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Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union

STUDY

Policy Department  
Structural and Cohesion Policies

# STREET ARTISTS IN EUROPE

CULTURE AND EDUCATION

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## **STREET ARTISTS IN EUROPE**

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**Directorate General Internal Policies of the Union**

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## **STREET ARTISTS IN EUROPE**

### **STUDY**

**Content:**

The study's main objective is to analyse the situation of street artists in Europe, taking into account as much as possible all 27 Member countries. The study evaluates the importance of street arts and the characteristics of this artistic sector.

The analysis is based on aesthetic and social research, enriched with surveys and interviews on the economic, political and cultural context of street arts, considering the multidisciplinary nature of the art forms, their social and urban involvement as well as its public.

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Content**

This study's main objective is to analyse the situation of street artists in Europe, taking into account as much as possible the 27 Member countries. It evaluates the importance of street arts and the characteristics of this artistic sector. This study's results are based on still confidential aesthetic and social research, enriched with surveys and interviews on the economic, political and cultural context of these practices, considering the multidisciplinary nature of these forms, their social and urban involvement as well as the publics that have access to them. Based on the specifications of the European Parliament, the study focuses on factual information, when it is available, and on analysis; it reflects the viewpoints of the professionals queried.

### **Introduction**

The development of street arts in Europe is part of an old tradition of expression in the public space. In the 1960s and 1970s, the artistic and political contestation movement was at the origin of a profound renewal of these forms of expression in many countries. At the time, Europe was undergoing a large number of historic configurations: a return to democracy, the development of artistic practices outside "official art", a reaction to the industrialisation of the art market and so on. More generally, the 1980s and 1990s were marked by strong growth in this sector in terms of number of companies, shows and festivals, as well as in terms of attendance by the publics. Street arts now constitute a very vital composite artistic movement characteristic of Europe and its cultural identity.

### **Chapter 1: What are street arts?**

The aesthetics of street arts are founded on a great wealth of artistic professions and disciplines. They bring together directors, interpreters, plastic artists, scriptwriters, video-makers and technicians who work on inserting an artistic project into the heart of the public space. Street arts call on theatre, prowess arts, urban plastic arts, music, dance, pyrotechnics and multimedia. They demonstrate great inventiveness in the blending of disciplines and the renewal of conventional forms, in particular in the area of non-textual writings. They present all sorts of shows outdoors, stationary or itinerant, ranging from gigantic forms to the most intimate proposals. The artists adapt to the performance venues, from city centres to peri-urban and rural areas. Lastly, the original relationship to the public via interactivity and the questioning of the spectator remains an essential springboard for the creation of shows.

The richness of these aesthetics refers however to an artistic quality that is very heterogeneous from one show to another, from one region to another. If certain forms are innovative and polished, others still suffer from weaknesses in terms of stage direction and dramaturgy or are more the province of entertainment than artistic creation.

### **Chapter 2: What is a street artist?**

Street arts professionals hold the same status as that of live performance artists in their respective countries. Their income primarily comes from the performance of their shows, and is mostly earned during the summer period. Their works devoted to the development of writing and to rehearsals is rarely remunerated. They sometimes generate intellectual property rights (e.g. royalties), but their income is irregular and unpredictable. Like most artists, the unique and

fleeting nature of their works and the discontinuous nature of their working periods that is associated with it create problems in terms of social security benefits and taxation.

Most artists structure themselves through companies in order to create, produce and programme their creations and have de facto expertise at all levels of the market. The composition of the companies ranges from just a few artists to groups of over 20 people who share an artistic project over the long term. Their activity is characterised by a high degree of geographic mobility: street artists are dedicated to European, even international mobility, a guarantee of fame and economic development.

Street artists are distinguished by a very reactive stance vis-à-vis their spatial, political and social environment. Their great attention to traditions and to certain types of popular knowledge, the bridges they build between the various disciplines, their determination to broaden the access of populations to culture are associated with the needs for entertainment, exchange, free expression and belief in myths.

Mobility is a key word for street artists. This idea refers to an artistic dimension (training, creation, inspiration) and a commercial dimension (visibility, being hired on the market, appreciation by professionals).

The recent structuring of their profession, through the creation of regional and national federations, demonstrates the current maturation of street arts. The Fédération des Arts de la Rue (Federation of Street Arts, France), the Fédération Flamande des Arts de Rue (the Flemish Federation of Street Arts, Flemish Region of Belgium), the FAR or Fédération des Arts de la Rue (Federation of Street Arts, Walloon Region of Belgium) the FNAS or Federazione Nazionale Artisti di Strada (National Federation of Street Artists, Italy), ISAN or the Independent Street Arts Network (United Kingdom), NASA or the National Association of Street Artists (United Kingdom) and the Bundesverband für Theater im öffentlichen Raum or Federal association of street artists (Germany) contribute to better representation vis-à-vis the public authorities.

With the exception of France and its FAI AR or Formation Avancée Itinérante des Arts de la Rue (Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts), there is no specific initial training in this field. The majority of artists have taken a programme in theatre or circus training and the transmission of specific know-how is generally done informally in the companies themselves (on tour or in a residence).

### **Chapter 3: Intellectual and institutional recognition**

The extreme diversity of street arts is multiplied by a host of different definitions: street theatre, itinerant or travelling theatre, fairground arts, in situ theatre, urban arts, public animation, urban cultures, arts in the public space, outdoor shows are some of the designations that circulate in European countries. The absence of a common definition (on the national as well on the European level) complicates this sector's identification (and therefore the production of exhaustive and reliable statistics by the different Member States).

Despite a dynamism of known territory, street arts suffer from a timid institutional recognition in the different European countries and a low level of consideration by public funding and cultural policies. States like France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and regions such as the Piedmont (Italy), Catalonia (Spain) and Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany)

recognize the artistic value of street arts and build their support policy through dedicated funding systems. The level of this funding is extremely low. These funds often come into play when faced with an economic emergency situation that the sector is familiar with and in proportions very much lower than the support given to other sectors such as opera, conventional theatre, dance and architectural heritage. The regions or the cities, interested in street arts for their cultural and tourism-oriented influence, become, on the other hand, major partners in funding and welcoming artists and events.

In Portugal and most of Italy, Germany and Spain, street arts are considered more as “spontaneous entertainment” and rarely benefit from direct financial support. In the countries of Eastern and Central Europe (Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia), street arts are occasionally aided through funds open to all the arts or those dedicated to emerging cultures. The rare support that exists is granted through non-specific aid systems. As for the countries of Northern Europe, they currently give considerably more recognition to circus arts than street arts, which remain barely developed in these countries, as well as in the Baltic states.

#### **Chapter 4: Street artists in the urban space**

Since the 1960s, the integration of street arts as an element of urban development has gone hand in hand with the growth in the role of culture in the cities’ economic development. Today, there is a real correspondence between the artistic approach of street artists and the cities’ new concerns: insertion of cultural programming into a strategy of attracting tourism, institutional communication of social action in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the redynamising of the local economy. Major events that are capable of developing street arts attract impressive crowds. They also contribute to the success of the European Capitals of Culture. Street shows have thus drawn over 100 000 people in Brussels, Porto, Graz and Copenhagen, while Lille recorded more than 600 000 participants, altering the conception that cities might have on the circulation of the public and the use of its spaces. Concentrated mainly in the city centres, but also in outlying areas and rural zones, street arts performances have a strong calling in social and spatial integration. Street artists often establish their work place in abandoned districts or those experiencing problems (former factories, disadvantaged areas, etc.) and participate in linking territories, making possible the development of projects with populations that have very little access to cultural products.

#### **Chapter 5: The street arts publics**

The street arts publics are primarily festival-going publics. Street arts have not escaped the determinism of socio-professional and educational factors, but they succeed in uniting more diverse and popular publics. All age brackets are represented in them, as well as all the socio-professional categories. If the breakdown of these categories does not exactly reflect national averages, the most under-represented, even ordinarily absent classes in live performance publics are very much present in street arts publics.

This heterogeneity of street arts publics is conveyed by a cohabitation between publics with cultural practices and plural attitudes. Spectators who are veterans of the conventional theatre rub shoulders with exclusive street arts fans and novice spectators.

Street arts therefore work modestly but surely at the democratisation of culture. The publics are in fact responsive to free access, performances in the public space that permit sharing, free admission (when it is practiced) and the festive atmosphere. The most attractive phenomenon



remaining that special relationship that street artists create with the publics. Whereas many studies call on the involvement of the populations in artistic and cultural projects, street arts demonstrate their potential to be a driving force for social cohesion.

## **Chapter 6: Means of production and diffusion of street arts**

Approaching the question of production and programming in the street arts field at the European level leads first to the exploration of the festival activity. There are nearly 600 festivals that open their programming to street arts in Europe, of which about 250 are in France. For the most part, they are organised by not-for-profit associations, either independent or funded by governments or local authorities.

Their festival budgets range for 50 000 to 1.5 million euros. The most frequently programmed companies are in France, Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Spain. Programming is composed of either shows that have been running for some time and have been on tour, or installations specially created for the occasion and the festival site, which highlight the architecture or local landscape. To these may be added new creations that may be co-produced with other festivals or other cultural structures whose aim is to go on tour afterwards.

The festivals propose different types of contracts to the artists, who are either covered 100% or only for a part of their fees and technical costs. The number of spectators expected can have a major influence on the show's purchase price. Nonetheless, the artistic budgets of street festivals remain very low in comparison to those of the other live performance sectors (theatre, music, dance, etc.). Apart from the "Off" festivals where acting conditions are difficult and competition fierce, certain festivals organise showcases, fairs or markets (United Kingdom, Italy, Spain) to permit artists to present their creations to programmers.

Cooperation between European partners, important for the artists' creativity and the circulation of their works, makes it possible, among other things, to share production and programming costs. Co-operation platforms (co-production and co-programming) such as Meridians (ex-Eunetstar), In Situ and PECA expect a great deal from Europe in order to durably sustain their actions.

Despite the vitality of this programming channel, artists and organisers greatly regret the very limited budgets and low public funding dedicated to these events. The concentration of festivals during the summer period (over 70% are held between May and September) brings about a high degree of seasonal work for the companies. There are still too few programmers who propose programming all year long whereas live performance structures only very rarely propose street shows during their cultural seasons.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

It seems essential to stress that street arts take part in the great challenges that are currently raised at the European Union level in terms of economics, social issues, the environment and citizens.

The strong growth in street arts, through this sector's **economic activity**, and notably the festivals that symbolise them, attests to their place in the live performance economy. Their close relations with the cities bear witness to their role in the cultural and tourism-related vitality of Europe's regions.

This sector moreover contributes to the development of **innovation** and **creativity** throughout Europe. Street arts offer a gamut of artistic expressions likely to renew the writings of popular shows. They favour inventiveness in the blending of disciplines and the renewal of conventional forms, all directly connected to the public space. This diversity brought to creation spaces takes part in the development, in European societies, of an intercultural and creative capacity that is essential to a knowledge society and an innovative society.

A sector characterised by the specific nature of its action field (the urban and rural public space) and its public (de facto broader than the traditional cultural public), street arts participate in the implementation, on a Europe-wide scale, of a **new solidarity** (professional, social and regional) and the construction of a **cohesion space**. Their involvement in the heart of the cities, in the countryside or intermediate areas makes them non-negligible partners in the economic and social renewal and development of countries, regions and localities.

Through their engagement with the populations, they are also genuine tools in the development of a **European citizen** and in the construction of a **common identity** in Europe. They are notably characterised by the great visibility of their European actions (number and variety of the public reached, free admission/access to culture without the socio-cultural barrier). Lastly, street arts constitute a European specificity that can contribute to the **cultural influence of the European Union** in its relations outside its borders.

In this framework, the European Union can find an important track for its policy in the support of street arts. Such support requires taking into account the sector's specificities and needs, and notably: the specific nature of production, programming and transmission modes, disparities between the recognition of the sector itself at the level of the different Member States of the European Union (absence of a common definition of this sector on the European scale, lack of expertise, etc.) and disparities in the very development of the sector, most particularly between the new Member States and the countries of the West.

Thus, taking into account the challenges raised by street arts on the European scale, and the particularity of this sector, and respecting the subsidiarity principle, the conclusions of this study lead us to formulate the following recommendations to the European Parliament.

- ***Recognition of the sector as a full-fledged artistic form on the European scale***

The street arts sector would have a great deal to gain by **political and institutional recognition** of its existence as a full-fledged artistic form. In this framework, the European Union could decide to establish a “**European Year of Street Arts**”, a time for reflection and spotlighting of this sector in the 27 countries of the European Union, by following the example of a “Year of Circus Arts”, which was established in the Netherlands, the Flemish Region of Belgium and France or the three-year “Temps des arts de la rue” (“Time of Street Arts”) in France (2005-2007).

- ***Favouring a scientific study of the street arts sector***

The street arts sector would have a great deal to gain by **being scientifically studied**. To do so, it seems essential to have, on the European scale, in-depth and comparative knowledge areas on this sector through: rigorous **statistical elements** on professionals and publics, and **content elements**, most particularly on the aesthetics of street arts.

In this framework, the European Union could integrate the street arts sector as a full-fledged sector into the **studies and statistics** that it commissions or carries out on the live performance. It could also propose specific studies on this sector. For instance, given the absence of quantitative and qualitative data on the spectators who attend these events, the European Union could commission a study of at least 200 days on street arts publics in Europe. This could be founded on the study conducted by Eunetstar on the basis of nine European festivals, as well as on the surveys carried out locally during events (Belgium, the United Kingdom, etc.).

The European Union could also, in order to favour **university research** on street arts Europe-wide, pay particular attention to the accessibility of such research in the framework of FP 7 (in its section on research in the social sciences). Comparative research between European countries related to the aesthetics of street arts would permit, for example, their specificities on a European scale to emerge. Moreover, it would be very interesting to develop interdisciplinary research on the challenges of the place of art in the public space.

Lastly, in order to ensure a **scientific valorisation of this knowledge**, including, for example, **the development of criticism** (a basic element to permit a discipline to improve or to take an objective look at its productions), the European Union could favour the networks of critics, journalists and specialized reviews in the live performance sector in order to improve knowledge of the specificities of street forms (history, genealogy, aesthetics, creation process, performance modes, etc. The European Union could notably re-establish the place of magazine and art critic networks in the “Co-operation Action” of the Culture Programme.

- ***Favouring better knowledge of the sector through the actors themselves***

The European Union should, in parallel, pay particular attention to the creation of efficient communication means that would facilitate **access to professional information** (financial and material aid, visibility of artistic companies and programming, exchange and meeting spaces for programmers and artistic companies and for “employers” and “employees”).

In order to help artists developing their own aesthetics, it would also be important to permit them to access: the heritage of street arts, as well as works, theoretical as well as technical, dedicated to these artistic forms. The European Union should therefore support the development of resources available on the European scale (creation and/or networking of resources centres, support for trans-national exchange programmes and digitizing of show videos, support for the translation of specialised works, support for the dissemination and accessibility of this heritage through new technologies).

- ***Favouring the development of infrastructures that integrate street arts***

As the **means of production** are very limited in most European countries, and most particularly in the new Member States, the European Union could support the construction of such **infrastructures**, notably with a view to development and regional cohesion. The European Union could therefore pay particular attention to infrastructure projects that integrate street arts (dedicated production centres, creation centres, residence spaces, etc.) in the framework of its cohesion policy and its rural development policy and most especially in the regions benefiting from Objective ‘Convergence’.

- ***Favouring the professionalisation of the sector on the European scale***

The European Union could at the same time be particularly attentive to projects concerning **initial and ongoing training for street artists** and specifically: multi-purpose trans-national training projects for street arts and flexible and temporary training projects in the framework of seasonal events (workshops or training sessions for instructors, for example). The European Union could, for instance, reflect on a particular awareness-raising programme for actors in the street arts in order to encourage professionals' participation in education and training programmes supported by the European Union (European Voluntary Service, Socrates and Leonardo Da Vinci programmes, etc.) It could also make actors in the street arts sector aware of existing funding possibilities in the framework of the employment section of the cohesion policy (European Social Fund).

The professionalisation of the sector also is accomplished by supporting operators in obtaining information on and integrating **public regulations** that restrict their activity (safety of the public, noise pollution, pyrotechnics, large number of contacts required to obtain all the needed authorisations for the smooth running of the event, etc.).

The European Union could encourage projects that favour the dissemination of “good practices” concerning respecting safety rules and preventing risks and working at raising awareness in these areas of the project's different actors – authorities, technicians and artists. Such projects, implying the co-operation of partners from two or more European states, are likely to spread the idea that respecting regulatory constraints does not necessarily hinder creation in public spaces.

Projects favouring a better readability of **European regulations** must equally be actively supported: for example, guides proposing methodologies and implementation procedures for artistic projects in the public space and presenting a comparison of rules in two or more countries. In this regard, the European Parliament could itself commission a reference paper that would treat these questions throughout Europe: regulatory reference points, measures to be taken, methodologies.

- ***Favouring the development of professional practices on the European scale***

It would be desirable that these **new writings** be developed during residences or specific workshops. The European Union should ensure that writing stipends and support programmes for creation professionals be accessible to them. It should equally see to aiding exchange and collaboration projects between street artists on one hand, and actors in the live performance sector such as writers, playwrights and directors, on the other.

The European Union could see that a larger place is granted to street arts programmes (annual and multi-annual) presented in the framework of the Culture Programme (as of today, only the In Situ project carried out by Lieux Publics in Marseilles, France, has benefited from Culture 2000, section 1, credits). It could also call on experts aware of the value of these projects and their capacity to transform the cultural environment to evaluate candidatures filed in the framework of the Culture Programme.

- *Supporting the structuring of the sector on the European scale*

As street arts are a professional sector in the process of being structured, notably through the emergence of national collective groups and federations, the European Union will in all likelihood be led to valorise the permanent work of these representative bodies. The latter work on the establishment of standards and good practices on the European scale and on the emergence of national federations in the Member States that are not structured at this level. So that the mobility of street arts professionals and co-operation projects can take place under good conditions, it is necessary that existing European networks be recognised and financially aided **in the long term** by the European Union. These networks participate in the broad dissemination of information provided by the European Union and reflect the invitations to tender and the new directives that concern street arts to a greater or lesser degree. These platforms, such as the Circostrada network, work, often by means of the new technologies, at making useful information available to the production and circulation of works (programming, professional directories, etc.). The level of development differs greatly among the 27 Member States and is lowest in Eastern Europe.

The European Union could see that a larger place is granted to **street arts networks** in the framework of co-operation support programmes, whether they are trans-border, trans-national or European (Culture Programme). No operator working for street arts was selected in 2006 in the framework of section 2 of this programme (“Support bodies active at European level in the field of culture”). Support given to the permanent work programme of a structure capable of uniting and representing this sector on the European scale would make it possible to professionalise practices and establish their European potential.

- *Contributing to the development of a space for free artistic circulation*

In a more transversal manner and in a more regulatory framework, the development of the street arts sector is undergoing an improvement in the regulatory framework of the **circulation of works and artists**. It is therefore cardinal that the European Union continues to work on **harmonising national regulations** that considerably hamper the free circulation of works and professionals. As many studies have already stressed, it is necessary to encourage reflection on **the artist’s status throughout Europe and on related legislation** (social protection, labour law, coverage of unemployed periods, etc.). It could for example encourage the Member States to facilitate, even harmonise when possible, the procedures artists (and therefore street artists) must deal with by envisaging, for instance, making administrative steps free of charge and more rapid; simplifying, for equipment required for artistic services, going through customs and security barriers, and so on.

- *Action permitting the participation of street arts in European objectives to be valorised*

Valorising the considerable contribution of street arts to the success of European Capitals of Culture (**ECOC programme**): the European Union could, for example, stipulate in the next invitations to tender for this programme that street arts must be an integral part of the candidate city’s proposal and that the evaluation of the candidatures filed will be done according to the place given to street arts and the support measures that will be proposed for them once the programme is ended.

