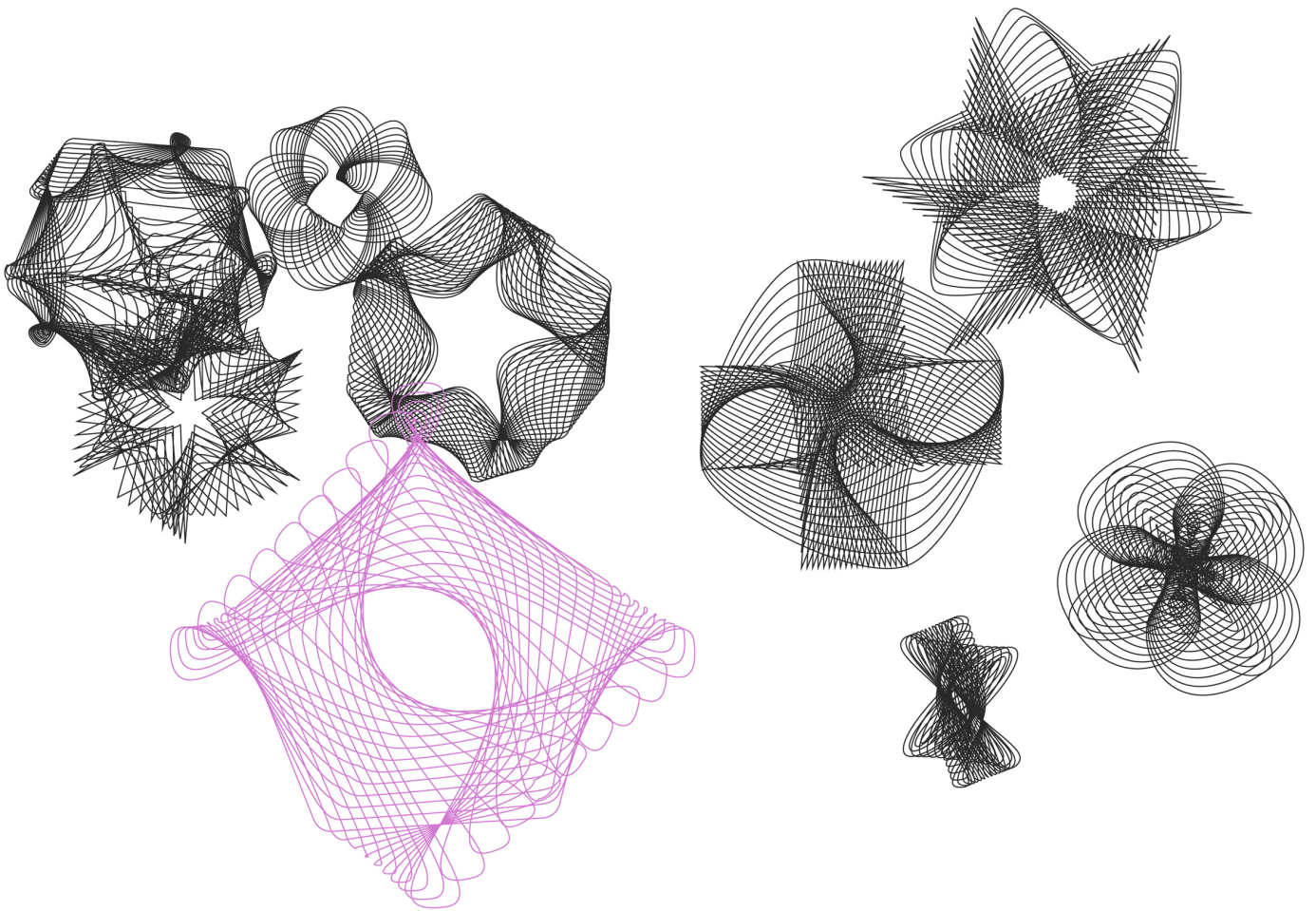


# Time for Cultural Mediation

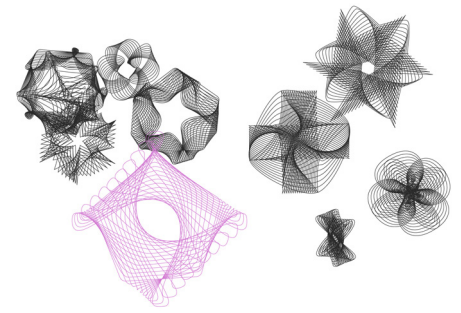
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?



- 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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- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?



