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How can building-based cultural organisations successfully create local community ownership, whereby meaningful long-term relationships are forged? A case study paper examining LSO St Luke's, Tate Modern and Brooklyn Academy of Music

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Year paper completed: 2006

Leadership Content Theme/s: Inclusive Leadership Practice, Hard Skills, Sector Insights

AHRC Subject Area/s: Cultural Geography, Music and Society, Museum and Gallery Studies, Community Art (including Art and Health), Heritage Management

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August 2007

How can building-based cultural organisations successfully create local community ownership, whereby meaningful long-term relationships are forged? A case study paper examining LSO St Luke's, Tate Modern, and BAM.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to explore the common themes and challenges which are faced by three cultural organisations from different sectors. Each organisation has a particular concern with issues of community ownership, and in particular the relationship with a local catchment area.

LSO St Luke's, Tate Modern, and BAM are all major cultural powerhouses, physically situated in locations whereby they have a local community either right on their doorstep (Tate Modern) or actually surrounding them entirely (BAM and LSO St Luke's).

The challenge for each organisation is how to create the long-term meaningful relationships with these local communities, and this paper aims to explore some shared themes. All three organisations are building-based, and each organisation is developing its programming using the concept of introduction spaces and entry points.

Tate will be developing multiple introduction spaces within its new Transforming Tate Modern capital development, BAM is developing local entry points for new audiences via its cinema and café programme as well as its ongoing core programme strands, and LSO St Luke's is itself an introduction space and entry point to the wider LSO organisation.

The theme of entry points and different platforms for different individuals or groups is explored further in the BAM case study, whereby BAM Café audiences grow and develop over time, as they develop relationships with particular supported performers, and they then get taken into the core programme as the performer moves onto the larger BAM stages.

Another theme of this paper is that of destination pathways, whereby local community ownership is developed by creating new paths into the organisations. At all three organisations, members of the local community are increasingly creating and shaping their own unique visits, and examples given within the paper include the LSO St Luke's Community Choir, and the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation participants at BAM.

In all three case studies, it can be argued that the sense of ownership of a space is sometimes as important as the creative experience itself, and this is particularly the case at LSO St Luke's, where the community have been invited to take ownership of the spaces via regular participation in specialist music activity and groups, devised exclusively for the local community.

Another important theme to be explored is that of offsite relationships, whereby the core programme is taken out of the organisation's building base, and physically relocated into the local community, to break down physical and mental barriers which traditionally have prevented engagement or participation.

Across all three case studies, there are also apparent tensions between the education and community aspirations, and the finite financial and staffing resources available to support this work. At BAM there is the constant requirement to focus on the "fight for dollars", and at LSO St Luke's there is a balancing act to be maintained between access to the physical spaces for community activity, and the potential to sell the spaces to earn commercial income, which ultimately goes towards supporting the rest of the programme.

At Tate Modern, there is a tension relating to the aspirations of the proposed new forms of future community engagement, and whether the curatorial team will be able to agree on how the new spaces should be used, and community ownership developed.

The focus of this paper is on community ownership, and how this can be defined for each organisation, and how each organisation can ensure that these relationships become embedded into the core script of the organisations mission and values.

2. LSO St Luke's

2.1 Introduction

LSO St Luke's is a converted 18th Century church, situated 10 minutes from the Barbican Centre. For forty years, it was a derelict ruin, having been deconsecrated and abandoned in 1959 due to structural problems. It was built by Nicholas Hawksmoor and John James, and it is a Grade 1 listed building of significant architectural importance.

The London Symphony Orchestra raised over £17 million to completely rebuild the ruined church, and since 2003 it has been the home for LSO Discovery, a pioneering music education and access programme, which works closely with the local community who reside near the church. LSO St Luke's is the first orchestral music education centre to be developed in the UK, and LSO Discovery is the largest orchestral education programme in the country. The programme aims to engage with the diverse inner-city audience that surrounds LSO St Luke's by providing long-term regular participatory activities and music opportunities for people in local Hackney and Islington. These regular opportunities then dovetail, where relevant, into larger projects involving a wider catchment of community participants, LSO players, and world-class artists including conductors and soloists.

The centre is also an increasingly successful performance space, and it has hosted performances by artists as diverse as Corinne Bailey Rae, Bruce Springsteen, Philip Glass, Thomas Ades and James Brown. It is developing a reputation for world-class chamber music, and also for experimental contemporary music events across many musical genres. In this way, LSO St Luke's is developing relationships with new audiences from across the spectrum, many of whom would otherwise have no direct or indirect relationship with the London Symphony Orchestra.

