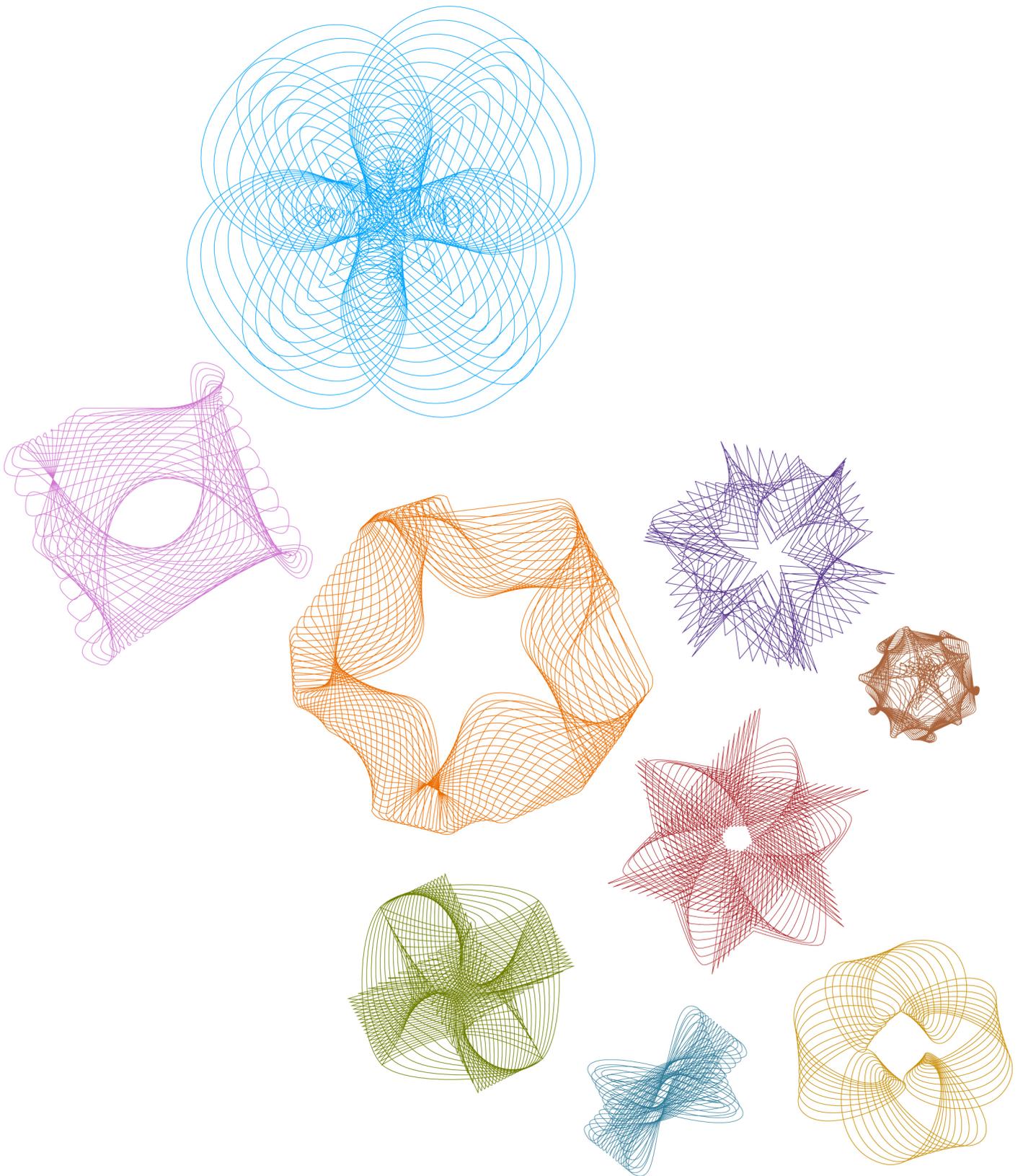


Time for Cultural Mediation



Time for Cultural Mediation

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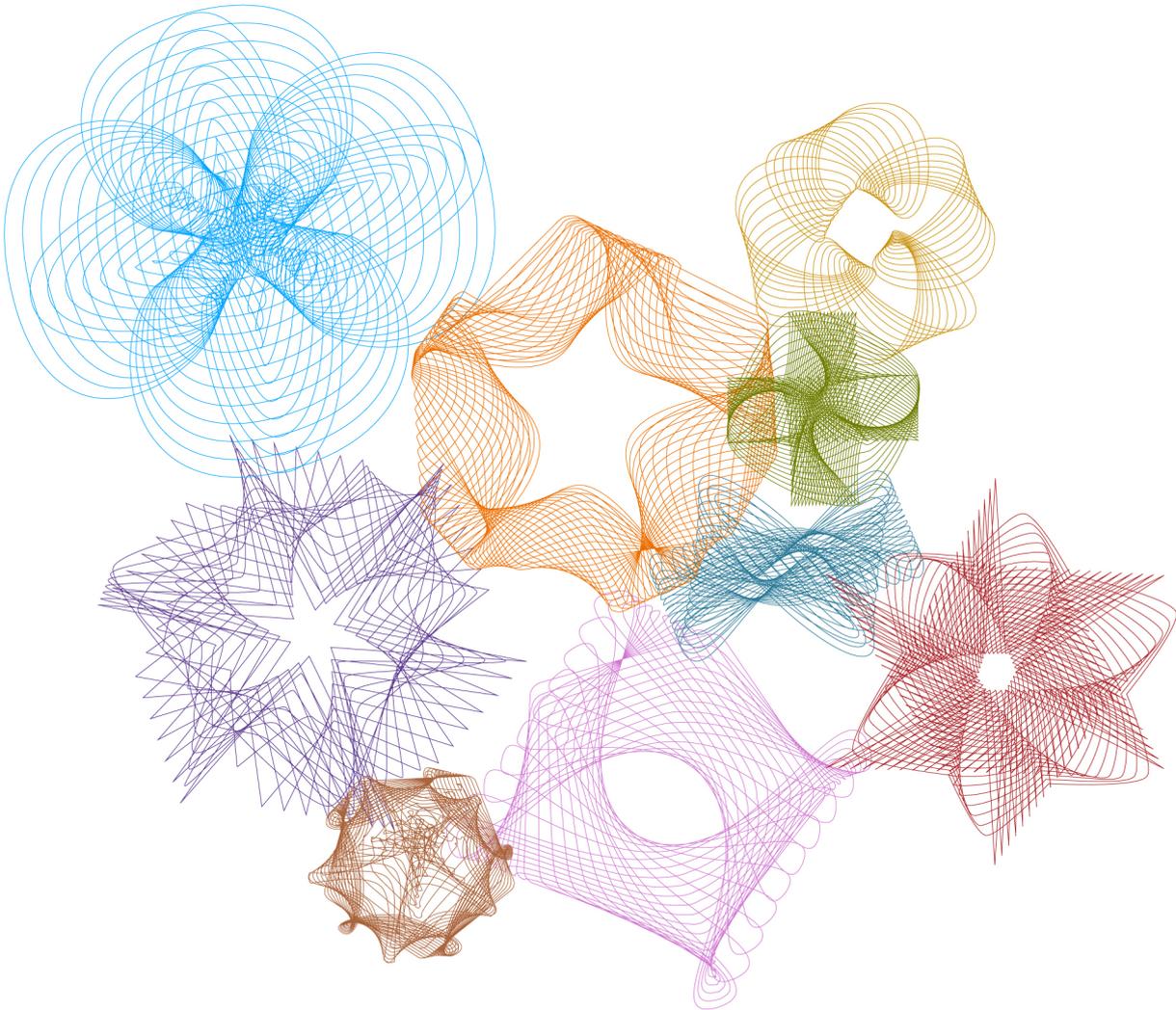
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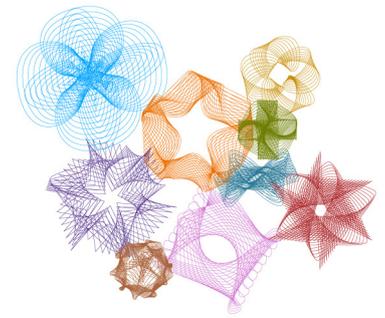
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Time for Cultural Mediation



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Time for Cultural Mediation

This publication was created as part of the → Arts and Audiences Programme of Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council. This programme, which ran from 2009 to 2012, sought to strengthen the practice of cultural mediation in Switzerland and encourage the assignment of higher priority to cultural mediation in approaches to the promotion of the arts and culture. The programme was also intended to stimulate the creation and exchange of knowledge in the professional field of mediation and contribute towards improvements in the quality of cultural mediation practices.

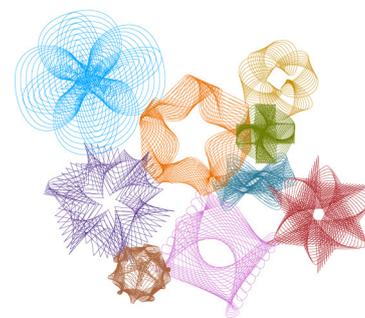
Against this background, Pro Helvetia commissioned the → Institute for Art Education of the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste [Zurich University of the Arts] to conduct research that would support the programme. In that context, the Institute was asked develop a tool which cultural mediation practitioners, institutions and funding bodies could use in the course of their daily work to help them place cultural mediation activities in context and assess their quality.

This publication is intended to be such a tool. It explores key questions in the professional field of cultural mediation in nine chapters. The short introductory texts labelled “Quick Reads” discuss key aspects of cultural mediation: relevant terms and concepts used in different linguistic areas, whom it is intended to reach, its content and subject-matter, its functions, the people and institutions involved in it, its quality and the ways it is presented and documented. These short texts also raise issues for further exploration and describe the controversies associated with this professional field. The “Quick Reads” were written by Carmen Mörsch, the Director of the Institute for Art Education, with editorial support from Eva Richterich, the Director of the Arts and Audiences programme, and Christian Gyger, the Coordinator of Pro Helvetia’s working group on Mediation. The texts reflect the perspectives of the researchers who supported the programme and were created in the context of intensive dialogue between themselves and Pro Helvetia. The texts labelled “Quick Reads” were designed to enable a reader (even one new to the field), to gain a good overview of the main topics, practices and issues associated with this professional field. In each of the nine chapters there is also a text under the heading “For Reading at Leisure” which explores the subject in greater depth. Adopting an example-based approach, these longer texts delve into the questions raised in the

→ Arts and Audiences Programme
http://www.prohelvetia.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/customers/prohelvetia/Programme/Kulturvermittlung/2010_Factsheet_Programm_Kulturvermittlung_E.pdf
 [12.2.2014]

→ Institute for Art Education
<http://iae.zhdk.ch> [13.2.2013]

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“Quick Reads” texts from the angle of what a critical and analytical approach to cultural mediation might be. They are intended for readers who want to explore the topic of cultural mediation in greater depth. Carmen Mörsch is the author of the texts “For Reading at Leisure” and is solely responsible for their content (with the exception of Text 9.RL, which was written by Stephan Fürstenberg).

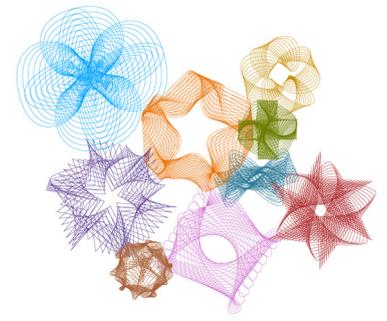
In addition, under the banner “Changing Perspectives”, professionals from relevant fields in Switzerland – mediation, promotion of the arts and culture and the directors of cultural institutions – were invited to express their views on the nine questions addressed. Their positions and attitudes augment the perspectives provided by the researchers and their voices lend additional dimensions to the publication.

To illustrate the topics discussed in the nine chapters, Anna Chrusciel, co-director of the programme’s research track, compiled two comparative case studies, each analysing two projects. Examples of mediation in the area of the literary arts were chosen as the subject of these studies because that area tends to be underrepresented in the world of Swiss mediation. Drawing their examples from Germany, France and England, the case studies illustrate how people can use the questions posed at the start of the nine chapters to evaluate cultural mediation projects in a more differentiated light.

The format of the online publication, available in four languages, permits the texts to be read in the order of their presentation or in a sequence or selection of the reader’s choice. A clear and simple outline displayed to the left of the texts facilitates navigation through the publication. Should a need or interest arise, readers can follow links to entries in the glossary or to other texts in the publication. Other links lead to the resource pool, which contains additional materials, which cover certain subjects at greater detail or in greater depth. It is also possible to download the entire publication as a printable PDF file, for those who prefer reading texts on a printed page to reading on a screen.

We hope that the title of this publication “Time for Cultural Mediation” will be understood in multiple ways. It refers, in one sense, to the growth in recent years of interest in cultural mediation, both in Switzerland and internationally, not only among cultural and educational policymakers and in the public at large, but also in the artworld itself.

The last two decades have seen the institutionalization of cultural mediation as a well-established professional field: it is associated with a



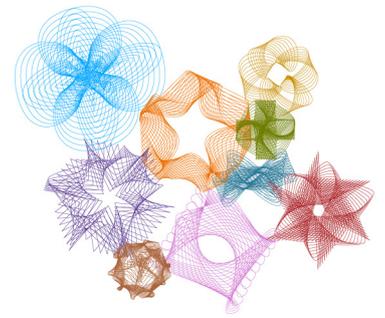
range of discourses and occupational profiles, is the subject of scholarly research and it has its own professional associations. Thus it is now time to examine this professional field more closely and take a position vis-à-vis the questions that arise in it. This publication proposes to do that.

In view of the variety and complexity of cultural mediation practices, the aspiration to define a position which can serve as a basis for individual decisions (in mediation work, in funding, etc.) suggests another way of reading the title: "Finding Time for Cultural Mediation", in the sense that concentrating on cultural mediation and developing the knowledge that entails requires time. Here, too, we hope this publication will be helpful, by providing a time-saving and structured survey of the field, which encourages its readers to think further.

Finally, the title is also intended as an appeal: "Giving Time to Cultural Mediation". Advances in the field of mediation will require investment of the resources necessary to create the kinds of working conditions that provide leeway for experiments and productive failures. It is our hope that this publication will provide a great many stimulating ideas in the light of which such an investment will appear worthwhile from many different perspectives.

Carmen Mörsch

Director, Institute for Art Education, Zürcher Hochschule der Künste

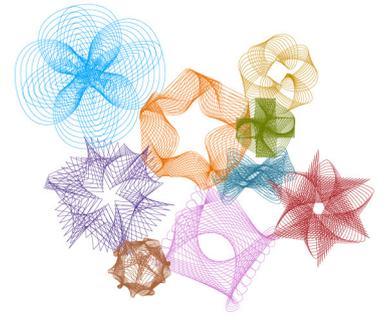


Foreword by Pro Helvetia

What is the current situation of cultural mediation in Switzerland, and where do its true needs lie? What role can Pro Helvetia, a national foundation, play in cultural mediation? On what criteria should we base our funding decisions for cultural mediation projects? These were the questions confronting us when Pro Helvetia took over the responsibility for promoting cultural mediation in 2012. Clearly, we would not be able to answer them on our own. For that reason, we launched our four-year Arts and Audiences Programme in 2009. With it, we hoped to enhance the practice of cultural mediation in Switzerland and create spaces for new formats to be developed through partnerships with experts in the field and other funding bodies.

To link the programme with the international scholarship in this field, we requested the Institute for Art Education of the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) to conduct research that would support the programme. Among their other activities, Carmen Mörsch and Anna Chrusciel, the researchers, studied five partner projects as they were being carried out by coalitions of funding agencies at the municipal and cantonal governmental level as well as by those undertaken by local institutions and educators. The intensive and critical exchange that resulted provided stimuli for the projects and influenced the content of this publication. In addition to the voices and views of the research team, the publication contains texts written by several other people who worked in the programme, as well as texts from the Swiss Federal Office for Culture, and Pro Helvetia itself; their views on the various subjects are presented in the “Changing Perspective” texts.

“Time for Cultural Mediation” marks the completion of an important phase. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the Arts and Audiences Programme. In particular, we wish to thank the researchers, and the people who worked in the partner projects in the cities of Biel, Geneva, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Neuchâtel, Winterthur, St.Gallen, Thun, and Zurich and in the Swiss cantons of Aargau, Appenzell Innerrhoden and Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Geneva, Thurgau and St.Gallen. Many thanks go to our forum partners as well: the cities of Bern and Biel and the Swiss cantons of Basel and Valais, and also to PHBern, the Swiss UNESCO Commission and over 20 other institutional partners. We thank Reso (the Swiss dance network) for their important work developing dance



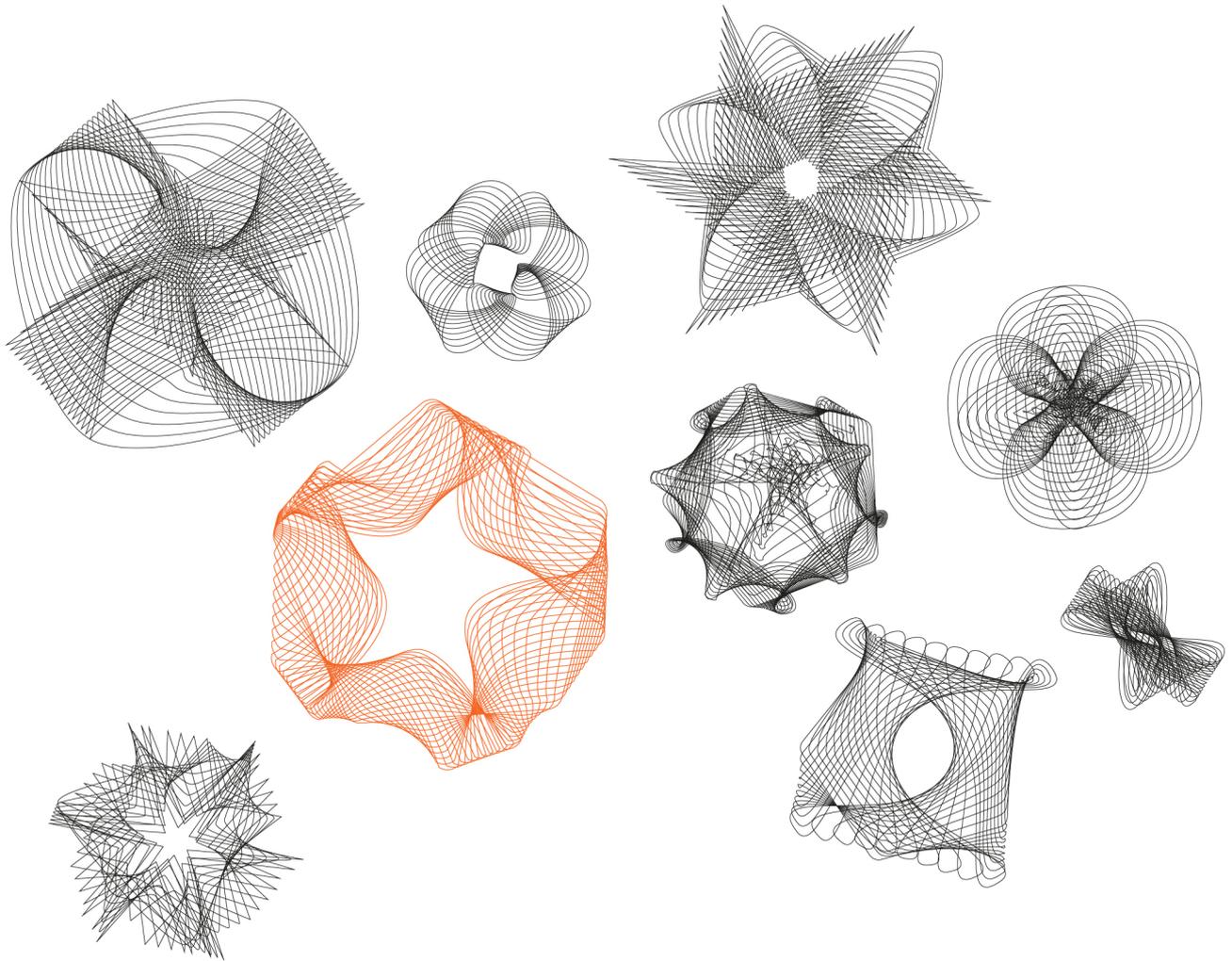
mediation, and Migros Kulturprozent for the joint final conference on the programme held in Basel on 7 November 2012.

The texts make it clear that cultural mediation is in flux and constantly giving rise to new questions. In the future, Pro Helvetia will continue to respond to this challenge and to support the practices of cultural mediation as they evolve.

Andrew Holland
Director of Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council

Time for Cultural Mediation

1 What is Cultural Mediation?



2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?

3 What is Transmitted?

4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?

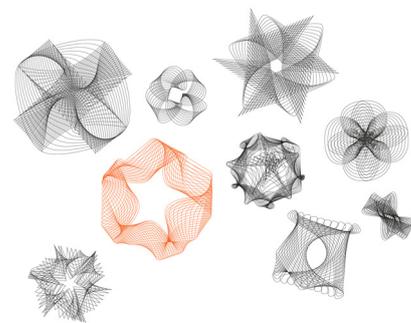
5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?

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1.0 Intro

This publication addresses forms of cultural mediation. The term cultural mediation, translated here from the German term “Kulturvermittlung” and the French, “médiation culturelle”, while quite open-ended, generally refers to the process of gaining and negotiating knowledge about the arts and social or scientific phenomena through exchange, reaction and creative response. Though not necessarily a familiar term for English speaking readers, who are more likely to be acquainted with the use of arts education (and associated terms such as music education, gallery education, literature education etc.) to describe these processes, the term ‘cultural mediation’ is more precise, evoking questions of negotiation which are at the heart of working between artistic objects, institutions, their social contexts and the people who encounter them. Where ‘education’ or ‘educator’ more frequently connote involvement with the formal education sector, the term cultural mediation also allows practitioners to imagine themselves as part of a larger spectrum of cultural workers across artistic disciplines working in a variety of cultural and social realms.

Accordingly, the examples of cultural mediation addressed in the texts that follow, take place in art-specific settings, and deal with the problems and issues they face. They concentrate on cultural mediation activities in the context of established and publicly supported art, artists and institutions – in other words, on the programmes of cultural institutions of various types: exhibition spaces, museums, opera houses and concert houses and organizations in the literary and dance worlds.

The publication and the research that preceded it were commissioned by the Swiss Arts Council, Pro Helvetia, through its Arts and Audience programme. The Arts and Audience programme was designed to expand the knowledge base on cultural mediation and make it available to various individuals and institutions who are active in Switzerland and beyond, as well as to launch further discussion in an international arena. A parallel aim of the programme was to generate conclusions relevant to the spectrum of funding opportunities possible and appropriate for Pro Helvetia.

Though programme officers and supporting researchers worked with a broad spectrum of municipal and regional partners, the area of

- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
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publicly funded activities in the arts and cultural arena was always the starting point. Despite this limited remit, the programme elicited an enormous variety of approaches and ways of framing problems and issues related to cultural mediation, making them applicable to other settings and activities in which cultural mediation takes place.

The publication's first chapter provides an introductory survey of the variations and uses of the German-language term "Kulturvermittlung" and the corresponding terms used by speakers of other languages. In none of the languages we address is there one single generally accepted definition of the concept represented by the word "Kulturvermittlung". As we will see, the German word encompasses several very different concepts and fields of activity. As we use the term in this publication [translated into English, as described above, as "cultural mediation"], learning remains of central importance. Across the examples discussed, however, this educational aspect of mediation is interlaced with artistic and social processes in addition to didactic methods employed to realize educational goals. Activities associated with marketing, art criticism or the presentation of works of art are outside the bounds of this term, as we use it in this publication.



1.1 “Kulturvermittlung” as a collective term in German-speaking areas

The less-than-precise umbrella term “Kulturvermittlung” encompasses a very wide range of practices and is continuously being redefined. Generally, the word is applied to situations in which people receive information about the arts (though sometimes about scientific or societal phenomena and discoveries), enter into an exchange about that information, react to it – whether orally or through other forms of expression.

Accordingly, in addition to encompassing the education and engagement programmes of cultural institutions, such as guided tours, public discussions, workshops or pre-performance offerings at venues for theatre, opera and dance, concerts or literary events, the term “Kulturvermittlung”, when used in a broader sense, also covers school-based instruction in art subjects and theatre education projects and artists in residence programmes in schools. By the same token, it encompasses such activities which take place outside of schools, such as → [instruction in artistic techniques](#) and forms of → [socio-cultural animation](#). Forms of knowledge transfer relating to natural sciences and technology which take place outside of schools – in science centres, for instance – are also included in the greater scope of Kulturvermittlung activity.

In some contexts, offerings specifically aimed at children or young people – musical, literary, theatre or dance productions, or exhibitions, are identified as forms of Kulturvermittlung. One also finds the term used in connection with presentation of the arts: for instance, people or institutions hosting exhibitions have described themselves as Kunstvermittler_innen [people who engage in Kulturvermittlung] on the grounds that showing art in combination with the communication processes associated with that activity already constitutes a form of Kulturvermittlung. Moreover, by some definitions, dissemination, promotion and marketing in the arts and cultural sector can also overlap with the semantic field of Kulturvermittlung, which, thus defined, extends to advertising theatre programmes, the hosting of festivals by concert halls or literary organizations and even to the sale of catalogues, merchandising products and souvenirs from exhibitions. Similarly, writing about culture or the arts and media criticism in the various artistic fields have also been considered by some to fall within the semantic field of Kulturvermittlung.

→ [Instruction in artistic techniques](#)
see Section 3.2

→ [Socio-cultural animation](#)
see Glossary

1.1 "Kulturvermittlung" as a collective term in German-speaking areas



So far the use of the term "Kulturvermittlung" in the open-ended meaning described above has been fairly specific to German-speaking Switzerland. In Germany and Austria the term "kulturelle Bildung" (cultural education), in which the aspects of learning and education are more pronounced, has become more prevalent as an umbrella term, though increasingly one hears the word "Kulturvermittlung" in those countries as well. There are also terms which demarcate activities based on their setting or genre: "Museumspädagogik" (museum education) applies to Kulturvermittlung-type of work in any type of museum; "Kunstvermittlung" (essentially arts mediation outside of museum education contexts) with a focus on transmitting knowledge about contemporary art, music, theatre, dance or literature; and "Wissenschaftsvermittlung" (science education and engagement activities).



1.2 Médiation culturelle

Usage of the French-language term “médiation culturelle” is similar to usage of the German-language → *Kulturvermittlung*, but it has a country-specific character and a longer history. When it first emerged in the 1980s, the term “médiation culturelle” was associated with public relations activities and knowledge transfer. In addition to the fields of the arts, it was used to refer to the preservation of historical monuments and cultural heritage. The term had associations with already well-established educational activities and links to diffusion in the field of the arts and culture. The understanding of “médiation culturelle” as a form of transmission of knowledge remains influential today and describes the majority of the activities practiced.

However in parallel to the emergence of this broader concept, a concept of “médiation culturelle” specific to the arts was also being developed, in part through the work of the degree programme (with a strong sociology and linguistics emphasis) set up in 1994 called “Médiation culturelle de l’art” at → *Université Aix-Marseille* in France. That programme is founded on the idea that art is often created from an individual act in opposition to the collective and is, for that reason, rarely accessible to a wider public in the absence of prior knowledge. At the same time, that art should be accessible to this collective is seen as desirable in the sense of a → *democratization of culture* (Caune 1992, Caillet 1995). Due to these tensions, médiation culturelle is understood less as knowledge transmission and more as the act of forming relationships of mutual exchange among publics, works, artists and institutions. Under this understanding, the aim of médiation culturelle is to place the various different perspectives involved in relation to one another. These activities focus on the individual perception of artworks by participants. The point is not to fill in lacunae in understanding with specialized knowledge, but to understand the lacunae as a point of departure for dialogue and aesthetic experience (Caune 1999). Ideally, the collective analysis of the different forms of expression which are brought together in this process of exchange is another integral part of médiation culturelle de l’art.

In addition to standing for this very specific concept, the term “médiation culturelle” is used in more common parlance with a meaning that overlaps with other terms, such as “action culturelle” (generally referring to the dissemination of cultural offerings out away from the centre and into the periphery) or “diffusion” which is associated with marketing.

→ *Kulturvermittlung* see Text 1.1

→ *Université Aix-Marseille*
<http://allsh.univ-amu.fr/lettres-arts/master-mediation-recherche> [1.2.2013]

→ *Democratization of culture*
see Texts 6.4 and 6.5



There are other terms in use which entail considerably more specificity as well, such as “*médiation artistique*” for → *instruction in artistic techniques or processes* or → *médiation culturelle de musée* for museum-based mediation. Increasingly, *médiation culturelle* is also being introduced in the area of activities of → *animation culturelle* (Della Croce et al. 2011). Animation culturelle is a field associated with the social sphere. It encompasses the aim established in 20th century → *éducation populaire*: cultural activities which have the capacity to transform society should lead to the emancipation of participants.

→ *Instruction in artistic techniques or processes* see Texts 3.2, 3.5 and 3.6

→ *Médiation culturelle de musée* <http://mediamus.ch/web/fr/rubriken/grundsatzpapiere-mediamus> [21.2.2013]

→ *Animation culturelle* see Glossary: Socio-cultural animation

→ *Éducation populaire* see Glossary: Lay culture



1.3 English terminology

There is no umbrella term in general use in English-speaking countries or regions which corresponds closely to → *Kulturvermittlung* or → *médiation culturelle*. In legal English and in the area of social affairs, “mediation” is associated with conflict resolution, “cultural mediation” specifically with interpreting and negotiating activities in the context of migration. While artists and educators increasingly find themselves mediating between artistic and social contexts, there has been no widespread adoption of “cultural mediation” in this context. The term “art mediation” does appear in international English (“Global English” or → *Globish*), as a literal translation of “Kunstvermittlung” or “médiation culturelle” – for example, Manifesta, a European biennial of contemporary art, calls its arts education programme “Art Mediation” and the persons who work in it → *mediators*. However, in this context, “art” generally connotes visual art (and its multi-disciplinary off-shoots) and not other cultural fields of practice.

“Education” is the prevailing term used in institutions in all branches of the arts to identify programmes intended to transmit knowledge and promote engagement with the arts: the terms opera education, gallery education, museum education, dance education and concert education are in common usage. Of late one occasionally sees the word “learning” appearing alongside “education” or even replacing it in this type of context. Many institutions prefer “learning” because people associated it less with the idea of formal instruction and more with the process of knowledge production and acquisition. Both terms, “education” and “learning”, communicate that pedagogical and didactic issues are of central importance for the field of activities, more forcefully than the German “Vermittlung” or the French “médiation” does. However, neither “learning” nor “education” sufficiently describe the work of cultural and social negotiation that is commonplace in the work of arts education outside of exclusive work in the formal education sector nor the possibility for creative expression or commitment to democratization alluded to by the German and French terms.

Areas of overlap between the English terms and marketing, criticism and presentation are less obvious, though in practical terms, the expectations of marketing and education departments frequently coincide. Since the mid 1990s the term “audience development” has been cropping up in connection with education projects and programmes aimed primarily at reaching broader audiences and increasing audience numbers. The emergence of that term is associated with a policy debate about whether and how cultural institutions should become more visitor-oriented. Projects and programmes involving cooperation with schools, social institutions or other organizations in this context are often referred to as “outreach” activities.

One recent phenomenon is the use of “participation” or “participation manager” as a professional field and → *job description* in cultural institutions.

→ *Kulturvermittlung* see Text 1.1

→ *Médiation culturelle* see Text 1.2

→ *Globish* see Glossary

→ *Mediators* <http://manifesta.org/network/manifesta-art-mediation> [14.6.2012]

→ *Job description* http://www.birminghamopera.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59:participation-manager&catid=24:latest-news&Itemid=31&Itemid=0 [21.2.2013]



This is symptomatic of the tendency towards active audience involvement in the production of art.

Since the 1960s, the term “community art”, or the analogous “community dance”, “community theatre” or “community music”, has been applied to projects in which artists work with the residents of one part of a city or with one particular interest group within the population, or projects in which amateurs organize and engage in artistic activities. However, unlike the term “participation” introduced by cultural institutions more recently, community art has historically been based on a deliberate policy of dissociating itself from “high culture” and its institutions.

Projects by artists with a strong cultural-mediation dimension are of growing significance, and have been since, again, the 1960s. In the early years, such projects tended to be of the “artist in schools” variety, but over the past five decades artists have developed a wide variety of mixed forms involving artistic, educational and social-activism activities, which, depending on their focus and emphasis, have been termed “new genre public art” (Lacy 1994), “socially engaged art” (Heguera 2011), “relational art” (Borriaud 2002) or “dialogical art” (Kester 2004 and 2011). Although these activities may not be seen by the artists themselves as vectors of “education”, they are often solicited and presented by cultural institutions as part of their educational programmes. As a consequence, these projects alter and expand the understanding of education at these institutions: the dividing line between “art” and “education” is obscured, partly consciously, partly incidentally as part of an evolutionary process.

Given this growth of activity extending beyond what is either discipline specific, or traditionally associated with the field of education, the term “cultural mediation” may offer another set of descriptive potentials for those working in the field of mediation in the English speaking context.



1.4 Italian terminology

In the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland, the term “mediazione culturale” is used with meanings corresponding to those associated with the German word → *Kulturvermittlung*. Outside of Switzerland though, the Italian term, like cultural mediation in English, is associated with migration issues. One does occasionally encounter the term “mediazione culturale” used in the “Kulturvermittlung” meaning in the context of international conferences, though, in a manner similar to the neologism → *art mediation*.

In Italian-speaking Switzerland one also finds the term “mediazione artistica” used for mediation activities in the arts. This term also crops up Italian translations of German or French texts. Within Italy, however, “mediazione artistica” is principally found in art therapy contexts. One of the few exceptions is the degree programme → *Mediazione artistico-culturale* at Accademia di Belle Arti Macerata, whose students are trained in arts mediation in the meaning used in this publication.

Otherwise the term “didattica culturale” is used in Italy in the context of cultural mediation in this meaning as an umbrella term that is comparable to the German “Kulturvermittlung” or the French → *médiation culturelle*. “Didattica culturale” encompasses, on the one hand, the activities associated with a visit to a cultural institution through the provision of specialist and artistic expertise and, on the other projects aimed at expanding audiences (Assessorato all’Istruzione, alla Formazione e al Lavoro, Regione del Veneto, → *List of job descriptions*). Thus in that sense “didattica culturale” overlaps with the field of activities associated with marketing or the English term → *audience development*. → *Instruction in artistic practices* both in and outside of schools are also covered by the umbrella term “didattica culturale”. Since the post-war era, the term “didattica museale” has also established itself as the title for programmes which make museums available to the public as places of education (→ *Ministero dell’Istituzione, dell’Università e della Ricerca*). These days, the term is chiefly applied to formats in which participants – usually children or young people – themselves produce some output. The term “educazione” is also occasionally used in this context.

Primarily in Italian-speaking Switzerland, one also runs across the term “animazione culturale” as a subfield of “didattica culturale” for Kulturvermittlung-type activities in which a playful, entertaining approach predominates. The two terms are also used synonymously.

Finally, the term “alta formazione” is sometimes used to describe projects in which art institutions (primarily museums) work in partnership with academic institutions. In this context, the transmission of specialised knowledge is the primary objective.

→ *Kulturvermittlung* see Text 1.1

→ *Art mediation* see Text 1.3

→ *Mediazione artistico-culturale*
http://www.abamc.it/pdf_offerta_home/1_med_artistico_culturale.pdf [22.8.2012];
 see Resource Pool MFE010401.pdf

→ *Médiation culturelle* see Text 1.2

→ *List of job descriptions* <http://web1.regione.veneto.it/cicerone/>

→ *Audience development*
 see Text 1.3

→ *Artistic practices* see Text 3.2

→ *Ministero dell’Istruzione, dell’Università e della Ricerca* http://archivio.pubblica.istruzione.it/didattica_musealenew/allegati/origini.pdf [3.9.2012]



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Tim Kramer: Creating New Paths and Forms Together

In the 2011/12 season, the organization Konzert und Theater St. Gallen carried out the project "Arbeit!" [Work!], as part of Pro Helvetia's Arts and Audience Programme, meeting with predominantly favourable responses. The partnership with Pro Helvetia, the supporting research from the Institute for Art Education (IAE) of ZHdK, and above all increased support from the regions of St. Gallen, Thurgau cantons and the two Appenzell cantons proved extremely fruitful for an organization of our size. In addition to a very interesting research phase, we were rewarded with an unusually vibrant performance on the theme of 'looking for work' by non-professionals who, for the most part, had been complete strangers to theatre at the outset. Moreover, we were called upon again and again as an institution to question our own practices of arts mediation. The change of perspective resulting from the active participation of people seeking work clearly impressed upon us the extent to which an established and successful institution binds itself to its existing audience through its forms of communication. Since our mission, in addition to the preservation and transmission of our artistic heritage, involves both taking up new points of view and launching discussion of them, we found this project to be extremely enriching.

Despite these positive aspects, it seems to me that this project has underlined just how difficult it is to differentiate between art-making and cultural mediation. When assessing or requesting contemporary cultural mediation, one finds oneself torn from very early on between conventional art (or its production) and modern, contemporary cultural mediation. For me though, the distinction is extremely vague and over-simplified. Upon closer examination, one realizes that the arts, and especially the performing arts, always have the objective of communicating something with the goal of learning. Art is fundamentally an interaction, and it has always entailed reciprocity. The real problem we are facing today is that the circumstances of communication are changing at a breathtaking pace, that traditional audience groups are dissolving, indeed, in conjunction with the revolutionary changes occurring in society, they can no longer be defined at all. For me, this is where the new developments in cultural mediation come into play. We need to determine collectively what meaning art should have today, what it consists of and who has, or might have a



need for it. Because it is apparent that in a radically diversified society, art can have an identity-forming and, above all, personality-strengthening function. So we are all rowing in the same direction when we question conventional approaches to learning, with the aim of developing a new culture of learning that is appropriate to our time, in order to equip human beings to face the enormous challenges of the present day.

Tim Kramer, actor, director, theatre mediator. Theatrical Director at Konzert und Theater St. Gallen since 2007.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES *microsilions*: Mediation. (counter)points.

The work of the collective *microsilions*, created in 2005, is a balancing act between mediation in the sense of autonomous activity (not subordinate to curatorial activity or the educational process) and a collaborative practice of art.¹

Over the course of the eight years of the collective's work, our methodology has developed around a few central aspects:

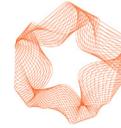
- We respond to institutions who want to use cultural mediation to expand its functions: to go beyond showing and presenting to become a space for collaborative production and action.
- We produce objects with groups of people from civil society and show them to the public.
- We build up long-term relationships with participants.
- We use tools taken from areas outside the arts.
- We do not apply models, instead we adapt ourselves to the environment and group at hand.

microsilions treats the term "mediation" with caution because etymologically it contains the idea of conflict resolution (thus implying a situation of conflict between audiences and works or between non-audiences and institutions) and it is often associated with the idea of transmission.

We attempt, not to transmit pre-fabricated content, but instead to create a space for dialogue that is open to the unexpected.

When our projects are realized in connection with a cultural institution, this unexpected component takes on a critical potential from which proposals for changes can develop. A reciprocal relationship can be created: the institution benefits from our work and the symbolic value it brings, but the institution also forms the basis for a process of critical deconstruction.

Another essential aspect of our approach to mediation is our interest in coupling our practical activities with research into the links between art and education. Starting from this practical/theoretical approach, we adopt a position which could be called "practical militancy", which is to say, we see workers in culture and the arts as people who are sensitive to changes in society and who are socially engaged.



The collective microsillons has collaborated with a great many institutions. Among them is the Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva for whose mediation projects microsillons was responsible from 2007 to 2010. The collective's founding members, Marianne Guarino-Huet and Olivier Desvoignes, currently head up the programme Bilden – Künste – Gesellschaft [Education – (Fine) Arts – Society] of Zurich University of the Arts and are doctoral students at the Chelsea College of Art. In 2008, microsillons received a Swiss Art Award.

1 Work which can be combined effectively with a variety of different approaches and methods: such as those of mediators who take a critical approach, like trafo.K, the artistic activities of REPOhistory or interdisciplinary institutions like the Center for Urban Pedagogy.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Barbara Waldis: Ta ville, ta rue ... ton art. Social Work and Critical Mediation in Public Spaces

I have headed up a module for the bachelor programme entitled “Art et Travail Social: Citoyennetés et Espaces Publics” [Art and Social Work: Citizenships and Public Spaces] in the Social Work programme of Haute École Spécialisée de Suisse Occidentale (HES-SO) since 2009. The module’s creation was the result of a partnership with Ecole Cantonal d’Art du Valais; the participating artists are from Valais, France and the USA. According to the module’s mandate, formulated by the Service of Culture and Integration of the City of Monthey in Valais, its objective is the integration of various groups and institutions in the city. The Service of Culture and Integration makes part of the lobby of the Théâtre du Crochetan available to us to use as a classroom.

In this course, future social workers work with experts from the fine arts arena to develop, realize and analyze projects which encourage the city’s residents to appropriate public space and which encourage social relationships within the community.

The project “Ta ville, ta rue ... ton art” [Your city, your street ... your art], for example, encouraged local residents to think about the quality of sculptures and pictures found in public spaces. The students did research at the Monthey city administration, the communal archives, in the library and on public squares to learn about the procedures for selecting, financing and presenting sculptures and pictures in public spaces. In the context of a performance, they asked approximately one hundred people to tell them which sculptures in public places they liked the least. The students then covered up the artworks cited most frequently. They summarized the results of their research and the discussions with the public in a poster. Their conclusions lend themselves for use in a subsequent project.

This type of project combines aesthetic experiences with the adoption of a critical position and the appropriation of public space. Both social work and a dialogical approach to art share a common interest in revealing new forms of integration in society. While art seeks to provoke a change in how we perceive things, for example, by distorting reality or shifting perspectives, social work focuses on the qualities of individuals or groups, in order to draw on them as resources in collectively orchestrated actions



designed to enable the individuals or groups to participate in society to a greater degree over the long term. Both approaches are intended to reinforce the autonomy and capacity for action of individuals and groups in society.

Barbara Waldis is Professor of Social Work at Haute École Spécialisée de Suisse occidentale du Valais; author of numerous publications on transnational family relationships; instruction and research in the field of fine arts and social work in public space for the past four years.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Cultural Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: What is Cultural Mediation?

Open-mindedness and curiosity about the entire range of cultural mediation were prerequisites for the four-year programme, in which Pro Helvetia delved deeply into this subject. Pro Helvetia's cultural mediation funding criteria, developed in parallel with the programme, are based on Switzerland's Culture Promotion Act and therefore focus on mediation in the arts. Pro Helvetia's → [promotion of mediation](#) concentrates on projects of high quality, in terms of both art and mediation, which have the potential to inspire the public to engage with the arts autonomously and contribute to the practices of mediation.

The boundaries between cultural mediation and related fields of activity, such as education, marketing and socio-cultural animation, are not always clearly defined. Mediation of the arts for children and young adults is undoubtedly very important, but many of the activities involved in that sphere take place in schools or in other training contexts and thus fall within the domain of the formal education system, for which Pro Helvetia is not responsible. An interactive website providing information about current offerings in Swiss museums may well have mediation-type results as a side effect, but since marketing aspects clearly predominate, a project of this kind does not fall within the Pro Helvetia's remit. On the other hand, cultural mediation can overlap with socio-cultural animation, such as when a neighbourhood-based project encourages more profound engagement with an art form while at the same time reinforcing the feeling of community.

The transition between mediation and the arts is also fairly fluid. Art itself is flexible. More and more, we see performance art taking place in public spaces and there are growing numbers of projects aiming unconventional forms of audience involvement: today's formats play out in private dwellings, shopping centres, factories and football stadiums; performers have their audience pilot them as living avatars through a life-sized computer game; passers-by become the protagonists of artistic installations. In productions like these, the boundaries dissolve: art is created only through the participation of the audience, mediation is intrinsic to the work. Would it be possible to use this as a starting point in the attempt to deliberately take the mediation aspects further? A relatively new discipline, arts mediation finds itself in a fascinating process of development, with potentials for evolution in many directions. For that reason,

→ [Promotion of mediation](#)
http://www.prohelvetia.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/customers/prohelvetia/Foerderung/Vermittlungsfoerderung/2014/131220_Promotion_of_arts_outreach_at_Pro_Helvetia_EN.pdf [10.2.2014]



Pro Helvetia deliberately left room open for this creative energy to flow when defining its criteria for funding mediation, – because that energy is crucial for innovative and dynamic cultural mediation in Switzerland.

Pro Helvetia's interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Working Group was responsible for developing the funding criteria within the framework of the Arts and Audiences Programme.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Swiss Federal Office for Culture (BAK), Culture and Society Section: What Does Cultural Mediation Mean in the Context of the Confederation's Promotion Activities?

In the context of the Confederation's activities in the field of the promotion of culture, the term "Kulturvermittlung" (cultural mediation) has been used in several different (and to some degree contradictory) ways over the course of many years. Legislation on the promotion of culture, which went into force in 2012, has provided clarification in this respect:

The Swiss Culture Promotion Act (KFG: Kulturförderungsgesetz) uses the terms "Kunstvermittlung" and "Kulturvermittlung" side by side (art. 1 KFG). The differentiation results from the subject matter and/or the area of competence of the Federal Office for Culture and the foundation Pro Helvetia.

Arts mediation [Kunstvermittlung] is anchored in the legislation through a section in the act explicitly establishing competences (art. 19 KFG). The Culture Promotion Ordinance (Kulturförderverordnung: KfV) states: "Measures that lead the public to engage autonomously with the arts and by doing so make artistic works or performances more accessible to the public are deemed to be measures of arts mediation" (art. 8 KfV). Therefore arts mediation denotes the focused handling of existing works, performances or artistic processes with the aim of making them understandable and more accessible to a public. The foundation Pro Helvetia is charged with measures in this definition of the term.

Cultural mediation can fall in the area of competence of the Federal Office for Culture, to the extent that the cultural mediation in question is directly associated with its own promotion measures (art. 23(1) KFG). The preservation of cultural heritage is one example of this in practice (art. 10 KFG); preserving cultural heritage encompasses not only the collection and restoration of cultural assets but also, and with the same justification, research into those assets, opening access to them and mediation of them. It also applies, for instance, to the support of organizations of non-professionals active in the arts and culture (art. 14 KFG), because non-professional organizations of this type constitute binding elements between the preservation and the living development of traditional forms of culture. Thus mediation – in the sense of incitement



to autonomous engagement with cultural assets and/or cultural practices – is one criterion for contributions in the promotion concepts for both of those areas.

The term “Vermittlung” [mediation] as used in the KFG is equivalent to the common usage of the term in both German- and French-speaking regions, which focus around the relationships of intellectual and emotional interactions between artists, works, institutions and the public. Mediation can be clearly demarcated from the semantic fields of diffusion, promotion and marketing (in the sense of the distribution of works, performances or artistic processes on the market).

The Culture and Society Section addresses issues of cultural mediation and participation in culture, specifically in the areas of promotion of language skills, literacy/reading, musical education and lay and folk culture.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 1: Cultural Mediation Between Emancipation and Discipline

"... there is almost no verb which could not be combined in common usage or in jest with [the prefix] 'ver-', and the basic perspective associated with that is always a movement away from the speaker, indeed, a loss [as in the word for loss itself, Verlust, where addition of 'ver-' transforms Lust, meaning pleasure/desire, to loss]."

(Mauthner 1913)

"I became aware that the introduction consisted of worrying people and not teaching them anything." (Caillet 1995)

Cultural mediation – and specifically arts mediation – should not be thought of (only) as an act of communicating, explaining or describing, nor as the smoothest possible transfer of knowledge from people ostensibly in the know to the ostensibly ignorant. There is a conflict inherent in mediation about who has the right and the opportunity to own art, to see it, to show it or speak about it: a conflict which is almost as old as the arts themselves. The letters of Pliny, written at the start of the first millennium of the Christian era, suggest that even then there were public debates about whether art collections could be locked away as private property or should be kept accessible to the public (Wittlin 1949, p. 109). In the modern era, the upheaval associated with the French Revolution and with industrialization created certain needs, which were reflected at first in the establishment of public museums and soon afterwards in the practice of museum education: the need to legitimize state ownership of cultural assets seized in connection with wars of conquest and colonization; the need to disseminate national myths in order to encourage the growth of a sense of nationhood in the population; to subject the growing working class to the discipline of bourgeois concepts of life; to provide education in aesthetics (in the sense of creative skills and the development of taste) to secure capacities in the context of industrial, global/colonial competition, but also the idea of the democratization of education and – still – the idea that the arts are an element of public life, to which all members of society are entitled (Sturm 2002b, p. 199ff.).

Against this backdrop, 19th-century England saw an institutionalization of museums as a place of education for school classes and later, after the 1851 World Fair, for adult education as well. "Philanthropic galleries" began to appear, places where social reformers, members of the clergy or artists themselves used paintings and sculptures as tools to help factory workers and the "have-nots" gain a better understanding of the civic virtues and present the arts as a component of a successful life independent of class or



origin (→ *Mörsch 2004a*). Many of these galleries, such as the South London Gallery, were started in institutions like the → *Working Men's College* and grew out of the labour movement. At the start of the 20th century Germany's Kunsterzieherbewegung [Arts Mediators Movement] advocated the pedagogical necessity of the free expression of the individual. Under its influence, avenues were developed at the international level for access to music, theatre and the fine arts (access both in the sense of reception of works and in the sense of opportunities for engaging in the arts as amateurs). But even back then, "free expression" did not imply freedom of purpose. A century earlier, Friedrich Schiller, in "Ueber die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reyhe von Briefen" [Letters Upon the Aesthetic Education of Man] published in 1801, had conceptualized aesthetic education as an instrument for developing the personality of the individual while obviating a struggle against existing power structures (Bergahn 2000). The objectives articulated by proponents of the art educator movement (Kunsterziehungsbewegung) are not dissimilar: "Because the renewal of the artistic education of our people is a question of survival for our people with respect to our morals, politics and industry" wrote Alfred Lichtwark, director of the museum Kunsthalle Hamburg and considered the founder of museum education in Germany, in his essay "Der Deutsche der Zukunft" [The German of the Future]. The essay appeared in 1901 in the publication marking the first Arts Education Day in Dresden. Cultural mediation is invoked here as a means of asserting a country as a nation which values industry and culture. Evidence that it was intended to serve this purpose is provided by a historical study published in 2005 which clearly documents the ways in which aesthetics education was used in colonialism to promote European value concepts and forms of government (Irbouh 2005). In the same period though, concepts of cultural mediation under the banner of emancipation were being developed as well. Walter Benjamin, for instance, wrote a programme for theatrical work with children and young people which was substantially influenced by the proletarian children's theatre of Asja Lacis. (Benjamin 1977, p. 764ff.).

Right from the start, combating social exclusion in the cultural → *field* has been both an ambition and a never-achieved goal of cultural mediation. Lichtwark, himself from a poor background, wanted to make education in the arts available to all classes, but he led his "Übungen in der Betrachtung von Kunstwerken" [Exercises in the contemplation of art works] (Lichtwark 1897) with a group of students the Höhere Töchterchule [secondary school for girls from middle-class families]. As a rule, even today, institutions like the "Freie Kunstschule" [free art schools] which began appearing in Germany in the 1960s, and the "Kreativwerkstätten" [creative workshops] in Zurich's community centres, still appeal to a fairly selective clientele, especially in comparison with socio-cultural programmes which do not focus on art. The efforts to decentralize and popularize contemporary

→ *Mörsch 2004a* <http://www.textezurkunst.de/53/socially-engaged-economies> [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0101.pdf

→ *Working Men's College* <http://www.southlondongallery.org/page/history> [14.10.2012]

→ *Field* see Glossary



theatre seen in France since the 1950s, though they have fundamentally changed the country's theatre scene, have had only a limited impact on the make-up of audiences (Duvignaud, Lagoutte 1986, p. 64; Bérardi, Effinger 2005, p. 75ff.). Mediation programmes in the area of classical music also continue to reach almost exclusively a public that is already interested (→ [Aicher 2006](#)). And throughout Europe, post-secondary art and music schools remain the most exclusive places in which to acquire tertiary education, demanding advance investment on a scale surpassing even that required for universities, whether in the form of symbolic or → *economic capital* (→ [Seefranz, Saner 2012](#)). Yet these very institutions boast that their admissions are based only on "talent" – a concept generally thought of as having no correlation with social or national background.

The terms "culture" and "art", then, are not neutral: they are laden with standards and, accordingly, are magnets for controversy. In the meaning intended by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, a person is seen as "cultured" if that person possesses a certain combination of taste and connoisseurship, which can be articulated through knowledge about the arts and design, the consumption of luxury goods, the way one treats one's own body and the bodies of other people or through styles of dress and communication. The components making up the ensemble of cultivation are subject to a process of change, though with one constant: "culture" signifies the promotion and distinction of a recognized style of life. The term, which is also associated with a concept of the world that is shaped by colonialism, is used in a manner which draws ethnicity-based distinctions, in the sense of "one's own", "foreign" or "other culture".¹ Bourdieu's study, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of "Taste"* was first published in 1979. But it is still cited in numerous scholarly publications to this day. This is because both demarcation functions – setting the boundary between one social class and others, and the boundaries with which we attempt to distinguish between what is supposedly ours and what is supposedly foreign – are still in effect – as old and familiar as they may be. It is against this backdrop that we must view attempts to continue using the term culture while ridding it of the demarcation functions just described. There have been calls for a broader understanding of the term culture, expanding it to include the practices of everyday life and "popular" phenomena: heard from of the French workers' education movement since the 1920s, from the discipline of cultural studies established in England in the 1950s and from Brazil's education for liberation (Freire 1974). The proponents of this approach argue that cultural practices, the research into them and their mediation should support the battle against inequality based on economic conditions or the categories of gender, ethnicity or nation of origin, for instance, rather than confirm and reproduce such inequalities. In the German and French-speaking regions, elements of Kulturpädagogik [cultural pedagogy] and → *socio-cultural animation* have also belonged to this tradition since the

→ [Aicher 2006](#) <http://epub.wu.ac.at/1602> [14.2.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0102.pdf

→ *Economic capital* see Glossary: Capital, forms of

→ [Seefranz, Saner 2012](#) http://iae.zhdk.ch/fileadmin/data/iae/documents/Making_Differences_Vorstudie.pdf [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0103.pdf

→ *Socio-cultural animation* see Glossary



1970s, as have the artists who engage in their art in schools and institutions of non-formal education (→ [Mörsch 2005](#)). In the same period, civil rights movements have allied with artists to call for the visibility and participation of minorities in artistic arenas – a demand which people engaged in cultural mediation have long been actively working to meet, above all in English-speaking and Anglo-American regions (→ [Allen 2008](#)).

Given the field of tensions surrounding cultural mediation, described here briefly, which result from a range of historical developments, it should not be surprising that cultural mediation is a highly heterogeneous field. Depending on their objectives and how they understand concepts of arts and education, people can frame and design cultural mediation in a wide variety of ways. Those who see the aim of expanding the audience for established cultural institutions as key find themselves close to the field of marketing. The pedagogical aspect, in the sense of stimulating and moderating debates and guidance and support of artistic creative processes, takes on greater relevance for those who see cultural mediation as an educational activity in a democratic/civil society and/or artistic sense. When mediation is intended primarily to promote economic development, e.g. by boosting the so-called “creative industries”, it may well be directed by a business-type of logic. When mediation is aimed principally at combating structures that give rise to inequalities, it will have interfaces with social work or social activism. All of that notwithstanding, cultural mediation can also be understood as an artistically informed practice – not least due to the fact that artists have to no small extent long been among those working to → [establish cultural mediation](#) as a field of activity and thus have a substantial impact on it ([Mörsch 2004a](#)). Wherever the focus lies though, it is in the nature of institutionalized cultural mediation to find itself in an ambivalent position. Cultural mediation serves to stabilize and legitimize cultural institutions because it provides them with (the) audience and represents their interests to the outside world. It also constitutes a permanent source of disturbance: simply by existing, it reminds people of a promise never yet realized, seeing the arts as a public good. It may be in part due to this reminder, this production of difference within the system, that the status of cultural mediation is often → [precarious](#) and that it tends to be assigned to a lower level of the institutional hierarchy. Accordingly, cultural mediation is still a [feminized](#) (women-dominated) field of activity. Artists regularly evince distrust of mediation, suspecting it of entailing a form of betrayal of art – e.g. by speaking about art in ways that deviate from the discourse of specialists. Or because mediation results in the appearance of people in the arts scene who, by their presence, disturb the routines of that sphere and cause it to become aware of itself directly. From the mid 1990s, people began responding to this tension by developing concepts of cultural mediation taking its very tendency to produce difference and the

→ [Mörsch 2005](#) <http://kontextschule.org/inhalte/dateien/MoerschKueInSchGeschichte.pdf> [25.7.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0105.pdf

→ [Allen 2008](#) http://felicityallen.co.uk/sites/default/files/Situating%20gallery%20education_0.pdf [25.7.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0106.pdf

→ [Establishing cultural mediation](#) see Text 5.RL

→ [precarious](#) see Glossary

→ [feminized](#) see Glossary



impossibility of fulfilling its mission as a productive base for cultural mediation activities. The degree programme “Médiation culturelle de l’art” was established at Université Aix-Marseille in France in 1994, at the behest of the French Ministry of Culture and based on a survey of demand. The programme was directed until 2006 by → Jean-Charles Bérardi, an art sociologist whose approach relates particularly to Pierre Bourdieu and the studies building on his work. From Bérardi’s perspective, médiation culturelle de l’art is a field of political activity. In it, the aim is to insist that cultural institutions be considered public spaces. Here, the intent is not to diffuse the tension between art and the public, but rather to take it as the point of departure and subject matter of debate. One function of médiation culturelle des arts is that of questioning the societal relevance of the arts and the relevance of the society for the artistic field (Bérardi, Effinger 2005, p. 80). This concept of médiation culturelle des arts is strongly influenced by linguistic scholarship, including the theses of the psychoanalyst Jaques Lacan (Effinger 2001, p. 15). In Lacan’s view, talking about the arts inevitably produces difference, because language can never be identical to that to which it refers. There is always some untranslatable remnant which cannot be put into words. However, this difference is productive, in Lacan’s eyes. It forms the basis for the constitution of the self, for the perception of otherness [altérité] and thus for the continued production of symbols. In this context, Jean Caune, one of the leading theorists of French médiation culturelle, speaks of the “brèche” [breach / gap] (Caune 1999, p. 106 ff.), through which “the other” is manifest, but can never be fully understood. From this perspective, the impossibility of realizing the aspiration of repairing the breach between the arts and society by explaining and making accessible constitutes the foundation necessary for an understanding of médiation culturelle. Médiation culturelle is not understood as the transmission of information, but rather as a performative act, a process permitting the creation of relationships among the participants (e.g. mediators, public), the vehicles of expression (e.g. art works) and societal structures (e.g. cultural institutions). Elisabeth Caillet, another prominent figure in French médiation culturelle sees a parallel in this with the complex relationships among artists, their works and the world (Caillet 1995, p. 183). In the German-language arena, the art mediator and theorist Eva Sturm independently developed an approach which is in line with this vision. In her book “Im Engpass der Worte. Sprechen über moderne und zeitgenössische Kunst” [In the Bottleneck of Words: Talking About Modern and Contemporary Art], published in 1996 – which has been highly influential for German-language cultural mediation – she analysed the act of speaking in cultural mediation in the museum, also drawing on Lacan. Where Caune speaks of the “brèche”; Sturm speaks of “Lücken reden” [speaking gaps] (Sturm 1996, p. 100). Cultural mediation becomes, for her, a performative act of translation,

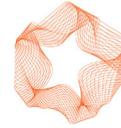
→ Jean-Charles Bérardi <http://www.youscribe.com/catalogue/livres/art-musique-et-cinema/beaux-arts/prolegomenes-une-sociologie-de-l-art-176900> [20.3.2013]



in which something is always lost and something new is added, i.e. some third thing is created, which is never identical to that which is to be translated. Accordingly, she does not see mediating as a form of explanation or arbitration either. The word “Ver-mitteln” [mediate] realises the meaning of the prefix “ver-” in the sense indicated in the quotation at the start of this section: in the meaning of embroilment, the loss of control and the missing the target, but with the positive result of the creation of a web of relationships and spaces for action which are not (always) subject to control.

The past decade has seen the emergence of concepts for an arts mediation as a hegemony-critical practice, as deliberate disruption and counter-canonization, in a sense which goes beyond the systemic disturbance described above, which, as we have shown here, has always been associated with institutional cultural mediation as a symptom. These concepts consciously hark back to the movements of the 1970s and ‘80s described above (Marchardt 2005; Mörsch et al. 2009; Graham, Yasin 2007; → [Rodrigo 2012](#); Sternfeld 2005). The term hegemony here refers to the system of rule found principally in Western-style democracies which are structured along capitalist lines, a system based on social consensus rather than implementation by force (Haug F. 2004, p. 3, citing Gramsci). The ideas governed by the consensus are seen by the majority as true and normal. A society’s members accept the hegemonic order and live according to its rules and codes (Demirovic 1992, p. 134). In this situation, the consensus, which provides the foundation for the hegemonic order, is the subject of continual debate: it is constantly being renegotiated. Criticism of the hegemony is therefore part and parcel of the hegemonic system. Thus criticism of the hegemony cannot claim to come from outside of the system it is criticizing. Such criticism has a tendency to become hegemonic itself, to itself represent the social consensus. This is where a form of cultural mediation which sees criticism of the hegemony as the basis for its practices comes into play. Cultural institutions and artistic production are among principal forums for negotiation of the hegemonic system. By virtue of what cultural institutions and artistic production offer, and the forms in which they offer it, but also their working conditions, their economies, the spaces for action and the form of their visibility, they are inevitably involved in the creation and confirmation of social norms and values, inclusion and exclusion, power and market, although potentially also in their subversion and modification. Cultural mediation, for its part, is not founded solely in the production of culture and the arts: it is also anchored in the educational field, another forum in which the hegemony is created, criticized and modified. Thus, in every situation, cultural mediation faces the choice of whether to confirm and reproduce existing hegemonic structures or to distance itself from them and transform them. Choosing transformation implies, first of all, contradicting (Haug F. 2004, pp. 4–38): examining

→ [Rodrigo 2012](https://www.box.com/s/7bfaa3f603e1dcfdad2d) <https://www.box.com/s/7bfaa3f603e1dcfdad2d> [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0107.pdf



the unquestioned axioms of its own field of activities, analyzing its hidden standards and values. Moreover, this hegemony-critical cultural mediation also wants to have an impact on the institutions and the conditions in which it takes place. Criticism which failed to offer constructive suggestions would, in its self-sufficiency, run counter to the purpose of mediation, which is to create → situations of exchange, which should be understood to encompass not only harmonious exchange but also antagonistic or challenging exchange (Sturm 2002a).² Accordingly, cultural mediation which sees itself as a critical practice in this sense attempts to arrive at a re-thinking and re-learning of the reasons for its own existence. Self-contradiction presupposes a project based on affirmation (Haug F. 2004, pp. 4 – 38).

→ Situations of exchange
see Text 1.1

The texts identified as “For Reading at Leisure” in the following chapters examine the dual dynamic of a cultural mediation evolving between criticism and the re-examination of its own practices. The texts start by presenting the fields of tensions surrounding cultural mediation in the context of the guiding question defined for each chapter. Then they offer some reflections about opportunities for action or transformation relating to those tensions. This first of the subsequent passes – i.e. examining the opportunities identified in that examination with respect to their own hegemonic disposition and the practices of dominance and contradictions which that might entail – is touched only briefly in the texts by pointing out that while the existing tensions in existing relationships cannot be completely dispelled, the aim should be to work within them and shape them in an informed and aware fashion.

¹ “This global concept of cultures took on the form which would prove authoritative for it for the subsequent period ... through Johann Gottfried Herder, and particularly in his ideas about the Philosophy of the History of Mankind, published between 1784 and 1791. Herder’s concept of culture is characterized by three elements: ethnic consolidation, social homogenization and delimitation relative to the outside.” (Welsch 1995)

² And wherein the people who try their hand at developing and implementing proposals for action need not necessarily be the same people who conduct the analyses.



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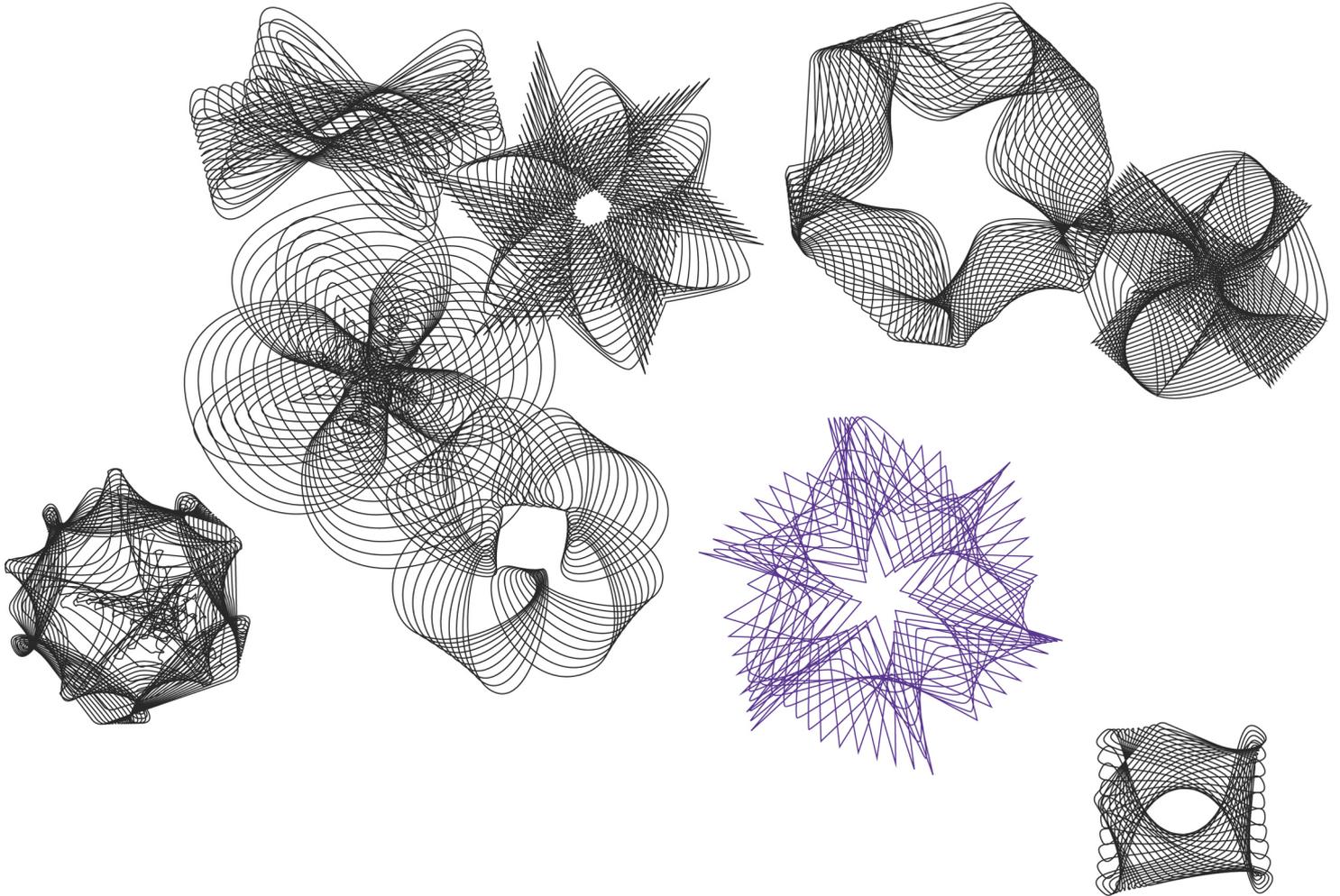
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Time for Cultural Mediation

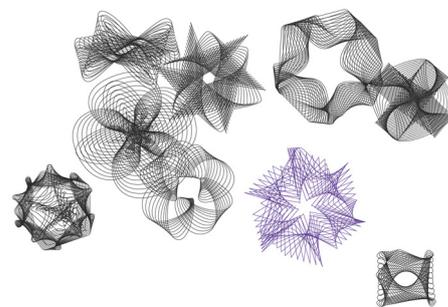
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?



- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?



2.0 Intro

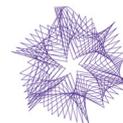
The justification, planning, publicizing and implementation of cultural mediation activities all hinge on the question of whom they are intended for. However, questions of audience definition have consequences for an institution's self-image and its staffing as well. An arts institution which offers only lectures, film series and symposia for experts will staff its cultural mediation department (assuming it has one) with people who have a very different set of professional qualifications than will an institution whose programme is aimed primarily at children and school classes. By the same token, the institutions will publicize their programmes differently, and justify them on different grounds. In the former case, the stated aim will be the advancement of discourse in the field; in the latter, the cultivation of the → next generation of visitors or a more broadly framed educational mission might be cited.

→ next generation of visitors see Text 5.2

→ attributes see Text 9.2

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the concept of the target group, a tool used by most institutions to define their audiences. It explores some of the consequences and critiques of thinking in terms of target groups and puts forth some suggestions for other approaches which might help institutions get past some of the negative aspects. The text for reading at leisure addresses problematic and yet frequently used categorizations attributed to target groups, such as "disadvantaged", "with little exposure to culture" [kulturfern] or "[im]migrant". It points up the dilemma of targeting: the dangers associated with the use of → attributes when defining the group of people to whom an invitation being issued vs. the difficulty of issuing an invitation without addressing it to someone. And finally, the text opens up perspectives for a constructive approach to this opposition.

- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
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2.1 Target group categories

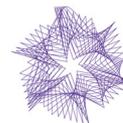
The arts provider tends to be the one who answers the question “who is cultural mediation for”. Only rarely does a group approach a cultural institution or individual artist to → request a cultural mediation programme on its own behalf.

→ request see Text 4.5

→ specialists in the arts and culture see Text 5.1

To define the audience or public for their cultural mediation activities, cultural institutions draw on a market research tool, the definition of target groups. Target groups are traditionally defined in terms of socio-demographic traits. Normally, the category of age or generation is the primary focus: children, young people, senior citizens, adults (less common though increasingly) are the most frequently defined target groups. In recent years, early development programmes (e.g. “theatre for toddlers”) have been seen in greater numbers, as have programmes for multiple generations. This last group brings us to another commonly used type of category: one based on societal institutions and groups, such as families, companies or occupations (e.g. managers or teachers). Alternatively, programmes can and often do identify target audiences by way of educational institutions, such as schools, universities and kindergartens. These invitations sometimes carry hidden target-group attributes, such as social status or educational background – an example of this would be offerings aimed at students in vocational programmes or at secondary schools which qualify for university admission. Target groups defined in terms of differentiation from the social majority, e.g. explicitly aimed at lesbians or gay men or at people of a specific ethnic origin, remain quite rare in the German-speaking world. There is a longer tradition of addressing audience groups with specific physical or mental characteristics – e.g. offerings for people who have learning impairments or impaired vision, hearing, or mobility.

A large proportion of the programmes offered by cultural institutions is addressed to an audience made up of → specialists in the arts and culture or people interested in the arts and culture. This group is almost never identified as a target group however. This is a case of an “invisible target group”, whose members are viewed as the obvious or natural users of programmes.

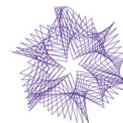


2.2 Critiques of target-group thinking

By using a market research tool, a cultural institution is assigning to itself the role of the goods or services provider; the users (institution-goers), thus represent customers or consumers. There are other ways of viewing the role of a cultural institution than one which places it in the market, subject to the whims of supply and demand. One could think of the cultural institution as a cooperation partner, for instance, or as a forum of public debate which is not bound to market logics and thus able to draw on other freedoms and take more risks than a business. Users, for their part, need not necessarily be seen as customers or consumers: they could be discussion partners and active participants in shaping the institution. That would eliminate, or at least put into perspective, inflexible arts mediation offered in the “we produce – you consume” spirit. Thinking in target groups does not prohibit this kind of thinking, but it does not foster it either.

Another critique has its origins in the field of market research itself, which recognizes that definitions of target groups tend to be conservative and oversimplified and to lag behind social dynamics and developments. As they generally lack the resources to conduct regular market analysis, cultural institutions tend to operate with insufficiently sophisticated definitions of target groups. For instance, the target attribute “family” refers to the heterosexual nuclear family, which has long since ceased to be the only mode of life in diversified societies and, indeed, may not even be the prevalent mode. Another example is the category of “seniors”: this target audience might prefer not to be addressed through that category because its members prefer to spend their time in mixed-age groups which share similar interests and educational backgrounds.

