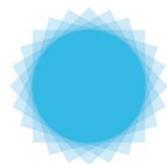


Rewilding the arts ecosystem: A discussion paper on multidisciplinarity in the arts in Canada

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Prepared for the network of Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF)

July 2015



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Note to the Reader from the CPAF Secretariat

Please note that this report was commissioned by the [Canadian Public Arts Funders \(CPAF\)](#) as a discussion paper for a meeting of staff from the 14 members of CPAF (see Appendix I). The meeting took place in Montréal, Québec, from March 16-17, 2015.

The views expressed by the author(s) are based on their interpretations from a variety of sources of information and do not necessarily represent all points of view or the current program structures and policies of the membership of CPAF.

The reader is invited to provide feedback to this report by contacting Melanie Yugo, Partnership and Networks Officer, Canada Council for the Arts, and CPAF Secretariat, at melanie.yugo@canadacouncil.ca or 1 800 263 5588 extension 5144.

July 2015

Artists (particularly in music and the visual arts) have a historically documented pre-occupation with trying to determine the limits of their ontological category – is THIS art? What about THIS? [...] By contrast, it is a rare biochemist who spends the afternoon in the lab cooking up something to which her fellow biochemists will unanimously respond: “but is it biochemistry?”

- Benjamin Evans (2008)

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction	7
Objectives & Guiding Questions.....	7
Methodology	8
Limitations.....	9
The Case Studies	11
Review of Findings: Approaches.....	13
Review of Findings: Challenges	18
Review of Findings: Opportunities.....	21
Reflection: ‘Rewilding’ the Arts Ecosystem.....	24
Conclusion	26
Themes and Questions for Further Reflection.....	27
Appendix I: Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) Members.....	29
Appendix II: Case Study Profiles.....	30
Appendix III: References.....	41
Appendix IV: Project Team.....	42

Executive Summary

Commissioned by the network of Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) (see Appendix I), this paper presents some insights on multidisciplinary in the arts through a discussion of 11 contemporary Canadian artists, collectives and organizations engaged in the field.

Overall, multidisciplinary seem to distinguish their practice by how they think inclusively about what they do. Their thinking may be intuitive or highly intellectualized; their choice-making may be organic or concept-driven – but their approaches to developing and sustaining their work are informed by a perspective that is rigorously multiple in its considerations. The framework is artistic *and* ecological, artistic *and* communal, artistic *and* scientific, *and* profitable, educational, academic, technological, sociological, cultural, feminist, activist, etc. Within the artistic mode, the thinking is theatre *and* folk concert *and* social practice, or sculpture *and* media arts *and* community discourse, etc.

This multi-perspective thinking results in actions – practices, activities and structures – that respond simultaneously to multiple purposes, contexts and aims. Space requirements and sources of support are often plural and diverse too. A single project may require multiple types of spaces and involve a variety of partners and possible revenue streams. It also creates or requires multiple abilities to successfully work in this way, be it found in a single individual or through the convening of a cooperative team.

Optimistically, the case studies suggest that 'people get it.' Audiences, communities, followers in the public sphere appreciate the perspectives that these multidisciplinary enact. The public is excited, engaged and continues to grow. The appetite is there, the need is present, even if the process of attracting audiences and sustaining ties with communities does not always feel effortless.

The challenge of connecting the people to the art, and the challenge of balancing the artistic person with the administration, business and cost of living, suggest opportunities, even priorities, and affirm continued need for cultural partners like public arts funders to furnish support, directly or indirectly.

If there is one theme or image that can be used to link all the case studies, it may be the metaphor of rewilding. These artists, collectives and organizations seek a re-engagement with the wilds of practice and of society. Multidisciplinary want to connect society with the obscure, forgotten, unusual, rare and unknown. They are uncommonly drawn to the outskirts and outside or unfamiliar elements, and seek engagement without certain outcomes. They appreciate experimentation, value the process of trying, and urge that a worthwhile artistic event can occur in strange locales and at the very small scale – between two people or inside of a petri dish.

Multidisciplinary are successfully innovating across society, transforming Canadian life and the cultural landscape, renewing public interest and building relationships with a receptive, in

many cases non-traditional arts audience. The conclusion that emerges from this inquiry is an implicit desire for funders, if they are to be partners, to shift focus: Help lift red tape, pull down caution signs and open up pathways. De-emphasize disciplinary distinctions, expand awareness and acceptance of non-traditional, perhaps even unspecified outcomes, and focus more on radical or new ways of supporting cross-sectoral efforts and experimentation. As well, consider further exploring the terrain to detail the scale and types of activities, to reach out to exemplary practitioners who do not fit or engage with existing funding models, and to ultimately support the continued pursuit of multi-purposed artistic excellence in whatever novel forms or configurations it manifests over time.

To rewild the arts is to re-enchant the country with surprising, adventurous possibilities.

Introduction

For years, public arts funders have been hard at work negotiating ways to accommodate 'applicants who don't quite fit.' Every funder employs different language, tools, and approaches to try to offer 'homes' to this ever-changing line of 'misfits.'

The term 'misfits' is a pun, of course; these applicants are not outsiders but decidedly part of the Canadian arts ecosystem.

Together, 'misfit' applicants and program officers have played their parts in the evolution of funding programs – advocating, explaining, listening and adapting policies to describe, honour and assess practices, projects and activities appropriately and inclusively.

Among these 'misfits' are artists, collectives and organizations that practice multidisciplinary in the arts. Their activities include the mixing of artistic disciplines, community- and socially-engaged arts, Aboriginal and culturally diverse arts practices, technology, science, and the blending of for-profit and not-for-profit mandates, among others. These artists, collectives and organizations pose new and continued challenges to funding models that were created in response to different times and based on the Western system of disciplinary specialization. They engage in practices, projects and activities that respond to contemporary society differently, are informed by different cultures and traditions, diverge from disciplinary norms, and/or stand apart somehow from recognized forms of artistic creation, production and dissemination.

Recognizing the need to continuously prepare, assess and adapt, the funders ask: What are these multidisciplinary like? What do these artists, collectives and organizations do to sustain and develop their practices, activities and structures? What are the challenges and opportunities they face? In other words, how does multidisciplinary in the arts potentially impact the roles that funders play within the arts in Canada? How best to support these multidisciplinary moving forward?

Objectives & Guiding Questions

The CPAF network (see Appendix I) commissioned this discussion paper to inform discussions at their March 2015 Professional Development Meeting for CPAF members on the theme of multidisciplinary in the arts. A Working Group that was formed to prepare the proceedings for this meeting issued the following guidelines:

CPAF members have expressed a desire to understand more about the changing arts landscape in Canada. There is increasing interest on the part of many artists, collectives

and organizations to experiment and to explore creation and production in different genres. Equally important is the growth of multidisciplinary approaches in terms of collaborations and partnerships across various disciplines, within and external to the arts, as well as connecting with communities and the public. At the same time, there is a need to critically examine some of the approaches to support in use by public arts funders to sustain a thriving arts sector in Canada.

The objectives of the discussion paper are to:

- Inform the discussions at the 2015 CPAF Professional Development Meeting on Multidisciplinarity in the Arts, which public arts funders from across the country will be attending;
- Provide participants with examples of multidisciplinary arts practices;
- Provide a common point of departure for discussions at the meeting; and
- Complement sessions featuring perspectives from guest speakers as well as group discussions at the meeting.

The Working Group also issued a set of questions to guide the development of this paper:

(i) What are key characteristics of multidisciplinary approaches in use by contemporary Canadian artists, collectives and organizations, to develop and sustain their practices, activities and structures?

(ii) What are the main challenges faced by contemporary Canadian artists, collectives and arts organizations who integrate multidisciplinary approaches into their practices, activities and structures? What are the main opportunities?

Methodology

This project was undertaken in eight steps, based on parameters set out by the CPAF Working Group:

1. Selection of Case Studies – The principal consultant and project team prepared a long list of potential case studies, focusing on ‘fringe practices’ or examples of artists, groups and organizations that might be ‘flying below the radar’ for CPAF members. This list was refined following a teleconference with the CPAF Working Group to compare the project team’s examples with a list of recommended case studies submitted by the CPAF membership as ‘high quality examples of multidisciplinary,’ largely drawn from their applicant pools. Further discussion with the CPAF Secretariat followed before agreeing on an interview process involving 10 cases from the combined list. The principal consultant later added an eleventh

case study for regional balance and to introduce a high-quality example from a non-applicant. (Week 1)

2. Contact with Case Studies - Case study participants were invited by email to participate in the project. Participants were asked to allow for 1 – 1.5 hours of interview time by phone or Skype. (Week 2)
3. Interviews - In preparation for the interviews, participants were sent the guiding questions as outlined by CPAF. All the interviews were conducted with the presence of the principal consultant and at least one other project team member, with the exception of Skwachàys Lodge, which was completed by the principal consultant solo, due to scheduling constraints. (Weeks 3 – 4)
4. Review of Interview Notes – The principal consultant and project team combined notes from the interviews. One round of follow-up questions was addressed to case studies by email or telephone. (Weeks 4 – 5)
5. Synthesis and Analysis – Interpretative analysis and the synthesis of some potential implications for public arts funders was performed by the principal consultant using notes by the project team from the interviews conducted, case study websites, media sources, and a very modest, limited literature review to consider other Canadian perspectives on multidisciplinary in the arts. A list of works consulted can be found in Appendix III. (Week 5)
6. Draft Submission to CPAF Working Group – Feedback was solicited from the Working Group on the first draft; this process was mediated by Secretariat who consolidated and relayed comments and questions to the principal consultant. (Week 6)
7. Finalization and Translation of Paper – Revisions were made by the principal consultant incorporating feedback from the project team and CPAF Working Group before finalizing the paper for distribution to CPAF members. The translation and dissemination process was led by the Secretariat. (Week 6)
8. Presentation – The paper was presented at the CPAF Professional Development Meeting on Multidisciplinary, in Montreal, Québec, on March 16, 2015.