Moreover, thanks to the installation of artistic teams in peri-urban, rural or socially disadvantaged contexts, street arts have greatly increased the number of positive experiences in

the **social field**): it would be legitimate for the parliamentarians to support European projects concerning the exchange of experiences. The wish of many street artists to work more with disadvantaged publics must be heard and supported on the European level (better access to European Social Fund credits).

Lastly, in the framework of building the European Union's exterior policy and asserting **European cultural influence** internationally, street arts should unquestionably hold a special place. Likewise, they could take part in pre-adhesion, neighbourhood and co-operation operations in development actions.



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## INTRODUCTION

European theatre was unquestionably born in the street. The non-exhaustive itinerary of the history of the theatre<sup>2</sup> preceded by the necessary evocation of the Greek theatre permits us to become more aware of these ancient practices which are commonly held to be the roots of contemporary street theatre. Street artists themselves lay claim to this past and demand this connection. Filiations in the artistic form already exist: ambulatory performances, fairground theatre, prowess... but up to what point are they probable?

Nothing is less certain than the dramatic filiation between Greek actors or mimes of the Lower Roman Empire and the clergymen or jugglers of the Middle Ages. Between the fifth and ninth centuries, buffoons and entertainers were present at the court, but they were not actors. It was the emergence of the farce, performed by brotherhoods that would really give birth to the theatre with characters. Henceforth, the Middle Ages entered the era of the theatre on the *échafaud* (a platform or planks). But this form of theatre can only be a very distant relative of street theatre: the medieval theatre was held outdoors but aspired to enter an indoor theatre and invented ways to establish a physical distance from the crowd, notably by the invention of raised boards prefiguring a stage.

From the Passion plays to the Fêtes of Fools, from Carnival to the itinerant storyteller-juggler, the points in common with today's street theatre prove to be evanescent. The religious context of the emergence of the theatre is one of the principal divergences. Moreover, the elements of true theatre in these medieval practices were still embryonic and were more like imitation than genuine acting.

Lastly, isn't this filiation that would make street arts the heir, simultaneously, of jugglers, barkers, puppeteers and practical jokers, a way of attributing a historical identity to street arts by including it in the long history of live performance? French researcher Philippe Chaudoir believes that this filiation would remain of a mythic nature because a crucial point of divergence remains in the nature of the public space in which the artists of these different periods evolve<sup>3</sup>. The public space in which the Fête of Fools, Carnival, then the fairground theatre, were held has nothing to do with the public space that street artists chose to invest starting in the 1970s. Today, this space is envisaged as a communication support for exchange and the creation of public opinion. For these artists, it is a space to be transformed in order to create a common place. Their ambition is the re-appropriation of the public space by the community.

The choice of the street proves therefore to be fundamental: (street) arts go "outdoors" because they refuse to remain "indoors". Against the institution, for the conquest of the popular public, seeking new aesthetic experiences and a community life, street artists have nothing in common with the travelling entertainers of the Middle Ages. They are, on the contrary, deeply anchored in their period. They recycle in an infinite manner this past that they lay claim to not

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<sup>2</sup> See the synthesis note "Back to Ritual – Back to European Traditions" by Stanislav Bohadlo in Annex 2.

<sup>3</sup> By "street theatre" I am understanding, specifically, performances that are markedly theatrical in nature and that are staged in the street. I am not taking the phrase to include street parades such as Carnival, nor popular religious feasts that take on the form of outdoor ritual celebrations which include band marches, religious processions and organized firework displays. Neither am I including political manifestations that take the form of big mass meetings, attended by crowds of scores of thousands and which may take on a festive air. To my view, these do not qualify to be called by the name "street theatre". (...) And these exclusions are very important where street celebrations are concerned, in Malta.' (Researcher, Malta – interview).

nostalgically and with the idea of going back in time, but with a syncretic approach that tries to get the best out of the past in order to go forward<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> See Gonon, A., *Qu'est ce que le théâtre de rue*, thesis, Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Lyon, 2001.

## CHAPTER 1: WHAT ARE STREET ARTS?

### 1.1. Background

Street arts have all around Europe a lot of names: street theatre, in situ theatre, urban cultures, art in open space, art in public space ... In the *Street Arts Healthcheck*, David Micklem remind us the definition adopted by Arts Council England: ‘Street arts is a broad term that comprises a variety of forms including theatre, music, circus, dance, carnival, mela, installation, pyrotechnics and spectacle. Street arts:

- is presented outdoors, usually in non-traditional performance spaces, and is often free to the public;
- can be presented in a range of urban and rural contexts – on streets closed to traffic, in shopping centres, parks, village greens and town squares;
- ranges from the epic to the intimate and can be presented across the widest range of scales of audience size;
- enjoys a democratic relationship with its audience with people free to engage with work for as little or long as they wish’<sup>5</sup>.

We could add that street arts deal with the preservation and renewal of the popular cultural heritage. They keep the traditions linked to fêtes and certain popular know-how alive. Furthermore, street arts decompartmentalise the academic codes of the fine arts by creating bridges between the different disciplines, and therefore very produce innovative creation forms. Street arts help broaden access of the populations to culture by positioning themselves in the public space, open to circulation, and by setting up in isolated or poorly equipped areas. Street arts mobilise the social fabric of the city and help forge or strengthen a sense of belonging among the city’s inhabitants. Street arts are a communication vector for the cities and help dynamise the local economy. The following has been noted on a recurring basis: the need for the *fête*, the party, the need for exchange, the need for free expression, the need for a belief in myths (‘Street theatre is often the “voice” of society, is speaking about the matters important for that society’<sup>6</sup>). Street artists propose themselves to reinvent myths for the contemporary society whereas the latter, at least in the West, has practically destroyed them<sup>7</sup>.

### 1.2. Framework

#### 1.2.1. A dominant form

In the diversity of forms of street arts, we can nevertheless set out two categories: on one hand, the arts that come under the circus, aerial practice, travelling entertainers and the theatre; on the other, the plastic arts, special effects (pyrotechnics and explosives specialists), sound and music. Philippe Chaudoir, in his “general typology of the field”<sup>8</sup> brings out the primacy of the theatre

<sup>5</sup> Micklem, D., *Street Arts Healthcheck*, Arts Council England, [www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/phpYfKdxY.rtf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/phpYfKdxY.rtf), July 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Festival Director, Poland – interview. See also “Street Arts in East Europe-The Polish Example” by Joanna Ostrowska and Julius Tyszka and “Back to Ritual – Back to European Traditions” by Stanislav Bohaldo in Annex 2.

<sup>7</sup> These aims are analysed in “Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement”, Dapporto, E., Matisse – UMR CNRS 8595, University of Paris I, January 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Chaudoir, P., *Discours et figures de l’espace public à travers les arts de la rue*, Editions l’Harmattan, Paris, 2000.



(26% of all companies claim they belong to this category<sup>9</sup>) and, more generally, reveals two major sub-groups characterised by two practice methods: the one in which the body is the principal tool of expression, the other in which expression is created through a technical intervention.

### **1.2.2. An alternative approach**

Street arts are not highly innovative because they propose forms that never existed before but because they assert alternative approaches vis-à-vis the dominant codes and practices in the other artistic sectors, like the choice of the urban space and a different approach to publics. To these differences may be added: a rejection of traditional staging in which all eyes focus on the same point, an absence of hierarchy and a fragmentary use of discipline-oriented or technical languages. We may also add that street arts are now in sync with a new desire for decompartmentalisation that is beginning to spring forth from other artistic sectors as well.

### **1.2.3. The encounter with the public**

The encounter with the public is a founding element of the very existence of street arts. The public has a critical role in the show and influences its very execution. In their desire to deconstruct the traditional relationship with the spectator, artists wish to feel that the spectator is active and reactive, at the risk of never being sure that the public is won over to their cause. The delicate art of addressing the public entails the creation of a relationship through impromptu intervention, the effect of surprise and amazement. The face-to-face encounter that street arts create instils a distancing that is radically different from the indoor theatre and in so doing, a new intervention.

### **1.2.4. The space as language**

For street artists, the public space is a stakeholder in the show because the city, a physical, social, ideological and political entity, encourages creation within its walls. They consequently forge a customised writing that is connected with architecture, nourished by a multi-sensorial attention to the urban and rural worlds. This political, social and ideological confrontation with the invested place makes it possible to perceive the links of daily life from a new angle and inserts the narrative into the memories and history of the city.

## **1.3. Operators**

Paradoxically, street arts elude all live performance categories as they contain, in fact, all of them. They are both heterogeneous and ephemeral in their manifestations and discourses, existing in the margin. Margin is not to be interpreted here as marginal life but as related to comments, precision, to a “more than the text”.

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<sup>9</sup> The *Goliath*, a directory-guide of street arts published by *HorsLesMurs*, a national resource center for the development of street arts and circus arts subsidised by the French Ministry of Culture, lists street companies and proposes to define their artistic genre.

### 1.3.1. An ethic linked to the uses of the space

In her report<sup>10</sup>, Franceline Spielmann explains that the ethical position of street arts operators is a dominant feature shared by many. She notes: ‘Their intention on the occasion is to remove from banal daily life any private or public space that can become, through the collective use that is made of it, a place of artistic convocation. Moreover, these places would lose the singleness of their function to become non-sacred places of dialogues between those who, at a given moment, constitute a public and the street arts professionals.’

Henceforth, the questions of inclusion in the space are expressed in the creation processes as a set of basic artistic problems and not as a group of technical questions to be answered.

### 1.3.2. Aesthetics that produce a diversion

We may assume that there is dissatisfaction (and not despair) in street arts creators and protagonists as to the forms and contents: forms and contents of the public thing, the society, forms and contents of the way to witness and take account of them<sup>11</sup>. Hence there is the preoccupation with inventing a new language, a new writing. And here is where diversion comes into play: it is not a question of staging public or social reality, or of proposing another, diverted use of what constitutes the “subjects” of the creation. What is then born for the public is not another reality, but a different view on a reality that is still not readable.

## 1.4. Tools

### 1.4.1. Specific nature of the writing

Street theatre is rarely a theatre of writing in the sense of meaningful words and a text existing prior to the staging. The writing consists of the manipulation of the space, a dialogue with the urban, a body language, etc. The “street director” composes a multimedia writing (he can express himself through various communication channels): visual, sound and gesture. He must place himself in a 360° landscape that he largely helps to create. Certain people prefer the term “dramaturgy” or “scenography”.

### 1.4.2. Knowledge and values constantly updated

Street artists met by the street arts working group directed by French author Michel Simonot readily describe certain specific aspects of their approach: ‘We work with interdisciplinarity, the blending of genres, there are particular acting techniques, we practice experimentation, without any regard for norms, we establish a direct relationship, without any barriers, with the public, as opposed to places where there is a stage, our shows are designed to be adaptable to circumstances (venues, commissions), solidarity is an essential value, in life as in the troupe, and between the troupes, between ourselves, there isn’t any separation or hierarchy of functions: acting, building, mounting-dismounting... we have a direct relationship with the material, with the fabrication, but also with time, the weather, street life, our spirit is nomadism and not being closed in.’<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Spielmann, F., *Les questions de formation, qualification, transmission dans le domaine des arts de la rue*, DMDTS-French Ministry of Culture and Communication, January 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Dapporto, E. and Duvaurox, D., *Les Arts de la Rue: portrait économique d’un secteur en pleine effervescence*, La Documentation française, Paris, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> “L’art de la rue: scène urbaine, scène commune”, report of the working group chaired by Simonot, M., *Rue de la Folie*, no. 3, HorsLesMurs, Paris, December 1998.

### 1.4.3. Resource centres

Aside from HorsLesMurs<sup>13</sup> in France and the Internationaal Straattheaterfestival initiative of Ghent in Belgium, there are very few organised, digitized video collections, accessible to artists and the public. The access for former and contemporary aesthetics, by viewing videos or reading books and studies, is an important matter for artists. Many culture operators stated that they have shown images and acknowledged the importance of the work to be carried out to set up a common archive collection. Some organisations try to collect useful information on street arts sector (e. g. local/national/European directories of artists, festivals, venues, etc.), as Circostrada Network (European Union), Xarxa Teatre – review fiestacultura (Spain), x.trax (United Kingdom), FNAS-Kermesse (Italy), etc. A lot of work remains to do, since the lack of money does not permit to develop this work of “memory”. As resource centres and video collections are still a rarity, street artists do not really have the possibility of stepping back from and taking an objective look at the contemporary creation in their field. Moreover, the survey did not permit to establish the cultural consumption of street artists.

## 1.5. Specific actions

### 1.5.1. Overview of aesthetics

The French journalist Thierry Voisin put into writing a first aesthetic approach; he attempted to classify street art forms in eight themes. Of course, artistic productions may be classified in more than one category:

- ***Action/contestation:***  
Today, many street artists take on a militant attitude to show the world such as it is and place the spectator in a critical position towards a society where the homeless, the unemployed and those who are in an irregular position vis-à-vis the immigration authorities have appeared.
- ***Dance in the public space:***  
In the streets, squares, gardens, on horizontal as well as vertical, flat or uneven surfaces, dance also has the place of honour in the public space. There, it frees itself from the yoke of traditions, its elitist character and the technical constraints of the conventional stage, inaugurating new spatial relationships with raw (architecture) and moving (the public) material.
- ***Urban fêtes and tales:***  
One type of expertise of the street artist is to unite the population of a city or a neighbourhood in one place to tell it a story and to carry it along in a tale to be shared with everyone. At the end of the performance, the traces of a sensual and collective party remain in a corner of each person's imagination.

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<sup>13</sup> Apart from its large video collection, HorsLesMurs also published in October 2006 a DVD *Images de la création hors les murs – Esthétiques des arts de la rue* in the framework of Le Temps des arts de la rue (2005-2007).

- ***The heritage of the fairground theatre:***

Certain street artists are now using the popular forms of curiosities and sideshows from the fairs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in autonomous and organic acting spaces (big-top, yurt, hut, truck) in a very intimate relationship with the public.

- ***The diverted city:***

The artists transgress law and order, modify the circulation of cars and pedestrians, divert the ordinary use of public space and buildings. The objective is not to create disorder but to invent fictions in order to look at one's familiar environment in another way.

- ***The actor spectator:***

The spectator is fully involved in the performance, a willing or unwilling accomplice. On certain occasions, he even becomes a 'spect-actor'. Without him, the performance cannot take place.

- ***The visual arts:***

Happenings, performances, ambulatory performances, installations: the street artists intervene in an architectural context weighted with history (hi-stories) and symbols that they enhance or divert using different media (calligraphy, lights, sound, video).

- ***New urban poems:***

Certain street artists prefer the ephemeral to the completed, the elusive to the constant, the invisible to the immutable, poetry to the event. With fleeting images, they transform the urban space to make the spectators lose their spatial and temporal points of reference and, suddenly, reveal the mystery of another life, another city to them.

### 1.5.2. Breakdown of disciplines

Analysing the street shows integrated in the European data base of Circostrada/HorsLesMurs between January 2002 and January 2007, we observe that:

- Out of 8 772 spectacles enumerated, 80% of the shows do not mention a particular discipline. Street arts shows are eminently multidisciplinary;
- For the others, out of the 20% of shows described as having a discipline, the theatre arrives in the lead with 842 shows (or 48,2%), followed by street music with 235 shows (13,4%) and prowess arts with 218 shows (12.5%). As for puppet and object theatre, they count 143 shows (8,2%), and are not far from street dance with 116 shows (6,6%). Urban visual arts stand out as well with 74 shows, the parade with 57 shows, followed by pyrotechnics with 40 shows. Magic is present in 12 shows. Much less frequent but impressive forms, monumental constructions have 8 shows while street opera, a miniscule category but one that is noticed, shows 2 shows<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> See in Annex 2 the study by Anne-Karine Granger for examples of companies in Europe that are devoted to prowess arts, visual/urban plastic arts, monumental construction, dance, puppet and object theatre, clowns, theatre, music, urban parades, stilts and pyrotechnics.

## 1.6. Conclusions and problems raised

Street arts contain an enormous polymorphic movement in which directors, actors, musicians, dancers, plastic artists, production designers and video-makers all have the same concern: inserting an artistic project into the heart of the public space, as close as possible to the populations.

The writing of street shows is therefore based on new types of know-how under the combined effect of a desire to get away from the conventional and the financial constraints the shows find themselves faced with. An ongoing work of reflection is therefore based on the mixing of languages and the variety of writings, the artistic choices expressed by “unexpected collages”. Rather than making another reality come into being for the public, the question is one of providing another view, of looking into this reality for what is not yet readable or is masked by it.

There is a lack of academic research on a European scale on the aesthetics of street arts, research that could draw their specificities. Every kind of creation needs to improve itself or to take an objective look at its productions. Also, street arts sometimes suffer from the lack of knowledge of the specific features of street forms: history, genealogy, creation processes – e. g. the cultural consumption of street artists has not been the subject of any studies, performance modes, etc. Few specific residencies or workshops are available to these artists: the access to writing stipends and accompaniment programmes for creation professionals are not generalised.

Helping artists to develop their own aesthetics presupposes that they have access to the heritage of street arts and the works, theoretical as well as technical, dedicated to these artistic forms. Confrontation to other realities (mobility) is also a key element, we’ll develop this idea latter. Lastly, as resource centres and video collections are still a rarity, street artists do not really have the possibility of stepping back from and taking an objective look at the contemporary creation in their field.

## CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS A STREET ARTIST?

### 2.1. Background

First of all, let's remember that street artists ARE artists! Their creative work generates intellectual property rights, flourish culture/creative markets, they are generally carried out in far more precarious circumstances than other occupations. Several key words must be kept in mind: casual employment, irregular and unpredictable income, unremunerated research and development phases, accelerated physical wear and tear and high levels of mobility (elements not taken account of in the existing legal, social security and tax structures).

As Suzanne Capiau and Andreas Johannes Wiesand remind us in their report to the Parliament<sup>15</sup>, artists (thus street artists), by 'their working practices and motivations, must be considered "atypical" in different ways:

- Atypical logic: as a rule, artistic projects are not launched to get out of unemployment or to simply earn money but, above all, to express the creative forces of a personality;
- Atypical work status (multi-activity): the majority of creators easily switch from self-employed status to that of salaried worker to that of company head or civil servant, all the while being able to combine one or another status;
- Atypical cross-border mobility: artists, more than other workers, are highly mobile whether in Europe or internationally;
- Atypical economic structures: there exists a myriad of small or even one-person businesses which compete alongside very large multinational groups; the latter dominating segments of the mainstream marketplace;
- Atypical in their influence on economic cycles: the work of artists reaches way beyond the culture sphere in the strict sense and influences the heart of large industrial sectors of the economy such as fashion and other design-oriented consumer goods, property development, tourism, electronics, software development, etc.;
- Atypical in the assessment of results: artistic success and impact can not be measured in the same manner as other marketplace achievements;
- Atypical financing: artistic innovation and quality in the culture sector can not rely solely on "returns on investment" but rather needs specific forms of public intervention as well as private contributions. Public-private partnership is increasingly seen as a solution to this problem.<sup>16</sup>

The artistic activity of street artists has long spilled over the authorised spaces, increasingly nourishing sectors of economic life and the spaces of daily life, gradually destabilising the historic forms and venues of the dissemination of works. This diffuse creativity is visible

<sup>15</sup> Capiau S. and Wiesand A. J., *The situation of artistic creation professionals in Europe*, Policy Department: Structural and Cohesion Policies, European Parliament, August 2006.

<sup>16</sup> McAndrew, C., *Artists, taxes and benefits – an international review*, Arts Council of England, London, 2002, Capiau, S.; *La création d'un environnement juridique et économique approprié pour les activités artistiques – nécessité et urgence d'une intervention publique*, 2000, produced at the request of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg; Menger, P.-M., *Portrait de l'artiste en travailleur*, Seuil, Paris, La République des idées, 2003.

through the success street professionals encounter, through artists' residences, the blossoming of small formats or commissioned large-scale parades and the multiplication of festivals. This change affects the very figure of the artist himself who, under market pressure, becomes the entrepreneur of himself. Many companies are in fact forced to include commercial plans in the extension of their aesthetic approach, in order to live from their art. Moreover, the work of street artists, whose contribution increasingly goes beyond the fields of traditional cultural performance (going towards urbanism, the social sector), becomes difficult to define and to frame in terms of labour law. It is often insufficiently valorised and remunerated, irregular by nature and always much more involving than what their shows let the public see.