LSO Discovery brings 30,000 people of all ages and backgrounds into contact with the LSO's music and musicians every year – in the Barbican Centre, schools, community centres, hospitals, and also in its home at LSO St Luke's. Established in 1990, LSO Discovery has grown to become one of the most important ways for the LSO to realise its mission of “making the finest music available to the greatest number of people”¹.

Along with other UK orchestral education programmes, the LSO's early work in the area of music education during the late 1980's soon found a very important place in supporting schools with their delivery of the new National Curriculum. Projects took composers and professional LSO players into schools, and helped teachers and pupils compose and perform their own music, which was a central objective of the new Curriculum.

Over the years, the programme has grown so that LSO Discovery now provides a huge range of music-making opportunities to many people. In the mid-1990's, the Discovery programme was expanding rapidly, and it was decided that a purpose-built space should be provided, in order to provide a worthy home for the diverse performance strands of the education programme. The LSO's home at the Barbican had no dedicated education spaces, and the Barbican itself was proving to be a barrier to some groups and individuals becoming involved. The

¹ LSO Business Plan, 2005

Barbican of the mid-1990's was an intimidating and uninviting environment, and Discovery were aware that the Barbican was acting as a physical and mental barrier between the LSO and certain community groups. In order to truly take the LSO into the community, the LSO would have to physically relocate itself, and position itself within the community.

2.2 The importance of the physical environment

For Discovery and the LSO, the aesthetic impact of the Jerwood Hall at LSO St Luke's is one of the key success factors of the centre. Discovery previously had to plan most of their work in conference rooms in the Barbican Centre, or unsuitable hired spaces across London, including school halls and rehearsal centres. The environment was not conducive to creating memorable musical experiences for participants.

The LSO, like many orchestras, spend most of their working lives in concert halls and recording studios, often underground, and with no natural light or view to outside spaces. The Jerwood Hall has large windows on 3 sides of the space, and the impact of the physical space has been profound. The musicians say that the windows and natural light enhance the quality of their work, and Discovery project leaders and amateurs also report that the Hall has an impact on the school and youth groups that work in the centre. Some participants initially feel in awe of the space, which has a very high ceiling, but all of them feel that they have come to somewhere special, and that they are in a creative environment.

The regular community groups are the Adult Community Choir, the Youth Choir, and the Gamelan Group and Fusion Orchestra, and each of these groups feels a sense of ownership of the spaces within LSO St Luke's. It can be argued that this sense of ownership is perhaps as important as the music experience itself.

2.3 The Gamelan Programme

The Gamelan Room is a purpose-built space designed to accommodate two sets of Balinese gamelan, a *Semara Dana* and the smaller *Gamelan Angklung*. Gamelan is by its very nature a sociable and participatory experience. Participants do not need to be trained musicians to take part, and there is no requirement to read music. There are no soloists within a group, and everyone learns to play all the different instruments, from the simplest gong part to the most intricate decoration. Players learn to understand how their part fits in with the whole. The music is learned by ear, and parts are simple and easy to memorise, so that the player can also concentrate on what is going on around them. The instruments in the Gamelan Room are visually striking, and they sound beautiful and strange, and yet are technically easy to play for beginners. Total beginners can very quickly learn a basic piece, and begin to make music together, playing in an ensemble for perhaps the very first time. Gamelan is

accessible to all, regardless of ability, age or experience, and it encourages team work, listening and rhythmic skills.

Discovery offer workshops to local primary and secondary schools, and groups travel from all over London to participate. Sessions for children with special needs are particularly successful, and there is also a regular adult group which meets every week, and at the end of each term they give a public performance in the Jerwood Hall, often accompanied by Gamelan dancers in masks and full costume. Discovery have also started gamelan work with very young children, using shadow puppetry.

2.4 Destination Pathways

With the opening of LSO St Luke's in 2003, LSO Discovery embarked on a new strategic direction, working in partnership, over a sustained period of time, with the community who reside nearest to the venue in the EC1 postcode area, as well as engaging with the wider City Fringe boroughs of Hackney and Islington. This approach also reflects the evolution of orchestral education programmes, which were partially developed in the belief that by educating audiences to appreciate and understand classical music, children would hopefully become the new audience members of the future. Although there is still a case for this approach, and some of Discovery's work is of this type, the general belief is that this is no longer the most important aspect of the work.

The target audience for this work now includes people who may never attend an LSO concert in their life. Since LSO St Luke's opened, the whole concept of destination pathways² has changed forever. Before LSO St Luke's opened, if a school child was visited in their school by an LSO musician, the "pathway" was that the child would then attend a concert at the Barbican Centre, to watch that musician in a performance. Nowadays, the pathways no longer lead automatically to the Barbican Centre, and instead they often lead to LSO St Luke's.