Limitations

Time for comparative research and further analysis has been the greatest limitation to this process. The scope did not include a substantial literature review or a review of public arts funding practices at the national or provincial/territorial levels.

Some considerations for future investigations:

- Comparing case study findings with related existing research, e.g. multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, pluridisciplinary, intermedia and cross-sectoral arts practices;
- Broadening the respondent base, including analysis of unsuccessful applicants and more examples of non-applicants;
- Interviewing cross-sectoral arts funders outside the CPAF membership to uncover additional perspectives and other potentially paradigmatic cases.

The 'field' of multidisciplinary in the arts is a large, sprawling one; it might also be noted that it is a construct. Multidisciplinary in the arts is a phrase that has been used by the CPAF Working Group to refer to "practices that pose challenges to existing funding structures." Thus, multidisciplinary in the arts is perhaps less a field of practice or community of like-minded individuals, and perhaps a construct to give a name to 'everything that doesn't fit well elsewhere.' Outside of this project, would the case studies identify with each other as belonging to the same community of practice? To whom does this matter?

Further, are the key characteristics identified within the case studies features of a multidisciplinary approach, or linked by some other common context – society, the pressures and constraints of the artistic, self-employed, financially insecure, etc.? Without a process of correlating and comparing other data and research, there is no conclusive answer.

Nonetheless, with all of the above qualifications in mind, this paper attempts to make some generalizations on key characteristics, challenges, and opportunities across the terrain of multidisciplinary in the arts.

The Case Studies

Eleven artists, collectives and organizations were consulted as case studies for this project (see Appendix II). The first ten were selected in collaboration with the CPAF Working Group; the eleventh case study was added for regional balance and to introduce a high-quality example from a non-applicant.

1. **Calgary's Animated Objects Society** (Calgary)– Established 2003; engaged in community arts projects and arts education, e.g. leading kindergarten to grade 6 classes in school-wide video animation projects each year from September to June; creates media art projects; operates a bi-annual 10-day festival of 'animated objects' including puppetry, masks, animated films, lectures, performances, screenings, hands-on workshops, exhibitions. *Interviewee*: Xstine Cook, artistic director.
2. **Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival** (Winnipeg) – Annual one-week long festival that aims to rethink new music and "what art forms it could relate to"; tends to program work in untraditional spaces (warehouses, galleries, old cinemas). Aims to give audiences "something unexpected, often really bizarre, something they haven't seen before." *Interviewee*: Luke Nickel, co-artistic director.
3. **The Box** (Toronto) – A quarterly "mixed cultural salon" since 1999 with readings, screenings, interventions, (literary and visual) objects, music, theatre, dance and other types of performances. A practice of bringing together objects and communities in an environment of artistic and social intermingling. *Interviewee*: Louise Bak, curator.
4. **Le Bureau de L'APA** (Québec City) – A collective of two artists and invited guests founded in 2001. A studio that practices "undisciplined, DIY/tinkering/collage." (*Un atelier de bricolage indiscipliné.*) Performance installation experiences involving images, objects, direct address, audience participation, and music. *Interviewee*: Laurence Brunelle-Côté, co-founder.
5. **Eco Arts Incubator** (Okanagan, British Columbia) – SSHRC-funded research initiative (2011-2014) led by professors at the University of British Columbia in Okanagan; aims to foster ecological, interdisciplinary and community-engaged art that "attaches to a place and becomes part of the ecosystem [...] growing the seeds of local, place-based culture." *Interviewees*: Nancy Holmes, professor of creative writing, and Denise Kenney, professor of interdisciplinary performance.
6. **Liz Solo** (St. John's) – Identifies as performance artist. Theatre background, using media elements and designing installations to perform in on stage; now performing/intervening in virtual gaming worlds, and producing hybrid performance experiences that are performed and viewed in virtual and real worlds simultaneously. Also actor, plays music and works in video production.

7. **Reena Katz** (Toronto) – Identifies as media artist; also teacher, activist, curator. Began as sound artist, ventured into visual arts, now "dancing between all those media," practising an "experimental approach to creation." Installations, sculptures, prints, recordings, new media, live performances, online, in galleries, in public space.
8. **Skwachàys Lodge** (Vancouver) – Social enterprise owned and operated by Vancouver Native Housing Society, opened 2012, re-opened 2014. Boutique Aboriginal arts-themed hotel, fair trade Aboriginal art gallery, 24 subsidized residences for at-risk Aboriginal artists, basement artist studio/workspace, and healing lodge for Aboriginal peoples travelling from rural areas for medical treatment in Vancouver. *Interviewee:* David Eddy, executive director.
9. **Teslin Tlingit Council** (Teslin, Yukon) – Represents community of 500 people; Council's mandate includes Heritage Centre (opened 2002) that offers cultural programs and small artist grants, and houses the museum, gift shop, Elders Council meetings, and community meetings. Hosts bi-annual 3-day Hà Kus Teyea Celebration of traditional Tlingit arts and culture with 3000 – 4000 attendees. *Interviewee:* Melaina Sheldon, community arts & events coordinator.
10. **Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd.** (Sackville, New Brunswick) – Founded in 2009, a design agency, small bar/pub, bowling alley, design studio, record label, 6 multi-functional art spaces including art studios, local music festival office, and spaces for short-term rental. The bar hosts a range of events, including music, film screenings, comedy, record releases, poetry readings, and contemporary performance. *Interviewee:* Jon Claytor, co-founder.
11. **WhiteFeather Hunter** (Montréal) – Identifies as artist and transdisciplinary; also artist/researcher, educator, consultant and writer. Works with sculpture, video, performance, photography, textiles, digital surveillance, DIY hacking/electronics, writing and bio art. Background in textiles/fiber arts, now working with living (mammalian) tissues, using "textile structures" to create "laboratory specimens of semi-living organisms." Pursuing masters of fine arts degree at Concordia University.

Review of Findings: Approaches

The following are some key characteristics of the approaches used by the case studies to develop and sustain their practices, activities and structures.

While the following characteristics may resemble important aspects of how many artists, collectives and organizations in general (of any disciplinary bent) approach their work, the findings summarized here represent aspects specifically emphasized or valued by the case studies.

1. Valuing an approach that is inclusive or multiple in its conception

Multidisciplinarians distinguish their practice by how they think inclusively about what they do, ideally from the outset. The approach to developing and sustaining their work brings together multiple distinct frameworks.

- Denise Kenney of the Eco Arts Incubator notes that when an artist is brought in to an “interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary project,” it’s important that:

The artist finds a way to communicate across disciplinary chasms. Otherwise the artist’s role is marginalized; the artist becomes the communicator, designing the digital dissemination” for a project but is not actually influencing “the very core of the way the work is unfolding.”

Kenney’s colleague, Nancy Holmes gives an example of how, as a poet brought in to work with a scientist and an economist, she was able to offer a metaphor that re-aligned their perspectives to change the way they would approach course development for a class on “water issues” and became a truly multidisciplinary team in the process:

They said they wanted to work in an interdisciplinary way, but then all the talk was about water storage, water cleaning, water management. So I asked, what if you asked people to design water storage methods and development by thinking of water as sacred? How would you treat it in its development? [As a result] we decided to have a discussion with the students at the start of the course about the value of water. It’s become a determining factor for how the course will proceed.

- In the case of Le Bureau de L’APA’s Laurence Brunelle-Côté, her disability is indivisible from her physical presence. The negotiation with the disability is an integral part of the approach. As Brunelle-Côté puts it:

The physical limits impose constraints on us. [...] It influences artistically, the fact that we work in this DIY/tinkering/patchwork (collage) way. [...] The

interdisciplinarity takes place here too; it's not only an artistic interdisciplinarity but also social...I have other things to say.

2. Flexible, multi-purpose space or multiple spaces to serve multiple agendas

To meet the needs and ambitions of a multidisciplinary approach, artists, collectives and organizations often require a multi-purpose space or multiple different work spaces.

- Artist Reena Katz speaks to how she has to be “as flexible as the practice to find space.” She rents time in other artists’ studios for woodworking and to build projects, and arranges trades to borrow a friend’s sound studio. Recently, Katz has opted to join ‘a maker space.’ For storage, Katz shares a storage locker with her parents. For printmaking, she says she usually takes classes and pays for studio space after that.

A number of the case studies expressed interest in sharing resources and building alliances with others with similar needs. This interest seemed strongly motivated by necessity, although altruistic or ecological reasons may also be motivators.

3. Multi-Strategy to Organization and Financing

The multi-perspective, multi-purposed artist, collective or organization requires various abilities to successfully organize and work this way, be it found in a multi-skilled individual or through the convening of a cooperative multi-person team.

- Le Bureau de L’APA, Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival, and Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. Each involve more than one artistic leader at the helm. In the case of Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. The group does not identify themselves using such titles.
- Artists Liz Solo and Reena Katz both speak highly of the benefits of working as a collective for aspects of their practice in terms of collaborating on artistic ideas, as a way of creating alliances and of self-organizing together, as well as the opportunity for a feedback loop that inspires and invigorates one’s individual practice.

In terms of financing, many of the case studies resemble other artists, collectives and organizations in their need to develop diverse revenue sources.

- Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival initially thought it would, as co-artistic director Luke Nickel puts it, “run for 3 years, then get operating funding.” Nickel says they now recognize that that model is no longer the case. “We’ve gotten better at making smaller grants fit in, with understanding how to piece them together, and being flexible in how to conceive of funding.”

