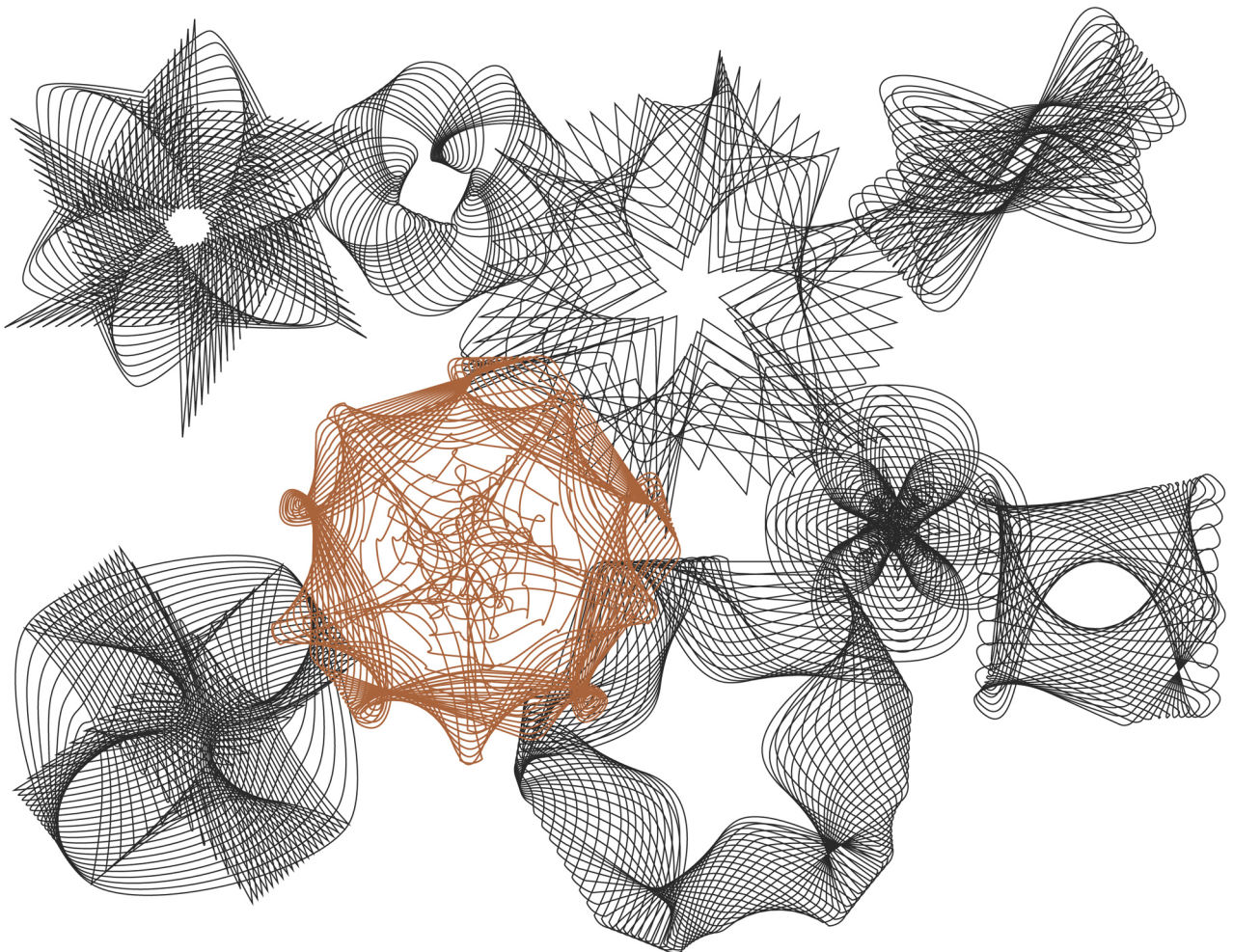


# Time for Cultural Mediation

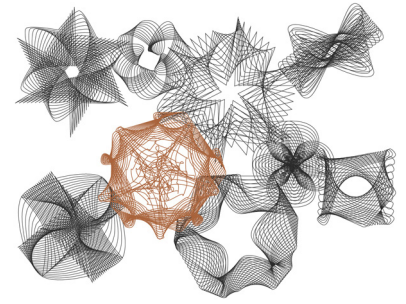
- 1 What is Cultural Mediation?
- 2 Cultural Mediation for Whom?
- 3 What is Transmitted?
- 4 How is Cultural Mediation Carried Out?
- 5 What Does Cultural Mediation Do?
- 6 Cultural Mediation: Why (Not)?
- 7 Who “does” Cultural Mediation?
- 8 Good Cultural Mediation?**



- 9 Transmitting Cultural Mediation?

## Time for Cultural Mediation

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



### 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].

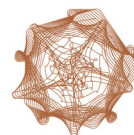
The example below is intended to illustrate how the situation and interests of the assessor determine the assessment of quality:

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](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 counterparts](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/departemente/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungenpreise/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://www.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.com)).