The LSO St Luke's Community Choir was launched in the first season of the centre's opening in 2003, and it specifically serves the needs of those who live and work in the EC1 area. It is funded and organised by LSO Discovery, and the conductor is a trained LSO Animateur. Unlike many choirs, no singing experience is required, and singers do not have to face an audition. At first, only 20 or 30 residents joined the choir, and its first concert was a fairly modest affair. However, as the choir developed under its conductor Gareth Malone, and the weekly rehearsals in the Jerwood Hall continued, word of mouth began to spread amongst the community. Soon, some younger people and local workers began to join, and now four years later, there are over 120 members of the choir, and it

² Destination Pathways for LSO Discovery – a definition devised by Andrew Burke, Head of LSO Discovery from 2003-2007

has a waiting list for joining. A sold-out concert is performed in the Jerwood Hall every term, and each concert is filmed and recorded so that the singers have a record of their achievement. Although the choir have also taken part in performances in the Barbican Hall, their home is LSO St Luke's.

Why is the London Symphony Orchestra organising and paying to support a community choir of local, untrained singers? Discovery's vision is that the Community Choir is central to the vision of a genuine, long-term commitment to the local community. The choir offers singers the opportunity to develop their musical ability, discover new types of music (including commissions written specifically for the choir), to be challenged, to be part of a local regular social group, and to perform in public within a world-class concert hall. For these reasons, the Choir has become a respected and supported cornerstone of community activity.

On Monday evenings, the Choir rehearse for 2 hours, and when they are rehearsing in the Jerwood Hall, for those 2 hours it is their Hall, and their home. The concept of destination pathways relates to the Choir, in that some of those singers may wish to further explore the LSO organisation, and they may choose to become a regular audience member of LSO concerts at the Barbican Centre. However, many of the Choir may not choose this pathway. For them, their pathway may take them from their home, or their workplace, into LSO St Luke's for the Choir, and there it may end. Whether these people come to watch the LSO in a performance or not, the point to consider is that they are all having a relationship with the LSO. All of these choir members are considered to be part of the extended LSO family, rather than a "target public" or a "new audience".

2.5 Friday Lunchtime Concerts

Another case study for destination pathways is the series of lunchtime concerts given on Fridays. These concerts are presented in the Jerwood Hall, and they are informal, and free. In each concert, players from the LSO or students from the Guildhall School of Music will explore different instruments or styles of music, presented by a Discovery Animateur, Rachel Leach. Each concert lasts for 45 minutes and is a combination of discussion, musical examples, question and answer sessions, and presenter interviews. Up to 150 mainly local people attend each week, and the concert series receives very positive feedback. Most importantly, the concerts are relaxed and accessible (you can just walk in without a ticket), and this is perhaps the key to their success. By developing an open door policy, and ensuring that the presenter builds the link between the performer and the audience, there is a real feeling of a shared voyage of discovery. In the Q&A sessions, the players talk openly and honestly about their music and their lives, and if the conversation needs further explanation for members of the audience who are unfamiliar with the terminology or musical expressions, then the presenter ensures that this happens.

Some of the audience are already knowledgeable about classical music, and already attend LSO concerts. However, some of the audience have never engaged with classical music, and they are embarking on a very new and unfamiliar voyage of discovery. Some of these people may eventually come to the Barbican and pay money to hear the LSO perform, but this is not the purpose of the concert series. For them, the pathway may lead them to these concerts, but no further, and that is considered to be a successful achievement.

2.6 Case Study interview – Rosaline Ogunro, local resident

As a voluntary Community Ambassador for LSO St Luke's, Rosaline Ogunro is one of the faces of LSO St Luke's in the community. The 53-year old part-time Customer Service Adviser lives locally and she spends much of her spare time spreading the word about LSO St Luke's:

"It started when I joined the Community Choir here in 2003. Then in 2006 I became a Community Ambassador. When I first saw the church I had no idea what went on there until one of my neighbours introduced me to the choir. I came along and I loved it. Some of the people around here had never met anyone who had been involved in LSO St Luke's. I think now they are starting to know what goes on there, and that's the purpose of the Community Ambassadors. The church looks so imposing and many people think it's for older people or they think it's beyond their reach. But it is not: I distribute leaflets, make people aware, and invite them in to have a look around. The exciting thing about this place is that even babies can make music. Right up to people in their 90's, there is something for everybody. And it is all part of one of the top orchestras in the World"

"In the Community Choir we sing different types of music, not just classical. We did part of Haydn's *Creation*, and some Mozart. But we've also done Stevie Wonder, and Abba. I'm proud to be part of it and I will carry on as long as I live round here".