- Skwachàys Lodge employs a similar multi-funder approach although on a larger scale. Buying and renovating the Lodge was a \$10 million dollar project. Sources of funds range from government agencies in the social sector to federal stimulus funds, municipal grants, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- The Eco-Arts Incubator has been able to use their SSHRC funding to leverage support from other sources, including the City of Kelowna, work-study programs for the students, and partnerships with local businesses, such as one that pays the Incubator a yearly stipend to do time lapse photo documentation work on the company's land. The company receives access to the footage in return.

There is a significant amount of 'blurring' or blending of for-profit and not-for-profit mandates. In a number of cases, it is the art that pays the bills.

- The art gallery at Skwachàys Lodge brings in \$12,000 to \$15,000 monthly. A significant portion of sales comes from selling tourist trinkets but these are all sourced through Authentic Indigenous, a program that aims to promote and support "authentic Indigenous artwork in the retail and wholesale marketplace."
- Reena Katz recounts how a project left her in significant debt; to recuperate some of her losses, Katz began to sell silk-screened pillowcases with political messages. The sales administration of the pillowcases was "a fulltime job in itself," but her account of the experience suggests a sense of pride at being able to generate an additional revenue stream, outside of grants.
- Jon Claytor of Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. Explains that given Sackville has a population of 4000 to 6000 people, there isn't enough bar business to pay all the bills. In fact, he says, "the paintings [his personal artistic practice] sometimes pays for the bar as much as the bar [itself]. Design stuff also helps. All three elements help."

4. Experimentation & Exploration Beyond Personal Sphere of Expertise, Experience or Training

Multidisciplinarians enjoy experimenting and exploring beyond their own sphere of knowledge, contact, training, or experience. "I don't know what I could do" becomes a principal motivator rather than a reason to not participate. Many of the case study artists, collectives and organizations allow, even prefer, their processes to be guided by curiosity and an appetite for venturing beyond one's personal sphere of expertise, experience or training.

- Luke Nickel, speaking to Cluster New Music and Integrated Arts Festival's development, notes, "there are always unexpected things that grow the festival in unexpected ways." Nickel and his founding co-artistic director created the Festival intentionally "with more

flexibility for collaboration, allowing developments to happen during the Festival, last minute collaborations with artists.”

- Artist WhiteFeather Hunter describes herself as someone who “take[s] a lot of workshops. Outside of academic programs, in different communities, just to broaden my circles, expose myself to different types of thinkers, and find another set of tools to bring into my art practice.” For example, Hunter has added DIY electronics to her practice, after attending a workshop that she attended, out of curiosity.

5. Adaptation, or Responsiveness to External Factors

Experimentation and developments are not always self-initiated or initially welcomed. Adapting to external factors is a key to developing and sustaining practices, activities and structures productively, successfully.

- Artist Liz Solo describes how her transition from theatre-based performance practices into gallery-based installation performances in the real and virtual world came about partly as a result of not being able to afford to or have access to opportunities to perform in theatres.
- Skwachàys Lodge evolved from a series of adaptations to external, sometimes adverse conditions: From conforming to funding requirements, to saying ‘yes’ to sudden, serendipitous opportunities that arose at different times to align with Board goals, access stimulus dollars, and benefit from pro bono hotelier experience, David Eddy, the executive director of the Skwachàys Lodge credits perseverance to making the project a success. The Aboriginal arts-themed hotel, gallery, artist live/work residences, and healing lodge is a multi-purpose social enterprise, and not the kind of work, says Eddy, “for the faint of heart.”

6. Presenting the Unusual

A number of the case studies spoke of surprise and the unexpected as significant aspects of how they arrived at their work, and/or how they approach presentation when framing their work for the public.

- Jon Claytor of Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. talks about the bar/pub that they run as being like a different movie set every night, with different casts of characters coming through, in the form of performers and publics:

One time, Ray Fenwick, a Halifax artist, was doing a performance piece in the bar. The seniors’ bowling league was happening that night. [The seniors] might have felt put off at first, but they were drawn in by the environment we had

created. That's what I like to see happen. Two groups of people that [might] normally be antagonistic, enjoying something together."

- Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival is an annual festival that aims to "rethink new music and what art forms it could relate to." Luke Nickel, co-artistic director of the Festival, says:

We've always been passionate about building the festival in a way that people trust the brand but can't expect what we'll do. They know they're going to get something unexpected, often bizarre, something they haven't seen before.

- Laurence Brunelle-Côté of le Bureau de L'APA says for them, "the effect of surprise is connected to the idea of freedom. If we are not surprised, stunned, it's too much of the same thing that is offered to us already."

7. Beyond The Art: Community and Society

Many case studies speak in different ways about how the communities they are involved with help make their work and daily survival possible.

- Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival's co-artistic director Luke Nickel reports that families and friends are an important source of support for Cluster.

They are the bodies who support the festival, who man the box office and the bar, cook meals for artists, work the door, make people feel at home, have conversations with someone needs it, drive artists around town. Our events and promotions may look slick, but we're very community- and family-oriented.

- Xstine Cook, artistic director of Calgary's Animated Objects Society (CAOS) explains: "A festival is a community." The Animated Objects Festival receives many in-kind contributions from the media, venues, and hospitality vendors, including restaurants that are part of a food program for participating artists. "Many small independent groups and non-profit organizations contribute to the festival community," says Cook.
- Louise Bak, curator of The Box shared several stories revealing the ways that various communities have supported her as an artist. In one instance, when a colleague heard that Bak was experiencing financial hardship, the colleague quietly offered Bak a chance to curate a series similar to The Box for another venue. "This friend gave me the money upfront to do this work," says Bak, "because she knew that everything was gone." Bak's stories speak to community as necessary for survival and well-being, not only for her, but for artists everywhere. Communities offer vital, generous, informal, invisible support; they play a complementary, fluid role – flowing into gaps where more formal systems might be unavailable or ineffective.

Review of Findings: Challenges

Across all case studies, time, money, and bureaucracy are the recurring challenges that these artists, collectives and organizations face. While typical-sounding, these challenges do play out in ways that are specific to the multidisciplinary. Successful negotiation between frames of references or ways of thinking in the various disciplines takes time. The different spaces, tools, training, transport, infrastructure, and upgrades needed to support a multi-faceted practice typically require money.

Some other challenges that seem to arise perhaps specifically from engaging in multidisciplinary in the arts:

1. Burdened by bureaucracy and administration

Many of the case studies feel they spend the majority of their time on 'paperwork' (as high as 70 – 90%) and business, instead of artistic work, particularly for the case studies engaged in collaborations with communities and disciplines outside of the arts.

- Calgary's Animated Objects Society (CAOS) artistic director, Xstine Cook, notes the challenge of translating the artist's process into the framework of a teacher's process when CAOS works with elementary public schools. "Teachers need help entering into an artistic process with 30 little people, and that can be unsettling for some." As well, the process is "very different each time," says Cook. The approach at each school and with each teacher is not standardized.
- For artist WhiteFeather Hunter, her bio art practice relies on access to biology labs that require her to be trained and re-certified at each new lab before she can commence work. In other words, the biohazard safety certification is not transferrable or portable from one lab to the next; each time Hunter has to "do it all over again."
- Some case studies view the marketing aspects of their work as related but not part of the art itself. For them, communicating about the art with collaborators is part of the artistic process, be those collaborators professionals or community members, but marketing and promoting their work with the wider public is not art. Marketing and communications is something they wish others would do. They also believe others would do a better job than they themselves.

2. Greater recognition and acceptance

Many of the case studies express desire for more opportunities and greater recognition and acceptance for their work and the work of other colleagues/peers. Many feel their practices are not well-understood.

- When it comes to presenting multidisciplinary work, presenters can feel daunted or 'turned off' by the requisite extra work and responsibilities. Artist WhiteFeather Hunter notes the added bureaucracy she encounters in her practice would naturally extend to any presenters that might be interested in presenting her work in a non-laboratory environment. As such, the venues where Hunter might show this type of bio art are extremely limited in number.
- Denise Kenney of the Eco Arts Incubator talks about the struggle to “defend creative practice” as a valid way of inquiry and dissemination within academia, where she feels artists must communicate in a different language “to accommodate someone else’s epistemology.” The other challenge for Kenney as a tenure-track professor is the need to produce academic product as well as artistic work:

The currency of academia is intellectual property. [...] If I’m doing collaborative or community-based practice facilitating other people’s work, that is the work, that is the art, but it’s ephemeral, difficult to own. [So to conform] I’m doing the art, then doing what a social scientist would do. Publish. So double the work.

3. Struggle to make funding programs 'work' for them

Some struggle to understand how to structure projects to best make use of grants available:

- Xstine Cook of Calgary’s Animated Objects Festival, describes her artistic approach as spontaneous. As a result, she feels she cannot seek full funding from arts councils because, as she puts it, “when something comes up and inspires, I want to respond. I want to get up and try and make stuff. I can’t do that if I’ve committed to delivering on some big project 1, 2, 3 years out.”
- WhiteFeather Hunter expresses frustration over the lack of public arts funding available to graduate students:

I’ve been fortunate to receive a lot of support [through other non-public-arts funders] but not a lot of graduate students do... So you’re struggling to maintain an arts practice while increasing your credentials. If you’re a professional artist, it shouldn’t matter if you’re in school; you’re still engaged in practice.

A few case studies seem as if they might benefit from some direct advice or clarity on how to make use of some grant programs. For example, one group indicates they are not eligible for a program because of the timing of the grant deadline. “We won’t know what we’re programming until after that.” They feel it would be only possible to apply with a full program in place. Two of the case studies are adamant they would not qualify for a particular funding program, without being able to specify why.

4. Need for cultural spaces (creation, production, presentation)

Many of the case studies speak about the challenges of accessing or maintaining flexible spaces for creation, production or presentation.

