6th DIVERSITY MATTERS
a Commonwealth forum on cultural diversity

LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore
23 – 25 September 2010

Social Cohesion and the Arts in Commonwealth Countries

Forum Report Contents

BACKGROUND

The **Sixth Diversity Matters Forum, Singapore** entitled *Social Cohesion and the Arts*, is the sixth in a series of Commonwealth Forums held every two years since 2001. The forums operate as a think tank, bringing together civil society, practitioners and academia to discuss key contemporary issues and make policy recommendations to Commonwealth institutions, governments and other agencies. Each forum has looked at a different facet of cultural diversity and how it is played out, including diasporas, and the role of the media and faith, and has included a diverse range of speakers as well as participants from numerous countries.

This forum was held on 23-25 September 2010 at the campus of LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. The forum explored the role that the arts can play in helping to bridge gaps, build social capital and strengthen social cohesion, and featured a range of distinguished international presenters from the Commonwealth who shared their experience and expertise in the area of social cohesion and the arts.

The thought-provoking presentations and discussions held during the forum produced several recommendations and practical solutions to be presented at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth, Western Australia in October 2011.

The Sixth Diversity Matters Forum was organised by the Australian Multicultural Foundation in partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation (UK), LASALLE College of the Arts, the Australian High Commission in Singapore, the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria (Australia), the Monash University Institute for the Study of Global Movements (Australia), Kape Communications (Australia) and The Statesman (India).

The Sixth Diversity Matters Forum builds on the success of previous forums held in Brisbane (2001), London (2003), Kolkata (2005), Johannesburg (2007), and Kuala Lumpur (2008), displaying cases of good practice from Commonwealth Nations where arts play an integral part in building cohesion between communities including Singapore, Australia, India, UK, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Uganda, the Bahamas, and Kenya.

The forum organisers wish to give special thanks to the staff and associates of LASALLE College of the Arts, especially Professor Alastair Pearce and Mr Venka Purushothaman for all their support, and also to Ms Suyin Chew and Ms Cassandra Ang for the coordination of the event. The forum organisers would also like to thank Ms Lynn Cain of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, Ms Irene Thavarajah of Monash University, and Professor John Nieuwenhuysen AM and Ms Sahar Sana of the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements for their efforts in making the forum a success, and to Ms Angela Wright of the Australian Multicultural Foundation for the compilation of this report. The organisers also wish to thank Dr Mark Collins and Mr Andrew Firmin of the Commonwealth Foundation, Mr Ravindra Kumar of The Statesman, and Mr Fotis Kapetopoulos of Kape Communications for all their valuable assistance.

The forum organisers also wish to express their appreciation to each of the speakers, including the keynote speaker Ms Penny Low MP, plenary speakers, workshop presenters, and session chairs for their excellent presentations, and also to the delegates for their attendance and invaluable contribution to the forum.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations that resulted from the forum include:

Forming strong cohesions amongst different groups. Dealing with one single group as opposed to many voices is easier for governments, and there needs to be a mechanism to forge stronger social cohesion amongst different groups. This could be through creating a space where there can be an open dialogue, or encouraging an interactive process and involving people from all levels be it grassroots, organisational etc.

When managing divergent views, there should be methods in place to develop and strengthen a greater social understanding amongst different groups. As nations become more open and have a larger diverse population where diverse views are being expressed, this may pose a challenge, for example, in the areas of censorship and regulation.

Convincing governments of the significance of the arts through network formation. Network formation is a valuable tactic for the cultural sector in getting itself recognised as part of wider civil society and needs to be voluntary and bottom up.

When developing community partnerships, principles are required for developing ways to facilitate excellence and respect in community programs. This includes the program being by, with and for the communities, where communities have the dominant role.

Engaging the arts with philanthropy and corporate social responsibility. There may be capacity constraints, and therefore increased reliance on funding from non-government sources so it is important to increase the connection between the arts and private sector philanthropy.

When dealing with a complex issue, a complexity analysis should be employed. Complex social issues have multiple facets and gaining cooperation is a tough challenge, particularly for those in the public policy context.

Ensuring that when dispersing funds in organisations this is driven by, with, and for communities.

Encouraging diversity amongst political leaders as diversity within political leaders may assist in changing ways of thinking.

There is need for highly trained, skilled and active 'culture brokers' who will seek to create or facilitate civic and cultural cohesion. Culture brokers illuminate what is opaque, or not understandable to audiences or to 'others'.

DAY ONE

Master of Ceremonies
Ms Samrina Mohan Mulani
Student of LASALLE College of the Arts

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dr B. Hass Dellal OAM, Executive Director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, as chair of the Diversity Matters Forum Committee welcomed speakers, delegates and distinguished guests. Dr Dellal presented delegates with background information to the Diversity Matters Forums which began in 2001 in Brisbane, followed by London, Kolkota, Johannesburg, and Kuala Lumpur. Dr Dellal expressed that the Sixth Diversity Matters forum builds on the success of previous forums and the theme Social Cohesion and the Arts explores the fundamental role that the arts and culture play as a gel for social cohesion in a global environment. Arts and culture are foundation stones in the building of social capital. Dr Dellal emphasised that community partnerships as a base for cohesion and cultural development is imperative.

Dr Dellal stated that the Forum is an opportunity to address recommendations raised from the Commonwealth Statement on Culture and Development by the Commonwealth Foundation. He also added that arts and culture is a powerful medium to bridge social or cultural gaps while promoting social cohesion. Dr Dellal emphasised the timely opportunity to influence the Commonwealth's agenda, with a view to present the recommendations from the Forum to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 2011. He thanked those involved in organising the conference including the host, LASALLE College of the Arts and team, as well as the sponsors of the Forum, the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, the Australian High Commission, and Kape Communications, and partners The Commonwealth Foundation, the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements, Monash University, and the Statesman. Dr Dellal ended by encouraging participants to learn, enjoy, share and engage with everyone.

Professor Alastair Pearce, President of LASALLE College of the Arts, welcomed delegates to the LASALLE College of the Arts Campus and expressed that as president, he was delighted that this venue was chosen. Its open and unique design allows communities to join debates about what art is, what art is for, and where art is going. Professor Pearce emphasised that the arts are immensely useful in linking a citizen with their cultural inheritance, and are key to acknowledging, respecting and

celebrating who we are. He further added that we can encourage deeper knowledge of that tradition through active participation, and that deepened cultural understanding, a key transferable skill, is a skill that will encourage understanding of others' traditions. With this understanding comes respect, and with respect comes cohesion. Professor Pearce ended by saying that profound engagement with the arts lies at the real heart of social cohesion.

Dr Mark Collins, Director of the Commonwealth Foundation, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending and expressed his pleasure to be back in Singapore, a place he has visited before but is always changing. Dr Collins stated that in the Commonwealth, cultural diversity is something to celebrate, protect, and enhance, one of the reasons why from the inception of the Commonwealth in 1965, the Commonwealth Foundation was established. Dr Collins stated that the Diversity Matters forums have been going for 10 years and they have influenced the direction of the Commonwealth and its diversity. Dr Collins explained that one indicator of a good society is a vibrant arts sector with wide access and multiple means for self expression and participation that really reaches out to everyone including disadvantaged and marginalised members of our community, who are so often at the heart of challenges in social cohesion. He continued on to say that we need to learn from the many examples of good practice in various countries, all of which have their own challenges and ways of addressing them through the arts. In the next two days we should consider how such practices can be adapted in different contexts, and hopes that through networking, talking and learning together, lasting links can be forged. In closing, Dr Collins emphasised that Diversity Matters is an opportunity to reach the ears of 54 heads of government through the CHOGM meeting in Perth in October 2011. He ended by thanking all the longstanding partners and participants and wished them a fruitful conference.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Chair
Professor John Nieuwenhuysen AM
Director, Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements, Monash University

Professor Nieuwenhuysen opened the conference and introduced the keynote speaker, Ms Penny Low MP.

Summary of Keynote Address

Presented by
Ms Penny Low
Founder and President, Social Innovation Park Ltd
Member of Parliament, Singapore

Ms Low opened by stating she was extremely honoured to be at the conference and that the arts has always been close to her heart – it is why she chose to be involved in her current ministry, and she chaired the government parliamentary committee until 2009. Ms Low spoke of an agenda to ensure the Ministry of Education is embracing arts as a main thrust in education and it is not a side agenda. There has been a quite a move in the way arts has developed in the last 9-10 years in Singapore, including controversial acts and discussions in the arts scenes, and amongst policy makers and the public.

When Ms Low joined the Ministry in 2001, her first introduction was a paper called Renaissance City Plan 1.0 which was about not being a cultural desert, but to live rich on Singapore's multicultural and multireligious social fabric, to bring out not just Singapore's heritage but also its cultural capital. She expressed that arts is not just for aesthetic appeal purposes, but should be a livid part of our lives. If we look at any great cities in the world, there is not one that is a cultural desert.

Ms Low added it is clear to Singaporeans that in aspiring to be a great nation, an attractive city, and a true home for people, there is a need for improvement and to progress and embrace all arts and culture. Diversity does not necessarily end in social chaos – if we address it, and allow space for it, then after perhaps some key debates and chaos, there could arise a much stronger and better bonded community. In her experience, she has encountered frequent debate.

Ms Low posed the question of how to achieve greatness in arts, and to bring arts to the community. Can we create a society where it is arts anytime anywhere rather than confined to theatres and galleries? The challenge is how do we do it: through community partnerships, who are the partners? Are they grassroots organisations, or

peoples' associations, or schools, or commercial institutions? Ms Low stated that the answer is all of the above. We need all sectors to be active participants and decision makers - the public sector, private sector, NGO sector and community sectors - everyone is to be involved.

In Singapore, the Renaissance City Plan progressed from 1.0 to 2.0 and cultural capital was emphasised. The arts in itself can also deliver premiums, not just from the aesthetic or isoteric point of view, but it can also be extremely profitable, thus encouraging more people and parents to encourage children to pursue interest in arts and sports. This was relatively unheard of less than five to ten years ago.

Today Ms Low is glad to see colleges like LASALLE which are efforts to ensure that the government in particular puts in resources to its markets. She will continue to push this agenda in her current capacity and encourage the arts into the community. An engaging example was to allow people to paint walls in a constituency in a laisse faire way, allowing passersby to join in. The artists could showcase their art pieces, the community participated and learnt to appreciate the different art forms, and those who physically did not paint this mural art were able to appreciate it, so much so that they will be using that venue for a celebration. It is about fusing arts into the community itself so that it can be anytime anywhere, and everybody is playing a part, participating in it, and living it.

In closing, Ms Low congratulated the AMF, LASALLE College of the Arts, the Commonwealth Foundation, and Monash University for this excellent event and stated she looked forward to the performances and results of the debates during the forum.

OPENING PRODUCTION

For the opening production a film and a dance performance were shown, produced as LASALLE students' graduating works.

TRACES, a film directed by Ong Zheng Kai, LASALLE Puttnum School of Film top graduate this year, was screened. In 'Traces', a poignant tale of regaining hope amidst the disappointments faced in life, Ken, a printmaking teacher, is faced with the difficult decision of having to choose between his family and his muse when an ex-student unexpectedly returns into his life. Following the film, there was a dance performance by the LASALLE School of dance, titled, Fried Banana (Animal Pop). Choreographed and composed by Jecko Siompo, the assistant choreographer was LASALLE alumnus Siti Ajeng Soelaeman. This dance draws on Jecko Siompo's unique style, which he calls Animal Pop, a melding of traditional Papua dance and Hip Hop. *Fried Banana* looks at how naming is inherent in our search for identity both within and outside group dynamics; it explores what gives a sense of belonging, and how acceptance can be found, despite differences.

