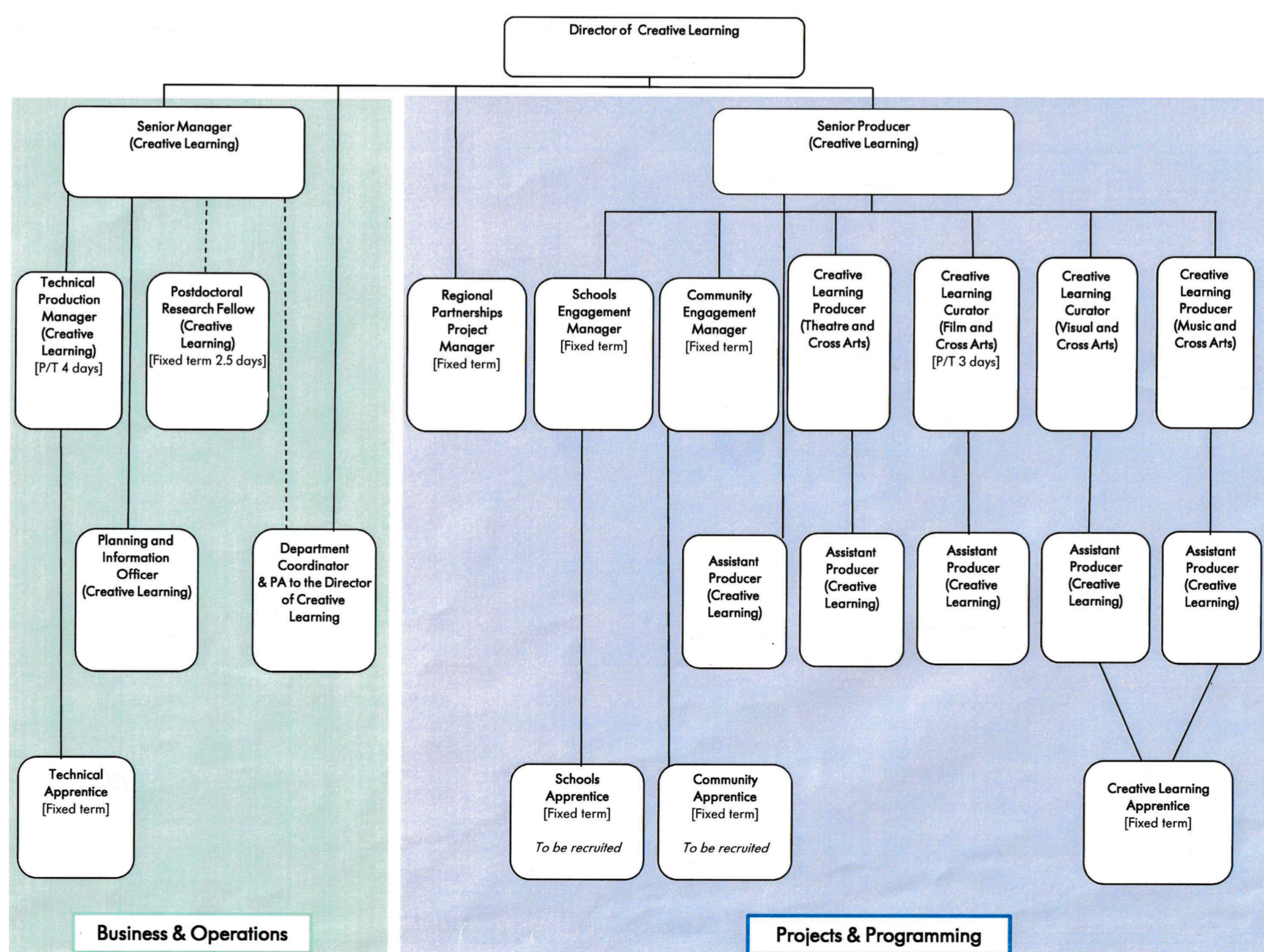
Therefore, there has been a shift in strategy in Creative Learning: the team has been working towards deepening the relationships, as it was acknowledged that "those relationships [with the Guildhall School] aren't as deep yet as they are with Barbican Art Forms team, it's something we're really working on" (Arts Manager M). According to the interview data, in the last ten years, there has been a real focus on the training of the students at the Guildhall School; Creative Learning aims to delve deeper in the next ten years into that point of intersection – what does it mean for an arts organisation or a cultural space to become more of a learning space and for a learning space to become more of a cultural space?

6.4.3 Operation and Structure of the Department

The Director of Creative Learning sits on the management team of both organisations. There are two core functions at Creative Learning: Business & Operations and Projects & Programming. *Figure 12* demonstrates the Creative Learning departmental chart. One senior manager looks after the Business & Operations team, which includes technical production, planning and information,

marketing and communications, research and evaluation, as well as development and fundraising. The Business & Operations team oversees the operational conditions for the work to happen. Another core function of the team, Projects & Programming, is managed by another senior producer. There are four Art Forms Producers (in theatre, film, visual arts and music) who are learning specialists in their art forms, and they work together with art teams from the Guildhall School. Furthermore, there are three externally funded, fixed-term roles: Regional Partnerships Project Manager, Schools Engagement Manager, and Community Engagement Manager.

Figure 12: Departmental Chart of Creative Learning



The role of Regional Partnerships Project Manager came with the funding to manage three new regional learning partnerships: HOME in Manchester, Harlow Playhouse in Essex, and the PEACH West Norfolk LCEP in Norfolk. Apart from managing these relationships for the next three years,

the new role will support the department to apply the learning experience and methodology that they developed over the years in working with partnership regionally and nationally. Two further roles, Schools Engagement and Community Engagement, are not about project design and delivery but focus on managing relationship with partners as well. As Mollica explained:

> Those two roles are the kind of holding the relationships, and they're advising the producers on the types of works that our partners need. So they're really understanding that, they're really helping provide the context for the project delivery.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

Creative Learning set up specific roles to manage and maintain the relationship with their partner organisations. This is because the department highly values partnerships in its work. For Creative Learning, building partnerships is a key step in delivering their strategic goals (Barbican, 2019). This will be explored further later in this chapter.

The structure of the Creative Learning department is partly dictated by the close working relationship with the Art Forms department. A traditional learning department is structured according to different audience groups instead of art forms – for example, with a Community Manager, School Manager, and Young People's Manager. Over the years, the Creative Learning team has discussed moving towards implementing a traditional model instead of the current one, but it would be problematic if the Creative Learning department separated too much from the Art Forms department (Mollica, 2019) because the distinctiveness of Barbican's proposition is that they are able to offer learning across all the art forms. More details of the relationship with the Art Forms department are explored further in the next section.

6.4.4 Programming Approach

The programming approach at Creative Learning changed over the years with the development of the department. At the beginning of the establishment of the department, there was a notion of Creative Learning being in service to the Art Form, which meant that the programming cycle was quite reactive and tended to have a shorter lead-in time. Moreover, the learning programme was dependent on artists' availability from the artistic programme. The Creative Learning team tried hard to move away from the sense that they were there to 'add value' or that the learning programme was the 'wrap around' to the 'main stage programme'. Both then Director of Creative Learning and then Managing Director of Barbican acknowledged that learning does play a role in supporting the core artistic programme, but also that learning is a strategic entity in its own right as opposed to purely acting as an ancillary service to the Art From. The next section further explores the position of Creative Learning at Barbican – where learning is claimed to be at the heart of the organisation instead of being seen as a 'secondary offer'.

The Creative Learning department views the artistic programme as a departure for learning, which means they might take the artistic programme as a point of inspiration, but the design of the learning programme is ultimately about making new work in and of itself. Creative Learning have shifted their programming cycle to incorporate a 12-18-month lead-in time. In recent years, the previous Director of Art Forms introduced centre-wide annual themes at Barbican. This thematic programming is a relatively new approach that is being used for developing and testing new forms of collaborative work between the Art Forms and Creative Learning. It has been transformational for the Creative Learning team because it means that they are on a level footing with the Art Forms in terms of thinking about what they want to programme and bring to the table (Mollica, 2019). With the Art Forms programming two to three years ahead, it gives Creative Learning a chance to be more intentional about what they want to do around a theme.

There are three major areas in Creative Learning's learning programme. The first area is related to the artistic programme itself and is based on what is going on in the venues. The second area is the centre-wide programming themes mentioned earlier. Accordingly, Creative Learning has a whole area of programming that offers a response to an annual scene. The third area of the learning programme involves very explicitly responding to things that are going on in the public sphere, for example, knife crime in East London, or an emerging topic in the education system. This area of work may or may not be connected back to the artistic programme at Barbican.

There are different layers involved in how Creative Learning designs its learning programme:

1. On a granular level of programming. All of the art form learning specialists have regular individual conversations with the Art Forms departments to generate ideas around a repertoire or an exhibition.
2. On a senior level of programming. The senior producer is the programme lead for the department, who shapes the ideas with executive control over the creation of the overall programme. This person oversees the balance of the programme across the art forms and reviews the context that they are working in. The senior producer will also lead on special projects, including new artistic projects that might go beyond the day-to-day activity.
3. On a strategic level of programming. The Director of Creative Learning looks at the overall strategic direction and considers about how everything they do reflects the departmental and organisational strategy.

Apart from the three levels of programming mentioned above, there are several outstanding features of Creative Learning's programme that are worth discussing below.

Arts-based Approach in Education

Arts-based learning programmes refer to programmes that support 'learning through the arts', which echoes Modrick's (2011) definition of "education through arts" which represents strategies that engage people in the creative process (p.70). It emphasises that engagement with an art form and creative expression are ways of thinking rather than doing. There is no distinction between student and teacher when education through arts is effectively used because the roles of teacher and learner are frequently exchanged (Ibid.). As Modrick (2011) further explains:

> "Through" expresses the importance of strategy and habits of mind. The intended strategy would be to provide a means of educational engagement that encourages teaching and learning for all involved, with all participants learning from each other, rather than direct questions and correct answers. (p.170)

Creative Learning has been trying to embed creativity within the curriculum and the classroom and to prove its value through an arts-based approach to education. A good example is the Teacher Lab project, which promotes creative practice in the classroom by supporting cross-curricular exchange between teachers and artists, giving teachers direct access to artists to re-imagine the curriculum and develop a bank of practical tools for learning through the arts (Barbican, 2019). Greenleaf Primary School was the first to take part in Creative Learning's Teacher Lab pilot project in 2019/20. After consultation with Greenleaf to identify a relevant gap in the curriculum, the school was matched with actor and mathematician Victoria Gould who works closely with the theatre company Complicité. The artist worked with a Year 2 teacher to find creative ways to help pupils understand the current science curriculum, creating and co-designing activities and training across two weeks, one at the school and one at Barbican. The artist and teacher worked together with a group of actors to explore how the science curriculum could be delivered using drama-based approaches. According to Gould, this project offered a unique opportunity to explore a teacher's creativity and vision rather than just add an artist's idea to the curriculum. Meanwhile, the Teacher Lab project allowed the teacher to be creative and really understand how the performing arts can

enable all students to delve into many areas of the curriculum. Creative Learning is very interested in the idea that arts-based approaches can bring the curriculum to life in a way that is potentially much more impactful (Mollica, 2019).

Utilising an arts-based approach in education is one of the specialties of Creative Learning and working with schools and teachers has accordingly become the biggest area of its work. This part of the work is increasingly important under the current situation whereby creative arts subjects are being squeezed out of the school curriculum in the UK (NASUWT, 2019; Holden and Hewison, 2011). For Creative Learning, it is strategically important to play a role in the cultural life and creative development of young people in schools.

Programming through Long-term Engagement with Partners

As mentioned in the last section, Creative Learning values partnerships very highly in their work. They see building partnerships with teachers, artists, young people, schools and community organisations as a key step in delivering their strategic goals (Barbican, 2019). To avoid parachuting in or going into a new project or partnership with any kind of assumption, Creative Learning has been working with bridge organisations to get a better understanding of questions such as: “What is the ecology? What is going on in that area? Where would we sit within that ecology? And how can we meaningfully and usefully contribute something to it?” (Mollica, 2019). As Mollica expressed, relationships with partners are key on the ground in terms of understanding the context within those environments. Therefore, each of the partnership and collaboration activities is tailor-made for that specific project, whether there is a role that Creative Learning’s work can play to catalyse something, or to convene a conversation, or to produce a new work in that area. Apparently, Creative Learning has been trying to not only do the work ‘for’ but ‘with’ their partner organisations. Programming through partnerships and collaboration might be an essential factor of

Creative Learning's success, not only because they could not make an impact on their own without those partners, but because they would not understand the contexts that they are working in.

Creative Learning does not favour short-term projects in local communities, unlike some other arts organisations in London, for example, the Southbank Centre (Mackney, 2018); and it does not operate on a festival model as Esplanade does. Instead, Creative Learning strives to deliver a strategic plan for long-term engagement with associate schools and local communities, to ensure meaningful and context-appropriate engagement. This echoes O'Neill's (2011) statement on durational engagement in participatory practice:

> When artists, curators and commissioners contribute to sustaining a practice-in-place for a period of static, immobile time, with a view to leaving something behind, there is the prevailing belief that a transitory and delimited duration matters. (p.272)

Unlike some community engagement projects, the Creative Learning team do not wish to 'change' or 'transform' the community through one-off events. As the former Director of Creative Learning confided in their interview, the goal they are aiming to achieve is "depth in partnership, breadth in impact". This strategy highlights how community engagement should ideally be carried out in a way that is responsible, which requires long-term partnership working. In 2018, the Creative Learning and Beyond Barbican teams launched an emerging partnership with Waltham Forest Council. This emerging relationship is part of an attempt to recognise the synergies and mutual benefits between cultural and creative organisations and local community organisations and hubs (Mackney, 2018). It is built on the ongoing collaboration with Walthamstow Garden Party, an annual festival of arts and music in Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, launched in 2013. Through the collaboration, Barbican and Waltham Forest Council are committed to supporting emerging professionals and young people in Waltham Forest to develop and share ambitious work, form

innovative collaborations, and develop new skills. This partnership is an example of the importance placed on longer-term partnership engagements between sectors. More importantly, it is also an example of how Barbican plays a leadership role in cultural participation by help building connections with and between local partners, including local residents, community groups and artists.

Co-creation

Grant Kester (2005) acknowledges the shift in contemporary art towards a more dialogical and socially engaged approach. Socially engaged practice is also a notable feature of Creative Learning, but it will not be explored further as it lies beyond the scope of this research. Here, the focus is on a more dialogical approach at Creative Learning – co-creation. Creative Learning, along with their participants, has tried to create “a participatory culture” (Jenkins and Bertozzi, 2008) where there are relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, where there is strong support for creating and sharing what one creates with others, and where members feel that their contributions matter. As the former Director of Creative Learning highlighted, Creative Learning sees its audiences as active participants; she acknowledged the evolution of arts audience from passive into active participants (cf. Boorsma, 2006). This is not only because the audience wants the opportunity to participate in an intelligent and responsible way instead of being told what the arts means (cf. Conner, 2004), but also because the audience has become much more interested in “participating, joining in, and influencing what happens to their organisation, including its programming” (Holden, 2011, p.185). Therefore, cultural leaders’ expertise will have to be practised by “working with people, not just for them” (Ibid.).

Furthermore, the former Director of Creative Learning stressed that engagement with the audience is a two-way process, and genuine engagement requires the organisation to understand its audience

as much as it wants to reach the audience. Thus, to create genuine engagement, the Creative Learning team has embedded a participatory process in their work to better understand both their existing and future or potential audiences and how they can be more relevant to them. A good example of this is the Youth Panel. The Youth Panel is a group of young people who are recruited through public engagement – many of them do not come from socio-economic groups that can support the private tuition often required to achieve the level of artistic skill to professional training. The cohort comprises a mix of diverse and highly energetic young people aged 14 to 18 years who are passionate about the arts and care about their community. Members of the Barbican Youth Panel meet once a month for a year to share their views on the arts programming and ethos of the organisation, working with different departments. Furthermore, they have the opportunity to get involved with the development of the Young Barbican programme, as well as gaining experience of teamwork, project management and leadership. According to Barbican's website, the role of a Barbican Youth Panel member is to:

- Be youth advisors to the Barbican Centre.
- Support our vision of 'arts without boundaries' to help open up the Barbican to even more young people.
- Give your views on our arts programming and the ethos of the organisation.
- Liaise with decision-makers within the Barbican.
- Work with different Barbican departments ranging from our art form teams (music, theatre and dance, visual art, film) to marketing, human resources and audience experience to help shape how the Barbican's future.
- Represent the Barbican Youth Panel at events.
- Commit to a minimum of one year as a Youth Panel member.

(Barbican, 2021)

The Barbican Youth Panel gives young people the opportunity to start a long-term conversation with Barbican. Meanwhile, the Youth Panel plays a crucial role in raising the voices of young people and helping the organisation to understand what young people want to see, how they want to engage with Barbican and how Barbican can stay or become a place that is open to and support

them. Through observing the Youth Panel Session, I understood that the Youth Panel exists to ensure that young people's voices are heard and made part of the decision-making processes at Barbican. Although the meeting session was chaired by a staff member from Creative Learning, I felt that the organisation was genuinely listening to the Youth Panel's opinions. It is worth noting that engaging with external panels is only effective if decision-makers take on board their comments and act on them, but these initiatives are often somewhat tokenistic in the art sector. Based on my observation, Barbican's Youth Panel appeared to be more than just tokenistic consultation, as the suggestions the young panellists made were reflected and implemented in a later event I participated in during the fieldwork. The perspectives of the young generation provide valuable insight for Barbican to engage with them; at the same time, the Creative Learning and Barbican provide a platform for the young people to co-design, co-curate, co-programme, and co-perform. Seemingly, a more democratic and emancipatory approach is employed in Creative Learning's work. The Young Artists Programmes (as part of the Young Barbican programme) could be an example of this.