- Laurence Brunelle-Côté speaks of not needing “high tech” spaces; le Bureau de L’APA prefers for raw, neutral spaces, like warehouses. A good space, she says, “nourishes us, helps us develop the work.”
- Artist Reena Katz speaks to the drawbacks of having to work in multiple (often borrowed or rented) studios across town. It’s cumbersome and expensive, moving materials from one place to another. You lose things. It’s a logistical nightmare."
- Louise Bak describes the Rivoli backroom, where The Box has been presented in recent years, as one of the last few spaces in Toronto that is relatively accessible for artists and arts organizations. Bak feels that artists are being pushed out of the neighbourhoods and vibrant areas they helped create.

5. Wondering how to survive, let alone thrive

Several case studies refer to their situation as precarious, which is a challenging notion to live with daily.

- Artist Reena Katz observes:

I have peers with normal jobs who have property, have families, are able to make decisions that relate to security. My choice of labour puts me in a position where I’m forty and I don’t have access to things in the general social sphere.
- Xstine Cook of Calgary’s Animated Objects Society and artist WhiteFeather Hunter mention that having children has spurred them to adapt. In Hunter’s case, she feels she has to “do everything” (or to know or believe that she can) because she is a single parent. In Cook’s case, she has adapted her personal practice to shift from performance-based projects to focus on animation and video projects, which is more suited to the scheduling constraints of being a parent.
- Artist Liz Solo speaks to the challenges of facing the uncertainty of public arts funding as one grows older, noting:

As you get older, you realize there’s limited time. There’s a limited number of projects that I can finish in my life. [...] I’ve been struggling with this question over the last 6 months. Where am I going? [...] Am I going to be applying for grants forever?

Review of Findings: Opportunities

The case studies identified opportunities specific to their own context and in the arts landscape generally.

1. Audiences 'get it.'

- Artist Liz Solo observes that understanding of experimental practices like hers is improving. The new generation of audiences is more familiar with technology, many of them are already into gaming culture: "More people can see and experience what's going on, particularly with hybridity – virtual and real together. We get great responses."
- Similarly, WhiteFeather Hunter reports overwhelming public interest in her work via social media. This Internet audience is particularly crucial for her lab-based work; by presenting this work online, the Internet gives Hunter access to a substantially larger public than if she were limited to audiences that can view her work in-person.
- Melaina Sheldon of the Teslin Tlingit Council speaks proudly of how much the public enjoys Hà Kus Teyea, their bi-annual heritage celebration. "It's really open," says Sheldon.

There are cultural demonstration workshops in fish trap making, painting, carving; there are cedar weavers, blanket weavers. Someone is smoking fish, someone is tanning a hide. You can go and engage with a carver. People can't believe it's free. People are appreciative that they get to join. They're kind of in disbelief, especially non-Native people.

Sheldon talks about wanting to see the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Centre positioned as part of the tourism package marketed to visitors to the Yukon. She mentions visitors to the Heritage Centre sometimes decide to find local accommodations so they can stay overnight and spend more time at the Heritage Centre.

- Louise Bak, curator of The Box speaks about how audiences can be very receptive.

Most people are open to things in The Box. Sometimes it's provocative, or it's quiet; sometimes more direct, sometimes more abstract; all of it is quite accepted. It's interesting how generous the audience is.

Bak attributes this to the unique context of The Box, which is about "making things occur on a local level." The informal, social and mysterious qualities of The Box salon experience, for Bak, relates to her beliefs about how "the smallest type of gestures" and encounters with strangers can affect people, can move them. "Things occurring in your cultural life can affect how you do things [in the rest of your life]."

2. Galleries and Artist-Run Centres

- Liz Solo and the Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival both characterize galleries as spaces that are 'more open' to the kind of work they produce.
- Reena Katz notes that her experience working at an artist-run centre has equipped her with project management skills that have become essential for her to develop and run large-scale new media projects today as an artist. Media arts and artist-run centres have been instrumental in helping to develop Katz's multi-faceted practice.

3. New colleagues, sharing responsibilities, succession planning

- Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival and Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. have both recently added a third co-artistic director to their operations. As well, Xstine Cook is passing the role of curator for the Animated Objects Festival on to a cohort of younger puppeteers who nominated themselves when they heard Cook speak about wanting to step back from the Festival and focus on other artistic projects.
- Melaina Sheldon of the Teslin Tlingit Council speaks of how visiting artists inspire the community:

We hosted a Tlingit copper jewellery maker [who gave public workshops] for 10 days. Young artists came to visit this man in his early 30s who could say, 'this is how I make my living and support my family. I make art.' It's inspirational not just for the youth but for the older people too.

Sheldon has plans to pair younger community members with those demonstrating traditional crafts, mentoring or sharing with them practices such as moose hide tanning.

4. Recognition

- Liz Solo notes, "the larger art world, the mainstream art world is starting to catch on to what we've been doing. Artists are organized about documentation." This makes Liz and her colleagues feel hopeful about having more of their work being made available. . As well, Solo mentions other factors that will change public recognition in the next few years:

The new generation – gaming culture – it's changing the way people go to the theatre. The virtual overlay – [Augmented Reality technologies] like Google Glass – being surrounded by holograms – this kind of overlay of virtual on real will be the next big thing in the next 10 years. It might bring some attention and support for what we're doing.

- Reena Katz was recently long-listed for the Sobey Art Award and this year she has received a Chalmers Fellowship (a substantial grant) from the Ontario Arts Council. She views both occasions as a form of "critical acclaim," which she is happy to receive, "despite having very little exhibition history in Europe and Asia."

5. Communities

- Artist Liz Solo mentions several times the rewards of travel and the desire to connect in person with other artists and colleagues, to have more opportunities to come together, at conferences and such. While she feels distant from people in St. John's, Solo also refers to the sense of community she derives from being in virtual or digital contact with like-minded colleagues.
- Artist Reena Katz mentions a number of entities in Canada and the United States that engage in the formation of alternative formations of practice and society. She speaks of wanting to work in a large space "collectively-owned by artists with the dual function of production and creative exchange." As Katz describes it: "I want the Bauhaus, basically, in Toronto or in a rural space [...] it's a utopian vision. Is it possible to get to a place in this moment in capitalism where we can de-prioritize income and foreground the labour that we do and its restorative possibilities?"

Reflection: 'Rewilding' the Arts Ecosystem

In reviewing the key findings, multidisciplinary artists seem natural leaders in what might be termed as the rewilding movement in the arts: Being hardy, resilient, outward-looking, expansive and anti-silos; rejecting inherited systems and disciplinary norms; resisting institutional policies governing use, objectives or outcome; reclaiming lost, under-represented, absent, non-standard or uncommon values and relationships, and creating new ones; guided by curiosity; supported by ingenuity; pioneering frameworks; and (re)generating vitality... all the while embracing uncertain outcomes.

Journalist and environmentalist George Monbiot, author of *Feral: Rewilding The Land, The Sea and Human Life*, defines rewilding as “not an attempt to restore [natural ecosystems] to any prior state,” but as a stepping back. Rewilding is not about seeking to engineer a pre-determined outcome or return to a previous state.

In Monbiot's view, rewilding is about re-introducing native species and permitting ecological processes to resume:

The ecosystems that result are best described not as wilderness, but as self-willed: governed not by human management but by their own processes. [...] The ecosystems that will emerge, in our changed climates, on our depleted soils, will not be the same as those which prevailed in the past. (8-9)

Rewilding is a movement, not to return to earlier times, but to oppose the confinement of imposed boundaries, to resist over-domestication and to rejoice in informal, atypical, 'undisciplined' development. The movement to rewild is a moving toward self-willed, self-determined processes. In its most progressive manifestations, rewilding may be linked to a contemporary impulse to decolonize – to disengage from artificial, inherited systems – and to renegotiate relations together anew. The arts that emerge from this rewilding movement will not be the same as those which prevailed in the past.

Indeed, Laurence Brunelle-Côté of Le Bureau de L'APA suggests that “the important institutions are the ones that enable artists to be free.” To support the rewilding impulse is to, among other possibilities, support greater artistic freedom, enabling artists to (re)construct forms, conversations and relations anew for contemporary society.

As noted in the Introduction to this paper, public arts funders have been working for years to 'find homes' for 'misfit' applicants like the multidisciplinary artists, collectives and organizations in these case studies. In this sense, public arts funders have long since played a part in this slow rewilding process by finding space and related means - training, support, recognition - for these species to occupy, take root, thrive and propagate. The continued leadership of funders is necessary to further support the rewilding process, identify exemplary practices and help multidisciplinary artists continue to move and work freely across sectors. *Can you give more? Find more? Let them in.*

In a few of the case studies, there seems less interest in funding from arts councils. These cases resist the perceived burden and structures associated with public arts funding. They have found homes elsewhere, or they have constructed flexible, unusual, even grand structures for themselves somehow, someplace. It seems advantageous if the many varied species of multidisciplinarians might be brought together for some discussion of approaches and creative exchanges on cross-pollination, grafting or sharing of resources and perspectives.

Conclusion

The case studies suggest that inflexible public arts funding systems risk creating unnecessary barriers for multidisciplinary artists – limiting them from freely engaging with society in the spaces, configurations and ways that are most meaningful.

The kind of work that a cross-sectoral approach makes possible, re-presents the artist to society, re-introduces Art *throughout* society. Multidisciplinary artists 'seed' themselves laterally across society, into specific communities and situations where fruitful new configurations and relations may form. Cross-sectoral work inspires artists with possibilities, freeing them from being limited to the cycles of creation-production-dissemination and the conventional binaries of artist/audience, for-profit/not-for-profit, commercial/artistic, scientific/poetic, and the like.