CASE STUDIES SESSION

Chair
Mr T. Sasitharan
Theatre Training and Research Programme
Singapore

Case Study 1 Summary: MOTHER UGANDA: ONE OTHER WAY TO NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND UNITY THROUGH THE ARTS

Presented by
Mr Joseph Walugembe
Artistic Director
Uganda National Cultural Centre

Mr Walugembe began by introducing "Mother Uganda", produced as part of the "rebuilding Uganda" Programme. The programme underscored national reconciliation and unity following the civil war that ended in 1986. Mr Walugembe explained that Uganda has 65 ethnic groups with their own identity, and each had a government of its own. The production carried a multitalented and multiethnic cast that used different art forms to dramatically present a message. Items were raised from individuals and through improvisation a product was achieved. The process witnessed challenges in the areas of cultural appreciation, time allotment and expertise. The Director got support from assistants and the rehearsal schedule appreciated the degree of complexity of the times. Shows were done in Uganda, United Kingdom, Kenya, and attracted support from Government of Uganda, Makerere University, Rockfeller Foundation and Africa Centre London.

Mr Walugembe explained that the Production changed the mindset of the cast, Ugandans at home and in the Diaspora. They appreciated the price and rewards of national reconciliation "Mother Uganda" gave birth to multicultural theatre in Uganda which has gained influence, dynamism and popularity. It provided a relevant message to Kenyans regarding national unity. Mr Walugembe emphasised that multicultural theatre should be given space at different forums and should be promoted within and among Commonwealth countries. A fund should be instituted to facilitate the programme and capacity building should be done to develop a skilled workforce in the area that can cause a multiplier effect. Exchange programmes within and among countries should be encouraged to practically express what is professed.

Mr Walugembe also spoke of the lessons learned − to be resilient, the director needs the assistant, improvisation taps creativity, and when in theatre you need to read about other fields such as politics for example, in order to show them in your performance. You need to research so that what you put together carries the meaning of what you

want to convey. Mr Walugembe ended by stating that theatre is a physicalised form to transmit messages, and multicultural theatre is a theatre without boundaries.

Case Study 2 Summary: CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNE

Presented by
Mr Jeffrey Tan
Head, Education & Outreach
Singapore Arts Festival
National Arts Council, Singapore

Mr Tan spoke from his personal capacity as a teacher and about his involvement in the establishment of the Arts Festival. He stated that 2010 is a very unusual year for the thirty three year old Singapore Arts Festival. With almost an entirely new team, the biggest challenge for the festival was how to stay relevant and connected to Singaporeans. With numerous independent festivals throughout the year, he posed the question, what can the Singapore Arts Festival offer that will enhance, compliment and led the cultural landscape? In refocusing the Singapore as a Creation and People's Festival, a theme was introduced for the first time- *Between You and Me*. Other than providing a lens to link the various festival programmes, the theme also highlighted the festival's desire to build connections between the festival and the audience.

Mr Tan stated that Commune, the education and outreach unit of the festival, was created to reach out and grow different communities of art lovers, art makers and arts volunteers. With the three principles of access, engagement and connection, commune was established to provide pre, during and post festival engagement with different communities throughout the year. The key audiences included children, youths, senior citizens, artists and teachers. Commune also worked with several schools, communities and industry partners, e.g. National Library Board, People's association, South East Community Development Council.

Mr Tan explained that through the Commune programme, the festival revamped the Festival Volunteers programme to include basic arts volunteerism training and established the new Festival Ambassadors programme. This year, the Festival Ambassadors programme attracted a record high number of 366 volunteers from different ages and from all walks of life. The different Commune programmes also provided a bridge between different communities of photographers, film makers, children, youth, senior citizens, artists, teachers and arts volunteers. In closing, Mr Tan stated that the power and value of the arts cannot be underestimated in its ability to bring different people together in providing a safe space for communication, exploration, expression and developing both self and social growth.

Case Study 3 Summary: THE ARTS IN A MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA *Successful arts and diversity initiatives*

Presented by
Ms Cecelia Cmielewski
Manager, Cultural Engagement Initiatives
Community Partnerships, Australia Council for the Arts

Ms Cmielewski began by stating that in Australia, social cohesion is enhanced by the arts – the arts provide a safe place for discussion about identity and belonging, often, witnessing the mere expression of diversity is enough to expand our understanding of the world and where we may fit within it. This becomes even more powerful when we are actively engaged through art making to express ourselves.

Ms Cmielewski described how a network of multicultural arts organisations can be an innovative way to distribute arts by diverse artists and groups. This is a model that can activate community building, do business that supports the social dimensions of engagement and elevate the artistic experience for artists and audiences alike. She stated that the Australia Council for the Arts' vision is that Australia's dynamic cultural life and practices are embraced, celebrated and created by the diversity of our cultures. The Council is committed to supporting and promoting a strong arts sector that effectively reflects Australia's cultural diversity, by integrating the objectives of its Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policy through the delivery of its activities. A fundamental principal of the Australian government's multicultural policy is that we are an integrated society without losing our cultural identities. This is a consistent principal of the Australia Council. Both can be characterised as adhering to a cultural pluralist approach to a multicultural environment. Cultural pluralism is "concerned with government recognition and support for the preservation and development of migrant groups and cultures."

Ms Cmielewski spoke of innovation as one of her mantras and the potential for innovation coming from diversity, and that when a range of demographic groups are involved in cultural production we are more likely to be successful at innovating for the long term. Pluralism and diversity of arts practice have a track record of delivering solutions to entrenched and systemic barriers across industry or society.

In conclusion, Ms Cmielewski put forward recommendations, suggesting that this forum considers recommending to CHOGM that the model of kultour is adopted and adapted to assist in the exchange of artworks and community development processes between Commonwealth nations, and also conveying to CHOGM that the issue of leadership by culturally diverse arts workers within the arts sectors requires concerted attention to realise the significant benefits to cultural expression and leadership.

SESSION ONE:
Strengthening the role of arts in education

Chair
Ms Jane Allan
Dean, Faculty of Foundation Studies
LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

Presentation 1 Summary: Trajectories of Change: Arts, Education and their Bleeding Prospects in 21st Century Asia

Presented by
Mr Venka Purushothaman
Vice-President (Academic) & Provost
LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

Mr Purushothaman began by saying that his area of interest is cultural policy and the way it creates an area of connectivity with arts education in Asia Pacific. He has been looking at Singapore's cultural policy for 10 years but has extended to the Asia Pacific region. Mr Purushothaman stated that the focus on the arts is on the rise in Asia in tandem with its growing affluence. This interest is spurred by two developments: First, the development of the creative industries. Singapore recently released its *Renaissance City Plan III* (2009) with a view to create Singapore into a magnet for international talent and a good home for Singaporeans by 2015 through a three-prong strategy of developing intellectual capital (content), a business ecosystem for the arts and to engage the community through the arts to build social cohesion. Other Asian cities have similar aspirations: South Korea is investing billions to realise Vision 2015: Cultural City Seoul; China's vision for Hong Kong's Kowloon as an integrated cultural hub by 2014 will require billions; and United Arab Emirates is investing billions in transforming Abu Dhabi into a crucible for high art.

Mr Purushothaman explained that secondly, the search for a new order for art-making that speaks *of, for* and *with* an Asiancentricity is emerging. Dissolving borders between art forms; rise of a new lobby for disappearing traditional art forms; formation of community-focused art collectives; and, shifting audience taste for conventional offerings evidence this. The introduction of the arts into different aspects of teaching and learning and as a form of education in itself (arts education) is at a crossroad. Mr Puroshothaman emphasised that the arts and culture are relevant only because of their nexus with the economy making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between notions and practice of 'culture' and 'economy'. He concluded that as such, the determining role of arts in education or for that matter arts education must reckon with its vital role in manpower support for economic growth as opposed to investing in the opportunity to re-state the role of education in developing new ideals, aesthetics and art for an emerging 21st century Asia.

Presentation 2 Summary: Cultural Diversity and its management in Singapore

Presented by
Professor Chua Beng Huat
Provost Professor
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
National University of Singapore

Professor Chua explained that Singapore is a settler nation, like Australia, Canada and the US. However, it differs from these three nations in the West in two significant ways. First, the settling of Singapore did not involve the wholesale massacre of indigenous or aboriginal population as the killings of native Indians in Canada and the US and of aboriginals in Australia. Second, the majority population in the new nation is not from the colonising stock of White Anglo-Saxon, which perpetuated White racist practices until recent times. The racial majority in Singapore is itself an immigrant population and these different settlement conditions are consequential to Singapore's management of racial and religious diversities.

Politically, Professor Chua explained, the majority, huaren, not being indigenous have no proprietary claim to the land, whereas the regionally indigenous Malays are in the minority. Professor Chua explained that huaren is preferred here to ethnic Chinese because of the need to distinguish ethnic identity from national identity. Huaren is the official term used in Singapore. A third and smallest group are the South Asians, generally grouped as Indians, whose ancestors came with the British colonisation of Singapore. Professor Chua stated that this history of multiracialism, multiculturalism and multireligiosity is very different from the emergence of multicultural politics in the West since the 1980s.

Racial and religious harmony has been raised to the level of moral public good. There are several legal restrictions in place to positively reinforce tolerance. These include the Racial and Religious Harmony Bill, the Presidential Racial and Religious Harmony Council which can recommend to the government specific sanctions against particular religious teachers and teachings and finally, the allocation of public housing is regulated by racial quotas in direct equivalent to the proportion of each group in the general population. Some of these sanctions will undoubtedly be seen as excessively interventionist in Western liberal societies.

Professor Chua concluded by stating that on the whole, he would argue that going forward, the Singapore government's education and arts policies will be moving towards the promotion of a 'national' identity and subjectivity, away from race-cultures, even if it remains impossible, due to geopolitical reasons and lingering adherence to race cultures in the older generation, to publicly remove the racial divisions in public discourse.

Presentation 3 Summary: Engaging with life issues: the Area Youth Foundation and Theatre Arts Education for young people in Jamaica

Presented by
Ms Sheila Graham
Executive/Artistic Director
Area Youth Foundation, Jamaica

Ms Graham explained that in the marginalised urban communities of Kingston, Jamaica, long-standing and intermittently intense inter-territorial, political and gang-related conflicts keep young people out of school and corralled in over-crowded, under-served enclaves dominated by criminal 'dons'. Tension born of fear, the scarcity of even the most basic resources and the endemic condition of grieving which accompanies daily encounters with death, combine to breed a population that is vigilant, volatile, cynical and depressed.

Ms Graham stated that as a community educator in Kingston, she specialises in working with youths in these settings. She discussed three alternative, performance-based curricula and practices. These were: "Mi Son Dead", is an excerpt from a collectively created musical production in which urban youth enact memories of traumatic violence – a 'cultural therapeutic' process; Forum Theatre in high schools through which the student body critiques and proposes alternatives to high risk behaviours common in schools; and "All in Pictures" describes a process of collective creation that produced four photo novellas which aimed to validate the Creole language, situate its usage in the language spectrum of the country and reinforce competence in the official language. At the same time, this project sought to diminish some of the inter-territorial tension by bringing young males from these hostile areas into a collaborative process in a safe, creative and stimulating environment.