Target group definitions are also problematic when they contain attributes which describe deficits. Two attributes used frequently in professional discourse on cultural mediation provide good examples: “bildungsfern” and “kulturfern” [literally “remote from education” or “remote from culture” respectively, in similar English contexts one sees “with low exposure to education/to the arts”]. Inherent in terms like these is the unquestioned assumption that the meaning of “education” and “culture” has already been established, and that everyone knows who has them and who does not. Programmes for target groups defined in this way run the risk of exacerbating the inequalities they are intended to combat. On the other hand, simply ignoring inequalities in circumstances associated with the use of forms of culture and the arts causes people who are disadvantaged to be further excluded. There is no easy way out of this quandary.

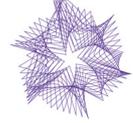


2.3 Other approaches to defining audiences

Moving away from the socio-demographic, socio-economic and psychographic attributes that traditionally define target groups, audience groups can be defined on the basis of interests shared by members of a range of conventional target groups. Thus, one can define the audiences invited in terms of the content of the cultural offering in question. For example, a performance with contemporary electronic music might be supplemented by a cultural mediation offering intended specifically for electricians and electric engineers or programmers which is designed to stimulate interaction between people with those professional viewpoints and the artistic approach. Or, one could invite young interior decorators to a Rococo exhibition to discuss current approaches to interior decorating and then take that further in a workshop based on the formal language of Rococo.

These examples point to the possibility of an imaginative approach to the target-group concept that plays with pre-defined categories. Cultural mediation can try to call preconceived notions into question or reinterpret and refresh them, just as the arts themselves do. Offerings that are unconventional – which do not quite fit with the self-image of the institution – are often those which generate the most attention.

A cultural institution can also open itself in other ways to active exchange with the surrounding community and develop programmes for the people who live or work there. It can also identify a problem in the community and use its cultural mediation programme to take a stance on that problem. This is another way to reach new users and co-campaigners within a local community – for instance by making common cause with activists working to improve living conditions in their district, who may initially have seen a cultural institution primarily as a factor contributing towards increased rents and evictions.



2.4 Cultural mediation for the institution's continuing development and renewal

Recently, there has been discussion of an enlarged role for cultural mediation. The aim is no longer (only) to expand access to cultural production to various new audiences. Now, the audiences themselves are being seen as possessors of knowledge essential to the development both of institutions and of art-making. Seen in this light, cultural mediation becomes a forum for exchange and interaction. The roles of teacher and learner slip their moorings.

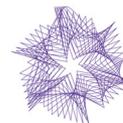
For example, the cultural mediation project with local residents proposed at the end of Text 2.3 entailed the possibility that the cultural institution would be encouraged to analyze its own local socio-economic impacts. The resulting awareness could, in turn, influence the institution's future programming decisions and internal policies – e.g. the institution might decide to hire locally and offer special training programmes for local residents, take an active part in the debates about changes in the district or host artists who address the phenomenon of → gentrification in their work. Or, in another example, a museum might engage in mediation activities intended for → people with impaired vision or mobility and use the knowledge it acquires through them to design accessible exhibitions and select exhibition objects with the needs of those groups of users in mind.

Here we see the understanding of cultural institutions shifting towards → performativity. In this view, institutions are not static but instead are capable of continual re-creation by means of the collective influence of the sum of the actions and perspectives of everyone who does (or does not) use them and / or perform within them: from the institutions' staff to their directors, to the various visitors and those who do not visit, the media reporting on them and the neighbours who walk right past without even seeing them. In recent years, new forms of public participation in social media have considerably encouraged this way of seeing cultural institutions.

→ gentrification see Glossary

→ people with impaired vision or mobility see Text 5.4

→ performativity see Glossary



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Corinne Doret Baertschi, Fanny Guichard: Two Concrete Examples of Cultural Mediation in Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne

Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne has been offering a cultural mediation programme for various target groups for several years. Classroom performances of “The Miser” and theatrical performances featuring audio descriptions are two examples.

Classroom Performances of “The Miser”

In 2012, Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne and director Dorian Rossel developed a production of Molière’s “The Miser” for school classrooms. The play is performed in the classroom and the performance, which lasts two school periods, is regularly interrupted by discussion with the classes.

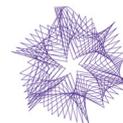
People do not automatically acquire an interest in theatre. There are many preconceptions associated with theatre. By reaching out to pupils and presenting them with a simple, easily digestible form of theatre, we hope to convey to them what is vibrant, direct and universal about theatre without the sometimes intimidating ritual associated with theatre as a social occasion. We believed Molière’s “The Miser” to be well-suited for this due to its humour and its theme of money, which is ubiquitous in our world.

The actors do not only act out scenes from Molière, they also interact directly with the classes. We believe that exposing the tricks of the theatrical trade causes the audience members’ powers of perception and judgement to be engaged differently and that the latter, paradoxically, is of advantage. The set-up in the classroom is almost unobtrusive, with no excessive scenery, costumes or lights, and the theatre unfolds gradually, only through the actors’ performances. The themes of the play provide aspects interesting for classes in subjects like economics, philosophy, sociology, history and psychology, as well as for French classes.

Theatrical Plays Featuring Audio Description

Aware that disabilities render theatre inaccessible to part of the population, in March of 2011 Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne launched an innovative pilot project: the performance of a theatrical play featuring live audio description¹ for people who are blind or visually impaired. To ensure an appropriate reception for these theatre-goers, the theatre arranged to have a staff of volunteers on hand to greet them upon arrival or even provide transport from their homes and assist them throughout the evening.

People who are blind or visually impaired have an opportunity to move around the stage and touch the objects there to become familiar with the scenery and props before the performance. During the performance,

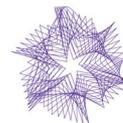


an audio narrator seated at the stage director's desk describes the visual elements of the piece. This description is transmitted via headphones, so it does not disturb the rest of the audience.

Due to the great response the pilot project received, we were able to continue with the programme. Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne now regularly offers plays with audio descriptions. In June of 2012 we invited children who have impaired vision or are blind and their families to a circus performance. A preparatory workshop which they could attend along with other children was also held.

Corinne Doret Baertschi *and* Fanny Guichard *are jointly responsible for public relations at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne.*

¹ Audio-description is a technique allowing people who are blind or visually impaired to better perceive what is happening visually in films, theatrical plays or exhibition by hearing commentary describing actions as they unfold.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Anina Jendreyko: Who is Foreign? Or, on the Art of Dissolving One's Target Group

The project → *fremd?!* [foreign?!] runs in Basel districts where social diversity has long been an aspect of daily life. The project concentrates on theatrical productions with young people between the ages of 12 and 15. It is tied to the classroom community and thus to the institution of the school. At the end of each 7-month rehearsal phase, five public performances are given in a Basel theatre. The work is led by theatre professionals, actors and actresses, musicians and dancers, representing a range of social and cultural backgrounds.

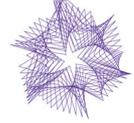
→ "*fremd?!*" <http://www.projektfremd.ch> [20.3.2013]

→ *inequalities* see Text 2.2

Clearly defining the target group at which the project "fremd?!" is aimed is part and parcel of the project. Because it is based in the field of interculturality, "fremd?!" has been accused of exacerbating the → *inequalities* it is intended to combat. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the project's name, "foreign?!", already casts doubt on the possibility of a clear target-group definition. The question mark and exclamation mark communicate the project's awareness of the ambivalence associated with these attributes and that it examines them with a critical eye.

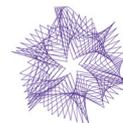
Usually the ambiguities of the project's name become clear during the first meeting with the young participants. The participants themselves do not identify with the theme of migration or the potentially derogatory attribute associated with it. The project "fremd?!" works with a target group which must first discover itself as such.

The impetus for "fremd?!" came from an individual rather than a cultural institution. With the eyes of someone returning home from foreign parts, I became aware quite quickly that Basel had failed to respond appropriately to the cultural diversity which had long been a part of daily life in its schools. Much was (and is) seen as problematic; having a native language other than the usual one was viewed as a deficit. I met classes in which as many as 15 native languages were spoken. Taking this diversity as a starting point, I launched an artistic process using the media of theatre, music and dance. Over the years, the idea underlying "fremd?!" has crystallized: by focusing on diversity of cultures rather than on migration one can expand the cultural landscape, open it up for new content and styles. The project "fremd?!" avails itself of the concept of transculturality, i.e. the mutual interpenetration of cultures. One could say that "fremd?!" took target-group thinking



as its launch point, and moved from there to its own ideological target: the dissolution of the target group.

Anina Jendreyko is an actress and director. She returned to Switzerland in 2006, having lived for many years in Turkey and Greece. After returning to Basel, she initiated the transcultural theatre project "fremd?!", which now has over a dozen participating theatre arts professionals, and serves as its artistic director.



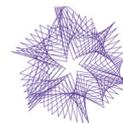
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Nadia Keckeis, Jeanne Pont: Disability, Culture and Cultural Mediation as a Chain Reaction

As one of the partner projects of Pro Helvetia's "Arts and Audiences Programme", the City and Canton of Geneva in collaboration with Comité franco-genevois [CRFG: French-Geneva Regional Committee] carried out a range of activities addressing the theme "Cultural Mediation, Arts and Disability". The project rattled the preconceptions of the participating cultural institutions and pointed to new ways of doing things.

To make cultural institutions accessible to people with disabilities is to uphold the democratic principle of equal opportunity. In Switzerland this principle is anchored in the Federal Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against People with Disabilities (BehiG 2002).

Taking specific cognitive capacities and behaviours of people with disabilities into account dramatically disrupts established ways of doing things. The more so because people with disabilities do not constitute a uniform group and because the requirements associated with some disabilities can conflict with those of others. A disability can be permanent or temporary; the range of possible disabilities is very large and extremely diverse. In Switzerland more than 1.4 million people live with a disability, i.e. 20% of the population.

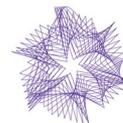
Taking accessibility into account when designing a cultural project creates an opportunity to rethink the encounter with the audience. The cultural mediator is not the only one responsible for this process: the entire cultural institution is involved, and interdependencies are created. The cultural mediator must adapt their cognitive approach to the cultural subject-matter, or even change it entirely, and in doing so react flexibly to particular rhythms and behaviours. The communications officer's job is to ensure that communication tools used are compatible with the aids and appliances used by people with sensory impairments or impaired motor function. The set designer has to make sure that the setting is accessible; people with reception duties have to have basic skills in non-verbal communication and assisting people who are blind. Everyone has to be ready to see situations through another person's eyes, demonstrate creativity and put aside any fear of trying new things. One has no option but to listen to what the other person has to say, whether the speaker is a visitor or another staff member.



No project can be realized without doing some basic analysis of the socio-cultural profile of the target groups or of their relationship to the cultural environment. And it is here that working within networks is so important, because the input of people directly affected is crucial to the ability to accommodate all aspects of their particular disability. This means that the target group itself acts as a co-designer of a specific cultural offering.

The experiments carried out in the project “Cultural Mediation, Arts and Disability” demonstrated that the change of perspective associated with examining both access to venues of culture and subject-matter can result in the creation of essential new forms of cultural mediation from which everyone can benefit.

Nadia Keckeis is the Deputy Director of the Cultural Service of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Republic and Canton of Geneva. Jeanne Pont is the Cultural Attaché of the City of Geneva, Cultural Promotion Service of the Department of Culture and Sports responsible for the development and / or coordination of innovative multi-discipline cultural mediation projects, development of tools for surveys on the arts and culture target groups and practices of the arts and culture.



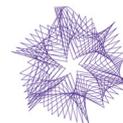
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Cultural Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: Cultural Mediation for Whom?

One aspect of cultural mediation projects is that they tend to work with pre-defined target groups. Therefore those involved in promoting such projects need to take a position on the target-group question.

Pro Helvetia does not mention any specific target groups in its funding criteria for cultural mediation projects; instead, it speaks only in terms of aiming the cultural mediation projects at an audience. The choice of this very broad term “audience” was deliberate, and it was intended to leave the question of target group primarily up to the mediators or project directors.

The choice of a specific target group has implications for how the project is targeted, what cultural mediation methods are used, whether expert assistance will be required and, if so, what type. One of the questions Pro Helvetia considers in its qualitative evaluation is whether the project takes the specific requirements of a particular target group into account and whether it has the relevant expertise available (e.g. young people with migrant backgrounds, people with impaired vision, etc.) In Pro Helvetia’s view, a thoughtful approach to target groups is one of the qualities that high quality cultural mediation demonstrates. One indication of such an approach is the involvement of a project’s participants in its development; another is the use of innovative formats which integrate the relevant specialist knowledge about the target group selected.

Pro Helvetia’s interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Working Group *was responsible for developing the promotion criteria within the framework of its Arts and Audiences Programme.*



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 2: Targeting and the Paradox of Recognition

“Like any social project, the project of recognition overall and specific projects of recognition individually have to be understood in relation to the specific ways they relate to systems of power. In the moment it manifests itself as a demand or intention, social recognition excludes [someone].”

(Mecheril 2000)

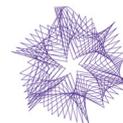
As discussed in Text 1.RL, one motivation for cultural mediation that has long been felt is the demand that the arts be accessible to all members of a society as a common good. In recent decades, publicly funded cultural institutions have come under growing pressure to demonstrate their achievements in this respect in terms of visitor numbers and broadly based audiences. Over the same period, competition with other offerings in the leisure and educational sector has heated up. One result is that cultural institutions, even those for whom democratization is not necessarily a priority, have adopted a → visitor-oriented approach and expanded their cultural mediation programmes to target specific groups, with the aim of expanding their audiences. In this context, institutions focus on groups within society which are not represented in their usual audiences; groups which are thought to require an active invitation. The sections of the population at issue possess relatively little → cultural and economic capital and are thus viewed from a privileged position as “disadvantaged”, [bildungsfern, having little exposure to education].

The targeting of these groups by cultural institutions entails a field of tensions which the scholar Paul Mecheril, an expert in issues of education and migration, calls the “paradox of recognition”, with reference to Hegel (→ Mecheril 2000). On the one hand, targeting of this kind is, allegedly at least, intended to result in the elimination of discrimination, or at least open up the possibility of eliminating it. On the other hand though, targeting implies an identification and thus a definition of the persons targeted as being different, “the other”, and as a consequence, not as equals. The identifications themselves, for their part, are neither random nor neutral: they are made from the points of view and in the interests of those who do the targeting. Thus they serve not only to create the “other”, but also to confirm the self as the standard to be aspired to. The terms “low exposure to education” or “bildungsfern” [trans. literally: “remote from education”], for instance, beg the question of how education can be defined in a way which allows people to be characterized as being located at distance from it. The latter term, “bildungsfern”, crops up often in the German-language debate about the use of culture and the arts and it refers (usually tacitly) to a lack of affinity with the recognized, bourgeois educational canon.¹ “Bildungsfern” is also used as a label placed on one group

→ visitor-oriented see Glossary

→ cultural and economic capital see Glossary entry on Capital, forms of

→ Mecheril 2000 http://www.forum-interkultur.net/uploads/tx_textdb/22.pdf [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0201.pdf



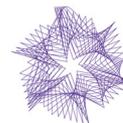
by another group of people who assume that the education they possess would be also beneficial for other people. Seen in this way, the “equality” being aimed at in the context of this and many other forms of targeting appears to be less the elimination of discrimination than the right (or the duty?) to assimilate to those doing the targeting. In the discussion about access to the job market, “bildungsfern” describes a person who has not undergone certified training or earned school leaving certificates. The scholar Erich Ribolits, an expert in the philosophy and practice of education, objects to this use, pointing out that “education” does not mean job market compatibility and suggests an alternative understanding of educated as having “the ability [...] to hold one’s own vis-à-vis the constraints in the system that result from existing power structures”. People “educated” in this sense would “oppose the totalitarian orientation of life geared at optimally successful employment and consumption” and see “nature as more than just an object to be exploited and other people as more than competitors” (→ [Ribolits 2011](#)). From this perspective, one would be forced to consider the majority of the population to be “remote from education”, according to Ribolits. He points out, though, that people who exhibit the relevant attitudes can be found in a very broad range of groups in society and that there is no causal association between a high-level school or vocational degree or bourgeois conceptions of culture and those attitudes. In Ribolits’ view, his concept of education might even allow the knowledge and skills possessed by people with little cultural or economic capital (who as a result have an enhanced ability to improvise and subvert) to be interpreted as the mark of an educated elite.

The terms “bildungsfern”, [low exposure to education] and their ilk are often used to identify target groups, but they are never used explicitly to communicate with them, as it is unlikely that anyone would feel that they were being addressed in a favourable light with such terms. The same does not apply to another form of address which is no less problematic and ever more common: “immigrants and their families” or, in EU-speak, “people with migrant backgrounds”. In the first decade of the 21st century (more precisely: since the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001), the question of the position and principles forming the basis for the activities of cultural institutions in the → [migration society](#) has taken on great importance, as a great many projects, studies, handouts and conferences have borne out.² Targeting of people with “migrant backgrounds” by individuals and institutions engaged in cultural mediation – associated in no small degree to funding policy requirements – fails to reflect the enormous diversity and complexity of identity constructs in a migration society. This is because such programmes are targeted at a very specific group, which is marked ethnically and nationally as “other”. Specifically: cultural mediation programmes are not intended to bring high-earning → [expats](#) into the art world, they are aimed at people “remote from

→ [Ribolits 2011](#) <http://www.gew-berlin.de/blz/22795.php> [16.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0202.pdf

→ [migration society](#) see Glossary

→ [expats](#) see Glossary



education” who have “migrant backgrounds”. Mecheril and other authors make it clear that this form of identification constitutes a “culturalization” of structural and social injustices. Rather than examining the effects of social, legal and political discrimination caused by the structures of the → majority society, the pre-defined cultural differences attributed to the people who are invited become the most important model for explaining their absence in the institutions. Thus it is hardly surprising that people are increasingly loathe to be addressed with such terms (Mysorekar 2007), an issue explored for instance, in a workshop held by → Tiroler Kulturinitiative [Tirolean Initiative for Culture] in the autumn of 2011 under the title “Anti-racism and Cultural Work”:³

In ‘critical’ or anti-racist contexts there is a fairly solid consensus that the focus of public debates about immigration should shift their focus from the immigrants to society’s problems: they should address the education system’s ineffectiveness and racist structures rather than speaking of immigrants with little exposure to education; mechanisms which result in exclusion rather than immigrants who exploit the social system, etc. Moreover, the debate on immigration has shifted dramatically to concentrate on immigrants from Islamic countries: whereas a few years ago people spoke about immigrants whose parents or grandparents were Turkish, now they speak about Muslim immigrants.

Questions based on the fact that cultural work shapes discourse:

- What contributions does free cultural work make to the debate on immigration?
- How can one do anti-racist cultural work without getting into in the current immigration debate?
- Is it possible to submit grant proposals, e.g., without getting caught up in this debate?
- Can one avoid “migrant” *? Or: AntiRa work beyond identity attributions.

In addition to these questions, the workshop will address the following issues:

- How do people deal with forms of racism within and outside of their own activities in independent cultural work?
- Is there a link between anti-racism work and resource allocation?
- What criteria are used to define racism?”

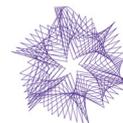
A petition entitled → Stopp mit dem falschen Gerede vom Migrationshintergrund [Cut the Bogus Talk About Migrant Backgrounds] was started in 2012. It is rare to find host institutions which entertain the idea of creating, or rather, exhibit willingness to create space at the level of their programme design or job activities for the people they are targeting. Switzerland is not the only country where key positions in cultural institutions are filled almost exclusively by members of the → white majority.⁴ Here we see another dimension of the paradox: targeting results in the creation of

→ majority society see Glossary

→ Tiroler Kulturinitiative <http://www.tki.at/tkiweb/tkiweb?page=ShowArticle&service=external&sp=1363> [26.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0203.pdf

→ Stopp mit dem falschen Gerede vom Migrationshintergrund <https://www.openpetition.de/petition/online/stopp-dem-falschen-gerede-vom-migrationshintergrund> [25.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0204.pdf

→ white see Glossary



“other”, i.e. the manifestation of inequalities, but it is only by actively tackling these categories of inequality that existing inequalities can be redressed. Citing Simone de Beauvoir⁵, Mecheril (2000) emphasizes that pretending that differences do not exist cannot serve as a rational way of dealing with the paradox of recognition. Ignoring categories contributes to the continued existence of discrimination no less than codifying them does. Mecheril argues that although it is vital to avoid reducing people to affiliations, we must respect the human need to differentiate oneself and define one's position by way of affiliations. This is in no small part due to the fact that self-identifying through membership of a group can represent a form of psychological and physical self-preservation in the sense of → strategic essentialism (Spivak 1988). Moreover, identifications are the product of society as a whole: immigrant artists face expectations that their artistic output will relate to their ethnicity or origin (→ Terkessidis 2011). Reference to one's ethnic origin is the most frequent occasion for categorization created by the majority society and one that cannot be avoided. → People of colour are forced to answer the question “where are you from” throughout their lives, regardless of whether they hear it as expressing polite interest in themselves as individuals or as insulting and annoying. Simply responding “Switzerland”, “Bern”, or “Mummy's tummy” is very seldom taken as a satisfactory answer by the asker (→ Winter Sayilir 2011; → Kilomba 2006).

The absence of a way out is one of the defining features of a paradox. Contradictions are inevitably entailed in any endeavour to create fair access in the cultural field, in every effort to combat the creation of minorities, discrimination or exclusion through education. Yet some ways of coping with these contradictions are more appealing and better informed (more contemporary, more appropriate) than others. Mecheril proposes “communicative reflexivity” as a professional approach for acting within the paradox:

“Professional activities and structures are scrutinized to determine the extent to which they contribute to exclusion of the “other” and / or a reproductive creation of the ‘other’. [...] Communicative reflexivity – as the medium in which an education of recognition can develop [...] also means that change-oriented consideration of conditions impeding or producing the other should characterize a communication process which [...] should involve the ‘others’ [...]” (Mecheril 2000, p. 11).

Thus Mecheril's communicative reflexivity entails not only a capacity to analyze one's own vocabulary, structures and courses of action, but also connecting with the people being targeted to analyze and take action together. What implications does this have for cultural mediation invitation policies i.e. if the aim goes beyond generating higher audience numbers (while having as little impact as possible on the arts and their institutions), and the creation of fair access is a declared objective? First, it becomes clear that the language of target-group communications is insufficient for

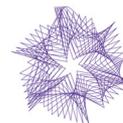
→ strategic essentialism see Glossary

→ Terkessidis 2011 <http://www.freitag.de/autoren/der-freitag/im-migrations-hintergrund>; see Resource Pool MFV0206.pdf

→ people of colour see Glossary

→ Winter Sayilir 2011 <http://www.woz.ch/1131/antirassismus-training-fuer-europa/wo-kommst-du-her-aus-mutti> [16.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0207.pdf

→ Kilomba 2006 http://www.migration-boell.de/web/diversity/48_608.asp [16.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0208.pdf



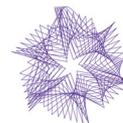
an approach based on communicative reflexivity. If we agree that reflection and cooperation with the people being targeted are basic prerequisites for the creation of equity of access in the artistic field, then the compilation of empirical knowledge about predefined groups can no longer suffice as a basis on which to design programmes for those groups. Under these conditions, the target audiences are no longer the potential consumers for a cultural offering: they are partners in a collectively shaped process of change which will not leave the self-image of those offering the cultural mediation undisturbed.

The audience development model of the “arts ambassadors” (→ [Arts Council England 2003](#)) proposed by Arts Council England is an example of a concept which builds on the approach described here. Arts ambassadors are people representative of local population groups that are of interest to an institution which wants to diversify its audiences. Arts ambassadors work to spread information about an institution's programmes by word of mouth. More importantly for this discussion though, they also communicate the perspectives and needs of the interest groups in question back to the institution. For the cultural institution, the idea is to use an approach to consumer research based on → [action-research](#) methods to acquire information about the interests and needs of the population group in question and to develop appropriate offerings within the framework of this consultation. The Arts Council notes that the approach can best reach its full potential when the relationship between the representatives of the institution and its ambassadors is based on an exchange of knowledge and information in which both parties are equally interested in what the other has to say. Arts ambassadors are representatives of their interest groups or social interest groups, and in the best case, they have an impact on practices in the artistic field. This form of cooperation concentrates on the needs of the interest group in question and thus on the potentials for changing the institution: “The ambassador approach requires commitment and can even bring about fundamental changes in the host organisation” (Arts Council 2003, p. 3). With respect to the function of the art ambassador as a representative of the institution to the outside world, the Arts Council expressly recommends that ambassadors be hired, i.e. provided with guaranteed remuneration and social security. The Council describes the use of volunteers, which only serves the purposes of stabilizing or reinforcing existing institutional conditions and the institution's self-image, as inadequate from the standpoint of reciprocity.

This last statement is intended to help avoid another problem that frequently arises, the exploitation of the knowledge and abilities of “others” for the continued existence and edification of cultural institutions in exchange for compensation which consists only of the symbolic value the institution has to offer. Thus, although the ambassador approach is more

→ [Arts Council England 2003](#)
http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/a-practical-guide-to-working-with-arts-ambassadors [12.10.2012];
see Resource Pool MFV0209.pdf

→ [action-research](#) see Glossary



strongly rooted in the marketing area than in education, one key aspect of educational reflexivity is crucial to its success: knowledge about the → power to harm (→ Castro Varela, undated) which cultural institutions or even cultural mediators possess due to their symbolic capital, and a responsible approach to dealing with this power. To avoid paternalism, communicative reflexivity is again called for: working with the targeted population to identify mutual interests and clearly stipulate who is to benefit how from the collaboration. In addition, it is necessary to ensure that there is always space in which to forge this understanding and address conflicts – space for the “ability to let yourself be confused” (Castro Varela undated, p. 3). In this model, reflecting about power also leads to the questions of how and by whom the representatives of the community in question (who will serve as the interface with the cultural institution) are selected and what effects the selection process will have on the collaboration.

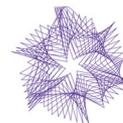
This approach does not sidestep the paradox of recognition, described above, which requires an identification and thus a definition: some categorization must take place in order to identify a group to contact about working together. Through the forms of address it chooses to use, though, a cultural institution can communicate that it is actively grappling with the problems of categorization and the definition of identity positions which are associated with defining target groups. This starts with the vocabulary it chooses to use or not to use. These choices can make it clear that the institution is aware of the dangers of → essentialization. A programme for “people with experience of life”, for instance, addresses anyone who identifies that way; the constellations which result might be more interesting than would be the case if only “seniors” were to participate. Attempts to reach people in terms that replace common categorizations with unexpected categories take a similar approach. For instance, potential interest groups could be invited on the basis of programme or cultural mediation content, rather than commonplace demographic traits (ethnicity, age, marital status), as was the case in the cultural mediation projects of the exhibition *documenta 12* in Kassel, including one in which people who are confronted with death in their professional lives were invited to a workshop about the motif of “bare life” in the exhibition (Gülec et al. 2009, p. 111 ff.).

A cultural institution which sees itself less as a producer of a programme to be marketed and more as one stakeholder helping to shape a collective endeavour – not only in the artistic field, but also in its local community – will need to find forms of address that go beyond a target-group orientation and aim at initiating cooperation between the institution and various different publics. The questions from the *Tiroler Kulturinitiative* workshop, cited above, clearly suggest that the most consistent and effective way in which an institution can cope with the targeting paradox in the case of “migrant background” is to shift the focus away from “immigrant

→ power to harm see Glossary

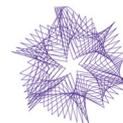
→ Castro Varela O. D. http://www.graz.at/cms/dokumente/10023890_415557/0a7c3e13/Interkulturelle%20Vielfalt,%20Wahrnehmung%20und%20Selbstreflexion.pdf [12.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0210.pdf

→ essentialization see Glossary



others” and on to the cultural institution itself as part of a migration society, to the structural mechanisms of exclusion in it and to its potential for transformation. From there the cultural institution can move on to its role as a stakeholder in society that identifies with the concerns of the people it is approaching rather than expecting them to adapt to suit it or trying to inject a bit of “colour” into itself by way of the “otherness” of the people it invites.

- 1 Here, one example among many, published while this text was being written: “Thus some German-speaking music conservatories offer training and continuing training programmes in music education designed to prepare [students] for the various activity fields for target audiences from young to old, from “locally born” to “post-migrant” and from *bildungsnah* to *bildungsfern* [italics added, low to high exposure to education]” (Wimmer 2012).
- 2 A few examples: *Conferences*: “inter.kultur.pädagogik”, Berlin 2003; “Interkulturelle Bildung – Ein Weg zur Integration?”, Bonn 2007; “Migration in Museums: Narratives of Diversity in Europe”, Berlin 2008; “Stadt Museum Migration”, Dortmund 2009; “MigrantInnen im Museum”, Linz 2009; “Interkultur. Kunstpädagogik Remixed”, Nürnberg 2012; *Research / development*: “Creating Belonging”, Zurich University of the Arts, funded by SNF 2008–2009; “Migration Design. Codes, Identitäten, Integrationen”, Zurich University of the Arts, funded by KTI 2008–2010; “Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue”, EU project 2007–2009; “Der Kunstcode – Kunstschulen im Interkulturellen Dialog”, Bundesverband der Jugendkunstschulen und Kulturpädagogischen Einrichtungen e.V. (BJKE), funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research 2005–2008; “Museum und Migration: Kinder und Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund als Zielgruppe von Museen”, Linzer Institut für qualitative analyzen (LIQuA)[Linz Institute of Quality Analysis], on behalf of the City of Linz and the Province of Upper Austria, Department of Social Affairs and Institute for Art and Folk Culture 2009–2010. *Publications and handouts*: Handout on the Swiss Day of Museums 2010; Allmanritter, Siebenhaar 2010; Centre for Audience Development of FU Berlin: MigrantInnen als Publika von öffentlichen deutschen Kulturinstitutionen – Der aktuelle Status Quo aus Sicht der Angebotsseite, 2009, → <http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/v/zad/news/zadstudie.html> [16.4.2012].
- 3 The workshop was led by Vlatka Frketic.
- 4 “People belonging to the majority” used in this text refers to Swiss citizens of any language region.
- 5 “To decline to accept such notions as the eternal feminine, the black soul, the Jewish character, is not to deny that Jews, Negroes and women exist today – this denial does not represent a liberation for those concerned, but rather a flight from reality.” Beauvoir 1953, p. 14.



Literature and Links

The text is based in parts on the previously published paper:

- Mörsch, Carmen: "Über Zugang hinaus. Nachträgliche einführende Gedanken zur Arbeitstagung 'Kunstvermittlung in der Migrationsgesellschaft'", in: IAE, IfA, Ifkik (pub.): Kunstvermittlung in der Migrationsgesellschaft / Reflexionen einer Arbeitstagung, Berlin: series ifa-Edition Kultur und Außenpolitik, 2011, pp. 10–19

Further reading:

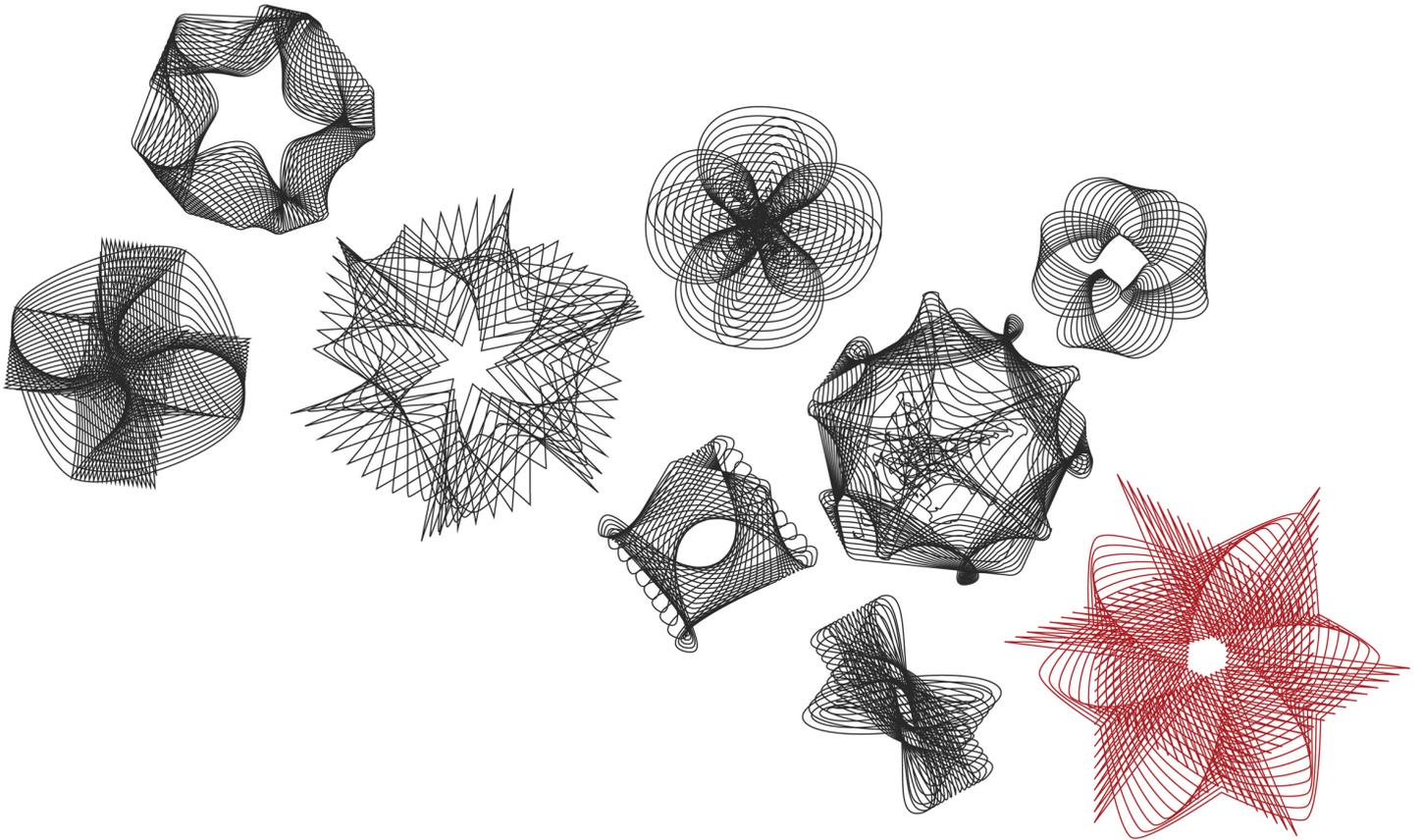
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Time for Cultural Mediation

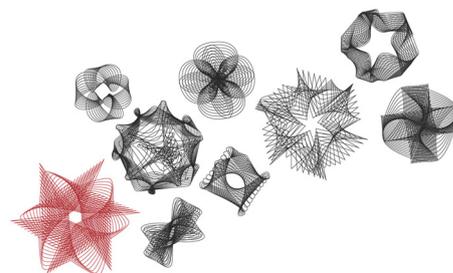
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?



- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
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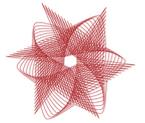
3.0 Intro

An art museum hosts an exhibition on medical themes in paintings dating from ten different centuries. In conjunction with that the museum offers a special cultural mediation programme for nurses in training. The programme starts with a guided tour of the exhibition, in which the group learns about the works on display from an art historical perspective while sharing their own associations with the paintings against the background of their work experience. Subsequently, the participants themselves engage in creative activity in the cultural mediation room. Taking images in their instruction texts as a starting point, they use various visualization techniques, such as analogue paper collage, acetone frottage, tracing projected images and digital image processing software. After a period of time, the mediator goes to the prospective nurses' university for a session with the group. Together, they review the day in the museum and consider whether anything from their experiences at the workshop could transfer to their daily routine in training or in their professional lives. In this context, discussion turns to a Damien Hirst piece from 2002 shown at the exhibition: a large printer's type case holding hundreds of brightly coloured pills, displayed like jewellery in a glass cabinet. The participants discuss whether a defamiliarization method like the one used in the Hirst piece might open up possibilities for them to develop new perspectives on everyday materials and thereby avoid falling into routines, stay alert. In that context, heated discussion erupts over the fact that Damien Hirst is currently one of the world's most expensive artists and that his works are included in the collections of many museums.

This example contains a great variety of educational content: above all, the artworks themselves; then techniques of image composition and artistic processes (such as shifting the significance of ordinary objects) and their potential relevance for other fields of action. The museum as an institution is also a subject matter, though, as are museum collection policies and what is currently happening in the art market.

This chapter explores in somewhat greater detail the various subject matters that cultural mediation can address. The final, more in-depth text turns to tacit content in cultural mediation in the past and the present, which has itself been a subject of critical discourse among professionals in the cultural mediation field in recent years.

- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who "does" Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?



3.1 Works and production as subject-matter

The content of cultural mediation which is both best known and most frequently addressed in practice concerns the output of institutions of (high) culture, such as museums, exhibition venues, theatres, opera houses and dance, concert and literary organizations. At centre stage is cultural mediation on the subject of works of art, presented in performances or exhibitions or, in the case of literature, released by publishing houses or presented in readings. In the visual arts, cultural mediation usually relates to an exhibition or a series of exhibitions, which may be thematically organized or may focus on the work of a single artist or group of artists, a period of history or a specific style. The presentation of an institution's own collection constitutes another focus, in part because unlike temporary exhibitions, the permanency of collections permits a more in-depth treatment and the development of a longer-term cultural mediation programme. Individually led or recorded audio exhibition tours offered in conjunction with practical workshops are a common format. Another popular approach is to concentrate on one individual work or one selected object: for instance, in many museums one sees the picture or the object "of the month" serving as the subject-matter of cultural mediation programmes. In the music world, we find cultural mediation about individual orchestral works or operas or the work and personality of individual composers in conjunction, for example, with a programme of concerts for children or matinee performances. In theatres and dance centres, cultural mediation focuses on pieces on the performance calendar – here, a commonly used format is the introductory discussion or director's talks.

The cultural mediation formats named above are generally explanatory in nature and designed to promote understanding of the works. Their primary aim is to produce background knowledge relating to the works and their creation. Cultural mediation can also have objectives which go further and thus use other ways of designing methods and formats for projects relating to the works and production of high culture.



3.2 Artistic techniques as subject-matter

Learning to play an instrument or to sing in individual or some form of group instruction now represents the most common form of music mediation. All major cities in Switzerland have music schools or conservatories, but there are also a great many individuals who offer private instruction.

The situation with dance mediation is similar – one finds instructional programmes in private dance schools, where pupils can learn a wide variety of dance styles, spanning all epochs and genres, right up to the semi-professional level. This type of programme is distinctly more common than projects dealing with productions or individual works. The majority of programmes relate to social dance forms, i.e. to forms not primarily intended for the stage.

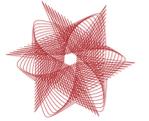
There are also private acting schools and schools whose programmes cover a range of disciplines. Some of them offer courses designed to prepare pupils for acceptance at state universities to continue their training.

In the domain of visual art there are fewer private instruction options available. There, most mediation programmes concentrate on instruction in analogue painting and drawing techniques, though it is not uncommon to see programmes providing instruction in digital and documentary media, such as film or photography, or interdisciplinary offerings. Less common are programmes designed to teach people techniques in the literary domain. In that field, the most common form of cultural mediation is offered by private individuals in the area of creative writing.

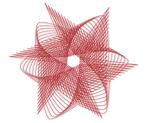
Outside of state-approved training centres, like the conservatories, cultural mediation in this area takes the form of a heterogeneous range of offerings on a free market. Accordingly, there is considerable variation in the level of professionalism of mediation providers. In many areas, independent instructors and/or schools have banded together in associations which engage in promotional activities as well as quality assurance.

In this context, the music schools are quite distinctive: existing throughout Switzerland, they represent an area of where the domains of cultural mediation and formal education overlap – both in the schools and in the universities.

Instruction in artistic techniques as provided by the majority of individuals and private schools does not cover the history of the arts or, most strikingly, the arts in the present day. One would hardly expect to find priority given to such subject matter at a dance class for instance, but its complete omission from the instruction of artistic techniques conceals a sort of tacit curriculum, in the sense of an implicitly communicated, often traditional understanding of art. The word tacit here is used to refer to instances when cultural mediation makes no reference to the fact that it is presenting only one of many possible perspectives, each of which



is associated with a set of choices regarding what is taught and what is not. In fact, one cannot learn to play an instrument or learn an acting or painting technique without at least incidentally acquiring some knowledge about music or the visual arts as a field of practice – however, in such cases this knowledge remains implicit and is not analyzed.



3.3 The institutions as subject-matter

The institutions and venues of arts production and presentation can and do themselves constitute the subject matter of cultural mediation. Many cities host open-studio events; theatres, opera houses and museums convey a sense of how they operate to visitors an “behind the scenes” tours. Programmes like these convey knowledge about the operational aspects of cultural institutions, about how work is divided, and the occupational profiles of their staffs. Participants also have the opportunity to learn about the differences between production and presentation: completed exhibitions and productions are juxtaposed with the daily work routine, the tools, the sounds and smells in workshops and storage facilities, in administrative wings and equipment rooms.

Institutions can also become a topic in → cultural mediation about individual works. This happens, for instance, when decision-making and production processes are explained. Or in cases when mediators explicitly → distance themselves from the decisions of institutions or when they depart from the subject-matter set by the institution and encourage participants to debate.

Cultural mediation formats in which participants actively interact with institutions go far beyond the → reception of content. The → Tate Forum, provides an example. There, young volunteers develop their own programme in the London gallery Tate Britain. One purpose of this programme is to give participants the opportunity to get to know the institution well, but that is not the only aim: participants are also supposed to help the institution to evolve – and to test and reveal its limitations while doing so. In such situations, cultural mediation about institutions crosses over into the sphere of an → affirmative function and can contribute to an engagement with → art as a system.

→ cultural mediation about individual works see Text 3.1

→ distance see Text 5.3

→ reception see Text 4.1

→ Tate Forum <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/on-evolution-peer-led-programme-tate-forum> [15.2.2013]

→ affirmative function see Text 5.1

→ art as a system see Text 3.4



3.4 Art as a system as subject-matter

Who defines what is art or who is an artist? How are quality criteria established in the arts? How is a price put on an artwork, and how did it come to pass that art can be traded like a commodity at all? Should an interest in the arts be attributed to innate predisposition or to social influences? Why have the students at Swiss universities of arts and music mainly been young men who are → white and come from families from the upper and university-educated middle class, despite the fact that “talent” is supposed to be the key selection criterion in admissions exams? Questions like these are examples of subject matters of cultural mediation which examine art as a → system and encourage debate. They target the – frequently unwritten – rules of the → field of artistic activity, the market mechanisms or the social conditions in the various artistic domains.

→ white see Glossary

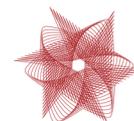
→ system see Glossary

→ field see Glossary

Addressing the topic of the systemic functions of cultural mediation itself constitutes a special case – arising, for instance, when mediators and participants discuss for whom, how and why the arts contribute to personal growth and /or why cultural mediation should take place at all.

In principle, “art as a system” can be introduced as a topic in any cultural mediation format – but in reality, at least in continental Europe, this happens quite rarely and, when it does appear, usually in very small doses. One can point to one reason for this in the latent tension that exists between the critical potential of this kind of thinking and the functions of cultural mediation, which has traditionally served to sustain and affirm the system. Because of that tension, cultural mediation staff do not tend to see questions like these as lending themselves to their purposes. Moreover, cultural mediators may be discouraged or even expressly prohibited from broaching such questions by the directors of cultural institutions.

The adoption of an alternative approach becomes more appealing when one realizes that (self-)criticisms and (self-)analysis can, to a certain degree, have a system-sustaining dimension. That is why, for instance, the Tate Galleries worked with education professionals to publish an “Art Gallery Handbook: A Resource for Teachers” (Tate Galleries 2006). Part of that publication discusses the institution’s selection processes and the offices endowed with the power to interpret, examining and questioning their authority. The fact that the Tate collaborates with schools a great deal suggests that the gallery has an interest in having partners in collaboration (teachers) who are well informed and independent thinkers. Moreover inviting teachers to think for themselves may do more to encourage them to identify with the Tate than would attempts to “convert” them to art. However, unanswered questions remain: how far institutions will allow critique to go and at what point and in what form it begins to be perceived by the institution as a threat or loss of control.



3.5 Instruction in artistic processes in businesses

Under the banner of “creativity”, businesses have become aware that artistic processes hold potential for the development of their employees. Companies are less interested in developing the artistic expertise of their employees than in fostering certain personality traits commonly attributed to artists, or thought to be engendered through engagement with art. These traits might include a positive attitude toward open processes and searches, a high tolerance for error, the ability to shift perspectives or an independent and inventive way of approaching problems. There is currently a research project underway at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts titled → [Art in Company / Kunst und Wirtschaft](http://www.artincompany.ch), which is devoted to the links between entrepreneurial activity and artistic activity.

Creaviva in Bern’s Zentrum Paul Klee, a children’s museum, offers workshops for management and employees under the banner “Art + Business”. There are also freelance cultural mediators who offer formats using music or theatre or creative writing which are intended to help companies enhance teamwork processes or improve the way businesses present themselves.

The use of artistic processes as creativity techniques for businesses is the subject of heated debate. One has to question, for instance, the purported correlation between the strategies of artist, perceived as highly flexible sole-entrepreneurs, and the strategies that employees are supposed to develop to cope with increasing demands. The following → [statement](#) is taken from a Swiss site advertising a programme of this kind: “The means for teambuilding in modern companies and the ones [sic] in theatre barely differ from each other”. Such claims would appear to cast doubt, albeit indirectly, on certain qualities associated with the arts, such as a spirit of → [openness of interpretation and processes](#) and → [relative autonomy](#), and thus their critical potential. No one mentions that artistic approaches can give rise to processes and effects which are diametrically opposed to the logics of business (such as the refusal to perform a duty, questioning rules as a matter of principle, the need to isolate oneself or to slow down) or that artistic professionalism can consist of rejecting any and all intention to have an effect of any kind.

While arts mediation is not the primary objective in this type of programme (though artworks do play a role for illustrative and /or inspirational purposes), formats like these (like instruction in artistic techniques) nonetheless convey implicit knowledge about art or implicit concepts of art in the sense of a “tacit curriculum”.

→ [art in company / Kunst und Wirtschaft](http://www.artincompany.ch) <http://www.artincompany.ch> [20.2.2012]

→ [statement](http://www.conray.ch/en/team-building/theatre-steady-go) <http://www.conray.ch/en/team-building/theatre-steady-go> [01.4.2014]

→ [openness of interpretation and processes](#) see Glossary

→ [relative autonomy](#) see Glossary



3.6 Instruction in artistic methods in social, educational and activist contexts

Artistic processes are taught in a variety of settings: educational, therapeutic and social, as well as in formal adult education programmes. Techniques of visualization, drama, dance, creative writing and acoustic and musical performance are used to structure learning processes, to uncover and depict conflicts or problems, to address issues collectively, to communicate with the outside world and for self-expression.

Artistic processes also play a role in the context of social and political activism, where they serve the aims of → self-empowerment, → self-representation and → intervention in public debates. Analytic engagement with images and texts, quite often drawing on examples from the history or present day of the arts, is used to help people develop → visual literacy, an ability to read images critically. This provides a foundation upon which people can produce other images and texts of their own creation that differ from the depictions found in the mainstream media and the advertisements ubiquitous in public spaces: to design posters and flyers or create theatrical and musical performances in connection, e.g., with demonstrations or interventions in public spaces or in connection with existing images (cf. the alteration of commercial advertising → culture jamming, or performative forms of speech like → radical cheerleading).

Artists are actively involved in all of the areas mentioned above. Here again, we see the links and intersections between the production of art and cultural mediation. Like the teaching of artistic processes in business settings, these intersections are highly controversial. They too give rise to debate about the contradictions between promises of efficacy and artistic autonomy, about the role of artists and art in political and social contexts, and about the instrumentalization of forms developed by the arts in this context.

→ self-empowerment see Glossary

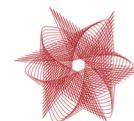
→ self-representation see Glossary

→ intervention see Glossary

→ visual literacy see Glossary

→ culture jamming <http://www.orange-press.com/programm/alle-titel/culture-jamming.html> [16.3.2012]

→ radical cheerleading <http://kreativerstrassenprotest.twoday.net/topics/Radical+Cheerleading> [16.3.2012]

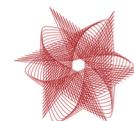


3.7 Learning methods as subject-matter

Whenever cultural mediation addresses the subject matters discussed in this chapter up to now, learning methods are also communicated, at least implicitly. We see this most clearly in connection with learning to play a musical instrument: techniques for practicing and developing interpretations constitute independent educational content in and of themselves in this context.

Cultural mediation focusing on works of art also transmits general and to no small degree normative knowledge about how to learn, though it often does so incidentally and without explicit acknowledgement. Participants learn what methods to use to read and interpret works, which aspects are important when interpreting them and which are not, how to approach the multiplicity of possible interpretations of artistic productions and what forms of expression, what vocabulary to use in describing them. It is not unusual for this to result in the creation of new forms of exclusion, which the cultural mediation was originally intended to prevent or even eliminate. One might see this when many specialized terms are used in director's talks or an exhibition tour. Or when phrases like "as you surely know" suggest to the audience that certain names or facts are generally known and that they should be familiar with them already from some other context.

Cultural mediators who aspire to a critical approach try to expose and question these norms in order to reinforce participants' autonomy and powers of judgement in engaging with art. A critical mediator aspires to a transparent transfer of knowledge, to analyze what is being taught and learned and what implicit content and unquestioned assumptions are being transported along the way.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES André Grieder: Contemporary Art is Where the Magic Lies

→ *Schule und Kultur* [http:// www.schuleundkultur.zh.ch](http://www.schuleundkultur.zh.ch) [14.2.2013]

A magician writes to me. He wants to be included in our programme. I saw him perform once. Between the main course and dessert he approached my table, made cards vanish and coins appear. I was impressed. I regret, I answer the magician, that we cannot include you in our programme. Our cultural mediation deals with the arts, not variety show acts. He responds: I do not do only magic, I do theatre and tell the stories of a dynasty of magicians.

The magician performs at a primary school. I am also there. He entertains the pupils well and makes them admirers of his art. Days later I contact him again: we program chiefly contemporary associative theatre. Your piece does not fit in with our programme. I'm sorry, again, I must say no.

Why do we not include primarily traditional, canonized, appealing, entertaining, nice art? I mean art that lights up the eyes of children and offers young adults an escape from reality?

Modern art is subjective, complex, associative. It reflects our world. Young people are supposed to participate in our world: for instance, by seeing Junge Theater Basel's production of "Strange Days Indeed". In it, young people dance this theme: you have to scream if you want to be noticed today – in politics, in advertising, in the media, in ordinary life. The production does not give any answers, it only asks questions, calls for reflection and criticism. "Strange Days Indeed" is open, disturbing, surprising: contemporary art in fact. By engaging with it, young people construct their identities along the principle of otherness. Variety acts, on the other hand, tend to confirm what is already known; they can hardly be said to promote self-reflection or self-criticism.

We trust our taste and our experience and make subjective judgements about what constitutes art that is worth conveying to people. We endeavour to avoid instrumentalizing that art or turning it into an educational exercise, in order that it continue to be art. In our work we engage in self-criticism, self-reflection and flexibility. That is our attitude. It gives us positions from which to argue why we bring "Strange Days Indeed" to young people. The magician did not have sufficient theatrical presence, there were dramaturgic weaknesses in his piece and his technique let him down at key points. As a result, his magic suffered: making things disappear and reappear. Without those formal flaws, we might have offered the piece to the schools as modern magical art.

André Grieder leads the section → *Schule und Kultur* in the Office of Elementary Education of the Department of Education of the Canton of Zurich.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Urs Rietmann: Art + Business

“One cannot tie a knot with one hand.” (Mongolian proverb)

There are several ways to parse the title of Creaviva’s format for business, teaching or administrative teams. You can make art your business. Managing a business responsibly, collectively and in a way designed to promote solidarity is a challenging task.

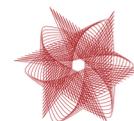
When we consult with people who are interested in our programme, we – who in no way consider ourselves to be experts in organizational development or supervision – explicitly describe its features. We are not selling Creaviva as a centre for the promotion of personality traits that are attributed to artists or understood to be engendered through engagement with art. Nor are our workshops intended to analyze the strategies of artists as independent entrepreneurs either, although that would be interesting.

We are interested in creating a framework that permits a team to break out of pre-existing patterns and habits for a few hours by engaging in creative workshop activities. In this context, art is an excellent means to the stated end to the extent that immediate exposure to art in a museum generates a productive sense of disorientation and a willingness to let oneself become involved which would be almost impossible to attain in a more familiar setting. The fact that the people who work in Creaviva are primarily artists with a talent for teaching rather than educators with an affinity for art enhances this aspect.

We have defined a range of missions for which we think our offering is appropriate. They encompass primarily visualization (e.g. of a company’s vision), reinforcement (e.g. of a core message), promotion of team spirit and creative teamwork within an existing or newly formed team.

We try to avoid articulating in greater detail the effects our workshops are intended to produce. One of the primary aims of our practice-oriented cultural mediation is to allow participants the opportunity to experience their own abilities. This does not mean that we try to convince our guests that they are artists. The collective work that they take home at the end of a team workshop does have a discipline-specific value though, to the extent that it encourages an appreciation for art and respect for artistic endeavour.

Urs Rietmann is the Director of the Creaviva Museum for Children in Zentrum Paul Klee in Bern.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Nathalie Tacchella: Appeal for Catalytic Cultural Mediation

When Beuys said that “everyone is an artist”, he was not talking about artistic production or profession: he was thinking of the potential – a potential of thought and action and an intimate space of freedom – which individuals either leave dormant or cultivate. Cultural mediation interests me when it does not shield those potentials from one another and lets art be what it is: an open dialogue between human beings.

By positioning itself between art, artistic practice and works, or between artists and the public, cultural mediation isolates the object from “its” audience and renders intimacy between the person and the art impossible. Conceived after the work itself, but designed and put in place before the public has access to it, cultural mediation affirms its own necessity at a time when that necessity cannot really exist, regardless of how good or well-intended the offering is. What I mean by that is that art is not an isolated phenomenon: it is an integral component of the world of our imagination and social reality.

Arts mediation should not exist: but it does for most of the works preserved or produced in the closed spaces of theatres, museums and concert halls. And this because these works were appropriated by the dominant culture – a culture which will go to any lengths to open itself to an audience as wide as possible, lest it become a closed circle, spinning into oblivion.

The dominant discourse imposes models which inhibit, which level knowledge and skills. Cultural mediation therefore reconstructs a relationship between the individual and art, but this relationship is truncated – one could almost say rigged. There is a genuine danger that cultural mediation could lend support to the view that art is inaccessible by nature and can be rendered accessible only through the efforts of competent mediators.

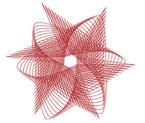
Cultural mediation also interests me when it tries not to neutralize the audience or prevent dialogue between human beings, no matter what its quality may be.

Cultural mediation interests me when it acts as a catalyst, something which “changes neither the direction in which a transformation unfolds nor the composition of the system in its final phase”. In my practice, I try to develop cultural mediation which is not an end in itself, but instead permits the renewal of direct dialogue among the artist, the artist’s actions, the work and the audience.

Nathalie Tacchella is a choreographer and dance mediator. She directs the dance troupe → [estuaire](http://www.estuaire.ch) in Geneva and is a co-founder of and is jointly responsible for Geneva-based theatre → [Galpon](http://www.galpon.ch). She also teaches contemporary dance at Atelier Danse Manon Hotte.

→ [estuaire](http://www.estuaire.ch) <http://www.estuaire.ch>
[25.1.2013]

→ [Galpon](http://www.galpon.ch) <http://www.galpon.ch>
[25.1.2013]



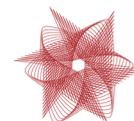
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Cultural Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: What is the Conveyed? Sociocultural Expertise in Cultural Mediation

At the focus of the Pro Helvetia's promotion of cultural mediation are the various artistic disciplines, their works, projects, techniques and institutions. However, cultural mediation activities also have ties to another sphere which frequently overlaps with cultural mediation in its vocabulary and practices: the sociocultural sphere.

Sociocultural projects and sociocultural animation do sometimes engage directly with art. When they do so though, they tend to be directed more towards social and societal aspects of engagement with art, and thus their aims differ from those pursued by Pro Helvetia in its promotion of arts mediation. Sociocultural projects and arts mediation can frequently overlap to a certain extent.

When carrying out cultural mediation projects which are based on interactive and participative approaches, familiarity with sociocultural processes can be crucial for a project's success. Is the target group being addressed in a way that is appropriate for that group? Is the project set up as a partnership? Do the mediators have the relevant knowledge and experience? Viewed in this way, sociocultural expertise is revealed as an important feature bearing on the quality of any cultural mediation project.

Pro Helvetia's interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Working Group was responsible for developing the promotion criteria within the framework of the Arts and Audiences Programme.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 3: Tacit Learning Objective in Cultural Mediation

“Once struggled for, the ‘right to education’ has become a lifelong duty to educate oneself requiring that learners be flexible and marketable, on pain of their demise”
(→ [Merkena 2002](#))

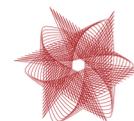
Text 2.RL revealed the necessity to examine the unspoken call for invitees to become more similar to inviters from a hegemony-critical perspective in the context of addressing invitations to cultural mediation. In this section, this issue will be explored and illustrated with respect to the content of cultural mediation. We will examine tacit teaching content and learning objectives in cultural mediation, taking “lifelong learning” as our example.

In 2010, the German Museums Association released → [Museen und lebenslanges Lernen](#), the German translation, in an expanded edition, of a European handbook entitled “Lifelong Learning in Museums”, which was the result of an EU-funded project of the same name.¹ The handbook defines “lifelong learning” as informal learning (i.e. learning not-leading to a qualification that takes place in social settings) and “highlights the importance and significance of learning throughout life”. In addition to providing suggestions relating to adult education practices in museums, the handbook provides a considerable amount of information about historical and current-day power relationships at work in museums and galleries which influence the educational activities there. In this context, the handbook explicitly addresses the issue of racism, one of the few publications of this type to do so (Gibbs et al. 2007, p. 83). It calls on institutions to ensure that “the diversity of staff matches the diversity of the audience the museum wishes to attract” (Gibbs et al. 2007, p. 17). It emphasizes the demand for contemporary museum work to consciously engage with all audiences, and particularly participants in education projects, on an equal footing and to consider the effects of inequalities in that context. It cites the mediator and philosopher Paulo Freire (Freire 1974) as having been influential for the leading learning concepts in today’s museum mediation. With these aspects in mind, one could say that the handbook is informed by the idea of cultural mediation as a critical practice. However, it makes no mention of the critiques articulated over the past two decades of the book’s guiding theme, the concept of lifelong learning itself and the emphasis on the importance of → [soft skills](#) equated with it. The authors, both museum consultancy professionals, describe the potential of museums in this respect as they see it: “Museums can be ideal places for promoting ‘informal learning’. Visitors may leave the museum knowing more than when they arrived: knowledge, understanding, insight or inspiration that helps to make a *positive difference* to their lives” (Gibbs et al. 2007, p. 13, italics added). Although this handbook and other similar publications do identify the radical diversity of

→ [Merkena 2002](#) http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/sozialoekonomie/zoess/Neoliberalismus__passive_Revolution_und_Umbau_des_Bildungswe.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0309.pdf

→ [Lifelong Learning in Museums](#) <http://online.ibr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/1/libri/pdf/LifelongLearninginMuseums.pdf> [12.2.2014]

→ [soft skills](#) see Glossary

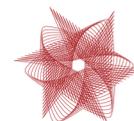


learners as offering a special potential in adult education, they adopt uncritically the assumptions that everyone sees a willingness to engage in “lifelong learning” as equally desirable and that everyone sees a visit to the museum as an opportunity for self development aimed at optimizing their capacities. This blind spot seems to be less a coincidence than a symptom of a literally “tacit” learning objective for cultural mediation: the development of a → *habitus* characteristic of “homo flexibilis” (Sennett 1998), adaptive people who can continually reinvent themselves and survive in a post-industrial economy “geared for short-term relationships and rapid change” (→ *Ribolits 2006*, p. 121) without becoming a burden to the collective. The development of the increasing flexibility in the organization and production of work required by the shift from a Fordist to a → *post-Fordist* mode of production causes the “willingness to build and optimize one’s own work capacity (permanently)” to become an “essential prerequisite for participation in society, and thus the possibility of surviving in post-Fordist capitalism” (Atzmüller 2011). The expansion of the concept of “lifelong learning” can be traced back over the past forty years: from the bottom-up demand articulated in the 1970s to be allowed to learn throughout one’s lifetime (in the sense of fair access to educational resources) through the idea anchored in society since the 1990s that individuals are able to learn throughout their lives (in the sense of a more complex understanding of learning biographies which relativizes the idea of linear occupation-specific qualification processes and development stages, each building on the last) through to the present-day imperative which insists that one keep learning through one’s life in order to stay competitive and avoid becoming an “education loser” (Quenzel, Hurrelmann 2010). All three concepts now coexist and intertwine. This explains to some extent the positive approach articulated in “Lifelong Learning in Museums”. Increasingly, responsibility to meet the requirement of lifelong learning is being shifted to the individual as the “enterprising self” (Bröckling 2007).² To reject this way of seeing oneself would appear not to be a socially acceptable option: it would be seen as actively refusing to plan what, in the current situation, the majority sees as a “successful” life. The fact that soft skills, i.e. personality traits and personal attitudes, are playing an ever larger role in the formulation of learning objectives and educational endeavours is simply a logical extension of this outlook. Our example, Lifelong Learning in Museums, describes the outcomes one could expect from informal learning processes for adults in museums.³ It lists the obvious learning progress relating to specific topics, such as “increased knowledge of specific subjects”, “enhanced understanding of specific ideas and concepts” or “improved technical and other skills”. However, the vast majority of the potential learning results it provides aim at changing the personal sensibilities and attitudes of the learners: at “increased self-confidence”, “personal development”, “change in attitudes or values”, “inspiration and creativity”, “social interaction and communication”,

→ *habitus* see Glossary

→ *Ribolits 2006* <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/erich.ribolits/php/web/archive> [22.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0310.pdf

→ *post-Fordist* see Glossary



“community empowerment”, “development of identity”, right through to “improved health and well-being” (Gibbs et al. 2007, p. 34). With this shift of focus, every museum-goer becomes a therapy subject and the museum becomes a therapeutic facility, since the process of optimizing the various traits is a never-ending one. Teaching participants ways to “use individual potentials creatively” appears to be a more important objective than engaging with the content of an exhibition. (→ *Sertl 2007*, p. 9). Since wellbeing, self-confidence, social and communicative behaviours and values are aspects which could be associated with the private sphere, one might consider their observation and assessment on the part of employees of a cultural institution as trespassing in that sphere. Nonetheless, it is stated, in a tone leaving virtually no room for doubt, that cultural mediation in the context of lifelong learning is intended to increase the individual's willingness to learn more.

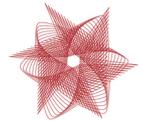
It is no accident that cultural mediation is considered to have special potential in this context. In the 19th century, the age of industrial capitalism, the image of the artist was still one which embodied the opposite of what the bourgeois-style entrepreneurs represented. This is no longer the case today though, in our era of → *cognitive capitalism*. Now there are many points where the qualities ascribed to artists and those of the ideal manager intersect: “autonomy, spontaneity, mobility..., openness..., conviviality, multitasking... availability, creativity, visionary intuition networking” (Boltanski, Chiapello 2004, p. 97.). Accordingly, artists and “creatives” are well suited as role models for the “enterprising self” (Loacker 2010). They are thought to have an ability to improvise (including in dealing with insecurity and poverty), to focus on problem-solving, be curious, optimistic and, above all, able to act on their own initiative. And indeed, continuous personal development and change do figure in the self-concept of many artists (Loacker 2010, p. 401). The basic problem associated with cultural mediation's unsceptical adoption of the task of encouraging lifelong learning as an internalized value is that doing so involuntarily encourages the creation or at least the legitimating of inequality. Instead of responding to economic deregulation and rising social insecurity with redistribution, we grant them legitimacy by insisting that individuals be creative and flexible and that they continue to invest in their own human capital throughout their lives.

On a pragmatic level, it should be said that the happily self-governing artist as role model for present-day employment is purely a fictional construct. The majority of artists in Europe face relatively difficult economic conditions. Many of them live on half (or less) of what is officially considered a living wage and do so with either inadequate or no provisions for illness, disability or old age (→ *Lazzarato 2007*). This situation is by no means welcomed by all artists, nor have they integrated it into their own concept of an artist by choice. On the contrary, some are engaging in organized

→ *Sertl 2007* <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/michael.sertl/OffenesLernen.pdf> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0308.pdf

→ *cognitive capitalism* see Glossary

→ *Lazzarato 2007* <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0207/lazzarato/en> [12.2.2014]



resistance. Adaptation is not the only way in which curiosity and a willingness to reinvent oneself manifest themselves: they can also encourage inventive forms of political intervention (Lazzarato 2007). I cite just two of the many such examples here: → [GlobalProject / Coordination des intermittents et précaires d'Île de-France](#), an organization founded in 2003 which is pushing for changes in the employment conditions of people who work in stage productions and the audio-visual sector, and the "Carrotworkers' Collective" in England, in which → [precarious](#) cultural workers have deliberately aligned themselves with other underpaid and poorly secured occupational groups, for instance in the nursing, cleaning and food-service sectors.

In recent years, cultural mediation has also come up in discussions about precarious employment conditions. In her April 2010 article "Spanners in the Spectacle: Radical Research at the Frontline" (→ [Graham 2010](#)), arts mediator, artist and activist Janna Graham reported on the strikes and surveys in which the mediators (arts educators) at the Venice Biennale joined forces with S.a.L.E. Docks and the project housed within it, → [Pirate Bay](#), which itself was associated with the Biennale, to protest the conditions of their employment. S.a.L.E. Docks describes itself as "a permanent laboratory of piracy in the lagoon, a self managed situation active since 2007 in the struggle against all kind[s] of privatization and exploitation of knowledge and creativity." Still, resistance activities remain fairly rare in the field of cultural mediation. Workers employed in cultural mediation (very often self-taught artists) also embody the soft skills so highly acclaimed in post-Fordism: they see themselves, by virtue of their occupation, as socially competent, good team players and good networkers, as inventive in coping with limited resources, as curious and ready to learn new things. Analogous to the artist figure as a role model, cultural mediation is associated with the promise to free up the creative potential of each individual, motivated to no small degree by the interest of economies "demanding workforces that are creative flexible and adaptable" (→ [UNESCO 2010, Road Map](#) p. 5).⁴ And the majority of arts mediators find themselves in precarious employment relationships. Yet they are – perhaps to an even greater degree than artists – (still) a group with a relatively homogeneous social background. Most of them come from the "new middle classes" (→ [Sertl 2008](#)), they are → [knowledge workers](#). In their self-image, the idea of lifelong learning tends to be associated with words like "entitled to" and "can" rather than "must". Seen from this angle, their desire to encourage a willingness to keep on learning among the people who participate in their offerings is also the consequence of an idea of "equality" which is paradoxical. Cultural mediators' aim in one way is to share privileges, create a level playing field in connection to access to the educational resource which is culture. At the same time though, it is to change "the others", to make them more similar to themselves: to convince them that the mediators' ideals

→ [GlobalProject / Coordination des intermittents et précaires d'Île de-France](#) <http://www.cip-idf.org> [7.9.2012]

→ [precarious](#) see Glossary

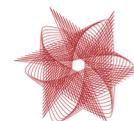
→ [Graham 2010](#) <http://www.faqs.org/periodicals/201004/2010214291.html> [10.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0303.pdf

→ [Pirate Bay](#) <http://embassyofpiracy.org/2009/05/thanks-to-sale-we-have-physical-space-in-venice> [7.9.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0304.pdf

→ [UNESCO 2010, Road Map](#) http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul_Agenda_EN.pdf [22.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0305.pdf

→ [Sertl 2008](#) <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/michael.sertl/IndividualisierungIDE.pdf> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0306.pdf

→ [knowledge workers](#) see Glossary



of the learning individual are the right ones. For the majority of cultural mediators, then, a critical distancing from the idea of lifelong learning would also entail distancing themselves from their own values and standards, and even from the tenets justifying their own activities. This very ability to distance oneself from oneself, though, is the feature which points to educational professionalism.

→ *alternative curriculum* http://carrotworkers.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/pwb_alternative-curriculum.pdf [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0307.pdf

Unsurprisingly, there is no easy way out of this paradox (comparable with the paradox of recognition discussed in Text 2.RL). It is not a coincidence that the people who produce the well-founded critiques of lifelong learning and related concepts presented above have tended to be individuals for whom access to educational resources and knowledge about how to learn are givens. Once again, stopping the attempt to use cultural mediation to engender a joy in learning and encourage personal development cannot be the answer. Doing so would only help bolster positions of privilege. The adoption, in the spirit of educational reflexivity, of a sceptical, challenging attitude towards what appear to be wholly positive concepts, such as lifelong learning, would probably result in transformed and transforming practices in cultural mediation. Such an attitude would bar practices aimed at engendering enthusiasm for something in participants or influencing people's personal development "for their own good", in the sense of a tacit curriculum. Instead, instances of critical distancing would themselves become the subject matter of the education. Perhaps materials such as the → *alternative curriculum* developed by the Carrotworkers' Collective for precariously employed cultural mediators, could be used to launch discussions in cultural mediation settings about what being allowed to / able to / compelled to learn means for the participants. One learning objective for cultural mediation might be to replace the demand for continuous, lifelong self-optimization in the name of competition with a concept of life-extending learning which considers the community as a whole and rejects the possibility of losers.

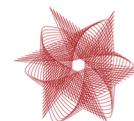
Whichever attitude one chooses to take – it should be clear from the discussion thus far that cultural mediators need to take a position on which objectives they are pursuing in their work and to make those objectives as transparent as possible to participants – always assuming that one is committed to encountering the participants on an equal footing, as the authors of the handbook "Lifelong Learning in Museums" aspire to do.

1 The handbook was a product of the two-year Lifelong Museum Learning (LLML) project funded by the European Commission, supported under the Socrates Grundtvig Programmes from October 2004 to December 2006.

2 The increasing shift of techniques of governmentality into self-governing capacities of the individual now form an extensive research field within the social sciences: governmentality studies.

3 In providing this list, the authors refer to the "generic learning outcomes" designed by Eilean Hooper Greenhill, a matrix intended to identify learning results from a museum visit; → <http://www.inspiringlearning.com/toolstemplates/genericlearning/index.html> [5.9.2012] and Hooper Greenhill 2007 → see Text 7.RL

4 "21st Century societies are increasingly demanding workforces that are creative, flexible,

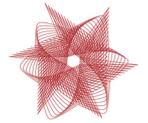


adaptable and innovative and education systems need to evolve with these shifting conditions. Arts Education equips learners with these skills [...]” (UNESCO 2010).