The outcomes of cross-sectoral collaborations may not be altogether artistic in any traditional sense: What the artistic engagement generates are relationships and ways of thinking and working through situations together – cooperatively, with integrity and conscious thinking – deeply informed by the artistic framework, the artistic instinct, the artist's voice. Simultaneously, cross-sectoral approaches are a vital means for artists, collectives and organizations to experience and develop sustained encounters with people different in geography, class, economy, education, temperament, interests, values, ethnicities, orientations, subcultures, etc. These initiatives enable the formation of unanticipated relations and diverse feedback loops that inform how artists, collectives and arts organizations shape their relevance, their relation to society.

Intuitively, the arts sector is engaged in a process of reclamation, of rewilding in and with the public's interest. Modernity's project of specialization has supplied public arts policy with language to order and organize, producing advances in disciplinary excellence and sectoral growth, while creating artificial chasms that funders and artists alike have been struggling to bridge. Can funding policies and institutions be renewed to be ever more open-minded and inclusive, to encourage interest from broad sources, and to welcome surprise, uncertainty and the unanticipated? While artistic rigour and excellence are important, new/renewed formations require new/renewed formulations of what those values mean, how they manifest, and how and who to assess this.

Ultimately, if being disciplined means building more fences, weeding out natural influence and reducing opportunities for cross-fertilization, let us all stay wild or re-wild.

Themes and Questions for Further Reflection

1. Multidisciplinarians define a large part of the value of their contributions to a project by their capacity to inform, influence or shape the approach, the thinking, the methodology underpinning a process and project. The time and effort required to communicate, listen, reflect, discuss, co-produce a shared perspective across disciplinary differences – this is a tremendous amount of work. Perhaps the 'real' triumph. How might funders help demonstrate recognition and value for these communicative and relational processes that are cornerstones to the building of new artistic expressions? Are artistic outcomes necessary for public arts funders to support arts-based or arts-led projects involving collaboration with other sectors? Is 'social practice' sufficiently leading or paving a way?
2. In contemporary society, who is doing work, creating cultural expressions that best speak for and respond to the inner life of Canadians? How to give artists the time, space and resources needed to compete for public interest, to uplift the public imagination?
3. Specific skills are required to introduce an artistic process to a community, to learn how to negotiate and merge different processes, to maintain art not as a product or means of dissemination but as a process. How can this skill be visible to a jury for evaluation? How can its contribution to "impact" be measured? How to encourage artists and communities that are introducing the language/process/means of perception of artistic practice in different contexts?
4. The great drawback to the professionalization of any art practice seems to be the intense administration that suddenly becomes required, to the detriment of the art-making. Is it worth it? Is it ethical to keep 'selling' this formula of professionalization to new artists?
5. Administrative burden aside, are arts workers really engaged in their practices the way they want to be? Is their relationship with society as they desire? What kind of support or assistance can public arts funders play in that vision?
6. With the simultaneous professionalization and democratization of creativity across society, what is the impact on the publicly-funded arts?
7. When does commercial work 'count' as art in an artist or organization's practice? How can 20 years of experience creatively marrying, or dancing between, business interests and personal aesthetics and values be related to artistic excellence?
8. How might public arts funders equip themselves to anticipate what to do, how to react, how to adapt, how to intervene in a future that is increasingly mediated by technology? What will be the currencies of tomorrow? A reference not to the bit coins of tomorrow but rather the current economy of visual images, 'link bait' headlines, Internet curators and

tastemakers, etc. How much influence, capital and liquidity does the Canadian art sector have in this online cultural economy?

Appendix I: Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) Members

There is a CPAF member in every province and territory in Canada. The federal member of the network is the Canada Council for the Arts, which also provides the CPAF Secretariat.

The 14 CPAF members are:

- [Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council](#)
- [Prince Edward Island Council of the Arts](#)
- [Arts Nova Scotia](#)
- [New Brunswick Arts Board](#)
- [Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec](#)
- [Ontario Arts Council](#)
- [Manitoba Arts Council](#)
- [Saskatchewan Arts Board](#)
- [Alberta Foundation for the Arts](#)
- [British Columbia Arts Council](#)
- [Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture \(Yukon Arts Advisory Council\)](#)
- [Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Education, Culture and Employment \(Northwest Territories Arts Council\)](#)
- [Government of Nunavut, Department of Culture and Heritage](#)
- [Canada Council for the Arts](#)

Appendix II: Case Study Profiles

Calgary's Animated Objects Society / Xstine Cook (Calgary, AB)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Founded in 2003. Bi-annual 10-day program. 7th edition this year. Performances, screenings, lectures, hands-on workshops, exhibitions. During off years, produce 1-2 media art projects per year, and a cabaret for local artists to try new work.</p> <p>Annual work in public schools engaging K to 6 school population 1-2 days/week Sept to June; each class creates 5 min animated video by students.</p> <p>Other community collaborations, e.g. prison population, Aboriginal artists, afterschool programs.</p>	<p>Attendance to festival very good but could be better.</p> <p>Limited organizational capacity – fluctuating funds, little time to develop sponsorships & partnerships, or to do “grunt work”.</p> <p>Projects with schools are process-intensive; methodology changes and develops year to year.</p> <p>Reports feeling poor fit between programs and the long development time of puppetry process.</p> <p>Suggests differences in development cycle or approach to creation for puppeteers vs. theatre makers, which may impact their success rate and sense of fit with existing funding programs.</p> <p>Low success rate with Inter Arts at Canada Council (1/9 applications); usually seek grants through Visual Arts or Media Arts.</p> <p>Prefer to work spontaneously, responding to the moment, “rising to the occasion, if, for example, an issue comes up in the community that inspires me.” As such, sometimes opting to not apply for full amounts available to avoid being constrained to “delivering on some big project 1, 2, 3 years out.”</p> <p>Balancing family life, administration, programming, and creation projects.</p> <p>Less able to pursue artistic practice in fulltime way.</p>	<p>Many puppeteers self-taught, and devise their own plays as well as “everything to produce the play.”</p> <p>Puppetry, including masks, object manipulation and animation, combines performance with visual art, as well as other art forms such as dance, theatre (actors not behind a mask), media arts, music, etc.</p> <p>Calgary Animated Objects Society (CAOS) produces the festival; CAOS receives operating funding from Calgary Arts Development, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and Alberta Lotteries.</p> <p>Alberta Lotteries funding every 18 months on the condition CAOS provides 30 volunteers for 2 days every 18 months. Project grants available; often successful with those too.</p> <p>Highly comfortable with improvisation.</p> <p>Aware and respectful that the teachers they work with are not typically comfortable with “making it up as they go along. They need to plan and make time and space for things to happen. A process where you’re constantly improvising to be responsive to context and needs is extremely challenging for them.”</p> <p>Strong understanding and desire to “make it easier so [teachers] know what’s expected of them.”</p> <p>Flexibility, adaptation. Personal practice has moved from performance to screen-based works partly to accommodate work-life schedule.</p>
<p>THE EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Masks Puppetry Kinetic sculptures Object manipulation Animation (video/film) Education Theatre Media arts Visual arts Community arts Community groups</p> <p>E.g. Giant buffalo puppet built by prison inmates and bike fanatics (operated with 4-person bike), performed with Aboriginal dancers and young people trained by Aboriginal theatre makers.</p>		

Box Salon / Louise Bak (Toronto, ON)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Since 1999. A quarterly “mixed cultural salon” with readings, music, performances, screenings, interventions, objects, and networking. Rivoli backroom. (Previously, The Labyrinth, Bar Italia, NOW Lounge.)</p> <p>The Box is a practice of bringing together objects and communities in an environment of artistic and social intermingling.</p>	<p>Frustration of “how formal culture occurs.” Formal approaches “aren’t always the way.”</p> <p>A lot of art is framed in terms of capital process. Most of the world is oriented toward cost.</p> <p>Some people have wanted to see The Box grow. Don’t believe in the spirit of what it is – something very humble.</p>	<p>Interest in “processes, language, technique, media.”</p> <p>Organic approach to curating and programming. Interest in bringing together younger and older artists, bringing out “textures” through re-contextualization of work/practices in unusual setting and program.</p> <p>Ticket price has not changed in 16 years; still \$5; as modest as can be.</p>
<p>THE EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Literary Arts Performance / Theatre Sound / Music Media Arts Inter & Multidisciplinary Visual Arts Social Criticism</p> <p>E.g. October 27, 2010 salon: Kalman Andrasofszky, illustration artist (Marvel comics, Dungeons & Dragons, SPIN magazine); Girl + the Marchine (indie pop music + video projections); Istvan Kantor (action-based media artist/subvertainer, 2004 Governor General’s Award); Nayeon Kim, performance artist (visual arts student); Peter Steven, author (The No-Nonsense Guide to Global Media); Micah Toub, author and columnist (Globe and Mail); and Phoebe Tsang, violinist & poet with BSc in Architecture.</p>	<p>When things get large, don’t see most effective qualities. Size of gathering doesn’t always bring out contact between people, social or learning.</p> <p>Wish there were more approaches to funding. More chances for people not necessarily more established. Experimentation.</p> <p>Not enough access to spaces outside of conventional presentation space.</p> <p>“Affordable” spaces for artists are still not that affordable.</p> <p>Trend for artists to have to move many times. Desire to work in industrial spaces.</p> <p>Structuring costs in a way that artists can actually afford. E.g. difficult to put together a lump sum for a down payment.</p> <p>“Impossible to feel any sense of stability.”</p> <p>“Looking period longer than the job itself.” How are artists going to live?</p>	<p>Some awareness of the impact of The Box (collaborations, projects, continuations) but Bak seems to prefer not to actively seek out reports from past participants.</p> <p>“When you get involved in things that are less or no cost, and things still occur, it’s something that people can think about differently.”</p> <p>“Responding to the unexpected and creating the unexpected.”</p> <p>Strongly motivated by curiosity, surprise, and desire to replicate, contribute or respond to the generosity and grace Bak herself has experienced over the years.</p> <p>Bak spoke to how giving in small “manners” (ways) or experiencing “qualities of grace” can give you “the means to move.” One can be “affected by people [outside of] formal contexts.” Sometimes “things occurring in your cultural life can affect how you do things [in real life]. I want people to feel a little bit of surprise.”</p>