### 6.0 Intro

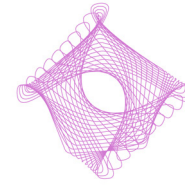
Increasingly, cultural and education policymakers and funding bodies are turning their attention to all aspects of cultural mediation. One instigator of this trend was the cultural policy reform instituted by the English Labour Party in 1998. The new policy (re)discovered the social and economic significance 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](#) 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](#), 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”.

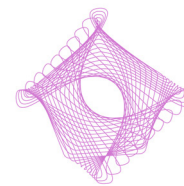
Another indication of the importance of the economic legitimization for cultural mediation is the key lobbying paper for this area, the → [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#). Adopted and released in 2010 at the second World Conference on Arts Education in Seoul, South Korea, it declares: “21st century 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> [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

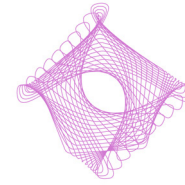


include the upgrading of urban districts through the presence of artists, the contribution of cultural and creative industries to the gross national product and the → change of attitudes in the workforce toward greater flexibility and inventiveness. Finally, cultural mediation contributes to the formation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

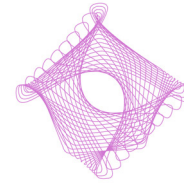
→ *cognitive capitalism* see Glossary

→ *Jansen-Osmann 2006* [http://www.psych.uni-duesseldorf.de/abteilungen/aap/Dokumente/mtk\\_petra.pdf](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](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]

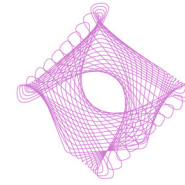


out that because the learning effects to be documented were defined in such “generic”, such very general, terms, the instrument, although quite easy to use, failed to yield particularly meaningful results. Nevertheless, Generic Learning Outcomes are now being used in cultural institutions throughout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

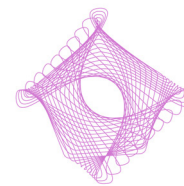




### 6.3 Legitimization: Cultural mediation as a matter of fiscal responsibility

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."

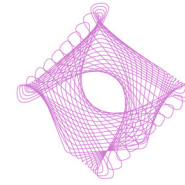
Problematic aspects of the inclusion rationale include its assumption that culture and institutions are immutable constants into which those formerly excluded ought now be included. The social context which gives rise to discrimination in the first place is seldom a factor considered or included in the 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](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

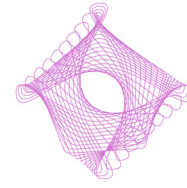
→ [UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education](#) [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul\\_Agenda\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul_Agenda_EN.pdf) [22.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE060501.pdf

→ [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

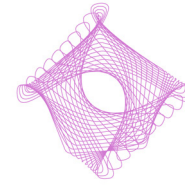
→ [Angela Merkel's speech](#) <http://perso.ens-lyon.fr/adrien.barbaresi/corpora/BR/t/1368.html> [13.4.2012]; see Resource Pool MFE0605.pdf



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

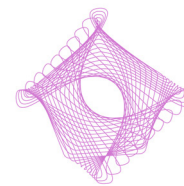


## 6.6 Legitimization: Cultural mediation as means to actively contribute to shaping the arts and their institutions

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.

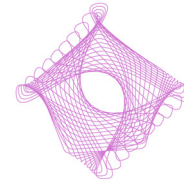
The success of these films points to comparatively large-scale public interest in cultural mediation projects which base their legitimacy on social grounds. This is not coincidental, because this particular legitimization strategy met with fertile soil in the collective memory. It has a long history, 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](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]

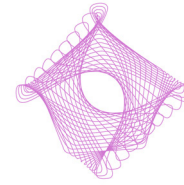
→ *Film El Sistema* <http://www.el-sistema-film.com> [15.4.2012]



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



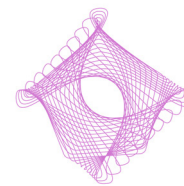
## 6.8 Objections to cultural mediation and its promotion

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

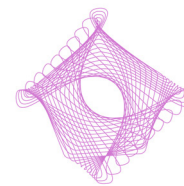
The doors to our institutions seem imposing and massive to those who do not already possess the cultural keys to open them. Yet sometimes it only takes a single encounter, one first experience with an artwork, to make the barriers fall. The way of seeing is transformed, the cultural adventure can begin.

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?