2.7 Case Study interview – Andrew Burke, Head of LSO Discovery

"LSO St Luke's is the home of LSO Discovery, and we believe passionately that people should have music in their lives. One of the most important things is that as many local people as possible feel an ownership of this place. It gives the public a chance to experience regular music making but also to become involved in the life of an orchestra".

"The last three years have been about focusing on this building and getting programmes going with different sections of the community. As for the future, we want to bring in more people and get different groups to work closely together on exciting projects. We also want to continue developing the connection between those local people interested in music and the musicians of the London

Symphony Orchestra, who play regularly at LSO St Luke's and just down the road at the Barbican Centre".

"We have strong relationships with schools and members of the community, who love being at LSO St Luke's, and are keen to make all types of music. Through programmes like our LSO open rehearsals, we are keen to open up the inner workings of the symphony orchestra, and enable local residents to understand and be part of the creative processes taking place".

2.8 Challenges & Conclusion

The challenge for LSO Discovery is how to balance and to manage the expectations of residents, the community and other stakeholders including the funders of the various community programmes. There is an increasing demand from local people to get involved in participatory music activities, but Discovery acknowledge that they are in danger of over-stretching their limited resources, in the desire to reach as many people as possible. As an increasing number of regular activities are brought online, more staff are required to maintain the regular activity, and the fixed costs and time commitments continue to increase.

The strain on the Discovery administration in sustaining the weekly and monthly regular activity can also lead to a lack of focused and visible success for the work, when there is a concentration of projects culminating at once.

The challenge for LSO St Luke's as an operating business is to continue to refine the balance between Discovery activity, other artistic activity, the requirements of the LSO for its own preparation rehearsals, and the requirement for commercial income to cover the bulk of the operational costs to keep the centre open. The financial limitations of the LSO St Luke's operating model are apparent to those within the organisation, and it is sometimes necessary for a commercial corporate booking to be accepted, instead of a Discovery requirement for the Jerwood Hall. Now that LSO St Luke's is established and is succeeding in its vision, it is hoped that the core funding of the centre can be developed, so that Discovery's work can continue to flourish.

The concept of the destination pathways for Discovery participants will continue to develop as the programme evolves, and for those participants who do wish to deepen their commitment and relationship with the LSO, Discovery are planning for how this can be achieved, whilst at the same time maintaining the sense of local community ownership of the LSO St Luke's centre, and also the community music groups themselves.

3. Transforming Tate Modern (Transforming TM)

3.1 Introduction

Tate is embarking on a major new capital project development to the existing Tate Modern, and the new wing (currently known as the Transforming TM scheme) will have community relationships and engagement at the heart of the programme. Tate states that it will be placing education, life-long learning and the development of creative skills at the heart of its mission, enabling it to reach out to different audiences. It is hoped that the new wing will be completed in time for the 2012 London Olympics.

The Transforming TM project will create the world's leading centre for contemporary art, which will be of benefit to both artists and the public, and will help Tate to develop one of the finest collections of contemporary art in the world. The capital project will create a major extension to the existing Tate Modern site, and it will create a new landmark building for London, which will help London to maintain its position as the leading cultural and creative capital of the world.

Transforming TM will act as a catalyst for the further regeneration of Southwark, and the new building will facilitate the greater integration of Tate with its local community and urban landscape, bringing maximum benefit to the local area. The scheme will also contribute substantial economic benefits to London as a whole, and to the Southwark area in particular.

3.2 The need for expansion

The main driving factor behind the Transforming TM scheme is the urgency for more space for displaying collections, and for accommodating visitor numbers. Tate Modern was designed for 1.8 million visitors, but in its opening year it had 5 million visitors, and it has now settled down to a steady 4 million a year. There is serious overcrowding in many parts of Tate Modern, particularly at weekends, and regular feedback from visitors indicates that overcrowding is having a negative impact on their experience of Tate Modern.

Tate require more space to show a greater proportion of the gallery's collection, to enable works to be brought out of storage and shown on a more permanent basis. Tate also wish to accommodate the expanding collection which is developing into new areas geographically, including China, Latin America and India, and also to provide new spaces for art forms new to Tate, including photography, film, video and performance.

An increased gallery space would also provide space for new acquisitions, to encourage gifts to the Collection, and also provide more varied and flexible spaces for large-scale works and installations.

3.3 Southwark Communities

Transforming TM will have a particular focus on a wider range of education facilities where families, young people, schools and the local community have time and space to explore, talk about, and discover the museum. Tate is committed to working with the local communities in South London, and to playing an active part in the area in which the communities live and work. The spaces planned for the new wing include a Tate Lab, Tate Learning, Young Tate, and two multi-purpose performance spaces based within the derelict oil tanks.