Bureau de l'APA / Laurence Brunelle Côté (Québec City, QC)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
Artistic duo, practising "l'indiscipline," i.e. non-discipline or the undisciplined.	Terminology poses challenge for going beyond or outside the disciplines, for self-defining.	"Surprise is a kind of freedom. If you aren't surprised, wowed, it's too similar to everything the audience imagines, everything you've already been shown."
They speak of their work as "un atelier de bricolage indiscipliné". An undisciplined DIY studio.	The challenge of "making your mark; there is a lot going on; the challenge of being present, saying something, being noticed."	Côté speaks of her disability as "une limite" that inspires her. It is part of the interdisciplinarity. It influences the work artistically. "The disability becomes a process, an integral part of the practice. [...] But it's not the message. I have other things to say."
Bricolage= a non-standardized aesthetic.	The challenge of attracting audiences; people want to do more and more from home.	"The space inspires us; it helps us find solutions."
Performance installations with many layers: a "bricolage" aesthetic that blends images, objects, direct address, audience participation, music.	Presenters that are focused on what "theatre" is, end up being disappointed. « It's clear we don't do theatre... The audience understands us better than presenters do."	Many spaces have features like tall ceilings or high-tech capacities. "But we don't need all that. What we do is low tech. We need warehouses. A space nourishes us and helps us find answers." Spaces nourish us; they help us to find solutions."
An approach that acknowledges authenticity of presence: performers are the creators of their work; performers are from all walks of life; they are their 'real' selves on stage.	Not enough time to search for funding, for administration, audience development, marketing/promotion, communications, and to find private funding. "We are not entrepreneurs."	The arts institutions that make freedom possible for creators are the important ones.
The performance is open to the impact of the audience. No fourth wall.	Hiring someone means having to also train someone. "We need a 36-hour day instead of 24."	"We need to stop getting hung up because of conventions. All artists must be as free as possible."
THE EXPERIENCE		
Performance Collage Installation / Theatre Objects, Images, Sculpture Artists & Non-Artists in performance (Disability Arts) Discourse	When renting a space, "you can't mess around; there's no time to lose." Storage spaces are often very far away; that involves transport costs. Fortunate so far, "but it's never a sure thing. Right now, things are going well, but tomorrow.... I find it hard."	"Nothing stops me, other than alienation, our way of thinking. We're never completely free. I do what I can with what I have."
« We try to not be too smooth, too uniform. The world is not smooth »	Private funding is completely "against our values." Sponsors have their own interests."	
"People participate in an experience. We choose to live an experience with others"		

Cluster New Music & Integrated Arts Festival / Luke Nickel (Winnipeg, MB)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Annual festival in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Organization established in 2008. First festival in 2010. Festival is now 1 week long, with additional year-round, small-scale programming.</p>	<p>Artistic directors do not pay themselves, and have other occupations to make a living. They have made cash contributions to sustain the festival. "We see it as a business...You invest in it."</p>	<p>Added a third director.</p> <p>Grants from SOCAN and Canada Council music programs. Winnipeg and Manitoba arts council are encouraging.</p>
<p>Curating, producing & presenting organization. Established to present "the kind of art we wanted to see," to rethink new music and "what art forms it could relate to."</p>	<p>"Being paid something would help us to make space in our lives to push the festival in the directions we hope to. I put as much time as possible into the festival, but I want to find a balance that is sane. Reflection is also something we don't get to do much of."</p>	<p>This is the first year they will not have to make a personal financial contribution. "This is very exciting."</p>
<p>Untraditional spaces: warehouses, galleries, old cinemas. "We are passionate about exploring as many spaces as possible for presentation."</p>	<p>Lack of office space; they work from home, and meet in coffee shops.</p>	<p>Families and friends support the festival. "Our events and promotions may look slick, but we're very community- and family-oriented."</p>
<p>Robust core audience: 60 – 70 audience members at each event.</p>	<p>Online archiving allows them to store old photos and videos in an accessible way, though process takes time.</p>	<p>"Artists are often our best supporters. They tell people about the festival... advocating for us across Canada and around the world." Present international artists and local artists to bridge gaps; artists from different communities, to bridge audiences, media, genres.</p>
<p>THE EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>Challenge of finding "the perfect space": a black box or white box with modular seating arrangements, and a piano. Expensive to bring a piano to a space that doesn't already have one.</p>	<p>Favourite collaborators are "artists who have invented their practice. "They know what they are doing but...can see their work changing, respond to the context of the festival."</p>
<p>Untraditional spaces Collaborations; commissions; R&D Small scale Mix of emerging and established, local and international artists "Always been passionate about building the festival in a way that people trust the brand but can't expect what we'll do. They know they're going to get something unexpected, often really bizarre, something they haven't seen before."</p>	<p>Recognition that operating model is changing. "Switching from that mentality was a big change. We've gotten better at making smaller grants fit...how to piece them together."</p>	<p>Benefit of Board of Directors that brings practical skills, connections, but also understands their programming ethos. "We can also bounce artistic decisions off of them, talk theoretically about the art."</p> <p>Allowing scope and size to change in a way that is "natural, not aggressive."</p>

Eco Arts Incubator / Nancy Holmes & Denise Kenney (Okanagan, BC)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>SSHRC-funded research initiative at UBC, Okanagan campus. Platform for students and artists, led by Prof Holmes (Creative Writing), Prof Kenney (Interdisciplinary Performance), and provides “access to artist-friendly resources for conservation and ecological initiatives.”</p> <p>Aims to foster art that “attaches to a place and becomes part of the ecosystem [...] growing the seeds of local, place-based culture.”</p>	<p>Artists within academia forced to communicate in a different language “to accommodate someone else’s epistemology” Have to make the case for creative practice; adds another layer on the work.</p> <p>Body not well-respected as valuable means of interpreting and communicating the world.</p> <p>Challenge to “communicate across [disciplinary] chasms, find language that can provide a platform from which people can work constructively. And to not alienate people.” Sometimes artist’s role marginalized, designs the dissemination but not actually influencing “the very core of the way the work is unfolding.” Methodologies and foundation of thinking sometimes “antithetical to the things that we do.”</p>	<p>SSHRC funding used as leverage to bring in significant other funding.</p> <p>Confident about future funding.</p> <p>Strong feeling that Eco-Art Incubator is very successful and satisfying because it is artist-driven. Incubator transfers the “energy and artistic skills of a large university into the community.”</p> <p>Opportunity to occupy the space of local culture. Create work for one particular area.</p> <p>Holmes sees the role of the artist to provide metaphors that prompt people to see things, the world, issues differently.</p>
<h3>THE EXPERIENCE</h3>	<p>Intellectual property the currency of academia. Kenney doing “double the work” to practice this way and produce work that conforms to notion of ownership, to work toward tenure. Doing art, then doing what social scientist would do (publish).</p> <p>Promotion/marketing support needed for artists. “So much is about getting the info out there.”</p> <p>Holmes and Kenney spoke to the value of skills-based training. “It is deeply relevant and necessary if you’re going to do meaningful work.” Stronger collaborator and interdisciplinary artist “if you’re well-rooted in one discipline.”</p>	<p>Holmes and Kenney have learned “to keep coming back” to thinking about process, entering each project with “a strong sense of process, intention, criteria ultimately to assess value.”</p> <p><i>Three Sheets to the Wind</i> a good example of a cross-disciplinary collaboration in which all 3 creators felt 100% represented in the process: “The way they proceeded didn’t belong to any one of them.”</p> <p>Holmes and Kenney cite comfort with arts councils; creative practice understood inherently as a valid way of inquiry and dissemination.</p> <p>“Feel the boundaries around what I see as valuable things to do as an artist has opened up a lot.”</p>
<p>Visual Arts Performance Community Engagement Literary Arts Digital Media Social Science Inquiry-Based Research</p> <p><i>Three Sheets to the Wind</i> installation by 3 grad students (Interdisciplinary Performance, Visual Arts, Engineering). Three hammocks hung from trees using interconnected pulley system, requiring all 3 hammocks to be occupied simultaneously to function. Invites participants to share what it means to be connected in an oscillating ecosystem. Cooperation between bodies, trees, material & engineering. Sensorial, playful, intellectual.</p>		