Creative Learning has also opened up its creative process to young artists, as they have realised that the organisation needs active participants involved in "shaping the creations, presentation, and advancement of art in our society" (Miller and Whalley, 2017, no pagination). The Young Artists Programmes include Barbican Young Poets, Young Visual Arts Group and Young Programmers, and each programme provides young participants with the opportunity to develop their artistic practice with experienced artist facilitators, as well as planning and delivering public-facing performance and events at Barbican. One example is Chronic Youth, a public film festival planned, programmed and marketed by Young Programmers in Barbican Cinemas. Walmsley and Franks (2011) emphasise that the key point for arts organisations' success relates to "listening, engaging, and opening up a variety of avenues to their audiences" (p.15). Creative Learning provides the young

people in these programmes with opportunities to design and curate their own performances and events as well as to use the spaces at Barbican to present their work. Through opening up the creative process of making arts to young people, Creative Learning has created a more democratic approach to engaging with them.

6.5 Creative Learning at Barbican

6.5.1 The Role of Creative Learning

> One of the things that happened to the Barbican in the last period it is that, when I arrived, it was very much a world-class arts centre, and that was what we were about: world-class arts. But through the period that creative learning was established and then developed, we changed our proposition to world class arts and learning. So we gave it a place at the top of the organisation. Now, it's so integrated. You don't even need to say that, it is just part of what we do.
>
> (Kenyon, 2019)

In theory, Barbican has transformed from an arts centre that focuses on presenting world-class arts to an international arts and learning centre that aims to "inspire more people to discover and love the arts" as well as "create inspiring arts experiences for all" (Barbican, 2019). There has been an evolution of the programme offerings at Barbican; the centre has become more of a Generation 4 performing arts centre, a nexus, that facilitates "extensive opportunities for cultural expression through performances, education initiatives, and community outreach programming" (Wolff, 2017, pp.20-42). It still functions as a home for traditional performing arts events but also serves as a learning centre that supports people of all ages and backgrounds to develop "creative skills for life" by providing meaningful, impactful learning experiences (Barbican, 2019). According to the former Managing Director of Barbican:

> Creative Learning changed our attitude in terms of what we provide to audiences. Partly, that is just changing taste in programming and natural development. But I think through Creative Learning, we've had a very different attitude to the people who we want to engage.

(Kenyon, 2019)

Creative Learning has been trying to bring in a whole new range of people to be associated with Barbican. As Kenyon (2019) claimed, Creative Learning "certainly changed completely the complexion of what we do". Since the activities have become more diverse, so the audiences engaged in them have become more diverse. It is worth mentioning that there was an accusation towards Barbican regarding issues relating to diversity and inclusion, racism and organisational culture as a result of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. Among the allegations was a concern that "there is a lack of diversity and equality in programming and those who are involved in setting the programme and curating it" (Lewis Silkin LLP, 2021, p.13).

Over the last decade, Creative Learning has had to work on moving from the notion of Creative Learning being in service to artistic programming, to become a compatible and vital component of the organisation. This is not only presented in the mission statement, but also shown in the organisational structure. The Artistic Director and the Director of Creative Learning are on the same level of the Director's team at Barbican. They work alongside each other in the programming meetings to shape the artistic and learning programmes. Seemingly, the role Creative Learning plays at Barbican is as important as the art form in theory. This suggests that at Barbican, Creative Learning has a more privileged role compared to comparable departments in other organisations, which would have an Artistic Director or/and Executive Director at the top of the organisation, and then the Director of Learning would be a level below. For instance, it is a very different structure from a typical theatre, where the Artistic Director would always be senior to the Director of Learning. However, in reality the relationship between the art form and Creative Learning is not as balanced as hoped for at Barbican: according to Lewis Silkin LLP's External Review Final Report about broader issues relating to diversity and inclusion, racism and organisational culture, "the art

form teams hold power over the teams that rely on them for cooperation (e.g. Creative Learning)" (p.21). This mismatch may be affected by Barbican's fixed hierarchy and old-fashioned structure which makes it very difficult to make change. As the External Review reported, there was "A concern that there is a hierarchy at Barbican which makes junior members of staff feel excluded and creates barriers to agility to implement change; A feeling that there is a lack of communication between leadership and staff" (Lewis Silkin LLP, 2021, p.13).

6.5.2 Working with the Art Forms Department

The organisational and operational structure within the Barbican Centre and the Guildhall School has shifted in recent years and includes a desire for Creative Learning not to be seen as separate to the Barbican Centre (Mackney, 2019). This is partly because the cultural divides within major arts organisations are, in many ways, defined by institutional structures (Gregory and Renshaw, 2013). As a result of these shifts, a more connected practice has emerged. According to its former Director, the Creative Learning team has a strong internal working relationship with the Art Forms department. The Artistic Director chairs weekly arts programming meetings between the Heads of Art Forms, Creative Learning, Marketing and Communications, and the Incubator, which the Director and Senior Producer of Creative Learning also attend. The Creative Learning team also has fortnightly learning programming meetings. Each art form of the Art Forms department (music, theatre, visual arts, cinema) has its sub-sector in learning and education terms in the Creative Learning department, that is run by the art form's learning specialists. These specialists attend team meetings in their respective art form, and most of them spend at least one day per week sitting in the office of the Art Forms department, to just be part of the environment and work closely with individual art form teams.

One of the things that the Creative Learning team really worked hard on with the Art Forms team was the sense that, while the Creative Learning team is using the repertoire of the Art Forms Programme as an artistic starting point for the Learning Programme, which is a part of Creative Learning's proposition, it is not the only part of the proposition (Mollica, 2019). As analysed in the previous section on the Learning Programme, this is only one of three areas of Creative Learning's work, along with the work in centre-wide annual themes as well as the work around public agendas. The pendulum among the three working areas is always very dynamic. When it works well, all three of those areas are beautifully intertwined together, but there are times when:

> sometimes the part with the art form programmes are richer than learning work… other times, then it might be such a good fit… sometimes the art form teams need a bit more attention… Sometimes we've kind of given a lot, and we have to pull back and give our resource elsewhere, and it's a balancing act.
>
> (Arts Manager M)

As Mollica explained, this is part of the complexity of being in a multi-organisational, multi-departmental working environment. This work is a constant negotiation and it is about managing expectations with internal stakeholders, allocating capacity and resources according to what the priorities are. As a department, Creative Learning is responding to a number of different agendas, and the team has to do so in a way that does not deviate from its own intentions and mission.

Creative Learning had to get the Art Forms department to understand this and also to understand that the pace of programming in the repertoire is not the same as the pace of the learning programme. This is because the work of programmes is temporary and transient. The performing artists or arts groups can be in and out of the building for a day. But to create deeper engagement through learning programmes, Creative Learning needs a lot longer – sometimes months. The different working paces between the two departments is due to their different natures of working.

Accordingly, the two teams developed a series of models, for instance, the Barbican Box, which aims to take inspiration from the repertoire, but then catalyse it in a much deeper, longer-term and more sustained learning process. Through working in this model, the Art Forms team got to see that the meaningful learning programmes are not about a wraparound workshop or event with the companies that are only in the building for 24 hours (Mollica, 2019). However, as the External Review revealed, there is inadequate collaboration between Creative Learning and the Art Forms teams, and the impact is that learning about how best to engage audiences is often lost (Lewis Silkin LLP, 2021). For instance, this could involve more integration of programming and learning from the perspective of the Visual Arts team (Ibid, p.13). Seemingly, there is a lack of integration between artistic programming and learning programming at Barbican.

6.5.3 Cross-Departmental Interactions

It is important to note that the Creative Learning department is not the only team that delivers engagement activities at Barbican. Under the heading of Creative Learning, there are activities that link to the artistic programmes, such as workshops, drop-in sessions, and pre-performance talks; all of these activities are regarded as Creative Learning activities. However, not all of them are run by the Creative Learning department – some are run by the Art Forms department. Moreover, public and community engagement involves the Beyond Barbican team, the Level G team, and the Cultural Mile team, which is a dedicated project team coordinating a number of projects and programmes across cultural institutions in the City of London.

Beyond Barbican

The Beyond Barbican team works with local communities across East London (Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham) to create inclusive and sustainable community run festivals, projects and networks – for instance, the previously mentioned Waltham Garden Party, and Leytonstone Love

Film, a festival programme of small-scale film screenings, online Watch Parties, talks and workshops. These projects are led by the Beyond Barbican team, but with contributions from all teams across the Barbican Centre. The team helps build relationships and connections with and between local partners and communities to realise creative projects in their neighbourhoods. These projects take place in venues and spaces in the heart of each community, including parks, streets, libraries and pubs. Therefore, Beyond Barbican is also referred to as 'offsite' internally at Barbican.

Barbican Incubator

The Barbican Incubator was established in late 2015 as a cross-organisational programming, strategy and policy team supporting the generation of new projects. The team manages and primarily programmes the Level G programme, a free public programme of arts and learning projects for public spaces at Barbican. According to internal material about the Incubator, "most, but not all, of our public programming takes place as part of the Level G programme". This is because Level G is shared by Art Forms and Creative Learning teams. While managing the Level G programme, the Incubator team works regularly with the Art Forms and Creative Learning teams to help realise their projects at Level G. The Level G programme is staffed by a core production team of four people (in addition to the Incubator team), all of whom have taken on responsibility for this activity in addition to their existing roles within other departments.

It is clear that the current working structure of engagement activities at Barbican is a very loose arrangement in terms of who runs what. As acknowledged by the former Managing Director:

> One of the things we have to think really is whether it's a department of its own, because you've got the foyers activity there, you've got all the programming activities that we do [through] Beyond Barbican, which is not just Creative Learning, because some of it is Programming. And then we've got Creative Learning [department] out there. So how do those three areas relate, that is a very live subject. It's sort of where it is and it works okay at

> the moment. But the question is, for the next stage of our existence, should we be reorganising that area?
> (Kenyon, 2019)

In a sense, this is a form of matrix organisation management, which integrates a functional structure into a horizontal project organisation (Pakarinen and Virtanen, 2017). According to Burns and Wholey (1993), implementation of a matrix structure constitutes a shift from vertical-functional authority towards a hybrid organisation. However, there have been no definitive successes in deployment of the matrix structure; as Sy (2005) highlights, misaligned goals, unclear roles and responsibilities, ambiguous authority, and lack of a matrix guardian are common problems with matrix structures. The matrix working structure at Barbican has allowed team members to utilise expertise from across the organisation and to learn from each other in mutual emulation. Nonetheless, the case study data revealed that it could be difficult to work as a separate unit for members from different departments, not only because each department and team has its own working pace and agenda, but also because of the different internal cultures and mindsets. This reinforces the finding from Chapter 4 that there are different philosophical viewpoints and priorities in co-ordination between functions of different departments (cf. Hayes and Slater, 2002). This issue will be analysed in detail in the following section through a case study between Creative Learning and Marketing & Communications departments.

6.5.4 Different Understandings Towards the Audience

While conducting the fieldwork for this case study, I was given a brochure called Audience Mindsets. This is an internal publication produced by the Marketing & Communication department for staff at Barbican. This brochure includes a very rigorous set of audience analysis through interviews with audiences about their relationships with Barbican. It categorises the audience into six mindsets based on their motivations for engaging with arts and culture: Culture Addicts, Family

Centric, Receptive but Reactive, Value Seekers, Next Generation, and Maybe Someday. It aims to help the staff to understand Barbican's audiences better, but this work is basically driven by ticketed customers.

This Audience Mindsets brochure comprehensively analyses existing audiences and evaluates what mindsets they fall into. It also analyses people who are not yet (paying) audiences of Barbican and tries to understand why this is so. Even though it is recognised that the audience includes both potential/new and existing audiences, this brochure does not draw the full picture of the audience at Barbican. This is because it come from a driver around ticketed booking events. What it does not consider are the participants of the Creative Learning programme, free events and other public programmes, such as those curated by the Incubator and Beyond Barbican, and visitors of public spaces at the centre, who have a relationship with Barbican, but are not ticket buyers.

It was revealed by one staff member that although they want to make as many connections as they can across the organisation, it is difficult for Creative Learning and Marketing to work together in some cases. As mentioned earlier, each department has its own agenda: for example, it is difficult for Marketing & Communications to make Creative Learning a priority. This is partly because it is difficult to get media coverage for "that sort of activity" according to one staff member, but it can be presumed that this is due to the different mindsets and different understanding of the audience as well. For Marketing & Communications, the audience might be current and potential ticket buyers, whereas for Creative Learning, it is "anybody who is engaging or has the potential to engage with our work" (Mollica, 2019). There is an apparent lack of understanding and communication between departments.

This piece of work is necessary and important, as it highlights the divergence among priorities of different departments and points out the direction for different teams to work together. For Creative Learning, this is going to be working with Marketing in the sense of:

> what the relationship is between a young person in Sydney Russell school who absolutely knows who the Barbican is and actually feels quite proud to have a relationship with the Barbican but haven't bought a ticket here before. And where do they fit within this? Or a community organisation that's in the Waltham Garden Party, who have a relationship with the Barbican, but are not ticket buyers.
>
> (Mollica, 2019)

As Barbican is trying to develop its civic role through creating space for people and ideas to connect, that goes beyond taking people to the events in its venues. This is a commitment that requires the whole organisation's combined efforts.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined how Barbican was designed and built based on the cultural values of the mid-20th century and demonstrated how its historical issues have made it challenging for the organisation to engage local communities and diverse audiences in its activities. I also investigated how Barbican and the Guildhall School have collaborated in terms of developing the Creative Learning division and examined the model of the Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning from its underpinning ideology to its departmental strategy. Furthermore, I explored the structure of the Creative Learning department and its programming approach from an operational perspective. As such, the Barbican case study offers original insights into how the organisation implements their OEP when engaging audiences, and it reveals how Creative Learning is situated in the cultural policies, how its learning programming is related to artistic programming, and how Barbican's organisational structure affects its practices.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Barbican was an example of a period in Britain’s cultural history in which the priority was not increasing access to arts activity but rather to celebrate ‘high art’ for élite audiences (Mackney, 2018). To reach local people in its neighbouring boroughs and to respond to late 20th-century shifts in the cultural agenda from excellence to access, Barbican established an education strand which later developed into a strategic joint division between Barbican and the Guildhall School. The collaboration between the two institutions, an arts centre and a conservatoire, towards working as a strategic partnership in shaping and delivering new approaches to engagement with the arts, made the model of Creative Leaning unique. It allowed the two institutions to bring together each partner’s strengths, knowledge and skills, and to combine and share resources in artistic, educational and physical ways. However, as highlighted in this chapter, there are inherent difficulties in co-ordination between the two institutions due to different drivers, working paces and agendas. In general, Creative Leaning is a good example of pioneering new models for creative and cultural learning across sectors.

One of the key findings in the Barbican case study is the dual role of the Creative Learning department and the challenges this brings for mission and delivery. Learning does play a role in supporting the artistic programme at Barbican, but learning is also a strategic entity in its own right as opposed to purely acting as an ancillary service to the art form. At Barbican, the emphasis on Creative Learning is theoretically as important as the artistic programming. As the analysis revealed, Creative Learning does not see engagement as a way of fixing the problem of ‘non-participation’ (Stevenson et al., 2017), and there is a strong egalitarian ethos embedded in the Creative Learning department. Barbican emphasises the importance of creativity in and of itself. Thus, learning programmes were designed to support and empower individuals or communities in their own creativity and for them to embrace their creativity and celebrate their culture. Ultimately, the design of the learning programme is about making new work in and of itself.

To engage with audiences on a meaningful basis through OEP, a higher level of strategic thinking and implementation as well as a longer-term approach are needed. However, as the case study found, the pace of programming in the Art Forms department is not the same as that in the learning programme. This brings tensions when the two departments need to collaborate on projects. An external review revealed that there were concerns relating to artistic programming and audience engagement strategy (Lewis Silkin LLP, 2021). Barbican's approach to OEP was not structurally integrated at the time this research was conducted. Presumably, this is why there was a lack of integration of artistic programming and learning programming at Barbican. The focus of the Art Forms department was putting high quality performance on stage, whereas the focus of the Creative Learning department was engaging with people and co-creating arts experiences with them. Therefore, a disconnection appeared between the works of the two departments. As highlighted in Chapter 5, connecting artistic work to OEP is crucial, and a philosophical connection is much needed to achieve an integrated approach.

Although Creative Learning has a senior representative 'championing' the cause to ensure that tactics are pursued within a strategic framework reflecting the organisational mission and priorities (Hays and Slater, 2002), there are conflicting understandings of the role of Creative Learning at Barbican, as revealed by this case study analysis. There is a lack of understanding and communication between departments; in particular, there is a difference in perceptions between the departments about the notion of the audience and how to engage with them. This echoes the finding from interviews suggesting that there are tensions between different departments regarding different understanding of their audiences. Therefore, it highlights the importance of building clarity and consensus around audience engagement objectives between artistic and OEP teams, as discussed in

Chapter 5. There is the necessity to develop interconnectedness within the organisation, increasing the capacity and the capability of individuals and departments to work together (cf. Holden, 2011).

At the time of writing, Barbican is undergoing a renewal project which includes refurbishment of its building in order to meet the needs of 21st century artists, audiences and communities. This project aims to transform the Brutalist arts centre and to provide new opportunities for its diverse community of artists, audiences, and partners, and to boost the building's accessibility and environmental performance (Barbican, 2022). The centre acknowledged that there is a huge opportunity to bring currently underutilised spaces to life and to explore how the centre can adapt the spaces and venues to improve the experience of audiences. It is alleged that there is a mismatch between public statements made and actions, for example, the issue of a lack of diversity ("the work of non-white cultures is not properly integrated into the Barbican's programme of activities"; "the staff at Barbican and the artists whose work is shown/performed do not reflect the diversity of the City of London") while pursuing a strategy which was publicising the future of the Barbican as inclusive and reflective of the diversity of London (Lewis Silkin LLP, 2021, p.14). There is more that can be done to serve a diverse audience, and this would include an integrated approach towards engaging audiences and broadening programme content, which will in turn attract a more diverse audience. This is not just a Barbican issue – it is relevant for many other cultural institutions in the arts sector.