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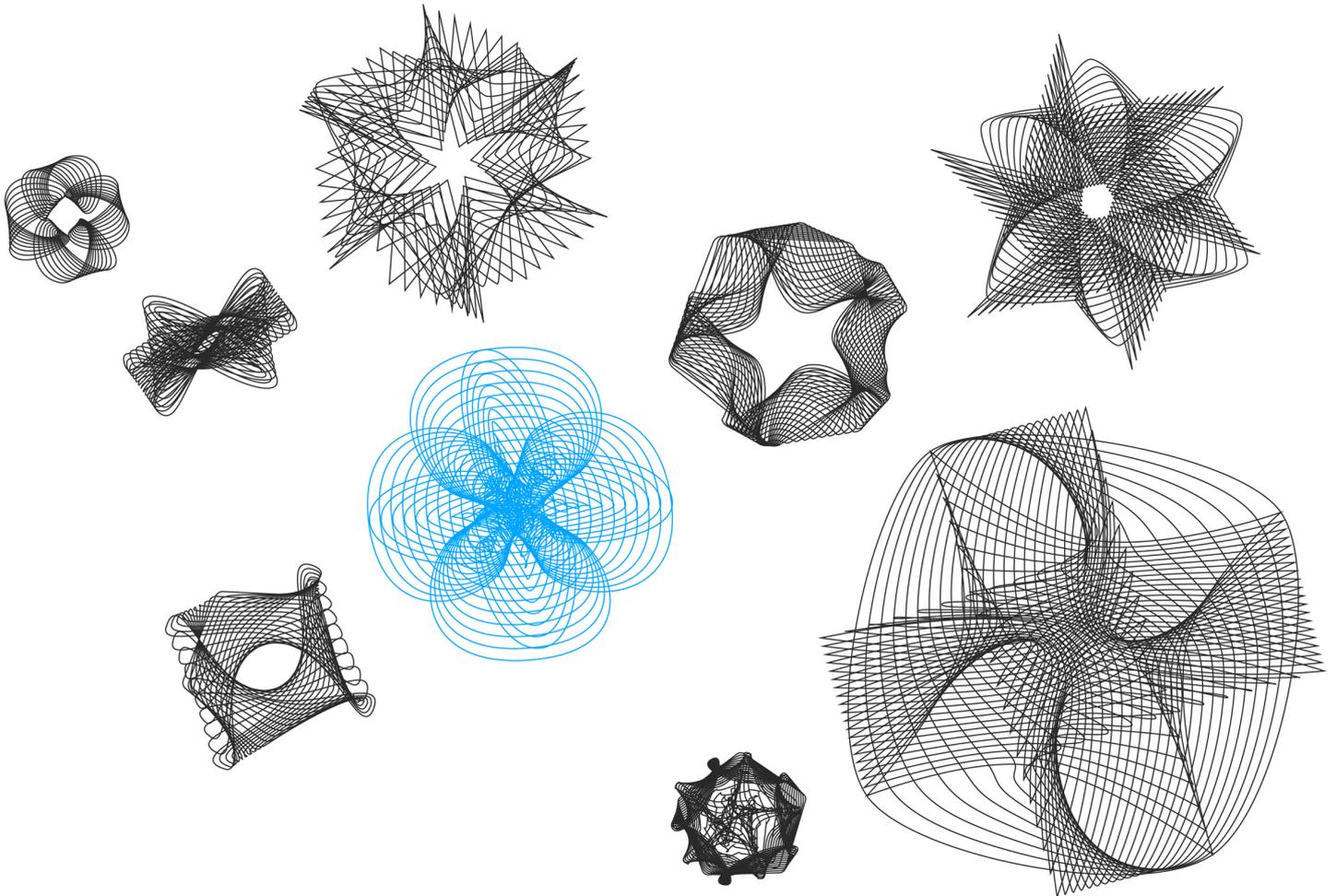
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[7.9.2012]
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Time for Cultural Mediation

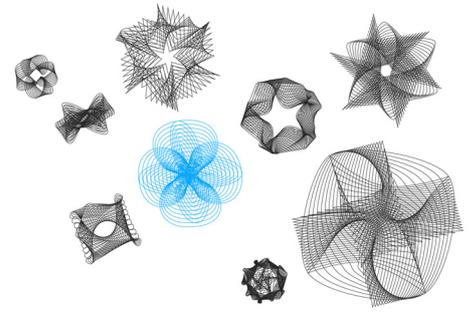
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?



- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

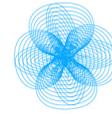
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
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4.0 Intro

Two of the key methodological questions in cultural mediation relate to participation: how much participation is involved in a format and what forms of participation are expected of people. As this chapter will illustrate, the extent of participation permitted or desired in a cultural mediation project has many repercussions, affecting how participants and mediators interact and the content and structures of both cultural mediation and its host institutions. The choice of teaching and learning concepts defines another dimension of “how” cultural mediation is carried out. School teachers tend to systematically plan the use of a selection learning forms and concepts for the classroom in advance, with specific learning objectives in view. This is often not the case in cultural mediation settings, where the concepts and forms used tend to be selected on the basis of the mediator’s past experiences and dynamics created as projects unfold. Unsurprisingly, processes that take shape in this fashion tend to be less systematic and more open in terms of both objectives and outcomes. One need not see this as a disadvantage – on the contrary, it represents a characteristic feature and potential specific to cultural mediation. Nonetheless, certain conceptual approaches to teaching and learning appear to have particular relevance for cultural mediation: this chapter presents them in brief.

- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

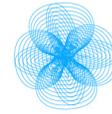


4.1 Participation level: receptive

“The symphony orchestra offers ‘Musikunterricht live!’ [Music instruction live!] to show how a professional orchestra operates. If desired, we provide informational material about the programme in advance, and an orchestra member may visit the school to talk about the life and work of a professional musician. Then the class can attend the dress rehearsal in the sound hall, followed by an age-appropriate introductory talk about the piece.” That is how → [Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen](http://www.theatersg.ch/mitmachen/schulangebote/schulklassen/offene-proben) [St. Gallen Symphony Orchestra] describes a programme it offers for school classes for students aged 13 or over. The programme contains a variety of components intended to introduce pupils to the classical music concert. The participation expected of the group is nearly completely at the receptive level: a musician introduces the profession, a dress rehearsal takes place, a concert mediator appears and talks about the background of the piece being rehearsed. The young people, for their part, mainly listen – or rather, they are expected to listen. Potentially, they have the opportunity to ask questions, which can sometimes lead to discussion. At such moments, participation shifts toward the interactive level.

→ [Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen](http://www.theatersg.ch/mitmachen/schulangebote/schulklassen/offene-proben)
[http://www.theatersg.ch/
mitmachen/schulangebote/
schulklassen/offene-proben](http://www.theatersg.ch/mitmachen/schulangebote/schulklassen/offene-proben)
[2.3.2012]

In other areas in the arts, cultural mediation formats featuring predominantly receptive participation levels include exhibition tours (especially those with audio-guides), readings, director’s talks, and the provision of written information and hand-outs, wall texts, supplemental flyers, catalogues and textual, pictorial and audio information posted online. The receptive level of participation is involved in almost every format of cultural mediation, since receptive participation is entailed in any sequence in which information is transmitted by one person and received by another person listening to it and/or reading it. It is important not to equate reception with passivity: reception is an activity which involves the active production of meaning through perception and interpretation.



4.2 Participation level: interactive

An institution that announces a “discussion” rather than a “tour” at an exhibition is soliciting interaction with the audience. Exhibition-goers are being asked to take part in the discussion by asking questions and contributing their own views and information, rather than simply listen. Formats of this kind frequently involve multiple cultural mediation providers; experts or everyday witnesses are also invited to enter into a dialogue with the exhibitors or mediators. This type of discussion creates a broader context for exhibition tours, which often takes the form of a monologue. The extent to which the audience genuinely engages in the discussion depends on the specific situation, the moderator’s skills, how provocative the topic is and the makeup of the group. There are also projects whose formats require interaction in order to take place at all: exhibitions with elements in which people are expected to try things themselves or set something in motion, or family tours in musical theatres in which instruments are put out for people to try to play, or costumes available for them to put on.

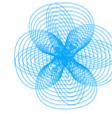
Usually, interactive formats in cultural mediation are intended to allow people to engage with an object for the first time. Increasingly though, they are also being used to give people the opportunity to engage with something at greater depth: one example of this is → [Hands-on Deck](http://en.nai.nl/content/988437/hands-on_deck) at the Netherlands Architecture Institute, where people play planning games exploring urban planning and architectural issues. Cultural mediation providers offering projects with interactive participation levels plan opportunities for and forms of participation in advance and the level of control exerted is high.

Digital media and the Internet have encouraged the proliferation of interactive formats in recent years. For instance, the → [Bavarian State Opera](http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de/data/kinder_flash/index.html) runs a website where children can learn about the various activities and rooms in an opera house by playing simple games, guided by an animated conductor. In programmes like this, the cultural mediation remains largely → [affirmative](#).

→ [Hands-on Deck](http://en.nai.nl/content/988437/hands-on_deck) http://en.nai.nl/content/988437/hands-on_deck [30.4.2012]

→ [Bavarian State Opera](http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de/data/kinder_flash/index.html) http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de/data/kinder_flash/index.html [2.3.2012]

→ [affirmative](#) see Text 5.1



4.3 Participation level: participative

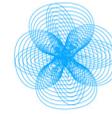
Cultural mediation formats with a participative level of participation allow audiences to independently influence the design, content, form and sometimes even rules within a project and framework defined by the cultural mediation provider. Examples of this include formats like the → *Musikkollegium Winterthur* [Collegium Musicum Winterthur] projects, in which children and young people take part in the creation of an opera. An example from the literary domain is the → *Schulhausroman* [Schoolhouse novel] project, in which young people collaborate with literary figures to produce a novel. The possibilities created by the Internet for participative cultural mediation are also being discussed and developed. In the exhibition field, there are increasing numbers of projects which aspire to “user generated content” and use the Internet as a medium for communication, production and documentation in that context. “Net literature” includes examples such as the → *Assoziations-Blaster* [Blaster of Associations], now in its 12th year, which enables users to randomly generate new texts by drawing on multiple individual contributions. Participation options include entering, reading, rating texts or discussing them in a blog. Although *Assoziations-Blaster* is intended less for the purposes of literary mediation than as a forum for the collective production of literature, it does come up in the discourse on literary mediation. This is an area where the already blurry line between the production of art and cultural mediation is fading rapidly.

One basic observation: when discussion turns to participation – and in cultural mediation circles it does so frequently and in ever more depth – it is crucial to raise the question of who is in the position to allow participation, and who bears the responsibility for its results, as well as who is participating in what and to what degree.

→ *Musikkollegium Winterthur*
<http://www.musikkollegium.ch/jugendhtml> [7.12.2014]

→ *Schulhausroman* <http://www.schulhausroman.ch> [9.5.2012]

→ *Assoziations-Blaster* <http://www.assoziations-blaster.de> [2.3.2012]



4.4 Participation level: collaborative

A collaborative level of participation requires that participants be involved in developing the framework, the topics and the methods of the cultural mediation project. One example is the → [Antikulti Atelier](#) [The name Antikulti is referring to the term “Multikulti” which stands for a multicultural society. It could be translated as “Anti-cultural studio”] project, which resulted from collaboration between the cultural mediation department of Museum für Gestaltung Zürich [Zurich Museum of Design] and Autonome Schule Zürich [Zurich Autonomous School]. In that project, a group of people of uncertain residency status in Switzerland meet regularly with a cultural mediator. The project is led jointly by the mediator and a representative of the group and its sessions take place in the museum’s cultural mediation room. Exhibitions hosted by the museum can (but do not have to) form the starting point for discussions on topics of importance to the group. The project’s activities in connection with the exhibition “Global Design”, which looked at globalization’s impacts on design phenomena, resulted in the creation of “Bleibeführer” [Guide to Staying], which contains useful information for getting by in the city of Zurich. Activities relating to the design objects presented in the exhibition “Black and White – Designing Opposites” led to the idea to develop a shadow theatre. Although it was the cultural mediator who initially put forth the invitation to collaborate, the methods, work conditions and contents are all chosen collectively, and are discussed and modified regularly by the group.

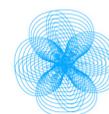
The allocation of resources for analyzing and managing power relationships and conflicts of interest is a prerequisite for projects with a collaborative level of participation, or an institution wishing to design one. This is particularly important when cultural institutions work with groups whose members possess lower levels of economic or symbolic → [capital](#). Frustration will set in unless everyone involved is there on equal footing. Moreover, good intentions on the part of institutions are often associated with → [paternalism](#) and its ilk, although these are sometimes manifested quite subtly. Making power relationships the subject matter and working together to deal with them is predicated upon a certain level of information and an awareness that extends beyond one’s own situation – as well as the willingness to actively redistribute resources and partially break down or modify power structures.

It is therefore far from easy to establish a collaborative level of participation in cultural mediation. When projects do succeed in using

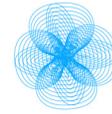
→ [Antikulti Atelier Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen \(ifa\) et al. \(Pub.\) Kunstvermittlung in der Migrationsgesellschaft. Reflexionen einer Arbeitstagung: <http://antikultiatelier.blogspot.ch/p/blog-page.html> \[17.2.2012\]; \[http://iae.zhdk.ch/fileadmin/data/iae/documents/121001_0106-482_RZ_WEB_PublikationKunstvermittlung-Migrationsgesellschaft.pdf\]\(http://iae.zhdk.ch/fileadmin/data/iae/documents/121001_0106-482_RZ_WEB_PublikationKunstvermittlung-Migrationsgesellschaft.pdf\) \[22.2.2012\]; see Resource Pool MFE0404.pdf](#)

→ [capital](#) see Glossary entry on capital, forms of

→ [paternalism](#) see Glossary



the resulting tensions productively, though, interesting avenues for institutional development can be opened. Over the long term, an institution which has collaborative processes in place is more likely to acquire the so sought-after new audience groups, because such processes create genuine opportunities for the new groups to wield influence. If the offer of these opportunities is genuine, the institutions themselves will not emerge unchanged.



4.5 Participation level: demand-based

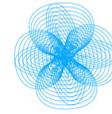
It is still quite rare for a cultural mediation project to be initiated in response to an approach by an interest group requesting a project. One of the mere handful of examples in the German-speaking region is the creation of the 2004 exhibition → [Gastarbajteri](#) – 40 years of Labour Migration at Wien Museum [Vienna Museum]. The Gastarbajteri exhibition explored part of Austrian history through the lens of economic migration, a topic the museum had not addressed until then. The impetus for the exhibition came in the form of a request from the association → [Initiative Minderheiten](#) [Initiative Minorities], which also collaborated in the exhibition's development. In this case, by requesting an exhibition, the association was pursuing the aim of → [representation](#) – seeking visibility for an interest group which had been left out of official historiography. It was demanding equal treatment for a group constituting part of Austrian society, but it also wanted to influence how that group was depicted in the exhibition. These ideas, for their part, had consequences for the cultural mediation programme associated with the exhibition, which the museum contracted out to the independent collective → [Büro trafo.K](#). Büro trafo.K. worked with the initiators to design an extensive programme of guided tours and workshops which reinforced the demand-based nature of the exhibition and its development: creating “counter-narratives” challenging the predominant public forms of representation and historical imagery.

→ [Gastarbajteri](#) <http://gastarbajteri.at> [15.3.2012]

→ [Initiative Minderheiten](#) <http://minderheiten.at> [15.3.2012]

→ [representation](#): see Glossary

→ [Büro trafo.K](#) <http://www.trafo-k.at> [15.3.2012]

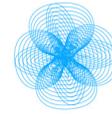


4.6 Teaching and learning concepts: instructionist

A mid-sized Swiss city has a theatre with its own symphony orchestra. As part of its winter programme, the theatre presents a series of concerts along with screenings of films with scores by Arthur Honegger, in honour of the internationally famous Swiss composer. The theatre's director, who had written her doctoral dissertation on Honegger's film music, gave a lecture introducing the first evening in the series. Not unnaturally, the lecture was packed with facts and details from the composer's life and highlighted certain aspects of his musical approach to the moving image.

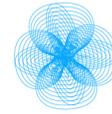
It is unlikely that many of those who attended the event would have said that they did so in order to learn something, had anyone asked. Even the director might have had trouble reconciling her understanding of her own role with the idea that her purpose that evening was to teach people something with her lecture. Yet one has to assume that she wanted to disseminate and increase knowledge about Arthur Honegger among the guests at the event. And in fact, a learning situation did exist for most of the people who listened to the lecture. This illustrates the fact that neither teaching nor learning are always intentional, i.e. conscious and premeditated.

In the (fictive) example described here, the concept of teaching and learning at issue is one informed by the theory of instructionism. Instructionism is based on an assumption that learning is receptive, i.e. is absorbed passively. It unfolds in a linear manner, systematically, one step building on the last, in a direction corresponding with the view of the person teaching. Learning content is understood as a closed knowledge cluster, or parts of one, which experts possess, prepare, and transmit to learners.



4.7 Teaching and learning concepts: action-oriented

Like the instructionist concept described in → [Text 4.6](#), the action-oriented teaching and learning concept assumes that knowledge transmission is the primary goal of the learning situation. Unlike the instructionist concept, the action-oriented concept recognizes that knowledge acquisition is more effective, more sustained and more multi-dimensional when pure instruction is complemented by forms of learning in which the learner becomes active within a framework defined by the person teaching rather than only listening (and perhaps taking notes). People familiar with modern schools will recognize the example of classroom “learning stations” that address a specific theme or themes: at learning stations, children can work individually or in groups to solve, experiment, research and relate in practice to a part of an assignment. If one were to apply action-oriented teaching and learning concepts in the fictional music mediation example described in → [Text 4.6](#), the result might be workshops supplementing the concert/film events, in which participants created scores for video sequences using self-composed or sampled sounds and experimented with how different sound atmospheres affected the perception of video images. Or, a (digital or analogue) game might be set up in the foyer, encouraging people to engage in planning and decision-making processes independently, which would illustrate the risks and tactics of life as an independent composer in 20th century Western Europe. As these examples suggest, an action-oriented teaching and learning concept can involve methodological and social learning subject matters as well as knowledge transfer.

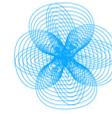


4.8 Teaching and learning concept: Constructivist and social-constructivists

A constructivist teaching/learning concept assumes that learning is based not on the transmission of knowledge by an external agent but instead on processes of organization occurring inside the brain. These processes are seen as the active production of reality by means of construction and interpretation. Reality is a process – one which all individuals, through their actions or interpretational activity, subject to dynamic change. From this viewpoint, the results of a learning process can be directed from the outside only to a limited degree. The implication for teachers is that their role is not so much that of guide and instructor as that of moderator and shaper of a learning environment which is as enabling as possible. Learning, in this view, is always embedded in a specific situation and is greatly influenced by what learners bring with them to a situation.

The social-constructivist theory is an extension of the constructivist concept. Social-constructivist approaches emphasize that people's constructing and interpretative activities are never restricted to a single individual in a closed system per se since the production of reality is always embedded in a matrix of social relationships. Therefore a social-constructivist teaching/learning approach pays particular attention to the ways in which power relationships and standards influence the learning processes of individuals.

In the social-constructivist view, the example of the introductory lecture at the Honegger event discussed in the preceding texts could be seen as involving learning processes apart from the intended instructive transfer of knowledge via the lecture. For instance, from their interactions with one another, audience members are learning how to behave in a concert hall or during a lecture (suppressing coughs, sitting still...). Or they are "practicing" ways to express socially acceptable appreciation or criticism in the given context (audience interested in concerts and films, concert hall). Or they may be learning methods of social punishment, ostracism, if a member of the group fails to live up to social expectations, if, for instance, someone grumbles loudly about the lecturer or starts dancing on the buffet table, enthusiastically singing the melodies from the pieces just performed.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Gunhild Hamer: How is Cultural Mediation Conveyed – the Example of the “Kultur macht Schule” Programme

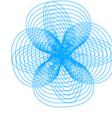
The programme → *Kultur macht Schule* [Culture is Making School] maintains and supports an extensive network of schools, artists and institutions. Interested schools can access a range of offerings emphasizing direct contact with artists and other people engaged with culture. Arts-related subject matter can be discussed and analyzed; content can also be collectively developed and modified by participants. This entails the use of formats which permit multiple and different participation levels: receptive (attending theatrical performances, concerts, literary events), interactive (tours in arts or history education) and participative (e.g. studio visits, workshops, project work with artists). The first time they sign up, teaching staff tend to choose receptive or interactive formats. If engagement with the artistic practice is taken to greater depth, schools tend to pick participative offerings or sign up for “combi-packages” (e.g. interactive tours in an art gallery or museum followed by a studio visit in an arts mediation studio or workshop on performance followed by attendance of a performance in the theatre).

→ *Kultur macht Schule* <http://www.kulturmachtschule.ch> [25.1.2013]

There has been increasing interest on the part of schools in partner projects with individual artists or cultural institutions. These medium- or long-term partnerships offer participants unusual opportunities for participation. Artist residencies in schools allow pupils to witness contemporary artistic creation and create opportunities for them to participate in the artistic process.

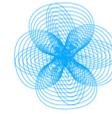
In this format, pupils develop their own opportunities to create and are encouraged to engage in their own artistic expression. They experiment with the effectiveness of their own actions, thoughts and feelings and develop new ways of seeing. Teachers benefit from art-making processes; they learn new methods and are inspired to channel art-related content into the daily school routine. Creative impulses emerging from these partnerships with artists can also be taken up by the school as a whole and contribute toward its evolution and the teaching in it.

The modules, which are specifically designated as introductory or more advanced, encourage teachers to get involved in the cultural mediation work. In this area too, engaging with artistic practices gives groups the opportunity to experience different levels of participation and learning concepts.



We plan to draw on the experiences gathered so far to improve the quality of the existing programmes, and in that context will seek to support participative approaches in particular.

Gunhild Hamer is the Director of the Cultural Education Office (and the Programme "Kultur macht Schule") in the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Canton of Aargau and a director with professional and non-professional performers.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Thomas Pfiffner: Musikkollegium Winterthur

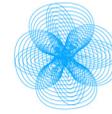
Designing interesting and varied concert programmes of high artistic quality is one thing. Getting people to engage with this musical diversity is another. The latter task has a great tradition at Musikkollegium Winterthur [Collegium Musicum Winterthur]. We reach out to a wide variety of audience segments on several different levels. This begins with free attendance of dress rehearsals for members of Musikkollegium Winterthur: the rehearsals let participants look into the “workroom” of an orchestra, enhancing people’s ear for and understanding of music.

Our youth projects are particularly important. Several times each year we hold events in our “Meet the Orchestra”, “Orchester hautnah” [orchestra close-up], “Orchesterlabor” [orchestra laboratory] and other programmes in which children and young people can have fun while being introduced to the world of classic music and its instruments. The highlight is the huge project “Winterthur schreibt eine Oper” [Winterthur writes an opera]. We have carried out that project twice now, both times with great success. A total of 750 children and young adults participated in it over a period of months, writing the libretto, composing the music, sketching the stage set and, finally, performing the opera themselves (supported in the orchestra pit by Musikkollegium Winterthur). This format, in which young people become creative themselves and begin to make music, is what you might call the ideal form of music mediation.

We also offer the “classic” formats of music mediation, i.e. pre-concert informational programmes, and sometimes post-format “Red Sofa” discussions, where audience members spontaneously come up on the stage and share their thoughts with the conductor and the evening’s soloists and ask any questions they might have. This is music mediation right in the heart of artistic endeavour.

Over time, Musikkollegium Winterthur has developed a music mediation programme with a form of music mediation tailored to every kind of audience (including potential audiences), whether young or old: from our loyal concertgoers to the ideal next-generation audience, from school children to families to companies. One format which is frequently under-appreciated in music mediation circles is what we call our client events, where we design music mediation for selected companies. This format brings together a group of people between the ages of thirty and sixty who would not ordinarily attend classical concerts. It combines an introductory talk on the concert, meeting with the artists and a glimpse behind the scenes to provide an up-close and personal experience of classical music.

Thomas Pfiffner is the Director of Musikkollegium Winterthur, the Vice President of Fondation SUISSE and the Programme Director of the concert series Meisterzyklus Bern.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Meris Schüpbach: Project kidswest.ch – A Process of Art and Culture in the Social Context

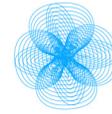
The project → kidswest.ch is an open art and cultural workshop in Bern West open to anyone aged 5–16 at no charge. Once each week children of various nationalities – almost all of them from low-income immigrant families – meet up to experience and create art and culture together. Public appearances are held on weekends and over the holidays, for instance, at kkj.ch, in the Bern Museum of Fine Arts Bern or in the City of Bern's Action Week against Racism. A core group of what is now 12 children has been meeting at kidswest regularly for years; others come for a year or two, a few weeks or just a single day. Since the art workshops are open to newcomers, the group composition is constantly changing.

→ [kidswest.ch](http://kidswest.blogspot.ch) <http://kidswest.blogspot.ch> [25.1.2013]

I plan projects or activities addressing topics, techniques or forms of expression with the children based on sporadically compiled priority lists. Depending on the needs determined (and resources available), I sometimes bring in other artists or students, who then develop and implement a project with the kids. The final product is never the main focus; experiencing and creating collectively always takes priority. Once an idea or plan has taken shape, each child decides whether or not to participate in the project. When children commit to playing a major role, then their participation becomes obligatory; for instance, children who have agreed to play a part in a theatre project or to give a presentation. Usually the ones who have not committed themselves also work on the project with the group, but they have the option to work on their own on the current topic if they want to.

The children figure out what interests them as a group in sporadically held "postcard circles". They each receive a blank postcard, on which they write down, or draw, a topic or an idea for a project. Then the cards are sent around the circle, with the children adding their own thoughts on the idea to each postcard. In the end, the children read their own cards out loud, both their initial idea and the responses to it. After the discussion, they vote on which topics interest them most. A lot of projects develop spontaneously out of shared experiences as well, or through questions asked and answered in encounters with outsiders. The current priority list has inventing and creating stories, painting pictures, doing theatre.

Meris Schüpbach *has worked as an independent artist in the social work context since 1981. In 2012 she received the third annual Award for Visual Arts Education in Switzerland from the Swiss Art Association and visarte.Switzerland.*

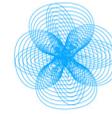


CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Claude-Hubert Tatot: Conveying Cultural Mediation

The mission of the degree programme Trans – Art Education at the University of Art and Design in Geneva is to train socially engaged artists and authors who are aware of political and social environments and are in a position to invent new forms of mediation fuelled by their own artistic experiences and their position as art-makers.

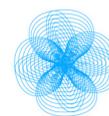
With respect to cultural mediation, the Trans programme seeks to equip its students for research and development. For that reason, it places great priority on both interaction in professional circles and implementing projects in partnerships with cultural institutions. These experiences promote learning, familiarity with current developments and the emergence of new forms of intervention. Instead of presenting students with a set of methods or prescriptions, the programme confronts them with concrete situations and questions. For example, how can one design, create and programme a Christmas market stand for the Théâtre de Carouge? How can spectators at the Les Urbaines festival in Lausanne be encouraged to move from one venue to the next? How can one create games which will enable a young audience to take a closer look at the works of Mamco (Geneva's Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art) or the MAC/VAL (Museum of Contemporary Art of Val-de-Marne)? How can one design a bus shelter during the Festival Art-Chêne which will invite passers-by to engage with it? How can one invite older amateur artists to come to paint at a neighbourhood social centre? What forms of interaction can take place in a public space between passers-by and the works of Thomas Huber?

The forms of collaboration, to which our students bring energy and commitment, adapt themselves to a variety of contexts and address a range of different population groups, depending on whether they take the form of local interventions or international campaigns, smaller projects or institutional partnerships. They represent forms of action research rooted in the reality of the territory explored by Trans. Theoretical approaches from various disciplines and practical activities interweave, bound up in a common desire to explore, propelled by the incessant back-and-forth between the two dimensions. While many decision-makers advocate the use of well-tested projects as models for new activities, we take the opposite approach, training Trans students to innovate. In this respect, we share the attitude expressed in the journal "Passagen" by Carmen Mörsch: "cultural mediation –



and in my eyes this is its most important function, one for which there is no substitute – allows space for a resistant cultural practice, removed from elite enclaves of art appreciation and populist strategies of audience development.”

Claude-Hubert Tatot is an art historian, the Coordinator of the Masters programme Trans – Art Education at the University of Art and Design in Geneva, and the Editor-in-Chief of “Start”, a free contemporary art magazine for children.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Cultural Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: Cultural Mediation as Exchange on an Equal Footing

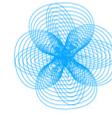
One feature common to all the cultural mediation projects which Pro Helvetia supports is that they each involve an exchange in which all parties meet on an equal footing— an exchange with no predefined hierarchies, within which all partners are equally entitled to express themselves, bear responsibility collectively and listen to one another. The Swiss Arts Council aspires to a type of cultural mediation that is based on interaction among a variety of individuals and brings their varied experiences and knowledge into play, rather than limiting itself to the transmission of knowledge from an expert to an individual or group. The aim is for everyone involved to be both teachers and learners, though everyone does not have to be teaching or learning the same thing.

An equal footing in a relationship can be created when a cultural institution takes on an active role as a mediator that extends beyond the mere provision of content. Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne, for instance, increases the accessibility of theatre to blind people or people with impaired vision by providing live audio-description and hosting events where audiences meet with directors. These allow sighted and blind people to experience a performance together, and that, in turn, offers to the director and the theatre a valuable new perspective on their own work.

During the “Schulhausroman” [Schoolhouse Novel] project, a school class writes a story intended for publication with the help of a writer. Naturally, the young people are influenced and enriched by the writer in this process, but the reverse is also true: the same exchange opens up new worlds of ideas and language to the writer, which will flow into that person’s future work. Thus both the actual target group – the school class – and the writer each profit from the project, but the school as a whole can profit from the experience as well.

By supporting projects structured in this way, Pro Helvetia hopes to contribute towards increased awareness of the transmission of culture and cultural mediation and highlight interaction among all participants in that context.

Pro Helvetia’s interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Working Group was responsible for developing the promotion criteria within the framework of the Arts and Audiences Programme.

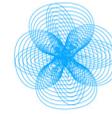


FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 4: Exclusions Engendered by Forms of Open Learning

"In this way, certain ways of seeing art are [...] taken for granted and unconsciously recognized, commended and encouraged in those who have already mastered them. The knowledge that is often necessary for this comprehension and the means and techniques through which that knowledge is acquired are not transmitted, and the people who have not already unconsciously mastered them, and for precisely that reason usually do not dare to ask about them, are disadvantaged in the educational process." (Sternfeld 2005)

In contemporary educational psychology, learning is defined as modifying and acquiring new modes of behaviour and attitudes through experience and/or practice. This concept of learning is broader than the typical notion of school instruction and the targeted transmission of content. Unless it is the result of physical change, illness or something similar, every long-term modification of behaviour or attitude is seen as learning-based. "We are also talking about learning fear and security, of acquiring likes and dislikes, of the formation of habits, acquiring the capacity for planned action and thinking in terms of problem-solving." (Edelmann 1993, p. 5).

Today, the prevailing understanding of learning processes is anchored in the constructivist theory of learning (Reich 2006; Harms, Krombass 2008). In the constructivist view, learning is less a result of instruction than a self-directed process of meaning construction. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is seen as inextricably linked to the production of meaning. This process is circular and based on agency: a specific experience leads to the analysis and the development of abstract concepts. The application of the concepts generates further experience, causing the cycle to begin again (Kolb, Fry 1975).¹ This occurs both in individuals on their own and through interaction (co-constructivist learning) with others. Social relationships and emotions are seen as important factors in the learning process. John Howard Falk and Lynn Dierking, scholars specialising in learning, see learning as an individual's dialogue with the environment for the purpose of orientation. This dialogue is influenced by the interactions among the individual's personal, sociocultural and physical contexts and by their temporalities (contextual learning). Thus, learning, knowledge and experience are always tied to a place, i.e. situated. Learning-process outcomes vary according to the circumstances and conditions under which they take place. From this perspective, the creation of environments allowing multi-layered experiences and ties takes on greater weight relative to the question of what contents mediators intend to convey. The knowledge that learners bring to a situation is deemed just as relevant as the knowledge teachers plan to transfer. This means that the learning situation is based on collective determination and



participation. The teachers see themselves more as guides than as instructors and are always learners as well as teachers. The criteria for “right” or “wrong” blur – failure to achieve targets and unexpected outcomes are no longer considered negative or gratuitous, but instead as experiences which can lead to new movements of learning (Spychiger 2008).

This approach to learning sees cultural mediation, its stakeholders, settings and contents as having special potential. Falk and Dierking, for example, describe the museum as an ideal setting for open learning arrangements, emphasizing exploration, self-direction and independent actions (Falk, Dierking 2000). The psychologist, Howard Gardner, who developed the concept of multiple intelligences (Gardner 2002), a highly influential concept in the field of cultural mediation, sees engagement with art as offering an opportunity to support multiple ways of learning, including ways not focused on linguistic and mathematical intelligence (see also → [Project Zero](#) at Harvard University, which has been researching learning in the arts since 1967). More recent research has looked at the logics associated with the agency of artists involved in cultural mediation and their self-images (→ [Pringle 2002](#), → [2009](#)). These studies reveal correspondences between constructivist learning concepts and the attitudes and approaches of contemporary artistic production. Artists work as “reflective practitioners” (Schoen 1983), in tentative, explorative ways, drawing on their experience. They seldom aspire to have their work be universal. Instead, they usually see it as situated and context-dependent. Artists’ work question ostensibly fixed notions of right and wrong and view failure and unexpected outcomes as productive events, sometimes also as conditions for the creative process (Schmücker 2003). In a 2006 text based on their own experiences, artists Seraphina Lenz and Stella Geppert attempt to systematize the differences between artistic processes and school learning in a model project on arts mediation (Geppert, Lenz 2006):²

→ [Project Zero](#) <http://www.pz.harvard.edu> [30.11.2012]

→ [Pringle 2002](#) http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/we-did-stir-things-up-the-role-of-artists-in-sites-for-learning [30.11.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0401.pdf

→ [Pringle 2009](#) <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/artist-educator-examining-relationships-between-art-practice-and> [30.11.2012];

An artistic process

Learning processes in arts mediation

An artistic process unfolds independently and in a self-motivated manner.

Learning processes in arts mediation are initiated by the teacher.

Artistic processes can have an exploratory quality and may therefore include detours and cul-de-sacs. A predefined objective cannot usually be pursued linearly.

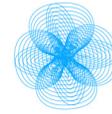
The structure put in place by the school requires an efficient use of time.

Artistic processes involve their own time structures, which are appropriate to the process.

Responsibility for the learning process lies with the teacher. That teacher provides the ideas, the material, the expertise and the time structure.

Artistic processes require communication with oneself and others as well as sensitivity in perception of oneself and others.

Feedback on the work takes the form of an assessment by the teacher in the form of marks.



Juxtapositions such as these, though highly illustrative, function only at the cost of enormous reduction with respect to content. To provide some examples, one might point to the economic and temporal restrictions of artistic project work and contrast them with the long-term nature and continuity of learning in schools, which might better support the initiation of open search processes. Moreover, one ought to note that project work and “self-organized learning” have taken a permanent place in the repertoire of many schools, and in fact now sometimes on the list of required formats and methods (→ [Patzner et al. 2008](#)). Moreover, the claim that artistic work necessarily engenders greater sensitivity in artists’ perception of themselves and others appears somewhat romanticized in view of the tough selection mechanisms, the pressure exerted on artists to assert themselves and cultivate their public images and the level of competition in the artistic field. In addition, it is quite possible that highly product-oriented artists would be less flexible in their approach to learners than would a teacher with a more process-oriented attitude. Thus it is not the professional background, but primarily an “artist”-oriented attitude (as described by Pringle, see above) which is important in the creation of learning situations. This has also been recognized by researchers in education and social sciences. That field has undergone a “performative shift” in the last twenty years: increasingly, artistic methods are included in methodological array and are being studied with a view to their potential for pedagogical activities (→ [Mackenzie 2011](#); Springay 2007; → [Wulf, Zirfas 2007](#), p. 7 ff.). On the other side of the coin, the arts have been taking an “educational turn”: one which is manifested in the increasing numbers of interdisciplinary projects using pedagogic methods, analysing the conditions of knowledge production with artistic means and interacting with participants from the widest variety of groups and individuals (→ [Podesva 2007](#)). Given these overlaps, maintaining a rigid separation between “art” on the one side and “learning” on the other no longer seems appropriate. It is difficult to draw a clear boundary between cultural mediation, art and general education. Drama education can serve as one illustrative example here: as an occupational field it has its own history as a discipline and is constantly evolving. In its more sophisticated varieties, such as those oriented toward → [post-dramatic theatre](#), it is difficult or impossible to distinguish between it and theatrical arts, which for its part has appropriated pedagogic and participative processes for its own uses (see for example the projects of Vienna group → [Wenn es soweit ist](#)).

In some cases, funding-level institutions and organizations have reacted to the interferences among “cultural mediation”, “art” and formal education. One example is the → [Projektfond Kulturelle Bildung](#) [Cultural Mediation Project Fund], created in 2008 by the Berlin Senate and coordinated by an independent office organizationally situated between city-state’s departments of cultural affairs and education and social affairs.

→ [Patzner et al. 2008](#) <http://www.schulheft.at/fileadmin/1PDF/schulheft-130.pdf> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0403.pdf

→ [Mackenzie 2011](#) <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1437> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0404.pdf

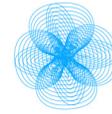
→ [Wulf, Zirfas 2007](#) <http://www.beltz.de/fileadmin/beltz/leseproben/9783407320742.pdf> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0407.pdf

→ [Podesva 2007](#) <http://fillip.ca/content/a-pedagogical-turn> [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0405.pdf

→ [post-dramatic theatre](#) see Glossary

→ [Wenn es soweit ist](#) <http://www.wennessoweitist.com> [13.9.2012]

→ [Projekt fund Cultural mediation](#) <http://www.kulturprojekte-berlin.de/en/cultural-education.html> [16.4.2014]

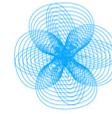


Other examples are the offices set up by Swiss cantons to coordinate co-operation between schools, artists and cultural institutions, which are situated partially in the cantonal education departments and partially in the cultural services.³

→ *Freie Kunstschulen* <http://www.bjke.de> [12.9.2012]

Education drawing on the arts and about them is described repeatedly as holding out hope because of the potential, described above, that it is thought to have. This takes place against the backdrop of crises in the education system and the related challenges questioning its modernity and above all its inclusiveness and whether it serves different learning types. Germany's → *Freie Kunstschulen* [Free Art Schools], for instance, emerged as a reaction to the "education catastrophe" diagnosed in that country in the 1960s (Picht 1964). The Free Art Schools offered (and still do) unaccredited, extra-curricular "free" activities for children and young people in all artistic domains, though in the early days dance, music and theatre were the main emphases. One of the key justifications for the schools' existence was the critique of an insufficiently artistic orientation, excessive pressure to achieve and lack of opportunities for "self-development and creative activity" in regular schools, for which the art schools were intended to compensate (Erhart et al. 1980, p. 15).

Presumably, programmes identifying themselves as "free" and which are designed to promote personal development would have great appeal to a wide variety of users. In fact, however, the free art schools have never really succeeded consistently in living up to their stated aim of being open to all classes and age groups (they are certainly not alone in this respect). Generally, their programmes are used by people belonging to the middle class. This contradiction was recognized early on, for instance, in a study written back in 1980 (Kathen 1980). Looking at the Königsborn district of the city of Unna in Germany's North Rhein-Westphalia, the study describes the infighting and clashing interests associated with the establishment of an art school. At the beginning, young people who had previously spent most of their free time in the streets worked with cultural workers to renovate a building to house a free art school. After this collective process, though, conflict erupted. The ideas about art mediation held by the people giving the courses proved to be incompatible with the interests of the young people involved. This led to the school's closure, and an official protest by the young people. The study's author, herself an instructor at the school, undertook an evaluation of this conflict-ridden experience. To place it in context, she also looked at twelve other art schools in the study. Von Kathen's conclusion is extremely critical: work in the art schools for young people draws heavily on elitist concepts associated with a bourgeois definition of culture rather than attempting to develop alternatives. The schools produce exclusion because their programme structures are unable to retain the interests of children and young people from a variety of classes. Despite its age, this study has lost almost none of its relevance.



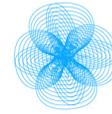
These days, one hears ever more criticism of an unreservedly positive assessment of open forms of learning and “self-directed learning”, which are typical of participative-oriented cultural mediation – the same forms of learning which have been described as constituting its great potential. Michael Sertl, for instance, demonstrates that such forms of learning are based on middle-class parenting practices. They build on abilities and linguistic and behavioural codes which middle class children have already acquired at home. For that reason these forms are most effective for those children in particular and benefit primarily their “self development” (→ [Sertl 2007](#), p. 2). To assert that these forms of learning will be beneficial for everyone is to take the lifestyles and learning styles of the middle class as a universal standard, to → [naturalize](#) them. While Sertl’s remarks are primarily concerned with regular schools, similar objections have been raised in the context of cultural mediation by the arts mediator and theorist Nora Sternfeld (Sternfeld 2005). Sternfeld focuses on the correlations frequently found in cultural mediation between the “call for independent exploration and creative autonomy” and the idea of “natural talent”, which should be developed in each individual separately. This approach is viewed in cultural mediation circles as particularly un-elitist (Sternfeld 2005, p. 22). Referring to Bourdieu (Bourdieu 2001), Sternfeld points out that “talent” itself is a social construct. Researchers have shown that people who are considered “spontaneous”, “creative” and “imaginative” are those whose childhood and socialization took place in middle-class environments. However, both the transfer of specialized knowledge and exercises for practicing techniques of knowledge acquisition tend to be seen in the progressive part of the professional field of cultural mediation as authoritarian, uncreative and out-dated.

It appears, then, that working in open, explorative learning settings is also fraught with contradictions for cultural mediation (again, for those who see cultural mediation as a critical practice aspiring to equality of access). On the one hand, the special potential of cultural mediation lies in developing this kind of learning setting. Correspondences exist between the arts, cultural mediation’s central subject matters, and the pedagogical methods based on open learning settings. They do not involve formalized performance assessment, which potentially promotes process-orientation and openness with respect to outcome. On the other hand though, open learning settings run a risk of producing precisely the types of exclusions which cultural mediation is intended and committed to combating. The study written by Dagmar von Kathen in 1980 provided an answer to the question of how to deal with this contradiction when she criticized the relatively uncritical mode and manner of engaging with art in the free schools. The children and young adults were set exercises to train them in the → [love of art](#) there.

→ [Sertl 2007](#) <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/michael.sertl/OffenesLernen.pdf> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0406.pdf

→ [naturalize](#) see Glossary

→ [love of art](#) see Glossary

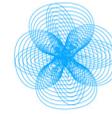


“Yet engagement with art must take the form of critical analysis of art in order for it to be productive in terms of emancipatory aesthetic education. Not every artistic statement is automatically positive [...]. Part of relating to art is understanding and integrating into oneself its societal function, the social position of artists, their high degree of individualization etc. [...]” (Kathen 1980, p. 155).

→ [*transformative function*](#)
see Text 5.5

Von Kathen also suggests that cultural mediation should have the analysis of the societal function of art as part of its subject matter. That corresponds to the approach advocated by Sternfeld, which requires that institutional exclusions be openly discussed in cultural mediation. Covering them up, she argues, has the effect of legitimizing them, particularly when working with marginalized groups (Sternfeld 2005, p. 31). This is undoubtedly an important component of cultural mediation as a critical practice, and it is feasible in any situation, at least to some degree, given an interest and willingness to do so on the mediator's part. Merely raising the issue of exclusions verbally will not counteract them however. The critique of open forms of learning itself is a matter of privileges. For that reason, critics like Sertl (Sertl 2007, p. 1) are not calling for the elimination of open forms of learning, but rather, insisting that cultural mediators maintain an awareness of the potential of these forms to produce exclusion while using them pedagogically rather than simply taking them on board with euphoric naivety. For cultural mediation aiming at this type of reflexivity, one would first have to develop a sceptical distance from one's own pedagogical “truths”. For instance, cultural mediation for an exhibition which, in the belief that it is fundamentally anti-elitist and democratic, has participants seek out their “favourite picture” and “free associate” with it, might scrutinize this practice to see what can be “freely associated” and expressed in a group situation in a museum without violating the unwritten rules of conduct – or whose associations the mediator finds “interesting”. Knowledge acquisition techniques can themselves be made the subject of education in any branch, instead of placing one's faith in the pedagogical “intuition” of education staff and relying too heavily on the self-direction of learners. This assumes however, that the people providing the cultural mediation are professional enough to have the ability to make their knowledge about methods available to participants – i.e. to present it in a systematic fashion and make it accessible both verbally and through exercises.⁴

Sternfeld also calls on mediators and ultimately cultural institutions to actively express solidarity for the groups and their concerns: “this cultural mediation would see itself as also involving opening up the institutions for political practice and organization” (Sternfeld 2005, p. 32). Serious attempts to combat institutional exclusions would therefore lead to cultural mediation with a → [*transformative function*](#) for the institutions.



- 1 Other authors have criticized various aspects of the learning circle model put forth by Kolb and Fry and developed their own, more complex models. Due to its introductory nature, this text can offer only a brief sketch of the complex field of learning theories and the conflicting positions within it.
- 2 KLiP ("Kunst und Lernen im Prozess" [Art and learning in the process] took place over the course of three years in various different schools in Berlin).
- 3 A list of all of these coordination offices is available at → <http://www.kulturvermittlung.ch/fr/infotheque/liens/suisse/services-de-coordination.html> [25.1.2013].
- 4 In the postcolonial view, the devaluation of forms of learning like imitation, copying, or learning by memorization supports the colonial claim of Western superiority over non-Western learning approaches (Spivak 2012, p. 46).

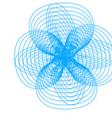
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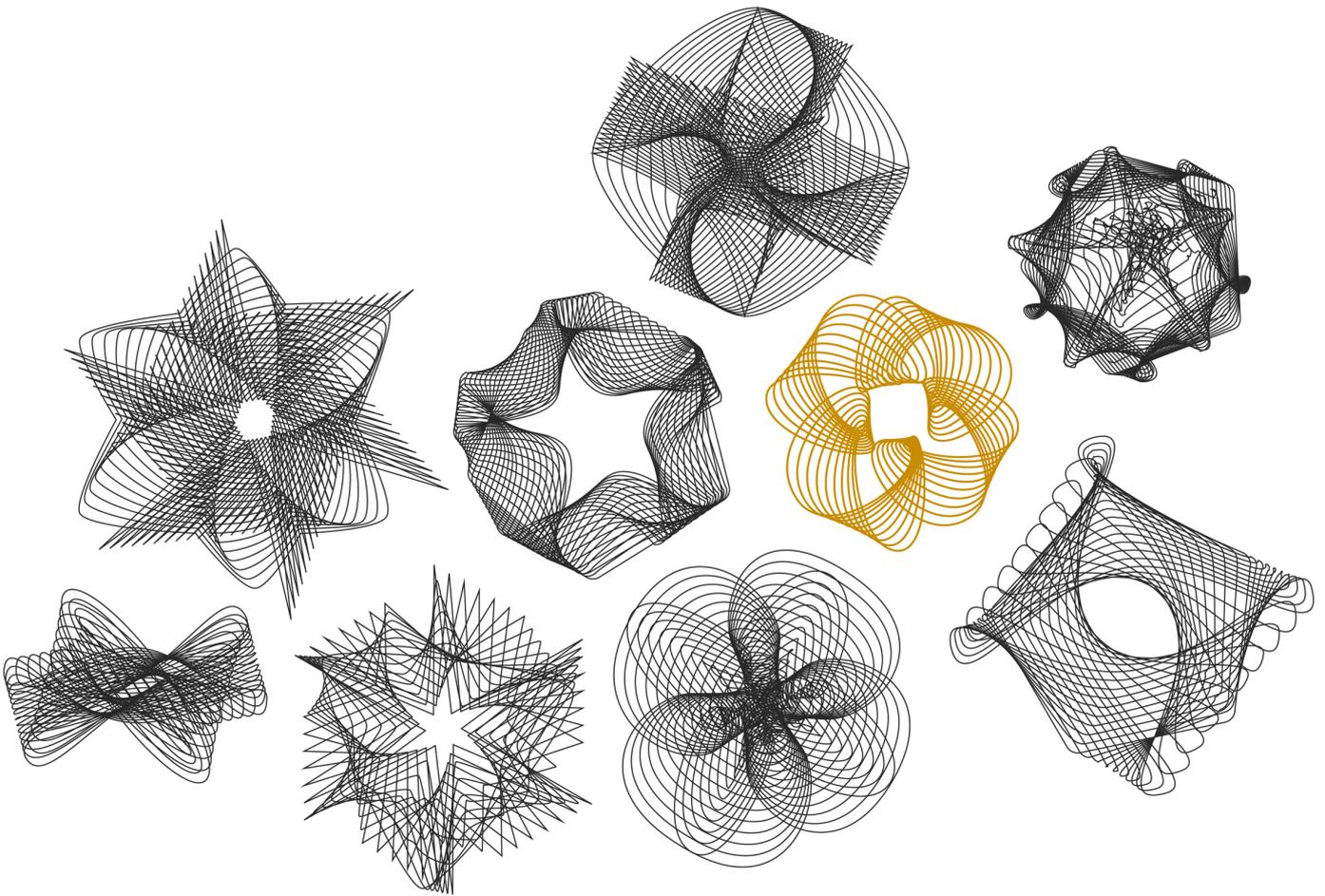
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Time for Cultural Mediation

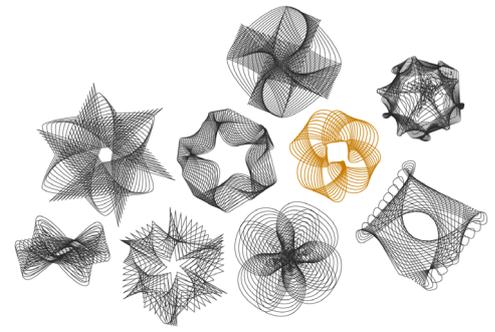
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 **What Does Cultural Mediation Do?**



- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
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- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?



5.0 Intro

Policy debates about cultural mediation often centre around the effects of projects on their participants: the people they target. One has the impression that the decision to fund a cultural mediation project comes down to whether the “effects” question is answered correctly. A fairly large share of the → *research on cultural mediation* seems to have been conducted with the intent of finding evidence of projects’ effects. We take a different track for this publication and avoid the active use of the “effect” concept (with the possible exception of the “Changing Perspectives” texts, which were written by others). We have chosen to do so because we are not convinced that it is possible to persuasively establish a direct causal relationship between cultural mediation and its users. The factors which result in a change of attitude or knowledge gain, i.e., factors associated with a learning experience, cannot be isolated with sufficient clarity. For that reason, the next section of this publication, “6. Cultural mediation: why (not)?”, takes the view that the purported effects put forth by proponents of cultural mediation in public debates on the subject are in truth arguments serving to legitimize it. We consider the nearly ubiquitous focus on changes in participants effected by cultural mediation to be problematic: it casts participants in the role of people “to be improved”. We believe that one ought first to examine the effects of cultural mediation on those who initiate them, run them or commission them – i.e. on cultural institutions themselves and the organizations and agencies engaged in funding and carrying out cultural mediation.

Therefore, this chapter, introduced by the question of what cultural mediation does, sets out five functions cultural mediation can serve for institutions.

The order in which the functions are presented should not be read to reflect a hierarchy or in the sense of historical-chronological stages of development. In practice, more than one of them tend to operate at any given time. A brief description of the problems associated with each function is included at the end of its description.

→ *research on cultural mediation* see
Text 7.5

- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?



5.1 Affirmative function of cultural mediation

Cultural mediation is described as affirmative when it serves the function of communicating the publicly acknowledged missions of an institution of high culture. By “publicly acknowledged”, we mean missions which institutions have inherited or, in some cases, which have been defined in writing by professional associations. For instance, in the case of → *museums*, they include the duties associated with the definition of a museum defined in 1986 in the statutes of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as a “non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”

→ *Museum* http://www.museumbund.de/en/the_museum/aaa/0/ [12.2.2014]

The affirmative function of cultural mediation treats the arts as specialized domains in which specialized knowledge is transferred. Practices frequently associated with that transfer consist of lectures and other events, and the production and provision of media intended to provide introductory or accompanying information, such as film programmes, director’s talks, tours led by specialists, pamphlets accompanying theatrical plays and wall texts or catalogue texts for exhibitions. These are created by people authorized to speak for the institution who are addressing a specialist public, or at least a self-motivated one.

Accordingly, the following aspects of the affirmative function of cultural mediation are problematic: its exclusivity, its tendency to confirm exclusions and its assertion of a fundamental validity for its contents.



5.2 Reproductive function of cultural mediation

Another commonly encountered function of cultural mediation is that of developing the “audiences of tomorrow” through activities with children and young people or by exposing people to the arts who would have sought such exposure on their own initiative, perhaps because their leisure activities are set in locations not within cultural institutions. Cultural institutions are seen as institutions which grant the public access to valuable cultural goods. These goods are not equally accessible to all: even when admission is free or very inexpensive, not all members of a society have an equal sense that the institution’s offerings are intended for them – one hears historically or socially-based exclusion mechanisms or “symbolic obstacles” spoken of in this context. Against this backdrop, the purpose of cultural mediation’s reproductive function is to provide access to these goods to the broadest possible range of audiences. Cultural mediation programmes whose function is primarily reproductive tend to be designed by cultural mediators with pedagogic experience. Examples of projects falling into this category are workshops for school classes and advanced training offerings for teaching staff, programmes for children and families and event-oriented activities with high audience figures such as museums at night events or museum days, concert picnics or the offerings for children and young adults in the Swiss dance festival → *Steps*. We use the term reproductive in such contexts because these projects are motivated to no small degree by the institution’s desire to ensure its own future by creating new users and also because they are associated with activities of caring and providing for.

→ *Steps dance festival* <http://www.steps.ch> [21.3.2012]

The problematic aspect of this function of cultural mediation is that in its attempts to draw in new audience groups the focus is primarily on those who are absent – the people who fail to grasp how good for them the culture the institutions offer might be. Thus this function is characterized by efforts to persuade and induce.

It is rare for institutions to shift their focus to their own content, range of offerings or rules of conduct. Yet these should be scrutinized, because they too contribute enormously to audiences development.



5.3 Deconstructive function of cultural mediation

Cultural mediation can take on the function of engaging with a public to critically examine the cultural institutions, the arts and the processes of education and inclusion in the canon of high culture which they facilitate. It can, for instance, be a forum for debating the rules of behaviour which apply in cultural institutions, their accessibility and their authority to define what is high-quality art and what is not. It can expose and explore the → *history of the institutions*, and analyse their ties with power and or market structures. It can also engage with participants to respond to the problems entailed in these issues – for example, by encouraging participants to present their own narratives or objects and place these in the institution as an intervention. Practices serving the deconstructive function of cultural mediation remain rare thus far. Historically, this function is closely linked with critical theory and the practices of institutional critique, which began to develop in the arts in the 1960s. Thus far, one encounters it primarily in the domain of the visual arts. One example is the project “ArtUOM”, run by arts mediator → *Javier Rodrigo* carried out with Universitat Oberta per a Majors [the education programme for seniors at the University of the Balearic Islands] at Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró on Mallorca, Spain, for three years. The participants explored the museum and its exhibitions, conducted interviews and discussions with the people working there and visited workshops and storage rooms – with the aim of understanding the rules which govern the activities of a contemporary art institution and the criteria applied in selecting, showing and evaluating art. They held their own exhibition at the end of each year, documenting in an artistic manner the, to some extent critical, processes of knowledge acquisition which played out within the project and inviting the audience to engage in activities of their own. One clearly deconstructive element in the project is its catalogue, which constitutes an alternative approach to talking about art, which is quite different from the normal modes encountered in the field of artists and professionals.

The example shows clearly that deconstruction-oriented cultural mediation often exhibits characteristics associated with artists even as it analyzes them. The deconstructive function of cultural mediation can also crop up in formats which are primarily affirmative, however: in guided exhibition tours which intentionally question, relativize or criticize the authority of the institution and make it clear that it is one voice among many.

Potentially problematic is the fact that cultural mediation projects with a deconstructive function can have a tendency to become self-referential and self-involved, just as art itself sometimes does. In other words, it formulates critiques but does not address the ramifications of or conditions for applying the criticism.

→ *history of institutions* see Text 3.4

→ *Javier Rodrigo* <http://javierrodrigomontero.blogspot.com/2010/05/artuom-0507.html> [22.3.2012]



5.4 Reformative function of cultural mediation

We speak of the reformative function of cultural mediation when experiences or knowledge generated in cultural mediation result in changes intended to improve structures existing within a cultural institution. For example, the Vincenzo Vela Museum in Ligornetto drew on its experiences with visitors with impaired vision from a project supported by Pro Helvetia called “Kulturattaché-e-s” (Grossrieder 2009) to expand its programming in this area over a longer term and to improve the accessibility of the museum to this user group.

One example from the field of theatrical mediation is the → [audio description](#) project carried out at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne. Visitors with vision impairments hear descriptions of what is occurring on stage in real time during the natural pauses in the dialogue of a theatrical production via earphones. A tactile examination of the stage set takes place before the performance and participants have the opportunity to talk with theatre personnel.

The more effective the information flows within an institution are, the greater the extent to which cultural mediation can fulfil the reformative function – i.e. if mediators have a voice in decision-making at the planning level of the institution and thus are able to apply their project experiences directly and effectively. One almost never finds such structural conditions in place in Switzerland, and it is still quite unusual to encounter them in other countries.

→ [Audio description](http://www.vidy.ch/jeune-public/audiodescription) <http://www.vidy.ch/jeune-public/audiodescription> [11.4.2012]; see Text 2.CP by Corinne Doret Baertschi and Fanny Guichard: Two concrete examples of cultural mediation in Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne



5.5 Transformative function of cultural mediation

Cultural mediation sometimes takes on the task of expanding the existing function of a cultural institution and positioning it, for example, as a participant and instrument in shaping society. One example of this is the → [Centre for Possible Studies](http://centreforpossiblestudies.wordpress.com), initiated by London's Serpentine Gallery in London in 2009 and led by the mediator and artist Janna Graham. The centre is an exhibition and event space in a neighbourhood which is strongly impacted by → [gentrification](#) and, in consequence thereof, the displacement of some sections of its long-term resident population. The Centre for Possible Studies, a venue for networking and production, offers space for artistic practice and combines that with the activities and concerns of local interest groups. The latter work with artists, geographers and social scientists, many of whom share countries of origin with large portions of the neighbourhood's immigrant residents. The focus is on investigating and imaging the neighbourhood's future. With this project, the Serpentine Gallery has taken an active stance opposing the dynamics of gentrification, which cultural institutions generally tend to promote or accelerate. One also hears the term → [Soho effect](#) used to describe situations of the latter type.

In this kind of cultural mediation project, cultural institutions are seen as changeable organizations in which the long-term participation of a range of publics in shaping the institution is seen as necessary to maintaining the relevance of the institution and its sustainability. However, this is due less to quantitative considerations (as is the case with the reproductive function of cultural mediation) than to the need to keep in step with the changing forms of cultural production in the knowledge and information society as well as the aspiration to be the source of groundbreaking impulses. Practices associated with the transformative function work in opposition to the hierarchical distinction between curatorial and artistic work and education. For a project to have a transformative function, it is essential that its practices do not stop at intervening in the institution and putting its functions out for discussion (as is the case with the deconstructive function), but go on to change and expand the institutions.

Problematic aspects of the transformative function are its potential instrumentalization of participants to enhance an institution's image and in general the question of decision-making hierarchies within projects aiming at → [collaboration](#) on an equal footing and creating exchange based on partnerships between larger institutions and groups of people possessing less symbolic power.

→ [Centre for Possible Studies](http://centreforpossiblestudies.wordpress.com) <http://centreforpossiblestudies.wordpress.com> [22.3.2012]

→ [Gentrification](#) see Glossary

→ [Soho effect](#) see Glossary

→ [Collaboration](#) see Text 4.4



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Hans Ulrich Glarner: When Girls Dance Paintings

I feel that cultural mediation is of the highest quality when it allows me to go forward: Towards something new and towards myself. Ideally, that should apply to everyone involved, to me as a member of the public, to me as the mediator, to me as the client. Only practices anchored in a cultural policy strategy can achieve this full effect. It is not only the people being targeted, who want to be pleased, not only the institutions, which seek higher visitor rates, not just the policies, which need to win the backing of the majority. One has to see cultural mediation which is anchored in a strategy of cultural policy as a reciprocal system which puts forth stimuli for improving state support for culture and the conservation of culture. Its purpose is to enable as many people as possible to engage with cultural issues, participate in cultural processes and enjoy access to works of art. This effect can be sustainable only when quality is consistently high. Success in cultural mediation is by no means inversely proportional to quality. Anyone making that suggestion is wilfully holding fast to an elite understanding of art aimed at drawing distinctions rather than encouraging cohesion.

At one event in the art gallery Aargauer Kunsthaus, a 9-year old participant expressed her experience non-verbally. It was towards the end of the event called the "Kunstpirsch" (art stalking); the children were asked to talk about one picture that they particularly liked. The schoolgirl, her name was Albana, told the mediator in broken German that though unable to talk about the picture, she could dance it. Standing in front of the picture, the other children forming a half circle around her, Albana expressed her impressions of it through movement. Her classmates rewarded the surprising performance with spontaneous applause.

A girl, one with no understanding of art in the traditional sense of that term, and who, moreover, was barely able to speak our language, embraced the message of the work of art and shared her response to it with other children. This episode perfectly illustrates the effect of cultural mediation. The art had the power to blast through the habitual conventions of observation and communication, the participant in the mediation programme was willing to take a risk and the arts mediator provided the environment that made this interaction possible. The group identity of the participants was reinforced and at the same time, their horizons were expanded as individuals. That is quality.

Hans Ulrich Glarner is *the Cultural Attaché of the Swiss canton of Aargau*.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Felicity Lunn: Arts Education as Intensified Engagement With Art

From the perspective of an art institution, education has a range of impacts on the organization-audience-educators triangle.

Art mediation intensifies engagement with art by uncovering hidden connections. This kind of engagement, which requires more time and commitment than an (anonymous) visit to an exhibition, brings various different perceptions, influenced by cultural background, age, gender and education to the foreground. Programmes that present the opportunity to react to an exhibition to a range of target groups who give feedback to the host organization about how its exhibitions are perceived is an example of such engagement. Cultural mediation allows organizations to perceive other attitudes, reactions and world views. This allows them to learn more about their audiences, but also about the effects brought about by the art they show and how they show it. This knowledge can make an organization think more carefully about the needs of its visitors and see them more as individuals and less as an anonymous mass.

Art mediation is the greatest form of marketing. Compared to conventional forms of communications and publicity, which fail to overcome the initial inhibitions of many people, art mediation encourages participants in a direct and concrete manner to continue visiting the organization and to bring other people with them. The concept of the mediator as host, implying that children and young people invite and can guide their relatives and friends, expands the circle of visitors. This demonstrates that the personal approach to art is more important than “understanding” it.

Considering exhibitions as spaces for genuine communication, art education has the function of a conductor who initiates and encourages the dialogue between an exhibition and the public. Far more than providing purely conventional knowledge or consolidating a traditional understanding of art, art mediation offers new ideas about ways to perceive art, to see it as part of one’s own life. When viewers are genuinely involved, treated as partners, stakeholders or collaborators, art education functions as an engagement with art which accommodates a wide variety of views and interpretations.



Active participation in art mediation fosters a wealth of abilities that are important in the lives of both children and adults in our time: seeing and reacting to visual images, analyzing and communicating content, presenting one's own opinion, listening and debating and respecting the views of others.

Felicity Lunn served as a curator at London's Whitechapel Art Gallery from 1990 to 1998, from 2005 to 2008, as the director of art association Kunstverein Freiburg (Freiburg im Breisgau) and, from 2009 to 2011 as Regional Curator of the UBS Art Collection. She has been the Director of the art centre Kunsthaus CentrePasquArt in Biel since January of 2012.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Irena Müller-Brozovic: Ask your Mediator about Risks and Side Effects

Cultural mediation in a multiple-month → *participative project* is not a one-dose miracle pill; it is a process which changes everyone involved.

Host organizations and policy-makers often call for cultural mediation as though it were a measure which had immediate (hopefully long-term) effects and expect to receive confirmation of its efficacy in the form of a list of people it has reached: number of “converts” per event, per Swiss franc. The more people involved, the better. This attitude equates cultural mediation with audience development.

The mediator’s focus is on class, not on mass. Qualities like this cannot be quantified. Nonetheless, mediators, artists, the directors of institutions and cultural policy-makers need good arguments to justify and fund cultural mediation. Because good cultural mediation comes at a price.

In traditional art formats, one tends to find a clear division between artist and audiences. Although performing artists do sense the reaction of their audiences, they can hardly be said to come into intense contact with those perceiving their works. In our long-term, participative Education Projects, by contrast, artists are thoroughly scrutinized as they act. They produce stimuli for creative action, take up the ideas of participants and undergo crises with them, and their exchanges with non-artists let them experience a new aspect in their artistic work, a social-political aspect. In participative projects, this open process is at least as important as the product. Those who are involved feel its effects almost physically and see the mediation work as challenging and meaningful. There is a risk entailed in the fact that an open process is one that can neither be planned nor predicted, and can, in fact, end in failure. Side effects can appear: a change in the artist or institution from the inside out may be detected. At the express request of the artists, the next generation of Education Projects

are being designed to ensure that collaboration between lay-people and professionals is even more intensive. Mediation plays a role in the planning for each season, and an idea for an education project can form the basis for one of the institution’s productions – a paradigm shift! This requires a commitment to mediation at the highest institutional level, and that a cultural mediation project be appreciated both by the public and by decision-makers.

→ *participative projects*
<http://www.educationprojekte.ch>
[25.1.2013]



The aim of the “Education Projects” is not to convey knowledge but rather to have lay people and professionals work together to carry out a collective artistic project. Active engagement with art fosters personal development and – particularly in the case of dance projects – a feeling of self worth. After an intensive rehearsal process, the participants move around in the cloakrooms, cafeteria, backstage spaces and on the stages of theatres and concert halls as a matter of course – a conquest of interior and exterior worlds.

Irena Müller-Brozovic studied piano and music education and music/concert pedagogy in Basel and Detmold. She directs the “Education Projekte Region Basel” for the Department of Culture of the City of Basel. She was awarded the “Junge-Ohren” [Young Ears] prize in 2007. Her clients include Sinfonieorchester Basel and Theater Basel and she teaches music education at the Bern University of the Arts.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Federal Office of Culture, Culture and Society Section: Why does the Swiss Confederation Support Cultural Mediation?

This text also serves as a Changing Perspectives text for section 6. Cultural Mediation:
Why (Not)?

There are many good reasons to fund cultural mediation from the public coffers. Arguments for doing so can be framed along economic, fiscal, pedagogic, didactic, artistic and social lines, depending on one's point of view.

For the Swiss Confederation, societal dimensions take centre stage. The legislature pointed the way forward by declaring in the Swiss Culture Promotion Act that one of the objectives of the Confederation's cultural promotion is to allow and facilitate access to culture (art. 3(d) KFG: Kulturförderungsgesetz). Projects with that objective receive preferential status for Confederation support (art. 8(a) KFG). The official message [Botschaft] accompanying the legislation directly links the promotion of access with cultural mediation (explanatory commentary on art. 8 KFG).

The emphasis on the aspects of participation and inclusion is explained by the level of importance that the Federal Council attaches to culture: "...culture is an essential factor of political and social life, an effective instrument of integration and social cohesion. Therefore, active cultural policy is not restricted to promoting artistic creation or safeguarding cultural heritage. It is also aimed at encouraging as far as possible participation of all groups of the population in cultural life. [...] The arts sharpen our perception and enlarge our consciousness. There is no better school than art to teach us to see, to enhance our awareness, our capacity to differentiate. Careful and critical listening, watching and thinking teaches people to be alert, to express themselves and to discern. Once a sensorial perception makes the transition to become emotional or intellectual realization, it takes on significance for a broader society. The intrinsic value of culture lies in its ability to allow people to understand themselves and their surroundings and to make themselves understood" (Message on the Promotion of Culture [Botschaft zur Förderung der Kultur] 2012 – 2015).

Participation of a broad and diverse audience has relevance for the legitimacy of cultural promotion: in past decades cultural offerings available in Switzerland (and in other countries as well) have expanded dramatically while the level of audience interest has not kept pace. Thus if this expansion



is to be sustainable, cultural promotion cannot be restricted to subsidizing providers of cultural offerings (expansion and consolidation of offerings). It must also encompass measures to develop future users of arts and culture.

The primary tools used by the Confederation to improve access to culture in the 2012 – 2015 period are language promotion, promotion of musical education, promotion of literacy (measures of the Federal Office of Culture) and the support of arts mediation projects (measures of Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council).

The Culture and Society Section addresses issues of cultural mediation and participation in culture, specifically in the areas of promotion of language skills, literacy/reading, musical education and lay and folk culture.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 5: Between Mediation, Art, Deconstruction and Transformation

"It's not a question of being against the institution: We are the institution. It's a question of what kind of institution we are, what kind of values we institutionalise, what forms of practice we reward, and what kinds of rewards we aspire to. Because the institution of art is internalised, embodied, and performed by individuals, these are the questions that institutional critique demands we ask, above all, of ourselves." (Fraser 2005)

Cultural mediation as → deconstruction (Sturm 2001) combined with participative and artistic approaches, along with the aspiration to use mediation to analyze the power structures in cultural institutions, and in some cases cause them to change, though comparatively rare, is not a new phenomenon. Among its proponents at the end of the 1990s was the group → Kunstcoop@ at the Germany's Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst Berlin (NGBK 2001) and the group "Stördienst" at Vienna's Museum of Modern Art. The collective → microsillons is a contemporary example in Switzerland, as are → trafo.K, in Austria the duo → Transductores in Spain. One characteristic these organizations share is the context-specific development of arts mediation in the intersection of pedagogical, political and artistic practices, in exchange and in friction with institutions and a wide variety of interest groups. Art movements which see their work as set in the same field of tensions are an important reference for their practices. For instance, the English → Artist Placement Group of the 1960s, which in its turn drew from the Russian avant-garde of the early 20th century, in which artists forged partnerships with factory and agricultural workers (Rollig 2002). By the 1990s at the latest, the participative paradigm of new genre public art had taken shape (Jacob 1995; Lacy 1994, Babias 1995 is an example of how the subject was discussed in the German-speaking region). In this international field of practice it is quite difficult to separate out art, pedagogic and social-political activities, as the boundaries among them are systematically traversed. The movement in art mediation described briefly here grew up in the 1990s, to no small extent in opposition to a museum and art pedagogy whose advocates based their arguments chiefly on developmental psychology and creativity theories. One aspect of that pedagogy which attracted heavy criticism was the idea that attempts only to create enthusiasm and touch emotions failed both the art and the participants because it levelled the potential for learning in their productive resistances. Another point of criticism aimed at the → mechanisms of exclusion associated with access aiming only at individual development.

→ deconstruction see Glossary and Text 5.3

→ Kunstcoop@ <http://www.kunstcoop.de> [18.9.2012]

→ microsillons <http://www.microsillons.org> [18.9.2012]

→ trafo.K <http://www.trafo-k.at> [18.9.2012]

→ Transductores <http://transductores.net> [26.9.2012]

→ Artist Placement Group <http://www2.tate.org.uk/artistplacementgroup/> [26.9.2012]

→ mechanisms of exclusion see Text 4.RL



Since the 1990s, the art world and German-language scholarship on art pedagogy itself have been sources of stimuli emphasizing the autonomy and art-specific characteristics of mediation and highlighting the potential of contemporary art production for institutional education. The approach of “aesthetic education of difference”, for example, associates cultural mediation with the artistic tradition of non-instrumental thinking and views art pedagogy as one possible form of creative practice. Here, arts mediation becomes a point of resistance to the tendency to see it as a service that can be capitalized – to the seamless transmission of specialized knowledge and the optimization of social behaviours of the people involved.

→ [ethnicization codes](#) see Glossary

A third field which is a source of stimuli for art mediation with a deconstructive function is critical museology and the New Art History. These approaches have been questioning the power structures at play in the canon of knowledge as represented by museums and the way that canon is disseminated and taught. These approaches see texts to be read and deconstructed in the order in which objects are presented, the layout of spaces and rules governing behaviour in museums, drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's analyses of the production of social exclusion, Michel Foucault's works on power, knowledge and discipline (Bennett 1995; Duncan 1996) and semiotics (Barthes 2003).¹ It attempts to analyze their economies, their gender codes, → [ethnicization codes](#) and the historical and social conditions in which they were formed, while bearing in mind that one can never have a fixed set of critical instruments, that every reading produces new texts. There was a conference held at the Tate Britain in 1992 titled “Gallery Education and The New Art History” (Vincentelli, Grigg 1992) which posed the question “How can gallery educators involve themselves in analysing or deconstructing their own gallery's practice?” In her talk, art historian Frances Borzello indicated that one special challenge and capacity associated with arts education lay in its inability to avoid the materiality of the works and the spaces of museum representation, which the New Art History has subjected to critical analysis while taking refuge in academic language. She said that in its interactions with audiences and subject material, arts education is forced to develop languages which democratize the discourse of New Art History, which also generates exclusion (Borzello 1992, p. 10). Thus Borzello stood up in front of an audience of museum education specialists and deconstructed their own scientific contexts, arguing implicitly against the traditionally devalued status (still detectable today) of cultural mediation work. She spoke of the increased complexity associated with the requirement to change linguistic registers, thus attacking the cliché that arts education inevitably leads to a simplification of content. This way of reading already taps into the aspiration set out in the New Art History (Borzello, Rees 1986) and New Museology (Vergo 1989; Hauenschild 1988) in the 1980s, that of producing counter-narratives through the active



inclusion of groups of largely excluded from museums so far (Giroux et al. 1994) and turning the museum into a place for interaction and debate.