Liz Solo (St. John's, NL)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Performance artist. Theatre background. Went from using media elements and designing installations to perform in on stage, to performing/intervening in virtual worlds, to creating hybrid virtual-real performance experiences.</p>	<p>Access to a free Internet.</p> <p>Commercial platforms might come with free tools, a large community, and artist-friendly terms of use, but can change overnight, suddenly become inaccessible or unsuitable for artists. "Can't transfer out the work." Artists powerless.</p>	<p>Opportunities to "do stuff that no one's ever done before."</p> <p>Understanding of these practices is improving. New generation more familiar and galleries catching on. Dance community open to experimentation. People in general becoming fascinated.</p>
<p>Also actor, plays music and works in video production.</p>	<p>Documentation crucial as new technologies overtaken by newer technologies. Already losses.</p>	<p>Opportunities to participate in high-profile presentations internationally.</p>
<p>Performance / Theatre Visual Art Virtual Worlds Experimental Media Media Arts Net Art</p>	<p>Access to venues, support and presentation opportunities for hybrid work. "Pushed into bars." Insufficient recognition by curators and critics.</p>	<p>Gaming culture, net culture, Augmented Reality all changing the way people go to the theatre, how they experience culture and the world.</p>
<p>E.g. <i>Senses Places</i> – Collaboration with Isabel Valverde (Portugal). Each performer uses a live webcam interface to control their avatars' bodies in real-time, in the virtual world simply by moving their bodies in front of the camera. Another layer is added as real life dancers interact with large-scale projections of the dancing avatars. Audiences watch in real life and in the virtual world. Connects human to virtual representation; view virtual representation of themselves, other artists in there, and audiences.</p>	<p>Artists often have to set up/tech support their own work, or train technicians how to do it on the spot. Presenter sometimes supplies the wrong equipment.</p> <p>Colleagues mostly located outside of geographic community.</p> <p>Artists that depend on grants live speculatively; "poverty mentality"; basic survival difficult; people want to give up. Big oil companies funding artists risk compromising artistic voice.</p> <p>Solo suggests as artist-run centres formalized, "organizations have been taken over by administration; they're the ones getting salaries, benefits, managing organizations that artists can't get into anymore."</p>	<p>"Artists need only access to the technology and support to live and work and they will take to this stuff immediately and explore the heck out of it."</p> <p>Solo sees current generation as very career-minded. She identifies deeply with "collective movement of the '60s and '70s."</p> <p>In Solo's experience, the Canadians that she has met working in the virtual and hybrid reality worlds tend to be professional artists. "The Europeans [that I work with in this space], a lot of them have 'straight jobs.'" It's more of an extra-curricular professional activity for them."</p>
<p>"Kind of virtual, global contact improv going on."</p>	<p>Solo suggests as artist-run centres formalized, "organizations have been taken over by administration; they're the ones getting salaries, benefits, managing organizations that artists can't get into anymore."</p> <p>Internet devaluing artists' work.</p>	<p>"Canada Council funds you fully, properly." Solo spoke to significance of these large grants; psychological impact; "changed trajectory of my career every time for the better."</p>

Reena Katz (Toronto, ON)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Media artist, teacher and activist.</p> <p>Began as sound artist, ventured into visual arts, became comfortable "dancing between all those media."</p> <p>Practices an "experimental approach to creation."</p> <p>Installations, recordings, live performances, online, in galleries, and most often in public space.</p> <p>Multidisciplinary community partnerships. "I produce large-scale New Media projects with communities, organizations and other artists in a collaborative, skill-sharing framework."</p>	<p>Missing "deep impulse to make stuff out of passion and emotion." Seek balance between "constantly accessing your creative self with rest time to rejuvenate it." Administration exhausting.</p> <p>Negotiating around-the-clock immediacy of email, wanting to appear (and be) responsive, professional, while choosing to not "do everything that's being asked of me... otherwise not sustainable."</p> <p>"What I get defines my work." Rare to secure funding beyond 12-month framework.</p> <p>"Always applying for fulltime jobs." Applied for 100 academic positions since MFA. No interviews.</p>	<p>"Most contemporary artists combine disciplines, especially if they're involved with new technology; they have a multi-valence practice."</p> <p>Sees artist-run centres (ARCs) and media arts centres as multidisciplinary centres; instrumental in development of her practice.</p> <p>Most projects now with 20+ people; approaches as project management, using skills and experience from working at ARCs - budgeting, facilitation, communication, delegation, etc.</p> <p>Clarity about her ideals; "honour that vision and work in realistic contexts with that in mind."</p>
<p>THE EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Performance Sound Art / Music Visual Art New Media Augmented Reality Net Art Collaborations with Dance</p> <p>Polyvocal live feminist reading series performed in New York and Toronto; soundscapes for <i>Mapping Ararat</i>, an augmented reality walking tour on Grand Island, New York; built a John & Yoko bed at Harbourfront, visitors confer with queer couple/activists about how to live in peaceful defiance.</p>	<p>"I have to be as flexible as the practice to find space." Wood shop, sound studio, area to make electronics components, office, art storage etc."</p> <p>Size of new work constrained by storage available.</p> <p>"Staying on top of new technology is a real challenge."</p> <p>Struggle with "getting general public audience" and little to no critical attention.</p> <p>Witnessed artistic peers "getting fulltime jobs, moving to a more hobby-based practice," whose practices no longer progress or evolve at same rate. "Changes the landscape of contemporary art... It leaves out a whole bunch of voices."</p>	<p>"Factors of success [for artists] seem identical to what it takes to be an entrepreneur: Incredible drive, huge passion for what I do, real ability to be resilient in precarity, creative problem-solving approach... A fair degree of arrogance. That's where I falter."</p> <p>"Critical acclaim nonetheless." Sobey's long list, even with "very little exhibition history in Europe and Asia – most others on the list had a more robust exhibition history." Chalmers fellowship this year.</p> <p>Ongoing desire to develop language around work that feels inclusive and accessible. Ongoing learning to understand and work with different people's levels of comfort with their imaginations.</p>

Skwachàys Lodge / David Eddy (Vancouver, BC)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Social enterprise owned and operated by Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS), opened June 2012. Re-opened Aug 2014 after extensive 7-month redesign.</p> <p>Boutique Aboriginal arts hotel, fair trade Aboriginal art gallery, and urban Aboriginal artist residence. 18 hotel rooms designed by teams of local Aboriginal artists and designers from 6 world-renowned hotel design firms.</p>	<p>Offered building by BC Housing in 2008, but BC Housing would only provide \$3.5M for cosmetic renovations. 100-year old building vacant for 4 years.</p> <p>Had to raise \$10.5M in total to buy and renovate the building.</p> <p>First 7 months, didn't get occupancy required to make enterprise viable. Health Canada had said they would take 9 of 18 rooms on annual basis, for patients, but in the end didn't come through. Decided to open up healing lodge to general travelling public.</p>	<p>Support from multiple levels of government/funding agencies, private sector, and in-kind contributions.</p> <p>Expansive vision. Combining multiple sources of inspiration, including success from 7500 square foot mural project that brought "huge reaction" from neighbourhood and public. Resulting theme – <i>"community building through the transformative power of art"</i> – helped spawn next art project, a work studio & Aboriginal art gallery (different property), and now Lodge. Gradual steps unknowingly toward this moment.</p>
<p>THE EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Social Enterprise Housing Visual Arts Aboriginal Culture Tourism & Hospitality Architecture & Design Heritage</p> <p>Revenue from hotel and gallery subsidizes 24 self-contained apartments for Aboriginal artists at risk of homelessness. Rooftop sweat lodge and smudge room. Artist studio / workshop production space in basement.</p> <p>Originally to create a healing lodge for Aboriginal people travelling from remote areas for medical treatment. Some rooms still reserved for this.</p>	<p>So busy getting hotel up and running, have not had time to formalize 3-year professional development program for artists.</p> <p>"Really have to be flexible, be a survivor, look at the numbers but also [have a vision], have faith in the project... Not for the faint of heart."</p> <p>"Non-profit world not used to creating profit." Social enterprise means "you have to create so much money that you exceed your expenses."</p> <p>Finding right employees challenging; complicated set of attributes. Flexible, not risk-adverse, can see the vision and contribute with their own ideas, hard-working, open to atypical work timeframes.</p> <p>Municipal bureaucracy particularly challenging; disproportionate to funding levels (vs. federal/provincial).</p>	<p>Fair trade gallery sells art and more commercial tourist items verified by BC Authentic Indigenous program.</p> <p>Working with Aboriginal arts consultant on professional development; will engage post-secondary educational partners too.</p> <p>Business community understands better than government the benefits of social housing; "they can be the messengers – government tends to listen to them more."</p> <p>Gallery averages \$12,000 - \$15,000 per month. \$500 monthly subsidy per artist residence. \$144,000 annually. Confident future Lodge profits will increase, help develop other projects.</p> <p>Received a lot of media attention.</p> <p>Serendipitous, fortuitous coming together of factors to create Lodge. Transformative project.</p>

Teslin Tlingit Council / Melaina Sheldon (Teslin Tlingit, YK)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Community of 500 people. Achieved self-government 20 years ago. Mandate included establishing heritage department and Heritage Centre “to share and sustain our culture and show our pride.” Priority that the Tlingit people see themselves reflected in the space and programming. “That’s our main audience.”</p> <p>Building opened in 2002, houses museum collection, gift shop, hosts Elders Council meetings, community meetings, and the Hà Kus Teyea Celebration.</p>	<p>Many northern artists don’t know or believe they can make their living as artists. Sheldon believes the solution is to show them how, to offer models or examples of success, so that they can believe and know that it is an attainable goal.</p> <p>Sheldon helps northern artists navigate some of the bureaucracy of the ‘professional’ arts world. There are challenges around literacy, technology, application & reporting structures for many artists.</p> <p>Yukon Government “doesn’t really use First Nations festivals and artists as [a tourist attraction]. There are initiatives but we need to be more a part of a package that we sell to our visitors.”</p>	<p>Sheldon keeps an informal record of artworks available for sale. “Would be great to develop an online catalogue of items available for sale from local artists.”</p> <p>Mentorship opportunities with successful artists would help show how to make a living as an artist. “This is what I do, this is how I did it. So that they can recognize that creative work is 90% paperwork and 10% fun; that artists have to do their own books, be their own managers, create their own opportunities.”</p> <p>Sheldon would like to see communities/organizations working together to bring artists in “for a longer period of time, so that they are visiting for more than a day or two. How can they come to the festival and then continue mentoring in the community?”</p>
<h3>THE EXPERIENCE</h3>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Culture Heritage Visual Arts Traditional Crafts (cedar weavers, smoking fish, tanning hides, carving) Performance Storytelling Song Dance Canoe Games Food Professional Development 	<p>No permanent/dedicated studio space. Artists desire “a space where you can work on regalia or a big button blanket and not have to fold it up at end of day.”</p> <p>Heritage Centre multifunctional and busy space; not always well-suited as learning place.</p> <p>Compared to other Tlingit communities, “exemplifications” of culture not as prevalent. E.g. Totem poles, other visual displays in town.</p>	<p>Sheldon also spoke about partnering youth with artists, e.g. moose hide tanner, to talk to visitors, answer their questions, and learn the skills at the same time. So that knowledge is not only transmitted to visitors but also locally, passed on, handed down.</p> <p>Small artist grants available for supplies and travel. Council also gives grants so artists can afford to buy moose hide, a set of carving tools, etc.</p>
<p>Hà Kus Teyea Celebration - 3 days, runs every other year, to alternate with Alaskan coastal communities’ celebration. 3000 – 4000 attendees.</p>	<p>Difficult for artists to compete for grants at national level, or when it’s not limited to just First Nations applicants.</p>	<p>Desire to bring in specialists, to work with artists and so Sheldon can learn how to help more with marketing, packaging, outreach to other markets, etc.</p>