Chapter 7: A Case Study of Esplanade – Theatre on the Bay

7.1. Overview

Esplanade – Theatre on the Bay was built in 2002 and is Singapore's national performing arts centre, situated in the scenic Marina Bay waterfront. Esplanade is one of the busiest arts centres in the world, producing and presenting approximately 3,500 performances and activities throughout the year (Esplanade, 2018). Seventy per cent of its programmes are available non-ticketed for the public, which aims to make the arts at Esplanade accessible to all. The arts centre has a 2,000-seat Theatre and a 1,600-seat Concert Hall, which are situated in the building's twin-domes. It also comprises Esplanade Mall, a performing arts library, Jendela – an exhibition space dedicated to visual arts – as well as smaller venues and spaces, such as Theatre Studio, Recital Studio, Annexe Studio, Outdoor Theatre, and PIP's Playbox – a children's activity space. To support its next stage of development, a new mid-sized Waterfront Theatre is under construction and is due to open in 2022.

Arts centres are cultural entities and civic spaces which, as Bianchini (1993) stresses, should be "places where people meet, talk, share ideas and desires, and where identities and lifestyles are formed" (p.12). Esplanade has become where 'art meets life': it is not only a destination for people to encounter the arts, but also a site of social activity and interaction (Kong, 2009). There is some consensus among commentators that it is a performing arts centre that has become integrated into people's lives in Singapore's cultural context. As choreographer Lin Hwai-Min, whose Cloud Gate Dance Theatre has performed several times at the centre, highlighted:

> They [the audiences] are not only there to watch performances – whether it is the whole family having French cuisine, friends having beer together, [parents] bringing their kids to buy an ice cream, or just wandering around the centre; these behaviours, be it before or after

> performances, always seem natural and full of joy… A performing arts centre such as Esplanade is very rare elsewhere in the world. It represents an "ecosystem" where arts and culture and life can coexist, and it's teeming with life. (cited in Wang, 2011, p.21)

The offerings and services at Esplanade Mall have been configured to better serve the diverse communities that come to Esplanade, and complement the overall Esplanade experience, from restaurants, cafes, a convenient store, a rooftop garden and library, to fashion, gifts, lifestyle and music shops. These facilities may synergise with arts activities and are important for broadening and diversifying arts participation for those who have no intention of participating (Trivic, 2021). It was observed that the use of public spaces and the facilities before and after the events and performances included informal socialisation, gathering, studying or resting. Esplanade has seemingly become a multi-use destination and a "collective anchor point" (Januchta-Szostak, 2010; Soule et al., 2011).

As Singapore's national performing arts centre, Esplanade has a close working relationship with the National Arts Council (NAC). The first CEO of Esplanade, Benson Puah, was also 'double hatting' as the CEO of the NAC from 2009 to 2013. As discussed in the literature review, the arts council acts based on the 'arm's length principle' to distance the artist-recipients from possible political intervention in their work and to maintain their intellectual and artistic freedom. But in Singapore, power is centralised in the government, and the 'distance' is insufficient to minimise its interference:

> [in terms of] the level of intervention from the government, the arts also gets a very heavy hand of intervention. [It] might not be the best solution. So the government and also the arts council, that's the same, right? I thought that's the same. [The government] control very, very closely. It's not side by side. It's actually top-bottom.
>
> (Interviewee L, 2019)

Although the government provides funding for the net overhead costs of operating the centre and the cost of developmental programmes through the ministry[2], half of Esplanade's revenue is self-generated through its sponsor, the box office, mall rental, and the car park. In a way, Esplanade has a relatively high level of autonomy compared to the NAC, which acts as the government agency.

7.2 Background of Arts Development in Singapore

Singapore has a diversity of languages, religions, and cultures which stem from the four great civilisations: Malay-Arab, Indian, Chinese, and English-European. While arts and culture received little attention for their own sake (Chong, 2005, 2010), they played a significant role in shaping the identity of the new ethnically and culturally diverse nation (Chua, 2008; Purushothaman, 2017; Yeoh and Huang, 2008). Given the social disorder and political instability of the young nation, the need and desire for order thus resulted in heavy social orchestration and paternalistic governance that are characteristic of Singapore's urban development policies (Dale 1999). The government exercises significant control over politics and society, and the People's Action Party has ruled continuously since independence in 1965. The arts and cultural development in Singapore are dominated and led by the state (Kong, 2000; Chang, 2016). As Chong (2018) argues, the arts and cultural policies are perceived as the 'bureaucratic imagination', which is highly instrumental to the socio-political or economic objectives. To better understand the outreach and education practices of Esplanade, it is vital to appreciate the context of arts development in contemporary Singapore. This section includes a brief background of arts development in Singapore since its independence, along with the cultural policy development prior to Esplanade's opening in 2002.

Singapore in the 1960s and 1970s

[2] On 1 November 2012, Esplanade's parent ministry was changed from MICA to the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) (Esplanade, 2014).

In the early post-independence days in the 1960s and 1970s, even though artistic and cultural activities were considered good for nation building, the emphasis on rapid economic growth overshadowed arts development (Chang and Lee, 2003; Kong, 2009). As Kong (2000) and Takiguchi (2019) note, artistic and cultural activities were expected to promote the racial equality and national unity that were required for modernising the society at the earliest stage of nation-building. Numerous cultural activities were held in schools and community centres across the country to promote the sense of local identity, racial harmony and patriotism. The term 'cultural policy' was first mentioned in Singapore in 1978 in the speech of the Acting Minister for Culture, Ong Teng Cheong, who stressed:

> Unfortunately our cultural development has not kept pace with our economic growth. It is our aim to make Singapore socially and culturally a better place to live in. My Ministry has an important role to play in this respect. We will continue to promote art exhibitions, the performing arts and other creative pursuits. In this way we hope to instil and inspire in our people a true and enduring appreciation of the life-enhancing qualities of artistic expression. (cited in Chong, 2018, p.xxvi)

This resulted in an increase of government-led arts and cultural initiatives, including a growing number of grants, competitions and festivals (Cho et al., 2016; Yeo, 2011). More attention was paid to the arts when a Cultural Affairs Division was established in the former Ministry of Culture in 1978 (Chang and Lee, 2003). During the 1970s, the Ministry of Culture together with the People's Association organised "Art for Everyone", a regular monthly series of grassroots exhibitions, and "Music for Everyone" programmes, which targeted "ordinary people who must learn to appreciate the beautiful as part of the process of gracious living" (Chan, 1971, no pagination). This could be seen as the early state-led community arts practice in Singapore. As Xue (2019) explains, in this way, community arts participation was employed by the Singapore government as a response to the socio-political agenda at the time, and to create 'civilised' and 'cultivated' citizens. The cultural policy of the dominant People's Action Party was directed at promoting a 'universal' society

(Takiguchi, 2019), and it represents a "deficit model of participation" (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015). We can see, therefore, that the intention was both instrumental and egalitarian.

1980s and the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts

Since Singapore experienced its first post-independence economic recession in the mid-1980s, the government started considering the economic capacities of arts and culture, and further realised the need to harness the arts, which was included in Culture and Entertainment services, as the future potential growth area within the service sector (Kong, 2000; Kong et al., 2015). The 1986 report of the Economic Committee noted that "a vibrant cultural and entertainment services industry would enhance our image as a tourist destination, make Singapore a better place to live in, and also help to attract professional and skilled workers in Singapore" (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 1986, p.192). Therefore, developing the arts and making Singapore a culturally vibrant society has become critical in its competition for global tourists, expatriate talent and high-skilled residents (Chang and Lee, 2003; Oon, 2018).

Accordingly, the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA) was established in February 1988 with the purpose of offering recommendations to make Singapore a "culturally vibrant society by the turn of the century" (ACCA, 1989, no pagination). In 1989, the first cultural policy blueprint of Singapore, the Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA Report), was released under the commission of the government in order to review the state of the arts and to recommend measures that would make Singapore culturally vibrant by the turn of the century (Oon, 2018). In the ACCA Report, the role of cultural policy as a formal instrument to utilise the arts to cultivate a cohesive community was clearly stated: "the government's cultural policy is to promote widespread interest and excellence in the pursuit of the arts in our multicultural society, and to encourage cross-cultural understanding and appreciation" (ACCA, 1989, p.3). It emphasised the

social values of the arts and culture by arguing that the arts and culture "can provide for greater social integration and strengthen the spirit of our nation" (Ministry of Culture, 1989, p.12).

The idea of constructing a national arts centre was first mooted in the ACCA Report, along with the recommendations to establish other cultural facilities including the Singapore Art Museum and the Asian Civilization Museum, as well as several national arts institutions such as the National Heritage Board, the National Library Board, and the National Arts Council (NAC). The establishment of these statutory agencies and major arts institutions set the stage for institution building in Singapore's arts and cultural landscape. The ACCA Report listed the instructive priorities of culture as "to enrich us as persons, to enhance our quality of life, to help us in nation-building, and to contribute to the tourist and entertainment sectors" (Mahizhnan, 2018, no pagination). As Kong (2012) notes, the ACCA report marks "the first dedicated recognition of the value of arts and culture for a maturing nation" (p.281). However, as Wong (2018) argues, the report can also be seen as a logical offshoot of the Singapore government's economic strategy, as it indicated the government's perception of culture and the arts not as public goods in their own right but as part of a sector with commercial potential, geared towards providing entertainment for the public and tourists. Despite the underlying economic rationale of the government's support for culture and the arts, it was made clear in the ACCA Report that an increased knowledge and appreciation of the arts and heritage would create a "more gracious environment" and also better equip Singaporeans to "respect, appreciate and accept the cultures of our neighbours" (ACCA, 1989, p.11).

According to Chong (2005), the ACCA Report formulated key recommendations that subsequently transformed the landscape of arts and culture in Singapore. Among the strategies outlined in ACCA were:

> to encourage more people to develop an interest in culture and the arts, to take part in art activities as amateurs or as professionals, to build up a pool of good artistes, arts administrators, arts entrepreneurs and other related professionals, to develop more modern purpose-built performing, working and exhibition facilities for the arts, libraries and specialised museums/galleries, to step up the level and tempo of cultural activities and have more works of art in public places, and to encourage and promote more original Singapore works. (ACCA, 1989, p.3)

One of the key recommendations was to make cultural programmes more accessible to Singaporeans through community clubs (formerly known as 'community centres') and other community organisations, such as social clubs and clan associations (ACCA, 1989, p.32). To some extent, the ACCA Report formulated the initial strategies for community outreach and civic engagement (Hoe, 2018a).

1990s and the Development of the National Arts Centre Project

In 1990, the year after the ACCA submitted its report, a "calibrated programme of social liberalisation" had started to take place due to the political transition in Singapore (Devan, 2009, p.31), which led to an era of greater arts and cultural expression in the 1990s (Wong, 2018). Meanwhile, concerns about nation-building and social cohesion were highlighted by the government. The new Prime Minister, Goh Chok Tong, spoke openly about cultivating a gracious society in Singapore: "we have reached a stage in our economic and national development where we should devote greater attention and resources to culture and the arts in Singapore. Culture and the arts add to the vitality of a nation and enhance the quality of life" (ACCA, 1989, no pagination).

The National Arts Council (NAC) was formed in September 1991 as a statutory board merging the functions of three arts bodies to reflect an expanded vision for the arts in Singapore's development (Oon, 2018). It would assist the ministry in "formulating cultural policies and co-ordinating the

implementation" as well as "provide a platform for community participation" (ACCA, 1989, p.29). To realise its social objectives, the NAC organised many accessible activities through Artreach, an outreach programme that brings the arts from traditional downtown art spaces to new sites and locations. For example, the Concert in the Park series was launched in 1996 with the aim of bringing the arts to the people and exposing them to various art forms through a series of concerts held at public parks all over the island. Other than Artreach, NAC also launched a public radio station, Passion 99.5 FM, in 1997 to increase arts awareness. In addition, Singapore Arts Festival was launched in 1999, and its closing night was held at a suburban shopping mall with the aim to bring art to as many Singaporean heartlanders[3] as possible. Despite these efforts, levels of awareness and appreciation were still low, and the arts were considered "inaccessible, expensive and abstract" by the layperson (Chang and Lee, 2013, p.137).

In its first year, the NAC set up a company called the Singapore Arts Centre Company Ltd., later renamed Esplanade Company Ltd., to develop and manage the state-of-the-art performing arts centre being constructed at Marina Bay (NAC, 1993, pp.19-21). Robert Iau, Executive Chairman of the Singapore Arts Centre Company, stated that the design of the arts centre would "involve the people of Singapore" and that the centre would be "built for the people of Singapore" (Goh, 1992a). The setting up of a national arts centre evoked a host of concerns and challenges from the public and the arts community. It sparked debate and discussion around what role the arts centre would play in a nascent arts and cultural landscape and there was a great fear that the national arts centre would only be able to showcase populist foreign productions that were capable of drawing large crowds, at the expense of the development of local works that would articulate Singaporean issues and identities (Sasitharan, 1994). After a series of consultative processes, it was announced that the building would be designed with both Asian and Western art forms in mind and that the arts centre

[3] Refers to people who live in areas beyond the city centre, outside of the Central Area.

would “not be one in a long series of Western-inspired arts centres” (Goh, 1992b). In a later speech by the chairman of the NAC in 1994, Goh Swee Chen stated that the aligned role of both NAC and the upcoming national arts centre was to champion the cause of arts groups in Singapore and to build Singapore into a regional centre for the arts and entertainment (Pang, 1994). Since the government’s emphasis on the creation of a physical space to promote Singapore’s international image over supporting the artistic development of artists and audiences in the 1990s, cultural practitioners in Singapore expressed serious reservations about Esplanade in the early stages of its development (Kong, 2000).

This project was meant to be an arts centre for Singaporeans to develop an appreciation for the arts and to present art works for Singaporeans. However, as the project developed through the 1990s, these original aims slowly changed. The release of two policy documents during the construction of Esplanade, The Global City for the Arts report in 1995 and the Renaissance City Report (RC Report) in 1999, highlighted a greater emphasis on the economic potential of culture and the arts. The objective of the Global City for the Arts campaign was to envision the city-state as a culturally attractive global city in the competition for global capital and talent by boosting the local arts and entertainment scene (Chong, 2018). Accordingly, the original aim of an arts centre that would develop Singapore’s arts and cultural landscape – and hence develop Singaporean audiences and artists – would now be married with the pursuit of transforming Singapore into a Global City for the Arts to attract global capital and talent (Lim, 2018). Although the Global City for the Arts shaped the nation’s cultural policy and development as a tourism blueprint, in this development, culture and the arts were not restricted to the forms of ‘high culture’ but also encompassed lived cultures and everyday life, which were reframed and celebrated as Singaporean cultures (Ooi, 2018).

The Millennium and the Opening of Esplanade

For decades, Singapore privileged economic development above other considerations and arts development was not accorded national priority until the new millennium (Chang and Lee, 2003). By the early 21st century, the creative industries and the knowledge-based economy made the idea of art indispensable to the way new economies were developed (Chong, 2018). As Oon (2018) notes, there was growing global recognition of the arts as creative industries that contributed directly and indirectly to economic growth at the turn of the millennium. Meanwhile, the Singapore government saw an important role for cultural activities in the making of a global city and aimed to reposition Singapore as a Global City for the Arts and a Renaissance City to compete with the most economically prosperous and culturally vibrant cities in the world. Therefore, arts and culture were employed as instruments for marketing the nation as a culturally vibrant destination in an increasingly globalised world with the aim of boosting tourism. Art and culture were thus intertwined with economic growth once again.

The Renaissance City Plan in 2000 was the next major planning exercise for arts and cultural development after the ACCA Report. The three Renaissance City reports (released in 2000, 2005 and 2008), which mapped out arts and cultural development from 2000 to 2015, outlined the government's intention "to position Singapore as a key city in the Asian renaissance of the 21st century and a cultural centre in the globalised world" and to create "an environment conducive to creative and knowledge-based industries and talent" (Ministry of Information and the Arts, 2000, p.4). The Renaissance City Plan I (RCP I) which was released in 2000 recommended that in order to reinforce the sense of belonging and cohesion among Singaporeans more outreach and arts education programmes should be implemented, along with supporting local artists and broadening opportunities for their artistic practices (Chang, 2000; Chang and Lee, 2003; Chong, 2005; Kong, 2012a). Among the key strategies proposed in the RC report were to develop a strong audience base

through arts education, develop major arts companies, and to provide good infrastructure and facilities (Ministry of Information and the Arts, 2000, p.52).

The focus on hardware over ‘heartware’ has generated opposing views from the arts community over the years and formed debates around the pervasive tension between culture as an economic resource and culture as a social human phenomenon. As Chang and Lee (2003) argue, physical arts spaces should not be the only focus, and more emphasis should be placed on the ‘heartware’, described as “the intangible environment that nurtures the artist’s spirit” (p.129). A shift from focusing on cultural infrastructure (‘hardware’) to a stronger embracement of the social values of the arts and culture (‘heartware’ or ‘software’) started to appear, with the emphasis on community-based arts initiatives (Cho et al., 2016; Kong, 2012a; Lee and Sim, 2017; Low, 2015). Hence, there was a philosophical tension in cultural value in Singapore, and this debate has influenced the early development of Esplanade as the national arts centre of Singapore.

Esplanade opened its doors in October 2002. The national arts centre was constructed at a cost of S$600 million (£360 million) from the Singapore Totalisator Board, using public funds generated from various lotteries and horse racing (Lim, 2018). It represents Singapore’s most ambitious and expensive venture into the production of spaces for the arts and embodies what Singapore hopes to achieve: the vision of a global city, acting as a hub not only for banking, finance, manufacturing and commerce, but also for the arts (Kong, 2009). However, concerns about alienation of the local population and discouragement of local cultural development rose strongly throughout its construction and in its early days of existence (Ibid.). Academic commentaries and arts communities voiced reservations about Esplanade as one of the top-notch arts facilities and spectacular monuments. As Chang (2000) argues, the grandiose Esplanade epitomises the government’s ‘economistic’ attitude towards the arts, prioritising a ‘physical’ as opposed to

‘humanistic’ perspective of the arts. Esplanade has worked hard to change this perception after initial criticisms. Over time, Esplanade has evolved into a more socially inclusive space and an icon in the landscape, with programmes and strategies that facilitate local performances in its theatres and other spaces (Kong, 2009).