In the 21st century, the intersection of the fields of cultural mediation, art, art studies and museology both in practice and in the discourse led to an → educational turn (→ Rogoff 2008; O'Neill, Wilson 2010) in the exhibition world – i.e. increasing interest in pedagogical formats and issues on the part of those producing exhibitions and artists. That interest was also encouraged by criticism of the market-oriented restructuring of European school systems, in particular in connection with the EU's adoption in 2000 of the → Lisbon Strategy. For that reason, projects and texts associated with the educational turn are often connected to a critique of the application of economic categories to knowledge and in particular to artistic education and training. They are also frequently associated with a search for alternative spaces and practices of education. Accordingly, greater attention was directed to approaches based on critical pedagogy, although people drew on a very broad spectrum of positions in this context, ranging from that of Paulo Freire (Freire 1973) to that of bell hooks (hooks 2003) to Jacques Rancière (Rancière 2007). At the practical level, the educational turn is articulated in, for instance, pedagogic formats for exhibition programmes which define the public as a collaborating element (see e. g. the project → Wide Open School of London's Hayward Gallery in the summer of 2012²), in the re-invention of historical forms such as Brecht and Weill's Singspiel (cf. e.g. the productions of the St. Petersburg collective → Chto delat? [What is to be done?]), in the linkages in the production of artistic and didactic materials (c.f. the download of available videos and comics from the collective → Pinky Show, some of whose users are teachers), in self-organized spaces for artist education (e.g. the → parallel school of art; the → Free/slow University of Warsaw) or in artistic projects exploring the conditions of learning (e. g. the work of → Hidden Curriculum of the artist Annette Krauss, in collaboration with students from schools in the Netherlands (Krauss, undated)).

There are many intersections between the contents, intentions and practices of → deconstructive or → transformative arts mediation, on the one side, and the artistic and curatorial inquiries associated with the educational turn on the other. However so far the work done in cultural mediation and the knowledge of its practitioners have seldom been acknowledged by artists or exhibition organizers (→ Sternfeld 2010; Mörsch 2011; schnittpunkt 2012). This ignorance reflects a traditional hierarchy between the fields of art and education. One must hope that collaboration will one day become possible in more places because there are fields of tension which need to be addressed collectively, and with them potentially productive opportunities to interlink the curatorial, artistic and educational production of knowledge. One such opportunity has to do with the → tension which exists between the production of exclusion and the paternalism

→ educational turn see Glossary

→ Rogoff 2008 <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/18> [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0501.pdf

→ EU Lisbon Strategy http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0503.pdf

→ Wide Open School <http://wideopenschool.com/> [14.5.2012]

→ Chto delat? <http://www.chtodelat.org> [14.5.2012]

→ Pinky Show <http://www.pinkyshow.org> [25.9.2012]

→ parallel school of art <http://www.parallel-school.com> [19.10.2012]

→ free/slow University of Warsaw <http://www.wuw-warsaw.pl> [7.12.2014]

→ Hidden Curriculum <http://www.post-editions.com/?page=hiddencurriculum> [25.9.2012]

→ deconstructive arts mediation see Text 5.3

→ transformative arts mediation see Text 5.5

→ Sternfeld 2010 <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/unglamorous-tasks-what-can-education-learn-from-its-political-traditions> [14.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0502.pdf

→ Tension see Text 2. RL



of targeted invitation and inclusion policies. The formation of an alliance to analyze the subject collectively and develop options for moving forward which draw on the full range of perspectives might be very productive in that regard. The same applies to another field of tension, that related to the wish for equality within partnerships. For instance, when a cultural institution enters into collaboration with a small educational centre, it does so from a position of power. The power imbalance not be due to superiority of material resources, on the contrary, it is primarily a matter of → cultural and social capital. This means that the creation of an equal footing between partners requires active effort on the part of the institution in cooperation with its partners. Practitioners from all of the relevant professional fields, curating, programme design, the production of participation-oriented art participation and education and arts mediation can recall experiences in which the status of persons actively contributing to project design was downgraded to that of “project materials”. Or in which a situation in which a balance has been struck between everyone’s interests deteriorates into one in which the exploitation of workers was justified by pointing to symbolic compensation. Examining issues from multiple perspectives and developing options collectively could contribute to encouraging self-reflective practices and taking more intentional and deliberate decisions.

A third field of tension is associated with thinking about acting within power structures. This relates to the question about the aesthetic of projects at the intersection of art and education. While cultural institutions cultivate a highly receptive sensorium with respect to what is “good form” or, for some institutions, “cool”, such standards may not always be in harmony with the ways participants and cooperation partners wish to represent themselves. There are a variety of requirements, quality standards and interests in respect of modes of presentation at work here. On the part of the institution, the response to this tension has often been one of either assimilation or exclusion: a project must adapt itself to the design parameters of the recognized authorities in the relevant artistic field, if not, it will not gain visibility or might not even take place. In contrast, self-reflective cultural mediation attempts to take the aesthetic articulations of all participants seriously. However, this should not take place at the expense of the creation, in an informed and elaborated form, of a visibility, which could, in many cases, be beneficial for the project and those involved in it. Again, this balancing act and the negotiation processes associated with it would involve an exchange among cultural mediation, curatorial and artistic practices which might lead to interesting results. Below, we describe an example of cultural mediation in the framework of a partnership between a grassroots group and a large exhibiting institution in order to suggest some approaches for dealing with the fields of tensions at issue.

The research and development project “Kunstvermittlung in Transformation” was carried out in Switzerland in 2009 and 2010 (Settele et al.

→ cultural and social capital
see Glossary entry on capital,
types of



2012). Four art universities and six museums took part in the project, the aim of which was to research ways in which museum mediation can be improved. The Institute for Art Education (IAE) of Zurich University of the Arts worked with Museum für Gestaltung Zürich [Zurich Museum of Design] in the project to develop multiple pilot projects. One of these was a co-operative partnership between Nora Landkammer, researcher at the IAE, and the association “Bildung für Alle” [Education for All] and its project, the → [Autonome Schule](#).³ The Autonome Schule [Autonomous School] provides German language instruction and other activities for Zurich residents who are barred from formal education systems. Nora Landkammer contacted the organization with the plan of developing a cultural mediation project for the → [Global Design](#) exhibition at the Museum für Gestaltung, which explored the impacts of globalization on design.

The exhibition was intended as an opportunity for taking a close look at globalization and visibility, which everyone involved – including the museum – would learn from. Alone the fact that a research institution attached to a large university of the arts made contact with a small grassroots organization of immigrants and non-immigrants placed this project in the paradoxical situation mentioned above, of wanting to create an equal playing field while starting from a position of power. In this particular case, it was possible to influence (though not eliminate) the paradox, thanks to the fact that both the group and the arts mediator were highly conscious of the fact that they were acting in a situation where power was distributed unequally. Right from the start, the group actively sought to clarify how the various roles were to be distributed within the project and who would benefit from the partnership in what way. The group was unwilling to allow itself to be instrumentalized for research purposes or as a means for producing → [symbolic added-value](#) for the museum. In all phases of the partnership, the people involved took great care to ensure that everyone’s motivations were openly articulated, regularly scrutinized and respected, to ensure the preservation of a “minimal equilibrium”, without pretending that the inequality in resource distribution did not exist. Thus, for instance, the partners decided collectively that the arts mediator and one member of the group would lead the project as a team. In this context it was important that the mediator did not define in advance specific processes or subject-matters for the project. Instead, these were actually developed collectively within the group. Accordingly, the project was given the very open name “Atelier” [studio] – the term for a workshop in which the unexpected and unplanned could occur in many different forms of activities. The group was made up of 15 interested persons who were attending German classes at the Autonome Schule. Their first step was to visit the exhibition together, multiple times. After this they met with the chief curator. The first objection was voiced during the group’s visits to the exhibition: the “we” form used in the

→ [Autonome Schule](#) <http://www.schuel.ch> [25.9.2012] see Text 4.4

→ [Global Design](#) <http://www.museum-gestaltung.ch/de/ausstellungen/rueckblick/2010/global-design> [26.9.2012]

→ [symbolic added-value](#) see Glossary



exhibition texts and the catalogue – which stressed that the use of credit cards as a form of payment is normal today – was aimed only at relatively affluent members of society and above all, those with legal residency status. Similarly, the objects shown in the exhibition struck the group right away as being beyond their reach, either financially or because of their immigration status. The invitation to a group to attend an exhibition and work with subject-matter neither of which were created for them or with them in mind, generated the → *field of tension* between paternalism and the institution's desire to be more open. In response to this tension, the group decided to refrain from defining possible interests in advance, as a target group approach might have dictated. Instead, a space for discussion was opened up to allow the group to ascertain what their positions and interests vis-à-vis the museum and the exhibition might be.

As a result, the project should be seen less as a form of → *participation* than as → *collaboration* with the institution – one appropriately open-ended with respect to results. Following the exhibition visits, the group worked with visual media in various workshops and developed ways to approach urban space through the camera from the angle of globalization and taking up the themes along which the exhibition was organized: mobility, communication, economy and control. In the course of these exploratory efforts, the group decided to work on the themes from the perspective of people who are living in Zurich illegally and hope to remain there. During the activities in urban spaces it was occasionally necessary for the institution to actively work on the creation of an equal playing field, or to redistribute resources. The cameras for the participants were lent to Atelier by the IAE. A letter accompanied the devices, so that none of the participants who did not have residency permits would be suspected of stealing the cameras if stopped by the police. After a few meetings, the team leading the project suggested that the group collectively produce a publication that would help people in similar situations to get by: a “Bleibeführer” [Guide to Staying], the title an ironic twist on the ubiquitous “Reiseführer” [travel guides] for tourists. The collective creation of that publication filled the next few months. In this phase, the group had the opportunity to work in the third field of tension: the one resulting from differences in aesthetics. The question of the Bleibeführer's aesthetic, its form and its appearance, was not an easy one to resolve. The members of the group came from different socio-economic backgrounds and different geo-political regions and had varying ways of approaching design. The arts mediator intervened to a greater degree at this point than she had in the rest of the process because she felt responsible in more than one way for the project's product: to the museum, to the research institute and, to no small extent, to her own design standards and the cultural mediation project itself. She applied her own design expertise to the process. Though all of the decisions concerning the selection of texts and images were

→ *field of tension* see Text 2. RL

→ *participation* see Text 4.3

→ *collaboration* see Text 4.4



discussed and made by the group as a whole, in the end the → *Bleibeführer* reflected homogenous, modern standards – and conventions – in its graphic design. This rendered it acceptable to the museum as a product and won it a place next to the other items for sale in the museum shop. At the same time, it was under great demand in Zurich by organizations working on immigration issues. Thus the “professional look” of the publication had multiple tactical benefits and resulted in the release of a second print run for it (Landkammer, Polania 2012).

In this project, the → *cultural mediation's functions* with respect to the museum were complex. They included a reproductive dimension, since new museum-goers were created, at least temporarily. This aspect received less emphasis than did the project's deconstructive function. The latter function was associated with the critical scrutiny of the implicit audience targeting which the museum, and the exhibition visited, “Global Design”, effected – scrutiny which took place not only at the level of discourse but also through the presence of persons who are barred access to most societal resources due to → *routine and structural racism*. Another factor highlighting the deconstructive function is the fact that the creation of *Bleibeführer* constituted the creation of a new contribution which took its place in an array of other pre-existing contributions put forth as interpretations of the theme “Global Design”, and in doing so shifted the meaning of that term. The project also encompassed a transformative dimension: in its formation of a group whose activities extended beyond the formats used in museum mediation in the past, in the opening of cultural mediation as a space for social-political action and through the demand for the “*Bleibeführer*” from another field of social activity. The museum transformed itself within this framework into an “institution critique”, of the kind called for in the quotation which introduces this text from Andrea Fraser, who believes that thirty years of institutional critique should have some effect. In the medium term, the project “Kunstvermittlung in Transformation”, within which the “Atelier” project was set, contributed to a visible change at the museum: with the 2012 creation of the post of “curator of mediation”. That is – and this is part of our thesis – also a symptom of the educational turn described above: the elevation of the status of mediation in many cultural institutions. This elevated status is key to further advances in this field of work. If the standards articulated in the discourse surrounding the educational turn are to be met, it is important that pedagogical expertise consistently be brought into play in cultural mediation projects, to encourage pedagogical reflexive practice. This is not an expertise which the artists involved in cultural mediation or programme designers necessarily have. It remains to be seen whether the educational turn will turn out to be a powerful one, in the sense of a paradigm shift, and result in cultural institutions in which artistic, curatorial and pedagogic knowledge operate in combination and on a basis of equality.

→ *Bleibeführer* <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B8GZVOICv9OPsk5sSkJ1MVZ1R2c/edit?pli=1> [22.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0504.pdf

→ *Functions of cultural mediation* see texts für Eilige in 5. What does cultural mediation do?

→ *routine and structural racism* see Glossary



- 1 “[...] [Culler citing Derrida’s Positions] ‘In a traditional philosophical opposition we have not a peaceful coexistence of facing terms but a violent hierarchy. One of the terms dominates the other ... occupies the commanding position...’. [...] The practitioner of deconstruction works within the terms of the system but in order to breach it” (Culler 1982, p.95).
- 2 The text announcing the project on Southbank Centre’s website reads “This summer, [...], the Hayward Gallery transforms into Wide Open School. An experiment in public learning, Wide Open School offers a programme devised and fuelled by the imaginations of more than 80 artists from over 40 different countries. Intended as a meeting place for people who love learning but don’t necessarily like being taught, Wide Open School presents the opportunity for people of all ages and walks of life to explore different ways of learning about a wide variety of subjects, alongside leading artists”.
- 3 I wish to thank my colleague Nora Landkammer here for making her written notes available to me; they provided the basis for my brief description, which permitted only a encapsulated version of the project’s complexity.

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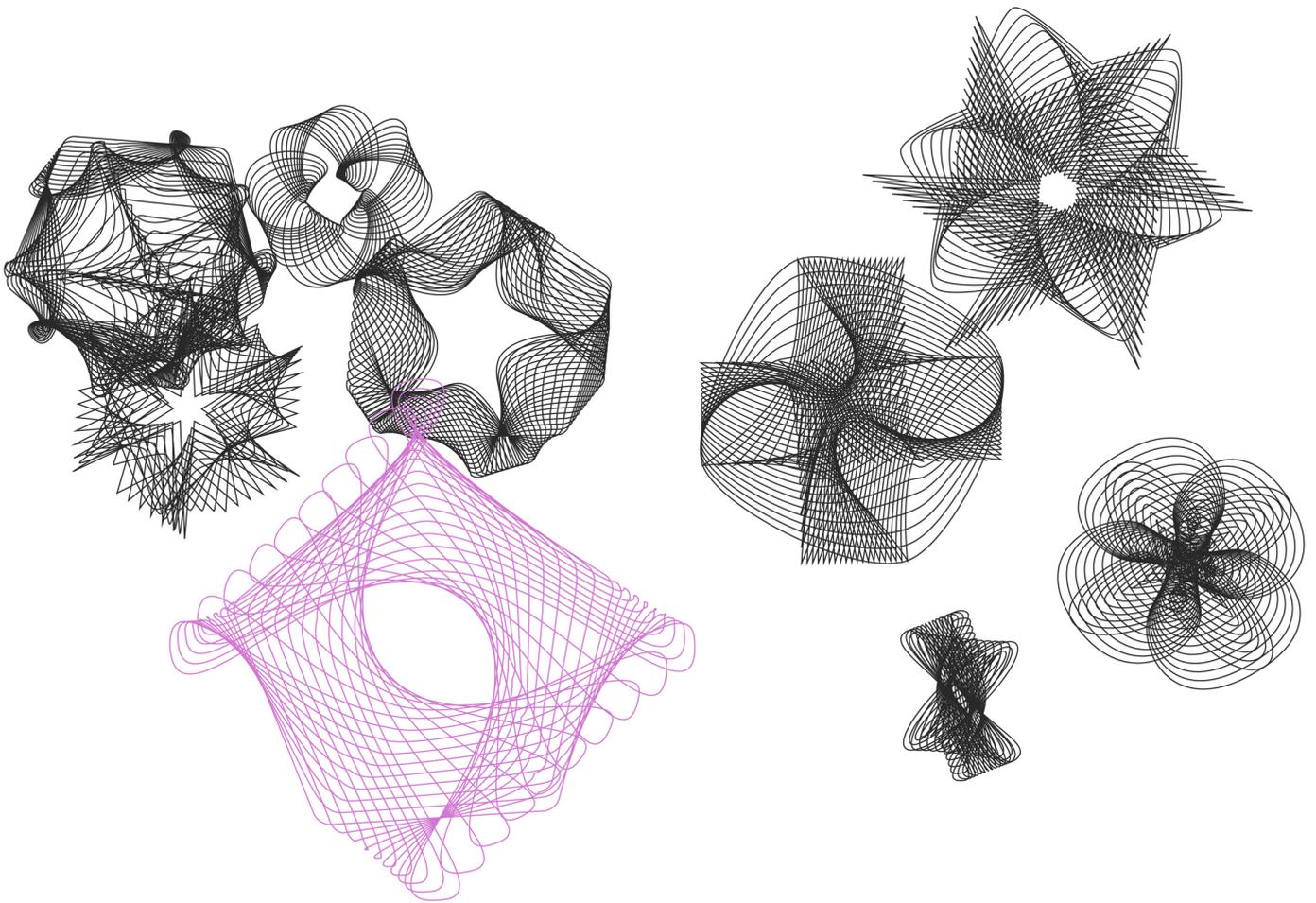
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Time for Cultural Mediation

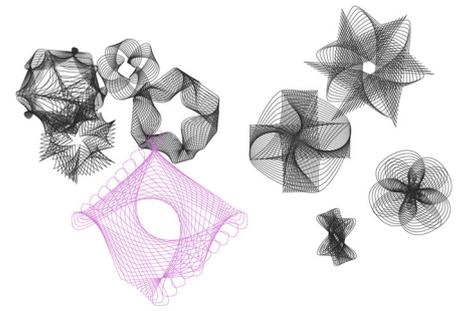
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?



- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

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6.0 Intro

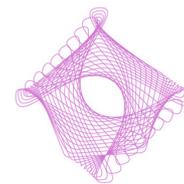
Increasingly, cultural and education policymakers and funding bodies are turning their attention to all aspects of cultural mediation. One instigator of this trend was the cultural policy reform instituted by the English Labour Party in 1998. The new policy (re)discovered the social and economic significance of connections between art and education and resulted in an increase of support for such linkages and calls for cultural institutions to do likewise. In the intervening years, cultural mediation has also taken on a greater role in funding decisions in continental Europe, and thus in Switzerland. This shift has had repercussions for cultural mediation as a practice: the field has grown increasingly professionalized overall and differentiation within it – on the basis of methods, objectives and rationales – is increasing. Once the objective was to launch mediation activities and mobilize the requisite funds and enthusiasm for them: this is no longer whole story. Advocates for cultural mediation have put forth a variety of different rationales for the existence of cultural mediation, and it has now become imperative to take a stance and justify one's own approach. To an increasing degree, this necessity applies equally to practitioners of cultural mediation and to decision-makers in the areas of funding policy and the leadership of institutions.

This chapter is an initial survey intended to give readers a sense of the current situation. It sketches out the strategies of legitimization frequently encountered. We stress the word strategies here, because no legitimization can ever be neutral or objective. Each argument advocating cultural mediation is pursuing other aims as well – for instance, that of asserting certain ideas about the social function of art, about the intentions of cultural mediation or about what makes a functioning society and what the individual's contribution to it might be. To shed light on areas of contention among the different rationales, points of criticism that can be levelled against each strategy of legitimization are set out at the end of each subsection.

Following the texts on the individual strategies of legitimization is one devoted to the objections to cultural mediation. In the context of the existing hierarchies, there is indeed opposition to the policy focus on cultural mediation and the redistribution of resources it entails.

The "For Reading at Leisure" text in this chapter delves into the consequences that emerge for cultural mediation when one takes these objections and criticisms seriously.

- 7 Who "does" Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?



6.1 Rationale: Cultural mediation has an influence on the economy

The European Commission declared 2009 the → [European Year of Creativity and Innovation](http://create2009.europa.eu/ueber_das_europaeische_jahr.html) and allocated funds to EU member countries to pay for related projects. The key message on the relevant EU website “Creativity and innovation contribute to economic prosperity as well as to social and individual well-being”. The economist Richard Florida, whose book “The Rise of the Creative Class” was published in 2002, served as one of the year’s ambassadors. Florida was highly influential in the establishment of the figure of the “creative, unconventional thinker” as an economic figure affecting the attractiveness of a location and thus as highly relevant for international competition in the minds of politicians and urban planners (Florida 2002). In many places, it was common for the funding associated with the European Year of Creativity and Innovation to be invested in cultural mediation projects. In Austria, for example, the government’s major project partner in this regard was → [Kulturkontakt Austria](http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at), an organization highly influential in the field of cultural mediation. Kulturkontakt Austria played an active role in the initiative, with its school student competition “Projekt Kreativität Europa”.

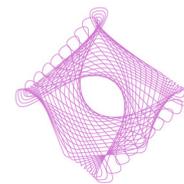
Another indication of the importance of the economic legitimization for cultural mediation is the key lobbying paper for this area, the → [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30335&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). Adopted and released in 2010 at the second World Conference on Arts Education in Seoul, South Korea, it declares: “21st century societies are increasingly demanding workforces that are creative, flexible, adaptable and innovative and education systems need to evolve with these shifting conditions. Arts Education equips learners with these skills, enabling them to express themselves, critically evaluate the world around them, and actively engage in the various aspects of human existence. Arts Education is also a means of enabling nations to develop the human resources necessary to tap their valuable cultural capital. Drawing on these resources and capital is essential if countries wish to develop strong and sustainable cultural (creative) industries and enterprises. Such industries have the potential to play a key role in enhancing socio-economic development in many less-developed countries.”

This rationale for cultural mediation concentrates chiefly on economic benefits. In addition to promoting personality components which are presented as favouring economic development, the Roadmap rationale emphasizes the significance of cultural mediation for creative industries. The development of artistic or creative skills in the largest possible part of the population is seen as an investment in the sustainability of cultural industries and the economy as a whole – an echo of great World Fairs era, which saw the introduction of general drawing instruction to school curricula. Other economic arguments for supporting cultural mediation

→ [European Year of Creativity and Innovation](http://create2009.europa.eu/ueber_das_europaeische_jahr.html) http://create2009.europa.eu/ueber_das_europaeische_jahr.html [30.4.2012]

→ [Kulturkontakt Austria](http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at) <http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at> [11.4.2012]

→ [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30335&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30335&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [30.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE060501.pdf

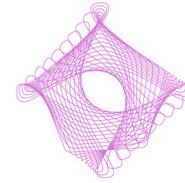


include the upgrading of urban districts through the presence of artists, the contribution of cultural and creative industries to the gross national product and the → change of attitudes in the workforce toward greater flexibility and inventiveness. Finally, cultural mediation contributes to the formation of both producers as well as well-informed and motivated consumers.

→ change of attitudes in the workforce see Text 3.5

→ precarity see Glossary

Critics of this strategy of legitimization point to the fact that policy makers' newly awakened interest in cultural mediation appears to be based less on a desire to promote self-determination or independent judgement with respect to the arts than to train people to be willing to perform and able to solve problems creatively and thereby prevent them from becoming an economic or social burden on the state. However, engagement with the arts can in fact lead to precisely the opposite effects. It can cause people to refuse to perform, to reject the principle that material and social opportunities should be based solely on individual performance and the principle of competition and motivate them to consider and contribute to alternative ways of shaping one's life. The arts themselves can expose and criticize the market economy and its effects. Moreover, artistic and research fields themselves have raised the criticism that employment conditions, what is called the → precarity of most artists and cultural mediators remain, despite all the talk about the great importance of the arts for the economy (Raunig, Wuggenig 2007).



6.2 Legitimization: Cultural mediation promotes cognitive performance and other forms of intelligence

Engagement with the arts initiated by cultural mediation is held to be ideally suited to promote cognitive performance as well as emotional, social, visual-spatial or physical-kinaesthetic intelligence. Proponents of this argument point out that today's information society is, and future societies especially will be more dynamic and more heterogeneous than their predecessors. For this reason, they say, the contents and forms of learning are undergoing rapid change. Concepts such as lifelong learning and informal learning are essential for designing contemporary education. From this viewpoint, cultural mediation is particularly well-suited to prepare people to face the challenges of → *cognitive capitalism*. In 1993, American researchers conducted a study intended to prove that listening to music composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart resulted in superior cognitive performance, particularly in the area of spatial and mathematical reasoning – dubbed the “Mozart effect” (Rauscher et al. 1993). A 1992–1997 study conducted at Berlin primary schools claimed to have documented the beneficial effect of music classes on the social behaviour and concentration skills of children (Bastian 2002). Notwithstanding the fact that comparative studies failed to confirm the results of both of the original studies, and methodological objections were raised about both (→ *Jansen-Osmann 2006*), the two studies have continued to provide the central arguments for promoting cultural mediation since their release.

Since 2005, Germany's national association for cultural mediation for youth, Bundesverband für Kulturelle Jugendbildung, has been developing a → *certificate of cultural competence*, which is intended to serve as an instrument allowing the documentation of knowledge and abilities acquired in non-school cultural mediation. The categories it uses, which encompass social, cognitive, emotional/psychological and creative aspects, outnumber even the → *50 social impacts of participation in the arts*, published by François Matarasso in 1997, which at that time were highly influential in steering English funding for culture towards cultural mediation (Matarasso 1997). The research team led by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill at the University of Leicester developed a lucid set of arguments in favour of beneficial learning effects from cultural mediation in their → *Generic Learning Outcomes*. Hooper-Greenhill's team believes that learning increases can be documented in the following areas: knowledge and understanding/skills/attitudes and values/enjoyment, inspiration and creativity/activity, behaviour and progression. Developed as an instrument for use in the self-evaluations of cultural institutions, especially museums and libraries, the Generic Learning Outcomes were also the objects of criticism by other scholars who pointed

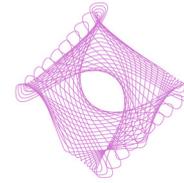
→ *cognitive capitalism* see Glossary

→ *Jansen-Osmann 2006* http://www.psych.uni-duesseldorf.de/abteilungen/aap/Dokumente/mtk_petra.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE060202.pdf

→ *Certificate of cultural competence* <http://www.kompetenznachweiskultur.de> [13.4.2012]

→ *50 social impacts of participation in the arts* http://mediation-danse.ch/fileadmin/dokumente/Vermittlung_ressources/Matarasso_Use_or_Ornament.pdf [13.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE060201.pdf

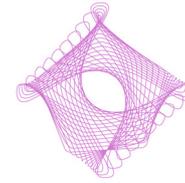
→ *Generic Learning Outcomes* <http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/toolstemplates/genericlearning> [13.4.2012]



out that because the learning effects to be documented were defined in such “generic”, such very general, terms, the instrument, although quite easy to use, failed to yield particularly meaningful results. Nevertheless, Generic Learning Outcomes are now being used in cultural institutions throughout Europe.

The validity of the evidence put forth by proponents of these approaches has been challenged again and again by scholars who have suggested that their outcomes are the results of self-fulfilling prophecies rather than evidence of positive effects from engagement with the arts (→ [Mirza 2006](#)). Another point is that in the context of such legitimization strategies one very seldom hears anyone ask who defines what is or is not a “beneficial effect”, from what perspective. Another potentially problematic aspect is that the neurological approaches, at least, have tended to apply only conservative concepts linked with the canon of high culture in their definition of art – pregnant women should play Mozart for their foetuses, not Lady Gaga. In the context of these critiques, researchers have suggested that it would be wise to concentrate less on the “transfer effects” of cultural mediation and instead recognize the acquisition of art-specific knowledge and skills as a value in its own right (Hetland et al. 2007).

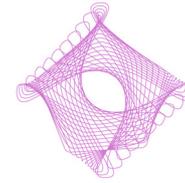
→ [Mirza 2006](#) <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/culture%20vultures%20-%20jan%2006.pdf> [21.2.2013]



6.3 Legitimization: Cultural mediation as a matter of fiscal responsibility

The fiscal responsibility argument insists that cultural mediation be offered in order to expand the audiences for cultural products. The legitimacy of elite art and culture is at the heart of this argument. It assumes that only the broadest, most heterogeneous audiences can justify the use of tax revenues to finance art institutions, lest all taxpayers be burdened in order to support the interests of just a few. This argument goes back to the 1960s. The familiar slogan “culture for everyone”, which is often associated with this strategy of legitimization, comes from an eponymous book published in 1979 by Hilmar Hoffman, then head of Frankfurt’s department of cultural affairs. However, although the need for accessibility of high culture was an important component in Hoffman’s thinking, he was calling for more than that: he wanted to expand the spectrum of cultural achievements to include the practices and products of culture from rural and working class milieus, such as pigeon-breeding for example. Hoffman proposed that in order to increase cultural participation, such achievements should be supported and disseminated, just as the programmes of cultural institutions visited more by higher-earning groups with more formal education were. His idea was to break down, or at least call into question the boundary between “high” and “popular” (Hoffmann 1979).

One objection raised by critics of the audience expansion legitimization is that the insistence on quantitatively demonstrable equity of distribution is itself unjustified since even those people who do not actively take in cultural offerings profit from the arts as an elementary and indispensable part of society. No one, for instance, questions the legitimacy of public funding for highly sophisticated medical technologies by arguing that they will benefit only a few. In this sense, the arts enjoy a special status, as do science and technology. The argument that one should not distinguish between high and popular culture and should promote the consumption of culture according to individual interests and tastes is countered by the claim that that approach would mean that the public would no longer be challenged by ambitious forms and contents and offerings would change to accommodate the tastes imputed to the majority in a sort of anticipatory conformance.



6.4 Legitimization: Cultural mediation as an instrument for inclusion

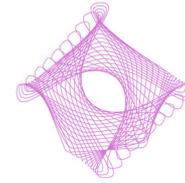
Like those calling for art which is financed with tax revenues to be made available to all population strata, the proponents of the inclusion concept are also critical of the exclusion of large swathes of society from institutions of high culture. These excluded groups should, in their view, be introduced to the existing offerings in culture and the arts through cultural mediation and thereby motivated to take part in the culture. This argument is driven less by the aspiration for tax equity than by the ethical principle of equal treatment and related ideas about democratization. The notion of inclusion relates specifically to social groups of people who, due to social inequalities, have little access to education and affluence or who differ in their needs, activities and habits from the majority society in some other way, for instance due to a disability. In this view, cultural mediation is seen as a way of compensating for the inequitable distribution of resources by facilitating cultural participation. See for example, the statement of the German project, → [Tanz in Schulen](#) [Dance in Schools], suggesting that the disadvantages suffered by children and young adults as a result of social inequality which can be combated by active engagement with dance: "Dance is nonverbal and helpful for the integration of children with a variety of backgrounds [...] Dance fosters the formation of the personality and supports the development of identity through the experience of the 'physical-me'. Dance as an artistic form of communication and expression promotes: diversity of motion, quality of motion, body awareness, powers of visualization, physical imagination, design skills and independent creative action, personality formation, social skills, interdisciplinary work."

Problematic aspects of the inclusion rationale include its assumption that culture and institutions are immutable constants into which those formerly excluded ought now be included. The social context which gives rise to discrimination in the first place is seldom a factor considered or included in the transformation work. Moreover, the definition of who should be included is effected unilaterally, as is the definition of what they should be included in. This view can be seen as → *paternalistic*, i.e. as well-meant condescension. There is a risk that people will be defined according to their imputed deficits and then "made equal" (→ [Dannenbeck, Dorrance 2009](#)).

→ [Tanz in Schulen](http://www.bv-tanzschulen.info/fileadmin/user_upload/content-service/pro_Tanz_Argumente.pdf) http://www.bv-tanzschulen.info/fileadmin/user_upload/content-service/pro_Tanz_Argumente.pdf [13.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE060401.pdf

→ *paternalistic* see Glossary

→ [Dannenbeck, Dorrance 2009](http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/inkl-02-09-dannenbeck-inklusion.html) <http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/inkl-02-09-dannenbeck-inklusion.html> [30.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE0604.pdf



6.5 Legitimization: The arts as universal educational good

“Arts Education programmes can help people to discover the variety of cultural expressions offered by the cultural industries and institutions, and to critically respond to them”, reads the → [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#), a lobbying paper for cultural mediation which is attracting attention in many parts of the world and bringing forth concrete effects on educational and cultural policies internationally. The same document points out that participating in the cultural life of the community and enjoying the arts are defined as universal human rights in the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights and thus must be secured for everyone. This legitimization strategy is based on an understanding of the arts as a universally valuable educational good. In this view, engaging with the arts is always beneficial for everyone, regardless of an individual’s interests, convictions, circumstances or objectives. Those who have not recognized this on their own should be → [brought to the arts](#) through cultural mediation. Since many people fall into this category – or so goes the argument – appropriate resources should be channelled to cultural mediation.

Historically, the idea that (high) culture is an educational good which is fundamentally beneficial for all people and is aimed at all people has its roots in the Enlightenment. One finds it articulated as early as in the mid 18th century, in the Friedrich Schiller’s texts on aesthetic education (→ [Schiller 1759](#)). At the start of the 20th century, this idea established itself (to no small extent through the efforts of reform pedagogy for the recognition of → [“musisch” education](#)) as a fixed component of the bourgeois concept of “Bildung”. It remains an influential legitimization for cultural mediation, and for the promotion of culture in general, which is still present and effective throughout Europe (and beyond, as the global presence of the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education cited above illustrates).

Examining the hypothesis that the arts per se are good for “humanity”, one cannot avoid objecting that it assumes the existence of a link, at least an implicit one, between cultural mediation and bourgeois and western values and is sometimes explicitly connected with nationalistic ideas. We find an illustrative example in a 2008 → [speech by German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel](#), in which she said:

“Art and culture give us a sense of where we come from, where we feel at home and how our identity is composed. They document to a great

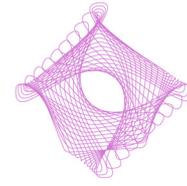
→ [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#) http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul_Agenda_EN.pdf [22.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE060501.pdf

→ [brought to the arts](#) see Text 5.2

→ [Schiller 1759](#) full text version online <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3355/1> [13.4.2012]

→ [“musisch” education](#) see Glossary

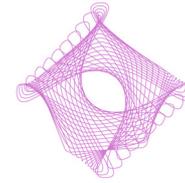
→ [Angela Merkel's speech](#) <http://perso.ens-lyon.fr/adrien.barbaresi/corpora/BR/t/1368.html> [13.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE0605.pdf



degree that which makes us belong together and they promote cohesion within a society. This means that culture is the unifying bond of our Germany. Thus it is no coincidence that we speak of the 'Kulturnation' [cultural nation] of Germany."

Another point of criticism worthy of consideration points out that it is fundamentally condescending to decree that → engagement with the arts is good and important for everyone as a matter of principle, whether it is the state, politicians, experts of an educational elite or the society as a whole which does so.

→ engagement with the arts see Text 6.8

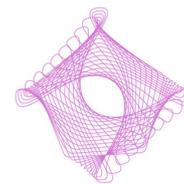


6.6 Legitimization: Cultural mediation as means to actively contribute to shaping the arts and their institutions

This strategy of legitimization focuses on the potential for cultural mediation and its participants to actively influence the design of programmes, and the contents and practices of cultural institutions. Since it encourages and facilitates change, this strategy goes beyond the identification of a necessity for inclusion and participation: it aims at → *institutional change*. For instance, the dramaturge, director and author Rustom Bharucha suggests that cultural institutions inherited their self-image from the bourgeoisie / civil society. The rapid changes in the world outside the institutions, he says, have given rise to new notions about the public and politics and to new forms and practices of cultural representation that challenge and transcend those inherited bourgeois concepts. Cultural institutions therefore find themselves threatened with a decrease in their importance. Bharucha believes that it would therefore be prudent for institutions to do more to open themselves to partnerships with other social domains, individuals and organizations. The institutions should accept influence and challenges from other perspectives. This is not solely a question of “access... [to the institution, CM], but the right to interrogate its assumed privileges and reading of history. It is my plea that instead of shutting ourselves up in the box – whether it is the ‘black box’ of theatre, or the ultra-white, air-conditioned, dust-free box of the museum – that we should open ourselves to those seemingly disruptive energies ‘beyond the box’ that can enable us to forge new links between the public and the private, the civil and the political” (Bharucha, 2000). Thus this line of argument would have cultural mediation actively contribute to the development of the institutions as well as fulfil the democratic aspirations of participation in shaping the culture.

→ *institutional change* see Text 2.4

No relevant criticisms of this argumentation have yet been formulated, other than the cautions (in Text 6.3) regarding populist tendencies. This may be because, as a relatively new phenomenon, it has rarely had an impact on actual practices.



6.7 Legitimization: Cultural mediation to compensate for social injustice

Almost every statement advocating the funding of cultural mediation credits it with great potential to combat, or at least mitigate social problems. This provides the rationale for using cultural mediation projects for therapeutic purposes in the health sector, in community, youth and social work and in connection with urban planning processes. In this context, advocates cite effects on participating individuals, including enhanced self-confidence, greater willingness to perform or take risks, or positive changes in social behaviour. The effects for the relevant social context and society as a whole are also highlighted – for example, pointing out that cultural mediation projects enhance solidarity, promote a desire to become involved in shaping the environment, encourage the formation of local networks or contribute to conflict resolution (Matarasso 1997).

One case widely discussed in recent years is the → *Rhythm Is It!* project. In that project, the Berlin Philharmonic, along with choreographer Royston Maldoom, staged “Le Sacre du Printemps” as a ballet with Berlin secondary school students. The documentary film about the project emphasizes the effects the project had on the students’ behaviour. The project inspired many other dance projects in schools in the German-speaking world. A similar rationale has been presented for the project → *Superar*, and since 2012 *Superar Suisse* as well, which are modelled on the growing network of youth orchestras in Venezuela, Fundación del Estado para el Sistema de Orquesta Juvenil e Infantil de Venezuela [FESNOJIV: State Foundation for the National Network of Youth and Children’s Orchestras of Venezuela], often shortened to → *El Sistema*. That network provides instruction in classical music to children from poor districts in Venezuela, including orchestral performance. There has also been a → *film* made about *El Sistema*, which attempted to depict the life-changing impacts on the participating children and thus document them.

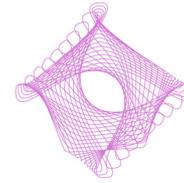
The success of these films points to comparatively large-scale public interest in cultural mediation projects which base their legitimacy on social grounds. This is not coincidental, because this particular legitimization strategy met with fertile soil in the collective memory. It has a long history, as does the argument that art is an important part of humanity’s educational heritage: in the early 20th century institutions known as “philanthropic galleries” began to open in industrial cities in England – founded by members of the clergy, social workers or even factory workers themselves. Their purpose was to use art to keep destitute city-dwellers from turning to alcohol consumption, and teach them to appreciate bourgeois protestant values.

→ *Rhythm Is It!* http://www.rhythmisit.com/en/php/index_flash.php [15.4.2012]

→ *Superar* <http://superar.eu> [15.4.2012]

→ *El Sistema* <http://fundamusical.org.ve/>[15.4.2012]

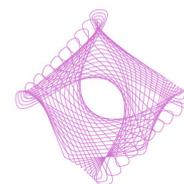
→ *Film El Sistema* <http://www.el-sistema-film.com> [15.4.2012]



Even back then, this legitimization strategy was criticized for the fact that “cultural participation” frequently served as a substitute for a genuine voice in political decision-making and that cultural projects served more calming or prettifying purposes than to combat real problems. Critics saw them as a substitute for expensive or controversial policy interventions, such as legislative reform or the redistribution of resources.

Another critique relates to the instrumentalization of art. In this view, the real potential of art lies in its very engagement with that which is provoking, the uncomfortable, the imponderable, that which rejects utility. Max Fuchs, then Chairman of the German Cultural Council, pointed out in a 2004 paper that “it is this very respite from efficiency and pragmatic effectiveness which makes art, as a form of action, so effective” (→ [Fuchs 2004](#)). From this viewpoint, one of cultural mediation’s duties is to promote this engagement rather than use to the arts as a means to combat society’s ills.

→ [Fuchs 2004](http://www.kulturrat.de/dokumente/texte/DieFormungdesMenschen.pdf) <http://www.kulturrat.de/dokumente/texte/DieFormungdesMenschen.pdf> [24.8.2010]; see Resource Pool MFE060701.pdf

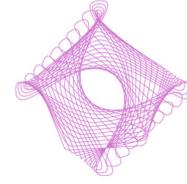


6.8 Objections to cultural mediation and its promotion

The points of criticism against the legitimizations of cultural mediation depicted in the preceding sections are essentially aimed at improving the practices of cultural mediation rather than at doing away with it entirely. However, arguments against cultural mediation as such and its promotion per se have been raised. Part of these arguments relate to various levels of the relationship between cultural mediation and production. Opponents of the former point out that the policymaker's increased emphasis on funding cultural mediation is not automatically coupled with an increase of available funds and thus often entails a redistribution of existing resources. Thus, prioritizing cultural mediation can result in cuts in funding which previously supported the production of culture. Many are aware of the UK policy which makes public funding contingent on the existence of extensive cultural mediation programmes. Its critics see this as an attack on artistic freedom and the paternalistic treatment of institutions. There are also those who hold the view that cultural mediation always entails a dilution, simplification or infantilization of cultural work. In their eyes, the pedagogic dimension that is key to cultural mediation cannot be combined with the arts, which they consider to be incompatible with any form of didactic preparation, explanation or pedagogic analysis.

The charge of popularism is wielded by people and organizations concerned that artistic quality and the multiplicity of meaning inherent to art might suffer in connection with what they see as a "boom of cultural mediation" – primarily in cases where a focus on cultural mediation is coupled with a desire to develop larger, more broadly-based audiences. In this context, some ask whether intensifying the cultural mediation on a production might actually harm its content – in the sense of putting the cart before the horse, an "anticipatory obedience" on the production side, which might tend toward reduced complexity and greater digestibility before the fact.

Another view hostile to cultural mediation focuses on the relationship between institutions and their audiences. The chief objection here is that cultural mediation programmes are paternalistic attempts to prevent people from thinking for themselves by persuading them what art they should like and what culture they should consume. This perspectives view – and correctly so – art and culture as being produced primarily for an audience of people who already have an interest in it.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Marie-Hélène Boulanger: Cultural mediation, or the Story of a Special Encounter

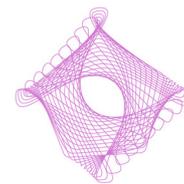
The doors to our institutions seem imposing and massive to those who do not already possess the cultural keys to open them. Yet sometimes it only takes a single encounter, one first experience with an artwork, to make the barriers fall. The way of seeing is transformed, the cultural adventure can begin.

The question is: how can that encounter be provoked. How does someone become a visitor or audience member? On one's own, the first step seems too big... and accompanied? It is by offering this accompaniment that cultural mediation takes on its entire meaning, because it invites people to explore by dismantling preconceptions and reticence. It provides access to the work, not by offering pedagogic analysis but through confidence building, which creates favourable conditions for reception.

Although the term cultural mediation has only recently found its way into the institutional vocabulary, the aspiration to democratize culture is not a new one. The history of Geneva's oldest theatre, the Comédie de Genève itself has been shaped by a philanthropic vision from its earliest days. It was founded in 1913 by four members of the Union pour l'Art Social who wanted to "introduce to art a very large audience which has been kept away from the artistic movement due to economic circumstances". One hundred years later the Comédie continues to pursue this vision by developing cultural mediation projects for multiple audiences.

Since the 2009/2010 season, the Comédie has benefited from the work of "cultural attachés", who help it open its doors to new theatre goers from diverse backgrounds. Appointed for one season, the cultural attachés invite two or three people from their community to accompany them to each performance. In their capacity as mediators, they encourage engagement with the theatre, facilitate access to the site and guide the viewers in their encounters with art (whether or not it is their first). More than 600 people have been invited and thus have experienced one of the performances of the Comédie de Genève since the project started.

Holding a Master degree in Cultural Management, Marie-Hélène Boulanger was responsible for cultural mediation at the Théâtre de Bourg-en-Bresse (France). She has been responsible for audience development at the Comédie de Genève since May of 2012.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Denise Felber: Why Have Cultural Mediation in Schools?

Cultural mediation? No cultural mediation?

The question does not arise for the average teacher – cultural mediation takes place in schools, it is a tradition. Certainly one rooted in enthusiasm for culture and the arts, but most of the time without any deliberate rationale. And fairly often, the teachers who, though interested in culture, are overwhelmed by the complexity of the material, choose free cultural mediation projects for their classes which require minimal efforts on their part and which their school, for one reason or another, believes to have proven effective.

There is often no one who can answer the most pertinent questions – what is done in the project, why is it needed, what are its objectives?

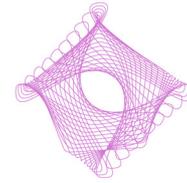
Children and young people fail to take up the offer to participate; already scant resources are depleted further to organize and finance the projects. In addition, the teachers themselves are often poorly networked: they are active as representatives of a subject of instruction, an artistic discipline, but not (yet) as cultural ambassadors who have their own positions on cultural mediation. We should not forget to mention, too, the lack of a common understanding as to what constitutes cultural mediation.

However, sustained engagement with artistic ways of thinking and acting issues an unremitting challenge: exploration-based learning requires one to confront uncomfortable questions and doubts.

Cultural mediation is a must for schools! Curiosity-driven exploration of culture and appropriate education about it are quite simply predestined to cause not just students, but teachers as well, to continue learning and growing. Professional teachers see themselves as cultural-communication experts, who examine their own work in a questioning/improving and critical approach and thus continually enhance their own abilities.

Cultural mediation requires this open, exploratory attitude from teachers: teachers are no longer people who prepare learning material, but the initiators of ideas, observations and perceptions which it is their job to put into context, to exchange, to communicate, to realize and to analyze with their students.

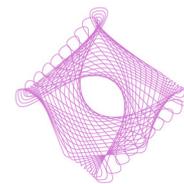
In order to take on this role, teachers have to be willing and able to scrutinize their routine perspective on things, to call into question that



which they would otherwise see as self-evident, to transform themselves into an research object. Only then is an experimental approach possible, only then can something new take shape, can something other than the expected sometimes occur.

Engagement with art as a “school of the multiplicity of meaning, the multiplicity of interpretation, of grappling with dichotomies and with conflicts, including irresolvable conflicts” trains teachers to get close to the required exploratory attitude, and “There can be no substitute for that.” (Adolf Muschg).

Denise Felber *is responsible for the Art and School section of the Institute for Continuing Education of Pädagogische Hochschule (Univeristy of Education), PHBern.*



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Eszter Gyarmathy: Cultural Mediation: Why?

What is interesting about the survey of the different legitimizations for cultural mediation is the cookie-cutter approach taken in each case. This illustrates the impossibility of extracting cultural mediation from its societal and economic environment or trying to comprehend it in the full complexity of its larger context.

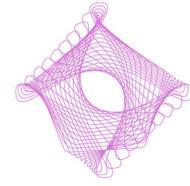
The argumentation relating to power structures is striking. It frames all the legitimizations as a proof of performance for a paying customer: one whose expectations are also reflected in these reports on activities. Those providing funding want performance and outcomes. Those doing the performing may have defined their offer themselves, not per request, but they still have to deliver on their promises. This “conformity with the system” determines the rationales set out in the survey.

Cultural mediation is not the same as art making. It is a meta-cultural production, it communicates that which has been created by others using other means. Yet with respect to the justification for its existence vis-à-vis the public coffers, it is scarcely different from the creation of culture funded in the same way. That too is subject to the requirement that it justify itself in the eyes of the public.

Publicly funded cultural mediation, and certainly also some of the creation of culture, serves to meet societal needs which have been identified in the political sphere. To this extent, cultural mediation and culture creation can be understood as services. Policymakers and administrators justify them, in turn, to their customers. And why do those customers want cultural mediation? Probably for the sake of culture alone, or the repercussions that the creation of culture has on all of us.

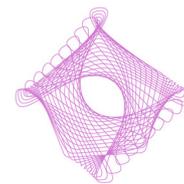
Something is missing from all of the legitimizations presented here: the art, the artwork, the artist, the human being (*c’est le regardeur qui fait l’œuvre*). Yet they are present wherever there is art. The appalling term “cognitive capitalism” can be understood as the exploitation of the receptor, the person doing the receiving. Thus the exercise of political power takes its place alongside that of the power of the (cultural mediation) market.

So why should we have cultural mediation? Public support for culture must step in to ensure that the creation of culture and its perception by



individuals does not (or does not only) take place according to the dictates of power structures or economic necessities in order to preserve artistic freedom. If we do not provide such support, we are putting artistic freedom up for debate, and by doing so, undermining the meaning of art for our society.

Eszter Gyarmathy is the *Delegate for Culture of the City of Biel*.

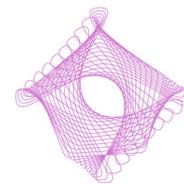


CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Raphaëlle Renken: I Love Cultural Mediation

When I, at 16, declared my ardour for cultural mediation (which I called “introduction to the arts” back then, to define an occupation which almost no one had ever heard of at the time), there were two things motivating me. One was my newly discovered passion for contemporary art, combined with a boundless desire to help people to understand it. The other was the irresistible urge to throw open the museum doors flaunting “No public admittance” signs. The urge to explain and the desire to lift the veils have remained with me, but my motivation has changed: I want to encourage the public to engage in active, yes, even creative participation.

What good are all the efforts of cultural institutions to preserve and exhibit art if they are not combined with the aim of stimulating visitors in some way with the objects on display? That is the job of the cultural mediator! The cultural mediator, like Dr. Knock in Jules Romains' play, ignites the twitching, tingling and itching in the visitors. Cultural mediation is a way to trigger symptoms through the perception of a work or an object. The cultural mediator displays an unshakable optimism: nobody is insensitive and everything has potential to promote sensitivity. Unlike the aim of the conniving doctor, the objective here is not to provoke imaginary symptoms to inflate the treatment price. Nor is it to believe in the healing power of art, for no one can ever recover from art. The cultural mediator makes sure of that too.

Raphaëlle Renken has been responsible for cultural mediation in Geneva's Musée d'art et d'histoire [Museum of Art and History] since 2001. From 2003 to 2009 she also worked in Lausanne's Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts [Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts], developing and heading a sector for welcoming visitors. In 2010 she was commissioned by Association Vaudoise de Danse Contemporaine [the Vaudoise association of contemporary dance] to develop and coordinate a platform for dance education for the Swiss Canton of Vaud. She also lectures on dance history and art criticism.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES David Vuillaume: Cultural Mediation and Museums

The ubiquitous use of the term “Vermittlung” [cultural mediation, but also literally mediation] in today’s museums owes a great deal to the struggle of cultural mediators for the recognition of their profession.¹ The International Council of Museums explicitly included education professionals in its list of → *22 occupational profiles* making up the spectrum of museum professions. Yet we must not forget that the museum itself is a mediation tool, since museums and thus all of those who work in them function as a nexus between various spaces and divergent interests. Between here and elsewhere, today and yesterday, immediacy and permanency, the museum is a place of confrontation and negotiation between visitors and objects, between members of the public and [cultural] heritage.

Mediation processes are also necessary within an institution. It has been well established that a museum is an institution “which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment”.² Conserving, researching, promoting, educating: these four activities, which give the museum its identity, create a tension specific to museums. While a museum may tend to look inward in its research and conservation activities, in its promotion and exhibition activities it opens itself to the outside world. The institution must seek a way to balance out this fundamental contradiction. Then, too, the museum is an instrument of mediation between elitism and democratization. Other sources of tension associated with the functions museums are supposed to fulfill require other forms of mediation, for instance, between market and pedagogy, passivity and action, or between high and popular culture, to name only binary alternatives.

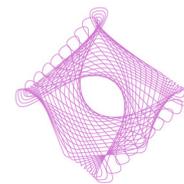
Since cultural mediation calls for negotiation and the search for balance, it is ideally suited to museums, which are continuously causing different worlds to collide and have to attain a certain degree of harmony among innumerable viewpoints.

David Vuillaume is Secretary General of VMS (*Museumsverband Schweiz: [Swiss association of museums]*) und ICOM Schweiz [*International Council of Museums*].

¹ For instance, mediamus, Schweiz. Verband der Fachleute für Bildung und Vermittlung im Museum → <http://www.mediamus.ch> [15.2.2013].

² Definition of the International Council of Museums ICOM (Ethische Richtlinien, 2004 → <http://www.museums.ch/standards/ethik> [15.2.2013]. For other definitions of museums, see Desvallées 2011).

→ *22 occupational profiles* <http://www.museums.ch/publikationen/publikationen/museumsberufe> [15.2.2013]



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Federal Office of Culture, Culture and Society Section: Why Does the Swiss Confederation Support Cultural Mediation?

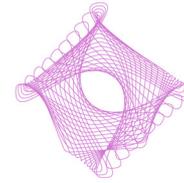
This text also serves as a Changing Perspective text for section 5. What Does Cultural Mediation Do?

There are many good reasons to fund cultural mediation from the public coffers. Arguments for doing so can be framed along economic, fiscal, pedagogic, didactic, artistic and social lines, depending on one's point of view.

For the Swiss Confederation, societal dimensions take centre stage. The legislature pointed the way forward by declaring in the Swiss Culture Promotion Act [KFG] that one of the objectives of the Confederation's cultural promotion is to allow and facilitate access to culture (art. 3(d) KFG: Kulturförderungsgesetz). Projects with that objective receive preferential status for Confederation support (art. 8(a) KFG). The official "Botschaft" [message] accompanying the legislation directly links the promotion of access with cultural mediation (explanatory commentary on art. 8 KFG).

The emphasis on the aspects of participation and inclusion is explained by the level of importance that the Federal Council attaches to culture: "...culture is an essential factor of political and social life, an effective instrument of integration and social cohesion. Therefore, active cultural policy is not restricted to promoting artistic creation or safeguarding cultural heritage. It is also aimed at encouraging as far as possible participation of all groups of the population in cultural life. [...] The arts sharpen our perception and enlarge our consciousness. There is no better school than art to teach us to see, to enhance our awareness, our capacity to differentiate. Careful and critical listening, watching and thinking teaches people to be alert, to express themselves and to discern. Once a sensorial perception makes the transition to become emotional or intellectual realization, it takes on significance for a broader society. The intrinsic value of culture lies in its ability to allow people to understand themselves and their surroundings and to make themselves understood" [Message on the Promotion of Culture (Botschaft zur Förderung der Kultur) 2012–2015].

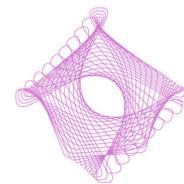
Participation of a broad and diverse audience has relevance for the legitimacy of cultural promotion: in past decades cultural offerings available in Switzerland (and in other countries as well) have expanded dramatically while the level of audience interest has not kept pace. Thus if this expansion is to be sustainable, cultural promotion cannot be restricted to subsidizing



providers of cultural offerings (expansion and consolidation of offerings). It must also encompass measures to develop future users of arts and culture.

The primary tools used by the Confederation to improve access to culture in the 2012–2015 period are language promotion, promotion of musical education, promotion of literacy (measures of the Federal Office of Culture) and the support of arts mediation projects (measures of Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council).

The Culture and Society Section addresses issues of cultural mediation and participation in culture, specifically in the areas of promotion of language skills, literacy/reading, musical education and lay and folk culture.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 6: Cultural Mediation – Between the Need for Legitimization and Critique of Cultural Hegemony

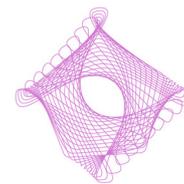
"At this point, one probably has to ask whether there is a way out of these manifold entanglements. If pedagogy is one of the major technologies of control, can arts education ever be progressive or emancipatory? [...] The question is an essential one because there is no middle way – no 'neutral pedagogy'."

(Marchart 2005)

There are as yet very few places which have recognized the equal and autonomous status of cultural mediation (both as a practice and as a field of discourse) in cultural institutions and with respect to the arts, called for at the end of text 5.RL.

This circumstance gives rise to another field of tension for cultural mediation which wishes to see itself as a critical practice. Its representatives are forced to lobby for their field of work, to seek legitimacy in the eyes of the institutions, of the art world, of cultural and education policymakers and, last but not least, of their own colleagues. It might seem natural for them to turn to the arguments set out in the "Quick Read" texts in this chapter. Yet those striving for a critical practice are aware of the critiques of those legitimizations, also set out in these texts; indeed, to some extent they are the source of those critiques.¹ Before we turn to consider how this field of tensions can be influenced, we will present a survey of the key points of criticism. At the same time, this review will serve to recapitulate the discussions presented in the in-depth texts in the foregoing chapters.²

One central critique relates to the instrumentalization of the arts and of art education as a factor affecting economic success and the attractiveness of a location. The potential of the arts, in this view, is in its engagement with that which has no utility, is not exploitable, the provocative, the uncomfortable, the incalculable, the different, the untranslatable. Initiatives like "Kompetenznachweis Kultur" of Bundesvereinigung für Kulturelle Jugendbildung [German Association for Cultural Education for Youth] in which young participants in cultural mediation programmes are issued a certificate of cultural competence, are pointing in the wrong direction from this perspective, because their arguments for cultural mediation are closely tied up with benefits for the employment market in the sense of improved "employability" of participants. This entails an implicit economization of art and education. It views the increase in the ability to compete in the job market and willingness to perform as fundamentally beneficial, ignoring the fact that the arts are a source of alternative visions for how societies should be structured. One also has to point out that, thus far anyway, artists and so-called "creative



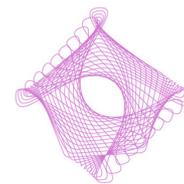
practitioners” are still being pushed into → *precarity*, despite the enhanced status of their field of work. In the context of the deregulation of markets and social system, the attributes associated with artists, i.e. flexibility, willingness to take risks, willingness to perform and take on responsibility independently, make them excellently suited as role models.

→ *precarity* see Glossary

→ *culturalization* see Glossary

Arguments emphasizing the so-called “transfer effects” of cultural mediation, with reference to the findings of neuroscience, are also permeated with the competition paradigm. They focus on individual development and increase of performance capacity, without addressing conditions in society. Moreover, neuroscience-based rationales for cultural mediation have tended to equate culture with conservative concepts of the canon of high culture absolutely. Parents should play classical music for their embryos, not punk rock.

Studies such as François Matarasso’s 1997 “Use or Ornament?”, with its list of fifty positive transfer effects of cultural mediation, have had an enormous impact on funding policies, primarily in the English-speaking world. There, too, one finds criticism challenging the validity of such studies, those based on neuroscience or on social sciences (Merli 2002). While neuroscientifically supported arguments for cultural mediation focus on individual cognitive abilities, social science studies, such as that of Matarasso, stress the beneficial transfer effects that cultural mediation has on the social environment and social behaviour. One aspect of this legitimization worth criticizing is the fact that it uses “cultural participation” as a substitute for genuine involvement in political decision-making. A conservative government in a German federal state can serve as an example here: having taken office, it cut funding for regional anti-racism initiatives and simultaneously introduced a new requirement for the region’s free art schools to run projects in secondary schools “with a high proportion of immigrants” (Mörsch 2007). This constitutes the redirection of efforts to combat racism away from those who perpetrate it and towards those affected by it. Implicitly, it is also a case of the → *culturalization* of a political and societal problem. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that culture is a doubly loaded term: “Recourse to the concept of culture is associated with a problem of identification since one culture can be defined only in opposition to other cultures. In the name of culture, the shift away from traditional values, a characteristic phenomenon of our time, is regularly being reinterpreted to promote a fantasy of emphatic self-definition, which per se defines cultural differences asymmetrically as dominant or inferior characteristics. [...] From this point of view, every culture should be considered to be colonial” (Röllli 2006, pp. 30–41). Thus the suggestion that cultural mediation is per se good for “the people” must be put into context: it frequently involves the transmission, at least implicitly, of moral concepts that are distinctly Western or even bound up with national identity. Conversely, the notion of promoting “cultural diversity” harbours the risk



of → *ethnic essentialization*, because it involves relegating persons to categories on the basis of the cultural practices – attributed to them by others – of their countries of origin. Almost no other position within the cultural field is granted to people who are addressed in such a way (→ *Steyerl 2007*, pp. 21 – 23). This objection takes on particular urgency in view of the present-day shift from “biological” to “cultural racism”: racially motivated aggression, policing, stricter laws and reporting in the media are increasingly oriented towards a matrix of culturally-marked oppositions, such as “anti-western Muslim” (Taguieff 1998).

There may be good intentions behind a requirement like the one described above, imposed on art schools for young adults. However the social context which gives rise to discriminatory treatment in the first place is seldom part of the efforts to create change connected with such measures. It is usually the job of the individuals concerned to overcome their situation and display an interest. The → *paternalistic* dimension involved in assigning attributes associated with the targeting of groups defined as minorities is ignored to a similar degree. Another problematic aspect of the inclusion idea is that it presupposes that culture and its institutions are indisputable constants which are good for all human beings, and need themselves never to change.

This review makes it clear once again that the points of criticism presented all have something in common: they analyse ostensibly natural social conventions and relationships and ostensibly neutral contexts like cultural or educational facilities as the basis for the reproduction of inequality and for the production of social standards. Thus these objections are critical of hegemonic structures, in the sense explored at the end of Text 1.RL.

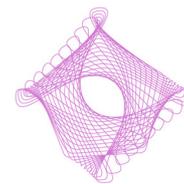
Multiple authors, all of whom are involved in both theoretical and practical work in cultural mediation, have outlined guidelines for alternative approaches to shifting and reworking the hegemonic structures under the banner of arts education as a critical, change-promoting practice (Sternfeld 2005; Sturm 2002; Mörsch 2009a). Having reviewed the points of criticism above, we will now turn to present a summary of these guidelines.

Cultural mediation as (hegemony) critical practice emphasizes the potential represented by the experience of difference in education with art and opposes the idea of efficiency with the upgrading of the value of failure, of exploratory movements, of open processes and of offensive non-utility as a source of disturbance. Instead of presenting the desire to continually optimize oneself to individuals as the best survival option, it makes spaces available to them in which problems can be identified and grappled with – in addition to fun, pleasure, the joy of making, training of perception and the transfer of specialized knowledge. These are spaces in which dissent is seen as constructive and in which attributes which are ostensibly indisputably positive, like the love of art or the willingness to work, are challenged

→ *ethnic essentialization* see Glossary

→ *Steyerl 2007* <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0101/steyerl/de> [21. 2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0602.pdf

→ *paternalism* see Glossary



and where people can discuss what the good life means for whom and how a good life for everyone can be attained. The point is less lifelong learning than life-prolonging learning.

→ *subsystems* see Glossary: system

Cultural mediation of this kind opens up spaces for action in which no one suffers discrimination on the basis of age, origin, appearance, physical dispositions, sex or sexual orientation, in which no supposed knowledge about others is produced or used as a foundation, but rather, one in which proceeds with partiality with the aim of communicative, pedagogical reflexivity.

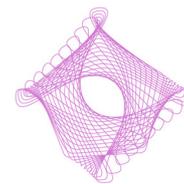
Spaces where it is therefore also necessary to reflect on the cultural mediator's own privileged status, to contest it and to exploit it strategically to promote greater justice. Despite a possible dearth of material resources and a weak position within the institutional structure, the majority of cultural mediators do enjoy a great many privileges, such as the right skin colour, access to the right knowledge and the right culture (Castro Varela, Dhawan 2009).

Constituent attributes of cultural mediation spaces of this kind are a reflexivity with respect to the concept of culture and an active resistance to the culturalization of conflicts and political problems, as well as a reflexivity vis-à-vis the values and myths associated with "art". Cultural mediation work thus also serves to promote exchange about how the arts and their → *subsystems* function.

Instead of "fostering talent" and "self-development", critical cultural mediation attempts to permit a transparent transmission of tools for learning. This attempt is based both on a thoughtful approach to one's own starting points and circumstances as well as to the potential associated with the arts to design, to intervene, to reinterpret and to change (including collectively and across borders between knowledges and languages). And, to complete the circle, this work is based on the special possibilities offered by the arts to give form to all of that, forms, however, which remain open to many interpretations and, in the best case, avoid instrumentalization.

As suggested above, the attempt to institute cultural mediation as a critical practice is a destabilizing enterprise at multiple levels. In a field which at present is still struggling to establish its status and against being pushed into precarity, one which is still being forced to justify its own existence, this approach produces yet more stumbling blocks. It means that, along with constantly questioning themselves, cultural mediators may well face a lack of broad acceptance, even among their own colleagues. Moreover, a critical approach to cultural mediation can hardly be said to have a documented history to draw on as a matter of course. It was not so long ago that cultural mediation was a field of practice only; its historiography and theoretical framework is still quite young.

However, there are growing numbers of cultural mediators who are interested in developing a critical practice in its many possible facets, which



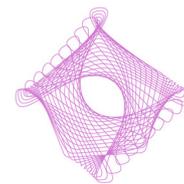
the guidelines above highlight. These mediators are developing ways of dealing with the field of tensions mentioned above, taking a position between an attitude critical of hegemonic structures and the need for legitimization. One can describe their approaches as two related strategies: i) network building and thus reinforcing and improving the position of the individual through collective cohesion and ii) the struggle inherent in any criticism of hegemonic structures against becoming hegemonic oneself, and with that, the formation of alliances. Networking of cultural mediators interested in a critical practice is currently happening in many places. Symposiums play a key role, and above all symposium series because they provide the opportunity for repeated encounters and continuing discussions. One example is the series “Educational Turn” held by → [schnittpunkt. ausstellungstheorie und praxis](#)³, which brought together a very diverse group of people interested in the → [Educational Turn](#) for discussions in symposiums held in three consecutive years (schnittpunkt 2012).

The symposium series “Prácticas dialógicas” developed by Javier Rodrigo and Aida Sanchez de Serdio Martins in Spain (Rodrigo 2007) took a similar approach. These symposiums were also held on an annual basis in various different Spanish museums and made a valuable contribution to the formation of an informal network of critically oriented art mediators. Currently, an international network is taking shape under the name “Another Roadmap”, motivated chiefly by the critical reading of the → [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#). The UNESCO Roadmap is a lobby paper which strongly advocates the establishment of cultural mediation (chiefly in schools, but also outside of them) in all countries of the world. This paper clearly illustrates the dilemma facing hegemony-critical cultural mediation. On the one hand, its practitioners cannot but welcome such vigorous advocacy. On the other hand though, the legitimizations it puts forth are open to all of the points of criticism discussed in this chapter. Such as, for instance, the fact UNESCO Roadmap use of concepts of “culture” and “education” which are influenced chiefly by Western thought and universalized in the Roadmap without examining their colonial past. In addition, it advocates education in the arts primarily as a way of producing a flexible workforce and mitigating social tensions; it is dominated by a concept of indigenous artistic creation which frames such creation as “traditions” to be conserved rather than as a part of contemporary cultural production; it is influenced by a conservative concept of the family (and, linked with that, a narrative about the loss of moral values) which does not correspond to the plurality of existing social forms in which people are happily living. Unsurprisingly, like every result of international negotiations, in many ways the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education reflects the dominant hegemonic order, and thus does not represent the positions of those see the development of alternatives to that order as the reason for their work. Still, the paper has caused people in the field of cultural mediation to begin to see themselves as comprising a

→ [schnittpunkt. ausstellungstheorie und praxis](#) <http://www.schnitt.org/wer-spricht/educational-turn> [14.10.2012]

→ [Educational Turn](#) see Text 5. RL

→ [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#) http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/40000/12581058115/Road_Map_for_Arts_Education.pdf/Road%2BMap%2Bfor%2BArts%2BEducation.pdf [11.4.2012] see Resource Pool MFE060501.pdf



professional field of global dimensions. Confronting the UNESCO paper and similar statements, the international network with the working name → *Another Roadmap for Arts Education* is developing research and projects. To some extent this involves creating alternative rationales for cultural mediation based on specific examples. It also involves the attempt to create a historiography of cultural mediation which encompasses its global dimension, the transfer of concepts like art and education in colonialism, as well as their revision in post-colonial contexts. This is not intended to stake out a position beyond any contradiction, but rather to make an active contribution from a critical perspective to the contemporary debates about the reasons for cultural mediation from the inside.

A study examining the business models of freelance cultural mediators in Austria, Germany and Switzerland showed on a different level that criticism of hegemonic structures is never positioned outside of the relationships on the ground. Its author rejects her initial hypothesis and concludes that the actions of critical and artistic oriented cultural mediators are economically more successful than are those who take an → *affirmative* position with respect to the art field and whose offerings are a better fit with the services domain (→ *Pütz 2012*). One could explain this in part by pointing to the fact that in their project acquisition they are able to draw on a comprehensive knowledge of the system which their critical approach has caused them to acquire. The fact that their clients are primarily public cultural and educational organizations, might also be interpreted as suggesting that the proposals of a critical approach to cultural mediation have been taken up in the mainstream, at least in some places.

→ *Another Roadmap for Arts Education* <http://another.zhdk.ch> [15.3.2013]

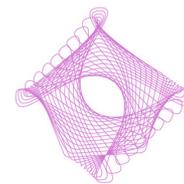
→ *affirmative* see Text 5.1

→ *Pütz 2012* see Resource Pool MFV0603.pdf

1 This applies to the author of this text or to individuals such as Nora Landkammer, Nanna Lüth, Javier Rodrigo, Nora Sternfeld, Rahel Puffert, Stephan Fürstenberg, Janna Graham and many others who are actively engaged in establishing the field of work of cultural mediation and are also contributing to the critical discourse surrounding it with analytical and programmatic texts.

2 As the following is a summary of positions already described elsewhere in this publication, the relevant citations and references have not been inserted a second time, for the sake of readability. Relevant works are cited only where new aspects emerge.

3 "schnittpunkt. ausstellungstheorie und praxis is an open, transnational network for active participants as well as or interested in the field of exhibitions and museums. As a non-institutional platform, schnittpunkt presents it members the opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange, information and discourse. One of our aims is to create a general awareness of how interpretation and operation patterns in institutions are determined by cultural and social conditions, as is the creation of a critically reflexive exhibition and museum public" (schnittpunkt 2012).