WhiteFeather Hunter (Montreal, QC / Fredericton, NB)

OVERVIEW	CHALLENGES	OBSERVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Transdisciplinary. “Consider myself an artist, nothing else.” Currently most work done in biology lab, working in electronics as well as traditional crafts. Pursuing MFA at Concordia University.</p> <p>Background in textiles / fiber arts. Now broadened to include material studies; last 1.5 years working with living systems - mammalian tissue culture.</p>	<p>Student status prevents Hunter from applying for artistic grants. “Struggling to maintain arts practice while increasing credentials.”</p> <p>SSHRC funding “very rooted in the scientific process.” Required to reframe practice in terms of scientific research objectives, results and outcomes. “They don’t ask about the materials used; they don’t care what the work looks like.”</p> <p>Research creation a “hot word” within academia. “People orient their practice and work toward the funding that’s available – consciously and unconsciously. People who don’t, don’t get funding.”</p> <p>Few places equipped to show bio art publicly. Very high level of bureaucracy required of the presenter; many galleries not willing to take on the paperwork load. Also don’t know how to show the work, explain to the audience.</p> <p>Creation timelines extremely extended due to “massive safety certification process” required, at every new lab. Certification not transportable/transferrable.</p> <p>A lot of resistance in biology department to allowing an artist to work in the lab. “Even if I have more training than most of the students in the lab.” Mental resistance as well as bureaucratic barriers, like process for obtaining supplies and materials. “Wading through knee deep pudding all the time.”</p>	<p>Resourceful, flexible, creative with funding, bureaucracy, and other barriers.</p> <p>Applies for “everything that makes sense to apply for.” 80% of time on paperwork, 20% on research and “making stuff.” When new opportunities arise, they “invigorate my practice.”</p> <p>Social media “very good way to engage with people interested in what I’m doing.”</p> <p>Prospect of making NSERC and SSHRC funding available to artists who want to work in science, and scientists to engage more with DIY and be creative.</p> <p>Pursue workshops outside of academia and in different communities to broaden circles, exposure to different thinkers, finding new tools to bring into arts practice. Keeps her practice “moving with high momentum.” Led to discovery of bio art possibilities.</p> <p>Bio art may not produce work that can be presented in a traditional way. “Microscopic organisms don’t necessarily translate to a visually-compelling object, particularly not in an art world obsessed with large scale. Some artistic ‘events’ happen in the petri dish.” Presentation may take the form of publication in an art-science journal, or online.</p> <p>Proposal writing has become her writing outlet; proficient at it and takes pleasure in it. Has led to consulting for others.</p>
<h3>THE EXPERIENCE</h3>		
<p>Textiles / Fiber Arts Visual Arts Material Studies Biology Photography Performance Video Soft Sculpture Writer</p> <p>Colour photographs of bio-art process; focus on microscopic scale, forms, colours, textures; interaction with human hands & technology; revelation of process at microscopic level; movement, rhythm, interaction of cellular organisms; consideration of life, death & decay of organisms, materials; occasionally overlain with instructions, ceremonies involving audience interaction. “Please kneel.” Reflections on human interaction with microscopic world.</p>		

Thunder & Lightning Ideas Ltd. / Jon Claytor (Sackville, NB)

OVERVIEW

A design agency, small pub, bowling alley, design studio, record label, 6 multi-functional art spaces (art studios, local music festival office, spaces for short-term rental). The bar hosts many different events, including poetry readings, film screenings, music and other performances. Claytor describes his way of working as "doing a bit of everything constantly." He derives a great deal of personal satisfaction out of doing things for the community, like helping to build an arts scene in Sackville. "I really want a space that doesn't depend on arts funding, do things free of that system. This feeds my soul and writing grants does the opposite. I base my life around a way of living so that I'm not doing things that don't feed my soul." The multidimensional enterprise was founded with 1 month's rent and \$250 to buy booze for the bar, and money for the liquor license (\$2500 all in). Inspired by All Citizens (Bruno, SK). "Any NB artist or business person will have 3 or 4 businesses. You can't support yourself with just one. It's kind of like how an artist might have more than one discipline. It's a very new Brunswick or Maritime way of doing things. Paintings sometimes pays for the bar as much as the bar. Design stuff also helps. All three elements help. "

Appendix III: References

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Appendix IV: Project Team

Helen Yung, principal consultant

Artist-researcher Helen Yung practices Marginalia by designing interactions, installations/environments and interventions. Her practice has been supported by Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, *Le Fondation Tenot* (France), and *L'Institut international de la marionette* (France), Performance Space (Australia), Harbourfront Centre, Dreamwalker Dance Company, Theatre Direct, Critical Path Choreographic Research Centre (Australia), Oboro, *Festival Accès Asie*, *Centre d'art Marnay Art Centre/CAMAC* (France), Gladstone Hotel, Dasein Dance, and Puppetmongers Theatre. Helen was previously regional peer facilitator for the Stand Firm Network (Central Canada) for Canada Council for the Arts, founding community engagement manager for Culture Days (national office), national coordinator for the Canadian Arts Coalition, and programs and services coordinator for the Canadian Dance Assembly. She has given talks at conferences convened by the International Association for the Study of the Culture of Cities (2014 & 2013), American Comparative Literature Association (2013), Ontario Museums Association (2010), Magnetic North Theatre Festival (2010), University of Toronto's Teaching & Learning Outside The Classroom Initiative (2008), and University of Toronto's Graduate Centre for Drama (2006). Helen is currently researcher-in-residence with Dreamwalker Dance Company (since 2014), artist-researcher with the Culture of Cities Centre (since 2012), a member of the Centre for Social Innovation (since 2010), and volunteers as advisory council member of the Ontario Nonprofit Network (since 2009) and member of the Board of Directors (since 2011) for hub14, a 100% self-sustaining artist-run space for art and performance.

Clea Minaker, associate

A performer, designer, and director, Clea Minaker collaborates bringing the language of contemporary puppetry to creations in theatre, opera, dance, video, film, and live music. Trained at the International Institute of Puppetry Arts (2002 -2005) in Charleville-Mezieres, France, Clea's original creations evoke a poetic quality. Situating clandestine manipulation within ever-evolving scenic spaces, she strives to produce a 'total' image. In 2009, Clea was awarded the *Siminovitch Protégé Prize* for Theatre Design by Canadian puppeteer Ronnie Burkett. From 2007-2008, Clea created and performed a shadow puppetry stage show for *Feist, The Reminder Tour*, touring internationally. She has created 'carte blanche' performances with Leslie Feist at the Montreal contemporary puppetry festival, *Casteliers*, with Candace Bas at *IFI* Istanbul Independent Film Festival, the *Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego*, and most recently at with Hajra Waheed at *Art Dubai*. In 2013 she created shadow puppetry for *Salomé* a Canadian Opera Company production directed by Atom Egoyan, as well as for *Tales of Odessa*, A So-called Musical, at Montreal's Segal Centre. This summer she performed and designed for the Luminato premiere of Kid Koala's live puppetry film-performance, *Nufonia Must Fall*, directed by K.K. Barrett. Clea's first full length solo performance, *The Book of Thel*, based on the poem by William Blake was presented in 2013 at Festival Artdanthé at Theatre Lachpelle in Montreal.

Soraya Peerbaye, associate

Soraya Peerbaye is an arts consultant specializing in creative, career and community development for dance artists. She was the Dance Officer at the Toronto Arts Council from 2004 to 2012; prior to that she was the Equity Officer at the Canada Council for the Arts, advocating for artists of colour and diasporic artistic and cultural practices. She is currently the Director of Development for adelheid dance company, and works on an ongoing basis as an advisor with Anandam DanceTheatre (Brandy Leary) and Dreamwalker Dance Company (Andrea Nann); she also supports the development of Compañia Carmen Romero, The Triana Project (flamenco), Mafa Makhubalo (gumboot), Allison Toffan (tap), and was the producer of the inaugural Body Percussion Festival. She also serves as a creative collaborator with artists such as Sharada K. Eswar and Nova Bhattacharya, and companies such as The Independent Aunties. Soraya is a poet and the author of *Poems for the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names* (Goose Lane Editions, 2009), nominated for the Gerald Lampert Award for first poetry collection. She graduated with a BA in Theatre from York University and also holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph.

Marjan Verstappen, associate

A sculptor, draughtswoman and installation artist, Marjan Verstappen is interested in the vastly complex ways humans, plants, objects and animals move around the globe. She sees huge similarities in artistic and scientific practices because they both seek to know the material world in ways for which there are not yet words. For Marjan, drawing is an exercise in holding the world still, and caressing it with her eyes and her hands. This impetus for stillness in movement continues to inspire her practice, where she renders the banal with care and consideration, using her skills to make it precious and interesting. Marjan loves weeds, insects and the unexpected complexity created by urban ecology. Her passion for artistic and scientific observation has brought her around the globe from rural southern New Zealand to downtown Toronto where she has recently completed her MFA at OCAD University.