Ms Graham stated that these three examples demonstrate different aspects of the Area Youth Foundation's practice, which is Freirean in its commitment to encouraging adult learners to engage with life issues important to them and having them articulate the themes around which the learning agenda is elaborated. It is also grounded in the theoretical concepts of the 'literacies' for developing not only the 'multiliteracies' of audio-visual, musical, cultural and drama skills, but also the socio-political 'literacies' of deepening educational, personal and public competencies which are important foundations for active, self-confident citizenship.

LUNCHTIME DVD SCREENING
The Young Advocates' Programme and 2008 International Youth Forum
A short film produced by Yeast Culture

Presented by
Mr Neil Webb
Director Arts & Creative Industries East Asia
British Council

Summary
The *Young Advocates' Programme and 2008 International Youth Forum* brought together a group of 250 disabled and non-disabled Young Advocates from mainland China, Hong Kong, the UK, the USA, Bulgaria, Israel, Jordan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan during 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. The Youth Forum used sport, arts and education to develop the Young Advocates' confidence, leadership and communications skills and was praised by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) for promoting intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and development of civil society.

SESSION TWO:
Urbanisation and its impact on social cohesion and cultural development

Chair
Mr Andrew Firmin
Programme Manager - Culture
Commonwealth Foundation, UK

Presentation 1 Summary: Identity, Culture and Community: the integral role museums play in dynamic and cohesive cities and communities

Presented by
Ms Padmini Sebastian
Manager
Immigration Museum, Museum Victoria, Australia

Ms Sebastian introduced that today, millions of people are on the move and immigration and cultural diversity are key characteristics shaping urban spaces. Social Cohesion is one of the world's biggest challenges and opportunties; for the first time in human history more than 50% of us live in dynamic, complex and hybrid citites.

Ms Sebastian spoke about how museums play an integral role in undertaking community engagement and promoting social cohesion. By creating forums for cultural participation and exchange by individuals and collectives from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, museums engage diversity in a meaningful way. In particular, models and examples of initiatives undertaken by the Immigration Museum and Museum Victoria will assert the value and contribution of museums as social and cultural agencies that play a role in constructing identity, culture and community.

Technology and transport has resulted in greater integration of cities across the world virtually and in reality. Social media and networks are connecting people and more people are travelling and exploring different countries. The voices of many cultures are being felt in an increasingly networked world. Melbourne mirrors the changing face of both the State of Victoria and Australia – according to census reports almost a quarter of the City's residents were born overseas, while over 40% were either born overseas, or have a parent who was born overseas. Ms Sebastian explained that deeply integrating cultural institutions into the civic landscape, enabling and encouraging individuals and groups to participate and contribute to culture creation and reflecting the pluralism and hybrid nature of cities within our cultural spaces will enable greater connection, relationships and participation. Diversity is not greatly reflected in many cultural institutions and people don't see themselves represented and therefore feel disconnected. The 21st century provides an opportunity to create new cultural spaces and experiences that mirror the reality of diversity.

Ms Sebastian concluded by stating that in the future, we need to explore how can we work together across art form, disciplines, or cross pollinating. She put forward the question of how can we create programs that have sustained commitment from our organisations so that we can see some real results in our community and help social cohesion.

Presentation 2 Summary: Cultural Innovation during the First Great Urbanisation

Presented by
Dr Vincent O'Donnell
Executive Producer
Arts Alive, Australia - *Award-winning current affairs radio*

Dr O'Donnell spoke of cultural innovation during the first great urbanisation. Each of our countries, these members of the Commonwealth, is heir to the experience of the first country to experience wide spread industrialisation and urbanisation, Great Britain. He explained that how we invest that legacy, how we have done so, and will do so, determines whether we are also heir to the social, cultural, and economic distribution that was the first experience of urbanisation.

Dr O'Donnell explained that urbanisation has become the domestic experience of half the world's population. Supporting social cohesion in our communities and the domestic order that follows is a key challenge. If the forecast changes in climate and consequent alterations to the geography of food production, water storage, and waste disposal occur, those changes will bring great uncertainty and instability to urban populations and further threaten social cohesion. He stated that caution alone says it's wise to consider these potentials now and, if nothing adverse does come to pass, we will still be wiser for the effort. In shaping urbanism to support human needs, one cannot simply employ the nostrums of the past. The past provides examples of templates to recut, models to renovate, and outcome to avoid. However, the challenge here is for the politicians and bureaucrats: Those who come to lead, by promotion, by election, or by hereditary right of appointment. Those who expect to be, or are expected to be, the source of ideas and inspiration may have to change their ways. Dr O'Donnell concluded that in drawing solutions to the challenges of urbanisation from history and their communities, the best way for the leader to lead is to be the wise follower.

Presentation 3 Summary: Many Spokes, One Hub

Presented by
Ms Margot Bethel
Founder
The Hub, The Bahamas

Ms Bethel explained that the Bahamas' colonial history and fairly recent political independence (1973) make it a complex and challenging terrain to sustain culturally and artistically strong personalities. Nassau is a widely fragmented city, where the realities of racism, classism, homophobia, xenophobia and religious conservatism often undermine the possibilities for critique, debate or open dialogue. Tolerance is uncommon. Moreover, the importance of tourist and foreign investment industries are seen to necessitate the prioritisation of external interests above those of our local population. Consequently, current projects to revitalise Nassau's urban centre aim to balance the benefits to both locals and foreigners.

Ms Bethel stated that the Hub's main incentive is to recognise, accept and give voice to these challenges. A versatile and collaborative community arts space, we facilitate sharing ideas and resources, and describe ourselves as a central location where various "spokes" meet and share. As such, we enable alliances that strengthen a sense of community within the broader cultural context of Nassau. Their program focuses on unconventional, progressive ways of thinking, and promotes the arts as a platform to discuss social injustice and questions existing values and beliefs. Ms Bethel stated that the Hub focuses on "awakening" the wider society and its often isolating behaviours, by proving the role of the arts in implementing societal change. The Hub has established that there is a need for community space and open discussion wherein

ideas of ownership, initiative and agency are encouraged. The creation of a community space in the downtown core creates a counter-point to the historical dominance of private interests and parallels a direct need for Bahamians to claim/re-claim the city as their own. There have been many challenges such as finding and maintaining resources both monetary and human. Many of the individuals and groups using the Hub are themselves underfunded or recently established, and there is no public or private tradition of subsidising the arts, also productive and sustainable management and reaching the other ethnicities that make up society – specifically Haitian communities.

The Bahamas lacks several important policies governing social cohesion or the arts, and such policies are sorely needed. Ms Bethel suggested that international organisations like The Commonwealth Foundation could make grants accessible to Bahamian artists and cultural workers, fund local workshops, invest in projects that demonstrate the value of the arts in building community and social cohesion, provide travel grants for Bahamians interested in making regional and global connections, invest in training in arts administration and encourage the exchange of skills relevant to arts and social cohesion, and invest in the creation of technological webs to decrease travel costs and expand user base.

In closing, Ms Bethel provided the following recommendations: to build strong, diverse programming and be flexible, to diversify the management team - age/gender/race/sexuality, to document and archive as much as possible, to listen directly to members and associates and keenly observe, to actively collaborate and share with similar groups and to engage the young and youthful with leadership opportunities.

CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS: General perspectives and overview

Workshop 1: Arts in education and community arts practices in promoting social cohesion

Facilitator
Ms Sheila Graham
Executive/Artistic Director
Area Youth Foundation, Jamaica

Case Study 1: SPONSORED ARTS FOR EDUCATION (SAFE)

Presented by
Mr Kamau Wa Ndung'u
Creative Coordinator
Sponsored Arts for Education (SAFE), Kenya

Mr Ndung'u opened by describing Sponsored Arts For Education (SAFE) as an arts based development charity working in three Kenyan regions, that uses the power of theatre to mobilise, educate and empower individuals and communities to rethink their perceptions of taboo public health issues. This ends in social change and improves public health in the poorest areas of Kenya.

His presentation looked at how by harnessing the best of the arts community in Kenya SAFE is able to address the failure of public health education surrounding HIV and other social/health issues. SAFE's performances can draw audiences of up to 2,000 people and ensured quality of delivery in such a large forum presents its own challenges. Analysing the success of the project will involve examining the process of creation of the work that is taken to the community, and the quality of the performance which by engaging the audience, moving them, and making them laugh, impacts on deeply held beliefs. He examined rules of delivery such as all SAFE performers coming from the communities to which they perform enabling cultural relevance and local humour to prevail. Looking at the impact of the shows, Mr Ndung'u showed how SAFE measures impact and looks at and overcomes the challenges faced while delivering life saving information.

Case Study 2: THE ARTS AS CATALYST IN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: PERSPECTIVES FROM ASIA & EUROPE

Presented by
Ms Anupama Sekhar
Project Executive, Cultural Exchange
Asia-Europe Foundation

Ms Sekhar's presentation explored the possible roles of arts and culture as catalysts in contemporary processes of social and cultural transformation, drawing from the work of the Asia-Europe Foundation with the arts and culture sectors in 43 member states in Asia and Europe. Ms Sekhar outlined some of the issues that the Asia Europe Foundation has recently prepared recommendations for, along the lines of the new role in the arts, on the issues of diversity, arts and education, articulated in the framework of the upcoming 4th Connecting Civil Societies Conference (2-3 October 2010, Brussels) in preparation for the ASEM8 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Asia-Europe Meeting (4-5 October 2010, Brussels).

Ms Sekhar spoke of the effectiveness of supporting smaller cultural spaces that are responding to community needs, as opposed to larger spaces such as museums. These spaces are far more capable of responding to the needs of cities in Asia. She emphasised that cultural practitioners are calling for creative responses, rather than purely cultural. The Foundation is seeking to request governments to provide grants that support artists in the community, rather than just purely art, and grants that support creative hubs in communities that respond to community ideas and community needs. There are many synergies with the ideas of the Commonwealth Foundation's background and Ms Sekhar recommended having smaller spaces, transdiciplinary projects, and specific projects that acknowledge and support artistic processes. She expressed that we cannot afford to be simplistic and non- cooperative, and in giving grants, governments must bring in criteria that help understand the complexity of processes involved. There needs to be a new way of measuring impact which is process oriented and complex, perhaps through intermediary organisations that assess the impact, not necessarily governments.

Ms Sekhar also expressed that the importance of the need for arts and education to be distinguished from art education. Essentially the arts could help a different experiential sort of learning, with a strong push to use the term artistic rationality and acknowledge the idea of arts and creative thinking. She suggested that as we move towards more engagement by community arts, it is important that a cultural practitioner from the arts sector has a say in education and urban. Ms Sekhar spoke of platforms for exchange, giving an example of a program called "Connect to Culture" over the last three years that not only talked about the cultural sector but recognised the importance of scientists, sociologists, economists etc. She expressed that we need to consider the role of the artist in the public sphere. Ms Sekhar emphasised that focus

will rest on emerging trends in 'creative collaborativity' (including interdisciplinary networks and links between artists and communities) and the value of including 'artistic rationality' in education.

Workshop 2: Urbanisation, social cohesion and cultural development practices

Facilitator
Ms Lynn Cain
Project and Training Manager
Australian Multicultural Foundation

Case Study 1: ART.CULTURE.PRACTICE.

Sharing inclusive models that engage communities and artists to forge contemporary narratives

Presented by
Ms Claudia Chidiac
Director, Producer, and Performer
Australia
&
Ms Cecelia Cmielewski
Manager, Cultural Engagement Initiatives
Community Partnerships
Australia Council for the Arts

The workshop presented by Ms Chidiac elaborated on the benefits to society of cultural engagement through artistic practice. Ms Chidiac explored case studies that engage communities and artists through the production, presentation and distribution of high quality and culturally diverse art works.