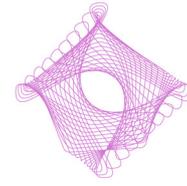
Literature and Links

The text is based in parts on the following previously published paper:

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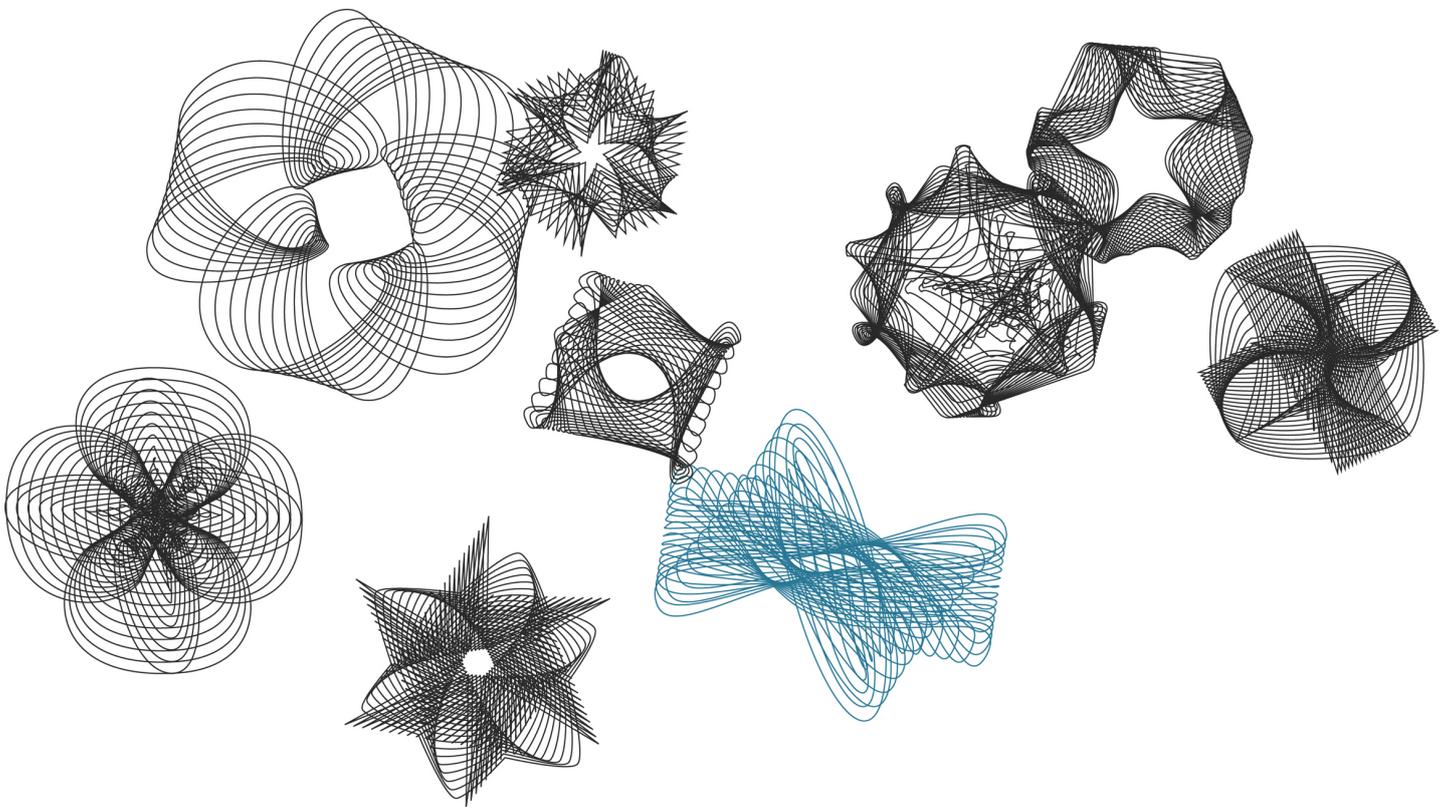
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- UNESCO, World Conference on Arts Education, Lisbon 2006/Seoul 2010, Roadmap: http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30335&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [30.4.2012], see Resource Pool MFE060501.pdf

Links:

- Another Roadmap for Arts Education: <http://another.zhdk.ch> [15.3.2013]
- schnittpunkt. ausstellungstheorie und praxis: <http://www.schnitt.org> [14.10.2012]

Time for Cultural Mediation

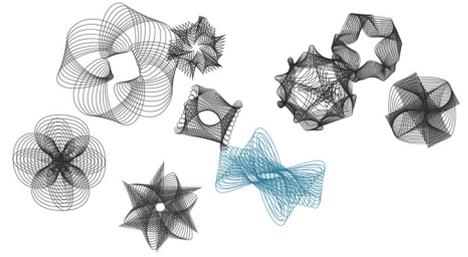
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?



- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
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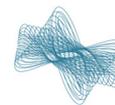


7.0 Intro

For many years, cultural mediation existed as an informal field of work but not as a defined occupational field. Around two decades ago, this situation began to change: universities launched programmes to train cultural mediators, associations were established in the various domains, new funding opportunities began to appear. A trend towards institutionalization has accompanied this evolution. People working in the area now see it as an occupational field, with profiles which, though heterogeneous, have been defined, with working conditions which can be described and which is associated with certain rights and requirements, as well as specific sets of issues. Network-building activities among cultural mediation professionals are intensifying at both national and international levels. The issues specific to the occupation and the identification of a professional discourse are giving rise to increased research activities. Cultural mediation, then, is also evolving as a scholarly discipline at the universities.

This chapter provides an overview of the various people and organizations involved in shaping the field of cultural mediation work.

- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?



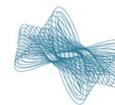
7.1 Occupation: Cultural mediator

Cultural mediation as a field of work is situated at the intersection of the arts, the scholarship associated with them and pedagogy. The mixture of knowledge and skills involved in it is correspondingly complex. While teacher training programmes in music or art instruction have long combined subject-specific studies (i.e. art studies or music studies) with pedagogic and artistic elements, it is only very recently that similarly specialized programmes have been established for → [cultural mediation outside of schools](#). For that reason, the field of cultural mediation has in many instances been greatly influenced by professionals from related scholarly, artistic and pedagogical fields. As a result, cultural mediation can encompass a wide variety of forms and contents, depending on the professional perspective the cultural mediator brings to the work. Many of those involved in art mediation in museums have a degree in art history, cultural and art studies or cultural pedagogy or are qualified school teachers, though more and more artists are working in the field as well. In the world of theatre, the professional profile of “theatre mediator” has a longer history. Many theatre mediators define themselves as artists as well as mediators, and have qualifications in subjects like directing and acting. Many also have backgrounds in the theatre arts. By contrast, others have backgrounds in social or cultural pedagogy with specializations in theatre or aesthetic education more generally. In addition, theatre mediation falls into the sphere of activities of many dramaturges.

In the domains of music and dance, which are traditionally associated with the instruction of instrumental and movement techniques, respectively, the mediation work is often done by artists. Even those whose chief employment is as cultural mediator and who have specialized in dance or music pedagogy tend to have a background in music or dance training. As the level of demand from institutions increases, new occupational profiles are being created, in concert or opera pedagogy for instance, positions sometimes filled by people who have studied the musical arts. In the domain of literature, it is largely scholars of literature or language studies who act as mediators, though it is not uncommon to find writers working as mediators as well, as for example in the “Schulhausroman” (Schoolhouse Novel) project, discussed in one of the → [case studies](#) included in this publication.

→ [cultural mediation outside of schools](#) see Text 7.2

→ [case studies](#) see Texts CS1 and CS2 under the heading Service



7.2 Conditions of employment in cultural mediation

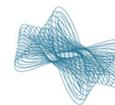
The conditions under which cultural mediators work are as diverse as the occupational backgrounds of the mediators themselves. Many cultural institutions do not have staff positions devoted solely to cultural mediation. In such institutions, mediation either falls within the sphere of outreach and marketing or appears as one responsibility among many in the job descriptions of individual staff members.

However, cultural mediation as a field of work is now undergoing a process of differentiation, primarily with respect to the programmes offered in institutions of musical and theatre arts, but also in museums. This process is accompanied by a gradual growth in jobs. Kunstmuseum Luzern, for instance, created multiple permanent staff positions in connection with a development project it set up called → *Kompetenzzentrum Kunstvermittlung* [Art Mediation Competence Centre]. Many of the publicly funded theatres in Switzerland have specialists in theatre pedagogy on their permanent staff. This trend is certainly related to the increasing emphasis on cultural mediation in funding policies, but it also has to do with the institutions themselves. The trend has already resulted in quality improvements in cultural mediation in many cases, since augmented time and financial resources can create a good basis for improved activities.

It must be noted that cultural mediation remains one of the more poorly paid and insecure fields of work in the cultural sphere. The increase in awareness of cultural mediation which could be observed over the past decade has not yet had a major structural impact. Most cultural mediators work as freelancers for a fee that is based on an hourly rate which can vary enormously. Also highly variable is the understanding of billable hours: while some institutions pay flat rates for preparatory and follow-up activities for projects and programmes, others will pay only for the hours in which mediators are actually working with participants. Cultural mediators often bear the entire risk of cancellation alone; i.e., when an offering is cancelled at short notice due to insufficient sign-ups, the cultural mediator may receive no payment at all.

As specialization and professionalization in the field increase, efforts to obtain better working conditions are intensifying, as Text 7.3 describes in greater detail.

→ *Kompetenzzentrum Kunstvermittlung* <http://www.kunstmuseumluzern.ch/de/kunstvermittlung.html> [1.5.2012]



7.3 (Swiss) Training options and professional associations of cultural mediators

→ [Teaching Artist](#), → [Trans](#), → [Ausstellen und Vermitteln](#), → [médiatrice et médiateur culturel](#), → [Kuverum](#), → [Musikvermittlung](#), → [Bilden – Künste – Gesellschaft](#), → [Vermittlung der Künste](#), → [Kulturelle Medienbildung](#):

Above are some of the many initial and advanced training programmes for cultural mediators who intend to work in non-school settings which have been set up at Swiss universities in the last decade. Their heterogeneous profiles cover mainly cultural mediation in the areas of exhibition and visual, musical and theatre arts. So far there is no curriculum devoted solely to mediation in the literary arts – but it is represented in the content of coursework such as the bilingual Bachelor programme in → [literary writing](#) of Bern's University of Applied Sciences. Courses of study in the area of both non-school and school dance mediation are offered by institutions in Switzerland's neighbouring countries (e. g. → [dance pedagogy at the Folkwang University of the Arts](#), in Essen, Germany; the → [private Anton Bruckner University](#) in Linz, Austria; → [dance dissemination](#) at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz [University for Music and Dance] in Cologne. One of the best established training programmes in the area of → [community dance](#) is offered by the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London. In France, Paris' → [Centre Nationale de la Danse Pantin](#) is one of the institutions offering continuing training programmes in dance education).

These newly created, specialized courses of study are one indication of the increasing differentiation within the cultural mediation field. Another is the enhanced visibility of occupational advocacy groups. In the exhibition world, and in theatre, musical and dance education → [associations](#) and other organizations are working to improve employment conditions, discussing quality criteria, organizing conferences, offering professional development courses, providing information services (such as notices about events, publications or job openings) and opportunities for networking.

Both the colourful bouquet of new training opportunities and the intensifying advocacy efforts within the occupational field are welcome in principle. It should not go unremarked, however, that institutionalization is also tied up with this process. Cultural mediation is changing from what was once a fairly ill defined, open field of experimentation into an increasingly disciplined sphere, with a varied, sometimes uneven distribution of resources, with respect to power, funding and prestige. Universities, cultural institutions and funding institutions are using cultural mediation and the knowledge it produces to enhance their own claims to legitimacy and their own images; associations are protecting first and foremost their own interests, which are not necessarily identical with those of cultural mediation. Thus institutions and other bodies are not under all circumstances automatically destined to promote new and interesting developments

→ [Teaching Artist](#) <http://www.hkb.bfh.ch/de/weiterbildung/kulturvermittlung/cas-teaching-artist/> [25.1.2013]

→ [Trans](#) http://head.hesge.ch/-TRANS-MEDIATION-ENSEIGNEMENT-#IMG/jpg/Sullivangravure1879_NB_web.jpg [25.1.2013]

→ [Ausstellen und Vermitteln](#) <http://www.zhdk.ch/?av-mae> [7.12.2014]

→ [médiatrice et médiateur culturel](#) <http://www.eesp.ch/ufc> [25.1.2013]

→ [Kuverum](#) <http://kuverum.ch> [25.1.2013]

→ [Musikvermittlung](#) <https://www.zhdk.ch/index.php?id=27814> [25.1.2013]

→ [Bilden – Künste – Gesellschaft](#) <http://weiterbildung.zhdk.ch/angebot/suche/3623> [25.1.2013]

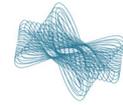
→ [Vermittlung der Künste](#) <http://www.fhnw.ch/ph/iwb/kader/vermittlung-der-kuenste> [25.1.2013]

→ [Kulturelle Medienbildung](#) <http://www.phbern.ch/weiterbildung/weiterbildungslehrgaenge/kunst-und-schule/cas-kulturelle-medienbildung.html> [25.1.2013]

→ [Literary writing](#) <http://www.hkb.bfh.ch/en/studies/bachelor/baliteratur/> [7.12.2014]

→ [Dance pedagogy at the Folkwang University of the Arts](#) <http://www.folkwang-uni.de/en/home/tanz/courses-of-study/dance-pedagogy-ma/> [7.12.2014]

→ [Anton Bruckner](#) <http://www.bruckneruni.at/Tanz/Institut> [1.5.2012]



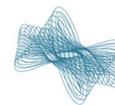
in this field of work. The latter quite often occur at the periphery of the field. Remaining attentive and receptive to people and developments outside of the mainstream during a phase of establishment and institutionalization is a challenge in every sphere – including that of cultural mediation.

→ Dance dissemination <http://dance-germany.org/index.php?languageId=2&pos=06000&id=20899> [7.12.2014]

→ Community dance <http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/study/dance/one-year-programmes/postgraduate-diploma-community-dance> [25.1.2013]

→ Centre Nationale de la Danse <http://www.cnd.fr/professionnels/education-artistique/formations> [25.1.2013]

→ Associations <http://www.kultur-vermittlung.ch> [25.1.2013]



7.4 Voluntary work in cultural mediation

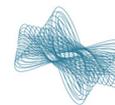
According to the → [Swiss Federal Statistical Office](#), approximately 33% of the Swiss population engaged in volunteer work in 2010. In the ranking of volunteer causes, cultural institutions came in second, accounting for almost 10% of all voluntary service (sports headed the list). Statistical Office data show that volunteers in cultural institutions tend to be more highly educated and correspondingly have higher incomes. In this respect they are less heterogeneous as a group than volunteers in other spheres, such as sports or the social sphere. This is a function of the fact that volunteers see public appreciation and the cultivation of networks, for instance, as beneficial. In the cultural arena, social and symbolic benefits of this kind can be used and generated only by those – few – individuals who have learned to perceive the arts in this way. By contrast, appreciation of sports as a social good is found at all levels of society to a greater degree.

A brochure published in 2008 by the German Museums Association entitled "Civic engagement in the museum" stresses that volunteers should not be a substitute for full-time staff. Instead, volunteer workers should "... support the museum's activities, round out the work of the full-time employees and bring new impulses into the museum" (→ [Deutscher Museumsbund 2008](#)). The latter is made less likely by the fact that institutions seldom have organizational structures in place which would systematically take up the experiences and ideas of voluntary workers and allow them to have an impact, in the sense of renewal or change. In 2010, the Swiss volunteer association → [BENEVOL](#) published a set of standards for working with volunteers which can serve as guidelines for cultural institutions and others.

→ [Federal Statistical Office](#) <http://www.freiwilligenmonitor.ch/static/files/service/downloads/SAKE-2010.pdf> [1.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE070403.pdf

→ [Deutscher Museumsbund 2008](#) http://www.museumsbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefts/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/BEIM_Broschuere_2008.pdf [1.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE070401.pdf

→ [BENEVOL](#) http://www.benevol.ch/fileadmin/pdf/BENEVOL_Standards_Freiwilligenarbeit_2011.pdf [1.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE070402.pdf



7.5 Cultural mediation as a research field

After remaining primarily a field of practice for over a century, cultural mediation has become a significant field of research and theoretical work in the last 15 years. The rapid proliferation of graduate programmes in the field testifies to this; other indications in the German-speaking regions are the establishment of research institutes in universities, such as the Institute for Art Education (IAE) at Zurich University of the Arts, and private cultural mediation institutions which conduct research, such as Vienna's → *Educult*. In recent years, platforms have been established for individuals and institutions active in research: the Art Education Research Network in Switzerland and the network → *Forschung Kulturelle Bildung* in Germany. In the French-speaking region, one can point to the Master's programme Recherche Histoire, esthétique et sociologie de médiation culturelle at the → *Médiation Culturelle* department of Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, which is conducting research in the field.

Thus far, the majority of the research into cultural mediation has been of an evaluative character. It is aimed primarily at demonstrating the effects of cultural mediation on participants (see, e. g., the research on transfer effects in the project → *Jedem Kind ein Instrument* [An instrument for every child]) (Rittelmeyer 2010). The motivation for funding and initiating cultural mediation is largely based on the desire for non-art-related transfer effects (such as increased willingness to perform or social cohesion), as the text in “6. Cultural mediation: Why (not)?” discusses. Research is commissioned in order to produce evidence of such transfer effects. This places researchers in a dilemma: on the one hand, if their work is to deserve the name of research, it must be unbiased. On the other hand, the future of the commissioning institution may depend on finding evidence for effects. The field of tensions is particularly evident in the debate about the validity of → *studies* conducted under these conditions.

However, there is also a growing amount of research which does not focus on effects but instead investigates that approach critically. For instance, there are studies which attempt to identify what various actors and organizations consider to be positive effects and then analyze what lies behind those views. There is also research exploring the effects of a funding policy aiming primarily at transfer effects (→ *Hoogen 2010*). Other studies analyse the key concepts of cultural mediation, such as “participation” (→ *Hope 2011*).

→ *Educult* <http://www.educult.at/forschung> [1.5.2012]

→ *Forschung Kulturelle Bildung* <http://www.forschung-kulturelle-bildung.de> [1.5.2012]

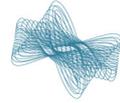
→ *Médiation Culturelle* http://www.univ-paris3.fr/MHSMEDC/0/fiche___formation [11.6.2012]

→ *Jedem Kind ein Instrument* <http://www.jeki-forschungsprogramm.de/forschungsprojekte/sigrun/sigrun-transfer> [1.5.2012]

→ *studies* see Texts in 6. Cultural Mediation: Why (not)?

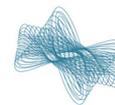
→ *Hoogen 2010* <http://irs.ub.rug.nl/ppn/327486783> [24.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE070501.pdf

→ *Hope 2011* <http://www.sophiehope.org.uk> [1.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE0705.pdf



One important methodological approach is practice-led research, the purpose of which is to improve cultural mediation on the basis of theory and through analyses performed jointly with practitioners (for an example see the 2009–2011 project “Kunstvermittlung in Transformation” [Cultural Mediation in Transformation] conducted by a coalition of four Swiss universities of the arts and five museums (Settele 2012)).

Other scholarly disciplines with different specializations have also begun to engage in research on cultural mediation. Among them (often in combination) are approaches anchored in the history of education, didactics, the neurosciences, concept-theory and philosophy, art and sociology and other disciplines.



7.6 Funding of cultural mediation in Switzerland

In Switzerland, the Swiss Confederacy acts in a subsidiary role in the promotion of culture, supporting only projects of interest to the country as a whole, and supplementing the country's cantonal and municipal governments in doing so. In its support for cultural mediation, the → [Federal Office for Culture \(BAK\)](#) funds measures intended to promote language skills, literacy and reading and musical education, while the Swiss Arts Council → [Pro Helvetia](#) is responsible for funding arts mediation projects. In the course of its four-year Arts and Audiences Programme, Pro Helvetia developed a set of funding criteria, which it published in 2012 in the form of guidelines for grant applicants → [Leitfaden für Gesuchssteller_innen](#). Since cultural mediation projects generally take place at one location and interaction with the public takes place within a specific local context, proving that a project has national relevance can be difficult. For that reason, the focus is on promoting projects which, due to their high quality, can contribute to improving the practice of cultural mediation in the country.

One meets with a range of attitudes to cultural mediation at the cantonal and municipal level. Accordingly, funding activities at those levels are structured in a variety of ways. The greatest share of resources flow into partnerships between cultural institutions and schools (see → [Canton of Aargau](#), → [Canton of Bern](#), → [Canton of Zurich](#)). Increasingly, regional coordination offices are beginning to coordinate such cultural mediation projects, i.e. those for schools as well as discounts on cultural programmes.

While funding opportunities for school projects do exist in many Swiss cantons, there is no comparable support for cultural mediation activities outside of schools led by freelance mediators nor, in many places, is there for the non-school-related cultural mediation activities of institutions. Such projects often fall organizationally between the departments of culture and education, sometimes even in the area of social affairs. What is more, cantonal and municipal authorities tend to see cultural mediation as a standard part of the remit of institutions and thus covered by the agreements governing their activities. As a result, a municipal theatre is expected to finance any cultural mediation projects from its ordinary budget. The portion of the budget spent on cultural mediation is therefore a question of the institution's priorities. Resource allocation at privately financed institutions is also determined to a great extent by internal priorities. The cultural

→ [Federal Office for Culture \(BAK\)](#) see their Changing perspectives text in "1. What is cultural mediation?"

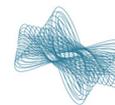
→ [Pro Helvetia](#) see their Changing perspectives text in "1. What is Cultural Mediation?"

→ [Leitfaden für Gesuchssteller_innen](#) http://www.prohelvetia.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/customers/prohelvetia/Foerderung/Vermittlungsfoerderung/2014/140708_Promotion_of_arts_outreach_at_Pro_Helvetia_def_EN.pdf [1.5.2012; see Resource Pool MFE070603.pdf

→ [Canton of Aargau](#) <http://www.kulturmachtschule.ch> [25.1.2013]

→ [Canton of Bern](#) http://www.erz.be.ch/erz/de/index/kultur/bildung_kultur.html [21.5.2012]

→ [Canton of Zurich](#) <http://www.schuleundkultur.ch> [21.5.2012]



mediation programme and the materials developed for it by the → Daros Latin America Collection in Rio de Janeiro – privately financed – provide an example of how this situation can be put to advantage. (see Valdes 2011).

In Switzerland, funding vehicles such as prizes and fellowships are rare or still up for debate. The City of Basel is an exception in this respect, having launched a free idea competition for → cultural mediation projects in 2012. At present, those → fellowships and grants which are awarded for cultural mediation in Switzerland are mostly destined for curators or critics, another indication of the open-ended use of the term.

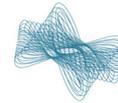
In many cases, the only funding opportunity available to individuals working with institutions or independently is to submit grant applications to the foundations which fund cultural mediation. A list of the foundations particularly active in cultural mediation is being compiled under → Infothek at www.kultur-vermittlung.ch.

→ Daros Latin America Collection <http://www.goethe.de/wis/bib/prj/hmb/the/156/de8622841.htm> [1.5.2012]

→ Cultural mediation projects of the City of Basel http://www.educationprojekte.ch/fileadmin/daten/wettbewerb/kult%26co_Ausschreibung_Flyer.pdf [21.5.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE070602.pdf

→ Fellowships and grants http://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/kultur/de/index/foerderung/bildende_kunst/stipendien.html [21.5.2012]; http://aus_schreibung.kurator.ch [21.5.2012]

→ Infothek <http://www.kultur-vermittlung.ch/de/infothek/foerderung.html> [24.8.2012]

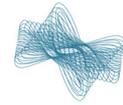


CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Margrit Bürer: All About Cultural Mediation

The attention being enjoyed by cultural mediation is a positive development since it is contributing to cultural mediation. New occupational fields have been established, various training programmes are available, professional associations have formed, and research findings and funding opportunities will make it possible to improve the working conditions of cultural mediators and perhaps even allow the effective employment of volunteer work – the achievements to date are numerous and substantial. Those who are interested in culture can choose from a plethora of cultural mediation offerings. Every domain has its own cultural mediation experts; practitioners have consolidated their role within the cultural sphere and the ratio of those mediating to those consuming is acceptable. Along with the satisfaction we feel with all that has been achieved, we should allow space for doubts about whether things are heading in the right direction, if we haven't already.

Surveys reveal that the absolute numbers of people interested in culture are not increasing with the growth of the spectrum of cultural offerings; instead, the same people are availing themselves of more offerings. Those findings, if correct, suggest that the investment in cultural mediation is resulting primarily in the development of skills among the “specialized audience”. In itself, this is not a bad thing, but neither does it provide a rationale appropriate to the cultural-policy ambitions implicitly tied to the cultural mediation. The continually increasing numbers of cultural events, artist and institutions suggest that engaging actively in cultural activity is more attractive than consuming it. Both this and the basic ideas behind cultural mediation suggest that one should continue exploring cultural mediation approaches which allow the boundaries between “those producing” and “those consuming” and between teachers and learners to dissolve and which open up opportunities for interaction and exchange. Thus along with calling for professional and differentiated cultural mediation, I am advocating respect and use of ordinary and effective cultural mediation, first and foremost, of the kind that is stimulated by a cultural work or production, lets that be known in its immediate environment and makes it accessible to other people.

Margrit Bürer holds an advanced degree in social pedagogy, certification to supervise in-service training in social pedagogy and an Executive MBA HSG. She has served as Cultural Officer for the Canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden since 2006. She worked as a freelance filmmaker, 1982–1994 and was employed in various capacities at the Swiss Art Council Pro Helvetia 1995–2006.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Franziska Dürr: Cultural Mediation – a Balancing Act

In the last 20 years, many cultural institutions have come to appreciate the importance of cultural mediation. An exhibition, a museum or a cultural event: visitors, especially for their first visit, need an invitation or a guide to draw them in. Thus we are seeing more and more museums and other cultural institutions announcing art mediation programmes and reaching out through them to both new audiences and their traditional audiences.

Who does the cultural mediation work though? Who can build the bridges? Is a history degree or teacher training what is needed to do cultural mediation in a historical museum? Should a person get an advanced professional qualification in cultural mediation or perhaps even do a course in marketing?

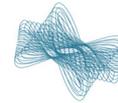
Cultural mediation work involves coming up with an offering, putting it into practice and then reviewing and analyzing it. The challenges begin to arise far in advance of the actual event: how are visitors going to find out about the offering, how can it be structured in a way that will ensure that visitors play an active role in the substantive area, not just passively consume, that their encounter with culture becomes an individualized experience?

In addition to specialist knowledge and pedagogical skills, cultural mediators need to be able to innovate, to devise new approaches. They need stamina, tenacity and aptitude since their aim is to inject new elements into existing structures.

Cultural mediation also entails actively pushing for structural conditions which allow the mediation to keep evolving over time. If it is going to develop into something which will endure, cultural mediation requires space, budgetary resources and attention.

Both a sound grasp of the subject and skills appropriate to the type of cultural mediation are prerequisites. Cultural mediators have to be interested both in people and in culture. Thanks to their own artistic and cultural practice, they share a common bond with culture and thus in-depth expertise about the cultural domain they are working in. They also need pedagogic expertise and aptitude, founded on education or their own experiences. It is because they can tap into both of these areas that cultural mediators are predestined to be the hosts, to invite new audiences, to build bridges and open the doors to culture. Personal initiative and a solid base of professional and life experiences are also key for a successful career.

Franziska Dürr is the Director of Art Mediation of the gallery Aargauer Kunsthaus and the “Kuverum” training course in cultural mediation.



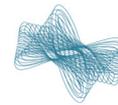
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Gianna A. Mina: Museo Vincenzo Vela and Cultural Mediation

Every exhibit, whether permanent or temporary, is in itself an act of cultural mediation. By compiling and presenting objects or artworks and presenting content in a specific arrangement, curators convey a vision, a common thread, an interpretation which is intended to engage the audience as far as possible, to engender an enriching and stimulating dialogue. When this act of displaying and conveying content takes place in what was once an artist’s studio, a dwelling and a private museum, it takes on an additional relevance and an evident rationale.

Supported by the Confederacy, Museo Vincenzo Vela is one of the few museums in Swiss territory where all of the above applies. It is one of the most original of Europe’s 19th century Künstlerhäuser [dwelling cum studio cum gallery of an artist or artists]. It was designed by the Swiss sculptor Vincenzo Vela (1820–1891), who was active, primarily during the Italian Risorgimento, as a sculptor and defender of the ideals of that unification movement.

Following the museum’s reopening after major renovations and restructuring work (1997–2001), its director, aware of the premises stated above, made cultural mediation one of her primary concerns. In 2001 she established a cultural mediation service, which serves as a motor for the whole region. The service expands its offerings for various audience groups from one season to the next, in an open dialogue. We have built up a relationship based on mutual trust with the teachers of several schools, by organizing discussion series and laying out our intentions clearly: museum mediation which is not a continuation of school instruction but rather is intended to be understood as a complementary learning process involving all of the senses.

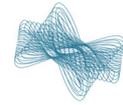
Our positive experiences with schools encouraged us to expand the museum’s public engagement process to encompass other interested visitor groups. Thanks to the contributions of experts in other fields and of our visitors themselves, who act as the museum’s “ambassadors”, we developed activities over the years for blind people, people with disabilities (including severely disabled people) and, starting five years ago, for asylum seekers. The fact that we have a very distinctive and unusual permanent exhibition enabled us to develop projects which involve not only the artistic experience, but also and just as seriously, a historical perspective and an engage-



ment with psychology and other humanistic disciplines. Music has become an important element of our cultural mediation concept as well. Regular musical events inspire an interested audience to come in for a new museum experience and provide an occasion for contemplating the intersections between different forms of artistic expression and their differences. And theatre, like sculpture a “plastic” form of expression – the one in motion, the other static – also has a firm presence in our programme.

In my opinion, appropriate cultural mediation, which makes all of this possible, is based on certain key principles: a generous, sensitive reception of the audience, a serious engagement with the themes proposed, an ear attentive to the needs and desires of the audience and the ability to interpret the permanent exhibitions anew over and over again, to approach them with curiosity and imagination along a path which is anchored in the past but directed towards the future.

Gianna A. Mina has served as the Director of Museo Vincenzo Vela in Ligornetto since 1992. She led the Swiss Commission for UNESCO from 2007 to 2011 and is a board member of the Verband der Kunsthistorikerinnen und Kunsthistoriker in der Schweiz [Association of Art Historians in Switzerland]. Since 2012 she has served as President of the VMS [Verband Museen der Schweiz].

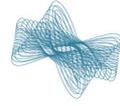


CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Anne Catherine Sutermeister: Cultural Mediation as an Indicator of the Quality of Cultural Policy?

By establishing itself as an independent cultural and artistic practice, cultural mediation became part of the system for promoting culture, while at the same time questioning what lies behind it and creating turbulence within it. The priority attached to it in the different cultural spheres is therefore a valuable reference point for assessing the reactive ability of policy and its capacity to position itself coherently vis-à-vis a new mandate.

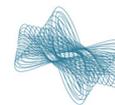
Cultural mediation enjoys a long tradition in Europe, though it was institutionalized in Switzerland rather late in the day. Whereas in France it was and still is bound up in a political vision (democratization of the audience), in this country it often figures in more pragmatic or even utilitarian considerations. Once funding instruments contingent on offerings were developed to support institutions and artists, the focus shifted to programmes aimed at a wider public. In today's apprehensive political climate, the question arises as to whom the subsidized cultural programme should target. At times, cultural mediation has been misused as an answer to every question.

The advent of cultural mediation as a support instrument raises cogent questions and speaks to the way culture is structured and how policy-makers view their own role. Most institutions, artists and associations have developed some form of cultural mediation, and provide a plethora of offerings. However, audiences do not always make use of them. This failure is due to inadequate coordination of promotional activities, redundancies and the heterogeneity of target groups. Despite extremely professional efforts on the part of a great many individuals and institutions, the view of cultural mediation as a service to the public – rather than as a series of short-term one-off offerings – is only slowly gaining ground. How can one put in place cultural mediation which, in accordance with its genuine mandate, is target-group oriented and not developed with a dependency on the artistic sector? How are the various visions of artists and cultural organizations to be reconciled with an approach that takes urban geographic and socio-cultural factors into account?



As a new form of established cultural and artistic intervention, cultural mediation can be seen as a challenge to rethink the inner workings of the cultural system: How can cultural mediation competence centres be coordinated with the institutions existing in the individual cultural domains? How can the array of artistic strengths and qualities be harnessed together to put them in the service of the population? With its specific features, cultural mediation is triggering an interesting dynamic in the cultural system. How the public sector responds to these questions will reveal a great deal about its reactive capacity.

Dr. Anne-Catherine Sutermeister is a university lecturer, and the Director of the Research Institute for Art and Design at Geneva University of Art and Design.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 7: Research on Cultural Mediation – Between Demonstrating Effects and Scientific Impartiality

“Cultural heritage institutions are increasingly seen as instruments for government policies on social inclusion, cohesion and access [...] and required to present evidence of their performance. [...] Funding levels across the sector are contingent on being able to present such evidence.” (Brown 2007)

In Text 6.RL, we pointed out that research in the field of cultural mediation is a comparatively recent phenomenon. The last 15 years have seen increasing efforts towards research-based analyses of current practices and a differentiated historiography. Traditionally scepticism vis-à-vis theory has prevailed in the education professions (Patry 2005), but recently more and more individuals working in the cultural mediation field have become interested in new stimuli, conceptual analyses and augmentation for the formation and substantiation of their practices. For example, in 2012 an Austrian virtual “salon” focusing on cultural mediation theory was established, → [Salon Kulturvermittlung](http://salon-kulturvermittlung.at).

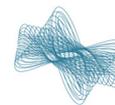
→ [Salon Kulturvermittlung](http://salon-kulturvermittlung.at) <http://salon-kulturvermittlung.at> [10.10.2012]

→ [Anderson 2000](http://www.cultivate-int.org/issue2/networked) <http://www.cultivate-int.org/issue2/networked> [10.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0701.pdf

Text 7.5 mentioned the tension that exists in cultural mediation between legitimization efforts and the aspiration of unbiased research in cultural mediation. Below, the research field will be described from this viewpoint in greater detail.

“Visitor orientation” has emerged as a key concept in the debate about the future sustainability of publicly funded cultural institutions. At the turn of the 21st century, David Anderson (then Director of Learning and Visitor Services at London’s Victoria and Albert Museum, now General Director of National Museum Wales) spoke of a museum’s switch from being “object focused” to “user focused” (→ [Anderson 2000](#)). Current position statements put forth by the management of cultural institutions in the German speaking region are aligned with Anderson’s statement, for instance, in the search for a position “between education on culture and cultural marketing” (Mandel 2005) and in the interest in arts and cultural mediation (Kittlausz, Pauleit 2006).

The notion of visitor orientation is coupled with the concept of cultural institutions as societal learning venues, in which the situation outside of schools and universities is taken as an ideal model for self-motivated “lifelong learning” (John, Dauschek 2008), with the associated transfer effects on the individual’s willingness to perform and social behaviour. Accordingly, a considerable share of the research activities in the field of cultural mediation is framed along those lines. As the quotation introducing this section suggests, the greater the emphasis on transfer and educational effects in rationales for the public funding of cultural institutions, the more imperative



becomes the pressure to demonstrate those effects. Another part of the research being done concentrates on the evidence and the promotion of the → reproductive function of cultural mediation. In this area one finds primarily assessments of cultural mediation projects' educational effects on participants or tests of displays, performance venues and infrastructures with a view to the ways they can be used by visitors and the aims of optimizing utility and expanding audiences (for examples in the museum sphere see the offerings of the working group for empirical education research → Arbeitsgruppe für empirische Bildungsforschung).

Evaluations and surveys are the most commonly found and also the oldest form of research examining cultural mediation. As early as in the 1940s, there were studies conducted in the United Kingdom and in the USA which examined the educational mission of museums and their status quo in the area of cultural mediation; they were funded both by governmental agencies and associations (Low 1942) and as individual initiatives by people who wished to rethink the role of museums (Wittlin 1949).

The methodology of audience research includes both investigative methods¹ drawn from cognitive psychology, such as “thinking aloud” (Dufresne-Tassé, Lefebvre 1994), in which the visitor is motivated to participate as a subject in an experimental set-up, and quantitative and qualitative investigative methods drawn from social and market research, i.e. focus groups, observation of visitor behaviour and surveys designed to record their demographic data and attitudes. One recent example drawing on neuroscience, cultural sociology and artistic processes to examine a question of marketing strategy is the study → eMotion (Tschacher et al. 2012), conducted out of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Northwest Switzerland in a partnership with the art museum Kunstmuseum St. Gallen.

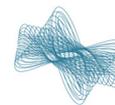
Basically, two distinct perspectives can be distinguished in audience research: one, the older historically, see visitors as forming a more or less homogenous group whose needs and behaviours can be described, and whose learning gains can be measured. The other, prevalent since the 1990s, sees visitors as a heterogeneous group whose members actively interpret content and take in cultural institutions in a performative fashion. From this perspective, research is understood as an activity which interprets and construes meaning rather than one which describes it objectively (Harrasser et al. 2012, p. 15). The lattermost approaches have also been used to obtain evidence of effects. Against this backdrop, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill at the School of Museum Studies of the University of Leicester, working on a commission from what was then the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, developed the instrument known as the → Generic Learning Outcomes (Hooper Greenhill 2007). Her objective was to provide a tool which state-supported museums, libraries and archives could use to obtain the required evidence of effects. The tool is designed to enable the institutions

→ reproductive function of cultural mediation see Text 5.2

→ Arbeitsgruppe für empirische Bildungsforschung <http://www.arbeitsgruppe-heidelberg.de/> [7.12.2014]

→ eMotion <http://www.mapping-museum-experience.com> [10.10.2012]

→ Generic Learning Outcomes <http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/toolstemplates/genericlearning> [10.10.2012]



themselves to conduct surveys which depict various dimensions of informal learning classified within six categories, including, for instance, “learning and understanding” and “values and dispositions”.² Two years after the study was published, about half of all English museums were using the Generic Learning Outcomes. They have since spread within the German speaking region as well (e.g. in the children’s museum → *Frida und Fred* in Graz, Austria, through a partnership with the → *University of Graz*). The Generic Learning Outcomes approach does consider audiences as active and heterogeneous, but one has to point out that although it provides potential opportunities for self-reflexivity on the part of institutions and cultural mediators (or users), the instrument is difficult to reconcile it with the aspiration of impartiality and being receptive to unanticipated outcomes, key criteria for scientific work. This is true above all when the continuing existence of the institutions under study is implicitly or explicitly tied up with a favourable assessment of its educational effects (Loomis 2002). In such cases, research is sometimes difficult to distinguish from services rendered, since the positions and intentions of the commissioning body are seldom made the subject of analysis or criticism. Moreover, the level of self-reflexivity involved is also frequently minimal – e.g. with respect to the → *normative positions* introduced by the analysis categories used. Thus they have not kept pace with the “reflexive turn” (Bachmann-Medik 2006), i.e. they do not involve critical self-analysis with respect to the scientific aspiration to produce an accurate depiction of the truth, or with respect to the authority and power of the researchers and their effects on knowledge production, despite the fact that self-reflexivity of this kind has been an established element in the scientific approach for several decades. Hence, rather than tending to contribute to an understanding of cultural mediation within the field as an independent and critical practice, they may be in danger of subordinating it to institutional and political objectives (Mastai 2007).

However, growing numbers of research projects on cultural mediation are based on the reflexive turn. Many retain the established constellation of researchers and subjects but attempt to provide a critical analysis of culture, its institutions and mediation practices rather than evidence of effects. One such is the project “Science with all Senses – Gender and Science in the Making”, which used ethno-methodological means to investigate knowledge acquisition of children in Vienna museums based on categories of class, ethnicity and gender (Harrasser et al. 2012).

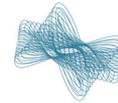
Other projects present themselves as attempting to use → *action research* to intensify the ties between research and development of cultural mediation by involving cultural mediation practitioners as researchers. There are also approaches which liberate visitors from their role as subjects and draw on their work and thoughts to design research. For instance, the Swiss project investigating aesthetic communication in children’s theatre “Ästhetische

→ *Frida und Fred* http://www.fridaundfred.at/cms/5780/Evaluierung_und_Forschung [7.10.2012]

→ *University of Graz* http://www.uni-graz.at/weiwww_tagung_outcome_vortrag-schrittesser.pdf [7.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0702.pdf

→ *normative positions* see Text 3.RL

→ *action research* see Glossary



Kommunikation im Kindertheater” used creative writing, drawing and other free design media to learn about the individual perceptions of children during a theatre visit both through observation and through the children’s own articulations (Baumgart 2012). In one nation-wide, model programme with an integrated research track in England entitled → [enquire](#) (2004–2011), artists, school pupils, students, scholars, teachers and gallery mediators worked together under the motto “learning in galleries”. During the programme, young people developed experimental interpretive tools for working with audiences. The projects were designed to draw on the work of school children while, at the same time, studying their learning behaviour and the dynamics of the partnerships between museums and schools. They also examined the authority of museums to interpret their traditional education practices. One project which takes a close look at that lattermost aspect is → [Tate Encounters: Britishness and Visual Culture](#) (Dewdney et al. 2012), conducted by the Tate Britain from 2007 to 2010 in partnership with London South Bank University and the University of the Arts London. In that project, a research group composed of scholars, museum staff and students with a migrant family background, in the broadest sense of that term³, examined how → [Britishness](#) is constructed within the museum’s curatorial practices and collection. Its results fundamentally challenge the museum’s → [cultural diversity policy](#) and open up prospects for changing the educational and curatorial work in exhibition institutions. The investigators behind Tate Encounters were familiar with the approaches of → [critical museology](#) and attempted to rethink institutional practice on that basis. The project attempted to make the hierarchies between researchers and their subjects and between teachers and learners transparent and conduct the “audience research” described above as “research in partnership with audiences”. In that context, the treatment and consideration of the inevitable hierarchies between professional researchers and participants from other fields was an integral component of the work. For instance, the young adults involved underwent methodological training as “co-researchers”. Similar projects have taken place in the German-speaking region in recent years too. For instance, the research project on the cultural mediation at documenta 12 was committed to this aim (Wieczorek et al. 2009; Mörsch et al. 2009). Education was declared as one of three leitmotifs of the d12 by the curators of that international contemporary art exhibit. The result was a cultural mediation concept which put the dialogue about art and the debates about education before the authorized transmission of knowledge. Cultural mediation was seen as a “critical friend” (Mörsch 2008) in its relationship to the exhibit. Twenty of the freelance cultural mediators conducted a team research project which used cultural mediation methods – as research, as performance and as intervention – in an attempt to conduct analyses designed to foster change in the practice of cultural mediation and its relationships with its surroundings, to engage in “radical

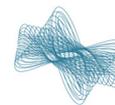
→ [enquire](http://www.engage.org/enquire) <http://www.engage.org/enquire> [7.12.2014]

→ [Tate Encounters: Britishness and Visual Culture](http://process.tateencounters.org) <http://process.tateencounters.org> [10.10.2012]

→ [Britishness](#) see Glossary

→ [diversity policy](#) see Glossary

→ [critical museology](#) see Text 5.RL



research” (→ *Malo 2004*, → *Graham 2010*). This example makes it clear, if it was not already, that one aim of research approaches like this in cultural mediation is to → *empower* the people taking part. This is also evident in the 2009–2011 “Kunstvermittlung in Transformation” [Art Mediation in Transformation] project, a collaborate project based on action research involving four Swiss universities of the arts and five museums, which aimed at working with practitioners to improve art mediation practices in museums on the basis of research and increase the engagement of universities with the field. At the end of the project, many of who had been involved indicated that the status of the cultural mediation in their institutions had improved. One of the museum professionals described finding that referring to the research context made it easier for her to motivate her team to experiment with practices and think about theoretical issues.⁴

Practical research does not offer an escape from the tension between the desire to document the effects sought and the aspiration of scientific impartiality. However, it can foster the development of the reflexive abilities in the field of practice, produce applicable outcomes and thus contribute to the field’s development while neither putting itself at the service of institution and cultural policy imperatives nor simulating indifference to those imperatives. Accordingly, it has the potential to continue the productive use of the existing fields of tension at the research level as well.

1 See for example the publications and projects of the Psychological Aesthetics and Cognitive Ergonomics research focus at the University of Vienna or the International Association of Empirical Aesthetics → <http://science-of-aesthetics.org> [14.10.2012]

2 For a detailed list and critique of these categories → see Text 3.RL.

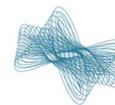
3 Participation in the research project was subject to two conditions: The students had to come from a family which immigrated to England (it did not matter where) and had to be the first person from their family to attend a university.

4 At another museum, a three-year position of “curator for education” was established → see Text 5.RL.

→ *Malo 2004* <http://transform.eipcp.net/transversal/0406/malo/en> [10.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0703.pdf

→ *Graham 2010* <http://www.readperiodicals.com/201004/2010214291.html> [10.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0704.pdf

→ *empowering* see Glossary entry on self-empowerment



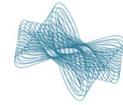
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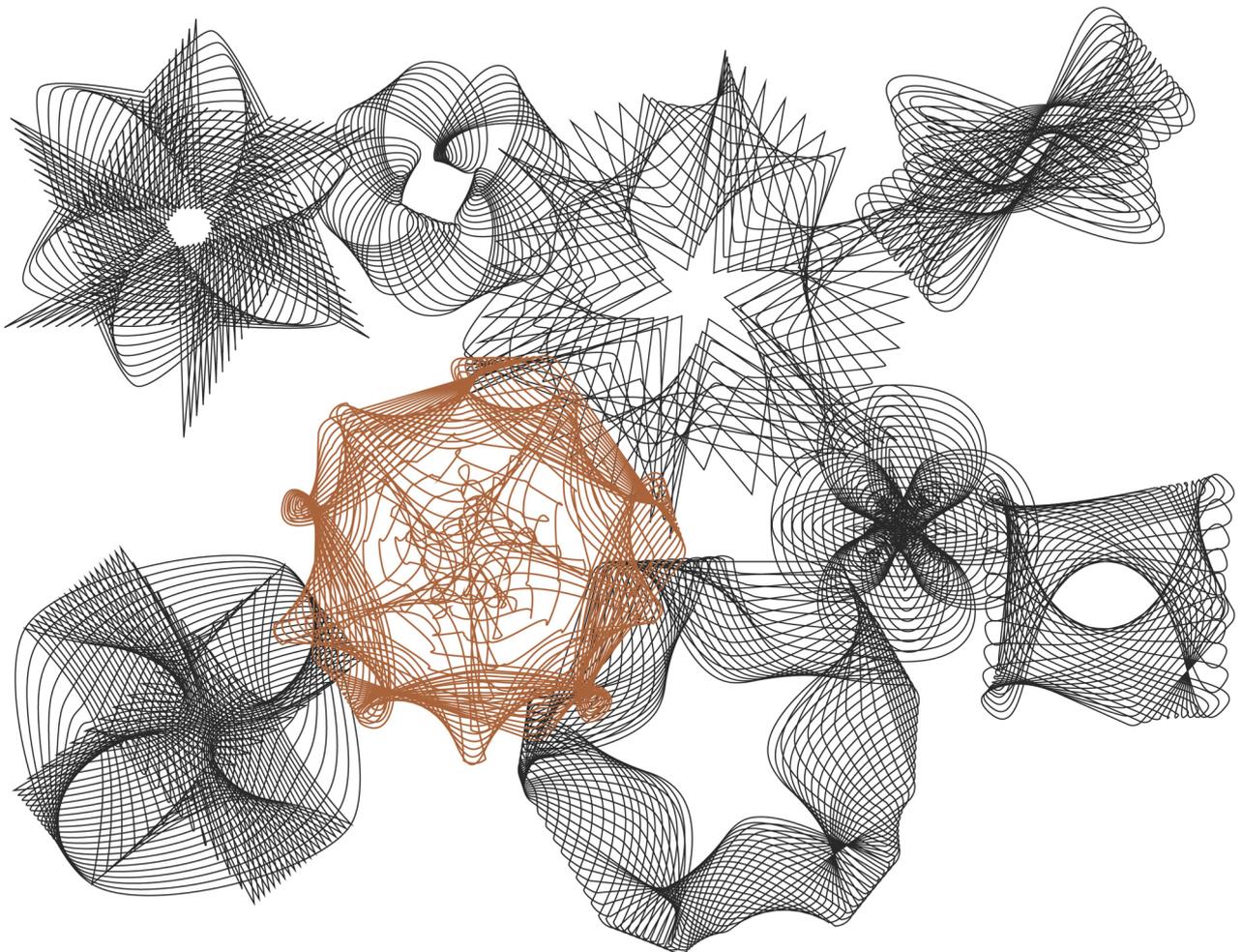
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Links:

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- enquire programm, England: <http://www.engage.org/enquire> [7.12.2014]
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Time for Cultural Mediation

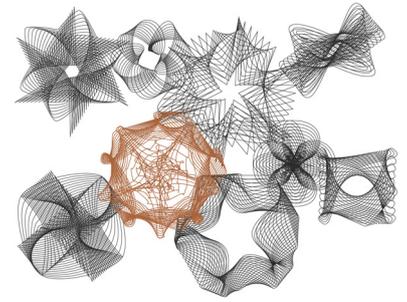
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?**



- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
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- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who "does" Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?



8.0 Intro

Accompanying the increasing degree of differentiation in cultural mediation as a field of research and practice are debates about quality. In this context cultural mediation professionals point out that "the process of ascribing quality is a normative one: it is bound up with individual and social values." (→ *Fuchs 2010*). The evaluation of cultural mediation is therefore always also a political act: which objectives, artistic and educational concepts come to the fore in an assessment depends on who possesses the power of definition [Deutungsmacht].

The example below is intended to illustrate how the situation and interests of the assessor determine the assessment of quality:

Suppose that the director of a cultural centre devoted to literature believes that a cultural mediation project is successful when many of the participants become regular visitors to the centre. The mediator responsible for the project wants quality to be measured on the basis of time and materials planning or on the level of satisfaction of the individual participants. The participants might assess quality based on the mediator's charisma, the personal meaning they found in the project or the extent of their enjoyment. One of the mediator's colleagues might deem the project too conformist, while the managing director of the centre is primarily excited about how inexpensive it was. The author of the work at the project's focus might be offended because she feels the treatment of her art was too superficial. The funding agency's representative might note approvingly that the project generated a larger than normal audience for the centre, while actually sharing the author's scepticism, because of what he feels he owes to his passion for new literature and because he believes deep down that high-quality literary art can never find more than a few interested readers.

This chapter looks at the current debate about quality in cultural mediation and at the criticism of quality management's introduction into the field. It then puts forth sets of criteria specific to cultural mediation's various functions for discussion. The text For Reading at Leisure focuses on issues relating to the evaluation of cultural mediation as a critical practice. It also discusses certain aspects of quality, drawing on examples from the projects described in the → *case studies*.

→ *Fuchs 2010* http://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Qualitaet/BKJ_Studie_Qualitaet_web.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE080001.pdf

→ *case studies* see Texts CS1 and CS2 under the heading Service



8.1 Quality in cultural mediation: current activities

In recent years, many countries have seen professional societies, associations, institutions and research centres begin to address the issue of quality in cultural mediation. One result of such activity has been the formulation of framework specifications, in the form of guidelines or criteria lists. Examples include funding institutions like Pro Helvetia, which have formulated criteria in order to make the basis for their cultural mediation funding decisions transparent to the public or → [mediamus](http://mediamus.ch/web/de/rubriken/grundsatzpapiere-mediamus), the Swiss professional association for museum education which published a trilingual occupational profile containing implicit quality criteria. The French association of → [médiateurs culturels](http://www.imp-actes.fr/IMG/pdf/Charte_de_la_mediation_culturelle.pdf) and its → [German-speaking association](http://www.museumbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefts/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/Qualitaetskriterien_Museen_2008.pdf) have developed charters of professional ethics and quality guidelines.

Another result of the emphasis on quality seen in many countries, including in Switzerland of late, has been the launch of a growing number of quality development measures: e.g. the creation of prizes, such as the award for musical education offered by network → [Netzwerk Junge Ohren](http://www.jungeohren.com/jop), the → [Cultural Mediation Prize](http://www.so.ch/departement/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungen/preise/2011.html) of the Swiss canton of Solothurn and, to provide a non-Swiss example, the United Kingdom's → [Marsh Award for Excellence in Gallery Education](http://engage.org/projects/marshawards.aspx). Other such measures include a growing number of → [advanced training courses](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch) in all cultural domains and of symposiums to enable cultural mediation professionals to exchange experiences and knowledge – an example for Switzerland here would be the annual conferences held by → [mediamus](http://mediamus.ch) or those of the theatre education association → [Theaterpädagogik Schweiz](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch). Also noteworthy are the relevant and ever more numerous → [activities at the universities of the arts](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch), teacher training universities, and other universities, often carried out in partnerships with cultural institutions or the → [forums](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch) on cultural mediation, which Pro Helvetia organized jointly with certain other funding organizations.

One can also find examples of the systematic implementation of quality management processes intended to improve and monitor operational processes, primarily at the interface of cultural mediation and music. The music school association → [Musikschulen Schweiz](http://www.musikschulen.ch), for example, developed its own nationally recognized certification system called “quarte”.

Finally, there have been studies and research projects which are working on approaches to evaluation appropriate for addressing the challenges of assessing quality in the heterogeneous field of cultural mediation. One example currently much spoken of is the international study on music education “Exchange – die Kunst, Musik zu vermitteln. Qualitäten in der Musikvermittlung und Konzertpädagogik” [Qualities in Music Mediation and Concert Pedagogy] by Constanze Wimmer, published in German and English [in summary] in 2010 (→ [Wimmer 2010](http://www.wimmer2010.de)).

In her study, Wimmer emphasizes that quality is not “something quiescent or self-contained, but rather it is a process which is continually

→ [mediamus](http://mediamus.ch/web/de/rubriken/grundsatzpapiere-mediamus) <http://mediamus.ch/web/de/rubriken/grundsatzpapiere-mediamus> [18.2.2012]

→ [médiateurs culturels](http://www.imp-actes.fr/IMG/pdf/Charte_de_la_mediation_culturelle.pdf) http://www.imp-actes.fr/IMG/pdf/Charte_de_la_mediation_culturelle.pdf [5.7.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE080101.pdf

→ [German-speaking association](http://www.museumbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefts/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/Qualitaetskriterien_Museen_2008.pdf) http://www.museumbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefts/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/Qualitaetskriterien_Museen_2008.pdf [5.7.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE080102.pdf

→ [Netzwerk Junge Ohren](http://www.jungeohren.com/jop) <http://www.jungeohren.com/jop> [4.7.2012]

→ [Prize for Cultural Mediation of the Swiss canton of Solothurn](http://www.so.ch/departement/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungen/preise/2011.html) <http://www.so.ch/departement/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungen/preise/2011.html> [5.7.2012]

→ [Marsh Award for Excellence in Gallery Education](http://engage.org/projects/marshawards.aspx) <http://engage.org/projects/marshawards.aspx> [4.7.2012]

→ [further training offerings](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch), see Text 7.3

→ [mediamus](http://www.mediamus.ch) <http://www.mediamus.ch> [24.8.2012]

→ [Theaterpädagogik Schweiz](http://www.tps-fachverband.ch) <http://www.tps-fachverband.ch> [24.8.2012]



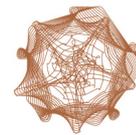
rendered more precise in the discussion and evaluation of the stakeholders.” In the summary of her results, she defines three quality dimensions in music and concert education, which lend themselves to being transferred to other domains of cultural mediation as well: structural quality, which concerns in-house cooperation and communication, funding, project management and collaboration with cultural and educational institutions; process quality which has to do with the artistic and educational concept and opportunities for audience/participants participation; and finally product quality, which assesses artistic and educational execution. This section draws on these quality dimensions in an attempt to formulate principles to guide the evaluation of cultural mediation.

→ *activities at universities* <http://www.tanztagung.ch> [18.2.2013], see Resource Pool his is hardly surprising, as such project MFE080103.pdf; http://www.hkb.bfh.ch/fileadmin/Bilder/Forschung/FSP_IM/Veranstaltungen_IM/Programm-Die_Kuenste_in_der_Bildung.pdf [20.8.2012], see Resource Pool MFE080104.pdf; http://www.samp-asmp.ch/downloads/zhd_k_musikvermittlung_tagung.pdf [20.8.2012], see Resource Pool MFE080105.pdf

→ *Cultural mediation forums* <http://www.kultur-vermittlung.ch/de/infotek/materialien/tagungsunterlagen.html> [22.8.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE080106.pdf

→ *Musikschulen Schweiz* http://www.musikschule.ch/de/25_qualitaetsmanagement/00_qualitaetsmanagement.htm [4.7.2012]

→ *Wimmer 2010* <http://www.kunstdervermittlung.at> [16.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0801.pdf



8.2 Critiques of quality management in cultural mediation

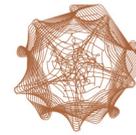
Quality management is a business administration approach adopted by European managers in the 1990s. Although one now encounters “quality” as an evaluative term used to describe suitability for purpose or degree of excellence applied to any form of process – up to including “quality of death” – until about twenty years ago its use in German was chiefly limited to the context of products (goods and services). The spread of this term can be seen as an outcome of an increasing trend towards the economization of all areas of life. As we have shown in connection with the → *critique of the concept of the target group*, here again one must ask whether a quality imperative in cultural mediation implies that cultural mediation is some form of commodity. Arguing against such a construction would be an understanding of cultural mediation as an autonomous cultural practice aiming at the production of relationships, the opening of spaces for actions and questioning and changing existing conditions – and something which, like the arts that provide its subject matters, does not lend itself to a normative approach to quality.

Thus far, it has been rare for increased funding for facilities engaging in cultural mediation to be made contingent on the implementation of a quality management system. A 2010 survey study looking at quality development measures in German cultural mediation found that people working in institutions with formalized monitoring in place have less time for substantive, conceptual and educational work (→ *BKJ 2010*). Thus quality management can lead to deterioration of “quality”, undermining motivation and structures.

The definition of verifiable criteria by an external body and the coupling of subsidies with measured results is also having an influence on the content of cultural mediation. The 2010 study cited above, for example, reports that the application of common quality assessment parameters in cultural mediation, such as “[...] project organization, target group potential, networking, effect on the public, [...], sustainability”, can lead to negative assessments of experimental and open-ended projects, because the open structures of such projects do not provide much data suitable for assessment in these categories (→ *BKJ 2010*). Conversely, there is a risk that precipitous conformity on the part of the education practitioners could, by causing them to factor such parameters into their planning, impede

→ *criticism of the target group concept* see Text 2.2

→ *BKJ 2010* http://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Qualitaet/BKJ_Studie_Qualitaet_web.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE080201.pdf



the development of new concepts and encourage them to adhere to the path entailing the least risk.

Practitioners and researchers in cultural mediation are working on multidimensional approaches to assessing quality in the field. However, a review of the literature in this area suggests that most of them are basing their evaluation criteria on the → reproductive understanding of cultural mediation's function, the → legitimization of the arts as a universal educational good or → target group orientation, without questioning those norms. Critical-deconstructive approaches to cultural mediation and those which are aimed at broadening the institutions themselves are off the radar, so to speak. Thus who holds the power to define these parameters lies in each case remains a key question in the discussion about quality development.

→ reproductive understanding of cultural mediation's purpose see Text 5.2

→ legitimization of the arts as a universal educational good see Text 6.5

→ target-group orientation see Texts in 2. Cultural Mediation for whom?



8.3 Attempt to define a framework of criteria for evaluating cultural mediation

Taking into account the points of criticism presented in Text 8.2, it becomes necessary to clearly separate quality management that is directed at operating structures from the public debate about evaluation criteria for cultural mediation. While one can find good arguments for or against the introduction of the former, the latter seems inevitable in view of the growing significance of this field of work. The more important it becomes for the various individuals and organizations in cultural mediation to take a position and provide a rationale for their own actions, the more urgent becomes the question of what good cultural mediation actually is. Although everyone involved continually engages in evaluation, only those who have adopted a set of criteria clearly based on sound reasoning can render them transparent, put them out for discussion and call on other people to contribute to their definition on that basis.

For that reason, we attempt below to outline, incompletely and with no claim to universal validity, a few principles to guide the evaluation of cultural mediation with its affirmative, reproductive, deconstructive and transformative → *functions for cultural institutions*. We have not formulated criteria for the reformative function in detail, because this function consists only of an institution using the experiences it gains in cultural mediation to improve practices already in place. Drawing on the work of Constanze Wimmer (Wimmer 2010), we use the quality dimensions of structure, process and outcomes as a → *quality model*. In addition, we define the perspectives and the presumed → *objectives* of the evaluation. In this context, the perspective of the cultural institutions was taken as the example in each case. This makes it easier to understand and compare the different functions of cultural mediation. Moreover, the institutional perspective seems a particularly apt choice at the present time since many institutions are in the process of expanding their cultural mediation programmes and asking themselves how they should evaluate cultural mediation.

Again, readers should keep the following in mind while considering this attempt: "Since quality is a relational term, not one that is value-independent, its essence can only be grasped in the interplay among various influences and framework conditions." (→ *Fuchs 2010*; → *BKJ 2010*).

→ *functions for the cultural institutions* see Texts in 5. What Does Cultural Mediation Do?

→ *quality model* see Text 8.2

→ *objectives* see Text 8.0

→ *Fuchs 2010* http://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Qualitaet/BKJ_Studie_Qualitaet_web.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE08001.pdf

→ *BKJ 2010* http://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Qualitaet/BKJ_Studie_Qualitaet_web.pdf [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE080201.pdf



8.4 Criteria for a primarily affirmative cultural mediation

Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- The institution defines the specialized knowledge to be passed on.
- The institution is targeting an already interested and informed audience.
- The institution seeks to strengthen the bonds between itself and this audience with the cultural mediation project.
- The institution presents itself as a specialized organization with influence over the artistic sphere in question.

Structure

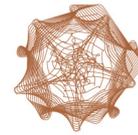
Underlying conditions relating to infrastructure, organization and staff, financial and material resources:

- The *staff for the cultural mediation* project possess the requisite expertise for the project and the pedagogical stamina to face an informed (in respect of both subject matter and methodology) and critical audience.
- *Compensation for the cultural mediator* is appropriate, at least in line with the published pay scale. The mediator is compensated for preparatory and follow-up activities.
- An appropriate *budget* exists for the materials necessary.
- Adequate *spatial resources* are in place to support the cultural mediation (e.g. rooms to work in, acoustics, seating, etc.).
- Staff responsible for the *organization, coordination and communication* of the programme have the requisite experience.
- Sufficient time is available for *planning* and *follow-up activities* for the project.
- The *flow of information* between departments is acceptable. Those responsible for the cultural mediation have *insight* into the production constituting its subject matter during design and planning phases of the project.
- The structure offers opportunities for *reflecting on the process* with all of those involved and hence for *refining the cultural mediation project* as an integral part of the institution.

Process

Pedagogic, subject-specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- The organizational *flow* of the project is transparent and straightforward for participants.
- The cultural mediation *concept* corresponds in terms of subject matter and methodology with the contents to be conveyed in a manner that is both coherent and imaginative.



- The *language* used in the cultural mediation reflects the subject-specific terminology while taking differing levels of knowledge within the audience into account. Phrases presuming advance knowledge, such as “as you are certainly all aware”, are avoided.
- The *content* of the cultural mediation comprises basic knowledge as well as background information which is new to an informed public. It makes transparent the perspectives and sources from which the knowledge comes (this applies for all functions of cultural mediation). Redundant descriptions and assumptions are avoided (“the gloomy light in the stage makes our flesh creep”).
- The *tone* and *attitude* of the cultural mediators are self-assured and friendly, neither servile nor defensive. They identify gaps in their own expertise and recognized that they are necessary for further developing their practices. Educational professionalism, in the sense of reflexivity, is a given: they have the ability to step back, and analyze their own practices, their audience and the environment of the cultural mediation.

Outcomes

Results and effects in relation to the objectives formulated:

- The *cultural mediator feels a high level of satisfaction* with the work.
- All persons involved in the institution feel a high level of *satisfaction with the collaboration* of the those responsible for the organization, coordination, production and cultural mediation; collaboration will be continued on that basis.
- The *audience feels a high level of satisfaction* with the cultural mediation project; similar projects are gladly taken advantage of by part of the audience.
- *Quantitative use* of the project corresponds to target objectives.
- The project perceptibly contributes to *reinforcing a positive public image of the institution*. The institution actively uses it to enhance this image.



8.5 Criteria for a primarily reproductive cultural mediation

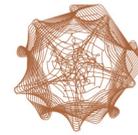
Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- The institution wants to present itself as an institution making valuable cultural goods accessible to the public.
- It wants to open up access to these goods to a wide public.
- It wants to expand its audience both qualitatively and quantitatively, particularly with respect to the “audiences of tomorrow”.
- Fundamental changes to existing contents and approaches are not intended.

Structure

Underlying institutional conditions relating to infrastructure, organization and staff, financial and material resources:

- The *cultural mediation staff* possess the subject, pedagogic and, if appropriate, artistic credentials necessary (certified and/or based demonstrably on experience) for the project.
- *Compensation for the cultural mediator* is appropriate, at least in line with the published pay scale. The mediator is compensated for preparatory and follow-up activities.
- An appropriate *budget* exists for the necessary materials, technical equipment and tools. Planning has taken into account the allocation of resources to respond to new interests if the desired audience development does occur.
- A budget exists for measures to *support reproductive cultural mediation*, such as audience research.
- The structure offers opportunities for collective process analysis with all of those involved and thereby for *refining the cultural mediation project* as an integral part of the institution.
- Adequate *spatial resources* are in place to support the cultural mediation project (e.g. rooms to work in, which can get dirty if necessary, storage space for intermediate products, work desks, seating, etc.).
- Staff responsible for the *organization, coordination and communication* of the projects have the requisite experience.
- Adequate time is available for *planning and follow-up activities* for the project.
- The *flow of information* between departments is acceptable. Those responsible for the cultural mediation have *insight* into the production, providing its subject matter during the design and planning phases of the project and have *opportunities to influence* aspects of the production relevant to cultural mediation (e.g. programme flyers, signage, access to objects).



Process

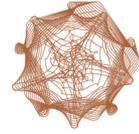
Pedagogic, subject specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- The *organizational flow of the project* is transparent and straightforward for participants.
- The cultural mediation *concept* provides a coherent framework allowing engagement with an audience without specialist knowledge to address the content of the education in an imaginative manner appropriate to the subject matter.
- The *language* used in the cultural mediation project draws on a wide variety of registers and is transparent and open, providing opportunities for a heterogeneous audience to engage. The imitation of modes of speech the audience is presumed to be familiar with (e.g. “teenage slang”) is avoided. The language is stimulating and, if appropriate, entertaining, but does not trivialize or render trite: e.g. it refrains from catering to presumed associations and preferences of the listeners (“this music is great for a birthday party”; “I’m sure you would like to show us your favourite picture”).
- The *content* of the cultural mediation consists of a mixture of knowledge and skills, brought in by the mediator, and also from the perspectives of the participants. With respect to subject matter, the project is structured in such a way that people can begin to participate at different levels of difficulty and that participants can experience an exciting shift between already familiar activities and new requirements.
- The mediator’s *approach* blends moderating and instructing dimensions and allows participants to find their own approaches. It is shaped by an active interest in extracting the knowledge and abilities of the participants and using them productively for the cultural mediation situation.

Outcomes

Results and effects in relation to the objectives formulated:

- The *cultural mediator feels a high level of satisfaction* with the work.
- *Impulses brought in by participants* are used to develop additional formats.
- All *persons involved in the institution feel a high level of satisfaction* with the collaboration of those responsible for the organization, coordination, production and cultural mediation; collaboration will be continued on that basis.



- The *audience feels a high level of satisfaction* with the cultural mediation project; similar projects are taken advantage of by part of the audience but also by new, to some extent unexpected visitors.
- *Quantitative use* of the project corresponds to target objectives and the trend is towards increasing use. New audiences visit the institution.
- The *documentation of the project* can be used for improving and publicizing the project.
- The project perceptibly contributes to *reinforcing a positive public image of the institution*. The institution actively uses it to enhance this image.



8.6 Criteria for a primarily deconstructive cultural mediation

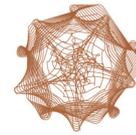
Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- The institution wants to present itself as an organization interested in subjecting its contents and position to critical scrutiny.
- The institution wants to present itself through a concept of cultural mediation as an autonomous practice.
- The institution has an interest in experimenting with the use of artistic processes in cultural mediation work.
- The institution has an interest in developing its practices and structures by engaging with a variety of different specialists and (with respect to the arts) non-specialist perspectives.

Structure

Underlying institutional conditions relating to infrastructure, organization and staff, financial and material resources:

- The *cultural mediation staff* possess the subject-related, artistic and pedagogic credentials (certified and/or based demonstrably on experience) necessary for the project.
- *Compensation for the cultural mediator* is appropriate, at least in line with the published pay scale. The mediator is compensated for preparatory and follow-up activities.
- An appropriate *budget* exists for the materials, technical equipment and tools needed in the project in question and the production associated with it, if applicable.
- *Adequate spatial resources* to support the cultural mediation project are in place (e.g. the possibility to act in the performance or exhibition spaces and if appropriate to intervene in them).
- The type of *organization and coordination* is appropriate to the cultural mediation project planned and is appropriately supported by the institution.
- Adequate time is available for *project planning* and *follow-up activities*.
- The *flow of information* between departments is smooth. Those responsible for the cultural mediation have *insight* into the production providing its subject matter during the design and planning phases of the project and it has its *own production opportunities* based on that (which, e.g., might also be put out to be seen in the exhibition space or in a public space or be heard in the concert hall or on the radio).
- The structure offers opportunities for *reflecting on the process* with all of those involved and thereby for *refining the cultural mediation project* as an integral part of the institution.
- The results of the cultural mediation can flow into *development activities in other areas* (e.g. exhibition or performance practices, outreach activities).



Process

Pedagogic, subject specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- The *organizational flow* of the project is structured in a manner transparent to the participants, they have the opportunity to contribute to decision-making and design.
- The *concept* of the cultural mediation provides coherent scope to critically consider the contents of the cultural mediation and the institution with different groups. This occurs through open exchange among participants and, if appropriate, with artistic design media.
- The *language* of the mediator introduces the tools of critical deconstruction in a manner understandable to the participants. A variety of linguistic approaches (in addition to or instead of specialist modes of discourse) are desirable and are tested.
- The *content* of the cultural mediation offers insights into institutional and art-related backgrounds and power structures. The situation of the cultural mediation itself and the language used in it are also the subject matter of discussion, since they constitute part of the institution.
- The mediator's *approach* uses a blend of moderating and instructing dimensions and allows participants to find their own approaches. It is shaped by an active interest in extracting the knowledge and abilities that participants bring with them to the situation and an interest in rendering them productive for the cultural mediation situation.
- If the cultural mediation encompasses *artistic elements*, they are used in full awareness of the state of the art of the artistic domain involved.

Outcomes

Results and effects in relation to the objectives formulated:

- The *cultural mediator feels a high level of satisfaction* with the work.
- *Ideas and impulses brought in by participants* are used to develop additional formats and if appropriate for developing the artistic practice.
- All persons involved in the institution feel a *high level of satisfaction with the collaboration* of those responsible for the organization, coordination, production and cultural mediation; collaboration will be continued on that basis.
- The *audience feels a high level of satisfaction* with the cultural mediation project; similar projects are taken advantage of by part of the audience but also by new, to some extent unexpected visitors.
- *Quantitative use of the project* corresponds to target objectives.
- The project perceptibly contributes to *reinforcing a positive image of the institution* in the eyes of the public and in expert circles (of cultural mediation, and art). It is used by the institution in its self-presentation at various levels.



- The *documentation of the project* is characterized by a high degree of reflexivity and itself uses, where appropriate, artistic design media. It can be used for improving and publicizing the project.
- Any *artistic results* are characterized by aesthetic and discursive density and coherence and by a familiarity with the state of the art of the artistic domain in question.



8.7 Criteria for a primarily transformative cultural mediation

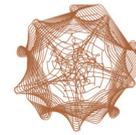
Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- The institution wants to use cultural mediation to expand its functions to extend beyond display and presentation, so that it becomes a space for collaborative production and action.
- It wants to present itself as an organization actively addressing societal issues.
- It wants to initiate partnerships in its local environment, in order to actively contribute to shaping its environment and to consolidate its role as a stakeholder in it.

Structure

Underlying institutional conditions relating to infrastructure, organization and staff, financial and material resources:

- The *staff for the cultural mediation* are well integrated within the institution, enabling them to shape institutional transformation. They possess the subject-related, artistic and pedagogic credentials (certified and/or based demonstrably on experience) necessary for the project and have experience in partnerships with extra-institutional partners.
- *Compensation* for cultural mediators corresponds to other similarly complex qualification profiles in the institutions.
- An appropriate *budget*, secured at least for the medium term, exists for following through with the partnerships.
- The internal *spatial resources* are advantageous for the project: the institution has adopted a policy for the flexible use of space and is willing to provide space to project partners. In addition, the cultural mediation uses spaces outside the institution in a coherent manner.
- The *organization, coordination and use of resources* takes place according to agreements with relevant cooperation partners.
- Adequate time is available for *planning and follow-up activities* for the project. Those activities are carried out in collaboration with the project partners.
- The *flow of information* between the cultural mediators and other units of the institution and between the institution and project partners is smooth.
- The structure provides a firm basis for opportunities for *reflecting on the process* with all of those involved within the institution and the project partners.
- The existing structures offer the possibility of *continuing the partnership*.



Process

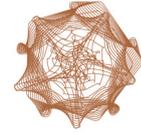
Pedagogic, subject-specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- The *organizational flow* of the project is developed in collaboration with the partners.
- The *concept* of the project is also developed in consultation with the partners.
- The *language* of the cultural mediation is aimed explicitly at helping to produce an equal playing field and trust among those participating.
- The *contents* of the cultural mediation tie in both the interests of the partners and the interests and resources of the institution. The analysis of the power dynamics and negotiating the diverging interests within the project itself figures constantly as one element of the content.
- The mediator's approach is characterized by *communicative reflexivity*: the mediator is aware of the position of power held by the institution and actively analyzes it together with the project partners. The mediator is willing to share responsibility with the project partners, take risks, and modify plans as the project unfolds.