7.3 Policy Context

The previous section offered a holistic view of the state of the arts and cultural sector in Singapore and highlighted the milestones that have occurred since the early years of the new nation. As discussed earlier, the arts and culture have been heavily exploited for their instrumental benefits, and the involvement of the Singapore Government in the provision of opportunities for cultural participation reflects the democratic ideal that opportunities should be available to all citizens. To some extent, it decided the vision of the national performing arts centre of this country: “a performing arts centre for everyone”. As Lee (2015) states, the first CEO Benson Phua was clear from the start about how he wanted to drive the performing arts venue:

> Esplanade must be an arts centre that is relevant to people. And by people we mean all people, not just segments of people who are already art lovers or connoisseurs. The first thing we needed to do was to ensure that people are comfortable to visit. Unlike many national arts centres, there is no stringent dress code, code of behaviour […] (Phua, 2013)

The original aim of building Esplanade was for Singaporeans to develop an appreciation of the arts and to present art works for Singaporeans. However, to raise Singapore’s international profile as a global city for the arts, Esplanade has to not only cater to local Singaporeans but also to international audiences. This embeds a strategic tension for Esplanade as these very different aims might lead to divisions of the programmes: some parts of the programmes are for an international audience or local arts lovers and other parts are more community-focused for local people. This is

because, “the artistic habitus that the government would like to create is one that is not emerging from a developing Singaporean cultural identity but from a habitus that is the government deems to be international” (Lim, 2012, p.135). In addition, as an arts centre for everyone, it must cater to a population of people with different levels of appreciation of the arts (Chia 2008). The programmers also have to juggle the demands of artists, connoisseurs, children and, last but not least, the Singaporean in the street (Choy, 2005), which again brings competing strategies into tension with each other. Like any national arts organisation, Esplanade has a very challenging mission and a diverse range of stakeholder groups, including a strong interventionist government, which forces Esplanade to strike a balance between government expectations and its own mission. Therefore, Esplanade has traditionally tried to be all-inclusive, while supporting a specific type of work which it has determined that a global city of the arts should possess (Lim, 2012).

It can be observed that Singapore’s cultural policy has been geared towards achieving and sustaining the city-state as an international arts hub. Therefore, the programmes and initiatives established since the 1990s have encouraged international arts groups and their performance productions to tour into Singapore. As Chang and Lee (2003) state, Singapore attained recognition by organising many internationally renowned events (such as the Singapore Biennale, the Singapore Grand Prix, and the Youth Olympic Games) and attracting thousands of Singaporeans and tourists by the turn of the century. According to Lim (2012), it seems that the Singapore government had hoped that the combination of both infrastructure and high-profile events would allow the nation to develop the necessary social and cultural conditions needed to be considered a global city for the arts. However, the colourful arts calendar belied a social reality whereby, while Singaporeans warmed to the idea of hosting international arts events, awareness and interest in Singaporean’s indigenous arts remained low.

This policy context has culminated in a market where both local and foreign audiences are more interested in shows that are internationally well-known. A prevailing perception that local works are of a lower standard than foreign productions has emerged over the years. For most Singaporeans, their artistic tastes extend to popular genres such as Broadway and West End musicals and entertainment events imported from the West. As Chang and Lee (2003) highlight, there was a tension between 'global' versus 'local' arts on one hand, and 'popular' versus 'high-culture' arts on the other. This put Esplanade in a difficult strategic situation where it needed to address the challenge of reconfiguring the Singaporean mindset so that indigenous art forms were appreciated and find a fine balance between support for global and for local arts.

The Social Turn of Cultural Policy

From ACCA to RCP II, cultural policies focused on developing the economy by providing world-class provision to attract foreign professionals and tourists. The release of RCPIII in 2008 signified a shift from wanting to turn Singapore into a 'gateway' to Asia to instead championing the production of local content. There is recognition of the growing importance of Singaporean content:

> It is a country's unique content that allows it to shape its national identity and distinctiveness thus allowing it to project a city's identity internationally as well as act as repositories of the city's heritage and collective experience. (Ministry for Information, Communications and the Arts, 2008, p.18)

There has been a greater emphasis on re-affirming the value of arts and culture in society and people's lives since the final version of the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) report was released in 2012, which positioned the ACSR as a policy that shifted the focus for the next phase of Singapore's cultural development to its "people and society" (Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, 2012, p.15). This involves not only expanding and redefining 'arts and culture' to include amateur, popular, street and hobbyist activities, but also changing prevailing perceptions of arts and

culture as being “expensive, inaccessible, and therefore ‘not for everyone’” (p.17) or “good-to-have” when people have time to spare (p.28). Rather, arts and culture should be an integral part of everyone’s lives. In 2012, the arts and culture portfolio was moved from the Ministry for Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA) to the newly formed Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). The arts were once again reunited with notions of community engagement and development, where greater public participation in the arts was encouraged.

The ACSR paved the way for Singapore’s arts development with the vision of “a nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity” (p.15). To achieve the next phase of cultural development, the ACSR Report stated two key strategic directions: to “bring arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, every day”, and to “build capabilities to achieve excellence” (p.19). To some extent, community engagement was integrated into the foundational objective of constructing a global artistic city but works separately with presenting and hosting world-class arts events (Xuan, 2019). To achieve its vision, the ACSR aimed to increase access and participation in the arts and cultural activities, which are seen to have transformative effects on society that include enriching the lives of Singaporeans, strengthening Singaporean ties and promoting social cohesion (MCCY, 2012, pp.8-11). In 2013, a dedicated Community Engagement unit was formed in the Programming department at Esplanade to consolidate their efforts “to better serve the less privileged in society through working with Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) and schools” (Esplanade, 2014, p.41). In a sense, Community Engagement at Esplanade become the social mission of the national centre.

Although ‘people and society’ were recognised as the focus of Singapore’s cultural development in ACSR, there were two specific targets it aimed to hit: one was “to double the percentage of Singaporeans who attend at least one arts and culture event every year from 40% to 80%”; the other

was “to increase the percentage of Singaporeans participating in arts and culture activities from 20% to 50%” (MCCY, 2012, p.15). Since 1996, the NAC has been conducting a Population Survey on the Arts to gather insights into Singaporeans’ attitudes towards arts and culture and the level of attendance and participation in arts events and activities in order to effectively direct the development of the arts scene in Singapore. Arts engagement is defined in terms of physical or live attendance at arts events in the survey. Therefore, audience attendance has been traditionally understood and measured in terms of the numbers of attendees who attend the arts and cultural events in Singapore. The public was marginalised as attendees of the international arts and cultural scene, rather than being seen as active participants. This ‘one-fit-all’ approach in developing audiences exemplifies the instrumental use of culture in Singapore. In this sense, cultural participation became a goal of public policy.

The ACSR reflected the changing demands of the arts and cultural community to engage local citizens more actively in Singapore’s arts and cultural development and boost the sense of ownership (Cho et al., 2016). This initiated a shift of the arts and cultural policy from profitable creativity economy development to expedient tools for social cohesion and community building (Hoe, 2018). In 2013, the MCCY further released Community Engagement and the Arts and Culture Education masterplans, which aimed to provide strategies for widening the opportunities for arts participation and strengthening active community engagement beyond passive arts consumption. Thus, arts engagement shifted beyond attendance at “traditionally defined cultural events taking place in traditionally recognised cultural settings” (Novak-Leonard et al., 2014, p.29).

In 2017, the NAC adopted the definition of community arts proposed by Goldbard in 1993 as the official reference of the Singapore government: community arts practice is based on the belief that cultural meaning, expression and creativity reside within a community, that the community artist’s

task is to assist people in freeing their imaginations and give form to their creativity; and the collaboration between artists and others is central and necessary to the practice of community arts (Goldbard, 1993). Furthermore, the NAC recognised different levels of community engagement based on Low's (2012)[4] work and revised the highest level of engagement to: "participant community organises its own activities and advocates for its own need" (Institute of Policy Studies, 2017).

The NAC aims to create and design programmes that promote relevant, accessible and high-quality content. In this context, as key stakeholders, arts and culture organisations and national cultural institutions are strongly encouraged to produce free/non-ticketed arts programming to maximise footfall and vibrancy. For example, People's Association's (PA) 'PAssionArts' and NAC's 'Arts and Culture Nodes' are both state-led community arts programmes that aim to increase the touchpoints for communities to encounter the arts in public spaces. Apart from these, the National Library Board and the National Heritage Board have also been involved in increasing access to, and participation in, the arts. Many of these activities are 'amateur, popular, street and hobbyist' ones such as karaoke singing competitions, line dancing, ukulele performances and the creation of flowers out of plastic bags instead of 'high' or 'elite' art forms (MICA, 2012, p.28). In this sense, the ACSR's aim to increase participation seems to have resulted in the support of community arts and arts activities that privilege process over product. These active community arts engagement initiatives over the years have greatly increased the arts and cultural attendance of Singapore citizens, but have also effected a wider gap between interest and attendance (NAC, 2018; Strait

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[4] Four levels of engagement between artists and the communities they work with:

- On the first level, the public is a mass participant within an arts process.
- On the second, volunteers are co-opted into the creative process of the work.
- The third level looks at co-developmental approaches in crafting a creative process relevant to the participant community.
- The fourth level of engagement occurs when the participant community organises its own activities and advocates for its own needs, with the artist as advisor or facilitator (Low, 2012, pp.90-91).

Times, 2018). The sectoral plan of the performing arts[5] observes that although overall arts attendance levels (including free events) continued to rise according to the Population Survey on the Arts and the growth in the number of groups and activities, ticketed attendance for performing arts events actually declined over five years, from 2.06 million ticketed attendance in 2012 to 1.81 million in 2016 (NAC, 2017).

Arts Education in Singapore

There has been an emphasis on the cultural policies on arts education for decades because "the arts is an integral part of all Singaporeans' lives and exposure to the arts should begin from a young age to support a child's holistic development, foster appreciation of other cultures, and seed the development of future arts professionals and audiences" (NAC, 2022, no pagination). However, as Chong (2017) argues, arts education has been subjected to the Singapore government's bureaucratic imagination for decades in designing programmes to produce "market-ready students" (p.127). The character of arts education in Singapore has been the result of shifting political and socio-economic forces that have subjected the production of cultural products to policymakers' interests and demands (Chong, 2017).

The ACCA Report called for improving arts education in schools, and the committee also recommended an Arts-In-Education programme, in which students could participate in school performances, attend art exhibitions and performances, and visit museums (One, 1989). The Arts Education Programme was created by the NAC in 1993 with the goal of inculcating arts appreciation among younger Singaporeans in the hope of nurturing a new generation of people into the arts (Chong, 2017). This scheme has grown widely in Singapore with 95% of schools under the

[5] According to Singapore Cultural Statistics published in 2019, performing arts refers to "folk, traditional, classical and contemporary forms of dance, music (pop/rock concerts included) and theatre" (MCCY, 2019).

Ministry of Education utilising this scheme when selecting arts education programmes for their students (NAC, 2022). There are some specific desired outcomes of Arts Education Programme – by the time students complete secondary school education:

1. Every student will have attended a performance or exhibition in a professional arts venue.
2. Every student will have had a learning experience with a local artist or arts group.
3. Every student will have been exposed to arts programmes across all 6 art forms.

(NAC, 2022)

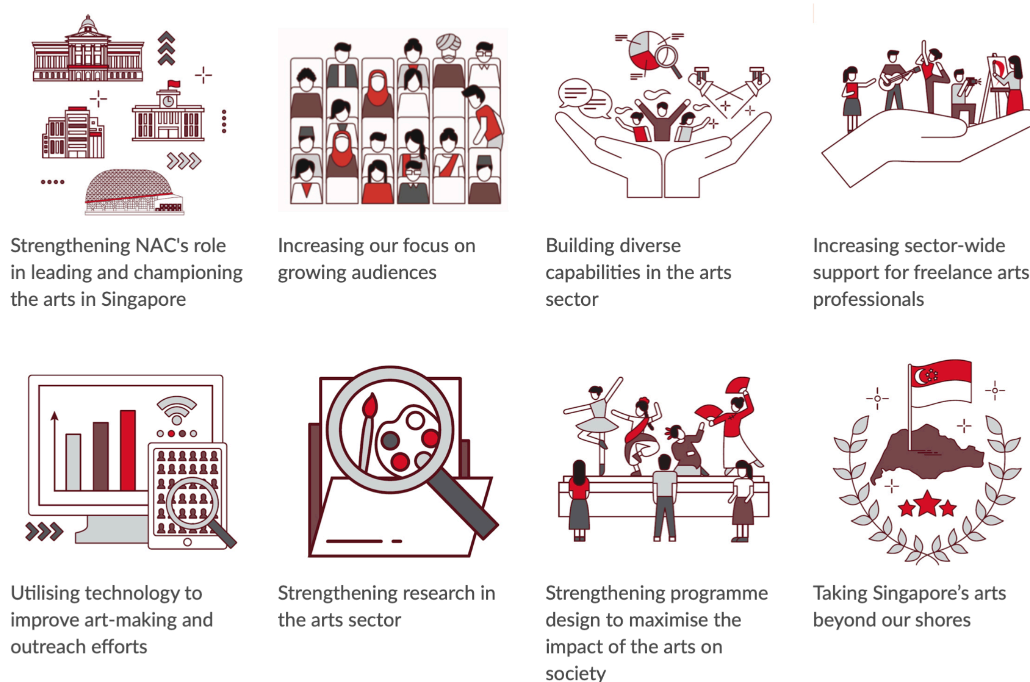
Arts groups in Singapore are encouraged to explore new ways of introducing the arts experience to students. Esplanade's Feed Your Imagination (FYI) is held as part of the Arts Education Programme and it offers primary and secondary school students a series of music, dance and drama performances by established local arts groups. Each FYI performance includes a tour around Esplanade, a resource kit for teachers to use before and after the performance, and an activity kit for each student. In addition, Esplanade has a special focus on community access and arts education, and they have age-appropriate programmes for students in different age groups. This will be further explored later in this chapter.

As academic critics Audrey Wong stated, arts education has become another way of building the audience, as the NAC and arts organisations are hoping that, by engaging in arts education, when they grow up young people will be interested in bringing their family to the arts. Therefore, arts education has been devised and become a component within the ecosystem of arts producers, cultural intermediaries, and audiences (Chong, 2017). However, one of the interviewees reveals that "people don't come and watch our concerts after they leave school" (Interviewee L). This issue highlights the failure of the Singapore government's prescriptive use of arts education in audience development and producing a new generation of ticket-buyers.

Supporting Audience Development and Engagement

In 2018, the NAC published its latest five-year strategy, *Our SG Arts Plan 2018-2022: Excellence that Inspires Our People and Connects Our Communities* (NAC, 2012). It revised its vision for Singapore to reflect the objective to become "home to diverse and distinctive arts that inspire our people, connect our communities and position Singapore globally" (p.7). In addition, NAC defined eight priorities, as illustrated in *Figure 13*, for guiding future arts and culture initiatives.

Figure 13: Eight Priorities for Guiding Future Arts and Culture Initiatives (NAC, 2018)



Providing access and opportunity along with growing audiences are still the current preoccupations of the arts scene in Singapore. As the arts scene becomes more vibrant with a greater number of cultural offerings, it remains important to engage existing audiences and to grow new audiences. Furthermore, the new strategy acknowledges the traditionally uneven audience engagement efforts and how there is still room for practitioners to improve how they engage and connect new audiences with their work. The emphasis is no longer merely on increasing access and participation

for arts audiences, but also on how to encourage those who attend free arts events to become ticketed audience members. Therefore, "supporting audience development and engagement" becomes a key focus in the new strategy (p.56). Thus, the effort of "developing capabilities in the areas of audience engagement, arts education, technology, fundraising, marketing, and arts management" was suggested by the NAC as a key priority (p.88). Along with enhanced audience engagement and increased accessibility to the arts, there remains a need to strengthen research efforts to inform audience development strategies, raise investment that focuses on understanding audience segmentation and audience development capabilities, help arts practitioners to develop audience engagement skills, and introduce further measures to build a stronger ecosystem in the arts.

In 2019, Esplanade created a dedicated Audience Development team within the Programming Department to work on education around different art forms for their audiences. The centre had been doing education work for a long time, but they realised that it was necessary to take a more consistent and centralised approach that aimed to develop as well as deepen their audiences' knowledge of a particular art form. The establishment of the Audience Development team could be seen as Esplanade's response to the recent cultural policy, and this is explored further later in the chapter.

7.4 The Esplanade Model

Esplanade was established as a not-for-profit company with charitable status, subject to the regulations of both a business and a charitable organisation. According to the former CEO, this allowed Esplanade to 'keep on its toes', so that it would not be overly reliant on public funding; as a result, the work of running Esplanade requires careful negotiation between social, artistic and financial considerations (Phua, 2013). This section analyses the underlying ideology and vision of

Esplanade, explores the development of OEP and how its organisational structure and management affects its practice, and examines Esplanade's programming approach to OEP.

7.4.1 The Underpinning Ideology and Mission

The vision and mission are often generated and implemented in a top-down way in arts organisations, whereas at Esplanade its mission and vision were generated bottom-up. According to one of the programming heads, when Esplanade was still under construction, members of the public as well as the staff of Esplanade were asked to contribute their views on what they wanted the arts centre to be. In a way, the concerns and suggestions of the general public and local arts community were implemented. Esplanade has a vision to be an inclusive, risk-taking, and world-leading arts centre. In its statement, the vision of "a performing arts centre for everyone" emphasises its ambition and commitment to be accessible and for all. It aims to put people – regardless of age, race, religion, or background – at the heart of everything it does. Esplanade has seemingly worked hard to create and evolve programmes that people from all walks of life can connect with. However, one of the criticisms of Esplanade was that the mission is too broad:

> Making space for all is not always possible, as there are limited resources – time, money, space and everything – so who do we allot these to? These limited resources are not only from sponsors, businessmen and all, they are also from the audience. (The Substation, 1995, pp.109-11)

As discussed earlier, with strong intervention from the government, the democratic ideal that opportunities should be available to all citizens influenced the establishment and development of the national performing arts centre. Esplanade has deliberately been trying to be all-inclusive. According to academic critics Audrey Wong, Esplanade has a very strong commitment to its audiences, and they really try to live up to the promise of being a centre for everyone, so that the range of programmes and the people they want to reach reflect its mission. How Esplanade curates

its programme for different groups of people and to be accessible to all people is explored later in this chapter.