## 2.2. Framework

### 2.2.1. Activity conditions of artists

#### 2.2.1.1. Status

According to the very good study *The Status of Artists of artists in Europe*, carried out by ERICarts at the request of the European Parliament, it appears that the artist's status varies a lot from one country to the other. Consequently, the definition of the professional sector does not have the same acceptance according to the countries and cultures. In point of fact, the French definition of the "professional company", and especially that of the professional artist, refers above all to the administrative system of unemployment benefits for intermittent workers: anyone who can make a living from his art can have an administrative status. In the countries that do not have this status culture, the shift from amateur to professional is based on other references and this distinction proves to be more vague.

The special intermittence regime in France appears privileged. Many interviewees underlined the French system of support for artists where they may claim a form of stipend at quiet times of the year. Two other European countries seem to stand out as well, Belgium and the Netherlands. Since July 2003, Belgium artists can be considered salaried workers when they fulfil a commission (some interviewees nevertheless observed the difficulty for artists to understand this new system). In the Netherlands, since a law passed in 1999, artists can receive an allowance for a maximum of four years over a 10-year period. In Germany, Great Britain, Spain, Sweden, Italy and Austria, artists have problems receiving unemployment benefits because their work as an artist alone is not sufficient to provide them with the right to compensation.

#### 2.2.1.2. Nature of the contracts

Most artists today share a structural instability in terms of hiring conditions, and this instability is in generally not offset by any measures providing security.

Hiring through a *contract per short-term project* has become the norm in the European Union and is accepted by the law (Belgium: contract for a clearly defined job; France: casual fixed-term contract), whereas artistic work is sometimes treated as a temporary job (Italy; Belgium for occasional employers)<sup>17</sup>. For the last 20 years, the *duration of contracts for intermittent workers in the performing arts* has continued to shrink. France is a perfect example: between 1987 and 2001, the average duration decreased by 72% (it went from 20.1 days to 5.7 days), while their

<sup>17</sup> Article 1, paragraph 6 of the Belgium law of 24 July 1987 on temporary work, interim work and making workers available to users.

number increased by 130%, but while the average remuneration diminished by 25%, like the number of days worked<sup>18</sup>.

### 2.2.1.3. Legal Security

It has been observed in all the states of the European Union that artists are aware of the various hiring modalities that are constantly changing: a work contract succeeds or may be concomitant to a royalties or performing rights contract, a civil law contract or even a government contract. These work conditions create a multiplicity of social and fiscal statuses that are not taken into account by most legislation and that increase the complexity and costs of social contributions without raising the level of social benefits. Faced with this complexity, pressure from economic actors pushes the artists who find themselves, however, in a position of real subordination to become independent (up to 70 to 80% in Poland) or to create micro-companies to avoid having to take in charge employees' social contributions (Belgium, France, Hungary)<sup>19</sup>. Many artists are then forced to take on complementary salaried activities outside the artistic sector (60%)<sup>20</sup>. Quite often, hiring contracts are not in writing in violation of the law (Spain, Greece), and social legislation is not always respected (Belgium, France, the new Member States of the European Union)<sup>21</sup>.

## 2.3. Operators

We know almost nothing about the age, social origin, type of qualification and education of street artists. The answers to the questionnaires did not make it possible to pool the information on these questions, and there are no indexed data. The sole approach possible can only be in terms of the values shared by these artists, as Elena Dapporto has noted in her study *Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement*.

### 2.3.1. Motivations and values

The street arts sector presents singular characteristics compared to other sectors of the live performance, notably the indoor theatre, subsidised or private. When the public authorities support the arts and favour their development in society, it is possible to decrypt which services the State plans to provide to society by supporting artists: the preservation of the country's heritage, support for creation and cultural democratisation. A concern for the cohesion of the nation may also be added, through the development of citizenship and the influence of the nation's image outside its borders. Street arts are part of these goals, but they also diverge from them.

Generally, relations between the members of a company are based more on friendship and companionship than on the norms dictated by the labour code or the hierarchy. Within the

<sup>18</sup> Guillot, J.-P., "Analyses et propositions des partenaires sociaux du secteur sur l'emploi dans le spectacle", report to the French minister of Culture and Communication, 20 October 2005, <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/politique/intermittents/index-intermittents.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> Poláček, R., *Study Relating to the Various Regimes of Employment and Social Protection of Workers in the European Media, Arts and Entertainment Sector in Five Applicant Countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia*. 66 pp, October 2003, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup> Staines, J., *From Pillar to Post*, 2004, p. 41.

<sup>21</sup> FIM-FIA-EURO-UNI-EAEA, *Study related to regimes of employment and social protection of live stage performance and audiovisual workers in the Member countries of the European Union*, 2002. A German independent producer specified in interview: 'Here in Germany, most of street artists only perform for a few years, then they get tired with travelling a lot, being paid too little and working in bad conditions, and they give up.'



company, solidarity allows individuals to deal with the ups and downs of daily life, on one hand, and, on the other, the financial precariousness that threatens the company's survival. The members of a company do not hesitate to invest their own assets or to give up their remuneration so that the company can continue to exist. Solidarity between companies is also shown by mutual aid: the loan of equipment or tools, a helping hand provided free of charge to assemble a set or make available rehearsal premises.

The vast majority of small companies have no grants, they create all their work and tour it in order to make a living. Many do not live only from their role as street performers; they work in education, in indoor theatre, in other professions entirely; some own vehicles or buildings that they can rent out in winter and earn a small income from that. Some artists do not apply for grants considering the administration is so arduous that they could spend more time than is worth it for the money they could get.

### 2.3.2 Four categories of artists' strategies

Philippe Chaudoir, in his work<sup>22</sup>, endeavours to define four categories of artists' strategies: the Passers, the Encyclopaedists, the Troupe and the Marginals:

- 'The Passers seem to have the most adhesive discourse concerning marginal figures. They consider the city as much a set as a social production. The action modes they describe imply a return to the meaning of the city, work giving the city back its visibility, a desire to produce a social link through artistic practice. The forms very often refer to an absence of a narrative canvas. The Passers apparently completely adhere to the logic of temporal continuity. They participate in a direct, almost reproductive filial logic.'
- 'The Troupe plays, almost systematically, on opposite categories. They believe that the city is most often language. Their reference is theatrical. They show a distance, even an indifference to the principal actions modes vis-à-vis the urban space. It is the public and its different segmentations that they mobilise as a privileged social form. The figure of irruption is central to it. On the other hand, they sometimes have a more projective discourse.'
- 'The role of the Encyclopaedists is more complex. One would tend to think that they are marginal but in another way, not through disinvestment but, perhaps, through a kind of critical over-investment. In this way, their discourse is systematically a type of reflective distancing as to meaning, the social link or space. They have a critical view of the illusion of a shared community, even if the sharing is fleeting, but recognise the effectiveness of the flow. They play on provocation by stimulating the imaginary dimension. They are, in fact, the ones who most provide a new reading of historical narration and a feedback logic.'
- 'As for the Marginals, they rather systematically settle into the most minority positions. They participate very little in the global objectives of street arts and withdraw, in a certain way, into their own logics of the artistic act.'

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<sup>22</sup> Chaudoir, P., *Discours et figures de l'espace public à travers les Arts de la Rue. La ville en scènes*. L'Harmattan, Paris, 2000.

## 2.4. Tools

### 2.4.1. Mobility

The lack of support for street arts is a serious obstacle to the mobility of artists and companies, to their specific education, to their artistic activity, etc. In practice, co-operation and networking among professionals and festivals, at a national and international level, help overcome the obstacles: European funds (in the first place, Culture 2000 programmes) and Foundations (e. g. European Foundation for Culture) support artists for travel costs. They provide a chance for confrontation among professionals from different countries, an exchange of opinions and experiences, an artistic inspiration.

Concerning the tradition of street arts and consequently, the expertise of the companies, in countries such as France, Germany, the United Kingdom, companies are more expert and have a longer experience in working at an international level, compared to Eastern European countries such as Romania, whose international work is just at its beginnings.

Artists are by their own definition open to new experiences and willing to grow, improve and experiment, especially in such an ‘unconventional’ and creative field as street arts. Mobility therefore is the keyword for street artists – and all artists – and concerns both the “artistic” dimension (education, training, inspiration<sup>23</sup>, etc.) and the “market” dimension of their work (visibility of the company, appreciation of its productions and booking in foreign festivals, etc.)<sup>24</sup>.

According to most of the operators, creators and street artists must travel, open their minds, have experiences abroad and compare their own knowledge and practice to that of other professionals in other contexts. ‘The mobility in the artistic field, the mobility of arts and artists, are thought to accelerate the mobility of ideas, leading to the mobility of innovation and finally to the stimulation of productivity’<sup>25</sup>. The *Study on impediments to mobility in the European Union live performance sector* listed the difficulties faced by artists when travelling in the European Union. Street arts professionals always confirmed these problems: employment of third-country live performance workers in the European Union and then going on tour with them inside the European Union, social security rights, double taxation and excessive taxation, management of rights... As for all performing arts, administrative issues are a problematic aspect of international street arts activity.

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<sup>23</sup> ‘(...) the interaction and influence of cultural talents upon each other through mobility gives rise to new cultural products which can significantly improve the quality of life. Therefore the mobility of talent should not be viewed simply as a means to economic growth; it must also be seen as a contributor to human development more broadly’. Addison, T., *The International Mobility of Cultural Talent*, World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), September 2006.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Successful touring and commissioning partnerships are the essential frameworks for the development of new and existing work, the very building blocks of the street arts sector’, states the report from the Independent Street Arts Network (ISAN) conference held in Winchester on December 2005, [www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk).

<sup>25</sup> *Mobility and cultural co-operation in the age of digital space*, On-The-Move and ECUMEST - Training of trainers, Bucharest, Romania, November 2006. Yet the same work points out that ‘a mobility rate in itself may not tell much. It is important to explore if it enhances the innovative capabilities and conditions of the ones that have chosen to move and then, as a consequence, the rest of the society as a whole (and not only the host). If mobility keeps on being a part of human character, policies should be supportive and possibilities should be explored to enhance the positive effects of migration’.

## 2.4.2. Education

### 2.4.2.1. *Development of training / long life learning*

Globally, in Europe, there are very few training centres in street arts that are institutionalised or at least recognised by the state, and that would allocate funding to them<sup>26</sup>. In general, for lack of specific training programmes in the street arts, professionals turn to circus training programmes, which are more developed and which respond to certain aspects of their needs, or to theatre training programmes, which are much more commonly recognised by the state and lead to a state diploma. Many interviewees observed a need of trainings/workshops and dedicated education: ‘(...) we have no specific education centre. There are some education centres providing certificates and educating in theatre and circus arts (for example a circus university in Berlin), but there is nothing specific for street arts: only private workshops or classes given within the companies.’<sup>27</sup>

France, a pioneer on the political terrain of the recognition of street arts, stands out. It made official, in 2005, a first national school of higher studies for street arts: Formation avancée et itinérante des arts de la rue (FAI AR or Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts). *See section 2.5.2. for description.*

### 2.4.2.2. *Non-artistic skills for a successful career*

Generally speaking, it seems to be very important to be able to put together the passion, which is necessary to work in the street arts field, the somehow “philosophical” attitude which allows keeping one’s mind open and some very practical skills which are necessary to carry on an (international) activity. Operators recognize the need to acquire personal skills in management, in order to better plan time (and save money) and not to be forced to rely on a specialized support from consultants.

Several universities in Europe propose now street arts oriented Masters for cultural managers so future professionals may be prepared to work with artists of this sector. We can give two interesting examples: the Escola tecnica superior d’arquitectura de Barcelona (ETSAB or High Technical School of Architecture of Barcelona) with the Universitat politecnica de Catalunya (UPC or Polytechnic University of Catalonia) propose a Master program on ‘Arquitectura, art i espai efimer’ (Architecture, Art and Ephemeral Space). The Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne proposes a Master programme called ‘Projets culturels dans l’espace public’ (Cultural Projects in the Urban Space). We observed an increasing interest for street arts also in Denmark or Sweden universities.

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<sup>26</sup> ‘In Romania, there is not a true “status” of street artists: street artists refer to the status of “classic” theatre artists; we need instead a recognition of this kind, as well as a professional training and education. This is why we have developed two educational programs. One is a professional institute, very particular, it involves only 40 students but there are 35 teachers – professionals from all sectors of art and management too – and it lasts 4 years. The other is a post university course, in which all artistic skills are developed: we focus mainly on those which are more useful for street arts, such as voice, body, dance, cirque... more than on the classical theatre artists training.’ (Artistic Director, Romania – interview).

<sup>27</sup> Interview of a German Agent.

### ***2.4.2.3 Language and communication***

Speaking different languages is obviously a basic tool for mobility, useful not only for performers but also for technicians, managers and directors. English and French seem to be the most useful languages, which should make it easier to travel and to work internationally.

The operators do not agree on the importance of language skills for performers. Some of them state that artistic skills in communication (through gesture, mime, etc.) are much more important when performing, other professionals on the contrary state that text-based performances are much more requested in other countries, and add that some forms of ‘national humour’ can be mainly based on words, more than on mime.

### ***2.4.2.4. Knowing the field***

Knowing the audience is very important for companies. Companies in fact can choose appropriate topics and the right approach (humour, kind of performance etc.) for a particular audience, in order to prepare a performance which can be really appealing, catchy, suitable for a certain mindset or a particular sense of humour. As already written, some topics (e.g. violence) or some contents (e.g. naked performers) can be unsuitable for some audiences.

Mobility, on its turn, is considered of basic importance for the vocational training, for the artistic quality of the work and for the international dimension of festivals, has to face problems linked above all to financial issues. Travelling gives chances for inspiring confrontation and exchanges among professionals and provides opportunities for artists to be known and to get support to production and performing.

The Web can be a powerful tool to find partners and to get to know the other festivals; within networks, it provides a great opportunity for members to keep in touch: it is “a rapid and egalitarian method of communication which has revolutionised their way of working”<sup>28</sup>.

### **2.4.3. Unions, federations, professional organisations**

Another important phenomenon that contributes to the recognition of street artists among themselves is the emergence of professional organisations. By analogy with the Fédération nationale des arts de la rue (Street Arts National Federation) in France, the Internationaal Straattheaterfestival of Ghent and the Provincial Centre of Neerpelt had created a Flemish Federation for Street Arts, still not recognised by the Flemish government. There is also the FAR (Fédération des Arts de la rue, des Arts du cirque et des Arts forains) in Brussels, which is a federation of professional companies in the street, circus and fairground arts sector in French-speaking Belgium.

We may also mention the Federazione Nazionale Artisti di Strada (Street Arts National Federation) in Italy, as well as the ISAN (Independent Street Arts Network) and the NASA (National Association of Street Artists) in the United Kingdom. The Bundesverband für Theater im öffentliche Raum (Federal Association of Theatre) represents the interest of some street arts members in Germany. The calling of these organisations is to support the structuring of the sector through the exchange of resources and information, particularly in legal matters, to create a network for professionals and carry out lobbying. Carrying on discussions and debates, they

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<sup>28</sup> Streetnet, “Street Arts in Scotland”, January 2005.

wish to encourage the commitment of other professionals, publics, local authorities and the media.

With the desire to intensify exchanges, promote the circulation of artists and aid show production, several street arts structures and festivals have formed groups among themselves or with production venues to create synergy. As a result, the following have been created:

- **Circostrada:** HorsLesMurs founded Circostrada in 2003. It is the only European network dedicated to information, resources, research and professional exchanges. It is currently constituted of an observatory whose members (about 30) are selected for their knowledge of the sectors in their countries.
- **In Situ (International Spectacles Innovants en Territoires Urbains) :** co-production and co-diffusion platform bringing together six street arts festivals and twelve partners in Europe. From 2006 to 2009, the main goal remains to provide production aid for artistic projects. In Situ is supported by the European Commission (Culture 2000 programme).
- **Meridians (ex-Eunetstar):** Eunetstar was a European street arts co-production and co-diffusion platform that grouped nine festivals. It was supported by the European Commission (Culture 2000 programme) until 2005.
- **Piloot:** Dutch - Flemish co-production platform for outdoor theatre productions.
- **PECA:** European Polycentre for Artistic Creation ‘Fabric in Progress’; this is a street arts and circus arts European collaboration programme, initiated in 1997, conceived to be a network of creation centres in the euroregion of Haute-Normandie, Picardie, Pas-de-Calais in France and East-Sussex in England. It is part funded by the European Union within the program Interreg IIIA.

## 2.5. Specific Actions

### 2.5.1. Intellectual property

The collective creation process and its legal implications are of particular interest to street arts where the status of the author, the director and the performer are often closely intertwined and sometimes even merged in the “collective” structure.

If an artistic company cannot be recognised as an author, it is possible to consider a work with several authors. The French intellectual property code (art. L 113-2) envisages the collective creation process according to three designations that define authorship and the royalties system: the collaboration work, the composite work and the collective work. It is essential to stress the necessity of agreeing not on an a priori breakdown of the author or co-author’s status among the “actors” in the creative process (the status of the author cannot be decreed), but on the choice of the creative process(es) itself (themselves)<sup>29</sup>.

Currently, this collective management comes in very diverse forms depending on the country. A study by the European Affairs Department, *The collective management of royalties and*

<sup>29</sup> For a more detailed presentation of the collaboration work, the composite work and the collective work, see Anne-Karine Granger’s reports in Annex 2.

*performing rights*, reviews the principal characteristics in several European countries such as Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and the United Kingdom as well as the United States.

### 2.5.2. The creation of a nomadic school

In France, the FAI AR (Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts) is based on the principle of the nomadic school and exists thanks to privileged partnerships with venues and production centres in France and elsewhere in Europe. This training (18 months, no age limits and free) aims to consider the main resources favourable to artistic creation in public areas. This training bases its pedagogical construction on meeting active artists and companies, on multidisciplinary and professional artistic openness (philosophers, town planners, etc.). This training revolves around three main axes: the collective fundamentals, the individual adventures and a personal artistic project.

## 2.6. Conclusions and problems raised

Like most artists, street artists suffer from irregular and unpredictable incomes and their unremunerated work when devoted to research and development. Moreover, the fact of producing prototypical works also results in questions about social security and taxation that legal structures generally ignore. The development of training, as the establishment of the FAI AR to support their transmission of knowledge, which is real in the companies but primarily informal, could help to enhance the sector.

The structuring of the profession through federations and networks on a European scale attests to the real maturing of street artists, permitting greater collaboration between artists and better representation in terms of public authorities.

As was pointed out in the *Study on impediments to mobility in the European Union live performance sector*<sup>30</sup> by Pearle\*, mobility in the European Union requires live performance organisations to have ‘a sound knowledge of the legislation and regulations of more than one European Union country’, especially concerning visas and work, social security regulations, taxation and in particular bilateral agreements on double taxation and national rules on withholding taxes and value-added tax (VAT)<sup>31</sup>.

Also the employment status of the performers has a huge influence on the general situation of the workers; live performance workers in fact often have several working statuses at the same time, in particular in a context of mobility. Each area seems to be affected by the same problems: European Union and national regulations are too different and ill-adapted; national administrative procedures are complex, time-consuming, incoherent and expensive; information about applicable regulations and procedures is insufficient; financing and funding are problematic.

The administrative workload required avoiding double taxation and excessive taxation clearly discourages artists and companies from being mobile or from hosting mobile organisations. Festivals therefore often have to hire professionals who deal with this issue, thus adding other

<sup>30</sup> Poláček, R., *Study on impediments to mobility in the European Union live performance sector*, Pearle\*, January 2007.