Though its Interpretation & Learning (I&E) department, Tate has developed strong partnerships with Southwark schools and community organisations, and they feature strongly in the 1.5 million educational visits which have taken place since Tate Modern opened. Tate have collaborated on a wide range of initiatives, from supporting Sure Start programmes for young children, to profiling the work of charities such as Kids Company and hosting community events such as the Frost Fair and the Thames Festival. Other regular Tate education activities include the hosting of a community film club with over 400 members which meets monthly. Tate also developed a community garden with local residents, which opened in late 2006.

The Transforming TM scheme has involved a substantial programme of community engagement at every stage of the process to date, led by Donald Hyslop, Head of Regeneration and Community Partnerships. As the project takes shape, an educational and community benefits programme is being developed, through discussions with community liaison groups, education partners and local communities.

Tate are involving different groups from all ages and cultural backgrounds in the discussions about what facilities are needed to provide for community groups, and what sort of programme they would like to see at Tate Modern. There is also a desire to strengthen the relationship with the 3,000 residents and 30,000 people working close by Tate Modern, and extend this further in Southwark and Lambeth so that people can be part of, and contribute to, the cultural campus around Tate Modern.

3.4 Case Study - Developing the vision - Stephen Heppell

In early 2006, under Transforming TM Director Vivienne Bennett, Tate held a series of workshop visioning sessions involving a team of Tate Modern curatorial and I&E staff, and Stephen Heppell, an expert in the design of physical and virtual learning spaces. Although Tate had provided the Transforming TM architects Herzog & de Meuron with an initial architectural brief for the new building, a detailed brief for every space within the new wing needed to be created. Tate was aware that more work needed to be done internally with the curatorial and I&E teams, to expand on the concepts for the new learning spaces, and to ensure that a shared vision would be supported and signed up to.

Stephen Heppell posed a number of challenges to the curatorial team, to test their own beliefs about the purpose of the Transforming TM development, and to explore how the gallery and learning spaces would be developed.

Two key themes were developed during the course of the workshops, and curator Frances Morris touched upon a central issue which applies to Tate as much as it does to LSO St Luke's, BAM, and most cultural institutions across the world today:

"In the 21st Century audience relationship, Tate will not be making people appreciate creativity (the old model), but will instead be making them creative people" – Frances Morris, Curator, Tate Modern

This understanding of the shift in the relationship with the audience informs much of the thinking behind the Transforming TM project. Stephen Heppell refers to the concept of the Cultural Campus, and states that the concept of a cultural campus serves to dismantle the monolithic qualities of the existing Tate Modern visitor experience. The concept of a campus means that the visitor is entitled to be part of something – it means that they are in fact no longer a "visitor" at all. The curators consider each of the new gallery and learning spaces as elements in an overall faculty, and one which would be shared with other creative organisations, who would be invited to share the space within Transforming TM.

The second key theme to develop is that Tate's curators hope that Transforming TM will allow Tate to develop its own cultural and community campus, and that Tate will mentor and support other organisations, who will have their own hubs within the new spaces, including the Tate Lab space. As part of this vision, Tate will actively emanate outwards into the cultural campus, and these community groups will engage in active ownership of the space.

"Transforming TM should act like a lens, beaming the neighbourhood in, but also beaming out into the neighbourhood" – Stephen Heppell

This concept of the reflective lens, which magnifies Tate outwards into Southwark, but also "beams" Southwark into the heart of Tate, is a strong and inspirational image, and this concept is informing much of the thinking of the curatorial and I&E teams as the Transforming TM plans begin to take shape.

Other important concepts taken forward from the workshops included the following:

- Visitors should be thought of as users
- Transforming TM would give Tate the opportunity to break out of the overriding curatorial voice

- The idea of “introduction spaces” for new visitors and community groups could help to develop entry points, but would this be considered as an inferior experience to the main galleries?
- Tate is not yet considered to be a place for wider cultural education, and should Tate catch the wave of the 21st Century, whereby there is a growing trend for people to help each other (for example, EBay and Wikipedia)
- Transforming TM should be about what you put on display, and how you engage with the visitor
- How do you assess the value of Tate Modern? Assessing visitor numbers is too restrictive, and is too simplistic a metric. How do you capture the value of the visitor experience, and measure factors like the effect on a person’s self-esteem, or enhancement of productivity?
- The new learning and gallery spaces must be evocative and resonant, and not purely functional
- Transforming TM could allow Tate to move towards the hybridity of visual culture, and towards stronger relationships with design, applied art, architecture, music and film
- Transforming TM should be a metaphor for democracy and permeability

3.5 Challenges & Conclusion

In Vivienne Bennett’s document *Transforming TM: The Vision* (May 2006), she states that, “Tate Modern, with its rich social ambience, will be a completely new kind of art gallery – a massive, organic and inventive hub of visual culture, set within a stunning work of architecture. Global in outlook and radically different from any existing model for an art gallery, Tate Modern will be far ahead of its international competitors”.