As discussed in the previous section, the Singapore government is deliberately engaged in growing audiences. However, this is not the goal of Esplanade. According to the CEO:

> We didn't think the goal of what we do was to build audiences, to turn people into ticket-buyers. That's not our goal. Our goal is to see how the arts can transform society and become meaningful to how society sees itself and to the different needs of society as it evolves.
>
> (Tham, 2019)

There seems to be a philosophical tension behind the aim of increasing access and participation in the arts. Esplanade believes that "the arts can uplift spirits and it has the power to transform lives" (Esplanade, 2015, p.58). This might reflect the ideological standpoint of Esplanade that adheres to the Enlightenment tradition, which stresses the need for a transformation in the individual (Stevenson et al., 2017). This ideology is heavily influenced by the Singapore government, which advocates for arts and cultural activities to have transformative effects on society. However, this assumes what Belfiore (2009) refers to as "the alleged transformative power of the arts and their consequent (presumed) positive social impacts" (p.343) and it risks limiting the notion of culture to only 'official' culture. As such, Esplanade is caught in a very difficult place between government expectations to democratise the 'official' culture and its own mission to be an arts centre for everyone.

7.4.2 The Development of Outreach and Education Practice at Esplanade

When Esplanade opened in 2002, the outreach and education work was named as 'Public Affairs Activities', which sat under the direction of Marketing and Communications, and it involved work

with educational institutions, community organisations, and welfare organisations. In 2003, Esplanade curated 'Access Programmes' – On The Waterfront, Beautiful Sunday, Lunchbox and Coffee Morning, and *Explorations* programmes – consisting of workshops, talks and masterclasses, with the aim of "better appreciation of art forms and the development of young artists in the long-term" (Esplanade, 2004). In the early days of Esplanade, OEP was mainly related to people who lived further away from the city. The community clubs that Esplanade collaborated with in the suburban neighbourhoods would host people who came to Esplanade, who were working class and typically older people.

For the first ten years, Esplanade aimed to cultivate a passion for lifelong arts engagement, especially with the young, and strengthen the sense of identity and community (Esplanade, 2014). According to its CEO, in its first ten-year phase of development, the centre may have helped catalyse a core arts-going audience and helped them to develop a deeper appreciation for the arts, at the same time it looked for programmes that went beyond more accessible works. In 2011, Esplanade formed a dedicated Education Unit in the Programming department to look into better meeting the needs of children and youth. Meanwhile, the Marketing and Communications department organised an annual calendar of outreach activities for different groups of people, which included two types of works: one was Youth Related Activities, and the other was Grassroots and Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) Related Activities. To prevent duplicating activity between different teams (cf. Hayes and Slater, 2002) and to maintain a strategic approach, a dedicated Community Engagement unit was established in the Programming department in 2013. As one programming manager explained:

> When Esplanade was ten years old, we did a lot of soul-searching reflection and then we started two new units, one is the Children and Youth, that focus on arts education and the

> other one is Community Engagement… the time had come [to form a dedicated team] instead of putting [those activities] under the Marketing department.
>
> (Interviewee G)

The Community Engagement unit focused on broadening access to underserved communities and deepening their engagement with the arts through activities tailor-made for their diverse needs (Esplanade, 2019, p.21). This consolidated efforts to "better serve the less privileged through partnering VWOs and schools" (Esplanade, 2015, p.18).

Community Engagement

Community Engagement at Esplanade is more about community arts and well-being. From the perspective of social inclusion, the Community Engagement team organises activities for community groups held in the centre, which may incorporate elements of the performing and visual arts, as a part of larger festivals or events. The Community Engagement team focuses on developing relationships and exploring how the arts can impact communities in society who traditionally may not find it so easy to access the arts (Tham, 2019). In recent years, the Community Engagement team has been focused on people in marginalised communities, which includes people with different learning or physical abilities, senior citizens who are vulnerable and lonely, and young people who are at risk. For example, when Esplanade started to work with people with special needs in 2015, the Community Engagement team created sensory performances for autistic children together with the Children and Youth team; music programmes for patients at hospitals and hospices, as well as for dementia patients and their carers; and events for migrants in crisis, such as construction workers and domestic workers.

There are two tracts of work in the Community Engagement team. One is broad-based projects, which offer an overview or taster of different art forms. These projects aim to take audiences out of

their usual routine and give them a chance to have social interactions, to take part in other activities rather than staying at home. Hosting events at Esplanade is a major effort in the tract of broad-based projects, such as inviting beneficiaries from different VWOs, more recently known as social service organisations. According to its staff, although the broad-based projects are usually short-term or one-off, undertaking these projects is a good way to develop relationships with partner organisations, and in the meantime, it allows the team to identify the needs of that organisation and whether they can further develop any work together in the future.

Another tract of work in the Community Engagement team is flagship projects, which are programmes with longer-term engagement including multiple sessions with the same small group of people, for example with young people in youth justice contexts and young people at risk of developing mental health challenges. These kinds of projects can range from two to eight months depending on the nature of the projects. As one Community Engagement team member explained:

> The objective is not about the art form itself. It's always about something else. For example, for young people, at the very least it could be something about building esteem, confidence, or perhaps giving them a platform to express what they couldn't say or express what they are feeling… the end objective is never about how well they can sing or act. It's actually about the process through which they unpack their creativity and how they process their thoughts and feelings with help.
>
> (Interviewee J)

For instance, in the case of the Songwriting Programmes for troubled young people, lyric-writing has given the participants an outlet to open up channels of communication and to tell their own stories. In a way, the programme has helped them in their own interventions. In the Centre for Cultural Value's research on young people's mental health, there is promising evidence that there is a positive value in cultural experiences in supporting young people's mental health and well-being: engaging with arts and cultural programmes helps young people to cope with difficult feelings and

acts as a distraction from negative thoughts, therefore, cultural engagement plays a role in building young people's confidence and self-esteem (Dowlen, 2021). It can be seen that, in developing the programmes, the participants are at their heart rather than the art from, as one senior manager stated:

> A lot of research and preparation goes into every project that we do. It's not about the mastery of the art form, it's about how the art form brings about personal resonance, and that's what is empowering for them. (Modder-Anwar, 2019)

Apparently, Community Engagement team places the participants in the position of actively interpreting and actively constructing meaning (cf. Reason, 2013) and aims to work 'with' them (cf. Leadbeater, 2009) and empower them to creatively address issues within their communities (cf. Trivic, 2021).

Digital Engagement through Offstage

As part of Esplanade's plan to become a 'digital performing arts centre' to reach audiences online, Offstage was designed to create a seamless experience for the audience between the physical centre and the digital space, which includes the creation of behind-the-scenes, infotainment and educational digital content that prepares the audience for a show and deepens their understanding of what they have watched after the curtains come down (Esplanade, 2019, p.81). It offers stories, podcasts and videos to their target audiences: working professionals, young people, families with young children, schools, researchers, and anyone who might be interested in the arts. Head of Communications & Content, Clarissa Oon, spoke of the aims of Offstage during an interview:

> It made sense to create a site that's not just a library and an archive, but a more dynamic site with content to engage audiences. We also wanted to go beyond that short span of time when audiences are in the centre. (quoted in *The Straits Times Life*, 26th Nov 2019)

Such digital capabilities and digital processes became even more essential when the world was faced with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which required all performances and learning to be conducted virtually. Offstage has become a performance venue in the digital realm where Esplanade continues to present programmes through videos, podcasts, and articles, even when the centre was closed during lockdowns (Esplanade, 2020, p.14). To some extent, this digital platform extended the audience experience.

7.4.3 Operation and Structure of the Organisation

Esplanade is operated by Esplanade Co Ltd., which is funded by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. The organisational structure is illustrated in *Figure 14*. Unlike most other performing arts centres in the world, there is no Artistic Director in the organisational structure. Instead, the CEO is responsible for the overall development, management, programming and artistic direction of Esplanade. It is worth highlighting that the CEO makes programming decisions along with five heads from the Programming department, including Community (Cultural Programmes), Community Engagement, Dance and Theatre, Music, and Visual Arts & Children/Youth. Each of the programming heads takes turns to chair the weekly general programming meeting. As such, the artistic decisions are distributed through the interactions of multiple actors (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Being able to sit in at different meetings allowed me to observe and understand Esplanade's organisational structure, which is more like "a series of interconnected functions" (Holden, 2011, p.188). The leadership roles are distributed and co-operative across the organisation, and there are strong teams acting as collective leaders within the organisation. As shown in *Figure 15*, this functions through the complementary action of different departments working together as an integral whole in delivering the Esplanade Experience.

Figure 14: Esplanade Organisation Chart
(Esplanade, 2020, p.4)

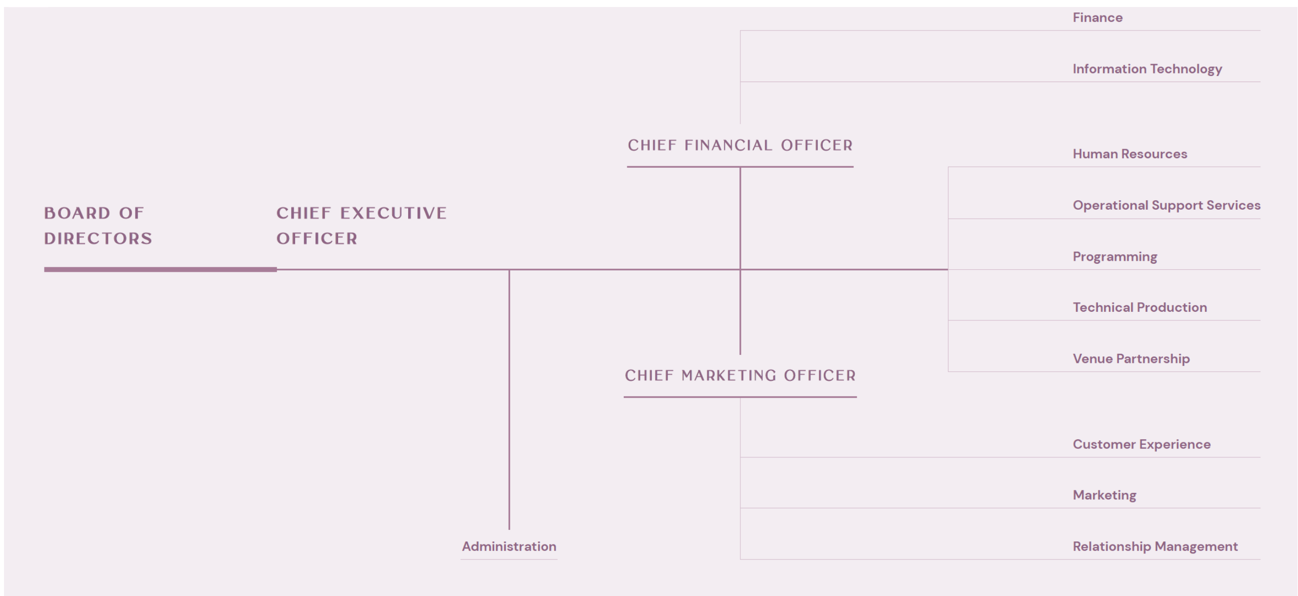


Figure 15: Relationships among Departments in Delivering Esplanade Experience
(Esplanade, internal material)

It is clear that the role of the CEO is in the centre rather than in a vertical relationship; the practice echoes Mintzberg's theory that the leader should be "reaching out rather than down" (2009, p.142). The distributed leadership at Esplanade is a collective phenomenon that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action (Bennett et al., 2003, p.3). Teamwork is stressed and

inscribed into Esplanade's values. It recognises that "everyone matters and that all roles are important" (Esplanade, 2019). Furthermore, it helps the organisation "keep communication channels open at all levels and at all times" (Esplanade, internal material). The interconnectedness within the organisation contributes to the creation and development of the Esplanade Experience. A good example would be the 'buddy-ship' between the Programming department and the Marketing department, which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

In Esplanade's operations, there is no main stage programming team and 'side' stage programming team (for example, OEP is regarded as 'side stage programmes' in some cases in this study). Instead of separate teams, one core team curates all the programmes. For instance, in a festival, the festival team is one team that looks at the full range of performances and engagement activities. Instead of fixed teams, they have small clusters looking at the several types of programmes. As the CEO, Yvonne Tham explained: "within the Programming department, most programmers have a focused art form, for instance, someone might join the team in music but that person will also be part of a team that looks at developing festivals or programmes that are more community-centric" (Tham, 2019). Thus, the Programming department is structured as a matrix – the programmers sit in different kinds of festivals and different types of programmes as project-based teams. Therefore, each programmer works across different festivals and series which allows the ideas and experience to be shared from one team to another. Under this arrangement, the programmers would always have a range of exposure and work on different tasks, as well as the ability to learn and contribute to different projects. This form of matrix management and matrix structures is called functional matrix teams, where individuals from the same function cooperate across an internal matrix (Hall, 2013). According to Burns and Wholey (1993), this is a "team-oriented arrangements that promote coordinated, multidisciplinary activity across functional areas, broad participation in decisions, and the sharing of knowledge" (no pagination).

This matrix model at Esplanade allows for new ideas and information to flow in and through the organisation which is similar to the network theory in Glow's (2012) research, whereby "ideas flow in and around all the "actors" in the network which, in turn, evolves to accommodate and build on the information it gathers and disseminates" (p.140). Based on my observation, this matrix arrangement works well at Esplanade, and it allowed fir a learning culture within the organisation. However, the centre needs to be aware that there are potential pitfalls of matrix working, for example, overlaps in responsibility and authority can result in power struggles and conflict, leading to the risk of slow response time (Bannerman, 2009; 2010); competition between projects; and conflicts between project managers and functional managers (Turner et al., 1998).

7.4.4 Programming Approach

One of the key strategies in developing audiences for arts events was to present these events in the form of festivals as these allow for greater intensity and consequently greater excitement to be generated (Esplanade, 2005). As Esplanade's former CEO explains:

> The multicultural, multilingual nature of Singapore's society, coupled with the wide range of socio-economic groups and differing tastes, meant that Esplanade programmes must reflect this diversity. Early on, we decided that presenting arts events in a festival format gave audiences a certain focus and intensity of experiences, which translates into excitement and buzz. (Phua, 2017)

A festival contains a range of ticketed and non-ticketed performances, workshops for families, masterclasses for artists, and talks for the curious, which would allow people from all walks of life to come together. Over the years, Esplanade's programmes have been presented not only in different festivals but also as annual series. *Figure 16* shows a list of the festivals and series that were presented at Esplanade in 2018-19. Esplanade Festivals are curated under different themes,

and they normally last between three to ten days, whereas Esplanade Series are single presentations across different art forms and genres spread through the year. It can be seen that Esplanade tries to make festivals and series that cover all cultural, ethnic and age groups in Singapore.

Figure 16: Lists of Esplanade Festivals and Esplanade Series in 2018-2019
(Esplanade, 2019, p.144)

Esplanade Festivals	Esplanade Series
A DATE WITH FRIENDS 14 – 17 MAR 2018	BEAUTIFUL SUNDAY
A TAPESTRY OF SACRED MUSIC 20 – 22 APR 2018	CHINESE CHAMBER MUSIC
BAYBEATS 17 – 19 AUG 2018	COFFEE MORNING & AFTERNOON TEA
DA:NS FESTIVAL 9 – 21 OCT 2018	DA:NS SERIES
FLIPSIDE 25 MAY – 3 JUN 2018	DANCE APPRECIATION SERIES
HUAYI – CHINESE FESTIVAL OF ARTS 15 – 24 FEB 2019	FEED YOUR IMAGINATION (F.Y.I)
KALAA UTSAVAM – INDIAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS 16 – 25 NOV 2018	IN::MUSIC
MOONFEST – A MID-AUTUMN CELEBRATION 21 – 23 SEP 2018	LIMELIGHT
OCTOBURST! – A CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL 5 – 7 OCT 2018	MOSAIC MUSIC SERIES
PESTA RAYA – MALAY FESTIVAL OF ARTS 12 – 15 JUL 2018	PENTAS
VOICES – A FESTIVAL OF SONG 7 – 9 DEC 2018	PLAYTIME!
	RAGA
	SPECTRUM
	THE STUDIOS
	VISUAL ARTS
	VOICES SERIES

Culture-focused Programme

As a cultural institution in Singapore, Esplanade's programme offerings aim to mirror the diversity of its society, by celebrating the heritage and artistry of Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures. Coinciding with the major community celebrations are their cultural festivals that aim to connect different ethnic communities with one another through the arts. For example, Huayi – the Chinese Festival of Arts, a celebration of the Lunar New Year; Kalaa Utsavam – the Indian Festival of Arts; and Pesta Raya – the Malay Festival of Arts, which celebrates Depavali and Hari Raya Puasa. These festivals aim to reach out to specific cultural communities, while giving other people insight into a

community's cultural practices and beliefs and therefore promoting cultural understanding among people from different cultural backgrounds.

Genre-focused Programme

Among Esplanade's festivals and series, there are programmes that dive into specific genres, such as Baybeats Festival, the largest free alternative music festival in Singapore; Mosaic Music Series and Classics Series, which features contemporary artists and world renowned orchestras; as well as da:ns festival and da:ns series that present different kinds of dance performances ranging from classical ballet to contemporary dance, from traditional Indian dance to street dance. Esplanade designs its engagement activities around the different themes of festivals and series, meanwhile the activities are designed based on different needs of different communities with different entry levels. Taking the example of the da:ns festival in 2020, there were workshops for people with no dance experience, such as Dance Fitness class and Footwork Fun-sized (a series including Balinese dance, Voguing, Bollywood dance); for dance enthusiasts, there were Artists Chats which could help them to develop arts appreciation by learning more about the artists and their artworks, while inviting audience members to share their thoughts and to encourage conversations between artists and audiences; for local dancers who have been actively practising or performing dance, Dance Masterclass helps them gain skills and techniques which they can incorporate into their own practice; in addition, there was a ten-day training workshop with award-winning British choreographer Wayne McGregor for professional dance artists trained in ballet or contemporary dance. There is a broad remit of engagement activities for different categories of audiences.