<sup>31</sup> For a survey of problems, different taxation systems in Europe and useful resources to keep up-to-date, see also *Tax and social security. A basic guide for artists and cultural operators in Europe*, by Judith Staines, IETM, March 2004.

expenses to the budget. The general feeling of the professionals in the live performance sector is that 'the most mobile sector in the European Union is discriminated against when providing services in other European Union countries due to specific tax legislation which does not exist for any other "mobile" economic sector in the European Union'<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Poláček, R., *Study on impediments*, op. cit.

## CHAPTER 3: INTELLECTUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

### 3.1. Background

Despite the growing enthusiasm of the publics, the recognition of street arts is far from being obvious. Consequently, it constitutes, for most of this sector's cultural structures, a major challenge. Municipalities or structures had some difficulty in answering the questionnaires because generally the public authorities do not have specialists who can be consultants on these intellectual and political questions in their institutions. Furthermore, in order to evaluate this recognition, it would be necessary to model the different cultural policies in the various European countries. Moreover, it appears that public policies vary according to the relationship that each European State has with culture<sup>33</sup>.

To use the typology defined by French researcher Robert Lacombe, three groups of countries emerge according to their institutional organisation and the division of jurisdictions that they use concerning culture:

1. 'The states of the federal or very decentralised type' such as Belgium, Spain and Germany that turn over cultural jurisdiction to linguistic communities, regions or the Länder;
2. 'The states where cultural jurisdictions are delegated to "Arts Councils"' i.e. the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands. They implement, with variations, what is called the arm's length principle, or remote administration; the Arts Council is then relatively independent of the government;
3. Lastly, 'the model of the centralised cultural State, with the predominance of the Ministry of Culture', notably embodied by France and Portugal.

### 3.2. Framework

In France and Belgium, the governments support street arts, not only in financial terms but also by supporting inspiration and creativity (even if these supports are nothing compared to dance, opera, theatre). This happens because of a precise mindset that considers street arts as true forms of art and culture, not as entertainment, and this attitude has a major impact on the number of production centres, companies and festivals held in those countries.

An approach may nonetheless be presented according to a grouping of countries based on the following distinction:

- The states that have politically recognised street arts. They have defined a policy orientation and have established dedicated funding systems and support professional training: France, Belgium, Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom, Poland, Catalonia (Spain), Piedmont (Italy) and Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany) are developing their policy and intervention in favour of street arts, and are included in this category.
- The states that have not yet politically and artistically recognised street arts, but are experiencing an artistic dynamism in the field in this sector: Portugal and Italy, where street arts are increasingly present, as well as Nordic and Baltic countries, where streets

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<sup>33</sup> Floch, Y. (coord.), *Public Policies in Favour of Street Arts and Circus Arts in Europe – Preliminary Study*, CRCMD-Université de Bourgogne, Paris, HorsLesMurs, 2006.



arts still barely known, and lastly, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which are pursuing a long tradition of street events.

### **3.2.1. Some countries/regions recognising street arts**

#### **3.2.1.1. France**

During the 1990s, street arts were associated with the circus and came under the DMDTS (Theatre, Music, Dance and Shows Direction) of the Ministry of Culture. The idea was then to draw up a structured aid plan dedicated to street arts. At this period, Lieux Publics was reorganised into the Centre National de la Création des Arts de la Rue (National Centre for the Creation of Street Arts) in Marseille and HorsLesMurs in Paris was created.

As of the year 2000, the reform of theatre companies made possible the three-year agreement system for street arts companies, which could henceforth benefit from greater financial stability. The Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs (DRAC), devolved ministerial departments in the regions, decide on agreements in collaboration with the DMDTS and after receiving an opinion from a committee of experts<sup>34</sup>. From small-scale summer events to large-scale international events like the Aurillac Festival (created in 1986) or that in Chalon dans la rue (founded in 1987), street arts festivals now propose very diverse programming, often open to other emerging forms of the live performance and notably circus arts.

#### **3.2.1.2. Belgium**

In Flemish Belgium, public intervention in favour of street arts has existed since 2005, when the Flemish decree on the arts recognised certain festivals and companies. Since 2006, for the Flemish Community, four festivals are now recognised and receive a total of € 1 225 000. At this moment, the Flemish government is working on a circus decree that could start in 2008.

In French-speaking Belgium, street arts have been subsidised for over several years. In 2000, the Ministry of the French Community dedicated a department to them, more broadly devoted to the circus, fairground arts and street arts established in the general theatre arts department (General Department of Culture/Ministry of the French Community of Belgium). Four types of aid were established: stipends for aid to creation (Piste aux espoirs, Piste de lancement, Namur en mai, etc.) and ongoing training; periodic aid; two or four-year agreements; five-year programme-contracts. But, the amount dedicated for street arts sector for the entire French-speaking Belgium is only of € 500 000.

#### **3.2.1.3. Republic of Ireland**

There is no doubt about the political recognition of street arts as a full-fledged art form in the Republic of Ireland: July 2006 marked the adoption of the first clear policy in favour of circus, street and show arts. In 2005, three street arts companies were funded: Bui Blog, Macnas and Spraoi. Total aid represents about € 900 000 a year. It should be noted that in Ireland, parades are a legacy of an ancient cultural practice. They are very developed and take place primarily in cities during holidays such as Saint Patrick's Day or Halloween. There are therefore generally funded by the public authorities: for example, in 2006, the Saint Patrick's Day celebration in Dublin received over one million euros.

<sup>34</sup> 'France for instance is the European country in which this form of art is better developed. In my opinion, the support at a local level is more important than the central one.' (Artistic Director, United Kingdom – interview).

Street arts are not separate from other shows (of the carnival type) in the spirit of programmers in Ireland. The long tradition of parades (a few hundred a year) based on performance reinforces this idea of the show and may explain the respect that national and regional festivals have for parades. Nonetheless, the street show is broadly established and makes up a large part of programming during traditional festivities such as Saint Patrick's Day and Halloween, or more geographically, the Spraoi festival in Waterford.

#### **3.2.1.4. The United Kingdom**

For over 30 years, outdoor shows have developed exponentially. There are now 200 companies, small for the most part, some 20 major festivals and several hundred multidisciplinary events that include street arts in their programming.

Like many professionals, David Micklem observes in *Street Arts Healthcheck* that the recognition of the artistic quality of street arts is not unanimous in cultural and artistic milieus. The last few years have thus witnessed the continuous increase in support given to street arts, with funding steadily growing for investment as well as creation and production, dissemination and aid for projects and stipends. A growing number of companies are involved in ambitious projects, but this trend is still in its early days. In the Arts Council England's refreshed Theatre Policy (January 2007), street arts, with circus arts for the first time ever, had been mentioned as a priority area for support and investment over the 5 years to 2011.

#### **3.2.1.5. Poland**

Street arts, which appeared in Poland at the beginning of the 1980s, now propose a great diversity of festivals and companies, although the season is fairly short because of the harshness of the climate. Most Polish companies conceive street theatre as an extension of the indoor theatre. Among the major companies, we may cite Akademia Ruchu, Teatr Ósmego Dnia, Teatr KTO, Klinika Lalek, Biuro Podróży, Strefa Ciszy... See also "*Street Arts in East Europe-The Polish Example*" by Joanna Ostrowska and Julius Tyszka in Annex 2.

#### **3.2.1.6. Catalonia (Spain)**

Under the aegis of the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música (INAEM or Ministry of Culture, the National Institute of Theatre Arts) takes in charge the promotion, protection and dissemination of theatre, music, dance and circus creation in Spain and abroad. It also handles co-ordination between autonomous communities.

It is above all the regional and local levels that play a dominant role in culture. For them, and especially for Catalonia, culture is the principal challenge in the construction of their own identity. The autonomous communities of Catalonia, Madrid, Andalusia and Galicia have the largest number of live performance companies (all disciplines combined)<sup>35</sup>.

Cultural life in Spain is impregnated with popular and liturgical traditions that, for a long time, have turned the public place into a performance venue. So the circus, puppet theatre, the gestural theatre, mime, dance and street arts have traditionally been very present. Respondents and interviewees always pointed out their difficulties to work in good conditions: local authorities

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<sup>35</sup> Lacombe, R., op. cit., p. 288.

do not seem to pay attention to the specificities of street arts sector in Spain. Catalonia appears as the only “dynamic” region<sup>36</sup>.

### **3.2.1.7. Piedmont (Italy)**

The live performance has never been a priority for the State and the budget allocated to it in 2000 only reached 10% of total cultural expenditures<sup>37</sup>. The political context in terms of culture is now undergoing a financial crisis. Moreover, there is no framework law specific to the live performance (the only law for the sector dates back to 1985). The local authorities alone grant more credits to street arts. The Federazione Nazionale Arte di Strada (National Federation of Street Arts), based in Rome, is now recognised by the Ministry of Culture. The Piedmont region is the only one who recognised street arts as an artistic sector and even published a regional law on July 15, 2003 (‘Valorizzazione delle espressioni artistiche in strada’) to create specific grants for artists and organisers<sup>38</sup>.

The festivals and structures more particularly devoted to contemporary theatre or dance, regularly seeking experimental projects, have experienced an upsurge in interest for circus arts, and many festivals, some of them very important, have included circus shows in their programming<sup>39</sup>.

### **3.2.1.8. Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany)**

Germany is one of the main European dissemination markets for street arts. Street arts appeared in this country at the beginning of the 1990s, but they are currently suffering because of the crisis created by reunification and low level of recognition<sup>40</sup>. Cultural public action in Germany is played out on the local level: communes: 55%, Länder: 38%, federal State: 7%<sup>41</sup>. That is why the German system would like political recognition of street arts to come first from the regional and local authorities. Only the Land Nordrhein-Westfalen gives subsidies especially for street-arts via an institution which is called Kultursekretariat Gütersloh (€ 80 000 for street arts in 2005). Facing the low interest of Public institutions, companies can ask the “Fond Darstellende Künstler” and the “Kulturstiftung NRW” to give subsidies for a new project.

The first festivals came into being about 20 years ago, like Open-Flair (Eschwege), the International Street art festival of Holzminden (1991), La Piazza (Augsburg) or Welttheater der Straße (Schwerte) in 1984 and Tollwood (Munich) in 1986, followed in 1994 by Via-Thea-Festival (Görlitz). If some of them, not very many, exclusively programme street theatre, most include street arts in their programming (music and theatre festivals) or their commercial

<sup>36</sup> For example, the Oficina de Difusió Artística (ODA or Office for Artistic Dissemination) of the Delegation of Barcelona take into account of street arts. The most important street arts artists, companies or festivals are from Catalonia.

<sup>37</sup> Lacombe, R., op. cit., p. 321.

<sup>38</sup> This law was based on a three-year programme. The Piedmont region decided to sustain street arts for another three year in March 2007, increasing the number of grants and subsidies (visit [www.regione.piemonte.it](http://www.regione.piemonte.it)). Other Italian regions are now tempting to adapt this programme to their own territories.

<sup>39</sup> ‘In Italy, what destroyed street arts when it was developing and looking for a “formalisation” in the 1950s (moving from our historical tradition of Commedia dell’arte etc.) was a number of intellectuals and critics who moved against this form of art, because it was not intellectually structured (the most famous declaration was that of Rita Cirio, who wrote an article in *L’Espresso* saying ‘Tagliamo i trampoli al teatro di strada’). Therefore, Italian festivals were cut out from international circles.’ (Artistic Director, Italy).

<sup>40</sup> Here in Germany, most of street artists only perform for a few years, then they get tired with travelling a lot, being paid too little and working in bad conditions, and they give up.’ (Independent Producer, Germany).

<sup>41</sup> Lacombe, R., op. cit. p. 169.

activities (commercial fairs). We are now witnessing the arrival of many artists from the neighbouring countries of Eastern Europe.

### **3.2.2. General lack of recognition: some examples**

#### **3.2.2.1. Portugal**

It was necessary to wait for 1995 for culture to be placed, for the first time, under the aegis of its own ministry. Budget restrictions and the succession of six ministers of culture between 1995 and 2002 explain the recent institutionalisation of Portugal's cultural policy. Nevertheless, the Instituto das Artes (Institute of the Arts), which is part of the Ministry of Culture, allocates an increasing amount of aid to street arts projects. International tours may be favoured thanks to aid from the Cabinet of International Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Culture or the Cabinet of International Affairs of the Instituto das Artes or the Instituto Camões (Camões Institute) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### **3.2.2.2. Hungary**

Festivals play an important role in the dynamising of the Hungarian artistic landscape<sup>42</sup>. The Hungarian government does not intervene financially in favour of street arts but certain organisations can do so. They are generally private, cultural entities (themselves aided by local governments) providing funding. Cities may support this type of projects.

#### **3.2.2.3. Croatia**

Street arts projects are part of festivals or more complex projects and their evaluation is carried out in the framework of the jurisdiction of commissions like the Council for New Media, which covers "alternative" culture and "youth" culture. The Ministry of Culture of Croatia states that it is not in a position to provide the exact amount of funding dedicated to street arts projects. This funding is part of the non-specific aid system.

Street theatre has also found a few specific festivals such as Cest is d'Best (festival in which remuneration comes from passing the hat, created in 1996), Street Art Festival in Poreč (created 2001), Urban Festival (festival programming experimental art in public spaces, created in 2001). There is also ZadArsNova (created in 1997), which is held in the summer and programmes theatre and dance in the parks of the city of Zadar and Špancirfest in Varaždin.

#### **3.2.2.4. Slovenia**

Although there is no policy line explicitly in their favour, street arts are considered a full-fledged art form, accessible to publics and worthy of support. Even if subsidies remain low, they concern many street companies.

The support system consists of an annual bid for tender. Two types of aid can then be allocated: for production and post-production and to support dissemination abroad.

Since 2003, the Ministry of Culture has supported the 12 largest independent cultural producers and organisers on the basis of a three-year agreement. Renewal of this agreement and the related bid for tender takes place every three years (the next one is in 2007).

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<sup>42</sup> For the historical and political panorama, see Lacombe, R., op. cit., p. 355-378.

Today, these funding systems are broadening out and companies and young artists do not hesitate to request aid. Street arts have become a real priority for local authorities, like the Ljubljana urban region for the 2007 to 2013 period.

### 3.3. Operators

In most European countries, the importance of the local authorities and especially the cities as the leading funders of culture no longer needs to be proved. Their cultural role is moreover strengthened by a decentralising wave (accentuation of the role of federated entities or regionalisation) that affects all the European countries. When the States do not carry out a co-ordinated cultural policy in favour of street arts, local authorities and communities, and especially the cities<sup>43</sup>, may take the initiative. They take on the role of both organiser and funder of events in the street. These commitments could create a correspondence between the artistic approach of street artists and the new concerns of the cities, which must deal with the growth of the ghettoisation phenomenon, or which decide to include their cultural programming in their tourist attraction strategy or even in the redynamising of the local economy.

The important role of local administrations in this recognition is noted in France and in Flemish Belgium with the province of Limburg and the aid of Ghent (€ 150 000), Leuven (€ 300 000), Hasselt (€ 250 000) and Ostend (€ 500 000 – this amount is as big as the whole support for street arts sector by the French community...). In French-speaking Belgium, the province of Namur supports the festival Namur en mai. The initiative of Brussels deserves to be highlighted: a specific policy for street artists and shows has been implemented in this city but the budget allocated is not significant: Espace Spéculoos.

In Spain, cities as Madrid (and Getafe), Valladolid or Leioa also show a growing interest in street arts. In Croatia, the city of Zagreb regularly supports street arts activities: for example, it funds the Cest is d'Best festival for an amount of € 13 700. In the same spirit, the cities of Zadar, Pula, Split, Osijek, etc. have equally made a financial commitment. The city of Varaždin contributes about € 17 000 to the Špancirfest. From this viewpoint, political recognition of street arts helps strengthen the cultural role of local administrations.

### 3.4. Specific Actions

In France in 2003, the Federation of Street Arts asked the minister in charge of culture to draw up a programme in favour of street arts. In collaboration with HorsLesMurs, the French Ministry of Culture (DMDTS) established *Le Temps des arts de la rue 2005/2007*. It was a vital step in the official recognition of street arts. The challenge lies in the consolidation of this sector, which is still fragile, and in a better knowledge of its artistic research and its proposals. It concerns favouring its development by strengthening financial support from the State through new measures and encouraging support for it from local administrations. The goal of this “time of street arts” is also a part of the desire to decompartmentalise artistic disciplines by encouraging links between the live performance networks, thus permitting experimentation on new relationships with the arts<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> See the article: Fourreau, E., “Financements publics de la culture en Europe : les collectivités locales en première ligne”, *La Scène*, Nantes, June 2003.

<sup>44</sup> See *Le Temps des arts de la rue: bilan d'étape du programme 2005/2007*, les cahiers HorsLesMurs, special issue, HorsLesMurs, Paris, 2006.

The first plan dates back to 1994 and concerned aid for written projects, for the recognition of companies, festivals, and national centres for street arts. This was strengthened in 1999 by aid to street authors and, in 2002, by the establishment of the founding framework of an accompaniment policy. In 2005, the minister of culture announced new measures (and promised 2 million euros but finally gave 1 million in 2006). A steering committee was also set up that was representative of the different street arts partners (state/region/professionals) to work on the specific street arts project. This committee established nine working groups that were to deepen and re-examine questions specific to street arts. To implement their principal creation project, nine projects were defined including notably:

- The encounter between artistic, population and territorial approaches;
- Participation in the recognition of the qualification of street arts and the accompaniment of young artists;
- The opening of national multidisciplinary stages to street arts and programming at least three shows;
- Training;
- Aid for the creation of a master's degree in cultural projects; the broadening of knowledge;
- Support for a continuous research network;
- The extension to street arts of ONDA's dissemination projects (French National Office of Artistic Dissemination).

One of the flagship measures for street theatre is the networking, with increased financial resources, of nine venues in France, and their labelling as Centre national des arts de la rue (CNAR or National Street Arts Production Centres).

### **3.5. Conclusions and problems raised**

From the point of view of artists and cultural managers, the core issue concerning street arts in Europe lies in the general lack of recognition of the artistic quality of this kind of activity. Street arts are generally considered as a form of entertainment, not as a artistic production. Starting from the lack of recognition by governments and institutions, a set of problems derives, at local, national and European levels:

- The lack of money. Street arts are generally cut off public funding allocated to culture. Therefore, this lack is a great obstacle to mobility, influencing therefore professional education and international work, as well as to production, influencing the artistic dimension of activities.
- Lack of information. Studies concerning contemporary creation or live performance sector don't take into account this sector. European states don't establish rigorous statistics (number of professionals, amounts of stipends and subsidies, etc.).
- Lack of encouragement to development and structuring. For example, no European operator working for street arts was selected in 2006 in the framework of "support bodies active at European level in the field of culture". One more time, there are many disparities in the very development of street arts sector, most particularly between the new Member States and the countries of the West.



## CHAPTER 4: STREET ARTS IN THE URBAN SPACE

### 4.1. Background

Street artists using public spaces to present shows and installations to the inhabitants of any cities or settlements is one of the typical examples of how different forms of urban culture can be resuscitated in different periods and with different objectives and meanings. Street arts also prove that no urban, social or cultural phenomenon can ever be considered as entirely 'new'. The same is true in the case of current discourses treating culture as an emerging sector of the new economy, and, as a result, as a new factor determining urban development. Albeit one thing is evident: culture and city are never, were never, and will never be separable: they presuppose each other, they can never function without the other.

#### 4.1.1. Urban planning and urban regeneration

After a long silence, the street arts movement re-emerged during the 1960s and 1970s. Parallel to other forms of expression reinforced at that period, street arts sought to stress some political and social considerations. These years witnessed the launching of several urban movements such as the occupation of empty houses (squats), the re-use of industrial buildings or the creation of alternative cultural venues on the outskirts of cities.

Urban planners designed new structures for the cities: the permanently increasing belt of new neighbourhoods around the old historical centres was planned to be re-structured by new sub-centres<sup>45</sup>.