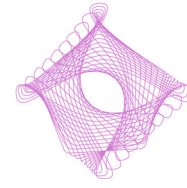
Children and young people fail to take up the offer to participate; already scant resources are depleted further to organize and finance the projects. In addition, the teachers themselves are often poorly networked: they are active as representatives of a subject of instruction, an artistic discipline, 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.

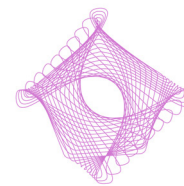
In order to take on this role, teachers have to be willing and able to scrutinize their routine perspective on things, to call into question that



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.

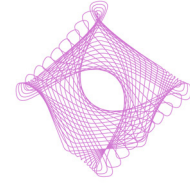
The argumentation relating to power structures is striking. It frames all the legitimizations as a proof of performance for a paying customer: one whose expectations are also reflected in these reports on activities. Those providing funding want performance and outcomes. Those doing the performing may 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.

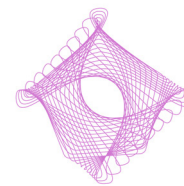
Something is missing from all of the legitimizations presented here: the art, the artwork, the artist, the human being (*c’est le regardeur qui fait l’œuvre*). Yet they are present wherever there is art. The appalling term “cognitive capitalism” can be understood as the exploitation of the receptor, 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.*



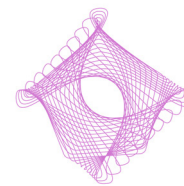
## CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Raphaëlle Renken: I Love Cultural Mediation

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.<sup>1</sup> 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”.<sup>2</sup> 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.

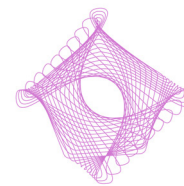
Since cultural mediation calls for negotiation and the search for balance, it is ideally suited to museums, which are continuously causing different worlds to collide and have to attain a certain degree of harmony among innumerable viewpoints.

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

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

<sup>2</sup> 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?

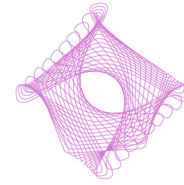
This text also serves as a Changing Perspective text for section 5. What Does Cultural Mediation Do?

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].

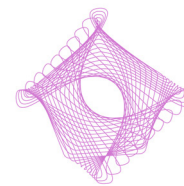
Participation of a broad and diverse audience has relevance for the legitimacy of cultural promotion: in past decades cultural offerings available in Switzerland (and in other countries as well) have expanded dramatically while the level of audience interest has not kept pace. Thus if this expansion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

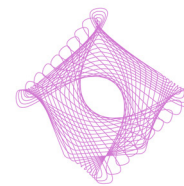
*"At this point, one probably has to ask whether there is a way out of these manifold entanglements. If pedagogy is one of the major technologies of control, can arts education ever be progressive or emancipatory? [...] The question is an essential one because there is no middle way – no 'neutral pedagogy'."*

(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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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



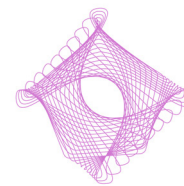
practitioners” are still being pushed into → *precarity*, despite the enhanced status of their field of work. In the context of the deregulation of markets and social system, the attributes associated with artists, i.e. flexibility, willingness to take risks, willingness to perform and take on responsibility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

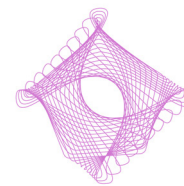
Cultural mediation as (hegemony) critical practice emphasizes the potential represented by the experience of difference in education with art and opposes the idea of efficiency with the upgrading of the value of failure, of exploratory movements, of open processes and of offensive non-utility as a source 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.

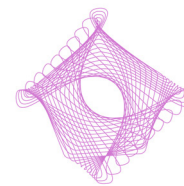
Spaces where it is therefore also necessary to reflect on the cultural mediator's own privileged status, to contest it and to exploit it strategically to promote greater justice. Despite a possible dearth of material resources and a weak position within the institutional structure, the majority of cultural 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



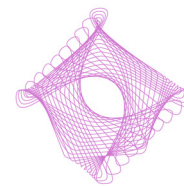
the guidelines above highlight. These mediators are developing ways of dealing with the field of tensions mentioned above, taking a position between an attitude critical of hegemonic structures and the need for legitimization. One can describe their approaches as two related strategies: i) network building 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](#)<sup>3</sup>, 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](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]

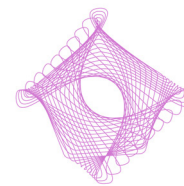
→ *affirmative* see Text 5.1

→ *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).