Demographic-focused Programme

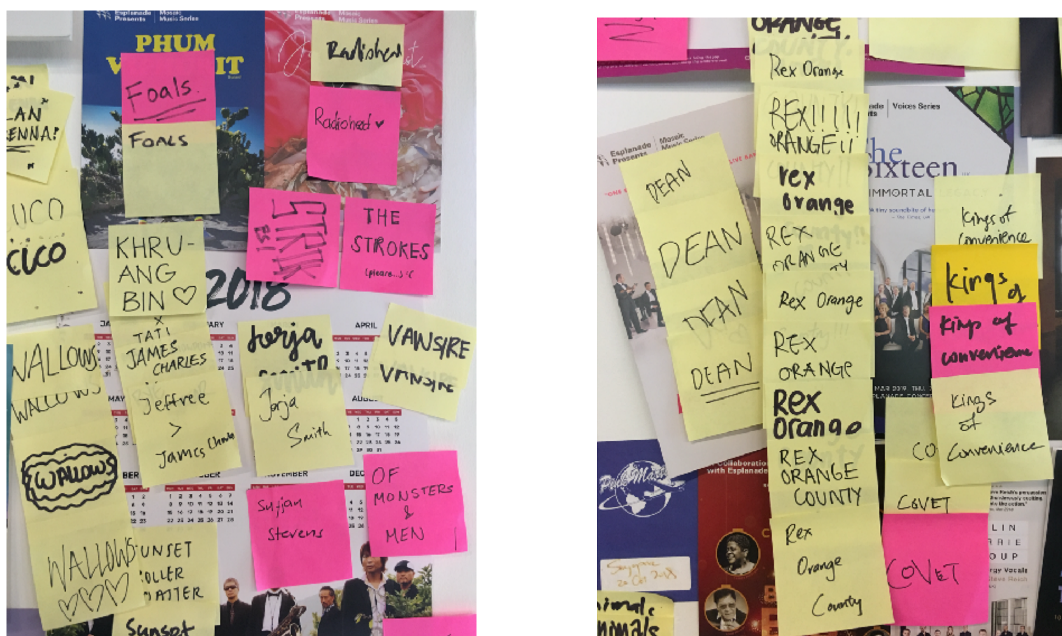
Esplanade has audiences drawn from across different life stages. To cater for the needs of different people, the age range is an aspect that Esplanade considers through its segmentation when

designing its programmes. The centre created four major categories of programmes for family and children, schools, youth, and seniors. To be more effective in engaging and developing an affinity with different segments of audiences, they consider the different personas of each segment. For example, there is a rapidly ageing society in Singapore, and in response, Esplanade has been trying to explore the quality of seniors' life and how the arts could affect who they are as well as their relationships with their families and community. Thus, the centre curated A Date with Friends Festival and Morning Coffee & Afternoon Tea series specially for seniors, and these have become part of Esplanade's regular annual programming.

Democratic Approach

The programmers at Esplanade try to listen to the voices of the audiences and understand what the audiences want to see at the arts centre. *Figure 17* illustrates stickers with artists' names collected from audiences after a show; the programmers explained that they would take into consideration the audiences' suggestions when selecting artists for the next season. As such, the audiences act as co-curators for some programmes at Esplanade.

Figure 17: Notes from the Audience on the Wall of Esplanade's Office
(Photographer: Yun Cheng)



Support for Community Arts

Apart from staging home-grown and regional talent alongside internationally acclaimed artists and arts groups, Esplanade offers a wide range of activities and informal/relaxed performance by talented amateurs and semi-professionals, such as Beautiful Sunday, free monthly Sunday concerts offering a proper concert experience at Esplanade Concert Hall. This series was staged by a semi-professional orchestra, a youth orchestra, and a secondary school choir. In a way, Esplanade provides opportunities 'to see' as well as 'to be seen' for people who would like to perform or take part. As Trivic (2021) states, while professional art reaches out to the community, community art should also be brought into the formal venues to recognise and affirm its value. It has become a platform for community arts to grow and develop.

Through these free programmes, Esplanade has formed relationships with local arts communities, amateur artists, and young emerging artists, and worked with them to try out new ideas. As a manager of Esplanade highlighted, these non-ticketed programmes might be developed into ticketed programmes over time, so this process provides value to the artists' growth. From the artists' point of view, free performances are 'steppingstones' or avenues for new artists to showcase their talents, gain exposure and build their participatory skills (Trivic, 2021). As the national performing arts centre, Esplanade has helped to shape the amateur arts scene and a whole generation of young performers in Singapore.

7.5 A Structurally Integrated Approach towards Engaging Audiences

7.5.1 Free Programme as Outreach and Education

As well as presenting performances on traditional stages, Esplanade also explores the continuity of public and performance space. The programmes are designed to engage both casual visitors and

those who are actively seeking arts experiences. For example, the Outdoor Theatre hosts a range of free performances on weekends and public holidays, whereas at the Upper Concourse there is a stage that hosts free performances daily (as shown in *Figure 18*).

Figure 18: Free Performance at Outdoor Theatre at Night & Free Performance at Esplanade Concourse (Photographer: Yun Cheng)

These free performances provide a good opportunity for building awareness of the availability of the venue for performances and arts events, while allowing audiences opportunities to participate in arts and culture on a regular basis. Esplanade consciously engineers opportunities for visitors to experience its works as they are walking by and through the centre. In addition, there are a variety of formal and informal visual artworks displayed throughout the site. Some of the visual artworks are commissioned each quarter for the centre's public spaces. These artworks complement and reflect the main Esplanade festivals and allow visitors to view and explore artworks in their own time in its public spaces, including the Concourse and Esplanade Tunnel (a passageway connecting the centre to Citylink Mall and City Hall MRT, allowing visitors to see showcases of visual arts installations and creative works on the way to Esplanade). To some extent, high accessibility to the art works/performances enables visitors to encounter the arts experience – whenever people step in or pass by, there is always artwork and/or performances to see at Esplanade. In addition to attracting art lovers, the free programmes attract incidental audiences, people who are passing by or pausing

for a rest, which can simultaneously engage them in listening to or watching ongoing arts activities. Trivic's (2021) research on community arts in Singapore shows that many participants reported feeling more relaxed at free performances because the informal settings allow them to take breaks in-between, walk around and interact with other people if they choose to do so. This might be one of the reasons why the free performances at Esplanade are so popular and well-received by audiences.

Figure 19: A Dance Event at Esplanade's Outdoor Space

(Photographer: Yun Cheng)

As Trivic (2021) highlights, investing in arts and cultural activities that are different in nature and level of engagement can spur stronger interest in the arts among participants and eventually empower and support ground-up creative initiatives. I observed that Esplanade provides a good diversity of arts and cultural programmes, including different types of art forms and engagement formats targeting different audience profiles. *Figure 19* shows a dance event for people to actively participate in during the da:ns festival in 2019. As such, Esplanade creates free programmes in its public spaces for anyone to enjoy in an informal setting to support people to participate in arts

events that "enrich public life, bring festivity and the sense of joy and create opportunities for building shared experiences, meanings and identities" (Trivic, 2021, no pagination). People gathering at the events and activities of Esplanade are not necessarily about the arts, but a socially inclusive space that supports and celebrates different aspects of social life (Kong, 2009).

Apparently, free programmes are important for broadening and diversifying arts participation for those who had no intention of participating at Esplanade. In a sense, the free programmes at Esplanade act as outreach which capturing the people that happen to be there. One programming manager defined outreach at Esplanade as "to actually reach out to audience who may know or may not know the arts through very accessible means" (Interviewee Y). Outreach could be bringing the arts out to people and reaching out to wherever they are, whereas the outreach work of Esplanade focuses on bringing people into Esplanade Experience at its site. According to one interviewee among the programming heads, this is because the NAC has already been implementing initiatives in this area, such as Arts in Your Neighbourhood, and Esplanade does not want to duplicate those efforts. The free programmes are part of the effort to really open up the centre, and to realise its mission of "an arts centre for everyone" in terms of overcoming the barrier of cost for people and to make arts more accessible to all. However, as mentioned in Section 7.3, Population Survey data shows that ticketed attendance for performing arts events has declined in recent years while overall arts attendance levels have continued to rise. One programming manager at Esplanade also mentioned this trend: fewer people have been paying for ticketed performances in recent years, so there has been a dip in the number of ticketed attendees. There is a danger that the free programmes may create a mindset in people that the arts can be free, and people may end up being less willing to pay for a ticketed events/performances. As one interviewee revealed: "When you have free activities, that is a huge potential for people to say: I'd rather turn out for the free ones and I don't

go for the paying ones". Therefore, the free programmes might create a divergence between the audience of ticketed events and free events.

7.5.2 Working with Marketing Engagement

Marketing Engagement is a sub-team within the Marketing Department which looks at marketing from an engagement perspective, as well as looking at engagement from a marketing perspective. The Marketing Engagement team supports the company's overall audience engagement objectives and considers ways that Esplanade can effectively engage with certain segments of audiences, including families with young children, students in schools, educators, the young, working adults, and seniors. As the CEO explained:

> Since the statement "an arts centre for all", Esplanade do have audiences across different life stages. So demographics is one way of defining them, as well as the different life stages that they're in. From a marketing perspective, we want to see how we are able to connect with them, our audiences, effectively in order for us to be able to start engaging with them.
>
> (Tham, 2019)

Therefore, Esplanade is looking at engagement from a marketing perspective in terms of reaching out to the different audience groups and communicating with them through marketing. The Head of Marketing Engagement is in charge of setting the strategy to be more effective in engaging and developing an affinity with different segments of audiences from young to old and working with colleagues across different programmes and initiatives to see how Esplanade can effectively connect with them, whether through the content they produce, the advertising and pricing strategy they have, or through the different ways they talk about themselves, and the activities they are organising. According to the Head of Marketing Engagement, the team is working on "how do we effectively develop our engagement goals and objectives through the efficient use of our resources" (Tan, 2019).

The role of the marketing strategist in Marketing Engagement is to offer help to drive initiatives other than just promoting programmes (Tan, 2019). They work across different programmes, each of them has a portfolio of different events to work on, and they are buddies/partners with the programmers. Through past experience, Esplanade has realised that sometimes one team's plan might be not workable for another. Therefore, to ensure common goals and consistency, Esplanade created 'buddy-ship' between the programming and marketing teams, which allows the two teams to sit together to make plans for the programmes. The 'buddy-ship' is usually assigned by the heads of Marketing and Programming based on individual strengths and interests, and it normally involves two people working as a pair formed from one marketing strategist and one programmer; when programmers are conceptualising programmes and events they work with their marketing buddies to work out a formula where they can achieve the targets they want to hit together. This ensures a functional integration between Marketing and Programming departments, which encourage a panoramic view of audiences that addresses their specific needs through a variety of integrated initiatives (Hayes and Slater, 2002). The cross-functional matrix teams are structured as groups of people from different functional areas, designed as an overlay to the existing functional organisation (Galbraith, 1994). Its purpose is to combine the efficiency of functional design with the flexibility and responsiveness of a multi-divisional organisation (Hatch, 2012). The buddy-ship at Esplanade is a good example of 'cross-functional matrix' management (Hall, 2013), which demonstrates audience engagement is not an effort by a single department but requires teamwork from multiple departments within an organisation.

7.5.3 Arts Education and Audience Development

Working with young people is written into Esplanade's Next Stage Plan (FY18-22). The centre curates age-appropriate outreach and education programmes for young people in different age

groups: the PLAYtime! series for two- to six-year-olds; Octoburst! A Children's Festival – an annual highlight for families with young children; the Feed Your Imagination (FYI) series designed especially for primary and secondary schools; and tours and learning journeys for educators and tertiary students, who are currently enrolled in arts-related courses. For Esplanade, programming for young audiences is guided by the belief that "the arts play an important role in the holistic development of a young person" (Esplanade, 2015). The teams are not just focused on making sure that students attend the performances. Instead, they aim to look at questions including how the arts can be integrated into the curriculum, what they can do for a young people at different ages, and how the arts can become part of that development.

To support engagement with young people, a small team of people from different units of the Programming department look at strategies and initiatives to attract the engagement of young people. The team has been constantly trying out different ideas to see what works best for implementing in practice. However, it was acknowledged that:

> Actually, there's a lot of emphasis about especially engaging with young people because they're our next generation audiences. Yet we do not know the right way to engage with them… when they leave school from 17 onwards, they don't really come to the arts or come for performances anymore.
>
> (Interviewee L)

As discussed earlier, there has been an emphasis on the cultural policies of arts education for decades in Singapore and arts education has been devised to produce 'market-ready students' (Chong, 2017). Accordingly, arts education in Singapore is seen not only as a mode of arts participation but also as a contributing factor to future attendance at formal arts events.

There is a close relationship between arts education and audience development at Esplanade. In the year of conducting the fieldwork at Esplanade in 2019, the centre had just created an Audience Development team within the Programming department to work on developing education activities of different art forms for their audiences with the aim to increase the level of their literacy. Even though Esplanade has been doing education work and engagement activities for a long time, there was no specific person or team looking after these activities. The managers felt that it was necessary to have a more consistent and centralised approach than simply from the angle of developing and deepening someone's knowledge of a particular art form. The CEO explained that the intention of this Audience Development team is to examine gaps and to spend more time in trying to understand the range of works that they have already been doing to try to join them up by looking at the education work and engagement activities from a more long-term perspective beyond the year-round calendar. Thus, audience development efforts can be co-ordinated at an organisational level, and this can prevent duplication of activity between different teams (Hayes and Slater, 2002).

The head of Children/Youth took on the leadership of this newly-formed team, as she had already been looking at children and families, working with schools, and scaffolding learning. Therefore, her new role became a natural extension, and she could then take into consideration what learning mean for adults as well (Tham, 2019). From another aspect, Esplanade also realised that beyond attending a performance, audiences are seeking to pick up a skill or learn something new as amateurs. Thus part of the role of the Audience Development team is to see how they can develop programmes that could appeal to a new generation of people who do not just want to see but to do (cf. Conner, 2004).

However, there is a tension behind the aim of arts education and audience development at Esplanade. As one interviewee revealed:

> …for C&Y [children and youth] we have play time, FYI and Octoburst… we want to develop this audience also from a very young age. So at every stage when they are with us, we are hoping that they would love what they see and they will love the experience so that when they grow up, they would just come back.
>
> (Interviewee L)

The Audience Development team was created to develop people's love of an art form through arts education, in the hope that at some point in the future, they will become audiences. Although this is not a very transactional relationship, compared to some of the short-term audience development tactics used by other organisations with their audiences, the aim of audience development at Esplanade is partially to build a long-term relationship and to broaden the audience-base for the future.

7.6 Summary

In this chapter, the roles and objectives for the arts in Singapore's each developmental stage, along with the policy context that influenced the formation and development of Esplanade and its OEP were discussed. It was found that, although Esplanade is in a challenging position between the government's expectation and its own agenda, the centre tries very hard to live up to its commitment to the audience. Esplanade can be seen to respond to Holden's call for cultural institutions to shift their focus from "product to people" (2010, p.60). 'The Esplanade Experience' that the centre aims to create prioritises the needs of the audience: the CEO highlighted that "the audience is fundamental to everything we do" (Tham, 2019). This reflects the audience-centric approach, as The Audience Agency (2016) defined it: "audiences first contains an important challenge – to put the people for whom we are doing our work at the centre of all our thinking" (p.11).

Furthermore, the findings suggest that Esplanade dedicates a lot of resources to OEP and takes a holistic approach in engaging audiences. Although the learning put in place was as important as the artistic programmes at Barbican, as stated in its mission, it was revealed by the staff that Creative Learning's activities were sometimes squeezed out by other commercial interests. It is clear that OEP gained more support at Esplanade from an organisational level. There is a shared understanding of the audience, and the role and objectives of OEP at Esplanade. The case study therefore offers an example of a more integrated approach to OEP.

Based on the analysis of the Esplanade model, there is a functional integration between Marketing and Programming departments through 'buddy-ship', while Barbican appeared to have a lack of multi-departmental coordination between the Marketing and Creative Leaning departments. Both organisations deployed a matrix structure and management in designing and implementing OEP, however, the employment of this structure at Barbican did not seem to be as effective as at Esplanade. As revealed in the Barbican case study, there was a disconnection among the different teams as each had their own agendas and working pace due to the different internal cultures and mindsets between the Art Forms and Creative Learning teams. This seems to suggest a key benefit of having an integrated team involved in OEP and programming.

The findings also revealed that the leadership of Esplanade is embedded in a decentralised leadership across the organisation (cf. Mintzberg, 2009), and the artistic decisions involve collective leaders. Thus, Esplanade provides an example of distributed leadership, whereas Barbican has a more hierarchical structure and a vertical relationship between managers and staff. It was observed that the process of leadership at Esplanade related more to knowledge than position and was therefore able to maximise the input of all participants. This extends to encouraging self-motivation among team members and allowing a learning culture to form across different teams.

Both case study organisations are situated in a multi-cultural metropolitan city, therefore, engaging with a diverse audience has inevitably become an imperative. From a programming perspective, Esplanade's culture-focused programmes serve different cultural communities and reach out to people from different cultural backgrounds; it recognises the different cultures and arts interests of different people. Furthermore, given the integration of OEP programming with artistic programming, it allowed each festival at Esplanade to have some free programmes and engagement activities for the public to take part in which supported wider and more regular cultural participation; moreover, Esplanade has a sense of responsibility to support local art and artists and provides opportunities that involve amateur art and enable everyday participation. The centre is more than just a venue but the foyers and the concourses are where many community activities constantly occur.

Nonetheless, a top-down policy intervention does not encourage a deliberative process with a wider range of people when designing and implementing arts practice. Apart from some projects in Community Engagement unit, the programme design was more reliant on the expertise of professionals. Although staff at Esplanade have been actively listening to their audiences' opinions through both formal and informal feedback, for example, the audience act as co-curators for some programmes, comments generated from evaluation questionnaires and face-to-face conversations, the programme design was more reliant on the expertise of professionals rather than co-creating with participants. Compared to Barbican's programming approach, Esplanade's was more top-down. In light of 'the art of with', instead of providing opportunities 'for' the people, it is vital to co-create meaningful engagement with them. This would allow for a free exchange of creative energy. A more democratic approach might be needed, which implies an equal relationship between the centre and its public.