Outcomes

Results and effects in relation to the objectives formulated:

- The cultural mediator feels a *high level of satisfaction* with the work.
- Experiences from the project are used to *develop the institution and its partnerships* further.
- All of those involved both within and outside of the institution feel a *high level of satisfaction with the collaboration*; any conflicts which arose were addressed and used to benefit the development of the cooperation.
- Creation of *new formats* and *logics of action* which become established as part of the institutional self-image.
- These changes are recognized and discussed in public. This gives rise to *new interest groups* which come into contact with the institution.
- The *project documentation* is created in collaboration with the project partners. It is characterized by a high degree of reflexivity and itself uses, where appropriate, artistic design media. It can be used both for enhancing the institution's image and to further the interests of the cooperation partners.
- Any *artistic results* are characterized by aesthetic discursive density and coherence and are based on the state of the art of the artistic domain in question. They are visible as part of the institutional production.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Regula von Büren: Quality is Decisive

When is cultural mediation “good”? What criteria can be used to measure quality in the cultural sphere? These questions are very important to the foundation Stiftung Mercator Schweiz: funding should go where it will make a big impact, generate stimulating output and create good practice examples. For this to occur, the projects have to be of a high quality. Judging whether a project is “good” or not is no easy task. Stiftung Mercator Schweiz sees three criteria as key in this kind of judgement:

Strategic Fit

The foundation supports projects which augment the role of cultural mediation in society. The foundation wants to make it possible for children and young adults to interact with cultural institutions and artists in order to dispel anxieties about contact with the arts and their institutions. The young participants should be able to actively experience and explore different forms of art.

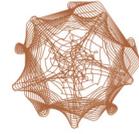
Superior Project Quality

The applicant must be skilled, the concept internally coherent, the budget appropriate and there must be a plan in place for meaningful evaluation. In addition, the project should meet a need.

Appropriate project objectives

Quantitative goals, like a specific number of participants of activities carried out, etc. are not the only dimensions of interest, a project’s impacts on the target groups are also of primary concern. The children’s satisfaction is one important aim, but so is the satisfaction of the teachers and artists involved. Internal and external evaluations provide valuable indicators in this respect.

In addition to those criteria, the foundation relies on expert reports in its evaluation of cultural projects. There are also certain guidelines which the project manager can consult for assistance (e. g. Perrot, Wodiunig 2008). The exchange of experience and information with project partners is very important, as is exchange with other foundations which provide funding



and with people responsible for projects who are pursuing aims similar to the foundation's. This encourages learning from one another – and that is an important aspect in cultural mediation. Quality assessment, the question of what "good" cultural mediation is, is a process that must be continually improved and changed through the concerted efforts of many people.

Regula von Büren is a project manager at Stiftung Mercator Schweiz. She heads the Museum and Environment division and is also responsible for the cultural mediation area of activities in the Children and Young Adults area.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Reto Luder: MUS-E – Promotion of and Through Art and Culture in Schools

The → MUS-E® projects integrate a wide range of the arts (e.g., theatre, dance, music, the fine arts and film) into the daily routine of schools. The two-year projects, taking the form of biweekly lessons, are individually tailored to the needs and underlying conditions of a school class. The concept at the core of every project in the MUS-E® programmes is designed individually in consultation with the teachers and artists. The artists bring in their artistic skills, the teachers a pedagogic competence in their subject. The principal aim of all MUS-E® projects is the social, emotional and physical sensitization of children through the medium of art and culture within a framework of holistic education. The intent is that the arts will help schoolchildren to better understand themselves and their environment and discover and enhance their own abilities and strengths.

→ MUS-E <http://www.mus-e.ch>
[16.2.2013]

Thanks to the changing artistic disciplines at the core of the MUS-E® programme, all children have the opportunity to discover their own individual expression in the arts and create their own approach to culture. The programme uses art as the language that can be understood across borders and makes it possible for all children to cope creatively with the challenges of a globalized world. An open, imaginative and creative attitude towards all participants helps the children to tap into the value of the arts as a language and acquire the associated opportunities for expression.

MUS-E® works with a wide range of institutions and applies advanced research approaches to document the effects of artistic projects. The non-profit association MUS-E Schweiz/Fürstentum Liechtenstein supports the growth of MUS-E® in connection with the "International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation" in Brussels, the umbrella organization of all national MUS-E coordinating bodies.

Taken as a whole, the MUS-E® programme is opening doors to art, culture and creativity for several thousand children in Europe and Israel. Compared to other in-school art programmes, it achieves a very high level of sustainability of impact, due in no small part to the length of its individual projects.

Dr. Reto Luder is a teacher and special education professional. He studied special education and psychopathology and serves as a lecturer for special education in the Zurich University of Teacher Education. Reto Luder is a member of the board of MUS-E Schweiz/Liechtenstein.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Murielle Perritaz: When Quality is a Luxury

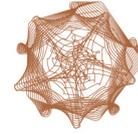
Dance mediation in Switzerland is a long way from having the framework and conditions necessary to ensure qualitatively excellent mediation. Very few institutions can boast a dance mediator or mediation programme. The training courses are not in place and dance mediators report having difficulty finding the support necessary to implement or develop their activities.

In a country in which the occupation of dancer went officially unrecognized until 2009, dance mediation is and will remain a marginal issue. Many projects aiming at improving conditions for the process of artistic creation are underway. Everyone is talking about the linkage of works and target groups, but it remains an objective which is difficult to achieve.

For that reason, platforms for dance mediation professionals have been set up. Thanks to these platforms, it is becoming possible to bring institutions, mediators and partners together to a single space to coordinate existing dance mediation activities, identify resources and skills, promote the dissemination of existing projects and encourage the creation of new ones and improve their quality.

No one can dispute that this instrument is achieving results: it is facilitating exchange and the presentation and modification of dance mediation projects in a variety of contexts. However, it has not resolved one of the central problems in dance mediation: dance is an ephemeral art form. While works in museums can be displayed for weeks or months at a time, performing art is a thing of the past after a few days. In a system where the amortization of investments is a decisive factor, the development of complete, coherent and high-quality mediation projects focusing on the work of an artist is a luxury which dance can afford far too rarely.

Murielle Perritaz is the Managing Director of the network Reso – Réseau Danse Suisse – and works as manager of a dance troupe in various fields of dance. She is also a member of staff at Pro Helvetia and a programme designer at the theatre Zürcher Theaterhaus Gessnerallee.



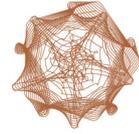
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Gallus Staubli: Cultural Mediation Makes People Happy

At the mediamus conference held in Lenzburg in September 2012 on the “Significance and Scopes of Action of Mediation in Museums”, Gottfried Fliedl (founder and director of Museumsakademie of the Universalmuseum Joanneum in Graz, Austria) referred to Article 1 of the General Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which contributed to the development of the French Constitution of 1793: “The aim of the society is the common welfare [bonheur commun]”. If we assume that the socio-political aim of cultural mediation is democratization, fostered through the education of responsible citizens who can draw on a wide spectrum of means of expression, think and act innovatively and take part in shaping the life of their society, then (good) cultural mediation ultimately serves to increase gross social happiness. Jigme Singye Wangchuck, former King of Bhutan, coined that term in 1979, telling a journalist, “Gross national happiness is more important than gross national product”. Safeguarding culture, and particularly the reinforcement of cultural values, should result in an empathetic, free and happy society in which culture can continue to flourish, along with socially just economic development, the protection of nature and good governance.

In certain cultural institutions, which are not so much democratic as time-honoured, venerable, highly hierarchical and influenced by an “every man for himself” mentality, putting a deconstructive or even transformative approach to cultural mediation into practice is an art, one which encourages the democratization process. Only when the entire institution takes on cultural mediation as its own (and not the other way around!) has the basis for good and happiness-inducing cultural mediation been created. When this is not achieved, the only thing to do is “Step out of the museum, (the theatre, the concert chambers...) and enter into risky, innovative, organizationally, substantively and strategically new projects, objectives and partnerships [...]” (Fliedl 2012).

UNESCO's 2011 “Education for All” global monitoring report identifies the following four factors as decisive for education:

1. The teaching staff.
2. The amount of time actually spent on instruction.
3. The key significance of the first years of school.
4. Facilities and equipment.



Transposing that to quality in happiness-inducing cultural mediation, we need:

1. Competent and confident mediators.
2. Good working conditions, and particularly scope for action and the vital position within the organizational structure.
3. Focus on a wide variety of target groups (cultural mediation for all).
4. Resources (personnel, budgetary, space, time).

Given all of that, cultural mediators will be able to make their users happy.

Gallus Staubli is a teacher, Head of Education and Knowledge Transfer at the Museum of Communication in Bern, a co-president of mediamus and a member of the board of the umbrella association for cultural mediation organization, Kulturvermittlung Schweiz.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Cultural Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: Good Cultural Mediation: A Synthesis of Artistic and Educational Quality

High quality in a cultural mediation project reveals itself in a successful process in which both artistic and cultural mediational factors smoothly intertwine, resulting in the formation of something new and complete. Even if the end product may not be up to everyone's artistic standards, the path that led to it can be an important one and the project a success, depending on what it was intended to achieve.

Pro Helvetia assesses the professional quality of cultural mediation on the basis of the concept submitted and the demonstrated experience of the mediators involved. One element in the text setting out the concept is a section detailing how scope will be provided for participants' decisions, experience and knowledge to flow into the project. Qualitative evaluation focuses on whether the target groups, the target effects and the cultural mediation methodology have been selected thoughtfully and are in harmony with one another.

The standards which Pro Helvetia applies to purely artistic content associated with a compelling approach to cultural mediation differ from those it applies to an art project. For instance, it might deem a music education project to be cogent and compelling because of its synthesis of artistic and educational dimensions, even if the Arts Council might not support the performance of the actual work it revolves for its own sake.

One indicator of quality in a successful cultural mediation project lies in the compelling intertwining of artistic and educational quality. Promotion of cultural mediation must take both aspects into consideration.

Pro Helvetia's interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Working Group was responsible for developing the promotion criteria within the framework of the Arts and Audiences Programme.



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 8: Quality Evaluation in Cultural Mediation – Between Self-Reflection, Empowerment and Conformity

“Who has the right to ask whom what questions; who has the right to answer; who has the right to see what; who has the right to say what; who has the right to speak for whom?” (Smith 2011)

At the end of the text about → *criticism of quality management* in cultural mediation, we suggested that there is inevitably a normative dimension to the criteria used to assess quality. We will now turn to two examples which illustrate this. In her international study on quality in music and concert education, Constanze Wimmer presents process quality as one of three → *quality dimensions* (→ *Wimmer 2010*). She writes that process quality “determines the artistic and educational concept and enables audience participation” (Wimmer 2010, p. 12). Later she defines a high degree of participation (e.g. in the sense of active musical participation of young people or of active collaboration with teachers during the planning phase of the mediation project) as an indicator of high quality in music mediation. Whether one accepts this as an indicator or not – one cannot help but see that it is not a natural and universal given, but rather a function of the objectives that Wimmer associates with music mediation. To justify this position the study provides statements about the positive effects of “cultural participation” of children and young adults on their attitude to “serious” music and about the United Kingdom’s pioneering role in cultural mediation, which has provided the models that many continental European projects look to. Thus this rationale clearly reveals that the quality criteria are based on an implicit, unquestioned concept of cultural mediation with a → *reproductive function*: the primary aim is to cultivate future generations of audiences through music mediation. (The case studies discussed in the publication also refer to the idea of culture as a tool to induce → *change in social conditions*, in addition to cultural participation, as a legitimization for cultural mediation.)

The German Museums Association and the Bundesverband Museums-pädagogik [Federal Association for Museum Education], in collaboration with the [Austrian music and exhibition mediators’ association] Österreichischer Verband der Kulturvermittler_innen im Museums- und Ausstellungswesen and mediamus, the Swiss association for mediation professionals in museums, published a German-language brochure titled → *Quality Criteria for Museums: Mediation Work*. In addition to guidance on the quality question, it provides an outline of the occupational field of cultural mediation. First, it defines the duties and responsibilities of museum mediation within the

→ *Critiques of quality management* see Text 8.2

→ *Quality dimensions* see Text 8.1

→ *Wimmer 2010* <http://www.kunstdermittlung.at> [16.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0801.pdf

→ *reproductive function* see Texts 5.1 and 5.2

→ *change of social conditions* see Text 6.7

→ *Quality Criteria for Museums: Mediation Work* http://www.museumsbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefts/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/Qualitaetskriterien_Museen_2008.pdf [16.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0802.pdf



institution framework. It then makes certain statements about the contents, → target groups and methods of cultural mediation, as well as discussion about the qualifications of staff and the underlying conditions necessary for high quality museum mediation. A definition of quality is provided for each thematic field. These definitions are given in fairly general terms and oscillate between a description of the activity and the formulation of objectives and quality standards.

For instance, the topic “methods” reads as follows: “High quality mediation work draws on a wide variety of methods to facilitate the encounter with originals and exhibition contents and with the institution of the museum in general. By doing so, it activates and promotes the cognitive and perceptive capacities of the visitors and guides them in a variety of ways to independent learning with all the senses.” The text under the heading “Target Groups” says: “mediators work for everyone and all of the museum’s visitors. The needs of those visitors vary. The museum mediation staff develop projects for all groups of the museum’s visitors and for potential new visitors, to permit the maximum possible participation in cultural mediation in the museum”. Further on in that section, the importance of trying to achieve → accessibility is stressed as an indicator of quality.

Although the brochure’s preface stresses that it is intended to stimulate further discussion about high quality cultural mediation work, the text does not contain a transparent description of the position of its authors. It offers no justification for why the entire occupational field should be guided by the affirmative and reproductive functions of cultural mediation. The result of those omissions is that the brochure presents these functions as standard – as obvious and unconditionally appropriate. As we have argued in Text 6.RL and elsewhere in this publication, cultural mediation can have very different aims than, for instance, that of facilitating the encounter with originals and the institution for as many people as possible. Accordingly, other sets of → criteria for evaluating cultural mediation are possible. Had the brochure identified the objectives being aspired to in a transparent manner and, above all, placed them in context, this would have been an indicator of the desire to make a contribution to a debate. Instead, the text refers to the development process jointly structured by the associations and the definition of the museum from ICOM (International Council of Museums) as serving as the basis for the brochure’s criteria. This at least invites the suspicion that the intent was to put forth something more along the lines of a binding definition and that this is a case of the affirmation of the power of definition. To no small degree, the brochure can also be interpreted as a contribution, in the spirit of a professional creed, in the struggle for official recognition of a traditionally marginalized field of practice as a profession to be taken seriously.

→ target groups see Texts in 2. Who is Cultural Mediation For?

→ accessibility see Glossary

→ criteria for the evaluation of cultural mediation see Texts in 8. Good Cultural Mediation?



From the viewpoint of hegemony-critical cultural mediation, the text discussed above is problematic due to the → naturalization of its arguments. Critical cultural mediation aspires to approach the normative dimension of criteria and objectives – including its own – with reflexivity at all times, and to examine them with an eye to their inherent power structures. This approach asks itself how the quality requirements imposed from outside (and also those emerging from within the field) can be rendered compatible in a constructive fashion with its → own criteria for critical practice, how the criteria set by an external entity and the framework conditions can be influenced to serve its purposes, and, if that proves impossible, at least how to offer some resistance to them. It also analyzes the type of social relationships which are created by the relatively new imperative of quality assessment and their impacts on the relationships and logics of action within the field of work. Quality assessment implies social relationships which are characterized to a substantial extent by the delivery of results, of verification and evaluation and the submission of evidence. Several questions arise in that context: is a verifying, demonstrating and results-oriented relationship what we want in our dealings with one another, for the structure of relationships and actions in the cultural mediation field? We ask again: “Who has the right [in this structure, CM] to ask whom what questions; who has the right to answer; who has the right to see what; who has the right to say what; who has the right to speak for whom”.

A declaration containing an example of thinking about quality in cultural mediation from this perspective has emerged from the field of theatre mediation. It was published in March of 2012, the month in which the second → Was geht? [What works/what's up?] symposium was held by the Arbeitskreis Theaterpädagogik der Berliner Bühnen [Working Group on Theatre Education of Berlin Stages] and the Institute of Theatre Education at Berlin University of the Arts. The declaration, which is about the knowledge and ability, and the objectives and needs of theatre mediation in theatres, was published in the wake of the symposium. Titled “Wollen Brauchen Können” [Want, Need, Can], it stresses that theatre mediators can “open a protected space for play, thought and experience” and “render oppositions and disturbances productive”, particularly “by changing perspective, adopt a productive distance”. According to the declaration, the aims are not only “culturally educating (acquiring) the theatre-goers of tomorrow, but also facilitating contact between the theatre goers of today and the artistic form of the theatre and with artists” as well as “an artistically-oriented theatre mediation. The aim, in addition to conveying contents and knowledge, is primarily to jointly generate and represent artistic knowledge”. The third section of the declaration details what is needed in the field of work in order for the aims formulated earlier to be realized. This includes ensuring “recognition of the profile and field of the

→ naturalization see Glossary

→ own criteria for critical practice see Text 6.FV

→ Was geht? <http://www.was-geht-berlin.de> [16.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0803.pdf



theatre mediator among artistic and theatrical directors”, obtaining “artistic autonomy and a specific budget for theatre mediation programmes” and establishing “an appreciation of our work with respect to its substantive, artistic and qualitative dimensions”. In connection with that final point, the declaration criticizes the approaches to evaluation currently gaining ground in the various sectors of cultural mediation: “Our work cannot be measured and evaluated in quantitative terms; it is not reflected in the number of events held. It is unacceptable to add up the workshops, audience discussions, theatre club rehearsals, project activities and the number of people who attended and present that number X to oneself and policymakers as successful cultural mediation.”

By tying these three aspects together – potentials, objectives and needs – the authors are seeking an approach to the subject of quality in theatre mediation which does not require to be assessable, demonstrable and verifiable by external bodies. This is an attempt to formulate principles which characterize cultural mediation and thereby determine the specific potential and the objectives and motives of cultural mediation in the theatre arts without reference to endorsement of outside authorities. This entails a commitment on the part of the profession to develop a qualitative and ethical framework for the field of cultural mediation on the basis of continuing discussion among specialists, without separating the two dimensions. A year before the declaration was published, on 31 March 2011, an international agreement on the conduct and ethics of theatre mediators was published (TR) by the associations → *BAG Spiel und Theater* [BAG Play and Theatre] and ÇDD (Çağdaş Drama Derneği) [Contemporary Drama Association] in Antalya. Taken together, the two documents can be seen as a reference for this development process, though both require further discussion and elaboration.

Just as cultural mediation models developed in the United Kingdom have been very influential, so, too, have the quality assessment methods developed there. Alternative approaches for evaluation are also being developed in that country. The impetus is coming for the most part from “community arts” or “socially engaged art”, i.e. partnerships between artists and various publics (most based on contracts from funding agencies or foundations) mainly for → *tackling societal problems collectively*. This is hardly surprising, as such projects tend to be subject to a particularly stringent burden of proof with respect to quality and effects and are caught up in highly varied webs of interests, in an environment where the power is not distributed equally. In 2012, the English artist Hannah Hull, working with many others, developed six → *critical toolkits*, available online, which help mediators analyse their work in artistic projects in the context of psychiatry, rehabilitation and the criminal justice system, in order to facilitate a reflective and → *self empowering* way of dealing with the differing interests. One toolkit called → *Criticality and Evaluation within a Culture of*

→ *BAG and ÇDD* <http://www.bag-online.de/aktuell/uevet-deutsch.pdf> [18.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0804.pdf (German), MFV0805.pdf (English)

→ *facing social problems collectively* see Text 1.3

→ *self-empowering* see Glossary

→ *toolkits* <http://artvsrehab.com/2012/08/14/apply> [17.10.2012]

→ *Criticality and Evaluation in a Culture of Optimism* <http://artvsrehab.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/criticality-and-evaluation-in-a-culture-of-optimism-art-vs-rehab-critical-tool-kit.pdf> [17.10.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0806.pdf



Optimism offers practical suggestions for self-evaluation as a critical practice by the people involved in projects. It includes exercises intended to depict the various interests which play into the creation of an evaluation, and the question of who would benefit or be harmed by the development of a critical description emphasizing the contradictions and complexities of the work and its conditions. Another exercise looks at the description and communication of productive mistakes and one to check whether the individuals involved approve of the concepts which the funding source has put forth for use in the evaluation, or whether there might be other concepts better suited to a self-description.

Another example of a hegemony-critical approach to evaluation processes is that of the practical research of curator, artist and researcher → *Sophie Hope*, who has consulted as an evaluator in cultural mediation and community arts since 2005. Her book *Participating in the Wrong Way?* (Hope 2011) documents her attempts → *to reclaim evaluation as a critical practice*. In her project "Critical Friends", she and a partner initiated and led from 2008 to 2010 a group of people living in London's North Greenwich district developing ways to evaluate community-arts projects in that district. The output of the work of "Critical Friends", which consisted mainly of interviews and observations of participants, was documented by the project group and published in the form of a local magazine. This rendered the work accessible to the population called on to participate in projects, as well as to the commissioners and funders. The work on the magazine also served as a tool for the group to systemize and assess the views and observations they had collected.

The conclusions elaborated on the basis of this documentation work opened up a view of the local structures and relationships and of the broader discourse and funding logics in which the projects are embedded. Though the conclusions underlined positive aspects of the projects, they also challenged, at a fundamental level, the practices of the commissioning organizations and the funding. In this sense they stand in striking contrast to the success stories which frequently result from evaluations in this field. Their critique touched on many subjects: for instance, the tension between the aim of working through a process-based and collaborative approach in the district and the requirements placed on artists to carry out a self-contained project within a relatively short period of time with no prospects of continuance; the terms and conditions of the work, which suggested that the organization was taking for granted that everyone involved would work for far more than the agreed time; the critique that the projects served to soothe conflicts rather than resolve them and use cultural activity as a substitute for political action; on through to the determination that most of the residents (including those actually involved in projects) remained uncertain as to the purpose and benefits of the projects. Against that backdrop, the evaluation put forth suggestions for improving the pro-

→ *Sophie Hope* <http://sophiehope.org.uk> [17.10.2012]

→ *to reclaim evaluation as a critical practice* <http://vca-mcm.unimelb.edu.au/events?id=445> [17.10.2012]



gramme. The group of “Critical Friends” continued to meet after the initial evaluation project was completed to question and rethink developments in the district.

Hope raises the danger that projects like “Critical Friends” risk serving as a fig-leaf if commissioning bodies fail to take action in response to their conclusions. At the time that “Participating in the Wrong Way” was being written, the commissioning organization had not yet reacted to the results of the “Critical Friends” evaluation. Thus it seems appropriate to add another question to the quotation from the American playwright Anna Deavere Smith which introduces this section: *“Who has the right to draw consequences and to take action?”*

Literature and Links

Literature:

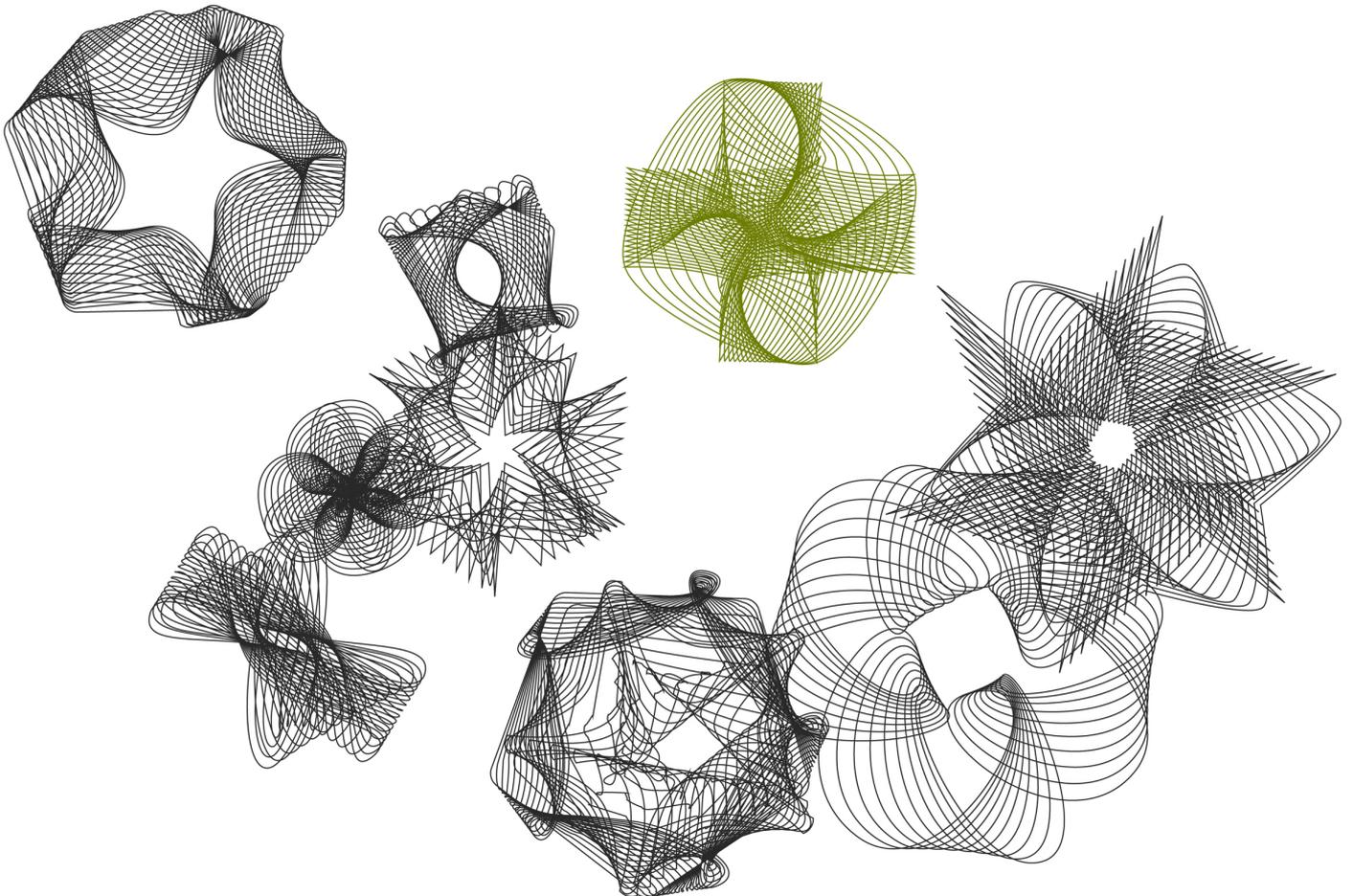
- German Museum Council, Berlin, et al. (pub.): Qualitätskriterien für Museen: Bildungs- und Vermittlungsarbeit, Berlin: Deutscher Museumsbund, 2008; http://www.museumsbund.de/fileadmin/geschaefte/dokumente/Leitfaeden_und_anderes/Qualitaetskriterien_Museen_2008.pdf [16.10.2012], see Resource Pool MFV0802.pdf
- Hope, Sophie: Participating in the Wrong Way? Four Experiments by Sophie Hope, London: Cultural Democracy Editions, 2011; <http://www.sophiehope.org.uk/research> [16.10.2012], see Resource Pool MFV0807.pdf
- Smith, Anna Deavere: quoted in Hope, Sophie: Participating in the Wrong Way? Four Experiments by Sophie Hope, London: Cultural Democracy Editions, 2011, p. 29
- Wimmer, Constanze: Exchange – Die Kunst, Musik zu vermitteln. Qualitäten in der Musikvermittlung und Konzertpädagogik, Salzburg: Stiftung Mozarteum, 2010; <http://www.kunstdervermittlung.at> [16.10.2012], see Resource Pool MFV0801.pdf

Links:

- Arbeitskreis Theaterpädagogik der Berliner Bühnen: Wollen Brauchen Können, 2012: <http://www.was-geht-berlin.de> [16.10.2012]
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel und Theater, Hannover; Çağdaş Drama Derneği, Ankara: Internationales Übereinkommen über das Verhalten und zur Ethik von Theaterpädagoginnen und Theaterpädagogen (ÜVET), 2011: <http://www.bag-online.de/aktuell/uevet-deutsch.pdf> [18.2.2013], see MFV0804.pdf (German), MFV0805.pdf (English)
- Hope, Sophie: Reclaiming Evaluation as a Critical Practice, lecture, University of Melbourne, 2012: <http://vca-mcm.unimelb.edu.au/events?id=445> [17.10.2012]
- Hope, Sophie: <http://sophiehope.org.uk> [17.10.2012]
- Hull, Hannah, et al.: Toolkits, 2012: <http://artsrehab.com/2012/08/14/apply> [17.10.2012]
- Hull, Hannah, et al.: Criticality and Evaluation in a Culture of Optimism, 2012: <http://artsrehab.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/criticality-and-evaluation-in-a-culture-of-optimism-art-vs-rehab-critical-tool-kit.pdf> [17.10.2012], see Resource Pool MFV0806.pdf

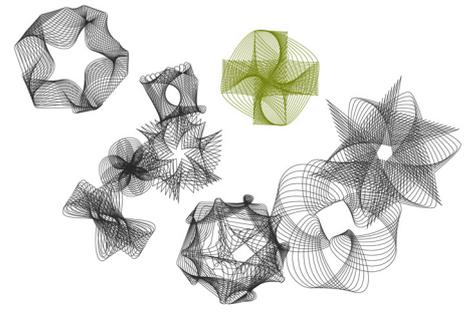
Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 **Transmitting Cultural Mediation?**



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9.0 Intro

Working together, adolescents and authors from Switzerland wrote texts and then read them aloud in a series of events across the country: the pilot phase of the literature mediation project is over. For those who are responsible for the project, a new phase is beginning, one focused on making people understand the cultural mediation project.

The various groups involved in the project harbour different expectations concerning its documentation: the young participants might like to see their texts published, and receive an album of photographs to remind them of an intense time. The funding source(s) needs a project evaluation written in the style they are accustomed to and applying their criteria, plus an overview of press reports. The institutions which hosted the readings want pictures and short texts which will work well on their websites. The authors might initially express indifference as to how the project is presented, but complain afterwards that their contributions were not adequately acknowledged. Last but not least, the project's designers need documentation demonstrating the success of their approaches to help establish them in their professional field. If, despite the tight budget, they do manage to produce some form of documentation, the variety of differing expectations and needs will result in contradictory presentations of the same project (see the project "Schulhausroman" in Case Study 1).

The texts in this section examine certain important aspects of the documentation of cultural mediation and discuss some of the problems associated with it.

The first section ends with a brief discussion of how cultural mediation is depicted in this publication. The "For Reading at Leisure" text explores the advantages associated with a reflective approach to the challenges posed by the processes of presenting cultural mediation.



9.1 Guiding questions for use in the documentation of cultural mediation

The introduction to this section might create the impression that a coherent and appropriate documentation of cultural mediation is nearly impossible given the variety of interests held by the various stakeholders. In the following we will provide a set of questions intended to guide and encourage a reflective approach to this complexity.

Before preparing materials that are intended to present a project, one should ask oneself about the influence the people or organizations commissioning them have. Does this influence necessitate conformance with a specific style of language, or might one deliberately omit the expected jargon, to offer a compelling contrast? Should certain details be skipped over in the presentation, or is transparency, even with respect to the project's problematic aspects, desired?

To make it easier for readers to get a sense of the project as a whole, certain central facts should be spelled out: What was done, how and by whom – and why? Who was involved? Where and when did the project take place? How long did it last and what phases were involved? How much did it cost and who paid for it?

It is also important to provide information about the conceptual basis of the project, not least because the position of the project's authors should be documented: Which theoretical approaches, cultural and educational policy requirements or good practice examples provided a rationale for the project? Which opened up points of criticism? Why was the project necessary and relevant today? What criteria are being applied to assess its quality?

In addition, the presentation should include a discussion of both the objectives and the results of the project. Did the objectives change over time? If yes, why? Were there any unplanned outcomes? Were the anticipated outcomes achieved?

Since cultural mediation is always about learning, the learning concepts underlying the project should also be discussed. What ideas about learning underlie the concept? What methods were used? Did, for instance, artistic approaches play a role at the methodological level?

One should bear in mind that the images used to document a cultural mediation project (and often used to announce future projects as well) are frequently recorded during the process. Who is responsible for documentation during each project phase should be clarified in advance. Participants or outsiders can serve as documenters. Usually, though, documentation tasks are done by the cultural mediators themselves. This sometimes causes confusion about roles and can lead to overwork, to the detriment of the documentation. There are pros and cons associated with every choice in this regard. An outsider might disturb the process, while pictures created



by participants will reflect their perspectives, not necessarily the one needed by the institution (and vice versa).

At this point one should also consider what type of professionalism one wants the documentation to have. Should documentation present the perspectives of the participants and reflect their desires regarding its design, or should it transform the project into a glossy brochure?

Author's rights are another question which must always be clarified: who holds the copyrights for photographs taken, and is the consent of people in photographic material required for its reproduction? Parental consent is always required if the subjects are minors. However both ethical considerations and the aspiration to transparency require that participants of any age always be in agreement with the use of their images and the way they relate to the accompanying text.



9.2 Challenges in transmitting cultural mediation

A museum's website promotes its cultural mediation programme. Two images are shown. On the left is one showing an older couple, leaning towards one another and looking at a painting on the wall of the museum. Both man and woman are → white, thin, dressed in simple but elegant clothing and very well-groomed. The way the light falls lends an extra shimmer to their silver hair. The picture speaks of cultivation, permanency, bonds between people and bonds between people and art. The link under this picture reads "For Adults". The picture on the right shows a woman in profile, seated at a table in a room with a workshop atmosphere. The lighting is diffuse, probably from a neon source. The woman is overweight; she is wearing a headscarf and a beige coat. Her features, combined with the clothing, suggest that she is an immigrant from Turkey. The way she is seated at the too-low table exaggerates the thickness of her figure. She is unpacking a box with crafts supplies evocative of a kindergarten. The link under the picture says "For Special People". The combination of text and imagery on this webpage is more than simply an announcement of a cultural mediation programme. It is also a narrative about who is seen as the natural museumgoer and who is not expected to be found there. Though perhaps well meant, the categorization of the woman in the coat as a "special person" sets her apart from the "adults". Had the picture's caption had read "an arts mediator prepares for the family workshop", the page would have had quite a different message: it would have spoken about the museum's interest in diversifying its staff. This example effectively illustrates one difficulty associated with the presentation of cultural mediation, in connection with both its promotion and its documentation. Wherever different audiences or interest groups are depicted, implicit attributions and dominant interpretative frameworks inevitably come into play.

However, it is possible to → address this problem consciously – for instance, by having the group of people being depicted collaborate in the documentation and rendering transparent the confrontation with the attributions in the depiction.

Another phenomenon associated with the depiction of cultural mediation is the repetition of a type of imagery which says very little about the process, and thus the actual substance of the cultural mediation work. Laughing or bored children sitting at a crafts table, group photos taken in a museum or theatre space, a circle of people around an individual who is explaining something: imagery like this, used to document cultural mediation for the past century or so, seldom says anything about the social energy or the complexity of the content, let alone the intriguing field of

→ white see Glossary

→ consciously addressing see Text 9. RL



tensions and processes of recognition which take shape during cultural mediation.

On a practical level, it must be noted that usually little in the way of time and staffing resources are available for careful, imaginative documentation of cultural mediation, due to the usually quite tight → cultural mediation budgets. Therefore, thus far the image archives of cultural mediation have tended to be fragmentary and spotty – particularly in comparison with the extensive archiving of cultural production.

→ cultural mediation budgets see
Text 7.2



9.3 Cultural mediation in this publication

This publication contains very little in the way of documentary pictures or project descriptions. In other words, it does not depict cultural mediation as a practice, in the ordinary sense of that term: as a space for action in which specific, even quite literally corporeal and material practices unfold at the intersection of the arts, education, the sciences and daily life.

Instead, this publication approaches cultural mediation by way of the questions and tensions that arise when people engage with cultural mediation. These “ramifications” of cultural mediation constitute a discourse which is described in this publication.

The graphic design of this publication picks up on the ideas of fields of tension and intertwining, both of which, in the view of the editor, constitute defining aspects of cultural mediation. Spirograph figures are geometrical images, playful, multifaceted and at the same time governed by strict rules. They suggest clarity, like the manual character of this publication.

Things get complicated from there however. The perfect spirograph forms lose their shape, get tangled up, fray, blur, implode. In a complex field shaped by complex and varied interests and histories like cultural mediation, creating order and describing “what is what” can never be more than a snapshot taken from one specific angle. Fortunately so, because that gives us a reason to keep working, keep thinking.

This publication seeks to inspire readers to pick up the frayed ends and reweave them, and thus contribute further toward clarifying – or, when necessary, complicating – this professional field.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Nicole Grieve: Kuverum's Annual "London to Go" Cultural Mediation Trip

The trip constitutes an inventive response to the question "How should cultural mediation, in all of its polyphony, its tensions and its potential, be shaped?" The trip offers participants an opportunity to immerse themselves in the cultural mediation methods used in London's museums and other cultural facilities, which are doing pioneering work in this area. The annual trip evolved out of a trip to London arranged by Pro Helvetia in 2008 and carried out by → *Kuverum*, an organization founded by Franziska Dürr. Two versions were offered: one, a trip for experienced cultural mediation supported by → *mediamus*; the other, for students in the Kuverum training programme.

The itinerary is designed by Kristen Erdmann, who is active in cultural mediation in the Swiss canton of Aargau. She assigns great priority to close contact with the "key players" in London to facilitate frank and open exchange.

The trip, which is modified to reflect the group of participants, has the following characteristics:

- 15 participants from various sectors of cultural mediation
- 5 intensive days
- 10 museums selected for the diversity of their collections, their size and their funding, encompassing a wide spectrum of structural conditions, positions, missions and mediation practices.
- 12–15 meetings with experts representing a range of orientations and levels within institutional hierarchies
- includes cultural mediators responsible for general programming, one particular sector, workshops, or supervising volunteer mediators
- addresses 5 types of cultural mediation, which can be combined with one another: programming with marketing-like dimensions, cultural mediation, socio-cultural and digital mediation
- delivered through a programme that rotates between presentations, discussions and workshops
- experienced in a format that provides large scope for mutual exchange, in order to present the various views, reveal tensions and facilitate individualized acquisition of content.

Like the orientation circuit in the world of maps visited during a workshop on → *Visual Literacy and Critical Thinking* at the British Library, the trip

→ *Kuverum* <http://kuverum.ch/moduldetails.php?sid=295> [2.1.2013]; <http://kuverum.ch/angebote.php> [2.1.2013]

→ *mediamus* <http://www.mediamus.ch> [16.2.2013]

→ *Visual Literacy and Critical Thinking* <http://www.bl.uk/learning/tarea/primary/mapyourworld/maps.html> [2.2.2013]



invites participants to engage actively and critically with the challenges and trends of cultural mediation.

With an accompaniment in French and Italian, this trip represents a national offering for mediators and directors of institutions and cultural funding organizations to expand their horizons or learn more about the diverse field of cultural mediation.

The trip shows that professional cultural mediation does not simplify cultural processes, but rather “disseminates” a way of engaging with continually new experiences and meanings, as Emily Dickinson¹ once described in a poem about the poetic process and its reception:

The Poets light but Lamps —
Themselves — go out —
The Wicks they stimulate
If vital Light

Inhere as do the Suns —
Each Age a Lens
Disseminating their
Circumference —

Nicole Grieve is responsible for cultural mediation at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Swiss canton of Valais. She served as co-administer of mediamus and is a founding member of Schweizerische Dachverbände für Kulturvermittlung, the Swiss Association of Cultural Mediation Organizations.

¹ Emily Dickinson: Poem no. 883, ca. 1865.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Sara Smidt: The Art Museum has Become My Power Station

Is arts mediation an art?" That was the title of a conference held in Vienna decades ago. Yes, it is. Cultural mediation is, by its nature, process-oriented: it does not write down pre-existing knowledge and then present it. Quite the contrary, cognitive processes are set into motion only upon engagement with the audience.¹ It is in the nature of the activity that this exchange is not perceptible to external parties. Even when, for instance, a workshop produces tangible outputs, a piece of woven fabric, a drawing or a rehearsed dramatic scene, the most important moments remain ephemeral and invisible.

However it is important that we find ways to present cultural mediation – or should we make do without statements like “the art museum has become my power station”?

We need tangible materials so that professionals can share their experiences and insights with one another. Not everyone should have to invent everything anew every time. Concepts which have proven effective can be modified and re-modified for use in new contexts. Documented cultural mediation is inspirational.² Documented cultural mediation also supplies arguments for stakeholders and facilitates resource optimization. To improve structural conditions, we should not argue with numbers but with impacts on people.³ Then too, documentation is at least equally important as a resonance chamber. People involved in projects can take a look back, make certain specific aspects visible, ponder further, create linkages between what they have learned and their lives and experience the power of creativity.

But how is this to be done? Joy, doubt, inspiration, these are often personal and not intended for publication. Insights are often slow to take shape and can do so without our being aware of it. How is this to be revealed and presented? On the one hand, we could develop the processes in cultural mediation anew every time and enjoy them without having to make anything visible. Enough pixels and paper have been put out there already. On the other hand, we do need trails to follow. For me, there is only one conceivable approach: the trails are an independent element of cultural mediation and take forms which are suited to the subject, people and location. That means that documentation should be part of the planning and concept from the start and resources should be allocated



for it. I sense an enormous difference between projects for which I do this, or – very often – do not. If we all documented the projects we cherish, for whatever reason, in an exciting way, the result would be a marvellous archive that inspires and does not obstruct. Our young professional field of cultural mediation needs a tailwind in the form of eloquently documented cultural mediation!

→ [mediamus](http://www.mediamus.ch) <http://www.mediamus.ch> [16.2.2013]

Sara Smidt Bill lives in Jenaz (GR) and Thun (BE) and is in charge of arts mediation at Kunstmuseum Thun; she also offers consultancy and training services through her firm MuseVM Beratung und Ausbildung; Co-president of → [mediamus](http://www.mediamus.ch), the Swiss association of cultural mediations in museums, she is also a Lecturer in Certificate of Advanced Studies in Museum Work Programme at the University of Applied Sciences HTW Chur

- 1 This applies to both face-to-face and digital mediation.
- 2 C.f. for instance the project database at → <http://www.kultur-vermittlung.ch> [16.2.2013]
- 3 More than 15 years ago, a beautifully designed photograph box with quotations from a wide variety of people involved was created during the first year of the arts mediation pilot project in Kunsthau Aarau. It won people over. Since then, arts mediation has established itself and grown there successfully.



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Ruth Widmer: Theatre in the Local Shop: Touching People's Everyday Lives with Theatre Education

There are essentially three different strands of theatre mediation: a pedagogical approach to the experience of art (educating through theatre), an instructional approach to art appreciation (educating to appreciate theatre) or a general educational approach to perception using theatre-relevant instruments (cf. Hentschel 2010).

These ways of linking theatre work and education can be put to use anywhere where people gather, to work or spend time. Theatres are one venue, but so are neighbourhood squares and streets, factory buildings available between tenancies, schools, museums, or the shop on the corner.

Theatre mediation often uses space deliberately in a way that is designed to engage the perception of participants subversively and thus encourage reflection and new insights. Thus the space becomes one of the methodological instruments, used for two purposes. One purpose is to cause the person on the other side to become active. The other is to build a bridge, so that I, the initiator and moderator of this cognitive and perceptual process, can enter into a dialogue with the widest variety of people and bring together the most diverse groups to engage in a dialogue about the widest variety of topics.

To mark the 25th anniversary of TheaterFalle [Theatre Trap], we carried out several projects in a series called "Schaufalle in Folgen" [Series of Traps on View], which illustrated the objectives and methods described above. The first project was called "Die Familie lässt bitten" [The Family Invites].¹ The second took place in Kunstmuseum Basel and was called "Die Bürger von Calais sind los" [The Burghers of Calais are unbound].²

The title "Die Familie lässt bitten" is a reference to the family of people who have worked in Theaterfalle for the past 25 years, but also to the classic situation at the start of a family festivity and, thirdly, to the venue: the familial atmosphere of a corner shop in a working class district, which is currently caught up in the early stages of a turbulent gentrification. We drew on a variety of methods in order to adequately accommodate and bring to life this multilayered meaning of the term family, and to combine entertainment with stimuli triggering reflection and new insights. The audience received headphones and was able to watch the scenes from outside and inside, some scenes were set in the street, others inside the shop. At times the public was directly drawn into the action. This made it possible for them to experience a shift between being directly involved and an almost purely voyeuristic watching. The production was not based on a play and did not even have a script. Specific themes provided its



starting point and leitmotif: for instance, the European football championship which underway at the time. The set-up was simple: a man had invited his mates over to watch television but their wives show up instead. However, there were also some other unexpected people among those who really did show up. The circle of audience and the participants expanded to include neighbourhood residents, who joined in spontaneously, out of curiosity, as observers or active participants. We used a somewhat unconventional cooking studio and we broadcasted the evening as a show on Internet radio to encourage this shift between inside and outside, from observer to active participant, further. So we combined space, a blend of media, everyday actions and theatrical improvisation to give the audience new ways seeing themselves and their neighbourhood. That is cultural mediation: working with people where they live so that they can experience the fact that theatre does relate to them and can be for them. We turned a living space into a stage.

Ruth Widmer is the founder and Artistic Director of → [TheaterFalle Basel](http://www.theaterfalle.ch) and the President of the theatre education association → [tps – Fachverband Theaterpädagogik Schweiz](http://www.tps-fachverband-theaterpaedagogik-schweiz.ch).

1 The trailer on the production → <http://vimeo.com/44470609> [2.1.2013]

2 The audio guide → http://www.medienfalle.ch/newsletter/SchauFalle_2_alle_Episoden.mp3 [2.1.2013]

→ [TheaterFalle Basel](http://www.theaterfalle.ch) <http://www.theaterfalle.ch> [18.2.2013]

→ [tps – Fachverband Theaterpädagogik Schweiz](http://www.tps-fachverband-theaterpaedagogik-schweiz.ch) <http://www.tps-fachverband-theaterpaedagogik-schweiz.ch> [18.2.2013]



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Mediation Working Group, Pro Helvetia: Transmitting Cultural Mediation

The “transmission” of cultural mediation has dual significance for Pro Helvetia: in its role as a funding agency, receiving funding requests for cultural mediation projects, and in its role as a disseminating body, feeding insights and knowledge acquired back into practice. Both roles are still in flux at the Swiss Arts Council, because the funding of arts mediation is a relatively new area in the promotion of culture.

Pro Helvetia’s primary aim in crafting funding criteria specifically for cultural mediation projects was to not to exclude any format that could contribute to improving cultural mediation practices. The guidelines for use by applicants in writing their project descriptions are designed to be open, so that innovative project ideas can be presented in the application submission, while ensuring that a comprehensive picture emerges. This balancing act sometimes means that one side or the other, the applicant or Pro Helvetia, has to request supplemental information. In the ensuing dialogue a mutual “communication” of the way each side conceives the subject emerges.

Cultural mediation projects are process-oriented. A look at the implementation process is often more revealing than the perusal of a project’s outputs. Project blogs, for example, come into play here, by allowing running documentation of the project as it unfolds (e. g. → [kidswest](http://kidswest.blogspot.ch)). Social media instruments of that kind can also help increase the degree of dissemination the project by creating networks of people engaged or interested in the project early on and seeking contact with the public.

Pro Helvetia is aware of the necessity for further action in the area of evaluation and documentation to ensure that knowledge gained in projects can flow into the developments within cultural mediation circles. In this context too, the Swiss Arts Council wants to build on its Arts and Audiences programme and cultivate an exchange of knowledge at the national level, involving both practitioners and funding bodies. This publication, and the many perspectives presented within it, represents one step in this direction. The website → www.kultur-vermittlung.ch and the newly established cultural mediation association Kulturvermittlung Schweiz also hold potential for the discourse on all aspects of knowledge related to cultural mediation.

Pro Helvetia’s interdisciplinary Mediation Working Group *was responsible for developing the promotion criteria within the framework of the Arts and Audiences Programme.*

→ [kidswest](http://kidswest.blogspot.ch) <http://kidswest.blogspot.ch> [25.1.2013]

→ www.kultur-vermittlung.ch
<http://kultur-vermittlung.ch>
[16.2.2013]



FOR READING AT LEISURE Working in a Field of Tensions 9: Documentation of Arts Mediation and its Challenges

“What has always been key with respect to representation is how and why someone is being ‘represented’, ‘depicted’, ‘presented’ or ‘rendered’, what purpose that representation serves and what remains excluded, i.e. what has been rendered invisible through visibility. It is a question of the power inherent in the act of putting forth to be seen.” (→ [Sturm 2001](#))

Documentation of cultural mediation activities often falls within the responsibility of cultural mediators and causes them, willingly or otherwise, to engage with questions of modes of representation and their effects. To depict an occurrence, one is forced to come to terms with issues relating to what description or which photograph is “eloquent”, “appropriate” or “good enough”. However, one can always adopt a more profoundly reflexive approach to documentary practices by asking oneself certain questions: Who makes decisions about the forms used to render things visible? What interests underlie those decisions? Who is being depicted and identified, and how? What is shown repeatedly and what is left out completely? Who, or what, remains invisible and unidentified due to the method and style of the documentation? And how does that which is shown become “evident” and acquire the force of proof? Fundamental to this → [critical perspective on representation](#) is the awareness that documentation does not directly depict cultural mediation. Instead, it shows and produces objects, persons and projects in a certain way. Documentation is based on the active process of selecting, designing, and showing, and thus places a powerful and challenging responsibility in the hands of those doing the documenting.¹

To explore the production of meaning and normality in the depiction of cultural mediation, we will start by looking at an example of the documentation of a family day of the kind featured in the cultural mediation programmes of many museums. Certain motifs appear pre-ordained and appropriate for the documentation of such events, others seem inappropriate and remain undocumented. For instance, the pre-event preparations and post-event clean up seldom figure in the pictures taken of family days, one seldom sees impatient or quarrelling children, very rarely do we see the tears spilled after an unsuccessful creative attempt, interruptions and waiting times, bored parents or stressed mediators. The omission of certain aspects is a central part of the representation work and production of meaning, in the same way that the repeated depiction of other aspects is. Which motifs are selected for a documentation, and shown over and over again, is primarily a question of institutionalized rules and routines of showing which aim at suitability for a specific purpose. The purpose may be that of

→ [Sturm 2001](http://kulturrisse.at/ausgaben/022001/oppositionen/in-zusammenarbeit-gangart.-zur-frage-der-repraesentation-in-partizipationsprojekten) <http://kulturrisse.at/ausgaben/022001/oppositionen/in-zusammenarbeit-gangart.-zur-frage-der-repraesentation-in-partizipationsprojekten> [21.9.2012]; see Resource Pool MFV0901.pdf

→ [critical approach to representation](#) see Glossary



addressing the “family” as a target group, that of framing the museum as a venue for a special type of recreational activity, or that of testifying to the successful implementation of a project for its sponsors. These depictions, normally intended to be clearly recognizable and devoid of ambiguity, build a limited repertoire of standard motifs shown over and over again with slight variations.²

→ classic symbols see Text 2. RL

In the context of a family day, we might find the depiction of two adults and two children standing next to each other, their backs to the camera and their bodies and eyes directed toward a large painting. It might be a guided tour for children and adults with a mediator pointing to a work of art; or it might be a studio scene, showing a child and an adult sitting at a paint-stained table and concentrating on an object they are making. These depictions are easy to decode as “art mediation” and “family” and they are often found as representations of a family day in the documentation of arts mediation. Yet the repeated display of the expected reinforces again certain meanings and conceptions.

The image shown here is a common way of representing art mediation and museum-goers in general, an appropriate caption to such an image would be: “from youngest to oldest, an entire family is engrossed in art.” But the preservation and presentation of this scene evokes other imagery as well. For instance, viewing a work of art in the original in a contemplative



stance like this is one of the ultimate
→ classic symbols of cultivation, education and bourgeois comportment (see Bourdieu 1982), and people will associate this too with the selected image as an additional level of meaning. Thus the depiction highlights a specific type of audience and

suggests a specific mode of behaviour in museums.

Even when this typical art mediation image is not explicitly labelled with “family day”, there is no question but that this “is” a family. The group of people is identified as a family automatically. The fact that we perceive and recognize groups in this way is not inherent to human understanding though, it is the effect of powerful processes at play in repeated identification in the same style and manner in a wide variety of settings.³ This repetition establishes the perception of certain constellations of people as families and by doing so creates images of “real” and “proper” families.⁴ However, this also results in the creation of boundaries defining what is normal, and thus certain constellations of people and behaviours are made identifiable as abnormal families or even denied that identity altogether – which can have serious consequences for their social, societal or legal recognition and thus the stability of their future.⁵

The depiction and identification of families in the context of cultural mediation documentation is thus tied up with the powerful and, at least



potentially, harmful re/production of normality, which must be taken into account during the documentation process. What can one safely do to depict cultural mediation? Would it be better to stop showing people at all in the context of family days? Selecting images showing only tools, rooms, products or the traces of cultural mediation work would certainly be one option. That would not stop the normalized depiction of families from continuing elsewhere. However, taking this perspective further, the documentation of art mediation represents a field of opportunity for disrupting the dominant practices of showing and labelling. For example, one can show people in the context of a “family day” who “normally” would not represent a family or one can develop alternative depictions to which the label is not obviously attached.⁶ Yet many images are more ambiguous than the depiction of a “normal family”, for instance, which is why captions are often added to the photographs selected for use in documentation. Captions are placed above or below the pictures when the authors want to highlight or clarify something. What is important or significant about the picture is made explicit: who or what are we supposed to see in the picture? When and in what context was the picture taken? What is it intended to show? This restricts the flux of meaning; the ambiguity of photographs is limited, certain ways of reading them are reinforced and certain statements highlighted. A specific visibility and identity is thus attributed to the people and situations that are shown and named.

One could see the photograph below and the comments written on it, which were created in the context of the cultural mediation project “micro-fiction” – Ist Demokratie gerecht?“ [Is democracy fair?] (2009) as an example of an alternative approach to captioning.⁷ The cultural mediators came up with the idea of having the participants write comments on the photo-



Foto © Henrike Plegge, Stephan Fürstenberg

graphs taken during the project. Participants could fill in aspects which were missing or invisible but which they thought were significant.

This assignment to add comments represents an attempt during micro-fiction** to integrate the people depicted within the documentation process for “their” project. At the same time, documenting an event collectively offers a potential way to counter the unequal distribution of power between documenters and their subjects.⁸ Instead of concentrating only on unilateral statements about

the project and its participants issued by the representatives of an institution, one can create conditions and structures which open opportunities



for creativity and for transferring the power to decide to all of those involved, thus allowing multiple voices to express themselves in the documentation. This could be done by passing the camera around within the group to document the course of a project, or meeting to review and select the pictures to be used in a publication at the project's end or – as in the example above – collectively discussing and appending comments to the photographs which have been produced.

Having participants write comments on the photographs created some scope for them to contribute or register objections at the documentation level and in doing so created a place for brief moments of friction (see Mörsch 2005) which are often omitted in documentation and which make cultural mediation the unique processes that they are. In this example, these moments are the stifling heat in the trailer during the audio editing, the names of the young people or the joking reference to discipline added by the students. These aspects do not enter into the “anticipated” depiction of the project, as, they do not obviously serve a representative function.

Intervention into the photographs like this should not be done in the pursuit of making visible all that is unseen. That would be impossible, if only because documentation is not a synonym for transparency: documentation is always a process based on the interplay between visibility and invisibility. However the addition of comments in the micro-fiction** project can be understood as a direct reference in the document to the fact that some elements are left invisible and unidentified in the project documentation. Thus the very style and form of the project documentation encourage people to think about documentation.

It would not be at all accurate to say that the scope for alternative approaches and creative activity in documentation work is so restricted that it permits only the recording, selection and (again) presentation of what is expected⁹, however it is true that the power to make decisions about what aspects of cultural mediation are put forth to be seen lies only partially with those who do the documenting. The repeated lacunae in what is visible and repeated failure to identify certain details in documentation processes can often be traced to the various interests, representational standards and institutionalized rules as well as routines associated with the presentation of cultural mediation. This also emerges in the presentation of micro-fiction**: on the project initiators' webpage only photographs, without the comments, are shown.¹⁰ In this form of depiction, the “brief moments” remain invisible to the viewers. Visualizations there function more as a sort of “photographic evidence”, furnishing evidence that the project has taken place by providing a photographic record of the people and their activities. The use of photography, an “objective” documentary medium, furthers this purpose of documentation by conveying the impression of that events are being depicted directly as they occur.



A glance through the archives of cultural mediation departments makes it clear that documentation is an area in which the mediators engaged in documentation work can input their own ideas and interests and that it is one which leaves scope open for transformative modes of representation, using experimental recording methods, participative documentation processes and a project- and process-oriented selection of documents along with a representation-critical depiction. Beyond the “documentarist” approach of legitimization and repetition of expected content, the documentation area offers the possibility of designing surprising and challenging modes of representation that tap into the potential of the medium being used and combine it with other recording processes. However, “other” representations can also be created by shifting the focus onto the ostensibly inappropriate or insignificant motifs and moments outside of the realm of the anticipated, which have gone undocumented up to now.

Inadequate access to financial or personnel resources and insufficient authority to determine design or make decisions on the part of the mediators engaged in documentation work certainly put limits on the methods they can use to creating transformative documentation, but these are not the only factors at work. The conflicts of interests and aspirations associated with the depiction of cultural mediation manifest in their documentation also play an important role.

For instance, the desire to work with participants to produce a challenging and reflexive documentation of a project can collide with the desire to lodge evidence which testifies to successful work, in order to justify a past expenditure and future resource allocation. It may collide with the representational aspirations of one's own institution, which is also interested in using the documentation of “its” cultural mediation work as a vehicle to present itself in the appropriate light. In this field of tension, furnishing documentation that is transformative will continue to pose a challenge, both daunting and worthwhile, for cultural mediators.

¹ Sociologist and art theorist Stuart Hall describes representation as “active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping: not merely the transmitting of an already-existing meaning, but the more active labour of making things mean.” (Hall 1982, p. 64).

² See also the findings of the SNSF research project “Showing Gallery Education” 2011 – 2013, → <http://iae.zhdk.ch/iae/deutsch/forschung-entwicklung/projekte/kunstvermittlung-zeigen-repraesentationen-paedagogischer-museumsarbeit-im-feld-der-gegenwartskunst-laufend> [22.2.2013].

³ E.g. in the spheres of the mass media, medicine, politics, science, the arts and culture or law – what Stuart Hall calls the “regimes of representation”.

⁴ See the poster “When they say family” of the public art project “Hey Hetero!” (2001) by Deborah Kelly and Tina Fiveash, which frames characteristics like whiteness, absence of disability, middle-class or a peaceful togetherness as attributes of the standard image of a family while critically underlining the normality and regularity of a heterosexual couple in a family setting. See → http://tinafiveash.com.au/hey_hetero_when_they_say_family.html [21.9.2012]



- 5 For example, teenage mothers and fathers, parents with physical or cognitive impairments or non-heterosexual partnerships.
- 6 For an inspiring example of cultural mediation work that challenges normality and assumptions about “families” see the project “Familienstudio Kotti – oder die Möglichkeit sich gemeinsam neu zu erfinden” [Family studio Kotti – or the possibility of reinventing ourselves collectively] realized by Bill Masuch as part of the Kunstcoop© group of projects. The project challenged and shifted the dominant images of families by creating photographic portraits of new “families” which were formed spontaneously on a sidewalk in Berlin, made up of people who happened to pass by; its effectiveness is in great part due to the use of painted backdrops emphasizing the artificial nature of “family situations” and their depiction (see NGBK 2002, p. 131 f.).
- 7 A partnership between the art and media technology centre in Karlsruhe, ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie and the secondary school Windeck Gymnasium Bühl under the initiative “Cities in the Year of Science”. Concept, realization and photo rights: Henrike Plegge, Stephan Fürstenberg.
- 8 Questions associated with a critical approach to representation in this context: “Who represents and who is represented? Who is visible and acknowledged? Who is not visible? Who is entitled and able to represent herself? Who is entitled and able not to represent herself? Who is authorized to speak for others and represent others? Who is considered the legitimate spokesperson for a group? Who is considered not to be a legitimate spokesperson?” (Brodén, Mecheril 2007, p. 14); → <http://pub.uni-bielefeld.de/download/2306439/2306444> [2.1.2013], see Resource Pool MFV0902.pdf.
- 9 In this context the conditions can be far less restrictive than, for instance, would be the case in connection with “reports” for sponsors, who often insist on fixed report formats.
- 10 See → http://www.staedte-im-wissenschaftsjahr.de/2009/tp_karlsruhe_schuelerforschung.html [21.9.2012].

Literature and Links

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Links:

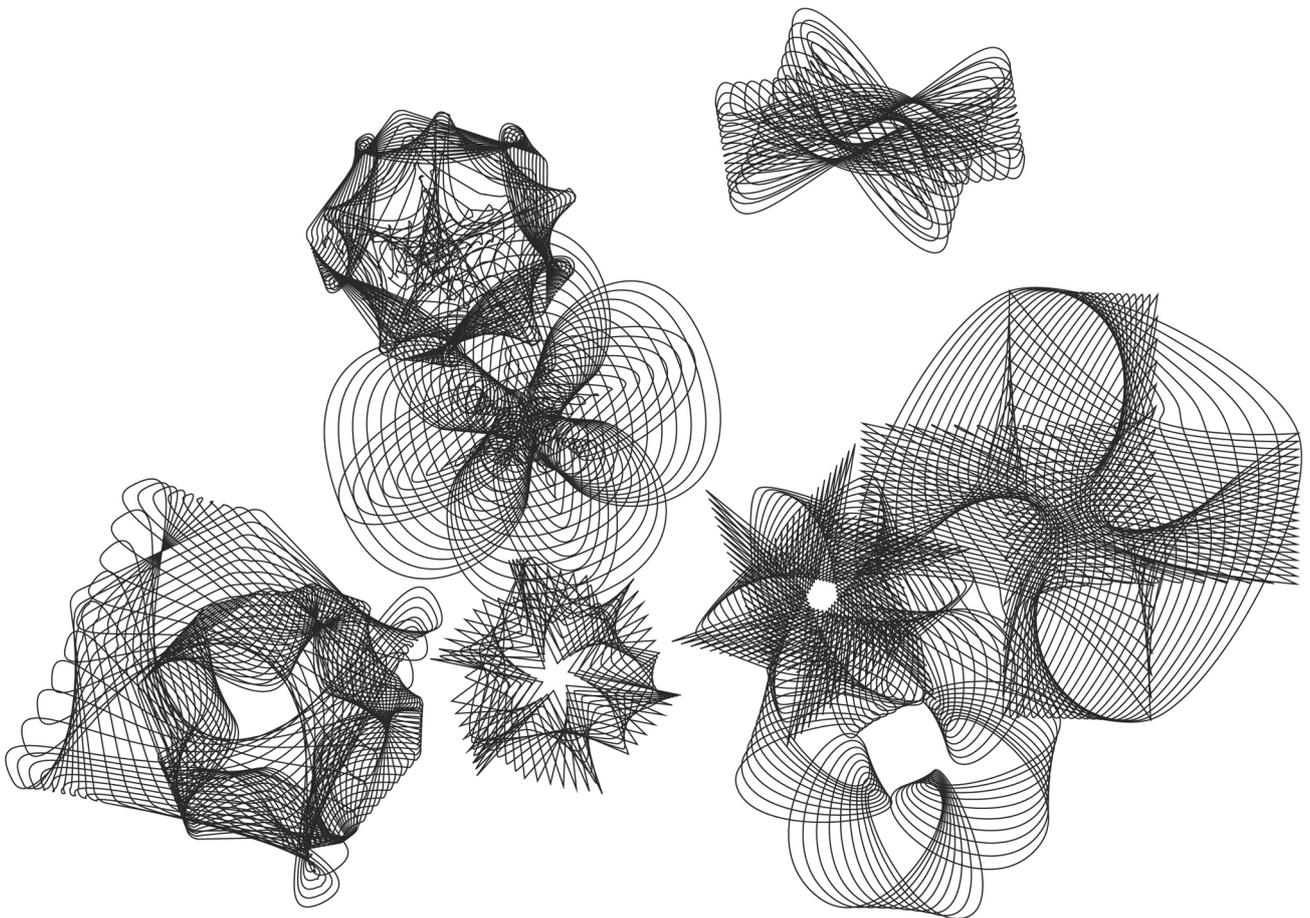
- Year 11 of Windeckgymnasium, Karlsruhe; ZKM Karlsruhe: "Ist Demokratie gerecht?": http://www.staedte-im-wissenschaftsjahr.de/2009/tp_karlsruhe_schuelerrecherche.html [21.9.2012]
- Kelly, Deborah; Fiveash, Tina: "Hey Hetero", 2001: http://tinafiveash.com.au/hey_hetero_when_they_say_family.html [21.9.2012]

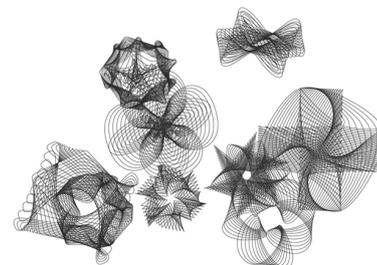
Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Service:

cs Case Studies





CASE STUDIES Intro

Purposes of the Case Studies

The two texts that follow describe and analyse four cultural mediation projects in the domain of literature taken from four different countries. These case studies are intended to give concrete form to the issues discussed in the texts "Quick Reads" and thus to demonstrate how this publication can be used as an analytical instrument for classifying and developing cultural mediation projects. The case studies do not give equal attention to all of the key issues discussed in this publication; instead, they focus on the aspects which appear particularly significant in relation to the specific project under analysis. Links connect points in the analyses to the relevant discussion in the main texts. The case studies are structured as comparative analyses of two projects each. These analyses are based on publicly available informational material and make no claim to comprehensiveness. It was possible to conduct interviews with the projects' initiators in order to clarify individual questions, but nonetheless, this approach does have its limitations. For instance, the case studies do not provide detailed information about actual implementation of the projects, except where the documentation of the projects made that feasible. Thus the analyses were unable to address aspects in which the project as presented in its documentation may have differed from what actually happened during implementation.

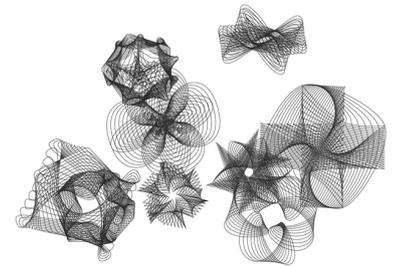
Selection of Projects

The projects studied were taken from the literary field because cultural mediation in that domain appears to be less developed than that in other artistic domains. This choice was deliberate and motivated in part by the desire to increase the visibility of cultural mediation in the literary domain.

The following criteria underlay the selection of cases:

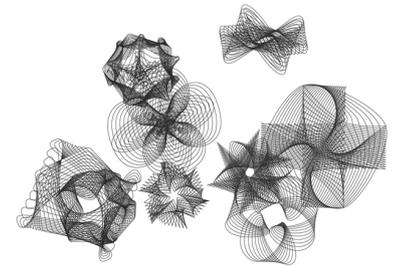
- All cases selected had to be examples of interesting cultural mediation practices, despite their limitations or criticisms.
- They had to be representative of approaches used in literature mediation while also being useful for analysis of practices in other domains.
- They had to be sufficiently complex to permit a meaningful discussion of the various contexts for which a project can be relevant, and the questions which arise as a result.
- Their documentation had to be extensive enough to allow a good reconstruction, notwithstanding the constraints on the analyses mentioned above.

One of the four projects selected was a Swiss project. The focus in selecting the international projects was on contexts which have had a substantial influence on the evolution of the Swiss field. Accordingly, one German project, one English project and one French project are discussed.



Discussion and Analysis of the Projects

The analyses of the projects are based on the nine sets of issues discussed in this publication. No attempt has been made to retain the sequence in which these issues are discussed in the chapters of this publication; instead they are addressed as they arise in connection with discussion of the projects. Individual passages are linked with the relevant "Quick Reads?" and the guiding questions are indicated beside the relevant passages. The discussion sections point to possibilities for changes or modifications in practice with respect to the individual projects. The analyses also address the contexts in which each of the projects should be viewed. By providing a comparative analysis of two projects in each case study in the light of the issues discussed in the main part of the publication, the authors hope to enable the reader to arrive at a clear understanding of the factors and differences which should be considered when attempting a qualitative evaluation of cultural mediation. Unanswered questions and omissions that seemed relevant for an evaluation of the project but were not addressed in the documentation are discussed and summarized at the end of each analysis.



CASE STUDY 1 "Schulhausroman" and "Auf dem Sprung"

Introduction

This case study looks at two cultural mediation projects in the literature domain. Both projects are set in the context of schools and they are also similar with respect to the people they target and their participative orientation. Although the nine key questions discussed in the main part of this publication provide the matrix for the analysis, they have not determined the order in which topics are addressed in the discussion. The order rather focuses on the aspects that the authors view as being of central importance for the analysis of the project. In the case of both "Schulhausroman" [Classroom Novel] and "Auf dem Sprung" [On the Go], the analysis concentrates primarily on the targeting and participation of the young people and on the specific structure of the collective activities, and unlike → *Case Study 2*, less on the structure of the projects and the strategic approach of the initiators. The questions discussed cannot always be clearly separated, as they have a tendency both to overlap and to raise other questions.

Schulhausroman



Cover,
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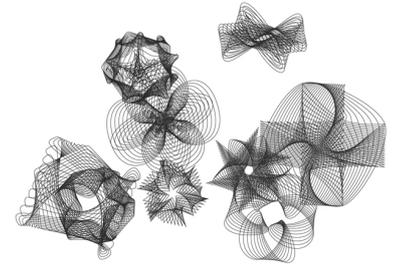
The "Schulhausroman" project was conceived in 2004 by the Swiss author Richard Reich, who was responsible for bringing it to fruition. The idea was to give pupils with so-called poor learning abilities [lernschwach] the opportunity to engage with the literary process. Authors were invited into classrooms to collaborate with pupils on a novel, which was subsequently published and presented in readings by the pupils at an institution, usually a centre for literature. The project has since been adopted by schools in Germany and Austria and is currently being introduced in Western Switzerland as well.

Auf dem Sprung



Exhibition
poster, ©Archiv
der Jugend-
kulturen

"Auf dem Sprung" was a project within the "Migranten-jugendliche & Jugendkulturen" project [Immigrant Youth and Youth Cultures] of Berlin's Archive of Youth Cultures. In it, twelve young people from Berlin from four 10th-year classes who have relatives in Palestine, Turkey, Lebanon, Croatia and Germany met at the Archive to participate in a literature workshop, led by authors Anja Tuckermann and Guntram Weber. A photography project, led by photographer Jörg Metzner, ran in parallel. The pupils worked together over the course of a week-long workshop in September of 2008 to consider their daily lives in Berlin against the back-



drop of their cultural affiliation. Afterwards, the texts and photographs created by the young people during the workshops were presented at multiple public events: readings and slide shows in their own schools and at the Archive of Youth Cultures. The culmination was the exhibition "Auf dem Sprung", shown 6 May–7 September 2009 at the Archive of Youth Cultures and 25 May–11 June 2010 at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, where it was presented by the interdisciplinary working group "Bildkulturen" [Image Cultures] within the Junges Forum für Bildwissenschaften [Young Forum for Image Studies].¹

Discussion

Cultural mediation: Why? Motivations and objectives of the project initiators. How does cultural mediation work? Function of the project for the institution, with special focus on audience development.

Author Richard Reich developed the project → Schulhausroman in response to the reactions of pupils to his readings. He wanted to engage children thought to be poor learners with literature through active involvement and practical experience and felt that the reading format was inadequate for that. Thus the project's initial intention with respect to literature falls within the scope of audience development and can be associated with the → reproductive discourse. In the open structure of collaboration in the project and in the participants' engagement with the authors in the collective production of a work with mutual exchange of knowledge, the project also contains → deconstructive elements. This applies both with respect to the reception of authors and for the field of literature itself. Rather than perceiving the speech of the young people as defective, the authors understood it as representing specific knowledge to be integrated within the writing process. The project developed a deconstructive function with respect to literary circles. In taking the name "classroom novel", by aspiring to collaboration between them and famous authors and by holding the readings in prestigious cultural institutions or cultural centres focusing on literature, the project was addressing the pupils not as a future audience for literature centres or readers. Instead, they were deliberately given the status of partners, in order to take the → young people as young authors seriously and generate visibility for their themes and their language. By doing so the project actively set itself against existing exclusions, turned the purported linguistic disadvantage of the young people into a new literary asset and, at the same time, invited discussion of the → current positions of artists (or authors).