The Tate Modern envisioned in the Transforming TM brief, explores the concept of a place, rather than a traditional gallery, and one where it will be fully open and will reach out to new communities. It will operate on the principles of exchanging knowledge and ideas, rather than dispensing expertise. As Bennett states, “because people today are learning differently and are more independent, Transforming TM will offer enough choices for everyone to invent their unique visit, and so reinforce a feeling of their ownership of the museum”.

The challenge for Tate Modern is to see this inspirational vision through to reality, and to keep hold of the image of the reflective lens, as the project progresses through its many stages towards realisation. As the project becomes more of a reality and it begins to impact in a direct way on the curatorial and I&E teams within the organisation, it is hoped that the core vision of long-lasting community ownership will flourish. The danger is that some of the unique spaces currently being developed on the drawing board will not come to fruition for practical or financial reasons, thereby depriving Tate and its community partners of having the blank canvas spaces in which to explore the notions of a unique cultural

campus where new ways of learning and new social experiences can be achieved.

Tate has an established education and community programme, and yet the existing facilities within Tate Modern do a disservice to that programme; the Clore Education Rooms, and other dedicated spaces are some of the least welcoming spaces in the whole building, clumped together in what feels like the basement, poorly designed and inflexible. The Transforming TM scheme will enable Tate to develop purpose-built spaces for youth programmes, adult learning and community engagement, and if the core values of the scheme are seen through, then these spaces will be positioned symbolically right at the heart of the new wing.

4. BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music)

4.1 Introduction

The Brooklyn Academy of Music is a misleading name for the organisation better known as BAM, because the name suggests that it is a training academy for musicians, when in fact it is an umbrella organisation covering two theatres, a suite of cinemas, and other multi-disciplinary spaces. The organisation now branded as BAM is situated in the heart of a diverse residential and business area in Brooklyn, New York, and on first impressions, it seems incongruous surroundings for an organisation which over the decades has been synonymous with ground-breaking performance art.

BAM has existed since the beginning of the 20th Century, and it has been a major presenter and champion of dance in particular, including close relationships with Martha Graham, Jerome Robbins, Merce Cunningham, Twyla Tharp, and Mark Morris. After the Second World War, Brooklyn shared the growing problems of other urban centres throughout America, and BAM's audience and support base declined. Language classes and martial arts instruction were booked into performance spaces, and a school for boys held classes in the partitioned grand ballroom. By the time Harvey Lichtenstein was appointed executive director in 1967, the programs and facilities needed rethinking.

During the 32 years that Harvey Lichtenstein was BAM's leader, BAM experienced a renaissance, and is now recognised internationally as a pre-eminent, progressive cultural centre. BAM's current programming consists of the annual Autumn Next Wave Festival (of which the 2007 Festival will be the 25th Anniversary), a Spring season of international opera, theatre, and dance; a comprehensive Education & Learning programme, and a variety of community programmes. BAM is a regular commissioner of new theatre, and it works in partnership with organisations including the RSC, and from 2008, The Old Vic.

Non-profit organisations affiliated with BAM include the Brooklyn Philharmonic, BAM's resident orchestra directed by Robert Spano which produces an annual season of concerts, and the BAM Local Development Corporation founded by Harvey Lichtenstein in 1998 to help create a mixed-use cultural district in Fort Greene.

4.2 Spaces and audience development at BAM

Like LSO St Luke's in Hackney & Islington, and Tate Modern in Southwark, BAM is a major cultural institution, housed in a radically transformed historic building, and serving the needs of a wide-ranging local and diverse community.

The staff at BAM are aware that there is an ever-changing community all around them, and that it is increasingly diverse, with a constant influx of new communities. In 1967, when Brooklyn was in decline, BAM became known for its *carte blanche* and daring programming, offering something unique and experimental when compared to what was on offer on Manhattan Island at the time. Because BAM was owned by the City, and the stakes were low, BAM created its own niche by serving an audience which was generally perceived to be young, white and educated, with a taste for experimental performances.

BAM still retains innovative and experimental programming at the core of its activities, but it recognises that if it is to truly thrive within the context of its community environment, it must serve the needs of a more diverse audience. BAM is now responding to a wider canvas of influences and audience needs, and the development of new spaces has been key to serving those needs.