Street arts, but art and culture in general, once became again the main elements of urban policies. Reinforcing urban solidarity, reanimating and regenerating urban streets and urban centres, re-using abandoned urban spaces, integrating excluded social groups – all these notions came into the heart of the new urban cultural movement.

Following the social, cultural and political movements of the 1960s, mainly in medium-sized cities governed by left-oriented municipalities in Italy, urban policies began to refer to these movements. Organisation of street events and festivals became an important issue for these urban policies, aiming to achieve the same results as the social-cultural movements of the 1960s. In the 1970s, the role of culture in urban regeneration was still apprehended as a social action. It was only from the mid-1980s that the cultural development and cultural policy of cities acquired an economic aspect as a result of the public sector's crises and the reduction of the cultural sectors' public subsidies<sup>46</sup>.

Street arts had reappeared as an important field of urban arts during the 1960s and 1970s: at the same moment as urban planners recognised the danger of emptying the cities' traditional centres and increasing the number of neighbourhoods without any meaning, called 'les non lieux' by Chaudoir. Throughout the 1970s, street arts had been developing as integrated parts of social urban development and policy-making.

<sup>45</sup> 'The urban developers note, in these same years, their incapacity to do urban development and believe they are able to obtain their objective by using the intermediary of the street theatre to recover it', Chaudoir, P., *Arts de la rue et espace public*, op.cit., p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Bianchini, F., "Remaking European cities: The role of cultural policies", F. Bianchini and M. Parkinson (eds.), 1993 ; *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration - The West European Experience*, Manchester University Press, Manchester-New York , p. 1-21.



Street arts projected a new conception of the public space. Instead of regarding it as a functionalist space, half way between home and other “useful” spaces in the city (for work, shopping, leisure or culture) they proposed to treat public spaces as common places, usable by everyone. Public spaces appear in street arts movements as places for meeting, relaxing, going out and, of course, for culture and the arts, available to everyone. Street arts gave new identities to old city centres, and as such, became tools of the urban regeneration process.

#### 4.1.2. Culture and economic development

Culture, no doubt, acquired a new, enlarged and emphasised role in spatial and urban development starting in the mid-1990s. The new economy, which is also called the global economy, is partly based on the increasing weight of immaterial sectors (services and IT, the knowledge sector or tourism)<sup>47</sup>. Culture, cultural production and cultural services became one of the most rapidly developing sectors of the new economy<sup>48</sup>.

The global economy has another particularity as well: the parallel feature of concentration and deconcentration. On the one hand, economic production is concentrated in the largest urban areas (the “global cities”). On the other hand, deconcentration helps the revival of regions or cities that had lost their economic potential as a result of economic or political transformations. In the era of global economies, competitiveness is one of the key notions, referring to the fact that any location, any community or even any person can only keep its attractivity and therefore can only develop if it is able to obtain some special knowledge or some unique attraction. This rule became a core element of urban policies: cities and regions all seek to develop their special offer, special image and identity in order to maintain their competitiveness.

One way to become attractive is to develop something “unique”, which will serve as a label for the city in the future. And this is how we arrive at the role of culture today in urban development. Culture has a double meaning: creation on the one hand, and the ensemble of characteristics of a special place or community, in other words, identity, on the other. Culture is able, at the same time, to create and represent (maintain) local identities. And the term identity almost covers that little specialty that can make a place be special and attractive... Culture became a key factor for urban development, and this for a dual reason: its determining role in the new economy and its determining role in the creation and maintenance of regional and urban identities. The presence of sectors relevant to culture and creativity, i.e. the strength of the ‘creative economy’ became a key condition of urban competitiveness<sup>49</sup>. Street arts are one of cultural sector’s branches that represents the strongest relationship between art, urban space and urban development.

#### 4.2. Framework

By the 1990s and 2000s, in post-socialist countries, street arts continued to occupy a different position than in Western Europe. First, as a result of the withdrawal of public funding from cultural sector, an important segment of the street arts movement, with other types of the “off”

<sup>47</sup> The study *The Economy of Culture in Europe* proves this from more than one angle. This study, carried out by KEA European Affairs in cooperation with Media Group (Turku School of Economics) and MKW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH at the request of the European Commission, stresses both the direct contribution (in terms of GNP, growth and employment) and the indirect contribution (links with creativity and innovation, links with the ICT sector, development of the attractivity of regions) of the cultural and creative sector on the Lisbon Agenda.

<sup>48</sup> Scott, A., *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, Sage, London, 2000; Zukin, S., *Cultures of Cities*, New York, 1995.

<sup>49</sup> Landry, C., *The Creative City*, Comedia, London, 2000.

culture was omitted from cultural subsidies. Second, as a result of the weakness of the civil sector and the lack of recognition of citizens' "responsibility", all events desirous of enhancing social cohesion and urban restructuring remained marginal for almost the whole decade of the 1990s. Street arts only developed in countries where they already had their traditions (like Poland, Croatia and very partially Hungary), and they could not develop in countries where they had no traditions at all (like Latvia, Finland, Denmark). In these countries, street arts events and festivals are very often in conflict with the local authorities which consider them as dangerous events that disturb local life, creating disorder and frightening potential urban investors away from urban areas (this is less the case for events attracting direct economic or urban input as, for example, festivals financed by private funds or events promoting local development related to a municipality).

In several cases, in Eastern European countries, street arts still have a provocative impact on local and national policy-making. They tend to call attention to urban subjects that in other parts of Europe are already integrated into public spatial policies, such as the necessity of urban rehabilitation faced with demolition. One of the reasons for this particularity is certainly that urban development is still in another phase in this part of Europe: many deteriorated, run-down areas still need adequate policy-making in order to be integrated into urban development. In this mission, street artists very often find themselves in conflict with local actors: not explicitly with the local municipality, but also (and perhaps even more so), with economic investors who want to shape the areas according to their interests. As a result of their small budgets, municipalities are often subordinated to these investors. In these circumstances they are logically against street artists even if the latter intend to take in charge some duties of the municipality, such as social and spatial integration or the reinforcing of public solidarity... This has been stressed by a Latvian festival Director: 'There is a need for a different attitude on the part of the municipality. While working on state-owned sites, the duration of our presence is always limited. The state and the city aim to sell the land to private businesses as soon as its value reaches a certain level. For instance, the cultural events organised in abandoned factories are endangered by private businesses which are more and more willing to rent out these spaces for a market price. The same scenario is obvious in the case of the old port territories, where certain buildings were given to cultural NGOs for a limited time, in order to attract audiences and potential investors, buyers. The same with the old military district, when it gets popularised, the state gets it back from the cultural NGOs, and sells it. All these processes turn the situation of the independent cultural infrastructure into a more difficult one.'<sup>50</sup>

### 4.3. Tools

#### 4.3.1. The choice of area and neighbourhood

The majority of events are located in the city centre, concentrating economic and tourism attractions. Intermediate areas, between the centre and the outskirts, are the second most attractive areas for street arts events, especially in largest cities. And finally, the least number of the events are organised in suburban areas. Nevertheless, at least two types of locations have

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with a Latvian operator. And also: 'Usually if a company has a large working space, it has invested a lot of private money into the creation of the space. There was in Sardinia a funding law which supported restructuring of buildings for theatrical use etc. but it has not been applied now for several years. The Region of Sardinia has also invested a lot of European money on restructuring ex-theatres in different towns, but without involving the artists and without thinking of who is going to run the theatre. The consequence: the theatres are restructures without consulting those who work in them and often the buildings are ready, but there is no keeper or organiser who runs the theatre. A lot of cathedrals in the desert.' (Director and Artist, Italy – interview)

been cited interviewees and respondents. Besides, a lot of permanent venues are generally located in the intermediate areas of cities.

Some of the events located in the historical areas (centres) of cities are organised in cities of countries that have recently gone through a deep economic, social and spatial transformation (for instance Ireland, Romania, Hungary, Croatia or Latvia). As a result, these historical city centres still often present as many social and urban problems as the outskirts do in other countries.

An unambiguously positive feature is that the second most-used type of space is that of brown-field areas: abandoned and run-down industrial sites that constitute one of the major problems for urban policies<sup>51</sup>.

Some areas have but limited interest for street arts events as they are generally less open for the sometimes "disturbing" noisy events in the streets. That is the reason why residential areas are in general less frequented by street arts events than areas with complex functions (economic, commercial and residential).

#### **4.3.2. Partnerships**

The majority of partnerships have been established with different local institutions and associations as well as with other non-profit organisations. Sometimes as a result of the differences of terminologies in diverse countries, these two types of partnerships can overlap one another. Partnerships with the local municipality and the inhabitants (or their special associations) are still very prevalent.

In the majority of cases, municipalities do give free technical support for street arts events: lighting, sound system, etc. It also helps to obtain more easily and quickly the permits needed from other authorities and particularly the police. There are however exceptions to this positive engagement of municipalities. In Germany, the municipality only supports the street arts event if it is financed by public funds. If it is a private event, it has to pay for all technical services. In the United Kingdom, local municipalities give no help to street arts events. Most typically in Eastern and Central Europe, street arts events are often in conflict with local municipalities.

#### **4.4. Operators**

Obviously, there is a lack of information regarding regulation aspects on street arts and open-air performances<sup>52</sup>. It is very difficult to collect data, national regulations being so different and not harmonised. Permissions required for the occupation of public space is an obvious part of street arts events. These permissions are generally delivered by local municipalities. The most

<sup>51</sup> 'The location usually depends on the topic. We organise events all over the city, but most often in the city-centre. But we are also investigating new territories. As there are only five or six theatres in Riga, which is a very small number, we are forced to look for new locations. We discovered several post-industrial spaces where we organise events, mostly site-specific projects. These spaces in industrial areas allow us to develop new concepts and involve people and architecture in different ways. We also organise specific programs on the beach, in the streets and in the fortress.' (Festival Director, Latvia – interview).

<sup>52</sup> Most artists provide a technical specification of materials and machinery that the host needs to provide. There may be confusions arising from misunderstandings over requirements, companies forgetting to mention key elements, or different names or specifications in different countries for artists' needs – e.g. voltage, theatre lighting, floor coverings, stages/raised platforms. There may also be issues about insurance and driving licences for industrial facilities that need to be leased.

frequent rules, as has been stated above, are related to public order. These rules appear in different forms: as rules concerning the disturbance of traffic, the acquisition of permits for blocking and moving cars (e.g. Italy), permits to organise an event lasting past midnight (e.g. Italy), rules for the maintenance of official working hours (e.g. Germany)<sup>53</sup>.

Two main authorities are the local municipalities and the local police. As answers have confirmed, street arts events are local events where main responsibilities are kept at the local level. In some cases, special permits must be purchased from other public authorities.

As safety is the most important and sometimes the most costly part of art events and festivals organised in public spaces, questionnaires tended to reveal whether street arts companies and organisations obtain any financial or practical support for safety matters. In the majority of cases, the local police are responsible for order and safety. As a public body, safety insurance is one of the tasks of local police and therefore is in general a free service for street arts events once they have obtained their permits for performing in the public space. In some cases, the local municipality finances safety insurance, as a form of subsidy supporting the street arts event.

Safety has also been taken in charge – at least partly – by private resources. The biggest structures or festivals with a big budget may finance safety insurance from private or semi-private companies.

## **4.5. Specific actions**

### **4.5.1. Street arts impacts<sup>54</sup>**

#### ***4.5.1.1. On urban space***

A street arts event may change the whole urban area; temporarily transform the use of the place and the relationship between the space and its inhabitants. It may create a new history for neighbourhoods, transform their old customs, or contribute to their identities.

Estimating street arts' impact on urban development is quite a difficult exercise. But street artists are conscientious about their role in cities. Having a direct effect on urban development is generally not among the direct objectives of street arts events. An impact on space is one of the main goals of almost one third of the events.

Street arts events mainly have an effect on the neighbourhood level, either in the form of creating new spaces, or by contributing to the regeneration of an area. Nevertheless, these events are only rarely “strong” enough to generate transformations on a city-wide level.

#### ***4.5.1.2. On social cohesion***

Chaudoir defines social cohesion as the effect on the ‘public-inhabitants’. Street arts integrate the ordinary inhabitants of the city by transforming them into spectators, and as such, pushing them to become the active public of street arts spectacles (see sections 5.2.2. and 5.5.).

<sup>53</sup> See the comparative study between France and Hungary in Krisztina Keresztély's report in annex 2.

<sup>54</sup> Partly based on the definitions proposed by Philippe Chaudoir, this section describes the main impacts of contemporary street arts on cities.

Almost all respondents and interviewees stated that street arts did have some social effects. The main effects are on social integration and inclusion. The two effects are in general mentioned as parallel ambitions of artists and organisers<sup>55</sup>.

#### 4.5.1.3. On economy

Street arts events and festivals may generate economic growth by attracting new investments, ranging from small business to large cultural investments. They may promote the international image and attractiveness of the city and as a result increase its economic potential even more. They can also become elements of cultural tourism. While street arts actually do attract economic potential, institutions, investors and other economic actors do not contribute in the same proportion to the funding of street arts events. This does not mean that these events are never sponsored; many of them are. But the capacity of their economic attractiveness and the weight of the financial support they benefit are certainly not equal. The impact of cultural events on local economy has been strongly emphasised by several studies. We can quote *Festivals and the creative region – The economic and social benefits of cultural festivals in the East Midlands* (De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom), or *Brighton Festival 2004, Everyone Benefits... The Economic and Cultural Impact of Brighton Festival upon Brighton and Hove* (Brighton, United Kingdom) for example. The very good study *The Economy of Culture in Europe*, commissioned to a group of experts by the European Commission, underlined the importance of the cultural sector for the European economy<sup>56</sup>.

#### 4.5.1.4. On urban and cultural policies

As soon as public policies recognised the necessity of enhancing social and spatial integration in cities, the street arts movements were used as part of cultural policies aiming at generating social changes. Street arts may become one of the tools for urban and cultural development. Street arts is also often used by local policy makers. For municipalities, it is a way of creating publicity for their area and of attenuating the social tensions characterising this area. Of course, these changes do not mean that the protest or provocative character of street arts has entirely disappeared during the last few decades. This only shows that like all other disciplines or branches, street arts are also diversifying: there are initiatives supporting political aims, there are profit-oriented ones, while some others represent different social, urban, or cultural interests.

Artists are convinced of the importance of developing their activities in public spaces. When estimating the sustainability of their actions, artists and street arts organisers agree on the long-term results of their events. This general opinion shows that there is a conscious acknowledgment of the need for such events in all the cities in question<sup>57</sup>.

Artists whose activities are not related to a special city or area usually see their role differently, and express it as being only ephemeral. The positive vision expressed by interviewees on the values that street arts events and festivals represent in the city explains their determination to continue their projects. However, several among them underlined the uncertainty of their funding conditions: 'The present the political context is very difficult, it is not easy to preview

<sup>55</sup> The Technical Director of a French venue indicated in interview: 'Creating the urban environment is in fact the mission of La Villette. We aim at structuring inhabitant-city relationships'.

<sup>56</sup> See *The economy of culture in Europe*, report to the European Commission by Kean European Affairs (with Media Group and MKW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH), October 2006; see also the report carried out by the European Festivals Association ([www.efa-aef.org](http://www.efa-aef.org)). See also section 4.1.2.

<sup>57</sup> 'Our project has been fulfilling every urban effect given on the list above and the effects are more visible and present in our city as time goes by.' (Festival Director, Croatia – interview).

the sustainability of the festival.’<sup>58</sup>; ‘Our festival has a permanent problem with funding. The city government has no conditions to pay for what we offer with our programmes and thus open some possibilities for new co-operation, expansion and the development of new ideas.’<sup>59</sup>

In spite of these often difficult situations, no professionals consider that there is no future and no possibility for continuation. Most of them have new plans: the extension, the delocalisation of their activities, or the research of new partnerships.

#### 4.5.2. European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programmes

As has been stated in the report of Robert Palmer concerning the role of street arts in ECOC programmes: ‘All ECOC cultural programmes included projects taking place in public space. Street parades, open-air events and festivals appeared prominently across the board. For some cities this was very high on their agenda and was often part of a strategy to increase participation in culture. Both the creation of art in public spaces and the organisation of specific events in public space were given considerable attention, and were generally the projects that received the most public and media attention.’<sup>60</sup>

From the point of view of street arts ECOC programmes in the different cities covered entirely different types of events. Opening events and large-scale parades were (and are) the most visible and favourite forms of street arts events: ‘Over half of the cities cited their opening event, usually involving some form of outdoor celebration, as being one of the most successful projects in terms of public attention. These opening events generally consisted of an evening, day or weekend of festivities and events that attracted large crowds (Brussels, Porto, Graz, Copenhagen each recorded an attendance of over 100 000 people and Lille recorded an unexpected 600 000 people). Many respondents spoke of the opening event as one of the most memorable occasions of the year where cities came to a standstill as people filled the streets’<sup>61</sup>. Street arts had different emphases in different ECOC cities. For instance, in Luxembourg (1995) street arts occupied an important place even if it was not the priority of the ECOC programmes. Some cities where street arts were of great importance during the programmes: Bruges (2002), Graz (2003), Lille (2004)<sup>62</sup>.

#### 4.6. Conclusions and problems raised

Street arts are increasingly considered as a good and useful method for cities to enhance their attractiveness and to improve their images. This appears very clearly in the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) programmes. Street arts events are used here as large events attracting crowds of people in order to call a wide attention on the city, or as artworks aiming to change the conception of the city on its own public and natural spaces.

Regulations that are present almost in all countries are related to noise, to fire and to the occupation of public space. Concerning these regulations, countries try to create laws that conform to the European Union’s directives. Permits for street arts events and festivals are

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with Portuguese Artistic Director.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with a Croatian festival Director.

<sup>60</sup> Palmer/RAE Associates: *European Cities and Capitals of Culture*, Study prepared for the European Commission, Brussels, 2004.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

purchased in the majority of cases, by the local authorities: the local municipality and the local police.

If street artists are often welcome in the urban space, their work is made difficult by a host of restrictive regulations (public safety, noise pollution, pyrotechnics, etc.) that differ from one country to another, sometimes from one city to another:

- Large number of contacts who are likely to supply all the authorisations required for the smooth functioning of the event.
- Complex procedures (payment for administrative steps, time-consuming, lack of accompaniment by the technical departments of the regional administrations, customs and security barriers with artistic equipment, etc.).
- Taking into account the different artistic approaches in their concrete executions (diversion of circulation, fitting out of spaces, storage of equipment, etc.).

The authorities, technicians and artists are working in proximity, but they are not always aware of the rights and duties of his contacts. There are no reference documents that bring together all the practical information for artistic events to be held under the best conditions in the urban space.

On the other hand, it would be very interesting to develop interdisciplinary research on the challenges and the place of Art in the public space in Europe.

## CHAPTER 5: STREET ARTS AUDIENCES

### 5.1. Background

The expansion to Bulgaria and Romania on January 1, 2007 has made the European Union a gathering of nearly 580 million inhabitants. Can they be envisaged as 580 million potential spectators? Street arts pointedly raise the question of the conquest of those excluded from art and culture. How can street arts, by shifting the territory of art, help reduce this artistic and cultural divide from which all the European populations are led to suffer?

#### 5.1.1. Diversity of the audiences?

The street arts publics in Europe cannot be isolated from the much greater question of the publics of culture and the live performance. Thanks to the surveys on cultural practices, habits and behaviours that a great many European countries have been conducting since the 1970s, the social determinants of the attendance of show venues and of the different genres (opera, concerts, theatre, dance, etc.) are now known. One comparative international study has even shown that, with rare exceptions, it is the same factors (education, age, gender, income, place of residence) that influence or determine, in the same way everywhere, access to the show.

#### 5.1.2. “New Audiences program”

In England, The Arts Council of England funded, from 1998 to 2003, an enormous programme called New Audiences Program<sup>63</sup> intended to support the many innovative actions that aimed, as a priority, at the populations not reached by art. It concerned on one hand targeting the so-called ‘prevented’ publics and on the other experimenting with new action modes by notably developing projects outside artistic and cultural institutions and projects directly involving the population.