Since it is based in schools, the project reaches young people who do not fall within the spectrum of the educated bourgeoisie.

It differs from conventional, → formal learning situations in lower secondary education², in that

→ Schulhausroman <http://www.schulhausroman.ch> [28.11.2012]

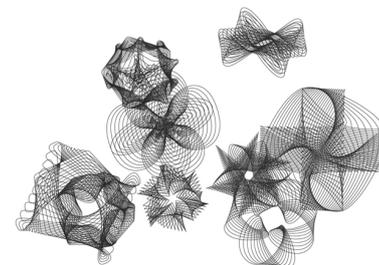
→ reproductive discourse What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.2

→ deconstructive elements What Does What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.3

→ young people as young authors How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.3

→ current position of artists What is Transmitted? See Text 3.2

→ formal learning situations How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.3



- no grades are assigned;
- it focuses on → collective production processes rather than individual performance;
- it uses an experimental and open-ended approach;
- it has authors act as mentors (coaches);
- decisions determining the project's evolution are made collectively;
- experiences of achievements constitute a substantial part of the project for everyone;
- characteristics defined in the school context as weaknesses are redefined as strengths, "wrong" becomes "right" or "exceptional";
- and finally, the possibility of failure is presented as lying not with individual pupils but rather with the professionals (the authors).

→ collective production What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.0

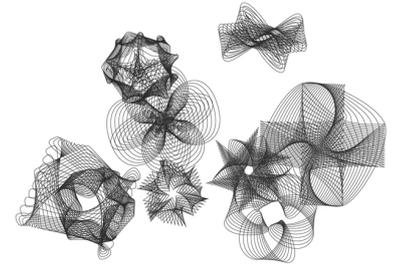
→ transformative function What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.5

→ South Park <http://www.southpark.de> [20.10.2012]

→ potential impact of art What is Transmitted? See Text 3.4

Thus the project features a → transformative function with respect to the institution of the school, although one of limited duration. The project, with its institutional framework, intervenes in the logics of literature production by rendering visible and, to some extent, mimicking the modes of operation associated with literary circles. It allows the greatest possible artistic freedom to the pupils in their writing and permits them to address topics, e.g. violence and sexuality, which might be off limits within the ordinary school routine. This approach can result in criticism of the texts by their recipients, i.e. parents or teachers. In the Swiss canton of Vaud, for example, a text written in a suburb of Lausanne provoked heavy criticism from the parents of pupils from another class, whose novel was printed in the same publication. The text at issue, entitled "Abuse Land", employed the stylistic media of the animated series → South Park and contained several text passages which were controversial. The parents' protest, which was communicated from one school to the other school via the schools' administrators, ultimately led to the retraction of the first version of the text and the release of a second, somewhat less inflammatory version, entitled "Imagination Land". The changes were made by the young people themselves in collaboration with the author. While the author's first response was a refusal to submit to censorship and an insistence on artistic freedom, the project initiators decided to go through with the reprinting, wishing to avoid any harmful consequences for the pupils, either in school or in the family home. In this instance, the pupils also learned something about the → the potential impact of art. As the initiators saw it, the force of impact wielded by the project in this situation made it abundantly clear to the pupils that the texts they created could indeed be meaningful. The criticism of the texts made it clear that they were being perceived both on a literary level and with respect to their content. Thus conventional assessments of value were displaced, if only temporarily.

"Auf dem Sprung" took place in a different context, being a subproject within a larger migrant youths and youth culture project initiated by the



→ *Archive of Youth Cultures*. The Archive of Youth Cultures, founded in 1998, collects materials created in the context of youth cultures (fanzines, flyers, music, etc.) – the only organization of its kind to do so in Europe. Its collecting activities also include scholarly works, media reports etc. The archive has a reference library, which makes its collection available to the public at no charge. The archive also conducts extensive research on youth-related topics, acts as a consultant to local governments, institutions and associations and organizes around 120 school project days and advanced training for adults each year. It also publishes its own journal "Journal der Jugendkulturen" ["Journal of Youth Cultures"] – as well as a book series featuring approximately six volumes each year.³ Thus there is a social / political dimension to the motivation behind the "Auf dem Sprung" project: it was aimed less at increasing the consumption of culture than at thematically focused engagement with migration and young people. An implicit aim of the project was for the activities with the pupils to highlight positive aspects of diversity and thus the project took on an → affirmative position with respect to the institutional objectives.

→ *Archive of Youth Cultures* <http://www.jugendkulturen.de> [20.10.2012]

→ affirmative What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.1

→ process of learning and development How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.8. Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.4

→ engagement with literature What is Transmitted? See Text 3.1

→ educational process How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Texts 4.3 and 4.4

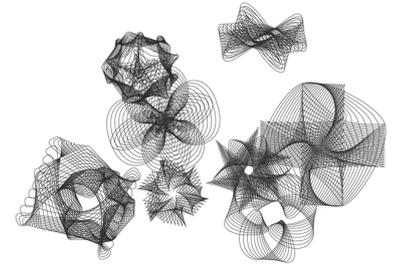
→ hierarchy of learners and teachers How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.RL

Cultural Mediation for Whom?

How and in what role are people invited to take part, what benefits does the project explicitly promise to participants?

What are the motivations, needs, deficits of the participants and how are participants implicitly expected to benefit?

Both projects entail working with pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged with respect to their situation within society. By targeting adolescents in non-university track secondary education, the "Schulhausroman" project acknowledges the inequality of opportunities which is both prevalent within the school system and induced by it. In the project, the form of school in the lower level of secondary education rather than ethnic or national origin was the key criteria for disadvantaged status. This reflects the correlations between of the use of culture and educational background.⁴ The structure of the collaboration makes it clear that everyone, students and authors, is considered to be taking part in a → process of learning and development. This means that differences are viewed as specific forms of knowledge are acknowledged within the project, which uses the energy engendered through the → engagement with literature against the backdrop of those differences to fuel the → educational process. At first glance, the project might be seen as pursuing an egalitarian agenda by making participation compulsory for all students in the class, regardless of their grades or motivation. However, compulsory participation means that students did not choose of their own free will to work in the project, a circumstance which reproduces the → hierarchy of learners and teachers which has long characterized formal educational structures. This is reinforced by the presumption that engagement with literature is fundamen-



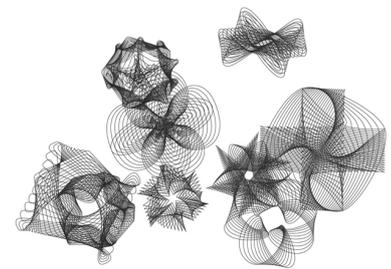
tally desirable and useful. A reflective approach to this situation would not gloss over of the tensions inherent in combining the desire to have young people participate in the writing process and taking their abilities seriously with the structural conditions required to achieve those aims. Instead, a reflective approach would attempt to render those tensions productive, by setting up an open process which encompasses the possibility of failure.

Aware that a large portion of society tends to ignore literature – and contemporary Swiss literature in particular, the project creates an opportunity to examine the significance of the work of authors in direct exchange with a non-reading audience. Thus the role of authors is actively scrutinized. In addition to encouraging adolescents to engage with literature, the project has the objective of initiating a learning process in the writers, specifically, creating in them an awareness of their own privileged stance and recognition of the fact that there are population groups for whom Swiss literature has no relevance due to complex cause and effect relationships.

The thematic focus of "Auf dem Sprung" means that its target participants are young people with immigrant backgrounds. In this regard, the project draws on a → concept of culture which assumes that an individual's attitudes and perspectives are primarily determined by ethnic origin, religion and language. In this view, culture is treated as a dominant constant which encompasses no other categories, such as education, social status, physical dispositions, gender or sexual orientation. Thus in this type of concept of culture such categories are not considered to be factors which limit and interact with one another. A reductive concept of culture of this kind is inevitably associated with hierarchization: although the project explicitly opposes discrimination based on ethnicity and operates in an "embracing diversity" context, even in doing so it implicitly reproduces essentializations and stigmatizations. The majority ethnicity, and thus its presumed culture, remain the standard: diversity is framed as deviation from that standard. Thus the young people in the project represent themselves, but also, inevitably due to the use of this reductive concept, they also represent their age group and their ethnic affiliation or → national origin. In many instances the texts and images produced by the young people rebel against this thematic constraint. They do not limit themselves to the effects or influences associated with their national, linguistic or religious origin. They address a broader range of content: ranging from encounters with neo-Nazi violence, to hugely varied experiences of discrimination and belonging, phobias and hobbies, right through to the ability to travel almost all the way around the world by virtue of having relatives ready to receive them almost everywhere. The variety of texts and contents produced by the adolescents clearly demonstrate that ethnic origins and the religious affiliations and languages associated with them represent only

→ concept of culture Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Texts 2.1 and 2.2

→ national origin Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.2



three among many influential factors. It emerges clearly that considering these categories in isolation tends to produce a fragmented picture which in no way reflects the complexity of individuals and social contexts.



Photo: Sarah Charif
© Archiv der Jugendkulturen



Sarah Charif, photo: Jörg Metzner
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"Well, unfortunately we do not have that many family members in Berlin. There are about 150 to 200 people, and they do not even all live close together. There are a few living in Spandau, Wedding, Neukölln, Kreuzberg, Schöneberg and in Tempelhof. We are a huge family. That would only be the ones who live in Berlin."
(Sarah Charif)

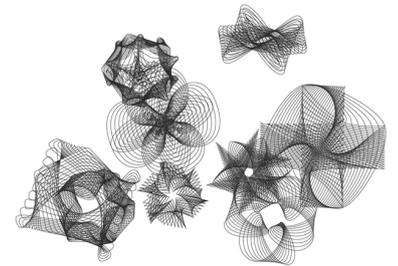


Photo: Birkan Düz
© Archiv der Jugendkulturen



Birkan Düz, photo: Jörg Metzner
© Archiv der Jugendkulturen

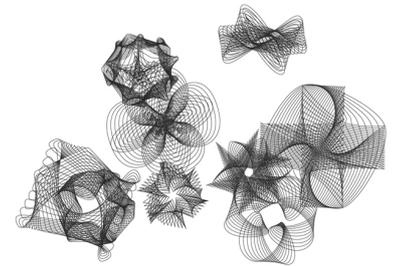
→ categories used to identify positions Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.3

→ culturalizing attributions Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.RL

*"I am in Berlin and I'm 16 years old.
Sometimes I am German.
Sometimes I am Turkish.
Sometimes I am Kurdish.
Sometimes I am Alevi.
Sometimes I am Zaza.
When I am in Turkey, I tell the people there that I am German,
When I am in Germany, people tell me that I am Turkish.
Or I say that I am Turkish. [...]
If I am alone, I feel like I am Birkan.
If I am with Germans, Turks, Kurds, Alevi, Zazas, I feel like myself.
I am Birkan."
(Birkan Düz)*

However, the project presentation created by the project organizers does not reflect the → diversity of categories used by the young people to identify their position in the world (as opposed to an imaginary, essentializing diversity of cultures). This suggests a failure on their part to exploit the potential to shift institutional misconceptions by engaging with the texts and photographs. This is one indication of how extremely difficult it is to eliminate → culturalizing attributions.

Another dimension of the way the project targets the adolescents is associated with the fact that the teachers were responsible for selecting the project participants. The project documentation does not reveal the criteria used for this selection. The act of selecting is of crucial importance, however, particularly with respect to the function of the project for the pupils. Selection might be used to reward some students and entail yet another exclusion for the others, exacerbating the inequalities within the school; but it might also employ the reverse logic: being considered



more "difficult" could qualify someone for selection for the project (see Omissions, below).

The aims of having students experience a sense of achievement and offering them a public platform are two things the two projects have in common. Through the high level of involvement by the adolescents in decision-making with respect to aesthetics and content and through the partnership structure created for the practical activities, both projects succeed at → *enabling young people to identify* with them, perceptible at least at the level of representation. In both projects, the young people are defined as authors and they have the opportunity to present themselves confidently as such. However, interestingly, in the "Schulhausroman" project, which is aimed at high culture, this occurs in a considerably more egalitarian and thus more radical manner than in the "Auf dem Sprung" project, which is positioned in a socio-cultural context, where participants have undergone a selection process.

Who "does" Cultural Mediation?

→ *Focus on cultural mediators: artists/mediators – their roles, intentions, aspirations and expertise.*

Only professional → *authors* are recruited to work with students in "Schulhausroman". They serve as mentors and experts in their genre, literature. The selection of authors who are successful in the book market confers extra credence and significance to this role (though the participants do call this into question). The authors have a decisive influence on the course of the project, its linguistic and artistic evolution as well as the reception of its results in the literary field.⁵ The project initiators themselves attribute a key role in the project to the authors and refer to them in defining one of the essential aspects in which the project diverges from the formal teaching and learning situation in schools, which they associated with the possibility of failure:

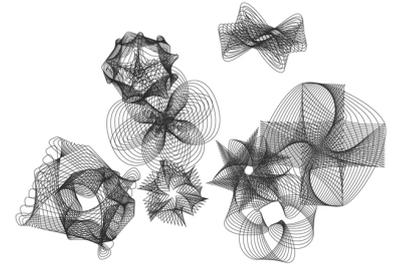
"The writing coaches (these are the authors), who encounter the non-homogenous class, are neither teachers nor social scientists working according to predetermined qualitative requirements. As a result, they develop a highly individual approach and in no sense do they create a neutral laboratory situation which one could duplicate in one class after another under comparable conditions. Thus, every schoolhouse novel is an experiment in itself, with an uncertain outcome – and the possibility of failure."⁶

In the "Auf dem Sprung" project, the role of the authors is less tied to their market position. Moreover, they are not acting primarily as representatives of their profession. The two authors and the photographer have all published in their fields, but they have also been working for years as mediators in projects at the interface of art and society – largely in independent insti-

→ *identification of the young people*
Good Cultural Mediation? See Text 8.2

→ *focus on mediators* Who "does"
Cultural Mediation? See Text 7.RL

→ *authors* Who "does" Cultural
Mediation? See Text 7.1



tutions associated with the → *socio-cultural field*. Thus they do not represent the occupation of artist or the art market per se, but are acting within the project largely in the capacity of mediators possessing artistic expertise. This positioning makes it clear that the primary objective of "Auf dem Sprung" is not so much the engagement with contemporary literature or photography, as with writing and photography as → *tools to be used for (self-)exploration* and (self-)representation by young people.

Who "does" Cultural Mediation?

→ *Focus on funding: what impacts do the amount, source and allocation of funding have on the project?*

The "Schulhausroman" project is carried out by → *Provinz GmbH*, a small business run by the initiators Richard Reich and Gerda Wurzenberger with a focus on writing and publishing. In Switzerland, the project is funded by multiple partners: the literature centre Literaturhaus Museumsgesellschaft, the City of Zurich's Office of Schools and the foundations → *Ernst Göhner Stiftung* and → *Mercator Schweiz*.⁷ Since 2010 Pro Helvetia has also been funding the continuation of the project in schools in French-speaking parts of Switzerland. To some extent, the motivations of the funding bodies can be inferred from the presentations of the projects on their respective websites.

While the project initiators demonstrate a very reflective approach in their phrasing, speaking, for instance, of pupils with "so-called" learning difficulties, the project descriptions provided by funding sources are not always as careful to differentiate. The foundation Stiftung Mercator, for example, describes the project on its website as follows:

*"Young people from environments providing little exposure to education write stories. Linguistically limited students with learning difficulties write novels [...] The young people experience a sense of achievement. Their self-confidence is reinforced as well as their ability to express themselves verbally."*⁸

This description, focusing as it does on presumed deficits, nullifies the real potentials of the schoolhouse novel project, which lie in its potential to displace these sorts of dominant categorizations. Clearly, the degree of reflection applied to attributions can vary considerably within one and the same project.

This is another instance that demonstrates how difficult it is to displace the dominant narratives which frequently reproduce exclusions and stigmatizations at the very places that projects like this one hope to combat them. The same applies to the project's German and Austrian versions as well.⁹

→ *socio-cultural field* see Glossary entry on: socio-cultural animation

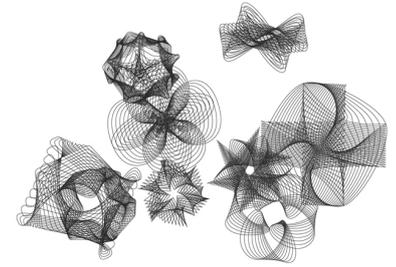
→ *tools used for self-exploration* What is Transmitted? See Texts 3.2 and 3.6

→ *Focus on funding* see Text 7.5

→ *Provinz GmbH* <http://www.provinz.ch> [20.08.2012]

→ *Ernst Göhner Stiftung* <http://www.ernst-goehner-stiftung.ch> [20.8.2012]

→ *Mercator Schweiz* <http://www.stiftung-mercator.ch> [20.8.2012]



This emerges particularly strikingly in the wording on the → Wuppertaler website:

"Students should be between the ages of 12 and 16, i.e. at what is quite a difficult age. [...] Surprising results have been achieved, above all in Hauptschulen [non-university track schools], and with so-called problem children."

"Auf dem Sprung" received funding from the German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Berlin Senate's Representative for Integration and the Federal Agency for Civic Education as part of a federal programme promoting the value of diversity [Vielfalt tut gut. Jugend für Vielfalt, Toleranz und Demokratie]¹⁰. The motivation of the funding sources is thus in line with the discourse on integration in Germany, which aims at intensifying immigrant's involvement in social, cultural and political contexts.¹¹ In this context, → cultural mediation is framed as a practice which supports those efforts.

→ Wuppertaler website <http://www.schulhausroman-wuppertal.de> [12.5.2010]

→ cultural mediation What is Cultural Mediation? See Text 1.RL

→ high degree of participation How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Texts 4.2 and 4.3

→ participative How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.3

What is Transmitted, How is it Transmitted?

At which levels of the project are participants involved and to what extent?

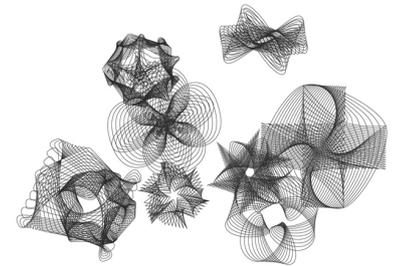


Exhibition preparations
© Archiv der Jugendkulturen

In the "Schulhausroman" project, the young people work with authors to develop their own texts, which they then analyse collectively in the context of the classroom before working on them further. The format of collective writing is a basic element of the project, involving the combination of individually written passages or sections of texts to form a single work. Exchange takes

place at various levels, both with the authors and among the students themselves, in collective discussions about their own texts. The roles of authors and pupils are structured hierarchically in the project, but they do appear to allow an exchange of knowledge in both directions. The → high degree of participation of the students in the creation of the texts causes their language, which is normally considered defective in the school context, to be seen as valuable and taken up into the process.¹² The authors support the development of the novel, analysing, together with the class, the credibility of protagonists, situations and actions, as well as stylistic aspects. Decisions relating to plot development are made by the students collectively. Generally, it is the authors who combine the individual text passages into a single text, which is then discussed with the class. Everyone participating in the project has access to a website which serves as a forum for collective work on the text.

The involvement of adolescents in the "Auf dem Sprung" project is also structured as → participative. The individual histories of the young people create the framework for their collective work. Literature and photography,



the two media in use, serve as instruments to access and means to express the world in which the students live.

Unlike in the schoolhouse novel project, the work in "Auf dem Sprung" was undertaken by individuals, not collectively. The artists were on hand to assist and guide the young people. Like the schoolhouse novel project, analysis during the project addressed the linguistic development and → literary quality of the texts. In the photography work the adolescents learned how to use the camera and the basics of image composition. The material available does not permit an assessment of the extent to which → critical analysis of the use of specific image materials and their implications took place.

→ literary quality of the texts What is Transmitted? See Text 3.2

→ critical analysis What is Transmitted? See Text 3.6

→ coherent design Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Texts 9.0 and 9.1

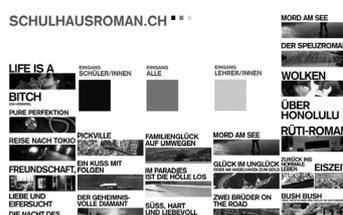
Good Cultural Mediation?

Reflexivity, for instance with respect to

- attributions vis-à-vis the target audience
 - the contexts and discussions in which the project intervenes
 - the development of empowering knowledge about the arts
 - the privileged position of cultural institutions and those acting in them
 - form and choice of representation (depiction of project outcomes, documentation, way participants are treated)
- process and results*
- how were the outcomes of the project created?
 - who produced what at what level?
 - what aesthetic language do the projects use?
 - how do the results of the project stand up with respect to formulated objectives?

Documentation

Who publishes what about the project, where and in what way?

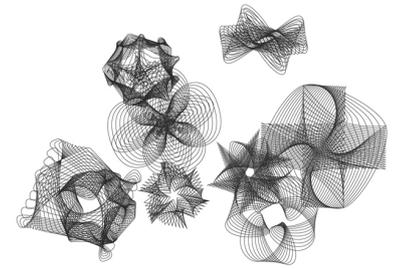


Screenshot of the "Schulhausroman" website, November 2012

One area that the reflexivity of the "Schulhausroman" project makes itself visible is the level of self-presentation. A → coherent design in all media, the selection of reading venues, the online presentation, the accompaniment and publishing of the texts online, wording, features and modes of access on the website and the publication of the

booklets communicate a consistent level of professionalism running through all levels of the project.

The website, with its three entries: "Student entry", "Entry for all", "Teacher entry" [square fields, left to right] makes it clear that different groups are being addressed and demonstrates a reflexivity about language by encompassing the linguistic variations associated with gender-inclusivity in German. This approach also provides a protected forum for exchange during the project period. In their minimalist design, the aesthetics of the website



and the novel itself do not attempt to ingratiate by using forms associated with youth culture and convey a sense of seriousness. The students have some influence in the design, since they select a title image for their novel which is inserted into a frame provided for that purpose. The presentation of the "Auf dem Sprung" project took place primarily in the exhibition shown in the rooms of the Archive of Youth Culture from May to September 2009. The work of the young people and the young people themselves were presented in it using the following media:

→ *recent design trends* Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.1



Reading held at Archiv der Jugendkulturen, © Archiv der Jugendkulturen

- texts and photographs produced by the young people
- photographs of the young people taken by photographer Jörg Metzner
- documentary film about the project
- bound collection of texts (without photographs)
- fanzine¹³, which was created in a workshop
- poster and flyers

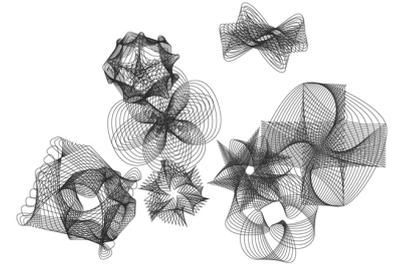
The documentation itself does not specify the extent to which the adolescents were involved in the design of the exhibition or the selection of texts and images. An interview with the project initiators (project director and author), however, yielded information on this question that is discussed in the section on omissions, below.



"Auf dem Sprung" exhibition, © Archiv der Jugendkulturen

The form of communication and the formal structure of the outcomes correspond to preconceptions associated with aesthetics which are frequently associated with socially-oriented art projects. The lack of professionalism suggested by the use of communications media which do not reflect

→ *the most recent design trends* in the cultural sphere, suggest implications for the quality of the project as a whole – though this is not always justified. In addition to a lack of quality at the formal level, a lack of coherence in the overall way in which the young people are presented is another area for criticism. The film deserves praise, both for its content and quality, because it communicates respect for the young people and identifies all participating students by name. Strikingly, the bound collection of texts lists contains short biographies of only the professional authors and photographer are given in the appendix, the student participators go unmentioned. By not



including the photographs, the text collection also fails to create a link between images and text and thus skips over one of the central aspects of the project. Aesthetically, the text collection evokes a work produced by a student at the end of a course, thus failing to produce a link between form and content. In a telephone interview with the project director, Klaus Komatz, this decision was justified by reference to the "private nature of the texts".¹⁴ Unlike the fanzine and the film, the text collection published very intimate and private texts. According to Komatz, the desire to safeguard this intimate character was also the reason that in some cases the authors of certain photographs were not identified by name. This decision constitutes a breach with the treatment of the authors as a group. After all, the names of the young people are identified in conjunction with the texts themselves. The author Anja Tuckermann justified this omission by saying that the text collection was intended mainly for the young people themselves, and not so much for presentation to the outside world. The short biographies of the authors and photographer were intended, according to Tuckermann, to give the young people information about the people who ran the project, since the students had not asked about it during the project and thus were not aware of it. This justification raises questions about the exchange of information during the implementation process. The adolescents revealed highly personal aspects of their lives; the project leaders revealed nothing about themselves. To what extent can one speak of a participatory collaboration based on partnership when there was such a large discrepancy in the amounts of information available about the people involved?

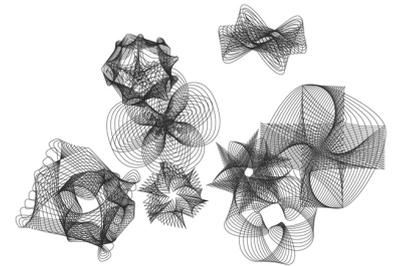
→ representation Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.RL

The fanzine, created by the participants in another workshop led by a member of the Archive staff, contains the names of the students, texts and pictures. Thus on the whole the project displays considerably inconsistency with respect to identifying the adolescents; the differing approaches and the differing reasons supplied for them suggest a fairly non-reflective attitude toward issues of → representation.

An evening discussion on the subject "Islamic and Islamist youth cultures", an event held in parallel to the project, is also indicative in this respect. The event was documented as follows on the Archive's Internet site:

"Novel hybrid lifestyles which are based in various ways on Islam have emerged among Islamic youth in Germany. While some manifestations of these youth cultures tend toward the traditional/religious or typical adolescent/provocative, others take up Islamist attitudes and lifestyles and thus feature extremist elements. How can one see clearly amidst the multitude of attitudes, music, sermons, styles of dress and symbols? How is a centuries-old religion being repackaged to seem cool and appealing to the young?"

These questions were discussed in the context of the exhibition by a group of around 85 interested individuals. Citing numerous examples, the



speakers Ibrahim Gülnar (→ *Stiftung SPI Ostkreuz*¹⁵) and Nadine Heymann presented and put forth for discussion the models of life and orientations of young Muslims in Germany.¹⁶

→ *SPI Ostkreuz* <http://www.stiftung-spi.de/ostkreuz> [2.5.2010]

The young people themselves did not have a voice at this event for experts and thus were confined to the role of exhibition pieces, tolerated for a moment in a → *hegemonic* space for the purpose of the project's presentation of itself, as long as this remained limited to self-presentation and so long as the rules imposed remained unchallenged. This shows once again that the project failed to recognize its own true potential with respect to participation, visibility and collective design or decision-making at different levels and was therefore unable to take advantage of it.

→ *hegemonic* see Glossary entry on: capital, forms of

→ *exclusions* Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)? See Texts 6.4 and 6.6

In "Auf dem Sprung", which was constituted primarily of the young people representing themselves, authors and work become quasi a single entity. The texts of the "Schulhausroman" project do speak to the issues and worlds of the young people – but they do so through the protagonists portrayed in their works, as is generally the case with authors, rather than directly.

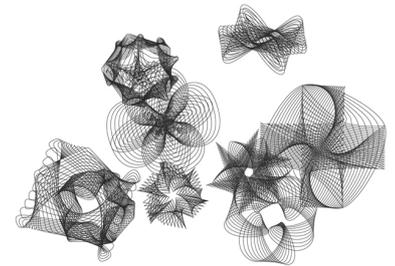
Local and Historical Context

For which discussions and local contexts is the project of relevance?

What category of practice of cultural mediation does the project fall into?

Because of its links with the Archive of Youth Cultures, the project "Auf dem Sprung" should be seen in the context of Soziokultur [socio-culture]. The Soziokultur context refers to a position on culture which developed in the 1970s to counter the marginalization of the arts and culture in society. Hermann Glaser¹⁷, who coined the term socio-culture, believed that all cultures should be "socio-cultural" in nature. Art should engage more closely with daily life and the issues in society and be less self-referential. Cultural policy conceived in this spirit would be seen as social policy. Although there is now a demand that socio-culture and so-called high culture come closer together, for the most part they still comprise two worlds which often remain completely separate from one another in terms of the individuals and institutions acting within them, though they can and do influence one another. With respect to hierarchy, the socio-cultural domain is subordinate to that of high culture; in the artistic field, it is associated with social work and pedagogy. Thus "Auf dem Sprung" does not operate within the same context as "Schulhausroman". The fact that the exhibition venue, the individuals taking part and the artists and project initiators are positioned in the socio-cultural domain renders the project invisible in the art context.

While both projects aspire to promote inclusion of excluded or disadvantaged groups and oppose existing → *exclusions*, the systems in which they do so are different. Although "Schulhausroman" taps into the debate



about discrimination in the educational system and actively addresses it rather than merely mentioning it, the project's primary aim is engagement with literature and positive experiences with writing. In pursuit of that aim, it acknowledges deficits in the literary domain with respect to its readership and attempts to engage with them through modes of cultural mediation by artists. In contrast, "Auf dem Sprung" explicitly places itself within the debate about migration and integration and sees art more as a tool to generate visibility for immigrant youth in a well-meaning context dominated by members of the majority. It uses this engagement to enable a selected group of these young people to experience a self-awareness which strengthens them.

Omissions

Which questions of apparent relevance for an assessment of the project were left unanswered in its documentation?

Certain questions arose during the analysis of the two projects for which the documentation supplied no answers. On the other hand, these omissions themselves provide information about the reflexivity of the project initiators, by indicating what it did not encompass.

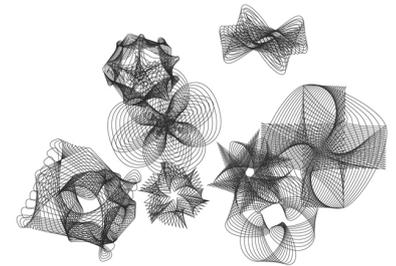
The documentation of the "Auf dem Sprung" project raised question which could only be answered through telephone interviews with the project director, Klaus Komatz, from the Archive of Youth Culture and author Anja Tuckermann.

Auf dem Sprung: Project Initiation

What criteria did the teacher use to select participants?

Anja Tuckermann and Klaus Komatz confirmed that the students were selected by the teacher from a personal point of view. The requirement of national origin was one of the key criteria, however the teacher deliberately disregarded it: two of the twelve adolescents were of German descent. The classroom performance of the students was not a deciding factor either: factors such as the level of motivation or the impression that certain students would benefit particularly from participation in such a project were of greater weight. This does not make the selection process any less problematic, since the selection involved a non-transparent experience of rewarding social behaviour and diagnosing need which suggested a pastoral/disciplining dimension.

With respect to the composition of the group of immigrant adolescents, the project director and the author clearly disassociated themselves from reductive attributions when interviewed by telephone. Klaus Komatz



said that the project had shown that the young people were ultimately Berlin youth, who were thinking about the same themes that other young people were. He added that the archive was not interested in "displaying the exotic", pointing out that to some extent there is no such thing anymore.¹⁸ For her part, Anja Tuckermann insisted on recognition of the unequal opportunities and the fact that immigrant youth face a considerably more difficult situation than do members of the majority society. This discourse, gleaned from two telephone conversations alone, was directly triggered by the work on the project, and remained invisible in the representations of the project to the outside world.¹⁹ Moreover, at no point did the documentation make explicit reference to the fact that not all of the adolescents were from immigrant families. Had this detail been made transparent, the result would have been a considerably more nuanced and non-harmonizing look at the → *issues of integration*, particularly in the institutional context of "embracing diversity". The project would have been able to deploy its potential with regard to these discrepancies – by, for example, including the young people in the debate about these issues.

→ *Integration issues* Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.RL

Implementation

How long did the collective work take place?

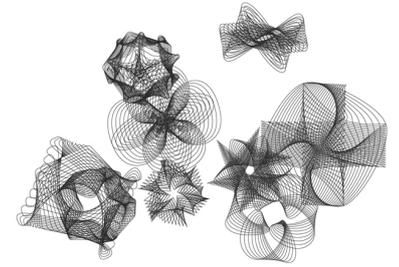
The project gives the impression that the partnership existed over a longer term. Nowhere is it mentioned that the writing and photography workshop lasted only a single week. This fact significantly diminishes the project, by calling into question the coherence between the process and the output. To what degree is it appropriate to transpose a five-day engagement with literature and photography into a media-savvy travelling exhibition? According to Anja Tuckermann, the students did meet up again, for the readings, the fanzine workshop and the exhibition itself, but the actual work, which was presented in the various formats (readings, exhibition, publications) was created within the framework of a single week.

Transparency

How was the project's aim communicated to participants?

Were the adolescents aware of the context in which the project work was taking place?

The project participants were not confronted with the project's aims or with those of the institution supporting it; they were only entrusted with the task of writing and taking pictures. From Anja Tuckermann's perspective, this was primarily the result of a disassociation on her part with the initiative of the supporting institution. However, this omission within the context of the project prohibited engagement with the issues that contributed to that disassociation.



According to Klaus Komatz, the young people did know about the context of the project, after all, he said "it was communicated in all of the publications [Internet site, flyer, etc.]." It was thus not possible to clarify definitively how well the young people were informed in advance.

Level of participation

*To what extent were the young people involved in the exhibition's concept and design?
To what extent could they influence/determine the selection of photographs/texts
which were included in the different media?*

While the project director seemed initially uncertain about the question of the young people's involvement, ultimately he said that they were involved "although it was difficult".

This information contradicts statements made by Anja Tuckermann, who said that she and the other artists involved were responsible for the exhibition's design. Tuckermann then noted that the work with the adolescents did influence the design of the exhibition, meaning that they were indirectly involved. According to Tuckermann, photographer Jörg Metzner selected the photographs to be used. This decision was justified on the basis of relieving the adolescents from the difficulty of completing such a task without having the necessary experience.

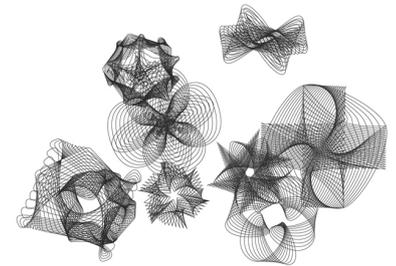
These statements are in stark incongruity with the project's approach: the participatory orientation is cast aside at the decisive moment – active participation in design relating to self-representation and depiction – and the project falls back on the classic hierarchical structure.

The omissions described above concentrate on two levels:

- diverging interests of funding sources, project implementers, institution and project participants
- and the resulting lack of transparency with respect to the participants, objectives and level of participation.

Schulhausroman

Although the documentation of the "Schulhausroman" project is very extensive, it too leaves some questions unanswered. Therefore, the initiators of that project were also interviewed, generating information for this analysis not available in the generally accessible documentation of the project. Former participants of the project were interviewed as well, providing an additional perspective.



How, specifically, was the writing process structured?

The general organization of work in the schools is not clear: were hours devoted to instruction set aside for the project? Did normal instruction pick up on aspects of the project? How, specifically, was the collective work structured? What happened when conflicts arose during collective work? To what extent did the good students end up making decisions during the collective work process?

The teachers were not directly involved in the process, but did engage in close exchange with the authors. This was particularly important when the writing process brought to light experiences of violence or other personal details, which required further action. The professional authors had the power to make decisions within the framework of the project and they determined the course and development of the project. The writing itself is not done solely by the students, it is created more through the oral stories told in the class, which the authors then put together in a text, which is then read aloud at the next session. All students participate in this process. Then they develop their protagonists further working in small groups.

What criteria were used to select the students who read the texts at the literature institutions?

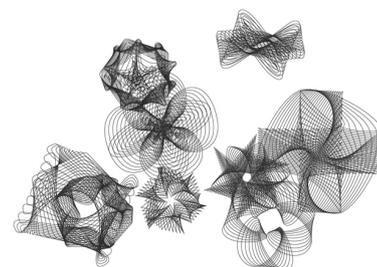


Schulhausroman reading at Literaturhaus Zürich, Photo: Iren Stehli
© Provinz GmbH

Though it emphasizes that all students participated in the writing process, the project description does not clearly indicate which students participated in the readings held at literary centres or cultural institutions. According to former students, only a selection of the participants took part in the readings.²⁰ The rationale for this is that several novels were read at a given event and thus more than one school involved. This raises the question of which criteria are used to select the readers. The reader-selection process could not be determined from interviews with former participants. Some of them suspected that a willingness to volunteer and a self-confident appearance were requirements.

The described omissions for "Schulhausroman" can be summarized as follows:

- lack of documentation of the mediation processes on site and methodology and



- lack of transparency with respect to student participation in various phases of the project.

Conclusions

The discussion of the two projects highlight the fields of tensions generated at various levels in cultural mediation that is → *participative* in nature. These fields are also relevant for non-school contexts. The central question is always, who can benefit from a partnership and how? This applies in particular to projects which work with marginalized groups. The larger the knowledge and power gaps among the individuals involved, the greater the risk of → *instrumentalization* benefiting the institution or project initiators. Therefore, in order to transform rather than reproduce existing structural exclusions, it is essential that the interests of all concerned are analysed.

Materials

The following material was available to aide in classifying and evaluating the projects:

Schulhausroman

- documentation on the → [website](#)
- published audio books and booklets containing the students' texts
- interviews with project imitators Richard Reich and Gerda Wurzenberger
- email questions submitted to Richard Reich
- interviews with former project participants
- recordings of the readings in Theater Kanton Zürich, Winterthur, on Friday, 13 January 2012:
 - [Freitag der 13. und andere Zwischenfälle](#)
 - [FNM – Freier Nachmittag](#)

Auf dem Sprung

- "Auf dem Sprung" exhibition
- documentation on the → [website](#)
- texts and pictures of the adolescents
- film documentation of the project on DVD
- fanzine
- media reports
- telephone interviews with Klaus Komatz, the director of the Archive of Youth Cultures project "Migrantenjugendliche & Jugendkulturen" and author Anja Tuckermann, who led the writing workshop with her fellow author Guntram Weber.
- [report in Spiegel online](#), Schulspiegel

→ *participative* How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.RL

→ *instrumentalization* Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.RL

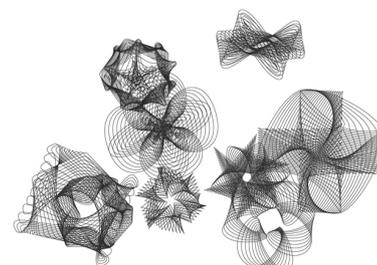
→ [Website of "Schulhausroman"](#)
<http://www.schulhausroman.ch>
[20.10.2012]

→ [Website of "Auf dem Sprung"](#)
<http://www.jugendkulturen.de/auf-dem-sprung.html> [4.2.2013]

→ [Freitag der 13. und andere Zwischenfälle](#) <http://vimeo.com/35901675> [20.10.2012]

→ [FNM – Freier Nachmittag](#) <http://vimeo.com/20789355> [20.10.2012]

→ [Online report "Auf dem Sprung"](#)
Spiegel Online, Schulspiegel; see Resource Pool MCS0215.pdf



1 → http://www.culture-on-the-road.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=233&Itemid=106 [1.5.2010].

2 "The interdisciplinary 'Image Cultures' working group takes questions of image studies which relate to the diversity of images and applies them to the diversity of the cultures which influence them. First image cultures are analyzed with respect to their depictions of space and perspective for their uniqueness and their claim to universal validity. The research of the working group is intended to focus in depth both on what makes a particular image culture special relative to others and what is universal with respect to a global image culture" Archive of Youth Cultures, Berlin: Image cultures → http://culture-on-the-road.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=253%3Ainterdisziplinaere-arbeitsgruppe-bildkulturen!-&catid=1%3Aaktuelle-nachrichten&Itemid=1 [15.3.2013].

3 → <http://www.jugendkulturen.de> [20.10.2012].

4 The connections between educational background and cultural preferences are extensively discussed in Bourdieu 1982 and Bourdieu, Passeron 1990.

5 It is therefore essential for the project's status that the authors work primarily as professional authors and are not primarily active in mediation projects.

6 → <http://www.schulhausroman.de> [19.5.2010].

7 Ernst Göhner Stiftung is a non-profit foundation endowed by the estate of the entrepreneur that funds both cultural and social projects. Stiftung Mercator Schweiz is a foundation founded by a German merchant family, whose funding activities include projects "initiated for better educational opportunities at schools and universities" which "stimulate the exchange between knowledge and culture for the purpose of tolerance" (→ <http://www.stiftung-mercator.ch> [20.8.2012]. See also Texts 6.4 and 6.7 in this publication).

8 → <http://www.stiftung-mercator.ch/projekte/kinder-und-jugendliche/schulhausroman.html> [20.10.2012].

9 → <http://www.schulhausroman.de> [20.10.2012]; → <http://www.schulhausroman.at> [20.10.2012].

10 "As of 1 January 2007, the [German] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth established the new federal programme 'Vielfalt tut gut. Jugend für Vielfalt, Toleranz und Demokratie' [Embracing Diversity: Young people for diversity, tolerance and democracy] to combat rightwing extremism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to support work in educational policy and pedagogy. A total of 19 million euros of federal funds are made available each year." → <http://www.vielfalt-tut-gut.de> [20.10.2012].

11 The funding guidelines of the relevant bodies are posted on their websites: German federal programme "Vielfalt tut gut": → http://www.vielfalt-tut-gut.de/content/index_ger.html [20.12.2012]; Senate Representative for Integration: → <http://www.berlin.de/lb/intmig/aufgaben> [20.12.2012]; Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth: → <http://www.bmfsfj.de> [18.11.2012]; Federal Agency for Civic Education: → <http://www.bpb.de> [18.11.2012].

12 Participative observation sessions would have had to take place within the project to permit a definitive judgement on this.

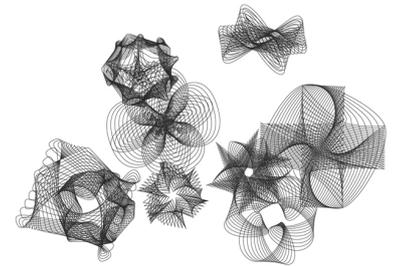
13 A fanzine, or zine, is a form of magazine first developed in the punk movement which is made by fans for fans within a particular scene. Fanzines are often handmade and consist of collages which are photocopied. The Archive of Youth Cultures possesses one of the largest collections of fanzines in the German-speaking world.

14 Klaus Komatz in a telephone interview with the authors [19.5.2010].

15 "SPI – the foundation Sozialpädagogisches Institut 'Walter May' – pursues the objectives of the German workers' welfare institution and thus aspires to contribute to the development of a society in which all human beings can develop freely with responsibility for themselves and the community. The SPI concentrates primarily on the living situations of the people concerned, focusing its social work particularly on helping individuals to help themselves." → <http://www.stiftung-spi.de> [20.12.2012].

"'Ostkreuz' is the SPI Berlin foundation's mobile counselling team for democracy development, human rights and integration. Since its establishment, it has focused chiefly on shaping social cohesion in the pluralistic city of immigration Berlin and on opposing ideologies and campaigns which make claims of inequality or dissimilarity of people based on group affiliations." → stiftung-spi.de/ostkreuz/ [20.12.2012].

16 → <http://culture-on-the-road.blogspot.com/2009/05/workshop-islamische-und-islamis->



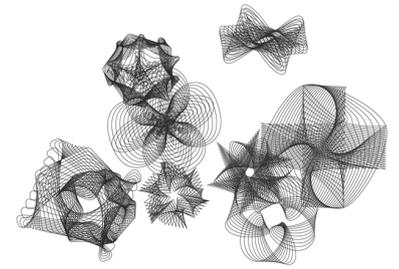
tische.html [20.10.2012].

17 Hermann Glaser, a German expert in communications studies, author and professor, studied German cultural history in great depth.

18 Klaus Komatz, in a telephone interview with the author [19.5.2010].

19 Both Spiegel online and Zeit online reported on the project, publishing photographs and text passages. However they stayed on the level of attributes and reductive visions defined by ethnically and nationally affiliations. → <http://www.zeit.de/online/2009/18/bg-aufdem-sprung>; → <http://www.spiegel.de/schulspiegel/leben/0,1518,621642,00.html> [20.5.2010].

20 Interviews with former students of the Erzbachtal School in Erlinsbach, CH, were conducted in October of 2011.



CASE STUDY 2 "Printemps des Poètes" and "Morley Literature Festival"

Introduction

This case study examines two literature festivals that have similar formats and a similar mission, encouraging the largest possible audience circles to engage with literature. Both festivals can be seen as representative of projects, including many in other disciplines, which are intended to diversify their audiences.

Taking the nine questions of this publication as a point of departure, this comparative analysis will discuss primarily the targeting strategies and forms of collaboration with various interest groups associated with the two projects. The nine questions will not all be addressed at the same level of detail or in the sequence in which they are presented in this publication. Instead, the analysis will concentrate on questions that allow a reflection of the mediation strategies and concepts used by the festivals' initiators.

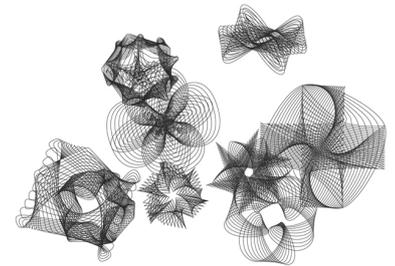
→ *Le Printemps des Poètes*
<http://www.printempsdespoetes.com> [15.11.2012]

Printemps des Poètes, France



Poster for Printemps des Poètes 2013, © Printemps des Poètes

→ *Le Printemps des Poètes*, is a French poetry festival that has been held each year in March since 1999. It now involves up to 8,000 poetry-focused events, which take place throughout France. The festival is organized by an eponymous umbrella organization which operates throughout the year at various levels, whose mission is to reinforce the position of poetry in France. Its activities concentrate on the dissemination of poetry-related information through network-building, advisory services and support for the implementation of projects and events. The organization functions primarily as a catalyst for implementation of projects in various contexts: schools, cities, libraries and public spaces. Its website serves both to communicate information about "Le Printemps des Poètes" activities and as a platform for the distribution of poetry-related materials, which is why its organizers call it a "resource centre for poetry". In addition to presenting dossiers about poetry, book recommendations and notices about interesting events, the site offers access to the following databases:



- "Poétèque", which contains bibliographies, news and extracts from poems from almost 850 poets and presents 533 poetry publishers (publications, collections, contact information) and 4,070 references to works (anthologies, books, journals, CDs and DVDs).
- A poem database with 576 poems, which can be downloaded.
- A yearly calendar of poetry events: readings, performances, festivals, exhibitions, etc.
- The section "OùQuiQuoi?" [Where,Who,What?], presenting events, organizers, poets, publishers and booksellers by region.

→ *literature festivals in England*
<http://www.literaryfestivals.co.uk>
[15.11.2012]

→ *Morley Literature Festival*
<http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk> [9.11.2012]

→ *Fête de la Musique*
<http://fetedelamusique.culture.fr/en/la-fete-de-la-musique/esprit-de-la-fete> [6.11.2012]

→ *Jack Lang* Who "does" Cultural Mediation? See Texts 7.0 and 7.5

Morley Literature Festival, England



© Morley Literature Festival

One of many → *literature festivals in England*, the → *Morley Literature Festival* has been held each year in Morley, a town in the City of Leeds metropolitan borough, since 2005. The one-to-two-week festival takes place in October. Unlike "Le Printemps des Poètes", the Morley festival does not concentrate on one specific literary genre or theme, but is devoted instead, in

the words of the festival's website, to "celebrating books, reading and writing."¹ Its programme combines book presentations, author's readings, writing workshops, music and activities for families. In addition, projects and partnerships are initiated within the framework of the festival.

Discussion

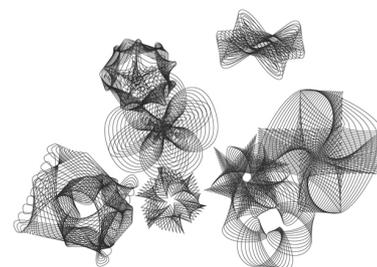
Who "does" Cultural Mediation?

Who started the festival and with what intentions?

Why include cultural mediation?

What rationale is put forth for holding the festival?

"Le Printemps des Poètes" was initiated in 1999 by Emmanuel Hoog, André Velter and Jack Lang, one of the founders of → *Fête de la Musique* [Festival of Music], which served as its model. All three founders were active in the arena of cultural policy and had themselves engaged in the production of culture. Emmanuel Hoog worked for the culture ministry, as a theatrical director and as a consultant to the government in the area of culture and the media. Before becoming the president of the French news agency Agence-France-Presse, AFP, in 2011, Hoog had directed the media archive "Institut National de l'Audiovisuel" (INA). Over the course of a long political career, → *Jack Lang* had served as minister of culture, communication and education and had been a close adviser of François Mitterrand. André Velter is a French poet, who experiments with improvised songs and "polyphonic poetry". Working with France Culture, the radio broadcaster, he created → *Poésie sur*



Parole [Spoken Word Poetry], a regular event which combined contemporary poetry with dance, instrumentalization or performances and thus conveyed poetry as a "performative, active and oral medium". Thus "Le Printemps des Poètes" was the creation of influential cultural practitioners and politicians, who were able to anchor it in the country's cultural policy and grant the project an accordingly high status in the cultural landscape right from the start. Since 2011, "Le Printemps des Poètes" has been headed by → *Jean-Pierre Siméon*, a poet, novelist, playwright and critic. Siméon also served for many years as a professor of modern literature at the teacher training institute in Clermont-Ferrand (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres) and has published extensively.² He, too, was active in the cultural policy arena, having served as an advisor on art and culture to the Ministry of National Education. Thus Siméon possesses expertise in cultural and educational policy as well as artistic expertise. "Le Printemps des Poètes" therefore continues to be well established with France's → cultural and educational policy. Accordingly, it receives funding from the → cultural ministry, the → National Book Centre, the → education ministry and the → Regional Council Île de France and it adheres to a logic anchored in the thinking of those bodies. Currently, debate about education policy in France is being influenced by school system reform (→ Refondons l'École de la République³) aiming at the gradual transformation of current teaching and learning practices from four approaches: "school success for all", "pupils at the heart of the reform", "well trained and certified staff" and a "fair and effective system". In this context, "cultural, artistic and scientific education for all"⁴ is identified as a method of establishing the school of the future.⁵ Cultural mediation is framed as a practice that improves the level of → individual performance, "supports, promotes achievement and contributes to self-esteem"⁶ and, finally, can contribute towards equality of opportunity. French cultural policy in the 2012 – 2014 legislative term also calls for the "democratization of culture" and the promotion of access to artistic works and artistic and cultural practices, as well as recognition for a great many forms of artistic expression. In this context, the role of public education and its beneficial effects on local contexts and social change are emphasized, with reference to the basic right to education and the → Law on the Fight Against Exclusion adopted in 1998. This approach follows to some degree from a rationale for the support of art and culture based on its beneficial effects on the evaluation of → society and education policy. It also associates itself with the → inclusion debate. That debate, guided by ethical principles and the idea of democratization as promoting of a more just society, is a response to the fact that large parts of the society are excluded from education, culture and politics. In this sense, cultural mediation is supposed to contribute to greater participation on the part of groups which have been excluded thus far from societal processes, and particularly in the art and culture of the majority society. However, the notion of creating inclusion by

→ Poésie sur Parole <http://www.mirpod.com/podcast-player.php?7554/France-Culture-Poesie-sur-parole&lang=en> [19.11.2012]
 → Jean-Pierre Siméon http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?url=poetheque/poetes_fiche.php&cle=3 [18.11.2012]; see Resource Pool MCS0107.pdf; Video MCS01V01.mp4

→ cultural and educational policy
 Who "does" Cultural Mediation?
 See Text 7.5

→ culture ministry Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication
<http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr> [7.11.2012]

→ National Book Centre <http://www.centrenationaldulivre.fr/?Printemps-des-Poetes>
 [7.11.2012]

→ education ministry Ministère de l'Éducation <http://www.education.gouv.fr> [07.11.2012]

→ Regional council Île de France
<http://www.iledefrance.fr>
 [7.11.2012]

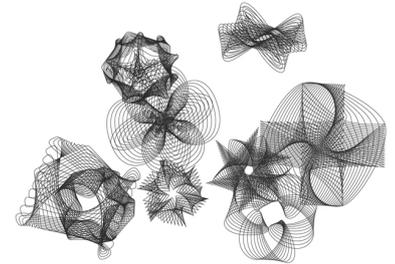
→ Refondons l'École de la République
 see Resource Pool MCS0108.pdf

→ individual performance Cultural Mediation Why (not)? See Text 6.2

→ Law on the fight against exclusion
<http://www.cnle.gouv.fr/Loi-d-orientation-du-29-juillet.html> [9.11.2012]; see also Text 3.RL

→ society and education policy
 Cultural Mediation: Why (not)? See Text 6.7

→ debate on inclusion Cultural Mediation: Why (not)? See Text 6.4



creating offerings for "excluded" groups fails to address the fact the fact that it is the prevailing conditions which gave rise to these exclusions.⁷

The Morley Literature Festival is directed by Jenny Harris, a → freelance creative producer and musician, who previously worked for the Leeds City Council as a music officer, in which capacity she initiated the → FuseLeeds Festival for contemporary music, among other things. She is a co-developer of → imove, a cultural programme for Yorkshire 2012 and of "the hub", an organization for cultural producers and people active in the creative industries, which also developed the festival → Phrased & Confused, which combines music and literature. Reflecting a self-declared interest in "inclusive arts practice", she also coordinates the programme for the Leeds educational network "Arts & Disability" and thus has a structural link with the city's cultural and educational policy affairs.

The literature festival receives funding from several different institutions. Some of the funding comes from the City of Leeds' → Leeds Inspired programme, started in connection with the 2012 Olympic Games, which promotes art, sports and cultural events, in order to ensure that Leeds has a diverse cultural programme. According to the Leeds Inspired website, it funds community and DIY projects as well as larger-scale annual events. This represents an attempt to integrate practices primarily associated with political activist circles, such as DIY, in funding contexts. The Morley Literature Festival is also supported by the → Arts Council England, the → Morley Town Council and → Welcome to Yorkshire (the region's tourist board) and certain businesses, including a → shopping centre, the → Blackwell chain of booksellers and the local press. Thus the project's funding structure is modelled on a → public-private partnership, a form of partially public, partially private funding that became very widespread during the "New Labour" Government of Tony Blair and has also been growing more common in the German-speaking region since 2000. This mixed financing model serves to shore up overstretched public budgets with private investment. In return, the investors have a voice in the projects they help to support. The model is frequently used to finance school and roadway construction projects, but museums and cultural projects also use it. The model is beginning to appear in Switzerland too, though it remains relatively rare.⁸ The main critique of this form of financing relates primarily to the increased influence of private funders on political decision-making and thus the risk of a stronger market-orientation in public investments. Another point of criticism relates to the short-term nature of the budget relief: by shifting the investments to long-term partnerships, the public coffers contribute mainly in the form of rents which are paid out to investors over a term stipulated in advance. In the end, this financing model is often financially advantageous to the investors while failing to deliver real public cost-savings over the long run.⁹ In the case of the Morley festival, it was not possible to ascertain how the selection of activities and the concept of

→ freelance creative workers and musicians Who "does" cultural Mediation? See Texts 7.0 and 7.2

→ FuseLeeds Festival <http://www.thehubuk.com/consultancy/fuse-leeds> [18.11.2012]

→ imove <http://www.imoveand.com> [10.11.2012]

→ Phrased & Confused <http://www.phrasedandconfused.co.uk> [10.11.2012]

→ Leeds inspired <http://www.leedsinspired.co.uk> [8.11.2012]

→ Arts Council England <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk> [10.11.2012]

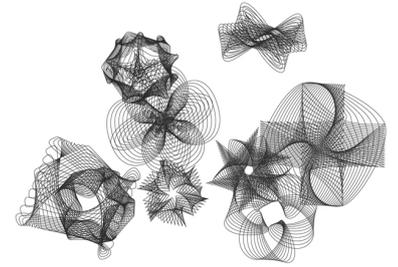
→ Town of Morley <http://www.morley.gov.uk> [8.11.2012]

→ Welcome to Yorkshire <http://www.yorkshire.com> [10.11.2012]

→ shopping centre <http://www.white-rose.co.uk> [10.11.2012]

→ Blackwell booksellers chain <http://bookshop.blackwell.co.uk/jsp/welcome.jsp> [10.11.2012]

→ public private partnerships Who "does" Cultural Mediation? See Text 7.5



the festival may have been influenced by private funding sources. However, the festival's programming displays a strong book-market orientation and thus appears to cater to the presumed → *interests of the audiences*. For instance, participating authors and the patron appear to be selected based on their market position. The festival's patron is Gervase Phinn, the bestselling author of many books, including several children's books.¹⁰ Phinn also teaches literature at English universities and has served as the president of the UK's → *School Library Association*. His academic publications include texts like "Young Readers and Their Books, Suggestions and Strategies for Using Texts in the Literacy Hour"¹¹, in which Phinn advocates new formats of literature education in schools. Thus he is associated with the content and practice of literary education in addition to acting in a promotional role for the festival by evoking a high level of audience interest.

Since their resources are concentrated on a single period of time, as dictated by the festival format, both literature festivals are part of the trend toward "festivalization"¹². While "Le Printemps des Poètes" organization attempts to use the festival to achieve visibility for activities which take place throughout the year, as a sort of → *marketing tool* for its own purposes, the festival in Morley operates to a greater degree as a form of local marketing intended to increase the town's appeal as a destination and to involve the local population.

How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?

Focus on school partnerships

In line with the most recent school reform guidelines, "Le Printemps des Poètes" underlines the complementary nature of cultural mediation vis-à-vis schools and recommends that school curricula take it into account. It advocates a structural shift in poetry education and has explicitly positioned itself in opposition to the formats and → *methods* currently used to teach → *poetry in schools*, which consist largely of → *reciting memorized poems* and their substantive and formal analysis. In this sense, "Le Printemps des Poètes" can be associated with the → *reformative function of cultural mediation* for the school system. However, it fails to address the possibility of integrating feedback from the schools into cultural mediation. It calls for greater attention to active experimentation and project work for students as alternatives to the → *teaching of art history facts* practiced by the majority.¹³ The turn toward practical activities in educational structures is being widely promoted, in accordance with the latest theories about learning. It promises a greater degree of learner involvement, a free development on their part and thus improved learning achievement.

→ *interests of the target audience*
Cultural Mediation for Whom?
See Texts 2.1 and 2.2

→ *School Library Association* <http://www.sla.org.uk> [10.11.2012]

→ *marketing tool* Cultural
Mediation Why (Not)? See Text 6.1

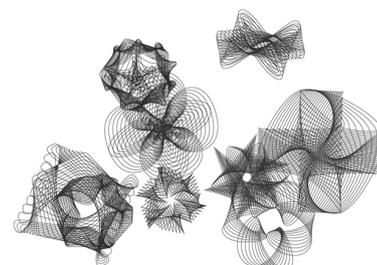
→ *methods of cultural mediation*.
How is Cultural Mediation Carried
Out? See Text 4.0

→ *poetry in schools* http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/pjs/PJ42_poesie-pascequoncroit.pdf [17.11.2012]; see Resource Pool MCS0101.pdf

→ *reciting poetry* What is
Transmitted? See Text 3.1

→ *reformative function* Cultural
Mediation: Why (Not)? See Text
5.4

→ *teaching of art history facts* What
is Transmitted? See Text 3.1



However, it also results in the neglect of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds, thereby reinforcing existing inequalities. The contradictions which arise from this situation are discussed in detail in → *Text 4.RL*.

"Le Printemps des Poètes" does not act directly by, for instance, setting up partnerships between artists or creative practitioners and schools, instead it functions as a sort of intermediary between the various individuals and organizations and provides a platform for networking, by providing information, contact details and possibilities for advanced training. The association has also developed an incentive system intended to encourage people and institutions in this cultural field to engage in their own poetry mediation and dissemination activities. To do so, "Le Printemps des Poètes" focuses on the creation of structures and long-term implementation of literary activities in the school routine. It does not offer specific programmes to schools (such as those associated with the Morley Festival), instead, it uses the label → *École en Poésie* to reward schools for their commitment to poetry. The label is produced in collaboration with France's Office Central de Coopération Scholaire [→ *OCCE*, Central Office of School cooperation]. Schools have to carry out at least five to fifteen activities falling under two sets of criteria in order to qualify for the label "École en Poésie". Proposed activities, such as taking part in poet festivals or initiating an exchange of letters with a poet, fall under the set of criteria called "poetry at the focus of the class", as does the showcasing of non-French language poetry from other countries and its translation. The other set of criteria relate to enhancing the visibility of poetry in schools, by, for example, naming classrooms after poets or publishing an article about poetry in the school newspaper. In return for their participation, schools receive special support for the activities, in the form of advisory services, professional training for the teachers involved and communications support using the websites of "Le Printemps des Poètes" and the OCCE. In an analogous programme, whole cities or villages can acquire the Village/City-en-Poésie label. For that label too, there are a set of → *fifteen criteria*, a certain number of which must be met (three to five, depending on population size). In 2012, 22 communities, thirteen villages and nine cities, were awarded with the label. The honour can be used in a city's marketing, an area in which the → *cultural factor* plays an increasingly important role. Culture as a "soft" factor contributing to the attractiveness of a given location has long been of economic relevance, as a draw for both tourism and, indirectly, for businesses.¹⁴ The label promises the cities and communities certain advantages relating to communication of their festival activities in March and thus greater visibility as a culturally active region. In addition, this sort of distinction tends to have a positive impact on subsidy acquisition.

The Morley Literature Festival also addresses schools with its activities. For instance, in 2009, the programme → *Find Your Talent* supported partnerships between festival authors and all of the Morley schools as an added

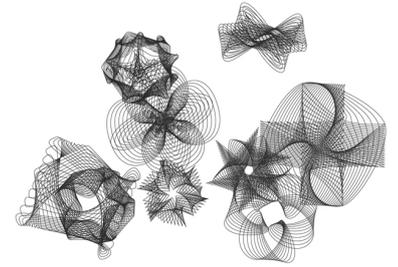
→ *École en Poésie* http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=3&ssrub=41&page=117&url=pages/page_116_fr.html [17.11.2012]; see Resource Pool MCS0104.pdf

→ *OCCE* <http://www.occe.coop/federation/nous-connaître/locce> [15.11.2012]

→ *set of fifteen criteria* http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/pjs/PJ72__Charte-Ville-en-Poesie.pdf [17.11.2012]; see Resource Pool MCS0102.pdf

→ *cultural factor* Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)? See Text 6.1

→ *Find your talent* <http://www.findyourtalent.org/> [10.11.2012]



level of the festival. "Find Your Talent" was a supra-regional programme in England funded by the Arts Council with the mission of increasing school-children's involvement at the various levels of cultural production. The idea was that rather than addressing them as the recipients of cultural messages, the children should be equipped with knowledge allowing them to intervene in the → programming and production of cultural offerings. At the same time, the programme was supposed to ensure that students were exposed as regularly as possible to various forms of the arts through projects, workshops and other offerings, in order, as the programme's name implies, to discover their own → talents. The view that talent itself is a construct based on bourgeois values was not addressed. The English programme subsidized the partnerships between local schools and the festival authors for the Morley Literature Festival. Fifteen local schools worked with authors in a partnership structured as → action research. The objective was to develop ways to better integrate literature in the schools. The approach was similar to that of "Le Printemps des Poètes", in that an attempt was made to integrate poetry in a subject like mathematics, for example. The results of the partnerships are not documented on the Internet site, but according to Jenny Harris, the projects led to the creation of long-term, personal contact with the local schools.¹⁵ In another project carried out in the "Find Your Talent" context, young people created their own literature events with the assistance of a youth librarian. In collaboration with "Reader Development", → literature days in libraries were developed to increase the attraction of libraries for young people in Leeds, and particularly in Morley, in an endeavour to promote reading. In both cases, school children were integrated as partners in the further development of literature mediation. Their knowledge was recognized as relevant for improving literature mediation, which suggests that a → co-constructivist understanding of teaching and learning was in play and that the project was intended to serve a → transformative function with respect to the programmes offered by the institutions involved. However, the results of the partnerships cannot be assessed, due to the absence of relevant documentation (see Omissions). In 2012, the festival's offerings for schools can be associated more with a → reproductive discourse: large-scale events featuring authors were initiated at several locations in Morley, including a reading at the town hall attended by more than 500 students¹⁶, and there was a possibility to schedule authors to come to workshops held in schools. This change is primarily the result of a package of spending cuts in the cultural arena introduced after the change of government in 2010, which caused the "Find Your Talent" programme to shut down.

In summary, these examples of partnerships with schools reveal a fundamental difference in the approaches used by the two festivals. While the Morley festival influences the content of the various initiatives, "Le Printemps des Poètes" does not take responsibility for the implementation or quality

→ programming and production How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Texts 4.3 and 4.4

→ talent How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4. RL

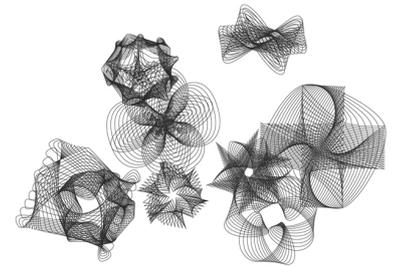
→ action research see Glossary

→ literature days in libraries <http://www.findyourtalent.org/pathfinders/leeds/projects/morley-literature-festival> [10.11.2012]

→ co-constructivist understanding of teaching and learning How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.8

→ transformative function What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.4

→ reproductive discourse What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.2



of the individual activities, only putting forth a platform for stimuli and suggestions as to content. The programme of "Le Printemps des Poètes" is a reaction to the fact that only one percent of the French population reads poetry regularly¹⁷. Reacting to that figure, it concentrates on building networks, communications campaigns and the initiation of training and continuing training offerings for interested professionals (teachers, librarians and organizers, and also amateur poets), unlike the Morley festival, which maintains a strong local focus in its activities.

→ increasing reception of poetry
What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
See Texts 5.1. and 5.2

→ changing the image of poetry
What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
See Text 5.4

→ addressed Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Text 2.2

How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?

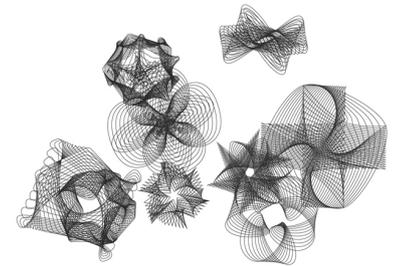
What formats and methods are used in the festival's mediation activities?

What is transmitted?

"Le Printemps des Poètes" identifies one main theme each year, which connects the various activities. In past years, the spectrum of themes has included unrestricted, open themes, such as "poetry and song" in 2001 or 2004's "hope". Since 2007, the themes have been associated with specific poets, such as "love poems" under the title "Lettera Amorosa, le Poème d'Amour" in homage to the poet René Char.¹⁸ Works relating to the theme are also commissioned from poets in this context. Thus "Le Printemps des Poètes" pursues a two-pronged strategy: the organization hopes to buttress the conditions of production of contemporary authors and, at the same time, improve the level of → reception of poetry, by → changing the image of poetry and positioning and revitalizing it as an artistically independent, contemporary genre.

In both approaches, one can detect a definite hierarchization of arts mediation relative to arts production. The resulting fields of tension are discussed in detail in → Text 1. RL. The multidisciplinary approaches adopted in "Le Printemps des Poètes" provide a concrete example. In 2011, a short film festival, "Courts Métrages Ciné Poème", was started in partnership with the City of Bezons. According to its director, Jean Pierre Siméon, the festival was designed to attract a larger public by offering a combination of film and poetry.¹⁹

The films shown in this festival are either inspired by a poem, dedicated to a poet or put forth something "to be read like a poem", and, in the words given in the film festival's description of its selection criteria, are characterized by their density, their intensity and a "cinematography based on the art of suggestion". The call for submissions, then, is → addressed to filmmakers who are considered as producers. In another way, though, it



addresses them as target audiences, by calling on them to engage with poetry. In their turn, these activities also give rise to cultural mediation projects. The médiathèque in Bezon, for example, set up a partnership with a youth centre in connection with the festival which resulted in the production of an animated film, which served as a trailer for the short-film festival. However, the trailer is nowhere to be found on either the website of "Le Printemps des Poètes" or that of the short-film festival. Only on the website of the → médiathèque itself is it presented in connection with the festival.

By failing to mention the project, "Le Printemps des Poètes" reveals that it attaches only secondary → importance to it. The same attitude manifests itself in the link with music, which the organizers also see as a way of reaching additional audience circles. The focus there lies on production again however, with a → competition for poems put to song and a → composition competition. Mediation is not mentioned in the festival's own presentation of itself and its mission, "to inform, to advise, to train, to accompany projects and support the work of contemporary authors, publishers and artists"²⁰.

By concentrating its activities on the dissemination of literature in various contexts, the festival is applying an → understanding of cultural mediation which implies that even the mere exposure to art involves an educational dimension. The key premise of the programme is thus based on the idea that knowledge of and coming into contact with poetry will inevitably lead to a better reception of this genre. As a consequence, the festival's activities aim specifically at → enlarging the readership for poetry, without questioning the practices or the form of contemporary poetry. The low readership is understood to be resulting from ignorance on the part of potential readers, or their educators, a deficit which "Le Printemps des Poètes" seeks to remedy through appropriate actions (professional training and an incentive system). No attempt is made



Poster for the short film festival
Cine Poème 2013,
©Printemps des Poètes

to make use of the opportunity to put poetry and its social marginalization at the focus of mediation activities and, for example, explore why so few people read this literary genre.

→ médiathèque of the City of Bezon
<http://public.ville-bezons.fr/mediatheque/spip.php?article1018>
[17.11.2012]

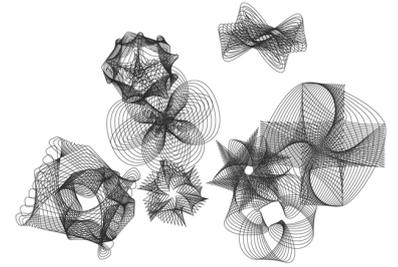
→ importance Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.1

→ competition for poems put to song
http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=3&ssrub=41&page=117&url=pages/page_116_fr.html [17.11.2012]

→ composition competition <http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=3&ssrub=20&page=74>
[17.11.2012]

→ Understanding of Cultural Mediation What is cultural mediation? See Text 1.RL; What is Transmitted? See Text 3.1

→ enlarging the readership for poetry What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.1



What is transmitted and for whom?

On what mediation subject matter does the festival concentrate and at whom are its activities addressed?

The Morley Literature Festival focuses its festival programme on the integration of successful authors, such as Barbara Taylor Bradford or the science-fiction writer Ian Banks²¹, and points to those authors in its presentation of itself. This means that the programme takes an → affirmative approach with respect to the book market and is oriented to some degree toward → marketing. This is explained, according to the festival director, by the fact that the well-known authors can be engaged as part of their book tours and thus relieve the festival budget of the need to pay their full expenses. The presence of best-selling authors makes it possible for the young and less well known authors to be invited to the festival as well. According to Harris, this approach is primarily a result of the festival's financial circumstances. With a budget of around GBP 30,000, it is a small-scale festival, which has to rely to a great extent on → volunteer work. Budgetary constraints have a big influence on programming options. Given its comparatively low status and a less-than-prominent venue (Morley), the festival justifies itself to a large extent in terms of visitor numbers. The aim, according to Harris, is to offer a qualitatively sophisticated cultural programme to the local population of Morley through the festival. The local population is composed predominantly of → white working-class people and the town has had to struggle with image problems on more than one occasion in the past. Currently, the situation is changing due to an inflow of ethnic minorities, artists and students. According to Harris, one central concern of the festival is to engage with the population to reflect on the town's historical development, taking the current changes into account.²² However, a survey of the subjects addressed in the festival's activities and the cultural mediation offerings of Morley, ranging from readings to creative writing workshops to artist interventions in public space, yields little information about the criteria providing the basis for their selection.