Case Study 2: COLOUR: SPIRIT OF THE FLATS

Presented by
Ms Chantel Erfort
Editor
Cape Community Newspapers, South Africa

Ms Erfort opened by stating that at face value, Cape Town, South Africa's Mother City seems to have it all - Table Mountain, beautiful beaches, hot summers and people from all walks of life. But post-apartheid Cape Town, like many parts of South

Africa, also has a gaping divide between the super rich and the achingly poor. While integration may be gaining a foothold in the middle classes, at grassroots level this is less of a priority for citizens who are still living in impoverished areas, lacking even the most basic facilities.

Ms Erfort stated, while the authorities look for ways to bridge this divide, the question needs to be asked: How can regular citizens help bring people from different backgrounds together? Through a project called theCOLOUR: Spirit of the Flats, a small group of artists and arts activists tried to do just that, by establishing creative hubs on the gang-infested, poverty-ridden Cape Flats and creating platforms for artists who would not ordinarily have the opportunity to showcase their work. Through theCOLOUR they often got to do this alongside already established or popular artists. Most importantly, artists were allowed to express their own voices without the pressure of considering what would make their work more accessible to mainstream audiences. Ms Erfort emphasised that today, theCOLOUR, which started as a multidisciplinary event lives on through related initiatives which either focus on one or combinations of the artistic disciplines - visual art, movement, music and words.

FORUM DINNER

Host
Ms Julie Heckscher, Deputy High Commissioner
Australian High Commission, Singapore

The conference dinner was addressed by Her Excellency, Ms Julie Heckscher, Deputy High Commissioner of Australia. Julie welcomed the delegates to the forum on behalf of the Australian High Commission and expressed her support for the forum and opportunity to host the Forum Dinner.

DAY TWO

SESSION THREE:
Identifying, developing and reaching audiences/ cultural tourism/ multilingual media/ marketing/ new media

Chair
Ms Padmini Sebastian
Manager
Immigration Museum, Museum Victoria, Australia

Presentation 1 Summary: Audience Development and Marketing Strategies: A look into i-AM2010

Presented by
Mr Benny Lim
Lecturer (Events Management and Marketing)
LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

Mr Lim's presentation explored the audience development and arts marketing strategies of i-AM2010, an arts festival organised by the Diploma in Arts Management students of LASALLE College of the Arts in March 2010 as part of their graduation. The i-AM festival is set to be a Singapore-based, annual arts festival which seeks to showcase a variety of integrated art forms by local, regional and international artistic talents, with the aim to become Singapore's leading arts festival organised by tertiary students. Mr Lim explained that this event is also the only arts festival in Singapore managed completely by the students, yet the events that are produced can be of professional standard. In terms of audience development, he spoke of many events at schools being free for students, but perhaps the school pays. Another scheme the government has in place is putting money into a bank account for students to purchase performances, so they do not feel as though they are paying.

To break down barriers preventing audiences attending events, Mr Lim spoke of bringing the event to the audience and to the community. He stated that there are two strategies in place – for you, by you, as well as community outreach. In conclusion, Mr Lim recommended that in order to have long term audience development, there could be the introduction of annual or bi-annual events by tertiary students throughout the Commonwealth, and with international backing this could potentially be sustainable.

Presentation 2 Summary: Culturally Diverse Audiences: global and national imperative

Presented by
Mr Fotis Kapetopoulos
Director
Kape Communications, Australia

Mr Kapetopoulos introduced his connection to Singapore, and his arts residency at the National Arts Council. He explained the importance of cultural brokers, a concept from the Smithsonian Institute, and expressed that Singapore is a perfect example to be a cultural broker between the east and the west. Mr Kapetopoulos spoke of multiculturalism in Australia and the many Australians who speak a language other than English. He posed the question, are we ignoring multicultural audiences? He stated that institutions need to have a strategy for culturally diverse audiences, a way to create a space between the audience and artist, and through transactions, be able to guide the audience. Being a cultural broker involves being able to listen to the voices of the unrepresented. Cultural brokerage is used extensively to develop international relations.

Mr Kapetopoulos examined the ways arts and cultural organisations can secure new culturally and socially diverse audience segments through Australian and international case studies. He stated that the notion of 'culture' has far greater implications than ethnicity, as it represents ethnic, gender, regional, religious, and occupational backgrounds, as well as lifestyle choices. We need to identify who we want in an audience, to know who is looking and where to engage these people, and this involves looking at segmentation and culture from a wide perspective and knowing where people get their information.

Mr Kapetopoulos also talked about the importance of the ethnic and specialised media and diaspora networks which assist in the augmentation of new audiences in his capacity as the editor of the English Edition of *Neos Kosmos,* Australia's leading Greek Australian newspaper and website. He emphasised that using drivers, having a strong voice, and utilising culturally diverse communities within a nation can generate new audiences, and this can be through ethnic media.

Presentation 3 Summary

Presented by
Mr Ravindra Kumar
Editor
The Statesman, India

Mr Kumar spoke of cultural tourism and whether we need to focus on it. He stated that it is growing at a rate of 15% per year, and over one third of all tourists are cultural tourists. He posed the question of whether this is because people are more educated, more aware and have the desire to visit places, or whether there are just more tourists? However, he expressed that this is not what needs to be focused on.

Mr Kumar stated that the message is more important than the medium. He dispelled the myth that new media is the cure. Unless the message is strong enough, there is no point trying to get it across. He expressed that the choice of media – new or conventional – is not so significant and that if the message is effective, the audience should be able to catch its point. The answer may lie in the way of handling the message, not the medium. In mainstream media, you can find a space.

Offering himself as a case study, Mr Kumar spoke of the first Diversity Matters forum in Brisbane ten years ago immediately after the 9-11 incident. He stated that one should engage as an individual with the problem. In 2003 after the Kolkatta Diversity Matters forum, he believed attitudes changed. Mr Kumar suggested concerning yourself with the message. He also suggested to try and engage mainstream media, because if you believe in what you are doing, you should be able to convince others and get them involved.

SESSION FOUR:
Public policy and its connection to embedding arts and culture in social cohesion issues

Chair
Mr Arun Mahizhnan
Deputy Director
Institute of Policy Studies
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
National University of Singapore

Presentation 1 Summary:

Presented by
Ms Penny Hutchinson
Director
Arts Victoria, Australia

Ms Hutchinson began by saying that it is a privilege and a pleasure for her to participate in this important forum and for Victoria to be so prominently represented from a State Government, an Arts Portfolio and a non-government arts sector

perspective. Ms Hutchinson focused predominantly on the public policy connections with cultural diversity and social cohesion issues. She stated that it will come as no surprise to Delegates that Australia's response to our growing cultural diversity, particularly in the post World War II era, has broadly moved from an emphasis on integration into the so-called 'mainstream' Australian community, both linguistically and culturally, to an emphasis since the early 1970s on celebrating our rich and distinctive cultural diversity, within a framework of the shared rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Governments in Australia - Federal and State - have responded on a number of levels and in a number ways to embrace this diversity, either though affirmative action policy frameworks and interventions, and through funding and support programs. Victorians hail from no fewer than 248 countries, speak more than 289 languages and practise more than 128 faiths or religions.

Ms Hutchinson stated that the Victorian Government is committed to promoting harmony and a society free of racism and intolerance and seeks to achieve these objectives through broader strategic frameworks including the *Multicultural Victoria Act* (2004), the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* (2007) and the *All of Us Multicultural Policy* (2008). The Victorian Government's 10 year arts and cultural policy *Creative Capacity +* (2003) also affirms the potential to engage culturally diverse artists and communities in the cultural life of the State. Arts Victoria's *Multicultural Arts Policy Advisory Committee* was established in 2008. Arts Victoria and the Portfolio Statutory Agencies are also developing *Cultural Diversity Action Plans* at the present time.

In terms of case studies, Ms Hutchinson highlighted that the Victorian Government has developed a number of whole-of-government strategic frameworks that acknowledge the role of the arts in reinforcing the significance of our bilateral trade, investment and other portfolio sector links, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Region where Australia's engagement is four and a half times what it was twenty years ago. Ms Hutchinson concluding by stating that next year - from 3-6 October - Melbourne will jointly host with the Australia Council and the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies the *5th World Summit on Arts and Culture* on the eve of the 2011 Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Presentation 2 Summary: Social Cohesion and the Arts: A Study of an Art-based Peace Building Resettlement Campaign in Sierra Leone

Presented by
Mr Mohamed Sheriff
President
PEN, Sierra Leone

Mr Sheriff stated that right across the globe there are many initiatives using the arts for various functional purposes – education, information, communication, development work, trauma healing, cultural exchange and understanding, peacemaking and peace building among others. In Sierra Leone a country now gradually recovering from a brutal civil war, the arts have become a powerful but unofficially recognised tool for social cohesion.

At various stages between 1999 - 2002 and beyond, a number of art-based projects were initiated in Sierra Leone through mainly ad hoc collaborations involving arts organisations, Government and other bodies to bring the various warring parties and the divided populace together with a view to breaking barriers, bridging gaps, building trust and understanding leading to binding peace agreements, disarmament, demobilisation, resettlement, reintegration, reconciliation and social cohesion. Cumulatively these projects have had a huge impact on peace and social cohesion in the country.

Mr Sheriff examined how one art-based organisation, Pampana Communications, collaborated with the Government of Sierra Leone and its local and international partners to successfully implement a peace building resettlement program following the country's decade-long civil war. Based on this study, he argued that by soliciting the services of an art-based organization to use the arts as a catalyst to move its stalled resettlement program forward, the Government and its partners tacitly recognised the role arts and culture could play in bringing about social cohesion.

In conclusion, Mr Sheriff stated that such recognition should consciously affect policy and practice at the highest levels of government with regards to making arts and culture integral to social cohesion issues.

Presentation 3 Summary: The role of arts and culture in building trust and opportunity in international relations

Presented by
Mr Christopher Wade
Director Programmes East Asia
British Council, Singapore

Mr Wade delivered an illustrated talk using examples from projects including *Civic Life* in Singapore (a collaborative film documentary about life in a hawker centre); *An Audience with Adrienne* (in which Adrian Howells performs his transvestite alter-ego Adrienne to an invited audience in a shophouse, again in Singapore); *Asian Field* (a collaboration between sculptor Antony Gormley and inhabitants of rural China); *Weaving the Future* in Indonesia (a collaboration between British weaver Laura Miles and designer Oscar Lawalatta); Tim Supple's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (an

international touring production performed by Sri Lankan and Indian actors in seven languages); and schemes we're running in Australia and New Zealand to provide professional development and creative opportunities for indigenous and non-Anglo-European communities. The talk will consider the unifying goals of this work – collaboration and cultural openness – in the context of a corporate commitment to mutuality and diversity. It will share some ideas for tracking and measuring the mainstreaming of diversity in arts programmes and talk about the kinds of challenges the British Council faces in engaging with the theme of identity, including the historical overhang of colonialism and significant attitudinal differences around key issues like gender, race and faith.

Concurrent Workshops - General Perspectives and Overview

Workshop 1: Audiences, cultural tourism, multilingual media, and marketing practices

Facilitator
Mr Ravindra Kumar
Editor
The Statesman, India

Case Study 1: Culturally Diverse Audiences: global and national imperative

Presented by
Mr Fotis Kapetopolous
Director
Kape Communications, Australia

Mr Kapetopoulos examined the ways arts and cultural organisations can secure new culturally and socially diverse audience segments through Australian and international case studies. Mr Kapetopoulos expressed that when he comes to Singapore, he can see, feel, sense, live and taste the history of three ancient cultures brought together by colonialism, war and later national building, to create a new nation.