Street arts fit fully into an approach (which goes beyond them) that attempts to conquer new publics. Through the work of these urban artists, the public space becomes a potential place for the convocation of art, and by this means, a common space to be shared. From this viewpoint, street arts seem to be in a position to take up the challenge of a cultural democratisation that is still pending<sup>64</sup>.

### 5.2. Framework

#### 5.2.1. “Festivalisation”

Street arts are taking part in a global movement of the “festivalisation” of cultural practices in Europe. They now find themselves faced with the same challenges as all festivals. The initial

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<sup>63</sup> [www.newaudiences.org.uk](http://www.newaudiences.org.uk)

<sup>64</sup> ‘One can believe or not in the social impact of theatre. Inside the very theatre, it is actually the street theatre which has a larger “field of fire”, because apart from the conscious spectators it also reaches some random onlookers. It has a chance to reach a greater number of people. The street performances give a chance of meeting to various groups of people, who in other circumstances would rather avoid each other (for instance in England, among the audience of our performance there were punks sitting along with very elegant spectators; it was even more striking in India, where spectators were from different casts). It creates more egalitarian conditions of reception and other mechanisms of reception.’ (Artistic Director, Poland – interview).



work of researchers brought together in the European Festival Research Project (EFRP)<sup>65</sup> since May 2004 has observed that festivals, whatever their type and nature, are characterised by joint problems, in particular concerning their impact on the populations: ‘Festivals have become emblematic for the issues (...) and contradictions of the current cultural practices, marked by globalization, European integration, institutional fatigue, dominance of cultural industry and shrinking public subsidies. Festivals reshape the public spaces in Europe, assert new focal points beyond the traditional cultural centres and further the intercultural competence of all parties involved.’<sup>66</sup>

The tensions are complex between internationalisation and local siting, support for contemporary creation and mainstream programming, the fleetingness of the event and belonging to the long term... As a festival constitutes a challenge in a city, street arts festivals investing public spaces find themselves all the more so in the eye of the hurricane.

### 5.2.2. Local siting: the relationship to the population

The influence of a festival on local development can sometimes be considerable. Its influence, whether it is regional, national or even international, gives rise to many benefits for the area where it is set up, as a form of local social cohesion and a galvanising role for the economics. Festivals (and for all the more reason as they take place in the public space) often therefore attract the sympathies of elected officials and regional administrations.

This festival context also has an influence on the type of publics reached. Street arts festivals in particular are in a position to play a role in an urban development policy. They can propose a shift in the urban centre of gravity, draw the attention of the area’s inhabitants and visitors to neighbourhoods that are not known or even abandoned. They induce a new perception of the city and modify its flows during the festivities and perhaps, even in a more durable way.

The multi-siting of a festival in the urban fabric determines to a great extent the public’s participation and induces the targeted public. The challenge is therefore even greater to know what public it should be attempted to reach, rather than how many people one tries to bring into the streets.

## 5.3. Operators

How can a public be quantified when the question is one of a crowd taking part in an event characterised by free admission and access? Despite the methodological complexities inherent in the subject studied, the rare surveys available contribute very important elements of knowledge.

### 5.3.1. Keys to success

The survey conducted in 2005 by the nine festivals belonging to the Eunetstar network<sup>67</sup>, combined with local studies, demonstrate the formation of a composite public. The public

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.efa-aeef.eu/efahome/efrp.cfm>

<sup>66</sup> Klaic, D., *Conclusions of a preparatory meeting of festival researchers*, EFRP, Brussels 1-2 May 2004, not paginated (<http://www.efa-aeef.eu/efahome/efrp.cfm>).

<sup>67</sup> Eunetstar was a European street arts production and touring pluri-annual programme bringing together nine festivals: Internationaal Straattheater Festival in Ghent (Belgium); Namur en mai in Namur (Belgium); Stockton International Riverside Festival in Stockton (Great Britain); Galway Arts Festival in Galway (Ireland);

usually difficult to reach makes its appearance here, attesting to the street artists' capacity to call upon and unite an entire population. Three factors determine the practice of street festivals and shows.

### **5.3.1.1. Entertainment**

The spectators at the Eunetstar network festivals queried on the party atmosphere state that they especially liked it (70% in Sibiu, 76% in Ghent, 86% in Cognac and 95% in Oerol). It is therefore throughout Europe that the festive, party factor is important in the practice of street arts publics. The concentration over a short period of a large number of shows and a large number of people acts as an attraction factor. Above and beyond a desire to party, the spectators were won over by the relaxed and unsophisticated atmosphere surrounding the street shows.

### **5.3.1.2. Free admission and freedom of circulation**

Even if free admission is not the miracle solution for winning over the "hard-to-reach audience", this principle as well as free circulation also becomes major factors. Free admission is perceived as an effective democratisation vector. Moreover, the spectators are aware of the political commitment that this free admission to the shows they attend represents. As proof, 90% of the spectators queried in the framework of a study concerning the publics of English street arts festivals (2003) think that this constitutes a good use of public funding<sup>68</sup>.

Street arts have a complex relationship with free admission. Whereas it is consubstantial to the very philosophy of street arts for certain people, others believe that it depends on the form of the show, which can justify paying admission. All festival operators and programmers do not hold the same opinion on free admission and certain festivals apply it to all their programming while others almost always charge admission. Today, most of the shows proposed in the European public space are free of charge, as observed by respondents. The French philosopher Jean-Louis Sagot-Duvaroux draws attention to the crucial stake that free admission constitutes, at a time when society is largely based on mercantile values<sup>69</sup>.

### **5.3.1.3. A socialising outing**

If the breakdowns between outings as a family and outings with friends vary considerably from one country to another, the street show and festival are sociability spaces. The *Coup de chauffe* festival in Cognac (France) is especially attended by families (32% state that they are accompanied by their spouse and 23% by their children) while the Malta festival in Poznan (Poland) is a meeting place for friends (37% came with a friend and 36% with several friends while only 7% came with their spouse and 3% with their children). The presence of children is extremely variable from one country to another and from one dissemination context to another. The Eunetstar survey brought out their almost total absence from its festivals. On the other

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Terschellings in Oerol (Netherlands); Coup de chauffe in Cognac (France); Malta in Poznan (Poland); Ana Desetnica in Ljubljana (Slovenia); Sibiu International Theatre Festival in Sibiu (Romania).

<sup>68</sup> *National Street Arts Audience*, Independent Street Arts Network (ISAN), Summer 2003, p. 4 ([www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk)). The study concerned the publics of seven English street arts festivals: x.trax/Decibel Showcase (Manchester), Streets of Brighton (Brighton), The Big Weekend (part of Cardiff Summer Festival), City of London Festival (London), Merseyside International Street Arts Festival (Liverpool), Garden of Delights (Manchester), Slough Arts Alive (Slough).

<sup>69</sup> Sagot-Duvaroux, J.-L., "Les valeurs de la gratuité", *Espace gratuit?*, Mouvement n° 29 (June-July 2004): 'Public commitment in the production of a free good is a political choice, a choice made by politicians faced with society's needs and proposals. The survival and development of street arts depend on these choices.'

hand, England had, on average in the six festivals, almost 40% of the people queried who were accompanied by children.

### **5.3.2. Socio-demographic and economic trends**

#### **5.3.2.1. Age and gender**

Apart from the Sibiu festival (Romania) where there are more men than women and the case of Namur (Belgium) where their number is equal, the street arts festival public is primarily made up of women. The increasing number of women constituting street arts publics clearly is connected with these publics' youth. This phenomenon is positive, bearing in mind the relative desertion of cultural venues by young populations (apart from cultural outings imposed by schools). Out of the average of the seven countries concerned, over half (57%) of the public was under 35 years old.

Another important phenomenon: the mobilisation of a range of relatively varied age brackets, especially in the countries of Western Europe (Belgium, France, Netherlands, Great Britain), whereas most artistic disciplines in the live performance sector are characterised by publics whose age is much segmented. If the conditions of attendance for street shows make access more difficult for older people (limited comfort), the populations of those over 50 are nonetheless present.

#### **5.3.2.2. Social categories**

Eunetstar study points out that in Eastern Europe, street arts publics are definitely younger and have a higher percentage of women. Logically, they are almost all students and recent graduates. It is also here that we come across more senior executives and people exercising the professions. In Western Europe, the breakdown of the socio-professional categories of the publics encountered matches that of the composition of the population of the city in which the festival is held. Even so, a basic trend is emerging, similar to that of the countries in Eastern Europe. Higher socio-professional categories are over-represented compared to the national averages. This over-representation logically fits in with the average levels of post high-school education. Street arts, like the live performance sector as a whole, inevitably attract the privileged social classes in large numbers.

Alongside managers, teachers and employees are students/pupils whose large number has been stressed, as well as 10% farmers and 4% pensioners<sup>70</sup>. These last three categories correspond to the categories of populations usually the most absent from theatres and generally speaking cultural practices. If it cannot be asserted that the street arts public is a popular public, it must be put forth that there is a tendency for it to become so and succeed in attracting the types of populations absent in the live performance<sup>71</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> The definition of a popular public proposed by Jack Lang, French Minister of Culture under the presidency of François Mitterrand, can on this level serve as a point of reference. A popular public constitutes "a sample, a reduced model of the entire population, in all its sociological components" (Lang, J., *L'État et le théâtre*, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1968, p. 177).

<sup>71</sup> 'What we recognize as a priority to change the situation is to work on the non-audience, people who do not attend theatre, cinema... people who are not involved in culture, not only into street arts. Then we can work on two levels: in a "passive" way, making them see a performance, or with an active approach, involving them in the construction and production of a performance. This is what street arts are doing: going in the blocks (where people live) and involve them.' (Festival Director, Belgium – interview).

### 5.3.3. Mixed audience

#### 5.3.3.1. *Street arts and cultural consumption*

On the whole, in Europe, over half of the people queried on their practices (by national institutes or Eunetstar, for example) state that they had not visited a cultural facility or event over the preceding 12 months. If this is also the case for the Eunetstar network publics interviewed, it is in a clearly lesser proportion than for the rest of the population. The people queried clearly attend movies, visit historic monuments, museums and exhibitions more often than the European average. Likewise, nearly three quarters of them said that they went to the theatre during the previous year, whereas this is the case for only one fifth of all Europeans.

The types of outings practiced by the people queried in the nine Eunetstar festivals show a rather high proportion of "classics", otherwise called "multi-culture": they take real advantage of the whole range of the cultural offering proposed to them. For these spectators, the street show is a potential cultural practice, in the same way as dance, theatre or an exhibition at the modern art museum. This point demonstrates the recognition of this disciplinary field by the live performance public.

#### 5.3.3.2. *The street arts "fans"*

Street arts publics are generally loyal and regular attendees. If the results vary greatly from one event to the other, about one third of the people queried in the Eunetstar survey consider themselves festival "habitués". The street festival crowds are clearly composed in part of spectators and not simple bystanders casually strolling in overcrowded streets.

Moreover, over half the people state that they had seen, apart from the festivals where they were queried, a street show during the preceding 12 months and had attended other street festivals. Consequently, there is now a niche public, exclusive and amateur, and undoubtedly knowledgeable, for street arts. Moreover other than their desire to address uninitiated publics, street artists have succeeded in winning over and creating loyalty in publics who are reticent about cultural practices.

#### 5.3.3.3. *Loyalty creation*

Eunetstar brings to our attention the fact that 60% of the festival-goers do not know what they are going to see. These attitudes bear witness to a kind of 'drifting attention' that belongs more to entertainment rather than to a proactive cultural practice. As proof, 20% of the people queried said that used the festival's programme. This practice can be interpreted as the sign of a certain lack of interest in the proposed artistic quality. Conversely, such an opportunistic attitude can engender the discovery of contemporary artistic forms that the spectator would perhaps never have intentionally seen.

This challenge of the relationship to the work is not specific to street arts but this artistic field offers a particularly eloquent illustration of it. The technological mutations and the radical aesthetic changes that have marked the arts of the twentieth century have clearly increased the porosity of the borders between culture and leisure, between the world of art and entertainment. Street shows are in fact located right at this juncture: they are both an artistic production and a distraction. This is perhaps where a public may be seen emerging on the margin of the traditional ways of coming into contact with art and culture.

## 5.4. Tools

The analysis of the questionnaires showed us that no programmer had personally turned his attention to the study of his festival's audience. The sociological evaluation, the qualitative approach to publics and their personal motivations remains a very rare practice. As of this date, there is no large-scale study that makes it possible to respond to the question of publics on a European scale.

The studies available are above all local<sup>72</sup>. They were carried out in different European countries, demonstrating the concern of the actors in the field to acquire knowledge to complement their own intuitive and pragmatic knowledge. Street arts festivals have no shortage of publics. The crowd is present, in Brighton (England), Aurillac (France), Sibiu (Romania), Malta (Poland) and Bologna (Italy). These thousands of people who crowd the streets elude more precise knowledge. Who are they? Are they spectators? Bystanders? The surveys adopt very diverse approaches depending on their country of implementation. Pierre Bourguignon, mayor of Sotteville-lès-Rouen (France), who had a study<sup>73</sup> done in 1998 on the publics of the Viva Cité festival, refrained from taking a 'marketing analysis' approach. In his opinion, such studies should be used to envisage "how our cultural practice, our cultural action can be more focused vis-à-vis the only challenge that is worthwhile for us, that is, being constantly involved, with our fellow citizens, in the construction of the living space"<sup>74</sup>. In England, research is focused more on the public's satisfaction and, especially, on the economic and social feedback, on the event at the heart of the city. Despite such divergences in viewpoints, the figures and results produced supply solid expertise at the service of project sponsors. Knowledge of street arts publics also constitutes a critical tool for the recognition and the legitimisation of the sector that has made the relationship with the public a major aesthetic challenge. Yves Deschamps, a historic actor in the street arts sector in France, stresses it with pragmatism: "All forms of studies, whether they are quantitative or qualitative, are justifications for going out to conquer (...) the means to make available to artists so that they can meet the public that is not talked about, the one that is not quantified, namely, about 80% of the population!"<sup>75</sup>

## 5.5. Specific Actions

Festivals, were, in the 1990s, the focus of criticism. Certain major festivals like Aurillac multiply the show offering at the same time in the city, but do not necessarily target "readability" for the spectators, especially as concerns the shows in the 'off' programme. Consequently, it must be mentioned that festivals today have a difficult time fulfilling their cultural democratisation mission. In France and Belgium, many actors in the field have turned their attention to this problem. Associating it with the aptitude of street artists to invest the public space and, more globally, a given territory, they have envisaged new forms of encounters between street artists and their potential publics.

In order to reach other publics, the actors in the field are attempting to go beyond two types of logic: the unity of siting (a single city) and the unity of time (a very short period, usually during the summer). With this dynamic, the question of the public is taken up to a greater extent from

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<sup>72</sup> See bibliography.

<sup>73</sup> SCP Communication, *Viva Cité*, 1998. Synthesis of the study available from Atelier 231, Centre national des arts de la rue, France.

<sup>74</sup> Bourguignon, P., cited in Gonon, A., "De la connaissance à la reconnaissance", in *La relation au public dans les arts de la rue*, L'Entretiens, col. Carnets de rue, Paris, 2006, pp. 111-112.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

the viewpoint of the appropriation of a cultural project by a population. The question here is doing something for the population, with the population, with the idea of associating it with the project and, by extension, of transfiguring it in public during the time the show is presented.

Collaboration with local associations, elected officials and inhabitants who wish to get involved makes it possible to make the project an integral part of the territory, rather than having it drop in from nowhere. As street artists have no need of any formatted infrastructure (hall or theatre), they can work and produce everywhere, from a neighbourhood in a large city to a small village with 50 inhabitants.

In the framework of the New Audiences programme developed in England, many experiments were carried out concerning the involvement of the populations in the project developed. The results attest that “the principle of participating in the project constitutes an extremely profitable way of coming in contact with art and culture.”<sup>76</sup>

This participation can take place during artists' residences or through the population's inclusion in shows. The artists owe it to themselves to be very clear as to the status and function they then give to the inhabitants involved, this inclusion principle being the ultimate degree of encounter between the artist and the population that he is trying to address. In this regard, the circulation of artists in Europe seems to be as important a challenge as the circulation of the publics themselves. The confrontation with ‘the other’, through art, does not leave the artist unaffected, or the population either.

## 5.6. Conclusions and problems raised

As the primary dissemination mode of street arts in Europe remains the festival at this time, the street arts publics are currently principally festival-going publics, with the basic characteristics that such a dissemination context implies. The holding of artistic proposals in an open milieu, with free access and admission, reveals all its impact in terms of attendance.

If street arts do not escape the determinism of socio-professional and educational factors, they nevertheless succeed in uniting the most diverse and popular publics. Heterogeneity demonstrates the artists' capacity to reach the population in all its diversity. All age brackets are represented, as well as all the socio-professional categories. If the breakdown of these categories does not precisely reflect national averages, the most ordinarily under-represented or even absent categories in live performance publics are well represented here.

The heterogeneity of street arts publics induces cohabitation between publics with various cultural practices and plural attitudes. Spectators with a great deal of theatre experience find themselves beside those who are amateurs solely of street arts and novice spectators whose attention still must be focused on the works.

The development of alternative dissemination projects relying on long-term work anchored in a territory attests to the capacity of street arts to be a local development tool that unites publics. From this viewpoint, the mobility of street arts must be enhanced and supported. By going to meet the populations of other countries, the artists can thus compare their vision of the world to other cultures and encourage the emergence of a common, trans-border identity through an artistic act that is uniting because it includes the population.

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<sup>76</sup> Rose, C., “Audience participation”, *Essential Audiences*, issue 69, Arts Council England, New Audiences Program (<http://www.newaudiences.org.uk/resource.php?id=306>).

Nevertheless, we observe the very limited knowledge of the audiences that attend these events. Except the study conducted by Eunetstar and some very local works (France, Belgium, United Kingdom), there are no surveys on effects of programming, capacity, annual period and hours of shows, topography of the venues, etc.

## CHAPTER 6: MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND DIFFUSION

### 6.1. Background

Approaching the question of production and dissemination in the field of street arts at the European level leads to the exploration, in the first place, of the activity of festivals. It is in fact mainly through them that we can observe the flow of creations and companies, the amount of the transactions, the budget share and the sources of their financing, as well as the limitations that weigh on their development. Nevertheless, the answers provided by the questionnaires do not, at this time, make it possible to draw up a sufficiently clear and exhaustive evaluation of the situation. Enumerating the companies invariably brings up the professional/amateur distinction that many contacts have trouble making. It raises the questions of the status of artist but also education, etc. The multiplicity of actors, the diversity of contracts, the rate scale, would require a case by case study per country that would have to be very detailed. The lack of knowledge on the part of producers and artists, currently mentioned, raises several questions we will expose here.

#### 6.1.1. Context of production and touring

##### 6.1.1.1. *Street festivals today*

There are a very large number of street festivals across Europe. Every country in the European Community holds at least one festival that features street artists alongside indoor performing or visual or multimedia arts; a few countries do not have a festival dedicated purely to street arts, but around half have more street festivals than they could count easily, with new ones added every year. France has many more street festivals than any other European country and the scale and ambition of some of the festivals there is impressive. There are nearly 600 festivals that open their programming to street arts in Europe, of which about 250 are in France. Artists perform predominantly at festivals in their own countries, though international touring is growing. Some large-scale companies have only survived because they are able to work a pan-European circuit, because of the scale and cost of their shows.

It should also be noted that street arts promoters are largely from non-profit organisations, theatre companies or community associations. In several countries, festivals are also organised by local government departments, or by individuals contracted to a local government body with the purpose of running a festival. In many cases, this makes a much simpler and easier relationship between artistic and logistical production of a festival, but not always.