In 1998, the decision was taken to convert an existing performance space into the BAM Rose Cinemas. Aside from specialist repertory cinema programming, the cinemas also show a selection of the latest releases, and as a physical space, it is possible to access the cinemas and foyer spaces almost independently of the main BAM house. The cinemas have a unique and bohemian feel to them, they are described by Time Out New York as, "Brooklyn's art-house pride and joy"³, they are a welcoming environment, and the cinema programme has enabled BAM to build a relationship with an entirely new audience.

There is also a growing crossover of audiences between the cinema programme and another initiative, BAM Café Live, which is based in a café space which was previously a small performance area. BAM Café Live is also helping to grow audiences by acting as a feeder platform to the main stages, whereby performers who are defined and developed as BAM Café artists will grow their audience, and thereby the artists eventually take the BAM Café audience with them into the BAM core programme.

³ Time Out New York, April 10-17 2003

The cinemas and the Café are both successful examples of how BAM is adding value to the needs of its local community, especially as Brooklyn becomes the area of choice for young creative 20 and 30-somethings, who are leaving Manhattan Island and relocating to a more affordable area.

The cinema programming has also enabled BAM to reach out and establish connections within the community. The African Film Festival, and a recent Diaspora Film Festival, are both examples of how the medium of film can now be successfully explored and supported by BAM.

Every Memorial Day weekend, BAM hosts Dance Africa, which is a celebration of African dance and culture showcasing dance groups from the USA, and around the world. Dance Africa has become a weekend-long community tradition with an outdoor bazaar, exhibitions, films, and live music, and this year it is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

4.3 Case Study interview – Tamara McCaw

Tamara McCaw is the Community Affairs and Audience Development manager for BAM, and she has spent the last 7 years building relationships with the local communities within which BAM is located. A key issue identified by BAM is the notion of entry points into the organisation, and Tamara has identified a number of different platforms across BAM where these low-cost entry points can now be found.

Tamara has built relationships with community leaders in recent years, and she has ensured that approximately 500 identified community leaders are cultivated by BAM, and that they are involved in the programme wherever possible. Receptions are held for the leaders, and many of these leaders, especially from the African American community, are associated with the church, where the social lives of so many communities are shaped and influenced.

Tamara has also developed strong relationships with local tenant association groups, with particular attention paid to building offsite relationships. For audiences or education programme attendees on lower incomes, this sometimes involves laying on specific transport in order to bring the groups into BAM, or sometimes BAM will take its work out into the community, and into some housing associations.

As an example, BAM's partnership with the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (BSRC) has helped more than 3,000 students study the arts and the history of Africa and the Diaspora. The latest programme, focusing on Uganda, culminated in the creation of a sculpture garden and performances throughout the Dance Africa weekend, taking place in May each year. The weekend featured dancers from the BSRC, celebrating their ancestral roots and the new global

community. Celebrating its 40th anniversary, BSRC is the nation's first community development programme corporation, and the BSRC is dedicated to improving the quality of life of the people of Bedford Stuyvesant, fostering growth and development through economic, cultural, educational, and social ventures.

Tamara also acknowledges that there is a middle-class African American audience, who have the income and the desire to attend BAM events, but who also require cultivation and being made to feel welcome, by an institution which by its own admission has not always factored these considerations into the programming. Tamara has built relationships with organisations including the black fraternity and sorority network, to ensure that BAM's message of "We want you here" is heard across different communities.

Tamara identifies a particular current issue with the Hispanic community in Brooklyn, who are not as vocal in identifying their needs or their interests as a community. For this reason, they are sometimes not catered for in the same way as the African American community, and this is a tension which BAM are aware of, and are looking to redress. However, an overview of the current programme suggests that this is more of a longer-term issue, as there is very little programming specifically geared towards a Hispanic audience.

Tamara states that for many years, BAM were not engaging with audiences in the way they should have been, and therefore it is a constant challenge. There is also the ever-present tension between allocating staffing and financial resources towards relationship building, and the ongoing "fight for dollars" and the need to sell tickets to performances.

4.4 Case Study interview – Jeffrey Levine

As Vice President for Marketing and Communications at BAM, Jeffrey Levine acknowledges that BAM's constant challenge is to try and serve multiple needs. BAM's mission is to forge the trust with audiences, and BAM has to find a way to weave this into its core script, in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Jeffrey acknowledges that BAM has an ongoing challenge of tackling outdated perceptions of the organisation, in that when many people think of BAM, they think of the BAM of the Harvey Lichtenstein era, which can sometimes mean there is a perception of BAM from 30 years ago as being the current incarnation.

Jeffrey states that, "things have really changed in the last 5 years, Brooklyn has revitalised, a lot of the artists have moved out to Brooklyn, and that has really been the start of the whole thing. All the elements have been right for Brooklyn to "come back". For a cultural organisation like BAM, we are very reliant on the local Brooklyn community, and almost 75% of our audiences are drawn from the local area".