In all cases of successful creative, economic and social development there has been an element of cultural brokerage. Certain nations, cultures, institutions and even individuals are excellent culture brokers. In many ways we are here as culture brokers, learning from each other, transmitting understandings, ideas, values and perceptions. He expressed that global diversity is challenge and opportunity not only for traditional immigration nations. Multicultural audience development should not be a special needs project, or welfare. Thus the need for highly trained, skilled and active

culture brokers who will seek to create or facilitate civic and cultural cohesion. He outlined that culture brokers illuminate what is opaque to audiences or to 'others'.

Mr Kapetopoulos explained that generating audiences is a complex but essential aspect of maintaining a vigorous arts and cultural sector particularly in a tenuous global economic environment. Mr Kapetopoulos also talked about the importance of the ethnic and specialised media and diaspora networks which assist in the augmentation of new audiences in his capacity as the editor of the English Edition of *Neos Kosmos,* Australia's leading Greek Australian newspaper and website. Mr Kapetopoulos outlined a program that he has been managing through Multicultural Arts Victoria and the Australia Council for the Arts called MAPD, which supports the development of cultural brokers.

Case Study 2: MIX IT UP – BUILDING NEW AUDIENCES
A model for developing arts and social cohesion through community partnerships

Presented by
Ms Jill Morgan
Director
Multicultural Arts Victoria, Australia

Ms Morgan explained that the Arts play an important role in connecting communities and bringing people together. The Arts provides us with a universal language that enables us to understand and empathise with each other in a time when there is much conflict and divide between cultures and people. Ms Morgan expressed that while arts initiatives often have a positive transformative effect on social cohesion, this effect depends very much on how they are designed and implemented. Social inclusion is not a passive concept and must actively encompass new ways of thinking which are based on the ethos and recognition of basic human rights for all. Over the past five years as a direct response to this Multicultural Arts Victoria and the Arts Centre have developed a unique collaborative partnership to create and deliver the MIX IT UP program.

MIX IT UP is an initiative that celebrates our shared heritage. It is a multi layered award winning arts program that creates many entry points to the Arts for artists and communities who are normally not engaged in the Arts or are disadvantaged. She explained that MIX IT UP is a way of recognising that diversity in artistic programming is a way of reaching out to new artists and communities as well developing audiences and new arts product and contributing to social cohesion in the community. The program has been a model in the arts that has stimulated and inspired other partnerships and initiatives in the community that contribute to social cohesion. MIX IT UP is supported by the State Government through Arts Victoria and the Federal Government through the Australia Council for the Arts.

Workshop 2: Public policy and community arts partnerships and practices

Facilitator
Mr Buck Song Koh
CEO, Integrative CSR Consulting Pte Ltd;
Adjunct Faculty
School of Social Sciences,
Singapore Management University

Case Study 1: Partnerships in arts and social cohesion – what are the barriers and how might they be overcome?

Presented by
Mr Andrew Firmin
Programme Manager - Culture
Commonwealth Foundation, UK

Mr Firmin's presentation brought out common points from a number of case studies commissioned by the Commonwealth Foundation in advance of the Forum, one critical barrier being misunderstanding. A concern is instrumentalisation of arts in attempts to advance social cohesion, and the corresponding poor quality of interventions. While the power of art to break down barriers is acknowledged, misunderstanding seems to stem from a lack of appreciation of the social value of arts in their own right. Interventions should advance both social cohesion and artistic practice. Further, for many, particularly in the arts, social cohesion remains an ill-defined concept, and arriving at a working definition may be difficult.

Sound process in interventions is crucial, and implies investments of time to develop mutual trust. Communities need to be understood as owners of processes rather than beneficiaries. Research is vital, and should be participatory and inclusive. However, this implies risk, with potential for drift and unexpected outcomes. This is not well understood by policy makers and donors.

Key partners at local level are community leaders. Too often they are used for endorsement, but they should be involved in project development. There are also challenges in choosing local partners, including exclusion and representation. Established arts partners are significant. There is value in unconventional initiatives, but prestige institutions can confer validation. There is a related need to challenge perceptions of who owns art and is entitled to art.

Mr Firmin also spoke about recommendations suggested for government including provision of tax breaks and specific allocations for arts activities. Funding for arts development in its own right is needed to enable arts to play any enhanced role. Arts and social cohesion initiatives often fall between funding stools. National and local

government disconnect is also an issue. An underexplored area is private sector funding, where there is often support for arts or social activities, so opportunities for intersection. International partnerships have value in encouraging exchange of ideas and practice. International partners can also help overcome local barriers by conferring legitimacy.

Case Study 2: Rethinking Unity through Diversity

Presented by
Ms Jovyn Lee
MA Arts and Cultural Management Candidate
LASALLE College of the Arts

Ms Lee spoke about "Rethinking unity through diversity", which focuses on the ways in which art was used as a medium of communication to bridge differences in various sectors of the society. The main emphasis is on an integrated art project called "Project Unity," where prison inmates, special needs artists, high school art students, and the general community at large were involved. This project was part of the Yellow Ribbon Project in 2007 when the theme was "Giving Back." The underlying principles behind this project lies in it being a platform for meaningful inter-agency interaction to bring together agencies that will otherwise have little interaction in the normal functioning of society, and for new knowledge creation and re-conceptualisation to take place. This project aims to extend art into the wider community, develop individual creativity, and foster shared understanding amongst people from different backgrounds. Ms Lee's presentation looked at the outcomes arising from this project through participant interview transcriptions and from the administrator's point of view. The challenges, lessons and recommendation that could be garnered from this project are also flagged out for the benefit of similar projects in the future.

SESSION FIVE: Panel Discussion

The role of government and civil society and the private sector in the arts

Chair
Dr Mark Collins
Commonwealth Foundation

Ms Audrey Wong - Summary

Programme Leader (MA Arts and Cultural Management)
LASALLE College of the Arts

Ms Wong introduced herself and gave some background on where she had previously worked, including her part-time teaching role at LASALLE. She also spoke of her role as a Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP) which is an appointment for the sake of having more diversity in voices in Parliament. Members speak on diverse topics. They are appointed by the people, and do not belong to any political party or constituency. Ms Wong's role is to represent the voices of the arts community in Parliament, and she spoke of her personal experience of representing peoples' voices in government and the differences in strategies used, coming from an NGO background.

Ms Wong spoke of a position Paper on Censorship and Regulation in Singapore, which has prompted artists and concerned citizens from the arts community to form a loose grouping called Art Engage. This group meets online and occasionally face to face, partly in response to government forming the Censorship Review Committee, to have a look at censorship guidelines, in response to the changing legal landscape.

Arts Engage wrote a position paper - an unprejudiced paper of guidelines, asking for regulation rather than censorship, and if something was offensive then people could meet with the artist to discuss what was troubling them. This was a mechanism put in place for people to express themselves. Ms Wong emphasised that you need to have mechanisms to forge stronger social understanding amongst different groups. As Singapore becomes more open and has a larger foreign population, more diverse views are being expressed. In Singapore, the challenge now is how the government will manage the many different groups and interest groups emerging from the grassroots level; the system has not been set up to fit them into the landscape. Managing divergent views is one of Singapore's challenges.

Ms Wong concluded that as artists and cultural workers, their role is to create dialogues where different opinions and voices can be heard, mediated, and in some way come together, and to also let minority voices be heard. They are cultural brokers, many of them without realising it.

Mr Frank Panucci - Summary

Director, Community Partnerships
Australia Council for the Arts

Mr Panucci spoke of his experiences in developing policy and explored through analysis of some practical examples of why the future of arts and cultural development require a new cultural contract between government, civil society, the private and arts sectors. He emphasised that we have to transcend notions of spheres of influence and responsibility to establish an agreed framework which creates a sense of partnership, respect and equality in achieving culturally and artistically vibrant societies. Mr Panucci argued that cultural and artistic vibrancy are seen as one of the cornerstones of a developing, sustainable and cohesive society.

Mr Panucci expressed that we should try to work out relationships to enable all the players to work collaboratively, and at the same time have control over those discrete areas where they are best placed to achieve success in outcomes to improve the greater social good. In the arts we have to understand they are not unique when it comes to public policy or social issues. Mr Panucci suggested there is rarely a single conductor for all shareholders, and you cannot control responses. You need to bring the players together, working towards shared and agreed goals, and once you have those shared goals you can work together for success. Transversality and hierarchies in terms of policies, and that transverse actions take place is another notion that could be explored, as observed from the Arts Foundation in Barcelona, an arts based agency and one of the best sources of new arts development policy on the world stage.

Mr Panucci expressed that policy players have to be clear that when we talk about policy players in contemporary society; that these are governments, the civil sector and private sector, and actions are taken ground up by civil society. Another point he raised on social cohesion was the Australia Council for the Arts took a review of its policies two years ago in a range of demographic areas and found that people have multiple identities and realities, so policies identifying people by a single identifier is problematic.

The Australia Council for the Arts also develops programs for community arts partnerships, connecting with communities in expressing their issues. Principles have been set up, including points such as the activity we support has to be by, with and for the communities – communities have dominant role. The artists involved are highly skilled, and also in work in the community based context. The activities reflect the energy and quality of the community, beyond community arts and cultural development to lead to an involvement in narrative. Programs are structured to support – they are about partnerships between government, non-government and communities, and funding sources are diverse, including non-arts bodies. Mr Panucci stated that the Council also supports facilitating high wealth individuals to give to the arts, working with the philanthropic community and creating a synergy of corporate social responsibility.

Mr Andrew Firmin - Summary
Programme Manager - Culture
Commonwealth Foundation

Mr Firmin stated that most governments have a perspective where they struggle to deal with diversity, and this can lead to significant cultural disconnect. Mr Firmin raised the points that in some nations culture is given little attention, it has low status and funding, and the cultural sector is very fragile. In promoting arts, he raised the questions of why haven't we won the argument yet? And on whose terms are you arguing? How to convince governments? Making an argument on economic terms may not work, so looking at it from the social utility value – how do you change the terms of the argument?

Mr Firmin emphasised the need for the argument to be convincing by making the material better, more accessible than in the past, and giving it a good policy edge. Also, he suggested that pushing the argument into non-culture spaces and building alliances to overcome disconnect is important. At the Foundation, an issue is joining cultural constituency with the rest of our civil society constituency where there is significant cultural disconnect as civil society and cultural civil society are working on different social issues.

Mr Firmin spoke of the need to internationalise our work, and locate ourselves in the debate of poverty, justice, redress etc, giving an example of this as through involvement in international forums. He emphasised that we should tell the story in a different way, make alliances, and internationalise what otherwise seems like "touchy feely" work. Due to the complicated nature of government, and capacity constraints in small Commonwealth countries, it would benefit the arts sector to have more private sector philanthropy which means connecting more. Corporate social responsibility could have more of an arts and community edge.

Professor Alastair Pearce - Summary
President
LASALLE College of the Arts

Professor Pearce began by saying that being from the UK and working in Singapore, he has observed various differences in the way of doing things. He expressed that he would be speaking about Singapore's arts and national identity and that he had noticed Singapore's government worries about Singapore's national identity. One reason may be because it might be important to its sense of social cohesion, having numerous ethnic groups. Where there is interethnic discourse, social cohesion is essential. Professor Pearce expressed that is was wisely decided that the arts can be a contributing factor to social cohesion, but the two approaches are different between the UK and Singapore. In the UK, he had observed that it is a bottom up process, whereas in Singapore it was potentially a bottom down process.