##### 6.1.1.2. *The marketplace/showcase*

A good way of encouraging the production and dissemination of street artists' creations is the showcase or marketplace festival, so that artists may be seen by visiting programmers from other festivals. There may be talks, discussions and proposals from companies with "work in progress". Showcase festivals are sometimes useful ways of finding work. Some artists who have been to them claim that an appearance at Chalon, Aurillac or Sotteville is essential in France. For getting work in other parts of Europe, programmers and artists described Hasselt,



Namur or Ghent in Belgium, Oerol in the Netherlands, x.trax (Manchester) or Brighton in the United Kingdom, Tàrraga or Valladolid in Spain<sup>77</sup>.

The principle behind showcase or marketplace festivals is that all artists are performing especially for visiting programmers as well as to the public. Significant efforts are made by the festival organisation to attract programmers. Detailed guides to all performances are supplied to all attending, along with companies' contact details<sup>78</sup>. 200-300 programmers may be regularly found at the larger festivals in Europe.

Nevertheless, festival/venue directors, union's representatives or policy-makers are not always enthusiastic about marketplaces. For them, these places don't help street arts sector to improve the quality of shows, since there is no selection to participate (or barely, e. g. Italy). In several European countries, professionals state a showcase festival is a place artists are not paid to present their work: they do not release from benefit which they can invest, partly or entirely, in their artistic productions. Thus, the notion of "marketplace" or "showcase" is not the same in United Kingdom or in Belgium.

### 6.1.2. Annual programme of street arts

It is clear both from festival organisers and artists that there exist few opportunities for professional companies to get work outside of the festival (summer) season<sup>79</sup>. In Britain, interviewees observe now a significantly higher use of street artists for traditional festive occasions – Easter, Halloween, Christmas and New Year (again, usually at a festive occasion)<sup>80</sup>. France is a pioneer in the presentation of street shows throughout the year, especially connected to the creation centres and other residencies. This is partly in order to spread the number of working months for which artists are able to get paid work, and also to encourage audiences to come to see different street arts shows outside of a festival context. Networks of promoters and artists are being established in hubs around towns and cities, whose aim is to maximise the opportunities for artists to tour around a locality, establish a workshop activity and hold interventions in local towns and villages.

### 6.1.3 Street arts/community arts

In several countries, community arts (defined as artists working directly with communities on creative projects of interest and relevance to those communities, rather than to an artists' agenda) is thriving and growing. Respondents to the questionnaires describe spending part of their year working on projects in a variety of media with local people, including developing

<sup>77</sup> 'Showcases play a big part for us in creating new contacts, as well as meeting promoters at "normal" festivals' (Artist, United Kingdom).

<sup>78</sup> 'Companies need to be as clear as it seems practical about how they would best be seen and programmers make efforts to get as close to what is requested as possible. I think I'm a bit more ambiguous about this; it's very difficult to have that kind of frank conversation with programmers – especially when a pedestrian street might be all they have to offer and you are desperate for another gig!' (Federation Representative, United Kingdom – interview).

<sup>79</sup> 'This is institutional problem for artists working in outdoors – underproductive winter waiting for grants to be agreed, then all projects start together and massively overcommitted.' (Independent Producer, United Kingdom – interview).

<sup>80</sup> 'Street arts outside of festivals are performed usually in specific periods during the year such as carnival, summer cultural events which are not necessarily conceived as festivals, and last but not least around Christmas. In this case they are either funded through regional funds obtained by the single company, which must be matched with public money from single towns, or also by local public administrations or by private enterprises.' (Director and Artist, Italy – interview).

local festivals and parades, alongside their professional street performance timetable (e. g. Slovenia, United Kingdom).

## 6.2. Framework

### 6.2.1. Festivals' use of productions

The artistic policy of festivals is very varied and suits the artistic aims and purposes of the artistic directors or their management committees. All festivals programme a selection of the following, in varying proportions:

- existing street arts performance and installation work, which the festival 'buys into' for a particular time;
- unique site-specific professional performance/installations created especially for the festival, which will be designed to enhance particular local architecture or landscapes;
- new performance/installations that the festival may commission (or co-commission, with other organisations) designed to premiere at a festival but continue to tour elsewhere<sup>81</sup>;
- community performances and installations that share the public space at the festival with professional companies. Festivals may directly commission some of these.

There are dozens of different quotations about how festivals work – some in-depth research on this would be very useful for artists, so they can know who to approach with which proposal.

### 6.2.2. "In" and "Off"

Street festivals have many different contractual arrangements with artists, paying varying amounts of artists' overall costs. In the *UK street arts and mainland Europe* survey<sup>82</sup>, one of the questions concerned how great a proportion of costs are covered by programmers.

Many festivals pay 100% of costs. Those that do claim that artists should not be exploited although some admit the sense in negotiating a package (several days' work, travel costs as part of a tour to a number of different festivals, some days of holiday between bookings).

Some festivals said they pay a proportion (50%, 80%, 90%) of fees and all technical costs. A couple of these consider themselves to be showcase opportunities for artists.

Many festivals, especially in France, have a two-tiered system of contracts, known as the "in" and the "off" programme. The off programme may be curated or (in the case of Aurillac) open to all. In the street arts milieu, the "off" programme gives the chance for young companies, or companies trying out new shows to get an opportunity to test out their work and perform to a willing audience, without a fee. The rationale for this is also that such performers are receiving a marketing opportunity, to be seen by festival directors from other festivals and through this to get paid bookings.

<sup>81</sup> Festival Director, Netherlands – interview.

<sup>82</sup> Tucker, A., *UK Street Arts and Mainland Europe: Opportunities and barriers to exploiting work form England in the rest of Europe*, Arts Council England, London, April 2005.

## 6.3. Operators

### 6.3.1. The size and scale of street shows

#### 6.3.1.1. Types of shows

There is an extremely large variety of scales and types of show on the street festival circuit; many different art forms are used separately and together. Of the festivals having an off programme, the biggest proportions of off shows are circus. *See section on street arts aesthetics 1.5 and Anne-Karine Granger's reports in Annex 2.*

There is a clear division in types of street performances. The majority of shows are clearly “entertainment” pieces. The aim of this kind of show is to appeal to everyone. Other shows are much more theatrical and may be very large scale, needing to take place in spaces removed from the milling public. Some feel very like “theatre without walls”, others use the surrounding environment or architecture very deliberately to enhance the effect of their message. Into this category may also be added small intimate shows that are hidden in quieter spaces and use unusual spaces and buildings. In many peoples’ opinions, there are not enough of these contemporary experiences.

In addition to performance work, there are a growing number of companies from a visual arts tradition that are finding outlets through the street arts festival circuit. Festivals commission artists to create environments, decorations, temporary outdoor sculptures and interactive games, light and soundscapes.

#### 6.3.1.2. Range of data

The questionnaires asked respondents how many street companies exist in their country. Many had no idea, or directed us to their cultural ministry (who also did not know in many cases). Some claimed that the number fluctuates rapidly with variable funding, several claimed that it was hard to know what was to be included<sup>83</sup>. There was also not a clear distinction between professional and amateur companies, especially as many young groups work in other fields, in order to be able to earn a living. Numbers varied from no professional companies or only amateur, to 1,000 professional companies in France. An astonishing variation for one small continent, which shows how much work there is to be done.

The questionnaires asked respondents how many street arts shows had been created in 2005. Not surprisingly there was very little information – the majority of respondents claimed they had no idea, some from the same country ‘guessed’ with sometimes very different results (Belgium: 3-5 to Portugal: 400).

The Anne Tucker’s survey looked at the prices paid for shows of different scales (2005 prices). Programmers were asked to give the ‘range of costs’ they might pay per show for small-scale, medium-scale or large-scale work. Several people objected on principle to this question<sup>84</sup>. Nevertheless, the responses ranged from:

<sup>83</sup> ‘Here is a question: What is a professional street art company? Is there a certain level of training or education, or practical experience or just the fact that you get your living out of your art?’ (Artists, Slovenia – interview).

<sup>84</sup> Comments ranged from ‘This is impossible, it varies every year’, ‘We choose shows we want rather than spending our budgets mathematically’, ‘Every show is unique’, ‘The range is huge’, ‘They all depend on the

- Small scale (audience of up to approx 500) from € 150 to € 2 500;
- Medium scale (audience of 500 - 3 000) from € 3 000 to € 12 000;
- Large scale (for an audience of over 3 000 up to 10 000) from € 10 000 to € 40 000.

Most festivals with budgets of € 50 000 or less programmed no large-scale work. However, large scale shows are regularly booked across Europe as “stand-alone events”, to celebrate/commemorate a special occasion or to inaugurate a space or landmark. Programmers have some fairly strongly held opinions about which countries produce different styles of work. Where money is granted directly to artists (as opposed to the festival structures) the range of knowledge was also very meagre. Estimates varied greatly, from € 5 000 to € 50 000 with everything in between. Few of the very large companies responded to this question – perhaps because each show is so different, perhaps because the respondent is not in charge of the budget, perhaps because grants to larger companies cover maintenance of the organisation as well as the show and cannot easily be separated.

## 6.4. The tools

### 6.4.1. Spaces

Artists need spaces to do their work – from initial devising and design (which may take place almost anywhere) to obtaining space and rehearsal areas<sup>85</sup>. Where companies use large-scale structures and props, they need correspondingly large spaces. All these things are extremely hard to find in most countries. Artists usually resort to renting bus garages, old warehouses or disused industrial spaces.

Artist companies and programmers from other parts of Europe are investigating the success of France’s creation centres - people are considering whether this extremely successful model may be adapted for local use.

### 6.4.2. Cooperation

When a production involves different partners, the presence among them of some important festivals or “names” can be a guarantee for other festivals interested in buying the show.

Support for creation also provides the opportunity to share production costs among partners. Moreover, companies involved in a co-production with festivals will perform in those festivals, with a mutual advantage – festivals reduce costs and companies have sure bookings, giving them the chance to be seen and known by other professionals and festivals. Co-productions therefore can be very helpful for companies in countries with no production centres. Companies can ask for financial support from a festival: once their new show is ready, they go and perform in that festival (and in others that have possibly supported the production), also more than once. When this kind of co-operation is at the national level, it generally is appropriate only for small productions, while at an international level larger productions are possible.

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number of people, as well as the size of the show’, ‘We sometimes book cheaper shows in the middle range rather than in small range’...

<sup>85</sup> ‘The main thing that emerged was that companies had found spaces to work in, but often with zero security of tenure so there were several (even many) stories of them getting evicted from their space at very short notice, often because of regeneration. Even cultural regeneration still seemed to result in street companies getting thrown out. It was shocking how often this had happened.’ (Independent Producer, United Kingdom – interview).

Co-operation projects are nevertheless limited and very few if we compare street arts with other artistic sectors. The different level of development and structuring between East and West is obvious here. Let's quote the words of an Artistic Director from United Kingdom: 'I believe that at present there is a huge difference among the European countries: in the "core ones" it is quite easy to perform, to develop, while in the fringes the work is much harder (...) in fact people in some countries have different opinions and ways of working, are not used – often – to think internationally and to work at an international level. We need to find some ways to make it easier: networking and encouragement from the European Union level would certainly be useful tools.'

#### **6.4.2.1. Mobility of live performance**

The survey *UK street arts and mainland Europe* established that 59 of the 62 festivals investigated work with international artists, for reasons of cultural exchange and understanding, festival profile and prestige, lack of product at home, the need to have variety, the high quality of the best international work and encouragement from foreign governments/agencies.

The proportion of international companies in festival programmes varies widely, from 10% to 100%. In general, festivals in France use the lowest proportion of international artists and Belgian and Italian festivals the highest (the majority of those who cited 'lack of national artists' as a reason for using international groups come from these two countries).

There is no obvious correlation between well-funded festivals and the proportion of international artists they book.

The amount of international work programmed by European festivals has appeared fairly stable over the last three years. Companies and artists are employed from most European countries - France, Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, Holland, Italy and Spain are listed most often. Over 50% of respondents cited high travel costs as the main disincentive to working with international artists; 42% cited language. Other reasons included 'quality of work', 'fee levels' and 'lack of information about foreign work available'.

All festivals with no international programme stated that finance was an issue and suggested that sharing costs between programmers might be of benefit. Of the festivals with no international programme, one claimed a lack of information from international artists<sup>86</sup>.

#### **6.4.2.2. Funding for street arts productions to go abroad**

Few people had accurate information about whether it was possible to get money from institutes or the governments for international touring. In view of the contradictory information (and lack of knowledge by many respondents), this area should be researched more extensively, as a way of encouraging foreign touring.

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<sup>86</sup> 'The problems with budget have got worse after Poland entered European Union two years ago: for years we used the excuse that we were an Eastern country, that we needed special prices for the companies, etc. and it worked, but now... We have no excuse! The main problem is that prices are about 40% higher than before, and this is a big obstacle. On the other hand, we have the chance to apply for structural funds (if the regional government applies for them) so this could be a good opportunity for us. Anyway we receive support and funding from private and public sponsors and donors, which help overcoming the problem.' (Festival Director, Poland – interview).

### 6.4.3. Budgets

It is extremely difficult to ascertain with accuracy at this point what budgets are available. Many respondents did not know and were unsure how to find out how much money was available. In many countries, respondents wrote ‘almost nothing’, or ‘less than 1%’ or ‘it is impossible to find out’. Street arts rarely appear as a discrete budget separate from performing arts, or theatre, or even education.

In countries where there is established funding for street arts, money comes from a variety of sources, national, regional and local; most festivals and companies are funded through public money.

In some countries, a number of street arts companies receive regular funding to maintain themselves, as well as for creating shows. In the United Kingdom and Ireland, these are known as ‘annually funded’ (there are around 20 companies in total), in France they are “conventionnés” (around 29 companies). There are a small number of funded companies in Belgium, Holland, Slovenia and Spain. Other countries stated that they both funded artists yet had no budget for street arts. In one of these cases, they described artists as working indoors as well as outdoors (Finland).

The ‘Assédic’ for “les intermittents du spectacle” is one of the keys to the astonishingly productive street arts scene in France, with hundreds of companies producing new, often high quality work every year. Another key is the extensive network of creation centres, designed to enable artists to create work with a maximum of support and a minimum of practical deterrents.

#### 6.4.3.1. *Income from festivals*

Most of the festivals are usually free to the public. In these cases, the artists are either paid to perform free for the audience or are allowed (and sometimes encouraged) to pass the hat at the end of the show.

However, a number of respondents claimed that there were situations and circumstances where admission is charged. In some cases this is the only way to fund the festival, in some cases it is in order to limit numbers for small capacity shows. At one festival in England, nominal admission is charged at an enclosed site in a park, as a way of counting visitors and keeping bicycles out, as well as giving visitors the chance to feel they are part ‘investors’ in the event the following year.

In the Netherlands, it is a principle adopted by festival organisers to charge for theatrical presentations, which they describe as *locatie theater*. All Dutch outdoor theatre festivals charge the public to see shows<sup>87</sup>.

In French-speaking Belgium, festivals have to show some income in order to qualify for grant aid. In some cases the audience pays to enter the whole festival; at Namur en mai, much of the festival is free and visitors pay to see the tented booth shows (fairground arts). The festival has created its own monetary unit for the weekend – the ‘sous’!

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<sup>87</sup> Anne Tucker mentions: ‘I have not ascertained definitively whether this is a funding requirement or an economic or ideological necessity (opinions differ – some further research would be useful on this).’

At many of the larger festivals, overcrowding may be a big problem; ticketed shows are becoming more common as a way to control numbers. These tickets may cost money or may be free. Some festivals can only invite large shows if they draw an income from the performance. In these cases, there is often a large part of the festival that remains free and animated (Aurillac and Chalon in France do this now).

Several festivals and creation centres help fund new work for artists to perform at their festivals. This money is usually called “commissioning”. Several different partners may co-finance expensive projects, in order to see new shows appear every year. This is done individually, with artists writing funding applications to festivals as well as official funding agencies, explaining their new project and what is needed. In reality, across Europe, most companies approach or are approached by festivals who know their work very early on, to discuss future plans and collaborations<sup>88</sup>.

#### **6.4.3.2. Alternatives to public funds**

Two elements are worth mentioning. In the first place, the operators contacted seem familiar mainly only with the framework of Culture 2000; secondly, they seem to be unaware of the possibility of applying to other European Union programmes (education, social cohesion), where street art practices could also be funded. In general, besides cash flow issues, no one has mentioned the efforts and the skills necessary to successfully apply for European Union funds or the (personal) success rate:

- Private supporters can be another way to find money. For instance, private foundations, bank foundations, TV stations, newspapers, private enterprises are the typologies most frequently mentioned;
- Public institutions, such as cities, municipalities, regions, sometimes support festivals and projects;
- Both kinds of supporters often do not provide money, but technical services, such as lighting, vans, cars, or street cleaning after the festivals;
- Networks and co-production often remains the best solution: through networking, festivals and companies can find money more easily, eventually applying for European Union funds; professionals, festivals and companies can get in touch and build partnerships; costs can be shared among the members of a network, for example mobility and performance costs – when inviting foreign companies – or production costs – in case of co-productions;
- When looking for alternative ways to finance their activity, street artists and companies often find it difficult to fill in forms and deal with bureaucratic matters. The forms provided are considered ‘too complicated’ and not clear, sometimes requiring the help of other professionals and they can be discouraging.

#### **6.4.4. The use and value of marketing**

Marketing is a weak link that unites every questionnaire. Festivals claim not to know about companies, companies do not know how to reach festivals so that they start to communicate with them. From the survey *UK street arts and mainland Europe* (which is mostly about British

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<sup>88</sup> See Anne Tucker’s reports in Annex 2.

companies abroad), it is clear that programmers have difficulty finding out about foreign groups unless they have seen them.

Artists need to market their work – in as many different ways as possible. Publicity is useful, ideally in several languages. Use of the Internet, e-mails and the telephone, are all helpful ways to reinforce contact. Appearance at showcasing events is a good way to be seen by programmers. Once a company is known, word of mouth travels fast between programmers and artists.

#### **6.4.5. Agents or not?**

One way of approaching marketing is for artists to work with an agent, who will promote their shows on their behalf as part of their larger portfolio. Possessing an international agent can help considerably in a company's attempt to negotiate cultural differences, language issues, legal and other restrictions. The disadvantage of agents is that they may take up to 25% of any fee; some agencies try and get the maximum fee for their artists from programmers – but may end up getting very few bookings for artists as they are too expensive to programme. Agents may not be entirely transparent in their arrangements with artists, which can give rise to mistrust, which is not helpful to either party. Programmers frequently prefer to negotiate directly with artists.

### **6.5. Specific actions**

#### **6.5.1. Safety regulations**

Safe parking for vehicles and the security of props, sets and costumes is essential for artists. Costs of this need to be built into the initial budgeting of festivals, rather than thought about at the end when the budget is all spent. Lack of respect for artists' needs is a frequent complaint and many are extremely anxious about safety and security.

The fact that safety regulations vary a great deal from country to country can cause problems for companies when travelling and performing abroad, as well as for directors when choosing performances to include in the programme of their festivals. The safety regulations most frequently cited by the professionals concern the separation between audience and performers (United Kingdom), the prohibition for young children to attend to a street event (Poland) and restrictions on pyrotechnics shows (Italy, Germany, Netherlands, etc.). This influences deeply the “magic” of the show, because it makes much harder for the audience to feel like a part of the show which is going on. Pyrotechnics shows are subject to very strict rules in some countries while they are a core element in many Spanish performances. This means that festival directors cannot invite important foreign companies whose speciality is just pyrotechnics shows.

#### **6.5.2. Co-operation, tool to bypass obstacles?**

Co-operation has huge importance in terms of creativity: giving artists and professionals a chance to meet, to compare ideas, to have discussions and to share ideas and needs, it is a major source of inspiration. Co-operation is also a good way to know and understand each European country regulations.

Networking gives chances for inspiring confrontation and exchanges among professionals and provides opportunities for artists to be known and to get support to production and performing.



Co-operation projects are very few, and some operators pointed out that in their country the custom of co-operating with other partners is not developed yet<sup>89</sup>.