“Brooklyn is a very multi-faceted community, you walk 10 blocks and suddenly you are surrounded by different pockets of neighbourhoods, you’re in the middle of a residential community, and somewhere like Carnegie Hall just doesn’t have these kinds of issues that BAM faces. BAM is a world-renowned cultural centre that resides in a neighbourhood”.

Jeffrey feels that the sometimes uneasy combination of a world-renowned cultural powerhouse, and the local neighbourhood, is where BAM has sometimes got into trouble, and this has often been a “tough balancing act”. 10 years ago, BAM was programming one African-American show in the main season, and Jeffrey acknowledges that it may have been perceived as tokenistic, and not enough on which to forge a relationship of trust with the local African-American community.

BAM have also been under pressure from politicians to represent the people of the district, and to be “of the people”. Jeffrey states that, “we are trying to serve local needs here, and reflect that we are as interested in someone who lives 2 blocks away, as someone who is 2 miles away. I’ve been at BAM for 15 years and have seen the neighbourhood change beyond all recognition”.

“We have a very successful marketing track record in reaching ethnic communities. In Brooklyn there are communities that will be interested in a show or activity, if you can find the right way to get through to them. We radiate out from BAM to understand who is actually in the community at any given time, and so that we understand the audience who we are drawing from”.

4.5 Challenges & Conclusion:

“BAM is a sort of all-you-can-eat smorgasbord of arts and culture”⁴, and it is constantly adapting and developing new programming for the 21st century.

The challenge for BAM is to engage with its local community, on which is it so reliant, and in order to do this successfully, it must create low-cost entry points to allow new audiences to find a way in to the organisation. Some new audiences will enter via the cinema, café or education programmes, and will go on to become attendees of the main programme, but for some, the café or the cinema may be the space in which they feel most comfortable.

Tamara McGraw acknowledges that sometimes BAM has to admit that it will not get a cross-pollination of audiences, and that for some people their destination pathway will bring them into the Cinema and no further.

It is also apparent that BAM has to constantly monitor the rapid changes in its local community, as the area evolves at a rapid rate, and communities form and also disperse. If community relationships and programming are to be part of the

⁴ Mark Rifkin, New York Resident, June 9th 2003

core script for BAM, the vision of BAM radiating outwards into the community to find out who is actually there on the doorstep, is critical to ensure relevance and success.

5. Conclusion

A key question explored in this paper is how can organisations signify ownership and participation by local communities, and can they successfully characterise openness and develop specific techniques to generate involvement?

Both LSO St Luke's and Tate Modern are developing participation programmes of engagement which attempt to de-mystify the cultural organisation, and create entry points for the local community. In both cases, there is an emphasis on the importance of creating a unique physical environment to enable this process to take place. At LSO St Luke's, the entire building is an inviting and accessible space, located right in the heart of a local community, in a building which used to be a church, and therefore was already associated in people's minds with community cohesion.

For the Transforming TM capital project, there are plans to create dedicated meeting places for local community groups, and bespoke spaces for youth engagement, adult learning, and introductions to visual art.

Each case study also acknowledges some of the existing boundaries to engagement and participation. For LSO St Luke's, preconceptions about classical music and orchestras can be a barrier, the Barbican Centre itself has been a major physical barrier for the local community, with the perception held amongst many that "it's not for us", and LSO St Luke's can still be a daunting prospect for a local resident who isn't sure whether they are welcome to enter. The LSO is attempting to radiate outwards into the community by recruiting from the community itself in order to get the core messages out into the most hard to reach areas. The Community Ambassadors are engaging with pockets of the community who either miss out on, or deliberately steer clear of, the standard forms of communication, and the ambassadors are bringing individuals and groups over the threshold and into the building, to experience the programme on offer.

For BAM, there is the challenge of constant adaptation to a local community which is rapidly evolving, and a danger that the programme will not reflect the make-up or the interests of the community. BAM is still aware that it could have done more to build long-term community relationships in the past, and in 2007 it must ensure that it stays relevant to the local Brooklyn population, on which it so heavily relies upon for its core audience. BAM places great emphasis on its accessible entry points, including the cinema programme and the offsite performance activities such as the Metrotech outdoor concerts and the Dance

Africa Bazaar, and it hopes that these activities create destination pathways into the wider organisation.

For all three organisations, long-term relationships with the local community will ultimately stand or fall on the key issue of ownership. There are similarities across the three organisations from different sectors, but all three have to address the shared issues of entry points, relevant engagement, and the need to radiate outwards into their local communities.

8,000 words.

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