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](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](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]

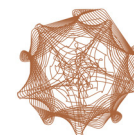
→ [Prize for Cultural Mediation of the Swiss canton of Solothurn](http://www.so.ch/departemente/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungenpreise/2011.html) <http://www.so.ch/departemente/bildung-und-kultur/kultur-und-sport/kulturfoerderung/auszeichnungenpreise/2011.html> [5.7.2012]

→ [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]



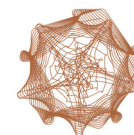
rendered more precise in the discussion and evaluation of the stakeholders.” In the summary of her results, she defines three quality dimensions in music and concert education, which lend themselves to being transferred to other domains of cultural mediation as well: structural quality, which concerns 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](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](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](http://www.musikschule.ch/de/25_qualitaetsmanagement/00_qualitaetsmanagement.htm) [4.7.2012]

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



## 8.2 Critiques of quality management in cultural mediation

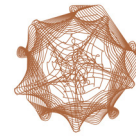
Quality management is a business administration approach adopted by European managers in the 1990s. Although one now encounters “quality” as an evaluative term used to describe suitability for purpose or degree of excellence applied to any form of process – up to including “quality of death” – until 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](http://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Qualitaet/BKJ_Studie_Qualitaet_web.pdf) [21.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFE080201.pdf



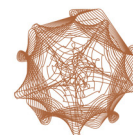
the development of new concepts and encourage them to adhere to the path entailing the least risk.

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*).

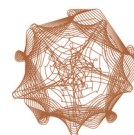
→ *functions for the cultural institutions* see Texts in 5. What Does Cultural Mediation Do?

→ *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](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](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:

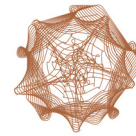
- The *staff for the cultural mediation* project possess the requisite expertise for the project and the pedagogical stamina to face an informed (in respect of both subject matter and methodology) and critical audience.
- *Compensation for the cultural mediator* is appropriate, at least in line with 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.



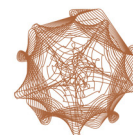


- The *language* used in the cultural mediation reflects the subject-specific terminology while taking differing levels of knowledge within the audience into account. Phrases presuming advance knowledge, such as “as you are certainly all aware”, are avoided.
- The *content* of the cultural mediation 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

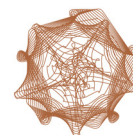
Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- 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

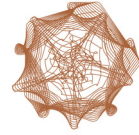
Pedagogic, subject specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- 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.

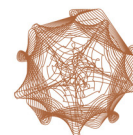
## Outcomes

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

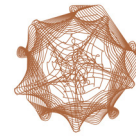
Main objectives for education in the cultural institution:

- 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

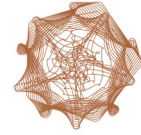
Pedagogic, subject specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- 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.

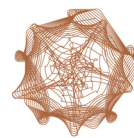
## Outcomes

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:

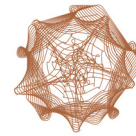
- The institution wants to use cultural mediation to expand its functions to extend beyond display and presentation, so that it becomes a space for collaborative production and action.
- It wants to present itself as an organization actively addressing societal issues.
- It wants to initiate partnerships 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

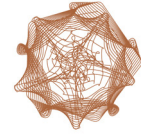
Pedagogic, subject-specific, organizational and, if appropriate, artistic quality of the concept and execution:

- 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.

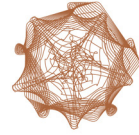
### Superior Project Quality

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

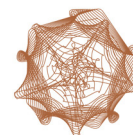
Quantitative goals, like a specific number of participants of activities carried out, etc. are not the only dimensions of interest, a project’s impacts on the target groups are also of primary concern. The children’s satisfaction is one important aim, but so is the satisfaction of the teachers and artists 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.

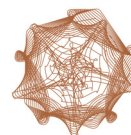
→ MUS-E <http://www.mus-e.ch>  
[16.2.2013]

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

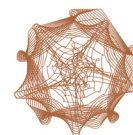
Dance mediation in Switzerland is a long way from having the framework and conditions necessary to ensure qualitatively excellent mediation. Very few institutions can boast a dance mediator or mediation programme. The training courses are not in place and dance mediators report having difficulty finding 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.*



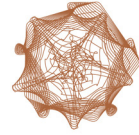
## CHANGING PERSPECTIVES Gallus Staubli: Cultural Mediation Makes People Happy

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.

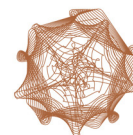


Transposing that to quality in happiness-inducing cultural mediation, we need:

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.

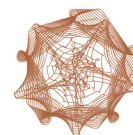
Pro Helvetia assesses the professional quality of cultural mediation on the basis of the concept submitted and the demonstrated experience of the mediators involved. One element in the text setting out the concept is a section detailing how scope will be provided for participants' decisions, experience 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 Museumspädagogik [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

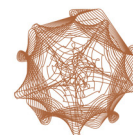
→ *Quality dimensions* see Text 8.1

→ *Wimmer 2010* <http://www.kunstvermittlung.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](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.

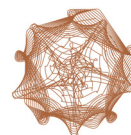
For instance, the topic “methods” reads as follows: “High quality mediation work draws on a wide variety of methods to facilitate the encounter with originals and exhibition contents and with the institution of the museum in general. By doing so, it activates and promotes the cognitive and perceptive 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?



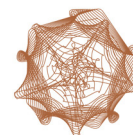
From the viewpoint of hegemony-critical cultural mediation, the text discussed above is problematic due to the → naturalization of its arguments. Critical cultural mediation aspires to approach the normative dimension of criteria and objectives – including its own – with reflexivity at all times, and 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*

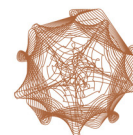
→ *BAG and ÇDD* <http://www.bag-online.de/aktuell/uevet-deutsch.pdf> [18.2.2013]; see Resource Pool MFV0804.pdf (German), MFV0805.pdf (English)

→ *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



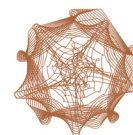
*Optimism* offers practical suggestions for self-evaluation as a critical practice by the people involved in projects. It includes exercises intended to depict the various interests which play into the creation of an evaluation, and the question of who would benefit or be harmed by the development of 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:

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- 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