The Barbican and Esplanade case studies represent two radically different models of OEP in terms of organisational structures: at Barbican it functions as an individual department, whereas at Esplanade it is part of the responsibilities of the programming team. The findings highlight that whether OEP is an individual department or embedded within an artistic department, a balanced relationship with artistic programming is vital. Moreover, to have an integrated approach, there must be a philosophical connection between artistic programming and OEP. The findings also suggest that a successful model of OEP requires coordination and effort from multiple departments, the involvement of artistic leadership, building longer-term collaboration with partners, and an integrated audience engagement goal that involves the whole organisation.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

The primary focus of this thesis was an empirical investigation into how performing arts organisations (PAO) implement their outreach and education practice (OEP) when engaging audiences today. To gain an understanding of the broader rationale for, and implications of, the inception of OEP in the performing arts, this thesis examined the relevant cultural policy and arts management literature from the perspectives of cultural participation and cultural leadership. Due to a lack of research in this area within the field of arts management, the cultural participation debate around the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy was used as theoretical framework for this study. This framework has enabled the study to analyse the inception of outreach and education practice as a democratisation tool within the publicly-funded arts sector and to explore how the notion of such practice has been changing towards a more democratic approach.

In investigating both the origin of OEP and, importantly, the practice as it manifests in contemporary PAOs, the study re-conceptualised the notion of outreach and education, which has implications both for cultural policy research and arts management practice. It was found that OEP was created as initiatives aimed to distribute the products of high culture to a wider audience, yet such practices are on a trajectory from the democratisation of culture through to cultural democracy. Furthermore, this research paid close attention to the specifics of terminologies in relation to OEP: how notions such as ‘audience development’, ‘audience engagement’ and ‘audience enrichment’ are related and shape the development of OEP. It may be argued that audience development and audience engagement represent two different ideologies. Audience engagement draws attention to the process of creating meaningful, long-term connections between people and an arts organisation, rather than to the result of increasing visitor numbers, as the notion of audience development emphases. Whereas the ultimate goal of engagement is enrichment (cf. Walmsley, 2019b). This

research found that there is less use of 'audience development' and more of 'audience engagement' in the current field of the performing arts. This change of terminology in practice reflects a shift in paradigm from a democratising intent towards a more democratic approach.

The research aimed to generate original insights into OEP as an audience engagement strategy in the performing arts sector from an international perspective. This was done through an analysis of the perceptions and experiences of a range of different arts managers within the performing arts sector by collecting data in a mixed-methods approach. This included surveys with PAOs, and interviews with arts managers and practitioners. Case studies were then examined as examples of practice in different contexts to further investigate how such practice related to artistic programming, and how different cultural policies and organisational structures may affect the practice. What the case studies have in common is that they are high profile major performing arts centres with widely acknowledged examples of excellent practice in engaging audiences. The two case study organisations are the products of their times and policy contexts, and both place audience engagement as central to their missions or visions, albeit with very different models and focuses in their practices. This therefore allows for a consideration of how OEP is being implemented and positioned in each organisation.

The following section draws together all the findings from the research undertaken and presents a discussion of their implications for the future development of OEP in the performing arts. The chapter then moves on to outline the contribution this thesis makes to knowledge both in arts management and in cultural policy and then suggests recommendations for future research. This is followed by a final section that offers a brief reflection on the methodological approach and methods, as well as on the research process in light of my own research journey and professional experience.

8.1 Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications

The findings of this research revealed that outreach and education are still popular terms in PAOs, alongside other terms such as learning, creative learning, and community engagement, but there is an urgent need to re-conceptualise the terms in light of fresh thinking in the areas of cultural democracy and cultural leadership in relation to cultural participation. It is the argument of this thesis that by understanding the origins and development of OEP we can better understand the debates and issues around it. Based on a review of the literature and extensive empirical research, the thesis advocates for the adoption of the practice not as the assimilation of new practice to perpetuate old ideologies, but rather as the adoption of new ideologies.

Drawing on the research data, outreach work appears to have reinvented itself and seems to be on a trajectory from the democratisation of culture towards cultural democracy. It is no longer perceived only as a way of fixing the problem of 'non-participation' (Stevenson et al., 2017). In this study, many arts managers acknowledged that engagement with the audience through OEP should be 'a two-way process' or 'two-way exchange and learning' between the audience and PAOs. Furthermore, they also acknowledged that the arts and creativity do not belong to arts organisations, and the audience are active participants rather than consumers of the arts productions. This signified a more reciprocal and democratic process in audience engagement and highlighted the changing role of PAOs in cultural participation from being the experts or gatekeepers towards facilitators and co-creators. As Kerr (2013) points out, the aim should not be for institutions to 'reach out', but to empower communities through the use of theatre methodologies and using their own language and culture to find strategic solutions to their problems. Outreach today accounts for the leadership role that arts organisations can play in communities, and it is about how arts organisations can support communities and grassroots organisations through 'communityship' on what they are doing in

creativity and culture. Furthermore, we have seen in the course of the thesis how the understanding of 'education' in the context of audience engagement needs to be broadened because the term 'education' not only indicates works in formal educational settings, but also refers to 'audience education' or 'arts education', which includes a variety of activities for people of all ages. This should come under the bigger strategic goal of unlocking people's creativity. Therefore, the term 'outreach and education' needs to be re-conceptualised to keep pace with changes in philosophy and practice. This study suggests that effective outreach and education represents an egalitarian approach and a reciprocal process that facilitates PAOs in building meaningful relationships with their audiences and wider communities while creating or co-creating meaningful aesthetic experiences for and with them.

Analysing the perceptions of arts managers towards the notion of the audience revealed a diverse range of philosophies and ethos among arts professionals that inevitably affect the type, range and manifestation of OEP in PAOs. As Lindelof (2015) argues, how arts institutions perceive their audiences affects how they imagine the relationship between the art form, the audience and the institution. This study has demonstrated how, as a result of its conceptual ambiguity, OEP reconciles ideologically opposed objectives, which can be summarised into a typology of five core categories: social inclusion; engaging with communities; enriching the experience of the current audience; arts education for young people and children; and building and cultivating new audiences. What becomes evident from the research data around the objectives of OEP is that there are multiple and divergent expectations about what OEP can, and should, be aimed at, and that there is no singular method by which these expectations can be drawn together into a coherent and cohesive whole. This implies that OEP depends on organisational ethos and philosophy, which affects vision, mission and strategy. Ultimately, of course, it depends on leadership to determine and implement it at an organisational level.

In some performing arts organisations OEP operates as audience engagement strategy, which plays a vital strategic and philosophical role. In others, it is marginalised, perceived as a secondary-level activity, outsourced, or neglected altogether. The Barbican and Esplanade case studies represented two radically different models of OEP in terms of organisational structures: at Barbican it functions as an individual department, whereas at Esplanade it is part of the programme team. The thesis has highlighted how different histories and policy developments have shaped OEP in these two high-profile global institutions. The results that emerged from both case studies stress how a successful model of OEP requires coordination and effort from multiple departments as well as the involvement of artistic leadership. As Hays and Slater (2002) suggest, it requires organisations to have a senior representative 'championing' the cause to ensure that tactics are pursued within a strategic framework reflecting the organisational mission and priorities. Whether OEP is an individual department or embedded within an artistic department, a balanced relationship with artistic programming is vital. To engage with audiences on a meaningful basis through OEP, a higher level of strategic thinking and implementation as well as a longer-term approach are needed. A lack of strategic planning encourages short-termism and many projects are consequently conducted on a tactical rather than strategic basis and do not necessarily achieve organisational goals (Hayes and Slater, 2002). Therefore, a written strategy in OEP is vital to create a long-term strategic direction and consistency that involves the effort and commitment of the whole organisation, meanwhile building a coherent understanding and effective communication between departments and teams towards engaging audiences.

Some valuable implications emerged from the findings of the study for the future development of OEP in the performing arts. First, an ideological shift is required to move beyond established patterns of cultural consumption and towards supporting cultural participation in the performing

arts sector. Although this thesis has re-conceptualised outreach and education and reclaimed the practice away from an outmoded notion, many PAOs and arts managers still fundamentally believe in the idea of the democratisation of culture. The greatest social deception of the 21st century has been to insist to all people that their cultural participation must be with the arts and that valuing the arts must be part of their culture if they wish to be valued. However, the ‘non-participants’ will not gain social justice and cultural equity through increasing access to the events which cultural professionals think they should (Stevenson, 2016). A conceptual shift in understanding of the arts and culture which recognises everyday creativity and participation is required – and is indeed underway. Increasing access to – and participation with – professional arts overlooks the enormous diversity of cultural creativity. OEP should not be limited to a set of art forms and activities, and some of the current practice ought to be changed to accommodate a broader definition and spectrum of arts and cultural activity.

To truly achieve their objectives of democratic cultural access, PAOs would be required to “enable the anti-institutional diversification of value” (Connor, 1992, p.4) that would undermine their own elevated status and privilege. However, as Gartman notes, in practice some elites “have no interest in eliminating cultural authority per se, but merely in securing a greater share of it for themselves” (1991, p.439). As such, according to Stevenson (2016), “they opt to continue to conserve and reproduce the values on which their existence relies through their management of the discourses that give their practice meaning” (p.304). This is why the capacity to engender the change and to “think outside of the Arts” (Stevenson, 2016, p.303) emerge as prerequisites to advance a more culturally equitable society. As Holden argues, “no one should be excluded from any sort of cultural activity, but more importantly, as a matter of social justice, nor should they be excluded from helping to define what culture means [to them]” (2010, p.13). This requires that PAOs not only recognise different cultures but also giving a legitimate right to the people to speak about the

practice that they value and the manner in which they value it. This is why the audience should become strategic partners in the mission fulfilment of PAOs (Walmsley, 2019). To do this, a broader understanding of the audience needs to be recognised.

In the performing arts, the term ‘audience’ is used to suggest a group of people assembled together to experience a live performance (Conner, 2008). However, with the development of artistic practice, arts management, cultural policy and technology, the definition of the audience is becoming broader and much more diffuse than before, and modes of engagement are becoming multi-dimensional. The audience today no longer only refers to passive spectators who come to see a performance in a venue. Following the audience research literature, the interview data suggests that an audience could be an active participant, an encounter, a community, or any member of the public. To facilitate and develop the engagement of the audience in the performing arts requires arts managers to acquire new thinking about participation and to rethink the leadership roles both inside and outside of the organisations. This would require new models of distributed leadership and inclusive leadership, which would lead to organisational renewal (cf. Glow, 2012). Meanwhile, it is important to acknowledge that every PAO’s audiences are unique and there is no such thing as one-size-fits-all in understanding audiences. At the heart of the strategy of audience engagement should lie ‘a two-way process’ or ‘two-way exchange and learning’ between the audience and PAOs. Therefore, PAOs as well as arts managers need to make efforts to better understand their own audiences in order to engage with them.

Secondly, the findings of this research also evidence the importance of partnership working through co-creation with the audience and collaboration with external partners on a long-term basis. This finding highlights how PAOs should assume a leadership role in co-creating arts experiences with audiences and in collaborating with partner organisations with the aim of developing a rich cultural

ecology (Holden, 2015). In doing so, PAOs and arts managers need to recognise 'communityship' as a social process (Minzburg, 2009) and understand that the aim of OEP should not be for institutions to 'reach out', but instead to empower communities from within (Kerr, 2013) and to act as community leaders. Furthermore, it would require PAOs to act as facilitators of a dialogue between policymakers, professionals and the public, and it should not be presumed that the purpose of such dialogue is to result in an ever-greater number of activities being valued as cultural participation (Stevenson, 2016). It is vital for PAOs to consider what role they might play in supporting everyday creativity and participation, and for arts managers to work towards tailored approaches of engaging audiences through OEP. This would necessitate a new paradigm in which a full spectrum of possibilities is actively encouraged and valued.

Thirdly, research data suggests that funding has a remarkable impact on OEP, therefore policymakers need to think strategically about distribution of resources to continuously support cultural participation through arts organisation. The research revealed that the impact of OEP takes long-term effort to achieve, whereas funding is usually short-term, which has led to current OEP tending to be funding-driven rather than mission-led. To have a wider and deeper impact, this would require policymakers to have long-term goals instead of funding short-term projects. Accordingly, funding requirements also need to be revised. For instance, the abilities of organisations to play a leadership role in cultural participation could be a criteria for organisations to get funding support. Furthermore, the research also revealed the mismatch between increasing expectations and limited funding resources in OEP. To make a real change in practice and not just pay lip service, policymakers will have to adjust inputs to organisations accordingly to meet changes of policy requirements.

Finally, there is a classic balance to strike between excellence and engagement for PAOs, as demonstrated by the evolving policies and strategies of public funding bodies such as Arts Council England. Through analysing the two case studies along with the interview data, the thesis has repeatedly highlighted the importance of artistic and OEP teams building clarity and consensus around audience engagement objectives. As revealed by this research, there is a notion of OEP being in service to the 'main stage programme' and being seen as a 'secondary offer' in some organisations. This highlights the unequal relationship between OEP and artistic programmes and represents an ideology that supports 'excellence' over 'engagement'. For some experts, engagement could threaten the 'excellence' that results from professional productions. However, excellence cannot and should not be determined solely by professionals who represent producer interests (Holden, 2008). As discussed in the literature review, artistic excellence is difficult to define, and it cannot be separated from the people who value it. The challenge is the act of engagement itself, rather than the quality of what is engaged with (Jancovich, 2011). The emphasis on professional standards and excellence could obscure engagement opportunities. To achieve integrated goals in audience engagement, maintaining a balanced relationship between OEP and artistic programmes is vital. This would require the involvement and commitment of artistic leadership in OEP, the representation of OEP staff at senior management level and in programming decision-making, as well as building connections and relevance between the works of OEP and artistic teams.

8.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge in the field of arts management by theorising and re-conceptualising outreach and education practice. In situating such practice within the wider policy discourse of cultural participation, the study has argued that a more democratic feature of OEP has been obscured by an outdated notion of it being patronising and regarded as a tool of democratisation of culture. By utilising the democratisation of culture and cultural

democracy as conceptual framework, this thesis has produced a productive and original insight into the shifting relationships between OEP and audience development which reflects a paradigm shift of OEP from a democratising intent towards a more democratic approach. Prior to this study, no empirical research had been undertaken which considered OEP as an audience engagement strategy and a means to achieve democratic access in PAOs. As such, this thesis has provided a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the roles of PAOs in facilitating and supporting cultural participation through OEP.

The interpretive methodology adopted by the study has produced a rich set of original data which offers a more nuanced understanding of OEP. The thesis has revealed the origins of OEP, explored its history and relationship with cultural policy, and discussed how OEP is underpinned by the notions of audience development, engagement and enrichment. Therefore, it provides clarification on scholarly and professional terminologies around OEP and reduced the ambiguity that affects the practice. It has also examined why PAOs should take a leadership role in co-creating arts experiences and supporting communities and partner organisations through OEP. The study argues that PAOs should go much further in co-creating cultural democracy and capability and do so more strategically. Due to the lack of research in this area, this thesis fills the problematic gap between practice and theory in OEP, which has thus far held back its conceptual development.

Through investigating the different perceptions and ideological perspectives of arts managers towards the notion of the audience, this study has developed a new audience typology in 4.3 which is based on a participatory relationship rather than a transactional relationship between PAOs and their audiences. This audience typology considers not only people who are directly involved in arts experiences, but also recognises people who physically encounter PAO space, who digitally engage with content online, and who potentially have connections with PAOs. This could be used as a

theoretical framework for future studies in understanding performing arts audiences in broader, more diverse terms. Furthermore, this thesis has explored and identified the key objectives of OEP from an organisational perspective; it therefore provides a conceptual framework for understanding the very different and mixed aims of PAOs in engaging with audiences through such initiatives. By revealing the issues around the structural and philosophical disconnections in some PAOs, the study helps to identify keys to success and draws out implications for future practice in the performing arts sector.

8.3 Recommendations for Future Research

This study attempted to understand and explain OEP from the perspective of being on 'the inside', as I myself was on the inside of the performing arts sector in a number of professional roles. Given the growing volume of audience research in academia and as more scholars and practitioners advocate for an audience-centric approach to cultural practice, it would seem inevitable to consider and explore OEP from the audience's perspective. Further research could thus be undertaken to investigate OEP from the perspective of participants with the aim of critically and creatively reflecting upon such practice, for example by investigating the value and impact of a particular project to participants. This may require a set of longitudinal and anthropological studies that will allow researchers to engage in processes of "deep hanging out" (Walmsley, 2018) with OEP participants.

Bennett (1991) recognises how powerful exemplars are influential in the process of emulation and learning. It is important to stress that there are many existing examples of good practice visible in the field, while many others take place under the radar. To enable other people to learn from good practice through cross-organisational practice there is clearly a need to disseminate contrasting manifestations of exemplary practice in certain parts of the world. More research is needed to

differentiate or compare different practices, to provide evidence of the effectiveness of different strategies in OEP. Future research could also investigate how such practice might be applied from one country to another from the perspective of policy transfer.

There has been a growing number of impact-focused research projects in the performing arts sector, as more PAOs are required to justify their usefulness to funders. However, such research often focuses on monitoring impact rather than learning. Future research could go further to evaluate the effectiveness of OEP in PAOs. As Connor notes, “the process of evaluation can never be avoided” (1992, p.8). For evaluation to be robust and beneficial it needs to accommodate differences of opinion about experience and evidence, rather than smooth them over to produce simple messages (Centre for Cultural Value, 2021). The voices of the participant and the artist are too often missing in policy design, review and evaluation, and it is important to give them a place around the table. Similarly, it is essential to involve different voices and multiple stakeholder viewpoints at key points to shape the aims, methods and analysis arising from the evaluation when conducting research on OEP. To create a multi-dimensional exploration and understanding of OEP, future research could also include beneficiaries, commissioners, funders, policy makers and those working on the project apart from participants and artists.

As collaboration increases the opportunities for learning, there is a need for cultural practitioners and academics to work together to co-create mutually beneficial research projects. Developing research collaboration across academia and practice would bring together each partner’s strengths, knowledge and skills, and therefore combine theoretical knowledge and rigour with practice-based expertise. As such, building collaborative research projects could become a co-created learning process and a powerful way to develop new theories, advance current practice, and fill the historical gap between academia and cultural practice.