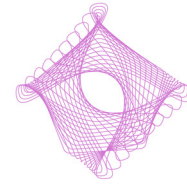
## Literature and Links

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

- Mörsch, Carmen: "Glatt und Widerborstig: Begründungsstrategien für die Künste in der Bildung", in: Gaus-Hegener, Elisabeth; Schuh, Claudia (eds.): Netzwerke weben – Strukturen bauen. Künste für Kinder und Jugendliche, Oberhausen: Athena, 2009, pp. 45–60

Further reading:

- Castro Varela, Maria do Mar; Dhawan, Nikita: "Breaking the Rules. Bildung und Postkolonialismus", in: Mörsch, Carmen, und das Forschungsteam der documenta 12 Vermittlung: Kunstvermittlung 2. Zwischen Kritischer Praxis und Dienstleistung auf der documenta 12. Ergebnisse eines Forschungsprojekts, Zurich: diaphanes, 2009, p. 350
- Marchart, Oliver: "Die Institution spricht. Kunstvermittlung als Herrschafts- und als Emanzipationstechnologie", in: schnittpunkt (Beatrice Jaschke, Nora Sternfeld) (eds.): Wer spricht? Autorität und Autorschaft in Ausstellungen, Vienna: Turia und Kant, 2005, pp. 34–58
- Matarasso, François: Use or Ornament. The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts, London: Comedia 1997/2000
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- Mirza, Munira (ed.) Culture Vultures. Is UK arts policy damaging the arts? London 2006; <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/culture%20vultures%20-%20jan%2006.pdf> [21.2.2013]
- Mörsch, Carmen: "Im Paradox des grossen K. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte des Signifikanten Kunst in der Kunstschule", in: Mörsch, Carmen; Fett, Sabine (eds.): Schnittstelle Kunst – Vermittlung. Zeitgenössische Arbeit in Kunstschulen, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2007, pp. 360–377
- Mörsch, Carmen, und das Vermittlungsteam der documenta 12: Kunstvermittlung 2. Zwischen kritischer Praxis und Dienstleistung auf der documenta 12. Ergebnisse eines Forschungsprojekts, Zurich: diaphanes, 2009 (Mörsch 2009a)
- Pütz, Joline: Mapping der Selbstständigkeit in der Kunstvermittlung. Eine Untersuchung anhand von vier Beispielen aus der Schweiz, Österreich und Deutschland, Masterarbeit im Master of Arts in Art Education, Vertiefung Ausstellen und Vermitteln, Zurich University of the Arts 2012; see Resource Pool MFV0603.pdf
- Raunig, Gerald; Wuggenig, Ulf: Die Kritik der Kreativität, Vienna: Turia und Kant, 2007
- Rodrigo, Javier (ed.): Prácticas dialógicas. Intersecciones entre Pedagogía crítica y Museología crítica, Palma de Mallorca: Museu d'Art Contemporani a Mallorca Es Baluard, 2007
- Rölli, Marc: "Gilles Deleuze: Kultur und Gegenkultur", in: Moebius, Stephan; Quadflieg, Dirk (eds.): Kultur. Theorien der Gegenwart, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2006, pp. 30–41
- schnittpunkt (Beatrice Jaschke, Nora Sternfeld) (eds.): Educational Turn. Handlungsräume der Kunst- und Kulturvermittlung, Vienna: Turia und Kant, 2012
- Sternfeld, Nora: "Der Taxispielertrick. Vermittlung zwischen Selbstregulierung und Selbstermächtigung", in: schnittpunkt (Beatrice Jaschke, Nora Sternfeld) (eds.): Wer spricht? Autorität und Autorschaft in Ausstellungen, Vienna: Turia und Kant, 2005, pp. 15–33
- Steyerl, Hito: "Kultur: Ein Begriff ohne Grenzen. Alltag und Verbrechen", in: Köchlk, Sylvia, et al.: fields of TRANSFER. MigrantInnen in der Kulturarbeit, Vienna: IG Kultur, 2007, pp. 21–23; <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0101/steyerl/de> [21.2.2013], see Resource Pool MFV0602.pdf



- Sturm, Eva: "Kunstvermittlung als Widerstand", in: Schöppinger Forum der Kunstvermittlung. Transfer. Beiträge zur Kunstvermittlung no. 2, 2002, pp. 92–110
- Taguieff, Pierre-André: "Die Metamorphosen des Rassismus und die Krise des Antirassismus", in: Bielefeld, Ulrich (ed.): Das Eigene und das Fremde. Neuer Rassismus in der Alten Welt?, Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998, pp. 221–268
- 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](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]