Professor Pearce posed the question of aiming for artistic uniformity or diversity? Singapore's culture has a rich range of ethnicities, and there is an issue of uniformity and unity not diversity. He stated that the kneejerk reaction is to go for uniformity, but suggested it is better to go for the diversity approach. He expressed the importance of understanding that we need to understand the other person's issues, history and have a true mutual understanding. It is only through profound diversity, not superficial, that understanding can come.

Ms Sabina Santarossa - Summary

Director, Cultural Exchange
Asia-Europe Foundation

Ms Santarossa introduced the Asia Europe Foundation as an organisation that lies between government and civil society which is an interface with an aim to promote cultural diversity and mutual understanding. She expressed that many of the issues raised throughout the forum were recurrent in the discussions of cultural policy, in particular, the top-down/bottom-up approach. Ms Santarossa suggested that it is difficult to create a successful formula applicable to everyone in cultural policy development, because both approaches have very different processes. Both approaches have examples of successes, for instance during the fascist period in Italy, important artists and architecture resulted. However this appears to have developed accidentally with no exact formula.

Ms Santarossa explained that the Foundation is involved in the cultural field in three areas of work. These are cultural exchange where young artists are put together to exchange ideas, practices, and their perceptions; also to promote policy dialogue neutrally. It is important that cultural diversity is expressed by inviting civil experts from both regions (Asia and Europe) who represent 46 countries, dealing with issues of heritage, media policy, environment and the role of the arts sector in climate change. Thirdly, they promote networks and platforms that build across domains and networks across Asia and Europe. Ms Santarossa expressed the belief in multilateral dialogue, more than just bilateral dialogue, as a vehicle for interesting cultural expression, and the role of civil society and government operating as two partners equally. The Foundation was a pioneer in promoting these components and principles together, through increasing awareness of the role of the private sector and civil society in promoting arts and culture. Ms Santarossa expressed it is important to cooperate with government, and for the Foundation to represent cultural diversity in everything they do.

SUMMARY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr Mark Collins - Summary

Director
Commonwealth Foundation

Dr Collins raised the question of where to from the forum. He expressed that it had been a wonderfully rich couple of days of discussions, and that the Commonwealth Foundation's interest in this forum is to find a political trajectory to carry the recommendations resulting from the forum.

Dr Collins outlined three ways for the Commonwealth Foundation to influence stakeholders. These were through Civil Society Engagement – producing a civil society statement through regional consultations in September in New York, where there will be a section on culture. The second of which is the Commonwealth Partners Forum – a series of 5 workshops held over 6 months from late 2010-early 2011. Lastly, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) – Perth 28-30 October 2011, where there would be an opportunity to present recommendations from the Diversity Matters forum. He explained that in Perth there will also be a Commonwealth Partners forum, but this forum will not be able to engage with heads of government and foreign ministers because this will be held immediately before.

Dr B. (Hass) Dellal OAM - Summary

Executive Director
Australian Multicultural Foundation

Dr Dellal acknowledged the positive work the Commonwealth has done and what it can still do in terms of progressing diversity within its member countries. He described the growing awareness and participation of the Commonwealth over the past ten years and said that the Diversity Forums have made a significant impact. Dr Dellal cited examples of forum outcomes; for instance, putting a multicultural agenda on the Commonwealth agenda. Dr Dellal emphasised that the Diversity Forums have made a difference in progressing understanding and developing practical community outcomes.

Dr Dellal expressed that over the last 12 years, the Diversity Matters forums have been improving, and this forum's presentations were of outstanding quality with excellent recommendations. He described the Diversity Matters forums as boutique forums – intense think tanks that produce outcomes. Dr Dellal stated that case studies from the Commonwealth have been sent to participants from the Australian

Multicultural Foundation to be used as a reference for the future, and that all of the recommendations from speakers' presentations will be incorporated into the final Diversity Matters forum report, the recommendations of which will be presented to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. Dr Dellal remarked that each participant also has their own way to influence decision making at some level, and encouraged everyone to do so. He outlined the advocacy of Arts Victoria and the Australia Council for the Arts at the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) the 5th World Summit on Arts and Culture to be held in October 2011 at the Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Dr Dellal thanked Dr Mark Collins, Mr Andrew Firmin, Mr Ravindra Kumar and Professor John Nieuwenhuysen for their commitment and passion and stated his appreciation for the ongoing partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation, the Statesman, and Monash University, which has resulted in producing successful outcomes. The tools and resources that have come out of the forums have been utilised. Dr Dellal thanked the participation of LASALLE students, emphasising the importance of passing these skills onto young minds. Dr Dellal also thanked all delegates for their excellent contributions and input throughout the forum, and thanked LASALLE for the fantastic journey of education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and Recommendations from the Panel Session, General Discussions and Presentations

Challenges for those working in the public policy context

The challenge for people working in public policy context – how do you identify public policy responses that quite often have to be articulated and multifaceted to address these complex issues? Complex social issues have multiple facets and gaining the cooperation is the toughest challenge of all. When dealing with a complex issue, you must employ a complexity analysis to ensure that more harm is not created under the belief that there is good being done, and to avoid missing vital things. There are diverse accountability bodies and different constituents such as government, shareholders and the community, and you need to factor in things such as shareholders to profit margins etc.

Forging strong cohesions amongst different groups

Diversity does not necessarily end in social chaos – if we address it, and allow space for it, then after perhaps some key debates and chaos, there could arise a much strong and better bonded community. It is easier for governments to deal with one single group as opposed to many voices, and there needs to be a mechanism to forge stronger social cohesion amongst different groups.

Try to work out relationships to enable all the players to work collaboratively and at the same time have control over those discrete areas where they are best placed to achieve success in outcomes to improve the greater social good. There is rarely a single conductor to keep all the shareholders, so we cannot control those responses, rather, we need to bring those players together, working towards shared and agreed goals, and once you have those shared goals you can work together for success.

Create a space where there can be an open dialogue. Encourage an interactive process and involve people from all levels, grassroots, organisations etc.

Commonwealth Foundation (CF) example

An issue the CF faces is joining cultural constituency with the rest of our civil society constituency where there is significant cultural disconnect – this can result in civil society and cultural civil society working on different social issues.

Liberalisation forming challenges

The process of liberalisation presents challenges in how peoples' groups can come together to engage in a positive way particularly in the arts, which is free-flowing and not organised in the corporate sense. Most governments have the perspective of

preferring to deal with blocks of organisations or a peak organisation and struggle to deal with the diversity of voices and opinions.

Convincing governments of the significance of the Arts
In some regions of the Commonwealth, governments give little attention to culture and it generally has a low status and funding, resulting in the cultural sector being very fragile. The argument for the arts brings the following questions - why haven't we won the argument yet? Whose terms are we arguing? How to convince governments?

Making an argument on economic terms is dangerous, but we can now argue the social utility value. However, how do you change the terms of the argument? To be convincing we must make the material better, more accessible than in the past, and give it a good policy edge. Building alliances to get this argument into non-culture spaces – network formation is one way to do it.

Network formation
Network formation is a valuable tactic for the cultural sector in getting itself recognised as part of wider civil society. Network formation needs to be voluntary and bottom up.
Top-down/bottom-up approaches - avoid a model where the government is at the top, and community is at the bottom with civil society and non-government at the sides.

Community Partnerships
As an example, Australia Council for the Arts has developed principles on how to develop programs to facilitate excellence and respect in community programs:
- The supported activity has to be *by, with and for* the communities - communities have the dominant role;
- The artists involved are highly skilled, and also in working in community based context;
- The activities reflect the energy and quality of the community, beyond community arts and cultural development to lead to an involvement in narrative.

The programs are structured to support – they are about partnerships between government and non government and communities, and funding sources are diverse and include non-arts bodies.

Engaging the arts with philanthropy and corporate social responsibility (CSR)
In Commonwealth countries, particularly small nations, there may be capacity constraints, and therefore the increased reliance on funding from non-government sources. Increasing the connection between the arts and private sector philanthropy through presenting the story in a different way, making alliances, internationalising work that otherwise seems less significant.

Corporate social responsibility could be given a greater arts and community edge.

There are examples of countries where there are bodies that support programs facilitating high wealth individuals giving to the arts, emphasising a synergy between the arts community, philanthropists and CSR.

How to disperse funds in organisations
Once organisations are formed, the issue arises of how to disperse funds. It is important that this is driven by, with, and for communities.

Diversity amongst political leaders
The notion was raised that some sort of diversity within political leaders may assist in changing the way of thinking. For example, in the UK the majority of ministers in any cabinet tend to have arts degrees, not economics degrees. In Singapore, ministers have science and economic degrees but not arts degrees.

National identity and interethnic discourse
In nations with a diverse range of ethnicities – there is no single uniformity. Where there is interethnic discourse, social cohesion is essential and the arts can be a contributing factor to develop mutual understanding and respect.

Censorship and Regulation
As an example from Singapore, artists and concerned citizens from the arts community have formed a loose grouping called Art Engage. This group meets online and occasionally face to face, partly in response to government forming the Censorship Review Committee, to have a look at censorship guidelines, in response to the changing legal landscape.

Arts Engage wrote a position paper - an unprejudiced paper of guidelines, asking for regulation rather than censorship, and if something was offensive then people could meet with the artist to discuss what was troubling them. This was a mechanism put in place for people to express themselves.

You need to have mechanisms to forge stronger social understanding amongst different groups.

As nations become more open and has a larger diverse population, where diverse views are being expressed, managing these divergent views is a challenge.

Cultural Brokers
There is need for highly trained, skilled and active culture brokers who will seek to create or facilitate civic and cultural cohesion. Culture brokers illuminate what is opaque, or not understandable to audiences or to 'others'.

Their role is to create dialogues where different opinions and voices can be heard, mediated, and in some way come together, and to also to let minority voices be heard.

Recommendations from Specific Case Studies Presented

Mother Uganda: one other way to national reconciliation and unity through the arts, Uganda

Countries where many different ethnic groupings or tribes exist should endeavour to draw from traditional art forms as a means to foster national unity. This includes staging festivals and performances to ensure that these forms are presented within and beyond each tribe's or ethnic grouping's boundary.

In-depth understanding of a subject and the participants in any project is vital to ensuring that multicultural projects tackling sensitive issues can achieve success. There is a need for the exchange of international experience. This could be achieved by establishing forums on multicultural theatre should be organised at which ideas and experiences can be exchanged with a view to developing best practice examples. Further, exchange programmes, with performances, should be organised between countries. Workshops before or after performances should be carried out to provide in-depth understanding and appreciation of different art forms.

Commonwealth countries could venture into a joint production that would bring together different participants from different countries to collaborate. This would necessitate financial support. Finally, there is a need to support training and skills refreshment for producers/directors of multicultural theatre.

Sponsored Arts for Education (SAFE), Kenya

The most important thing is to understand the issues on the ground, and the only way of doing this is to work with the people of the community. If not, there will be little trust. Research is crucial to ensure full knowledge of the topics an intervention wishes to address. Audiences are fully aware of local knowledge on a given topic, and will spot gaps in knowledge, leading to loss of trust.

In order to achieve a world class performance there is a need to invest in good talent and local talent. If performers come from a very different area, the audience will treat them differently. Similarly, investment in good and reliable equipment is valuable.

Taxation regimes should be reformed to encourage such interventions through tax breaks.

An art-based resettlement campaign, Sierra Leone

This project is a classic example of how the arts can be used effectively to contribute to social cohesion. Resettlement has been successfully achieved, and Sierra Leone has moved on further in the realm of social cohesion to post war recovery and development. The country has now witnessed two successful democratic elections, the last one leading to a change of government with no major incident. This project demonstrates that when government, international bodies and civil society work in

conjunction with artists and art organisations in peace building, peace-making and development efforts they can achieve major gains.