8.4 Reflection on the Research Process

I am highly aware of my role and potentially conflicted positionality as an academic researcher who has worked in OEP in the performing arts sector. This inevitably meant that I had my own ideological standpoint in relation to the topic explored and I therefore not only brought insights into how the practice works within PAO, from past experience, but also a potential bias to how my data might be interpreted. I am alert to my ideological imperatives, epistemological presuppositions, and subjective, inter-subjective and normative beliefs about the area under investigation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). Adopting mixed methods of data collection has proved to be valuable in this research, as it has allowed for a triangulation of the findings, enhancing the rigour and validity of the analysis as well as mitigating the risk of bias in my interpretation of the results (cf. Merrian, 1988). In addition, it has offered a meaningful and complex response to the research questions and allowed for the cross validation of conclusions by comparing them using data collected in different ways.

Although the online survey received fewer responses than anticipated, it covered a wide geographic spread of PAOs and offered a broad range of international perspectives on OEP. It was designed as an exploratory study to scope out general ideas and issues in the research area, and the preliminary findings assisted in choosing interview participants and refining research design for the following stages. Semi-structured interviews were conducted online using Skype, Zoom and Teams due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it was difficult to arrange interview times for some cases owing to different time zones. To involve multiple viewpoints, the interviewees included senior-management representatives from PAOs, OEP managers, and artists who work in the field with audiences. The flexibility of conducting semi-structured interviews allowed me to tailor-make

each one based on the dynamics of each interaction (Mason, 1996), yet it created some difficulties when conducting an analysis across the interview transcripts.

The research design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and its conclusions, rather than a logistical problem (Yin, 2018). Even though I had a research design in place before conducting the fieldwork, it was still subject to uncontrollable factors. As the research project needed a large amount of time spent in the field to collect data, and the multi-method design further complicated the data collecting process, the research design was subject to change due to factors beyond my own control. The original plan was to conduct the survey first and, based on these preliminary findings, to guide the following interviews and case studies. However, because of the difficulties in raising responses and the time limitations of a PhD study, I had to adopt a more flexible approach to extend the survey closing date while commencing the case studies. Even though the research plan was changed due to the unexpected circumstances, there were some advantages. Firstly, it allowed me to have more time to gather survey responses, which ensured the validity of data. Secondly, as the nature of this research is an interpretive study, it was an iterative, intertwining processes of access, generation and analysis. This demanded the researcher's status as an active agent within the debate, which helped to shape both the data generated and the conclusions reached. In this case, conducting case studies allowed me to gain in-depth knowledge on how PAOs operate OEP within their institutions, which, in turn, enabled me to sharpen my insight and ask better questions during the interview stage.

The multi-case approach enabled me to gain in-depth understanding from different perspectives (Simons, 2009) as the two case study organisations in this research represent two different models of implementing OEP in different countries. As such, the case studies helped me to explore and understand how OEP relates to artistic programming, and how different cultural policies and

organisational structures may affect the practice. Furthermore, it allowed me to consider what is unique and what is common across cases (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). Through analysing the collected data and drawing conclusions from each case, this method helped me to produce implications that inform future practice in an evaluative way. However, it could be argued that due to the brevity of time spent at each organisation, it was difficult to engage in deeper reflection on my participant observations. It would been better if the fieldwork could have been extended, but the geographic distance and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic sadly rendered this impossible.

My early arts experiences were in children's choirs, private violin and piano lessons, and, later, I studied Arts Management in a music conservatoire. This led me to pursue a career in the performing arts industry as an arts manager. Researching such a topic has been a learning journey for me. My position as an academic rather than a front-line practitioner has offered me the distance and time to observe things about the field and to reflect my previous ethical stance as an arts manager and also as an arts lover. Given my experience-based belief in the importance of the arts, this research process has forced me to reconsider many of my basic assumptions about the relationship between the arts, the people, and the society in which they exist. As a product of the established arts infrastructure and one of the privileged few, it has taken me a long time to look beyond my biased and filtered view. This awareness has provided me with a new lens through which to view the debates around outreach and education in the arts. Therefore, conducting research on this topic has been an education to me. There is no doubt that as a result of this research my personal views are very different at the end of the process from what they were at the beginning.

As acknowledged by one of the interviewees in this research, "there is a resistance to change the ideological practice because of tradition and hierarchy and all those kinds of longstanding problems […] but there is the capacity for this to change" (Arts Manager R). It is my hope that the discussion

prompted by this research will help more researchers and practitioners to realise the necessity of an ideological shift in the arts and cultural sector. This would require us to challenge the status quo, to think differently about how best the cultural participation choices of everyone might be supported, and to act creatively to ensure everyone can equitably pursue the cultural life that they desire.

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Appendices

Appendix A Survey Questions

Survey on Outreach and Education Practice as Audience Engagement Strategy in the Performing Arts

Part 1 Background and Information

1. Country and region of your organisation: _____________

2. Name of your organisation: _____________

3. Would you describe your organisation as _____________
☐ Producing company.
☐ Presenting organisation.
☐ Both producing and presenting.

4. How many employees (full-time equivalent) in your organisation? _____________

5. What art form(s) do you have in your work? Please select all that apply.
☐ Music
☐ Drama
☐ Dance
☐ Literature
☐ Film and video
☐ Other visual arts
☐ Other, please specify: _____________

6. What forms of Outreach and Education practice do you have? Please select all that apply.
☐ Pre and/or post performance talks
☐ Themed festivals
☐ Open days
☐ Backstage tour
☐ Artist in conversation
☐ One-off schools visit
☐ Longer term engagement with school programme
☐ Artist-led participatory projects
☐ Q&A's
☐ Talent development projects
☐ Community-based projects
☐ Other, please specify: _____________

7. What term(s) do you use to refer to outreach and education practice in your organisation?

____

8. What is the estimated number of outreach and education events (include projects, sessions, workshops etc.) in September 2017- August 2018?

____

9. What is the estimated number of outreach and education events in September 2018 - August 2019?
____

Part 2 Human Resource and Leadership

10. Is there a specific department in your organisation that dedicate to outreach and education works?
☐ Yes.
☐ No.

10.a. If your answer is yes: How do you name that department? __________

10.b. If your answer is no: What department(s) in charge of that? __________

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11. How many staff involved in your outreach and education work? __________

11.a. How many of them are full-time staff? __________

11.b. How many of them are permanent staff? __________

12. How many volunteers involved in your outreach and education work in the past 12 months?
☐ 0-5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ More than 20

13. Is the most senior member of the outreach and education team represented in senior management of your organisation?
☐ Yes. ☐ No.

14. Is outreach and education department representative in programming decision-making?
☐ Yes. ☐ No. ☐ Indirectly.

Part 3 Strategy

15. What is the **core aim** of your outreach and education work?
☐ Respond to funder's requirements.
☐ Give more people access to the arts.
☐ Convert participants to audiences.
☐ Diversify current programme.
☐ Extend the range of performance to other audience.
☐ Other: __________

16. Have you seen impact on performance-attendance numbers as a result of your outreach and education activities?
☐ Yes. ☐ No. ☐ It is not clear.

17. Who are your target audience of outreach and education work?
☐ a. Local community
☐ b. Current ticket buyers
☐ c. Children and families.
☐ d. School-aged children and young people
☐ e. Senior citizens
☐ f. LGBTQ
☐ g. Minority groups e.g. refugees, people with disabilities
☐ Other, please specify: __________

17.a. Is there a strategic priority for your target audience?
☐ Yes. ☐ No.

17.b. If your answer is yes, please list the strategic priority of your target audience.

(Please put your selected options' letters in sequence.) ____________________

18. Do you have a clear written strategy/plan for outreach and education?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Partly. (It is embedded in the wider strategic plan of the organisation.)

19. Have you ever surveyed people who participated in your outreach and education activities to evaluate their effectiveness?
☐ Yes. ☐ No.

20. How else do you evaluate your outreach and education work? Please write your answer.

____

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21. How do you develop your practice and learn in Outreach and Education?
Please select all that apply.

- ☐ From other arts organisations
- ☐ Attend international conference/society/association
- ☐ Attend national conference/society/association
- ☐ Attend local/regional networking events
- ☐ Reports published by arts councils/universities/other researchers
- ☐ Industry publications
- ☐ Consultancy
- ☐ Higher Education partnerships
- ☐ Other, please specify: __________

22.Who did you collaborate with in outreach and education work in the past 12 months?

- ☐ a. Schools
- ☐ b. Universities
- ☐ c. Local authority
- ☐ d. Corporations and other business
- ☐ e. Other performing arts organisations
- ☐ f. Community-based arts groups
- ☐ g. Trust and foundations
- ☐ h. Other charities/NGOs
- ☐ i. Health and wellbeing organisations
- ☐ j. Other, please specify: __________

22.a. Which three partners do you work with most regularly among the ones you selected?

____

Part 4 Finance

23. What was your budget for outreach and education work in September 2017 - August 2018?
Please specify your currency. __________

23.a. What proportion of the budget is from your core budget? __________

23.b. How much is through fundraising? __________

24. How much income did you earn via outreach and education work in September 2017- August 2018? Please specify your currency. __________

25. What proportion of the outreach and education budget was allocated to research and development? __________

26. If you were to receive unrestricted funding to nourish your outreach and education practice what would you apply to towards?

- ☐ Ongoing strategic activity.
- ☐ Prospecting for partners.
- ☐ International collaboration.
- ☐ In house training and education.
- ☐ Revival of programme.
- ☐ Experimentation with form and structure of content.
- ☐ Policy development and implementation across the organisation.
- ☐ Development of the priority for governance involvement.
- ☐ Other, please specify: __________

Thank you for your time and participation in this study!

27. Would you like to be kept informed about this study? If Yes, please leave your Email:

____

28. Would you like to be contacted for an interview? If Yes, please leave your Name and Email:

____

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Appendix B Ethical Committee Favourable

The Secretariat
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT
Tel: 0113 343 4873
Email: ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk

Yun Cheng
School of Performance and Cultural Industries
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee
University of Leeds

25 February 2019

Dear Yun

Title of study	**Outreach and Education Practice as Audience Engagement Strategy in Performing Arts Centres: An International Perspective**
Ethics reference	**FAHC 18-028**

I am pleased to inform you that the above research application has been reviewed by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments, I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
FAHC 18-028 Revised Ethical Review Form - Yun Cheng.docx	1	18/02/19
RE Reminder FAHC 18-028 provisional opinion – response from supervisor.txt	1	14/02/19
FAHC 18-028 Ethical_Review_Form_V3 Yun Cheng.docx	1	12/10/18
FAHC 18-028 Sample Information Sheet - Yun Cheng-2018-10-10.docx	1	12/10/18
FAHC 18-028 Example participant consent form - Yun Cheng -2018-10-10.docx	1	12/10/18
FAHC 18-028 Sample Email to Outreach and Education Managers and Staff Members - Yun Cheng -2018-10-10.docx	1	12/10/18
FAHC 18-028 Sample Email to Performing Arts Centre Executives Manager - Yun Cheng -2018-10-10.docx	1	12/10/18
FAHC 18-028 Fieldwork Assessment Form -low risk -Yun Cheng -2018-10-10.docx	1	12/10/18

Committee members made the following comments about your application, for consideration:

- C13: you ask for the phone numbers of potential respondents for interviews. The reviewers suggested email or phone number (whichever the respondent is happy to share).

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the information in your ethics application as submitted at date of this approval as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAmendment.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation and other documents relating to the study, including any risk assessments. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited. There is a checklist listing examples of documents to be kept which is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAudits.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie
Senior Research Ethics Administrator, the Secretariat
On behalf of Prof Robert Jones, Chair, AHC FREC

CC: Student's supervisor(s)

Appendix C Information Sheet for Survey

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Information Sheet

Research project: Outreach and Education Practice as Audience Engagement Strategy in Performing Arts Centres: An International Perspective

I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds and you are being invited to take part in my research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for your consideration.

Some questions you may have:

What is the purpose of the project?
This study aims to generate original insights into outreach and education practice (OEP) as audience engagement strategy in the performing arts from an international perspective. In order to investigate the roles and values of OEP in the current context, and to gain fresh insights into the impacts of OEP in arts participation and organisational development, this thesis will engage in-depth with OEP practitioners from different countries to investigate their perceptions, experiences, attitudes toward to the varied activities.

By exploring different structures and models of OEP, the findings will seek to refine terminologies; present an original typology of OEP; and clarify the differences in ways that scholars and practitioners can use to communicate and improve their understanding. Furthermore, this research will look at how is practice of outreach and education work being transferred and applied from one organisation to another and one country to another.

In addition, it intends to indicate a range of implications for theory and practice which will help practitioners, researchers and policymakers understand OEP better, and should encourage them to think broadly and creatively about how the performing arts might go on engaging audience-participants in the future via this form.

This research will involve online survey on performing arts organisations around the world, interviews with professionals and case studies on two performing arts centres: The Barbican Centre, London, and the Esplanade, Singapore.

What would I have to do?
If you take part you will be asked to fill out an online survey at:

https://leeds.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/survey-audience-engagement

It will take about 10 minutes of your time to complete the survey. This information would form an important part of this research in understanding the current situation of outreach and education practice in different performing arts organisations.

What are the possible benefits and risks of taking part?
Whilst there are no immediate risks or benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will provide insight into outreach and education practice and contribute useful insights for arts managers and policy makers. I would like to share the final result if you are interested.

This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by The University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee on 25 February 2019, ethics reference FAHC 18-028.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep.

Can I withdraw from the project if I change my mind?
You are free to withdraw your consent at any time up to 3 months after participation by emailing me. You are not obliged to justify your withdrawal.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?
The data collected will be kept confidential and you may choose for your contribution to be kept anonymous.

Your privacy and storage of data
To ensure that electronic data is protected, it will be stored on the University of Leeds server. Data will be kept for a period of 3 years on the secure server following data collection or two years following publication, whichever is the longest, before being destroyed.

What will happen to the results of the research project?
The research will form the basis for my PhD thesis, which I am planning to have completed in September 2021. The findings may also form the basis of academic journal articles or conference presentations.

Who is funding the research?
This research will form part of a PhD thesis which is being undertaken at the University of Leeds. The researcher is self-funded.

Further information
Should you have any questions please contact me:
Blair, Yun Cheng
PhD Candidate
Mobile: +44(0)7568908551
Skype: blair_chengyun
Email: pcyc@leeds.ac.uk

Or if you would like to speak to a representative at the University of Leeds
Dr Ben Walmsley
Phone: +44 (0) 113 343 8722
Email: b.walmsley@leeds.ac.uk

Appendix D Information Sheet for Interview

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Information Sheet

Research project: Outreach and Education Practice as Audience Engagement Strategy in Performing Arts: An International Perspective

I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds and you are being invited to take part in my research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for your consideration.

Some questions you may have:

What is the purpose of the project?
This study aims to generate original insights into outreach and education practice (OEP) as audience engagement strategy in the performing arts from an international perspective. In order to investigate the roles and values of OEP in the current context, and to gain fresh insights into the impacts of OEP in arts participation and organisational development, this thesis will engage in-depth with OEP practitioners from different countries to investigate their perceptions, experiences, attitudes toward to the varied activities.

By exploring different structures and models of OEP, the findings will seek to refine terminologies; present an original typology of OEP; and clarify the differences in ways that scholars and practitioners can use to communicate and improve their understanding. Furthermore, this research will look at how is practice of outreach and education work being transferred and applied from one organisation to another and one country to another.

In addition, it intends to indicate a range of implications for theory and practice which will help practitioners, researchers and policymakers understand OEP better, and should encourage them to think broadly and creatively about how the performing arts might go on engaging audience-participants in the future via this form.

This research will involve online survey on performing arts organisations around the world, interviews with professionals and case studies on two performing arts centres: The Barbican Centre, London, and the Esplanade, Singapore.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been identified as a key person involved in outreach and education practice and I believe that your insights would be invaluable to this research project.

What would I have to do?
If you take part you will be asked to attend an online interview with me which would take place via an online communication platform. The interview would last about 60 minutes and would be rather open and conversational, allowing you the space to express your perceptions and experience on outreach and education practice. This information would form an important part of this research in understanding how is outreach and education practice developing and evolving in the performing arts.

What are the possible benefits and risks of taking part?
Whilst there are no immediate risks or benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will provide insight into outreach and education practice and contribute useful insights for arts managers and policy makers. I would like to share the final result if you are interested.

This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by The University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee on 25 February 2019, ethics reference FAHC 18-028.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep.

Can I withdraw from the project if I change my mind?
You are free to withdraw your consent at any time up to 3 months after participation by emailing me. You are not obliged to justify your withdrawal.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?
The data collected will be kept confidential and you may choose for your contribution to be kept anonymous.

Your privacy and storage of data
To ensure that electronic data is protected, it will be stored on the University of Leeds server. Data will be kept for a period of 3 years on the secure server following data collection or two years following publication, whichever is the longest, before being destroyed.

What will happen to the results of the research project?
The research will form the basis for my PhD thesis, which I am planning to have completed in September 2021. The findings may also form the basis of academic journal articles or conference presentations.

Who is funding the research?
This research will form part of a PhD thesis which is being undertaken at the University of Leeds. The researcher is self-funded.

Further information
Should you have any questions please contact me:
Blair, Yun Cheng
PhD Candidate
Mobile: +44(0)7568908551
Skype: blair_chengyun
Email: pcyc@leeds.ac.uk

Or if you would like to speak to a representative at the University of Leeds
Dr Ben Walmsley
Phone: +44 (0) 113 343 8722
Email: b.walmsley@leeds.ac.uk

Appendix E Informed Consent Form

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures
School of Performance and Cultural Industries

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Consent to take part in Outreach and Education Practice as Audience Engagement Strategy in the Performing Arts: An International Perspective

	Add your initials next to the statements you agree with
I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	
I agree to take part in the project via interview and I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	
I understand that my taking part is voluntary; I can withdraw from the study up to three months after the interview and I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part.	
I understand my personal details such as phone number and address will not be revealed to people outside the project.	
I understand that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs.	
I agree for the data collected from me to be stored and used in relevant future research.	
I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by auditors from the University of Leeds or from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.	
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials related to this project to Yun Cheng.	
*Please choose **one** of the following two options:* I am happy for my real name to be used in the above.	
I would not like my real name to be used in the above.	

Name of participant	
Participant's signature	
Date	
Name of researcher	
Signature	
Date	