The festival's → spectrum of activities ranges from tours of the town, to a literary lunch with Tim Ewart, royal correspondent for a national television broadcaster, through to an evening of folksongs. No thematic linkages among the activities could be detected in the readings or selection of authors. However, the workshops and projects do reflect a concentration on the town of Morley, as the comments of the festival's director above suggested. In addition, the festival seems to be taking a "something for everyone" approach, though the programming is oriented towards the presumed interests of defined target groups. The layout of the festival's programme is another indication of this: it is arranged by event format "author talks, workshop or discussion", the group being addressed "children and families" and the section "music, art, sports". This makes it possible

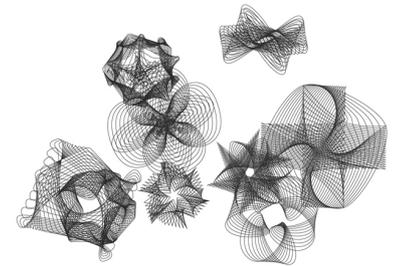
→ affirmative What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.1

→ marketing What is Cultural Mediation? See Text 1.RL

→ volunteer work Who "does" Cultural Mediation? See Text 7.4

→ white see Glossary

→ spectrum of activities <http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk> [11.11.2012]



to orient quickly within the programme according to one's interests and reflects a clear targeting according to → conventional definitions of target groups.

→ conventional definitions of target groups Cultural Mediation for Whom? See Texts 2.1 and 2.2

→ public call for submissions see Resource Pool MCS0103.pdf

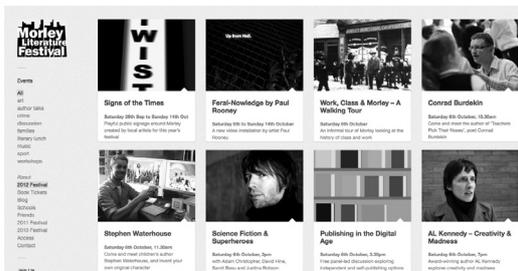
Who "does" cultural mediation?

Who carries out mediation activities? With whom does the work within the project get done? How is cultural mediation carried out? Drawing on specific project examples from the festivals, approaches and methods used in the mediation activities are discussed. What does cultural mediation do? What mediation discourses can these activities be associated with?

→ Paul Rooney <http://www.fvu.co.uk/artists/details/paul-rooney> [10.11.2012]

→ compensation <http://www.a-n.co.uk/publications/article/193995> [10.11.2012]

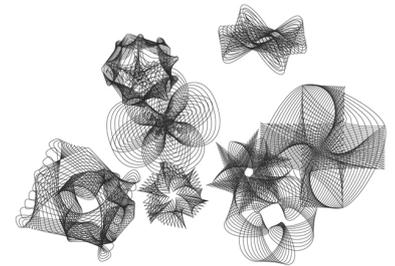
In 2012, the artist interventions of the Morley festival were supported by "Leeds inspired" (see above). In a → public call for submissions, the festival announced that it sought to commission work which "playfully responds to the festival's theme of 'Fact/Fiction'..." and invited artists to come up with "cross-art projects with the aim of engaging local audiences in imaginative and unexpected ways". Four small commissions were offered to Leeds-based visual artists to create works addressing the fact/fiction theme in the context of "Feral-Knowledge" a text-based work commissioned from the audiovisual artist → Paul Rooney which would "blur factual and fictional moments from Morley history".



Screenshot of the Morley festival's website, November 2012

The artists' projects were to take the form of street signs to be put up in Morley's pedestrian zone. The public would be encouraged to discover and map the signs for themselves. Commissioning fees of GBP 200 were offered, with an additional GBP 200 available per com-

mission as a materials budget. Even given the narrowly defined framework and concept that the artists would have to adhere to, the budget for project creation and realization seems inadequate. According to the Arts Council in England, → compensation for artists and cultural workers should be paid at a daily minimum of GBP 175. GBP 200 for idea and realization is likely to work out to far less than that daily rate. The commission announcement suggests that by involving visual artists in a literature festival, the festival's organizers saw an opportunity to set the stage for the "imaginative and unexpected"²³. However, they provided neither the appropriate level of funding nor scope for artistic creation. Nonetheless, five local artists²⁴ did apply for and receive commissions, and developed alternative public



signs which were posted in the town centre in a project titled → Signs of the Times. Given the deterioration of the conditions under which artists work in England, this type of strategy seems to be relying on intangible benefits associated with participation in the festival as a substitution for monetary compensation. This is in line with the way that → volunteer work is exploited in the cultural sector and the → economics associated with that.



© Poetry Takeaway

The festival also integrates freelance mediation projects into its programme. In 2011, for example, → The Poetry Takeaway project was part of the programme. The Poetry Takeaway transposes the concept of a street-food truck to the domain of literature. A trailer is set up on a public square or festival venue; in that and in other ways the project takes its aesthetic model from the typical burger van. The group of authors offer passersby the chance to order a made-to-order poem. This implicitly frames the project as being in opposition to the widespread notion of poetry writing as a contemplative activity which takes place largely behind closed doors. Instead, the creative act is accelerated by a self-imposed deadline, requiring the poem to be supplied within less than ten minutes. "The Poetry Takeaway" also uses the language of its catering model to describe itself, referring to the authors as "poetry chefs" who "cook up" the poems and deliver them to their customers packed in a box or wrapped like a burger. By taking this approach, the group is also playing with the increasing service-provision orientation in the art world. By transposing the act of "ordering, producing and delivering art" into a performance, they are criticizing the prevalent conditions of production and, at the same time, applying them in a caricatured, but positive form, to their own activities:

→ "How it works:

1. Queue up to speak to one of our fully trained Poetry Chefs.
2. You'll be allocated to a Poetry Chef, who'll discuss your order with you in order to ascertain its style and content etc. No knowledge of poetry is required – a few details about you, what you're up to, what you like and what you're into, will suffice. Alternatively, if you want a poem similar in style to your favourite by [insert not too obscure poet], our dedicated Poetry Chefs can successfully operate from your instruction.
3. Your Poetry Chef will retire to the kitchen to cook up your bespoke order, leaving you free to soak up the atmosphere.
4. Within ten minutes or less, you'll be greeted by your Poetry Chef who'll perform your poem to you. And hand you a written copy, either open or wrapped in our beautifully-designed takeaway boxes."

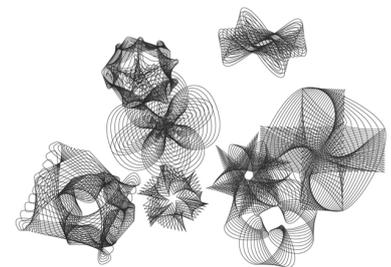
→ Signs of the Times <http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk/portfolio/signs-of-the-times> [10.11.2012]

→ volunteer work Who "does" Cultural Mediation? See Text 7.4

→ economics see Glossary entry on capital, forms of

→ Poetry Takeaway <http://thepoetrytakeaway.com/events> [15.11.2012]

→ How it works <http://thepoetrytakeaway.com/how-it-works> [15.11.2012]



The project's → *deconstructive function* is also evident in the wording used to describe the author's activities, which takes them completely out of the literary context. By placing them in a new context, this approach puts the spotlight on the mechanisms of art production. The result is that writing poetry is presented more as a craft, deglamorizing the author myth to a certain degree.



→ *Poématon*
© Isabelle Paquet

→ *Poématon* uses converted photo booths inviting passersby to take a seat and listen to a poem. Rather than receiving their photographs at the end, participants receive a printout of the poem and information about its author. Unlike "Poetry Takeaway", which permits direct contact with the authors and involves the deconstruction of poetry and the associations people have with it, *Poématon* creates a venue for the reception of poems in unexpected places. Its → *mediation goals* remain within the realm of communicating the work. Hence "Poématon", again unlike "Poetry Takeaway", aligns itself with the → *reproductive discourse*.

In addition to the activities on the festival programme, the Morley Literature Festival establishes long-term partnerships. One example is the 2011 project "Home is where the art is", which ran in collaboration with the "Picture Lending Scheme" of the Leeds Art Gallery. The → *Picture Lending Scheme* is a kind of library for art, started in 1961, with the aim of enabling Leeds residents to enjoy original works of art in their own private flats or houses. The → *festival's blog* was used to locate six households in Morley willing to borrow works from Leeds Art Gallery for the project. Participants had to consent to have photographer Paul Floyd Blake take their picture with the work they chose to borrow and to discuss the reasons for their choice with poet Andrew MacMillan, who used that exchange as the foundation for a poem. The photographs and poems were exhibited in the Leeds Art Gallery during the festival. In thanks for their participation, the borrowers were invited to what the festival blog called a "VIP opening" of the exhibition.

Thus, the call to the participants took advantage of the mechanisms of exclusion operating in the artistic field as an incentive system, granting participants privileged access for a limited period of time. One has to assume that the residents who applied to participate in the project were able to

→ *deconstructive function* What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.3

→ *Sélection Printemps des Poètes* http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=2&ssrub=14&page=128&url=agenda/selections_catalogue.php [22.11.2012]

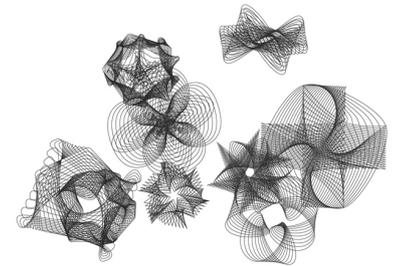
→ *Poématon* see Resource Pool MCS0105.pdf

→ *mediation goals* What is Transmitted? See Text 3.1

→ *reproductive discourse* What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.2

→ *Picture Lending Scheme* <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsand-galleries/Pages/leedsartgallery/Picture-Lending.aspx> [15.11.2012]

→ *festival blog* <http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk/blog> [17.11.2012]



recognize and exploit the → *symbolic capital* associated with it. In this sense the project is in implicit opposition to the intentions behind the "Lending Picture Scheme", i.e. to promote engagement with art among as heterogeneous a public as possible. The mechanisms were also reinforced by the opportunity offered to participants to invite a curator from the Leeds Art Gallery into the home to discuss the borrowed work, under the slogan "Tea with the Curator". This arrangement held the potential for an exploration of questions about the institution and its collecting strategy and the representation of art in private spaces. As it was implemented however, the project focused on brief encounters between artists, curators and audience. The exchange was limited to a single photo-shoot and the narration of a story that became the starting point for a poem. Artistic engagement rested with the artists alone – nor did exchange about → *artistic processes* take place. The residents were involved but they remained in their role as the perceivers of art and thus represented consumers of culture for the festival. In approaching participants who were already interested and in confirming the dominant logics of the system, the project failed to exploit its deconstructive potential and thus remained embedded in the → *affirmative discourse*. No engagement with questions relating to → *mechanisms of representation* of individuals and organizations in the fields of photography or the literary arts occurred.



Screenshot from "Home is where the Art is"; poem: Andrew McMillan, photo: Paul Floyd Blake

Formally, the photographs created in the project evoke depictions of collectors before their works. They also confirm the assumption that the homes involved were primarily those of well-situated members of the → *majority society*. The → *project's outputs* – photographs and poems – are documented online, but can only be found via the → *festival's blog site*.

Another project initiated in 2011 is → *Now then!*, a blog intended to present the past and present of Morley through text, sound and imagery with inputs from Morley residents. The project was led by the scriptwriter and playwright Emma Adams, who invited Morley residents to document the town by sending in their own stories, or their own texts and images.

The project encompassed writing workshops and other events held during the festival, though it continues to operate today as a blog or a growing archive in which anyone who is interested can participate. The project's description suggests that it involved partnerships with various communities in Morley, in which the object was to rewrite the history of

→ *symbolic capital* see Glossary entry on: capital, forms of
→ *artistic processes* How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Texts 4.1 and 4.2

→ *affirmative discourse* What Does Cultural Mediation Do? See Text 5.1

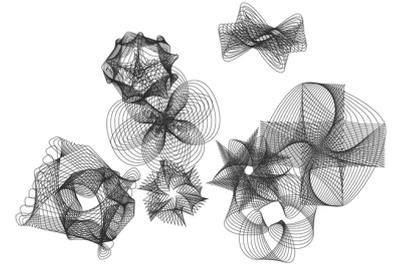
→ *representation mechanisms* How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out? See Text 4.6; Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.RL

→ *majority society* see Glossary

→ *results of the project*
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/morleylitfest/sets/72157629198939643> [18.11.2012]

→ *blog site* <http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk/blog> [18.11.2012]

→ *Now then!* <http://nowthenmorley.co.uk/category/memoir> [15.11.2012]



Morley based on the personal experiences, biographies and memoirs of Morley residents. However, the website documents only one public event in Morley's indoor market where the artist gathered the stories of passersby which she then put into writing for the blog. The opportunity to focus on the historiography of Morley and work with various population groups to rewrite it was not taken up. Instead, another focus was directed toward "People in Action" a social group for people with cognitive impairments, which meets on a weekly basis in a community centre for various activities, such as knitting, bingo, making music. Impressions from one visit to the group were documented in a short → *video* that says very little about the project and offers minimal insight into its process because it fails to describe either the project or its own role within it. The people appearing in the video are asked about their activities in the group and in Morley more generally. This approach raises questions relating to the selection and the weight given to this group. All the more so because "People in Action" represents a community which is marginalized and thus of great symbolic significance for the artistic field, whose participation in an institution's programme, in this case the Morley Literature Festival, is advantageous for the → *legitimization strategy* of the institution. In this case the problematic dimension is exacerbated by the fact that it is the only video produced in the "Now then!" project aside from a short → *video showing the artist* at the market. Harris puts these → *omissions* down to lack of experience with the approach. The conditions and resources to support a qualitative use of a participatively structured project were not in place. Accordingly, from the perspective of the festival's organizers, the project was unable to meet their expectations, e.g. deliver a text authored collectively by the residents and the authors. In this case, it is clear that a reflexive form of documentation would have been more appropriate for the way project turned out, as this would have required the failure to be described and the experimental nature of the project to be presented more clearly. As it is, the presentation of the project casts the initiators in a misleading light, suggesting a low degree of reflexivity and a failure to appreciate the potential for learning offered by failed projects. In this instance, it would have been wiser to → *dispense with the presentation of the project* completely, which would have protected the people involved from being put out on display.

Omissions

Reflexivity with respect to one's own work: though both projects have run for many years, neither provides an assessment of changes over that time. Statements about objectives which have been achieved, modifications to procedures over the years, adjustments to implementation or possible missteps would make it possible to trace the development of the festivals and make specific statements about real projects.

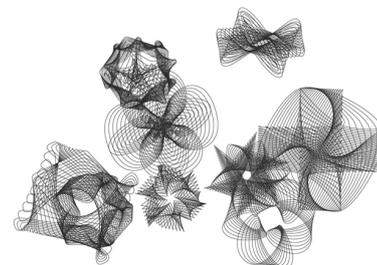
→ *video* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=UH9Ns8umGKI> [17.11.2012]

→ *legitimization strategies* Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)? See Text 6.4

→ *video of the artist* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGHMF9Lct9Q> [18.11.2012]

→ *omissions* Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.2

→ *dispensing with the presentation of a project* Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See 9.RL



Documentation of individual projects: in the case of both festivals, there are incongruities between the aims of the festivals' initiators as communicated and the documentation of activities that have already taken place, which does not offer much detail. As a result, very few conclusions can be drawn about past project plans and implementation. Therefore the qualitative assessment of the project must concentrate on the conceptual approach and the expectations of the initiators. Whether and how the planned approach was applied or is being applied, remains unclear.

Teaching and learning concepts, level of participation: the largest lacuna resulting from inadequate documentation of past activities relates to the learning and teaching concepts applied and the level of participation of participants. Information on those aspects can only be drawn from rather cryptic descriptions of projects and their aims. This analysis can address only the conditions and aims for a planned project, in those cases where they were indeed presented.

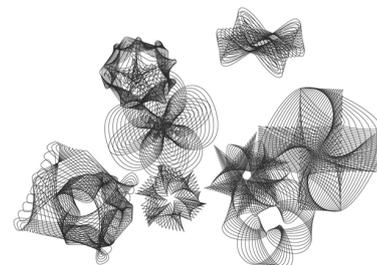
Conclusions

Although certain aspects of the festivals have been quite thoroughly documented, the largest gap in the analysis is in the area of a qualitative evaluation of the mediation projects. As → *Text 8. RL* makes clear, such an evaluation can only be performed if a project's structure, processes and results can be analysed in the light of a project's objectives. That requires transparency with respect to the initiators' objectives, what actually occurred during the project and its results, or the initiators themselves must place the project's history in relation to the formulated expectations. In cultural mediation, it is rare to find → *project descriptions and documentation* that actually do this. This is in part due to the budgetary constraints associated with cultural mediation. Exacerbating that situation are the conflicts of interests fuelled by the differing aspirations for mediation. As a result, the primary purpose of documentation tends to be that of → *legitimization* of the project, which produces a tendency to tell success stories only. If others are to learn from project documentation, it would be important to render transparent and analyse failures, problematic aspects or complications. Doing so, however, often entails a risk of losing funding or putting oneself at odds with the sponsoring institution. Accordingly, in presenting their projects, cultural mediation/project initiators tend to follow the dominant → *modes of representation* found in cultural mediation, as the discussion of the two festivals has illustrated, and thus contribute to the maintenance of the status quo, though not always consciously.

→ *project descriptions and documentation* Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.2

→ *legitimization* Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)? See Text 6.RL

→ *modes of representation* Transmitting Cultural Mediation? See Text 9.RL



Materials

The following materials were available for the project analyses:

Le Printemps des Poètes, France

- presentation of the project on its → [website](#)
- dossiers relating to cultural mediation in the literary field
- other information about the festival found online

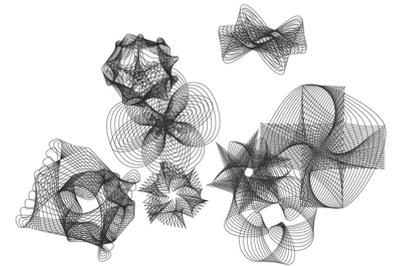
Morley Literature Festival, England

- presentation of the project on its → [website](#)
- video documentation on You Tube
- telephone interview with the festival director Jenny Harris on 11 Dec. 2012

→ [website of Le Printemps des Poètes](http://www.printempsdespoetes.com)
<http://www.printempsdespoetes.com> [17.11.2012]

→ [website of Morley Literature Festival](http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk)
<http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk> [17.11.2012]

- 1 The description provided on the festival's website reads: "Morley Literature Festival in Leeds is an annual week-long festival in October celebrating books, reading and writing" → <http://www.morleyliteraturefestival.co.uk/about> [17.11.2012].
- 2 See bibliography on Jean-Pierre Siméon: → http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?url=poetheque/poetes_fiche.php&cle=3 [18.11.2012].
- 3 A detailed paper on France's current school reform is available on the website of the country's education ministry: → <http://www.refondonslecole.gouv.fr/la-demarche/rapport-de-la-concertation> [10.11.2012].
- 4 In the original French: "une éducation culturelle, artistique et scientifique pour tous".
- 5 Refondons l'école de la République, Rapport de la concertation, p. 40; see Resource Pool MCS0108.pdf.
- 6 Cf. op. cit.
- 7 See France's cultural policy concept of the 2012–2014 legislative period, → <http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Politiques-ministerielles/Developpement-culturel/Education-populaire/Conventions-pluriannuelles-d-objectifs-2012-2014> [10.11.2012].
- 8 See the website of the association Verein Public Private Partnerships in Switzerland → <http://www.ppp-schweiz.ch/de> [10.11.2012].
- 9 See Sack 2003.
- 10 Phinn 1999; Phinn 2001.
- 11 Phinn 2000.
- 12 Walter Siebel and Harmut Häußermann coined the term festivalization (Festivalisierung) in 1993 in their article "Festivalisierung der Stadtpolitik". The term refers to the concentration of time, space and financial resources on a single event or project. See Häußermann, Siebel 1993.
- 13 See Refondons l'école de la République, Rapport de la concertation, p. 40; see Resource Pool MCS0108.pdf.
- 14 See the April 2011 issue of KM Magazin, which focused on urban and regional marketing (KM 2011); for more on the significance of the creative industries in Switzerland, see also: Weckerle et al 2007; Summary data also published at → <http://www.creativezurich.ch/kwg.php> [15.11.2012].
- 15 These statements are based on a telephone conversation between the author and Jenny Harris, the festival director [11.12.2012].
- 16 Statements by Jenny Harris [11.12.2012].
- 17 → <http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=2&ssrub=16&page=59> [15.11.2012].
- 18 All Le Printemps des Poètes themes are listed at → <http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=4&ssrub=23&page=13> [18.11.2012].



19 → <http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=3&ssrub=21&page=75> [17.11.2012].

20 → <http://www.printempsdespoetes.com/index.php?rub=4&ssrub=23&page=13> [17.11.2012].

21 → <http://www.barbarataylorbradford.co.uk> [10.11.2012] and → <http://www.iain-banks.net> [10.11.2012].

22 All statements cited here were made by Jenny Harris in the telephone conversation with the author on 11 Dec. 2012.

23 → <http://www.a-n.co.uk/publications/article/193995> [10.11.2012].

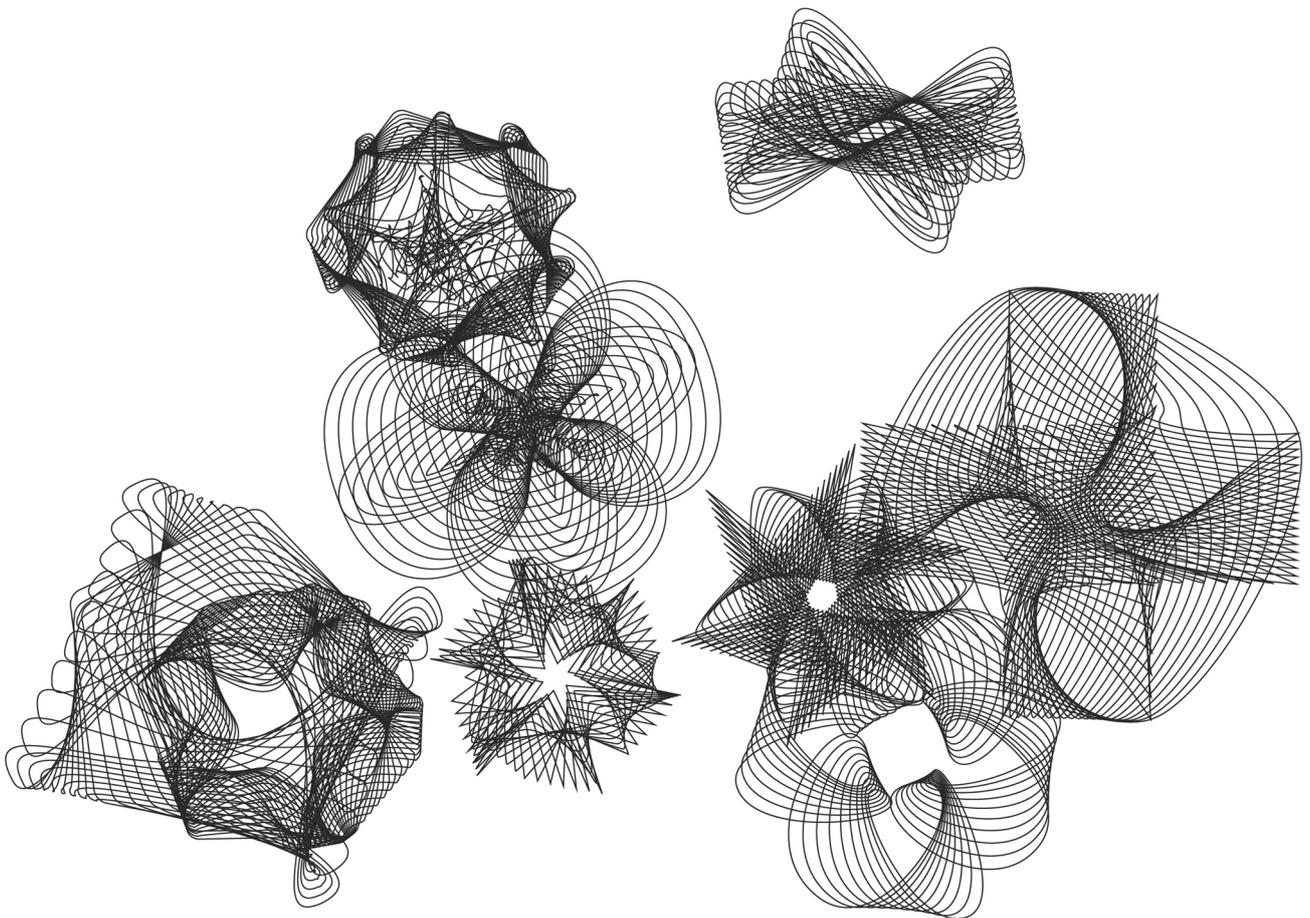
24 Artists who participated in "Signs of the Times": Paul Ashton, Amelia Crouch, Clare Charnley, Jess Mitchell and Vikkie Mulford.

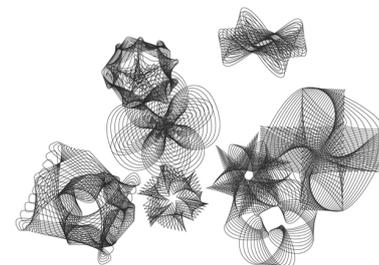
Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Service:

Glossary





Glossary

A

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Action Research

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Capital, forms of
Cognitive Capitalism
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Diversity Policy

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F

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M

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P

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Postdramatic Theatre
Power to Harm
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Precarization

R

Racism, routine and structural
Relative Autonomy
Representation
Representation-critical Perspective

S

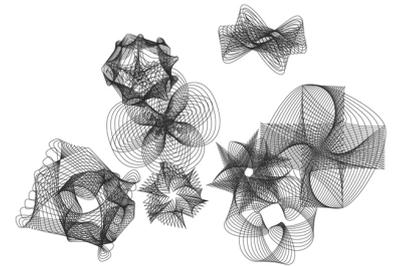
Self Empowerment
Self-representation
Socio-cultural Animation
Soft Skills
Soho Effect
Strategic Essentialism
Symbolic Added Value
System

V

Visitor-oriented
Visual Literacy

W

white



Accessibility

The term accessibility, primarily associated with the disability advocacy movement, refers to the universal accessibility of public goods or premises, to be achieved through a policy requiring real or symbolic barriers to be dismantled and disabilities to be neutralized. Accessibility would demand a comprehensive engagement with the manifold restrictions and closures associated with social spaces, something which seldom occurs to a sufficient degree. Many studies have demonstrated that the real and symbolic barriers to accessing museum spaces are considerable; they are also, as Pierre Bourdieu's work suggests, an essential aspect of the field, which may constitute the chief obstacle to achieving accessibility.

Action Research

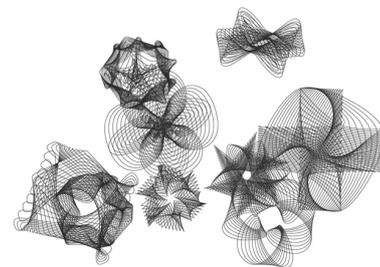
Action Research has become an influential form of research in the social sciences – mainly in English-language scholarship, but also in francophone, Latin American and, increasingly, German-language research. Action Research is characterized primarily by the fact that it involves the active attempt to change the social reality it is investigating and push the boundaries between the researcher and the people under study, the research and its subject. Social scientists first began developing methods and strategies for Participatory Action Research (PAR) in the 1960s. These approaches seek to solve problems and initiate transformation “through research into questions arising in daily working life [conducted] by individuals acting professionally, alone or in a team. Of key importance in this approach is the valorisation of the knowledge of practitioners relative to ‘expert knowledge’ generated outside the specific context of work” (Landkammer 2012, p. 200).

Britishness

Britishness is a somewhat hazy term referring to the quality of being British or, more accurately, for the codes evoking British identity. Like any other concept identifying a nation, Britishness is a discursive construct that must be produced, primarily through the definition of that which is deemed non-British. Britishness has a political role in the United Kingdom, which was and is far from homogenous. Stuart Hall, a pioneer in the field of Cultural Studies, speaks about the link between Britishness and racism, a frequent aspect of Britishness which people often wish to forget: “It is in the sugar you stir; it is in the sinews of the famous British ‘sweet tooth’; it is in the tea-leaves at the bottom of the next ‘British’ cuppa” (Procter 2004, p. 82).

Capital, forms of

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu distinguished among various forms of capital, which consist of different resources which individuals and organizations bring with them to social spaces: economic, social and cultural capital. The former, economic capital, refers to material assets (property, money), while the latter two refer to intangible resources: relationships and networks in the case of social capital and refinement and education (degree, title) in the case of cultural capital. The complex interrelations among these forms of capital comprise symbolic capital (prestige, privileged status) which an individual can draw on in social spaces.



Cognitive Capitalism

The term cognitive capitalism was coined as a term for the shift in capitalist economies since the 1970s, which has been characterised by a decline in industrial production. Intangible labour constitutes a key productive force producing “so-called intangible goods, meaning, knowledge, information, communication, relationships or emotional stimulants” (Hardt, Negri 2004, p. 126). The tertiary or service sector of the economy, which includes education, the arts and culture, is increasingly being caught up in the context of exploitation. In cognitive capitalism, material or manual labour does not become insignificant, rather it is delegated to non-privileged regions or non-privileged workers in accordance with the principles governing the international division of labour.

Culturalization

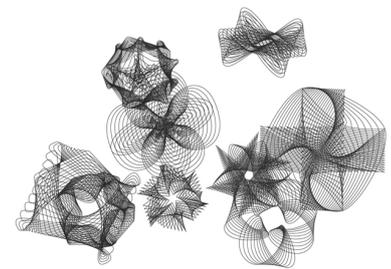
“Culturalization refers to the practice of identifying culture as the essential, central and determining explanation for (individuals’) actions, attitudes, modes of behaviour, conflicts or modes of expression. The concept of culture is often ethnicized in this context, so that, for instance, individuals are reduced to their – presumed– ‘Turkish culture’. Culturalization reinforces the division of society into two groups, those who belong (‘us’) and those who do not (‘the others’) and reproduces stereotypes and attributes” (Informations- und Dokumentationszentrum für Antirassismusbearbeitung Düsseldorf, Glossar: → <http://www.idaev.de/glossar> [22.2.2013]). Culturalization, which makes culture the “central signifier” (Grimm, Ronneberger) for the analysis of societal relationships, also tends to recast social issues as cultural issues and reinforce social inequalities by framing them as cultural differences.

Deconstruction

“The practitioner of deconstruction works within the terms of the system but in order to breach it.” (Culler 1988/1982 pp. 95 / 86). Deconstruction can be seen as critical work on the powerful oppositions within a discourse. Derrida describes the deconstructive gesture as follows: “...in a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a vis-à-vis, but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other [...] or has ‘the upper hand’. To deconstruct the opposition is, first of all, at a given moment, to overturn the hierarchy.” (Derrida 1986/1978, p. 88/56). To avoid the risk of pinning down meanings, deconstructive practices remain in motion, seeking to shift meanings rather than specify them.

Diversity Policy

This term refers to a museum’s official guidelines and rules which relate to the social and “cultural” diversity which the cultural institution is committed to embracing. A diversity policy formulates the institution’s approach toward the inclusion of and communications with individuals or groups that have been characterized as different on the basis of their gender, race, religion, class, ethnicity etc. Like the concept of diversity itself, the discourse on diversity policies has been criticized by many for tending to ignore or conceal discrimination while celebrating diversity.



Educational Turn in Curating

This controversial term refers to a growing interest evinced in the art field, and especially in the curatorial field, in educational approaches, primarily those developed in critical and liberation pedagogy in the tradition of Paulo Freire or Ivan Illich and in approaches associated with post-structuralist educational philosophies, such as that of Jacques Rancière. However, people were thinking and writing about the relationship between art and education long before the advent of the current educational turn: "The discovery by curators and art scholars of what had been, until recently, a marginal topic was preceded by about two hundred years of debate about the philosophy of education and practices of aesthetic education. One must hope that the current discourse will recognize those concepts and thus avoid the necessity to reinvent the wheel and the reduction of the complexity of those approaches." (Mörsch 2009).

Ethnic Essentialization

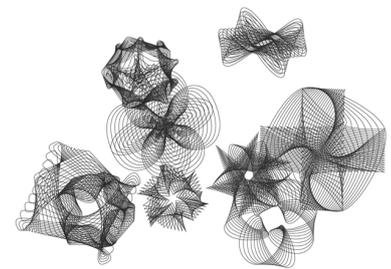
Ethnicity has been described by the sociologist and cultural theorist Stuart Hall as a dynamic concept, more of an idea, a form of consciousness that is neither natural nor eternal, but a function of circumstances at a specific point in time (Hall 1999). Ethnic essentialization defines individuals on the basis of their ethnicity and the attributes associated with it, which are usually descriptors used by a dominant majority to describe people they see as different from themselves.

Ethnicization Codes

The use of signs produces meanings in discourses and constructs social identities, for example that of sex or gender, or at times, ethnicity. Ethnicization codes take up cliché attributes and codifications and draw on what tends to be a racist repertoire and certain types of representations and dramaturgical discourses. Defining difference in ethnic terms is associated with a tendency to legitimize social inequalities and disparities by presenting them as "natural".

Expat

An informal abbreviation of expatriate, the word has become a common way to refer to people who live and work outside of their country of origin. However, "expat" tends to be used to describe mainly a privileged, mobile labour force in the global business world: immigrant, foreigner or Gastarbeiter (guest worker) remain stigmatizing terms reserved for socially de-privileged people, who are equally ex patrie. The fact that expats may like to live in parallel worlds, move in their own circles and seldom learn the language of the country which has taken them in, seldom elicits controversy.



Feminized

There are certain occupational fields, such as the field of education, which are distinctly feminized, i.e., jobs in the field are largely occupied by women. In particular, occupations in the service sector that demand certain social skills are characterized as women's occupations. Fields in which women are over-represented are often underpaid, while the sector of unpaid labour (housework, nursing care) is also extremely feminized. Moreover, a closer examination of the feminization of occupational fields reveals a highly specific tendency: feminization decreases with increasing status and salary. Thus, one should bear in mind the differences in the gender ratios among kindergarten teachers and university rectors when speaking of the feminization of the education sector.

Field

As defined by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, a social field is any sphere of social life, for example, the fields of the economy, politics or art. Each field adheres to its own logic and rules. These logics and rules are constantly renegotiated by individuals and organizations, the agents acting in the field; at the same time, they restrict the scope of action and the possible behaviours of agents within a field. The usually tacit consensus concerning the rules of a specific field and the value of investment in it is, in Bourdieu's terms, a field-specific 'illusio', or social illusion. The illusio ensures that the agents in the field continue to fight for advantageous positions or certain resources within the social space.

Fordist and post-Fordist

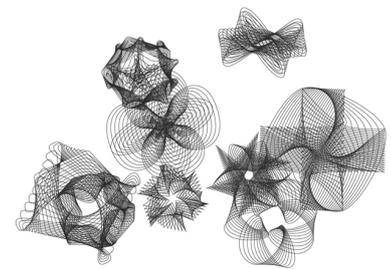
Fordism refers to a phase in a capitalist economy that is primarily based on the production of value by industry. Important motors for growth in such an economy are the mass production and mass consumption of blue and white-collar workers who are secured by a social state. This economic model, influenced, for example, by the concepts developed by Henry Ford, the auto industrialist, in the 1920s, underwent a crisis in the 1970s, causing a transition to the post-Fordist phase.

A post-Fordist economy is driven by the financial market and relies primarily on knowledge-intensive information/communication technologies. It is characterized by a trend towards individualized and non-formalized working conditions that have the potential to turn all individuals into entrepreneurs of the self.

Gender gap

In the other languages of "Time for Cultural Mediation" we have adopted gender-conscious language. We have used the underline (e.g. Vermittler_innen [cultural mediator_ess]) to interrupt the flow of reading and oppose the binary, fixed on male and female gender order.

The underline creates a symbolic space, referred to as the "gender gap". It is used to indicate variant gender-identities beyond the category man/woman. (This is in contrast to the conventional use of the term gender gap, for example, for financial discrimination against women in relation to men in comparable professional positions.) In the English version it was not possible to adopt this form, as in the English language, unlike in German, French and Italian, nouns do not always imply gender. Nevertheless we are aware that job-titles may sometimes bring to mind gender-identities.



Gentrification

A term from critical urban sociology describing a process, in which previously neglected or impoverished urban neighbourhoods are upgraded, that has characterized the neoliberal transformation of large urban cities in the context of global competition. Often associated with social conflicts, gentrification causes a change in the social structure of a neighbourhood and the displacement of non-privileged residents. Art and culture often function as the vanguard of gentrification processes; in some cases they are deliberately introduced to an area as part of a strategy to induce gentrification.

Globish

Globish, a portmanteau fusing global and English, refers to a utilitarian vocabulary (consisting of around 1,500 words) which is believed to function as a shared global communication code. Developed initially in transnational industrial management, but established in the sciences and the arts as well, this “decaffeinated English” (Robert McCrum) is controversial. Whether Globish is a language of domination or a democratic lingua franca furthering the cause of global understanding is the subject of debate.

Habitus

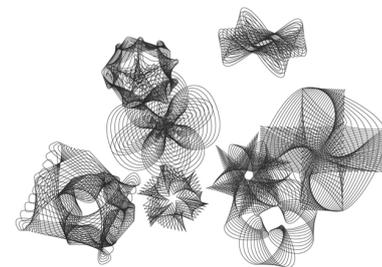
This term describes the routine modes of thought, perception and representation with which individuals organize their actions in practice. Habitus embodies the – usually unconscious – norms acquired through socialization that link together collectives, such as occupational groups, generations or classes. In very subtle ways, habitus influences people’s gestures, language and postures. A habitus is not easy to transform or cast off. Pierre Bourdieu, in whose sociology the habitus concept plays an important role as class-specific behaviour, describes it as “history incarnate in the body”.

Intervention

The term intervention art was coined in the 1980s to describe artistic works that intentionally attempt to induce change in their social environment. Artists taking this approach deliberately and systematically push their work outside the spaces assigned to art, seeking confrontation with the “outside”, with the local context, with political and social movements. Practices of intervention combine art and activism, thus inventing popular forms of the political, for instance the well-known disruptions of what still remains a male-dominated art business by the Guerrilla Girls or Volxtheaterkarawane’s theatrical interventions protesting against European border and asylum policy.

Knowledge Workers

Knowledge is the key production force in a post-industrial society whose economy is based on information, communication and technology. Knowledge workers, who are employed primarily by what is called the tertiary sector or service sector of the economy, are required to remain innovative and informed, to respond flexibly to the global market and bring consistently up-to-date and expanding knowledge as a resource to it. Creativity is a core competence for productive knowledge workers.



Latitude of Interpretation

Artistic work and practices possess – at least potentially – a high degree of interpretive latitude, i.e. they remain open to a process in which the viewer or visitor defines their meaning, which is, theoretically, never-ending. Viewed from a rational and social perspective on art, the meaning of art undergoes constant renewal caused by the activity of its recipients. This process of appropriation, retrieval or displacement holds an emancipation potential, which is of major significance for critical arts education.

Lay Culture

The slightly pejorative term lay culture (one also finds the term amateur culture) refers to a diverse array of cultural practices which are also defined through their non-affiliation with high culture or the cultural sphere. Singing in choirs, amateur theatre or folk music are classic forms of lay culture. It is anchored in civil society structures and is frequently not institutionalized, self-funded or publically funded (usually from regional or local coffers, rarely from funds specifically allocated to culture). Associations and initiatives organized by volunteers are the main seats of lay culture, though adult schools, libraries, socio-cultural centres and art or music schools are sometimes also active in the sphere.

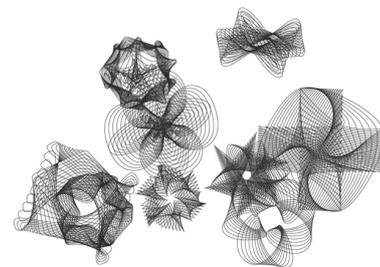
The Love of Art

“The Love of Art” is the ironic title of a study on “European art museums and their public” by Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel published in 1966. The study aimed “not only at the deconstruction of the notion of a ‘love of art’ anchored in human nature, but also at exposing the true but disguised societal function of art, stabilizing and legitimizing social differences” (Aigner 2008).

The study was based on a wide-ranging sociological survey of many different European museums. One of its conclusions was that statistical probability suggests that one would have to wait 46 years in a museum before coming across someone who did not have more than a lower secondary school education. The book, which was not translated into German until 2006, unmasked the love of art as a “cultural need” generated by a person’s upbringing and a bourgeois ideology which avails itself a code which is deliberately decipherable only for people who possess certain means, or cultural capital (see Glossary entry on capital, forms of).

Majority Society

Majority society need not, as a literal reading might suggest, necessarily refer to a group in the quantitative majority; rather, at issue is a socially dominant and privileged group which embodies the social norms (for instance, white, Western, heterosexual, secularized, etc.) which determine who is considered a minority. Thus majority and minority describe a power relationship rather than a numerical relationship. Some scholars have proposed the use of the term ‘dominant culture’ as an alternative to underline the power aspect.



Migration Society

“Consequences of immigration and emigration, of commuter migration and transnational migration are constitutive for today’s societal reality. [...] The degree to which migration affects societal reality is so decisive here that the expression migration society is an apt one. We are speaking of a migration society and not, for instance, of an immigration society, because the concept of migration is broader than that of immigration and it is this that makes the appropriate to a broader spectrum of migration phenomena.” (Broden, Mecheril 2007, p. 7)

“Musisch” education

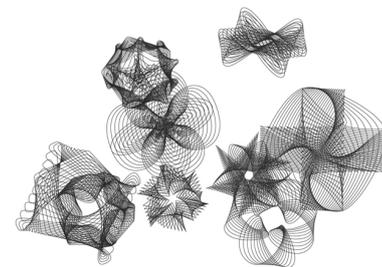
Both the term and the concept date back to the reform pedagogical movement at the start of the 20th century. Taking a culturally critical perspective on the technocratic and rationalistic modern era and an instrumental approach to education, proponents of *musisch* education sought a holistically designed education of body and mind which encompassed music, art, language as well as sport and movement. The programme gradually worked its way into teaching curricula of schools. In the post-war period of the 1950s, *musisch* education won many supporters, who saw it as a conciliating and purportedly apolitical concept. Subsequently, *musisch* education drew criticism in critical education discourses as being biased towards cultural conservatism, and many disavowed it as a concept. Nonetheless it continues to resonate in certain current views on cultural education.

Naturalization

We speak of naturalization when relationships or systems are depicted as natural although they are actually socially produced. These relationships or systems are then seen as givens and unalterable, since nature – unlike culture or history – is thought of in that way. The fact that nature and history are “confused at every turn” as Roland Barthes phrased in “Mythologies” (Barthes 2003 / 1972, p. 6 / 10), was revealed as a component of an ideology which sought to prevent changes in the status quo. Anti-racist, feminist or post-colonial positions are therefore continually addressing criticism at naturalizations.

Paternalism

Paternalism refers to a highly ambivalent strategy of supporting, caring or intervening “from above” – from a position of power and superiority – on behalf of subjects considered to be needy, challenging their autonomy “for their own good”. Classical configurations of paternalism, which is always “well meant”, are found in the relationship between parents and children, teachers and pupils, the affluent and the poor. Paternalistic gestures, often subtly disguised in the forms and rhetoric of empowerment, result in a consolidation of power relationships. A nuanced critique of paternalism should not overlook the dimension of protection and care it contains, which a liberal critique of the “welfare state” would like to see eliminated.



People of Colour

People of colour (also: person of colour) is a term used by some minoritized non-white people to describe themselves. It is connected to a strategy to create a political and strategic alliance against racism, in a context in which various groups have been played off against one another in the past. "The importance of a policy of allying various communities of colour is also evident in the fact that we have to take back the societal power of definition which has been denied us in the context of a generally white and majority-German dominated debate about racism, migration and integration." (Dean 2011, p. 607)

Performativity

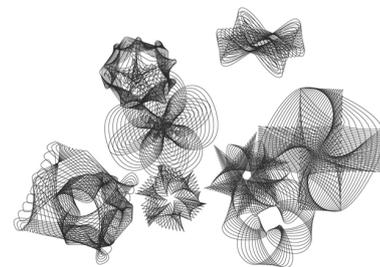
Since the late 1980s, performativity has been a key concept in many disciplines, such as linguistics, sociology and cultural studies. Central to the theories of performativity is the idea that socio-symbolic structures (such as gender-based structures or social spaces) are not simply given, but rather represented and produced. The semiotic theories on the speech act and the performance of speech by its speaker provide the starting point for the concept of performativity. One challenging dimension of the concept is that the thinking about performativity does not see the "real" or "natural" behind that which is represented or produced. This, in a sense, is performativity's provocative aspect, which emerges clearly, for example, in Judith Butler's gender theory.

Post-dramatic Theatre

Post-dramatic theatre is theatre which has emancipated itself from drama, i.e. from producing a dramatic work, a literary text, a "play". Instead, the focus is on the performance, the theatrical per se, which takes place in relation to the space, the acting and the audience. It does not centre around a text, but rather the theatre and its material situation. The term, coined by theatre scholar Hans-Thies Lehmann, can be interpreted or appropriated in a variety of ways, with the result that even text-based theatre can be defined as post-dramatic (as long as the text is not a traditionally structured dramatic text).

Power to Harm

Theorist Maria do Mar Castro Varela uses the concept of the power to do harm in her analysis of educational relationships: "The more privileged my position, the more power I have to do harm. Sometimes this causes people to have a sense of helplessness, because they feel that they are unable to satisfy anyone, that people are always correcting them." To address this, she calls for self-reflection and self-criticism: "The act of educating is saturated with power and always entails the risk of injuring other people, to that extent, it appears necessary to develop forms of sensitivity, hone one's own perception and take up a critical attitude to the system which endowed one with privileges." (Castro Varela 2004)



Precarious

Precarious employment conditions are conditions of unregulated employment with little (or no) social safeguards, i.e. as a contractor, rather than as a regular employee. Precarious employment situations are characterised by insecurity and, frequently, underpayment, but one must not forget that freedom and self-determination are also features of them. In certain sectors (art, media, cleaning, nursing) precarious employment conditions are the norm.

Precarization

Precarization refers to the trend toward increased insecurity in working and living conditions. It is an effect of the neoliberal restructuring of the economy and society and of cognitive capitalism (see that entry). The rapid deregulation of employment and the replacement of permanent employment with short-term project work and temporary contract work are having enormous impacts on individuals and society, affecting primarily non-privileged individuals (e.g. labour migrants on construction sites or in nursing care) but also privileged workers (cultural workers or scholars). Precarious employment is also associated with aspects of self-determination and self-realization, which make the continuance of a (self-) exploitation possible but which also hold out resistance potential as suggested in the analysis of Isabell Lorey in her book "Die Regierung der Prekären" ["Government of the precarious"] (Lorey 2012).

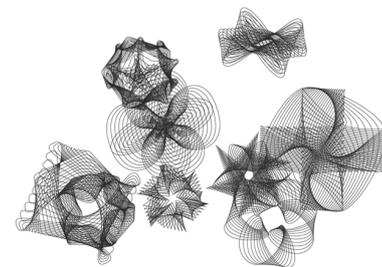
Relative Autonomy

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu attributed a relatively larger amount of autonomy to the art field (see the entry on field) that is associated with the fields of the economy and politics. The art field reverses the logics of the others: the lower the economic profit, the greater the symbolic capital. The autonomy of art is also a key assumption in aesthetics theory as well, in which that autonomy is seen as giving rise to the critical potential of art with respect to society and its structures. In view of the co-opting and exploitation of art, the relative autonomy of art is understood in very different ways from various different political and theoretical perspectives: as implicit, as lost or as something to be regained.

Representation

Representation inevitably contains an element of presentation. "Representation means putting forth meaning using a language, whereby language is understood to mean a system of signs, whose use is governed by codes. The process of representation is a social practice which is essential for the putting forth and circulation of meaning – through the use of the medium of language (general system of signs)" (Medienkulturwiki: → <http://www2.leuphana.de/medienkulturwiki/medienkulturwiki2/index.php/Repr%C3%A4sentation> [18.2.2012]).

Every representation attempts to fix the various meanings of signs, images etc. and to assign priority to a certain meaning. This results in a "battle over representation" (Stuart Hall), which centres around key questions: what is shown and what is not shown? Who represents whom in what way, and who are not entitled to represent (themselves or others)?



Representation-critical Perspective

A critical perspective on representation examines the powerful effects produced by an act of representation or presentation (for instance, in the documentation of cultural education work). By examining that which is shown or which is not shown, and how and by whom, one can create a space for criticism that reveals, first and foremost, how an alternative representation might appear. In this sense, a representation-critical perspective is a political perspective that addresses power relationships.

Routine and Structural Racism

While routine racism is a term which refers to individual racist acts, whether deliberate or not, of a type which people defined as minorities continually confront, structural racism refers to practices which come into play at a level above that of the individual. These are forms of racism which arise from societal systems and are expressed in their logics, economies, standards or laws. Discrimination in electoral systems, in the job market, in the legal system, and in the workplace are effects of structural racism. In the case of both routine and structural racism, what is at issue is "not simply the prejudices of individuals, but rather the legitimization of societal hierarchies which are based on discrimination against groups construed in this way. In this sense, racism is always a societal relationship." (Rommelspacher 2006).

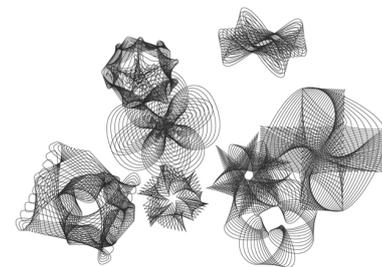
Self Empowerment

Self empowerment (a concept associated with the US American civil rights and women's liberation movements) on the part of marginalized or minority groups or individuals, refers to a redistribution of the powers of representation, definition and agency, primarily through social, political and cultural participation. A critical examination of hidden aspects of paternalism (see that entry) is imperative, because self empowerment is also currently much lauded as a neoliberal management strategy, in a less than liberating spirit, the point of which is to delegate responsibility to what are actually disempowered individuals.

Self-representation

In light of the power of representation (see that entry) which privileged positions tend to acquire and make use of, self-representation by marginalized subjects can be seen as a counterstrategy: i.e. a key "policy in the first person plural" (Kien Nghi Ha, → <http://igkultur.at/projekte/transfer/textpool/politik-in-der-ersten-person-plural> [18.2.2012]).

Self-representation gives under- and misrepresented individuals the opportunity and the means to present and represent their own positions while reining in the ambitions of the majority to speak for others.



Socio-cultural Animation

Socio-cultural animation is a discipline and practice of social work which has its roots in a range of theories and traditions of critical pedagogy, though first and foremost in an engaged leisure-time education for children and youths (the term was first used in France in the 1950s and further in the social movements of the 1970s and 80s.)

Socio-cultural animation is fundamentally participation-oriented and attempts to encourage or engage individuals and groups to participate in the transformation of individual spheres of action such as social structures in their communities, i.e. to use culture as a way of intervening in the social arena.

Soft Skills

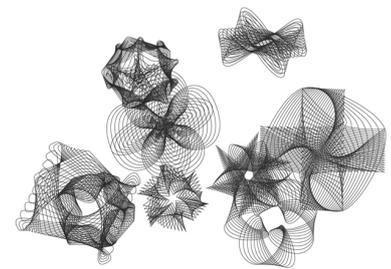
Soft skills are less easily pinned down than “hard” specialist knowledge and skills, but they are in ever-greater demand in both the business world and society as a whole. They include communicative and social abilities, like the ability to empathize, to work in a team, loyalty, and personality traits like friendliness, self-assurance or ambition. Because they can be of value in important processes like networking, the post-industrial (employment) world is developing a new appreciation for soft skills, which have frequently been categorized as feminine and associated with the private sphere.

Soho Effect

A term that currently comes up quite often in urban studies contexts, the Soho Effect refers to a process of gentrification triggered by artists and “Bohemians”, i.e. the displacement of socially and economically underprivileged residents in the process of upgrading an urban neighbourhood. The term is derived from New York’s Soho neighbourhood, which underwent a transformation in the 1980s. Initially, artists seeking affordable housing moved into the district, which made the district attractive to developers and urban planners: today, Soho is one of New York’s most expensive neighbourhoods. The intentional fostering of “creative clusters” in a given area has established itself as a strategy for urban renewal.

Strategic Essentialism

The post-colonial philosopher Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has advocated the tactic of “strategic essentialism”, meaning identifying oneself with an oppressed group for a strategic purpose and to speak about that group and for it, to represent it while fully aware of the snares associated with such representation. This would entail speaking, for strategic and political reasons, as a “Roma man” or as a “Muslim woman” and laying claim to an identity, knowing all the while that that claim is problematic. Strategic essentialism is characterized by the fact that it makes visible the pitfalls and problematic aspects of identity composition.



Symbolic Added Value

Assuming that resources other than economic capital (see entry on capital, forms of) are factors in the marketplace, then it must be possible to generate symbolic profit as well. If, for instance, a museum can promote an image of itself as a particularly advanced institution by hosting a critical cultural education project, then it can credit itself with having obtained a symbolic gain, which it can benefit from in various ways, including financially (perhaps through acquiring additional public or private funding earmarked for progressive museums, etc.).

System

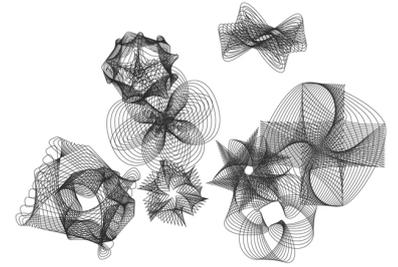
A systematic concept of art – which is distinct from an ontological or an idealistic concept of art – encompasses everything that appears in the system of art, that which is made as art, labelled art or perceived as art, as well as that which is produced or critiqued in the context of art. Thus a wide range of phenomena and practices extending beyond the static concept of the work and its authors belong to the system of art. In this context, it is essential to bear in mind that access to this system is not random but, on the contrary, is governed by communities of definition, i.e. individuals and organizations which settle on what is eligible, or not, to be integrated with the system of art and when.

Visitor-oriented

It has become strategically important and nearly compulsory for cultural institutions to be visitor-oriented or act as such. The motivations behind attempts on the part of institutions to think from their visitors' points of view and respond to their needs can vary: notions of democratization may be the driving factor, but a service-provision model may also. In any case, it is now a management mantra in the cultural arena that visitor orientation leads to an increase in visitor numbers.

Visual Literacy

Visual literacy refers to an education or competency in the fundamentals of the field of the visual (Sigrud Schade, Silke Wenk), i.e. the ability to read visual images which, contrary to received wisdom, cannot be understood without some previous knowledge. Visual literacy enables the viewer to contextualize images, to perceive the representational relationships they entail (see entry on representation) and the processes of production and dissemination in which they are embedded. Promoting visual literacy among the public, therefore, can cause people to adopt a responsible and critical approach to that which is visual. The definition of this competency is something that should be the subject of reflection and constant renegotiation, as it is not an objective quality but rather a social construction which reflects power structures. (Self-)Critical cultural education subjects normative notions of visual literacy to scrutiny.



white

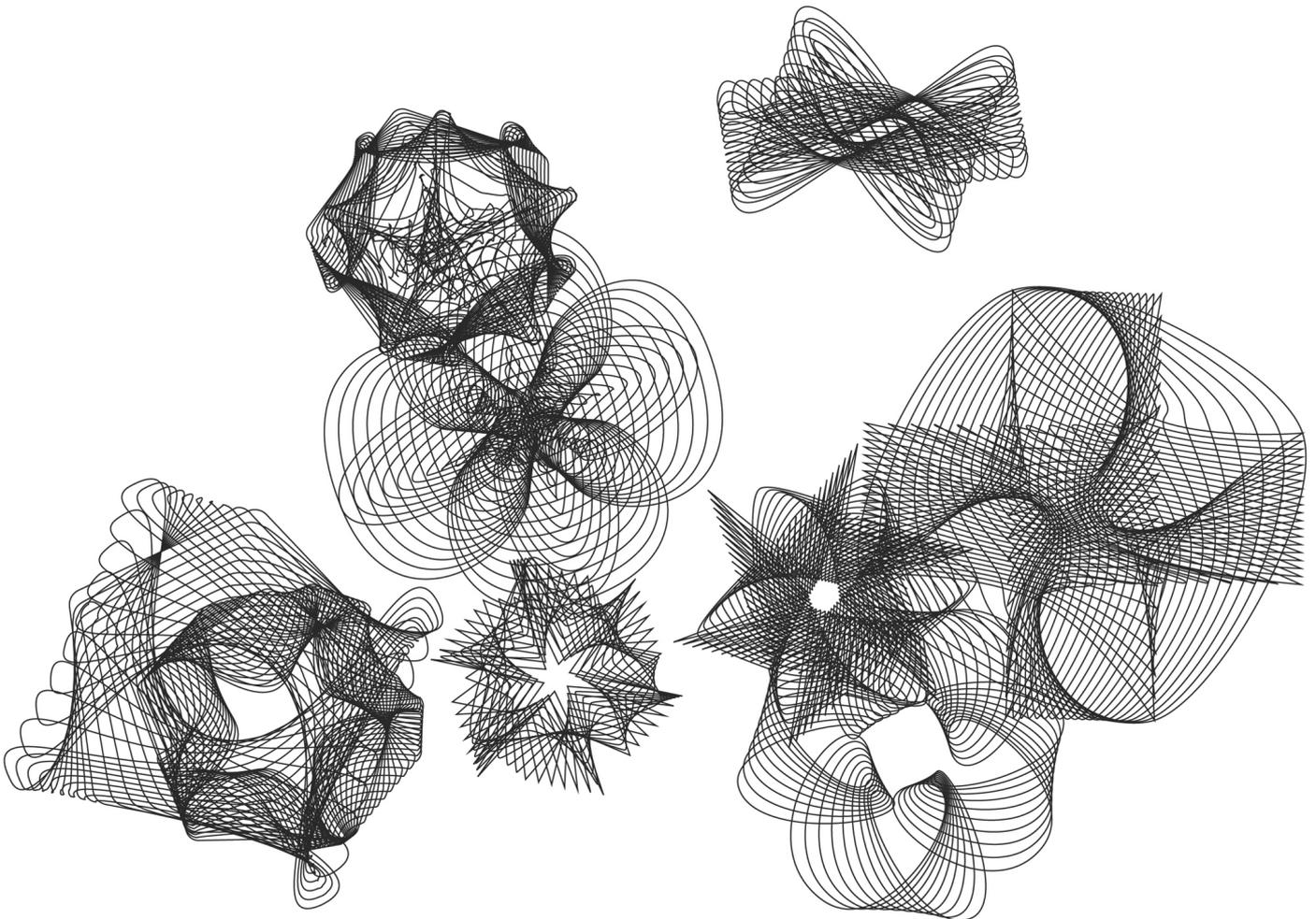
white as printed here, is a typographical convention proposed by scholars of “critical whiteness studies” (→ <http://www.unrast-verlag.de/unrast,3,0,261.html> [21.11.2012]), which seeks to provoke an awareness of and to counter, in printed text, the powerful neutrality and normality of being *white*. In this form, *white*, consistently set in italics and lower case, refers to a privileged position within a society, “in which the access to resources, is facilitated or impeded, in part, on the basis of skin pigmentation and physiognomy – i.e. within a racialized system” (Dean 2011). Black, capitalized and not italicized, refers to a marginalized and “racialized” position. In both cases, the typographic tagging is intended to point to the construed nature of these powerful categories and deliberately disturb the natural flow of a text.

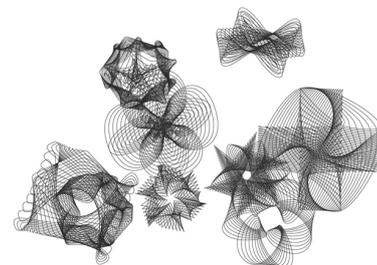
Time for Cultural Mediation

- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?
- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

Service:

Literature and Links





Literatur and Links

By sections

References in the texts For Reading at Leisure are listed at the end of those sections.

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1 What is Cultural Mediation?

1.2 Médiation culturelle

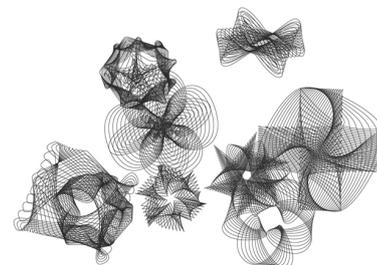
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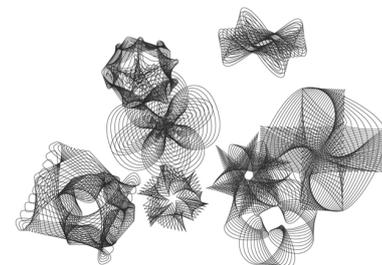
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4 How is Cultural Education Carried Out?

4.1 Participation level: receptive

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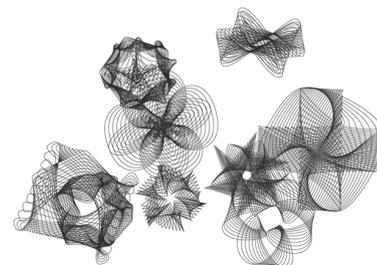
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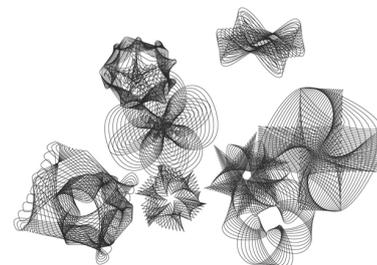
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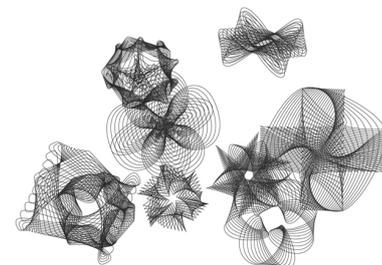
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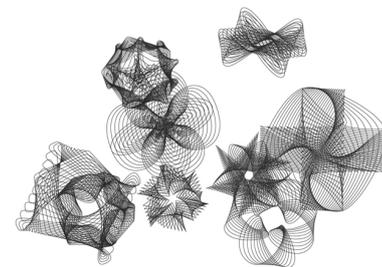
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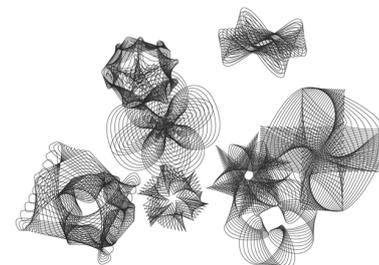
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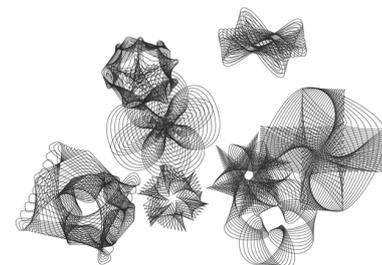
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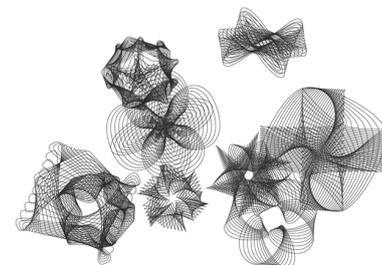
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Service

CASE STUDY 1

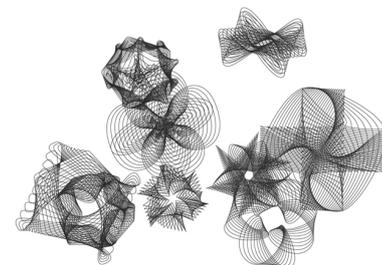
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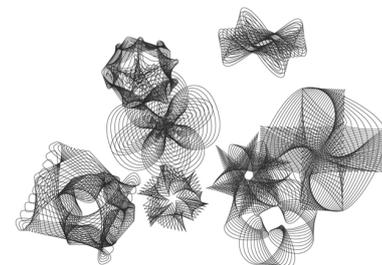
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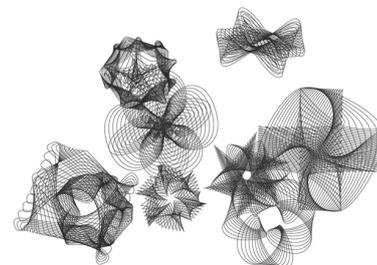
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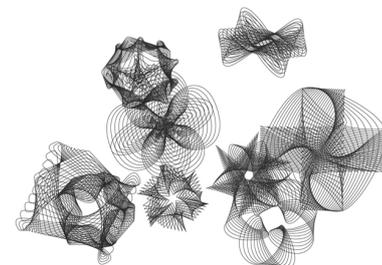
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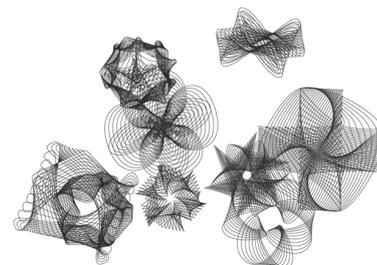
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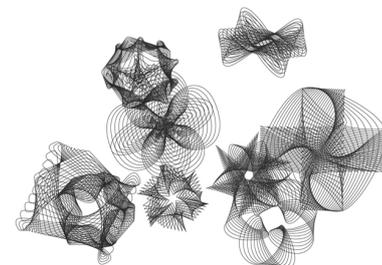
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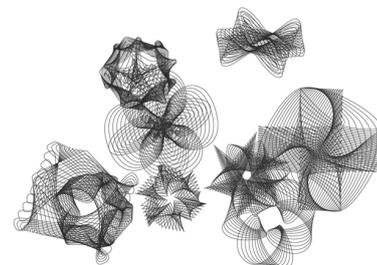
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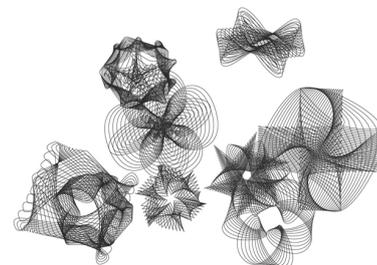


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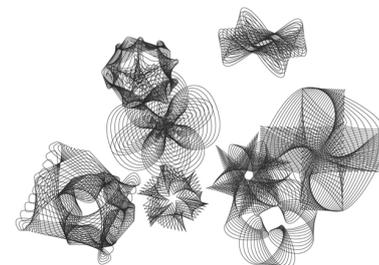
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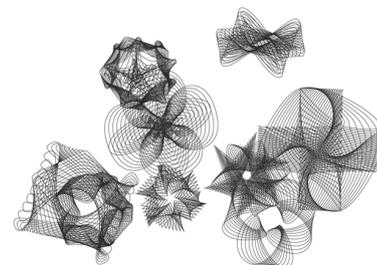
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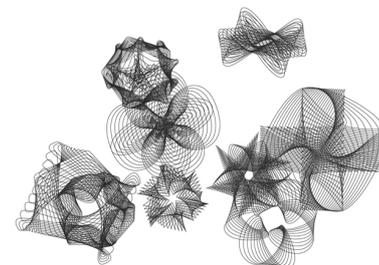
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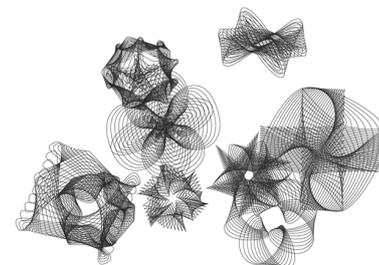
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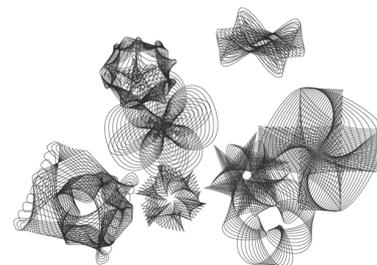
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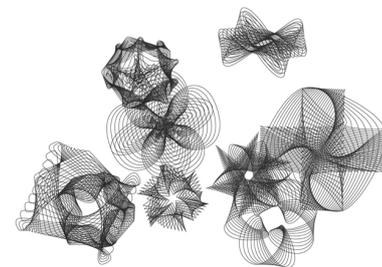
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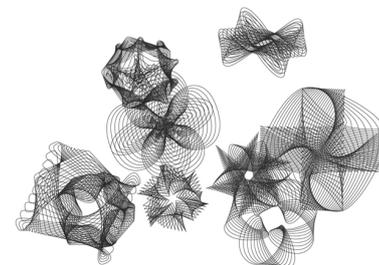
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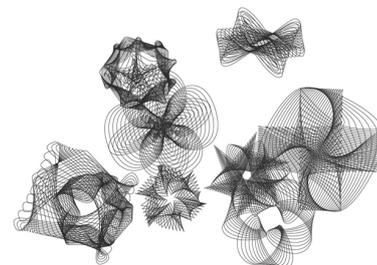
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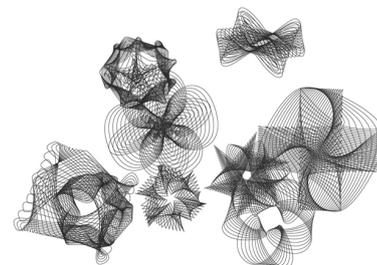
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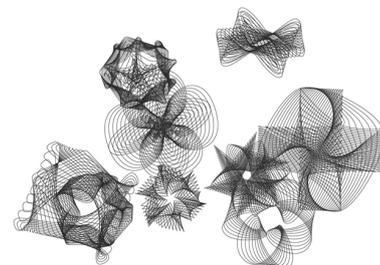
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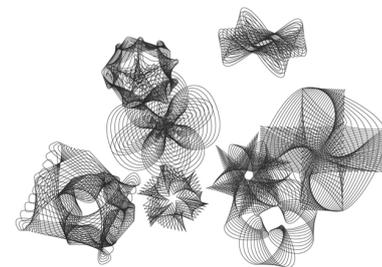
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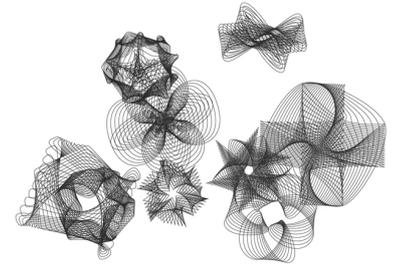
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Carmen Mörsch and Anna Chrusciel

Authors

“Quick Reads” and “For Reading at Leisure” texts

Carmen Mörsch, Stephan Fürstenberg (“For Reading at Leisure” text in chapter 9)

Case Studies

Anna Chrusciel

Changing Perspectives

Corinne Doret Baertschi, Marie-Hélène Boulanger, Margrit Bürer, Franziska Dürr, Denise Felber, Hans Ulrich Glarner, André Grieder, Nicole Grieve, Fanny Guichard, Eszter Gyarmathy, Gunhild Hamer, Anina Jendreyko, Nadia Keckeis, Tim Kramer, Reto Luder, Felicity Lunn, microsillons, Gianna Mina, Irena Müller-Brozovic, Murielle Perritaz, Thomas Pfiffner, Jeanne Pont, Raphaëlle Renken, Urs Rietmann, Meris Schüppach, Sara Smidt, Anne-Catherine Sutermeister, Gallus Staubli, Nathalie Tacchella, Barbara Waldis, Claude-Hubert Tatot, Regula von Büren, David Vuillaume, Ruth Widmer; Mediation working group at Pro Helvetia: Marianne Burki, Jelena Delic, Christian Gyger, Anna Schlossbauer, Gabrielle Weber; Swiss Federal Office of Culture, Culture and Society Section: Stefan Koslowski, David Vitali

Glossary entries

Catrin Seefranz

Editing and translation

Editing and proofreading, German

Hubert Bächler, Büro für Sprache, Zurich

German to French translation

Mariëlle Larré, Mots Clés, Zurich

in collaboration with Anne Maurer, Michel Schnarenberger and Christian Viredaz

French to German translation

Sabine Dröschel, Attalens

Copy-editing and terminology, French

Nicole Grieve, Sion

Proof-reading, French

proverb, Biel

German to Italian translation

Peter Schrembs, Coop Terziario, Locarno

Italian to German translations

Geneviève Bernard-Poncioni, Pianezzo

Editing and proof-reading, Italian

proverb, Biel

German to English translation

proverb, Biel

Editing and terminology, English

Janna Graham

Proofreading, English

proverb, Biel

Design

Nicole Boillat, Judith Dobler (Edit gestaltet, Basel), Assistance with animations:
Bruno Steiner

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Contact Information

IAE ZHdK: Toni-Areal, Pfingsweidstrasse 96, 8005 Zurich, → iae.zhdk.ch

Pro Helvetia: Hirschengraben 22, CH-8024 Zurich, → www.prohelvetia.ch

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