A great deal of practical planning, resourcefulness and creativity is necessary to develop audiences for projects such as this. No matter how hostile people may be about an issue, if they can be brought together to listen, learn and dialogue through the arts they may be influenced to change their views or be more receptive towards an issue even if they do not accept it. Successful projects are those that seek to understand an issue, its target audience and their relationship to the issue, their cultural, religious and social backgrounds and their tastes and preferences for arts and entertainment.

A key recommendation is to support policy that helps establish strong, active partnerships between the government, international bodies such as the Commonwealth, civil society and artists and arts organisations in the areas of conflict resolution, peace building, development and social cohesion. As part of this, the arts should be allocated funds directly, rather than having funding hidden under broader activity headings in which funding for the arts becomes more discretionary.

The Area Youth Foundation, 'All in Pictures', Jamaica

The success of the 'All in Pictures' project and other similar arts projects in inner-city communities suggests that significant policy changes can be made in education. Educators need to produce a curriculum that develops multiple literacies; one that meets the learner where he or she currently is and takes its lead from the lived experience of students. Teachers need to be trained to teach such a curriculum.

Classrooms need to break from the norm of a rigid, linear and hierarchical layout and become more democratic and flexible spaces to deliver a multiple literacy curriculum, which includes space for performing and playing games that teach life lessons.

In situations of conflict and post-conflict, educators and community workers need to recognise that students and out-of-school young people are very likely in various stages of post-traumatic stress disorder. Teachers therefore need to be trained to incorporate cultural therapeutic strategies, such as those used in the 'All in Pictures' project, that help relieve stress and promote trust.

theCOLOUR: Spirit of the Flats, South Africa

Support systems are essential for the success of any project, so anyone wishing to embark on a similar project should ensure that they have the support of people with the necessary skills to drive the initiative and to provide them with assistance in times of need.

The team should also be represented by individuals with a variety of diverse skills, including people who have some business acumen, as this is an area often neglected

by artists. While the artists are creative and trying to change the world, there has to be a level-headed individual back at the office taking care of the logistics.

There must be greater buy-in from funding agencies who generally do not believe enough in the proposals of artists who represent marginalised communities or do things against the grain. Sometimes it is more important for a project to be culturally relevant and significant than commercially viable.

To stage successful, relevant and culturally-uplifting events requires the support of the community and the development of a sense of ownership around the project. Most importantly, there has to be an acknowledgement – and celebration – of difference, rather than support of only the 'safe options'. However, those heading funding committees must be knowledgeable enough to weed out the superficial from the truly innovative work possessing both artistic value and social significance.

Lastly, it is important to contribute, through initiatives such as theCOLOUR, to building the confidence of black artists and to create a space in which social cohesion can take place without anyone having to compromise their culture or ideals. Facilitating this kind of cohesion demands more than simply bringing people into the same space to enjoy art together. There has to be engagement and understanding – and a conversation. theCOLOUR positioned itself as the start of that conversation where artists give audiences a glimpse into their lives through their work, and audiences engage. It is this engagement with another culture that moves intercultural integration and cohesion from the realm of the intangible to the practical.

'*Community is every one of us*' – *The Hub, The Bahamas*
The Bahamas lacks several important policies governing social cohesion and the arts. Among other things, policies are needed in the following areas:
- Establish an agency for the development and funding of the arts in The Bahamas.
- Offer economic incentives to encourage investment in local art and artists.
- Remove customs duties on the importation of artists' materials and supplies.
- Remove barriers to export of Bahamian goods.
- Impose higher taxes on the importation of film and theatre equipment as an incentive to hire/rent from locals.
- Increase Bahamian content to encourage the development of a stronger sense of self among Bahamians.
- Provide assistance in allowing short-term contracts for artists in residence or temporary/voluntary positions in the arts/cultural exchanges.
- Offer training in cultural entrepreneurship and arts administration.
- International organisations such as The Commonwealth Foundation could:
- Make grants accessible to Bahamian artists and cultural workers.
- Support local workshops.
- Invest in projects that demonstrate the value of the arts in building community and social cohesion.

- Provide travel grants for Bahamians interested in making regional and global connections.
- Invest in training in arts administration and encourage the exchange of skills relevant to arts and social cohesion.
- Invest in the creation of technological webs to decrease travel costs and expand user bases.

While recommendations for practitioners seeking to implement work include:
- Build strong, diverse programming and be flexible.
- Diversify the management team – including on lines of age/gender/race/sexuality.
- Document and archive as much as is possible.
- Listen directly to members and associates and keenly observe.
- Actively collaborate and share with similar groups.
- Engage the young and youthful with leadership opportunities.

MIX IT UP - Building new audiences, Multicultural Arts Victoria, Australia

The partnership and program has impacted on the different areas of programming at the Arts Centre which have become more collaborative and more inclusive. Other partnerships and ways of working have been inspired.

There has been significant anecdotal feedback over the five year period that the program has had a powerful effect on the artists and communities involved –affirming the original premise: Art is a very powerful medium to connect and create social change.

Marketing and audience development are rarely conceptualised well together. Product development is not just an option; it's a priority for new audiences. Translating brochures and distributing information is not enough to attract the unengaged. Artists have to be brought into the process of creating diversity. Audience development can't be done behind a desk, behind closed doors, by sending out brochures. Companies must take audience development on to the streets, into the suburbs, out of town, so people can see and hear what it is that's being promoted. Then they can start rethinking marketing seriously and creatively.

In Australia social inclusion policy and research has been led by the health and social welfare sectors. In the Arts we are creative but must work more creatively to develop greater opportunities which will enable the nurturing of a more socially inclusive society where all people feel valued and their differences respected. The Arts can create positive cultural systems which can contribute significantly to social cohesion in the community and contribute to individual the economic and social well being artists and communities.

Specific recommendations and observations:
- Change does not happen overnight – a long term commitment is needed
- It needs leaders or change champions to make it happen
- Do not accept the status quo- new ways of working need to be devised
- Relationships with opinion makers and communities may be challenging- learn from each other and work collaboratively

- Audience development needs new creative repertoire
- Some organisations see audience development and the arts in numerical, not cultural, social or psychological terms
- We need to be smarter in the way we imagine, design and implement audience development
- There is a need for policy development and resourcing to ensure that programs lead to systemic change
- There needs to be more research on the impact of the arts and the social return on investment

THE ARTS IN A MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA Successful arts and diversity initiatives-or "Talking with strangers", Australia Council for the Arts

Social cohesion is enhanced by the arts because the arts can provide a safe place to explore discussions about identity and belonging. Often, witnessing the mere expression of diversity is enough to expand our understanding of the world and where we may fit within it. This becomes even more powerful when we are actively engaged through art making to express ourselves.

1. That this forum considers recommending to CHOGM that the model of kultour** is adopted and adapted to assist in the exchange of artworks and community development processes between Commonwealth nations.

**Kultour presents an annual touring program of high-quality contemporary multicultural arts from around Australia. This program provides CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) artists with professional development via touring and opportunities for their work to reach new audiences regionally, interstate and internationally. Audiences have been provided with insight into multicultural arts practices and issues through a professional quality program.

2. That this forum considers conveying to CHOGM that the issue of leadership by culturally diverse artsworkers within the arts sectors requires concerted attention to realize the significant benefits to cultural expression and leadership.

Identity, Culture and Community: the integral role museums play in dynamic and cohesive cities and communities, Immigration Museum, Victoria, Australia

Deeply integrating cultural institutions into the civic landscape, enabling and encouraging individuals and groups to participate and contribute to culture creation and reflecting the pluralism and hybrid nature of cities within our cultural spaces will enable greater connection, relationships and participation. Diversity is not greatly reflected in many cultural institutions and people don't see themselves represented and therefore feel disconnected. The 21st century provides an opportunity to create new cultural spaces and experiences that mirror the reality of diversity.

We (as cultural practitioners and organisations) can and must be forums to ask questions, break down barriers, challenge perceptions, reach reconciliation and

compromise. We need to consider new ways of working and shaping culture in the future that will enable and encourage innovative collaborations across communities, art forms, sectors and disciplines. We should consider concepts of cross-pollination that will challenge, construct and re-construct identity, culture and community through innovative programs. We should integrate promoting diversity and social cohesion into our core responsibilities and activities. If we are to maintain relevance in a time of rapid change we have to be agile and adaptable and reflect the complex and rich diversity that exists in our societies.

Connecting through Commune, Singapore
Relevance brings people closer together. The Arts is able to inspire people in different fields. Social cohesion brings new ideas and awareness to the different parties when they are open to listen and embrace new experiences.
By providing a diverse range of programmes, com.mune was able to bring different communities of people together through the Arts.
Social interaction and understanding of our differences, brings us a step closer to social cohesion. The power and value of the arts cannot be underestimated in its ability to bring different people together in providing a safe space for communication, exploration, expression, growth and understanding for both self and communities.

APPENDIX 2: CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Pre-conference – 22 September 2010	
Time	**Session**
3:00 – 4:30pm	**LASALLE College of the Arts Tour** Optional tour of the LASALLE College of the Arts accompanied by students as your guide.

Day 1 – 23 September 2010	
Time	**Session**
8:30 – 9:00am	**Registration** Singapore Airlines Theatre, Basement 1
9:00 – 9:30am	**Introduction and Welcome** Singapore Airlines Theatre **Dr Hass Dellal OAM** *Executive Director* Australian Multicultural Foundation **Professor Alastair Pearce** *President* LASALLE College of the Arts **Dr Mark Collins** *Director* Commonwealth Foundation
9:30 – 9:45am	**Keynote Address** **Community/arts partnerships as a base for cohesion and cultural development** Singapore Airlines Theatre

	Ms Penny Low *Founder and President,* Social Innovation Park Ltd *Member of Parliament,* Singapore **Chair: Professor John Nieuwenhuysen AM** *Director, Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements* Monash University, Australia
9:45 – 10:15am	**Opening Production** Performance by LASALLE College of the Arts students
10:15 – 11:00am	*Morning Tea*
11:00 – 12:00pm	**Case Studies** Singapore Airlines Theatre **Case Study 1** MOTHER UGANDA: ONE OTHER WAY TO NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND UNITY THROUGH THE ARTS **Mr Joseph Walugembe** *Artistic Director* Uganda National Cultural Centre **Case Study 2** CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNE **Mr Jeffrey Tan** *Head, Education & Outreach* Singapore Arts Festival National Arts Council, Singapore **Case Study 3** THE ARTS IN A MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA *Successful arts and diversity initiatives* **Ms Cecelia Cmielewski** *Manager, Cultural Engagement Initiatives* *Community Partnerships* Australia Council for the Arts **Chair: Mr T. Sasitharan** *Director* Theatre Training and Research Programme, Singapore

12:00 – 1:30pm	**Plenary Session 1** **Strengthening the role of arts in education** Singapore Airlines Theatre **Mr Venka Purushothaman** *Vice-President (Academic) & Provost* LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore **Professor Chua Beng Huat** *Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology,* *Cluster Leader of Cultural Studies in Asia research cluster* National University of Singapore and Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore **Ms Sheila Graham** *Executive/Artistic Director* Area Youth Foundation, Jamaica Discussion following speakers' presentations **Chair: Ms Jane Allan** *Dean, Faculty of Foundation Studies* LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore
1:30 – 2:30pm	*Lunch* 1:00 - 1:30pm Pod 1, located in F Block DVD screening - **The Young Advocates' Programme and 2008 International Youth Forum** which brought together a group of 250 disabled and non-disabled Young Advocates from mainland China, Hong Kong, the UK, the USA, Bulgaria, Israel, Jordan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan during 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. The Youth Forum used sport, arts and education to develop the Young Advocates' confidence, leadership and communications skills and was praised by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) for promoting intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and development of civil society. A short film (13 minutes) produced by Yeast Culture Presented by **Mr Neil Webb** *Director Arts & Creative Industries East Asia* British Council

2:30 – 4:00pm	**Plenary Session 2** **Urbanisation and its impact on social cohesion and cultural development** Singapore Airlines Theatre **Ms Padmini Sebastian** *Manager* Immigration Museum, Museum Victoria, Australia **Dr Vincent O'Donnell** *Executive Producer* Arts Alive, Australia - *Award-winning current affairs radio* **Ms Margot Bethel** *Founder* The Hub, The Bahamas Discussion following speakers' presentations **Chair: Mr Andrew Firmin** *Programme Manager - Culture* Commonwealth Foundation, UK
4:00 – 5:30pm	**Concurrent Workshops** *(including afternoon tea)* **Workshop 1: Arts in education and community arts practices in promoting social cohesion** Room F201 **Case Study 1** SPONSORED ARTS FOR EDUCATION (SAFE) **Mr Kamau Wa Ndung'u** *Creative Coordinator* Sponsored Arts for Education (SAFE), Kenya **Case Study 2** THE ARTS AS CATALYST IN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: PERSPECTIVES FROM ASIA & EUROPE **Ms Anupama Sekhar** *Project Executive, Cultural Exchange* Asia-Europe Foundation

	Facilitator: Ms Sheila Graham *Executive/Artistic Director*, Area Youth Foundation, Jamaica _____ **Workshop 2:Urbanisation, social cohesion and cultural development practices** Room F202 **Case Study 1** ART.CULTURE.PRACTICE. *Sharing inclusive models that engage communities and artists to forge contemporary narratives* **Ms Claudia Chidiac** *Director, Producer, and Performer* *Australia* **Ms Cecelia Cmielewski** *Manager, Cultural Engagement Initiatives* *Community Partnerships* Australia Council for the Arts **Case Study 2** COLOUR: SPIRIT OF THE FLATS Ms Chantel Erfort *Editor* Cape Community Newspapers, South Africa **Facilitator: Ms Lynn Cain** *Project and Training Manager* Australian Multicultural Foundation

Day 2 – 24 September 2010	
Time	**Session**
9:00 – 10:30am	**Plenary Session 3** **Identifying, developing and reaching audiences/ cultural tourism/ multilingual media/ marketing/ new media** Room F202

	Mr Benny Lim *Lecturer (Events Management and Marketing)* LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore **Mr Fotis Kapetopoulos** *Director* Kape Communications, Australia **Mr Ravindra Kumar** *Editor* The Statesman, India Discussion following speakers' presentations **Chair: Ms Padmini Sebastian** *Manager* Immigration Museum, Museum Victoria, Australia
10:30 – 11:00am	*Morning Tea*
11am – 12:30pm	**Plenary Session 4** **Public policy and its connection to embedding arts and culture in social cohesion issues** Room F202 **Ms Penny Hutchinson** *Director* Arts Victoria, Australia **Mr Mohamed Sheriff** *President* Sierra Leone PEN Centre **Mr Christopher Wade** *Director Programmes East Asia* British Council, Singapore Discussion following speakers' presentations **Chair: Mr Arun Mahizhnan** *Deputy Director* Institute of Policy Studies Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy National University of Singapore

12:30 – 1:30pm	*Lunch*
1:30 – 3:00pm	**Concurrent Workshops** **Workshop 1: Audiences, cultural tourism, multilingual media, and marketing practices** Room F201 **Case Study 1** CULTURALLY DIVERSE AUDIENCES: GLOBAL AND NATIONAL IMPERATIVE **Mr Fotis Kapetopoulos** *Director,* Kape Communications, Australia **Case Study 2** MIX IT UP – BUILDING NEW AUDIENCES A model for developing arts and social cohesion through community partnerships **Ms Jill Morgan** *Director* Multicultural Arts Victoria, Australia **Facilitator: Mr Ravindra Kumar** *Editor* The Statesman, India _____ **Workshop 2: Public policy and community arts partnerships and practices** Room F202 **Case Study 1** PARTNERSHIPS IN ARTS AND SOCIAL COHESION – WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS AND HOW MIGHT THEY BE OVERCOME? **Mr Andrew Firmin** *Programme Manager - Culture* Commonwealth Foundation, UK

	Case Study 2 RETHINKING UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY **Ms Jovyn Lee-Ng** *MA Arts and Cultural Management Candidate* LASALLE College of the Arts **Facilitator: Mr Buck Song Koh** *CEO,* Integrative CSR Consulting Pte Ltd*;* *Adjunct Faculty*, School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University
3:00 – 3:30pm	*Afternoon Tea*
3:30 – 5:15pm	**Session 5** **PANEL DISCUSSION** **The role of government and civil society and the private sector in the arts** Room F202 **Ms Audrey Wong** *Programme Leader (MA Arts and Cultural Management)* LASALLE College of the Arts **Mr Frank Panucci** *Director, Community Partnerships* Australia Council for the Arts **Mr Andrew Firmin** *Programme Manager - Culture* Commonwealth Foundation **Professor Alastair Pearce** *President* LASALLE College of the Arts **Ms Sabina Santarossa** *Director, Cultural Exchange* Asia-Europe Foundation **Chair: Dr Mark Collins** *Director* Commonwealth Foundation

5:15 – 5:30pm	**Closing Remarks – Summary** Room F202 **Dr Hass Dellal OAM** *Executive Director* Australian Multicultural Foundation **Dr Mark Collins** *Director* Commonwealth Foundation

Day 3 – 25 September 2010	
Time	**Session**

10:00 – 1:00pm	**Arts and Cultural Precincts Tour**
	
	Optional tour of the National Museum of Singapore, Fort Canning Park and Peranakan Museum accompanied by LASALLE arts students as your guide. The entire tour is by foot as the venues are within walking distances.
	
	10:00am Meet at LASALLE for Registration
	10:15am Depart from LASALLE to
	              National Museum of Singapore
	10:30am Arrive at National Museum of Singapore
	              Visit the permanent collection
	              (Singapore History Gallery)
	11:00am Depart from National Museum and proceed to
	              Fort Canning Park
	11:45am Depart from Fort Canning Park to
	              Peranakan Museum
	12:00pm Arrive at Peranakan Museum
	              Visit the permanent collection
	              (The Peranakan Museum Collection)
	12:45pm Depart from Peranakan Museum to LASALLE
	1:00pm Tour ends at LASALLE

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Organisation	Country
Hajar Abdullah		Singapore
Jane Allan	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Cassandra Ang	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Margot Bethel	The Hub	Bahamas
Lynn Cain	Australian Multicultural Foundation	Australia
Suyin Chew	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Claudia Chidiac	Director, Producer and Performer	Australia
Beng Huat Chua	National University of Singapore	Singapore
Richard Chua	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Mark Collins	Commonwealth Foundation	U.K.
Cecelia Cmielewski	Australia Council for the Arts	Australia
Hass Dellal	Australian Multicultural Foundation	Australia
Chantel Erfort	Cape Community Newspapers	South Africa
Andrew Firmin	Commonwealth Foundation	U.K.
Shelia Graham	Area Youth Foundation	Jamaica
Julie Heckscher	Australian High Commission	Singapore
Penny Hutchinson	Arts Victoria	Australia
Fotis Kapetopoulos	Kape Communications	Australia
Buck Song Koh	Singapore Management University	Singapore
Ravindra Kumar	The Statesman	India
Jovyn Lee-Ng	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Benny Lim	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Jacinta Lim	People's Association	Singapore
Jiaxin Low	Nanyang Technological University	Singapore
Penny Low	Member of Parliament	Singapore
Arun Mahizhnan	National University of Singapore	Singapore
Jill Morgan	Multicultural Arts Victoria	Australia
Malar Nadesan	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
John Nieuwenhuysen	Monash University	Australia
Vincent O'Donnell	Arts Alive, Australia	Australia
Eilena Ong	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Frank Panucci	Australia Council for the Arts	Australia
Alastair Pearce	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Venka Purushothaman	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Sahar Sana	Monash University	Australia
Sabina Santarossa	Asia-Europe Foundation	Singapore
T Sasitharan	Theatre Training and Research Programme	Singapore
Padmini Sebastian	Museum Victoria	Australia
Sreyashi Sen Vithi	Training and Consulting LLP	Singapore
Anupama Sekhar	Asia-Europe Foundation	Singapore
Mohamed Sheriff	PEN	Sierra Leone
Suang Suang Tan	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore
Jeffrey Tan	National Arts Council	Singapore
Irene Thavarajah	Monash University	Australia
Kamau Wa Ndung'u	Sponsored Arts for Education (SAFE)	Kenya
Christopher Wade	British Council	Singapore
Joseph Walugembe	Uganda National Cultural Centre	Uganda
Neil Webb	British Council	Vietnam
Audrey Wong	LASALLE College of the Arts	Singapore

APPENDIX 4: PREVIOUS FORUMS

1st Diversity Matters Forum   **Brisbane, Australia - October 2001**

A bi-partisan approach between the Commonwealth Institute and the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the forum successfully concluded with a number of resolutions and a Statement of Principles on a Multicultural agenda for the Commonwealth, which was forwarded to the CHOGM meeting in March 2002.

2nd Diversity Matters Forum   **London, England - March 2003**

Hosted by the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit and the Commonwealth Foundation, this second forum was designed to follow up and further develop themes and ideas that were initiated by participants in the first forum. In addition, it was designed to develop and implement pragmatic approaches that Commonwealth countries can take on board as they work towards promoting social cohesion through acceptance and understanding between community and religious groups.

3rd Diversity Matters Forum   **Kolkata, India - February to March 2005**

The third forum specifically looked at identifying **Multi-faith initiatives**, issues and challenges for the Commonwealth with a view to recommending the establishment of a Commonwealth Multi-Faith Advisory Group. This was an outcome of the second forum and the role of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, in partnership with the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit, the Commonwealth Foundation, *The Statesman*, and the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements, was to co-ordinate a gathering of international speakers and practitioners from relevant institutions and NGOs within the Commonwealth.

4th Diversity Matters Forum   **Johannesburg, South Africa - February 2007**

Held at the Monash University campus, the focus of the fourth forum was on the relationship between the **Media and Diversity** with an emphasis on communities throughout the Commonwealth and how this can be better structured for mutual benefit. It addressed key issues facing countries and communities and explored approaches to the reporting and representation of cultural diversity in both traditional and emerging media. Issues of media freedom, pluralism and responsibility were subsequently given heavy emphasis in the report of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, *Civil Paths to Peace*, and identified as a priority area for further work by Heads of Government meeting at the November 2007 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala, Uganda, in the Munyonyo Statement on Respect and Understanding. A media toolkit for communities was also developed.

5th Diversity Matters Forum   **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - November 2008**

Entitled **Diasporas in the Commonwealth**, the fifth forum was held at Monash University Sunway Campus. It attracted a distinguished list of speakers presenting a breadth of analyses and discussions on diasporas in the Commonwealth. The keynote was given by His Royal Highness Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, Crown Prince of Perak Darul Ridzuan.

Please visit the Australian Multicultural Foundation website to access **presentation slides and conference papers** as provided by the speakers.

www.amf.net.au