Street arts professional nevertheless found ways to support their co-operation activities, using:

- Local institutions and private sponsors (including local TV) because they could sometimes provide money to pay for travel and accommodation costs of companies.
- Festivals as promoters: some of the main festivals contacted act as “showcases” for other festivals and companies: they give national or foreign companies the chance to perform at their festivals, thus showing their works and having the opportunity to be contacted by other festivals in other countries.
- International cultural organisations: local offices of European organisations (e.g. Goethe Institutes in Germany, the Arts Council in the United Kingdom, Instituto Cervantes in Spain, local offices of Istituto Italiano di Cultura) are a good link among different countries and festivals.
- The European Union Culture 2000 programme supported some of the projects mentioned by the professionals. Some of them note however that European funds (at least, a part of the total amount) are actually provided only at the end of the projects, so that the problem of finding money in advance still remains.

Thus, several street arts structures and festivals have formed groups among themselves or with production venues to create co-production and co-diffusion platforms, such as In Situ, Meridians (ex-Eunetstar), European Polycentre for Artistic Creation (PECA).

## 6.6. Conclusions and problems raised

Artists perform predominantly at festivals in their own countries, though international touring is growing. It is clear both from festival organisers and artists, that there exist few opportunities for professional companies to get work outside of the festival (summer) season. Festivals are organised in the main by independent non-profit creative individuals and organisations or local government departments, or by individuals contracted to a local government body with the purpose of running a festival.

Festivals vary widely in their selection of shows by price brackets, the only common feature being that festivals with a budget of less than € 50,000 rarely programme large-scale work. The majority of festivals (apart from self-defined “markets”, “buskers festivals” or “showcases”) pay 100% of artists’ costs for their main or “on” programmes.

Several festivals say that they “share travel costs on tour” – and imply later that they are more likely to take international artists coming in from a nearby country, which lessens the burden of travel costs.

In spite of the vitality of the festival circuit, it is a consistent perception among presenters, cultural officers and artists that the street arts remain of low value as an art form and are very

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<sup>89</sup> ‘Eastern shows cost much less than Western companies’ works, but the money you save when you buy their productions, you lose it in bureaucratic matters and you need a huge effort from legal and administrative points of view. These problems with circulation of artists and companies from Eastern countries has created a wall between East and West: in this sense, Berlin’s wall still exists!’ (Artistic Director, Italy – interview).

badly under-funded. Budgets are extremely small, in comparison to every nation's budget for the conventional performing arts (in complete contrast to the number of people keen to watch such work).

Again, administrative issues are a problematic aspect of international street arts activity, as each country has its own rules and laws, in particular concerning taxation, visas, intellectual property and rights, safety, etc.

Cooperation is recognized as the best tool to bypass the different kinds of obstacles, in first place by supporting production (through co-production projects) and mobility (also through the application to European Union programmes).



## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1. General Conclusions

It seems essential to stress that street arts take part in the great challenges that are currently raised at the European Union level in terms of economics, social issues, the environment and citizens.

The strong growth in street arts, through this sector's **economic activity**, and notably the festivals that symbolise them, attests to their place in the live performance economy. Their close relations with the cities bear witness to their role in the cultural and tourism-related vitality of Europe's regions.

This sector moreover contributes to the development of **innovation** and **creativity** throughout Europe. Street arts offer a gamut of artistic expressions likely to renew the writings of popular shows. They favour inventiveness in the blending of disciplines and the renewal of conventional forms, all directly connected to the public space. This diversity brought to creation spaces takes part in the development, in European societies, of an intercultural and creative capacity that is essential to a knowledge society and an innovative society.

A sector characterised by the specific nature of its action field (the urban and rural public space) and its public (de facto broader than the traditional cultural public), street arts participate in the implementation, on a Europe-wide scale, of a **new solidarity** (professional, social and regional) and the construction of a **cohesion space**. Their involvement in the heart of the cities, in the countryside or intermediate areas makes them non-negligible partner in the economic and social renewal and development of countries, regions and localities.

Through their engagement with the populations, they are also genuine tools in the development of a **European citizen** and in the construction of a **common identity** in Europe. They are notably characterised by the great visibility of their European actions (number and variety of the public reached, free admission/access to culture without the socio-cultural barrier).

Lastly, street arts constitute a European specificity that can contribute to the **cultural influence of the European Union** in its relations outside its borders.

In this framework, the European Union can find an important track for its policy in the support of street arts. Such support requires taking into account the this sector's specificities and needs, and notably: the specific nature of production, programming and transmission modes, disparities between the recognition of the sector itself at the level of the different Member States of the European Union (absence of a common definition of this sector on the European scale, lack of expertise, etc.) and disparities in the very development of the sector, most particularly between the new Member States and the countries of the West.

Thus, taking into account the challenges raised by street arts on the European scale, and the particularity of this sector, and respecting the subsidiarity principle, the conclusions of this study lead us to formulate the following recommendations to the European Parliament.

## 7.2. Recognition of the street arts sector on the European scale

The street arts sector would have a great deal to gain by **political and institutional recognition** of its existence as a full-fledged artistic form. In this framework, the European Union could decide to establish a “**European Year of Street Arts**”, a time for reflection and spotlighting of this sector in the 27 countries of the European Union, by following the example of a “Year of Circus Arts”, which was established in the Netherlands, the Flemish Region of Belgium and France or a three-year “Temps des arts de la rue” (“Time of Street Arts”) in France (2005-2007).

### 7.2.1. Favouring a scientific study of the street arts sector

The street arts sector would have a great deal to gain by **being scientifically studied**. To do so, it seems essential to have, on the European scale, in-depth and comparative knowledge areas on this sector through: rigorous **statistical elements** on professionals and publics, and **content elements**, most particularly on the aesthetics of street arts.

In this framework, the European Union could integrate the street arts sector as a full-fledged sector into the **studies and statistics** that it commissions or carries out on the live performance. It could also propose specific studies on this sector. For instance, given the absence of quantitative and qualitative data on the spectators who attend these events, the European Union could commission a study of at least 200 days on street arts publics in Europe. This could be founded on the study conducted by Eunetstar on the basis of nine European festivals, as well as on the surveys carried out locally during events (Belgium, the United Kingdom, etc.).

The European Union could also, in order to favour **university research** on street arts Europe-wide, pay particular attention to the accessibility of such research in the framework of FP 7 (in its section on research in the social sciences). Comparative research between European countries related to the aesthetics of street arts would permit, for example, their specificities on a European scale to emerge. Moreover, it would be very interesting to develop interdisciplinary research on the challenges of the place of art in the public space.

Lastly, in order to ensure a **scientific valorisation of this knowledge**, including, for example, **the development of criticism** (a basic element to permit a discipline to improve or to take an objective look at its productions), the European Union could favour the networks of critics, journalists and specialized reviews in the live performance sector in order to improve knowledge of the specificities of street forms (history, genealogy, aesthetics, creation process, performance modes, etc. The European Union could notably re-establish the place of magazine and art critic networks in the “Co-operation Action” of the Culture Programme.

### 7.2.2. Favouring better knowledge of the sector through the actors themselves

The European Union should, in parallel, pay particular attention to the creation of efficient communication means that would facilitate access to professional information (financial and material aid, visibility of artistic companies and programming, exchange and meeting spaces for programmers and artistic companies and for “employers” and “employees”).

In order to help artists' development their own aesthetics, it would also be important to permit them to access: the heritage of street arts, as well as works, theoretical as well as technical, dedicated to these artistic forms. The European Union should therefore support the development of resources available on the European scale (creation and/or networking of resources centres,

support for trans-national exchange programmes and digitizing of show videos, support for the translation of specialised works, support for the dissemination and accessibility of this heritage through new technologies).

### 7.3. Structuring and development

#### 7.3.1. Favouring the development of infrastructures that integrate street arts

As the **means of production** are very limited in most European countries, and most particularly in the new Member States, the European Union could support the construction of such **infrastructures**, notably with a view to development and regional cohesion. The European Union could therefore pay particular attention to infrastructure projects that integrate street arts (dedicated production centres, creation centres, residence spaces, etc.) in the framework of its cohesion policy and its rural development policy and most especially in the regions benefiting from Objective ‘Convergence’.

#### 7.3.2. Favouring the professionalisation of the sector on the European scale

The European Union could at the same time be particularly attentive to projects concerning **initial and ongoing training for street artists** and specifically: multi-purpose trans-national training projects for street arts and flexible and temporary training projects in the framework of seasonal events (workshops or training sessions for instructors, for example). The European Union could, for instance, reflect on a particular awareness-raising programme for actors in the street arts in order to encourage professionals’ participation in education and training programmes supported by the European Union (European Voluntary Service, Socrates and Leonardo Da Vinci programmes, etc.) It could also make actors in the street arts sector aware of existing funding possibilities in the framework of the employment section of the cohesion policy (European Social Fund).

The professionalisation of the sector also is accomplished by supporting operators in obtaining information on and integrating **public regulations** that restrict their activity (safety of the public, noise pollution, pyrotechnics, large number of contacts required to obtain all the needed authorisations for the smooth running of the event, etc.).

The European Union could encourage projects that favour the dissemination of “good practices” concerning respecting safety rules and preventing risks and working at raising awareness in these areas of the project’s different actors – authorities, technicians and artists. Such projects, implying the co-operation of partners from two or more European states, are likely to spread the idea that respecting regulatory constraints does not necessarily hinder creation in public spaces. Projects favouring a better readability of **European regulations** must equally be actively supported: for example, guides proposing methodologies and implementation procedures for artistic projects in the public space and presenting a comparison of rules in two or more countries. In this regard, the European Parliament could itself commission a reference paper that would treat these questions throughout Europe: regulatory reference points, measures to be taken, methodologies.

### 7.3.3. Favouring the development of professional practices on the European scale

It would be desirable that these **new writings** be developed during residences or specific workshops. The European Union should ensure that writing stipends and support programmes for creation professionals be accessible to them. It should equally see to aiding exchange and collaboration projects between street artists on one hand, and actors in the live performance sector such as writers, playwrights and directors, on the other.

The European Union could see that a larger place is granted to street arts programmes (annual and multi-annual) presented in the framework of the Culture Programme (as of this date, only the In Situ project carried out by Lieux Publics in Marseilles, France, has benefited from Culture 2000, section 1, credits). It could also call on experts aware of the value of these projects and their capacity to transform the cultural environment to evaluate candidatures filed in the framework of the Culture Programme.

### 7.3.4. Supporting the structuring of the sector on the European scale

As street arts are a professional sector in the process of being structured, notably through the emergence of national collective groups and federations, the European Union will in all likelihood be led to valorise the permanent work of these representative bodies. The latter work on the establishment of standards and good practices on the European scale and on the emergence of national federations in the Member States that are not structured at this level. So that the mobility of street arts professionals and co-operation projects can take place under good conditions, it is necessary that existing European networks be recognised and financially aided **in the long term** by the European Union. These networks participate in the broad dissemination of information provided by the European Union and reflect the invitations to tender and the new directives that concern street arts to a greater or lesser degree. These platforms, such as the Circostrada network, work, often by means of the new technologies, at making useful information available to the production and circulation of works (programming, professional directories, etc.). The level of development differs greatly among the 27 Member States and is lowest in Eastern Europe.

The European Union could see that a larger place is granted to **street arts networks** in the framework of co-operation support programmes, whether they are trans-border, trans-national or European (Culture Programme). No operator working for street arts was selected in 2006 in the framework of section 2 of this programme (“Support bodies active at European level in the field of culture”). Support given to the permanent work programme of a structure capable of uniting and representing this sector on the European scale would make it possible to professionalise practices and establish their European potential.

## 7.4. Participation of street arts in European objectives to be valorised

### 7.4.1. Contributing to the development of a space for free artistic circulation

In a more transversal manner and in a more regulatory framework, the development of the street arts sector is undergoing an improvement in the regulatory framework of the **circulation of works and artists**. It is therefore cardinal that the European Union continue to work on **harmonising national regulations** that considerably hamper the free circulation of works and professionals. As many studies have already stressed, it is necessary to encourage reflection on **the artist’s status throughout Europe and on related legislation** (social protection, labour

law, coverage of unemployed periods, etc.). It could for example encourage the Member States to facilitate, even harmonise when possible, the procedures artists (and therefore street artists) must deal with by envisaging, for instance, making administrative steps free of charge and more rapid; simplifying, for equipment required for artistic services, going through customs and security barriers, and so on.

#### **7.4.2. Contributing to the development of a cultural policy**

Valorising the considerable contribution of street arts to the success of European Capitals of Culture (**ECOC programme**): the European Union could, for example, stipulate in the next invitations to tender for this programme that street arts must be an integral part of the candidate city's proposal and that the evaluation of the candidatures filed will be done according to the place given to street arts and the support measures that will be proposed for them once the programme is ended.

Moreover, thanks to the installation of artistic teams in peri-urban, rural or socially disadvantaged contexts, street arts have greatly increased the number of positive experiences in the **social field**): it would be legitimate for the parliamentarians to support European projects concerning the exchange of experiences. The wish of many street arts to work more with disadvantaged publics must be heard and supported on the European level (better access to European Social Fund credits).

Lastly, in the framework of building the European Union's exterior policy and asserting **European cultural influence** internationally, street arts should unquestionably hold a special place. Likewise, they could take part in pre-adhesion, neighbourhood and co-operation operations in development actions.





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[www.adcei.org](http://www.adcei.org): Association pour le Développement Culturel Européen et International (ADCEI).

[www.arcade-paca.com](http://www.arcade-paca.com): Centre de ressources et de développement des arts du spectacle de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur.

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk): National development agency for the arts in England, distributing public money from Government and the National Lottery.

[www.arteca.fr](http://www.arteca.fr): Centre de ressources de la culture en Lorraine, établissement public de coopération culturelle.

[www.artfactories.net](http://www.artfactories.net): Artfactories is an international resource platform dedicated to art and cultural centres born from citizen artistic initiatives and based on involvement within communities.

[www.aoifeonline.com](http://www.aoifeonline.com): The Association of Irish Festival Events (AOIFE), is the all-island



advocacy, support, resource and development network of festivals and events.

[www.circostrada.org](http://www.circostrada.org): European information and exchange network on street and new circus arts.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int): site du Conseil de l'Europe.

[www.culturalpolicies.net](http://www.culturalpolicies.net): Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, an expanding Europe-wide information and monitoring system on cultural policy measures, instruments, debates and cultural trends.

[www.culture.gouv.fr](http://www.culture.gouv.fr): Site du Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication français.

[www.culturelink.org/culpol/index.html](http://www.culturelink.org/culpol/index.html): Network of Networks for Research and Cooperation in Cultural Development.

[www.ecumest.ro](http://www.ecumest.ro): Interface organisation, whose mission is to intermediate and accompany the democratisation (accession) and cultural democracy processes (diversity and participation), for the institutional emancipation of the cultural sector in Romania and in Central and Eastern Europe.

[www.efa-aef.eu/](http://www.efa-aef.eu/): European festival association.

[www.efah.org](http://www.efah.org): European forum for the arts and heritage.

[www.ericarts.org](http://www.ericarts.org): European institute for comparative cultural research.

[www.eurocult.org](http://www.eurocult.org): European cultural foundation, support cultural cooperation.

[www.faiar.org](http://www.faiar.org): Formation avancée itinérante avancée des arts de la rue.

[www.fitzcarraldo.it](http://www.fitzcarraldo.it): La Fondazione è un centro indipendente di progettazione, ricerca, formazione e documentazione sul management, l'economia e le politiche della cultura, delle arti e dei media.

[www.fnas.org](http://www.fnas.org): Federazione nazionale arte di strada - Italia.

[www.horslesmurs.asso.fr](http://www.horslesmurs.asso.fr): Centre national de ressources pour le développement des arts de la rue et des arts du cirque.

[www.ietm.org](http://www.ietm.org): Réseau international des arts du spectacle/international network for contemporary performing arts.

[www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk): Independent Street Arts Network.

[www.in-situ.info](http://www.in-situ.info): réseau constitué en 2003 à l'initiative et autour de Lieux publics, Centre national de création des arts de la rue (Marseille, France), afin d'offrir aux artistes des outils pour créer des spectacles sur l'espace public destinés à voyager en Europe et au-delà.

[www.labforculture.org](http://www.labforculture.org): LabforCulture is an online information and knowledge platform dedicated to European cultural cooperation, complemented by a range of offline services and programmed activities.

[www.la-far.be](http://www.la-far.be): Fédération des Arts de la Rue, des Arts du Cirque et des Arts Forains.

[www.newaudiences.org.uk](http://www.newaudiences.org.uk): The New Audiences Web site is one of the largest free resources on developing audiences in the world.

[www.observatoire-culture.net/](http://www.observatoire-culture.net/): l'Observatoire des politiques culturelles est un organisme national français dont la mission est d'accompagner la décentralisation et la déconcentration des politiques culturelles.

[www.observatoire-omic.org/](http://www.observatoire-omic.org/): Observatoire des mutations des industries culturelles – Omic. The observatory was created at the launch of the research program "Transformations of culture, information and communication industries: cartography, assessment, observation" which brings together international teams of researchers. The research is carried out within the context of a concerted programme set up by several Maisons des Sciences de l'Homme.

[www.pearle.ws](http://www.pearle.ws): European League of Employers' Associations in the Performing Arts sector.

[www.peca-network.com](http://www.peca-network.com): European Polycenter Artistical Creation (PECA) is a development and resource center for circus and street arts, and a production network in Haute-Normandie, Picardie, Pas-de-Calais in France and East Sussex in England.

[www.straattheater.info](http://www.straattheater.info): website for, by, and about street theatre performers in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

[www.straattheater.net](http://www.straattheater.net): source of information in the field of street theatre and theatre on location in the Netherlands and Belgium.

[www.teatrodecalle.com](http://www.teatrodecalle.com): website of Spain street arts.

[www.touteleurope.fr](http://www.touteleurope.fr): Le Centre d'information l'Europe (anciennement appelé "Sources d'Europe" et situé à la Grande Arche de la Défense jusqu'en 2004) est un groupement d'intérêt économique fondé en 1992 par le gouvernement français et la Commission européenne.

[www.unesco.org/culture/development/observatories/html\\_fr/index\\_fr.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/culture/development/observatories/html_fr/index_fr.shtml): United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

[www.2.culture.gouv.fr/deps](http://www.2.culture.gouv.fr/deps): Service statistique ministériel, Délégation au développement et aux affaires internationales, Département des études, de la prospective et des statistiques (DEPS).

[www.xarxateatre.com](http://www.xarxateatre.com): The only Spanish magazine specialised in street theatre and fiesta.

[www.xtrax.org.ukx.trax](http://www.xtrax.org.ukx.trax): x.trax is the UKs international showcase festival of contemporary performance.





## ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

### 1.1. The main evaluation questions

The study analyses the situation of street arts in Europe, taking into account, as far as possible, the situation in all 27 Member States. This evaluative study was structured around the following questions:

- Definition: the idea of the “street”
- Forms of artistic productions
- Intellectual and policy legitimisation
- Traditions and modernity in street arts
- Public/urban space and regulations
- The street arts publics
- The diffusion of street shows
- Means of production
- European co-operation and mobility of artists

This categorisation is purely methodological to enable a systematic and rapid survey. It does not preclude aspects being relevant in more than one category at the same time. The following aspects have been investigated:

- The traditions of street arts in the different Member States and the most common type of professional street artists;
- The level of recognition of street arts as an art form;
- The range of art forms and the type of projects that are mainly practiced in the different Member States and the degree and forms of international co-operation, of co-production and diffusion of productions, the circulation of performances, as well as networks and partnerships on the European level;
- Specific information on the audience for street arts, on their social structure and development, and on the possibility of reaching sections of the public who are not used to attending theatre or other performances; doing so, the democratic, accessible character and potential of social inclusion;
- Important measures needed to facilitate the work of street artists, especially as regards residencies, facilities to develop and rehearse the work, funding systems, administrative procedures and licensing regulations, the organisational infrastructure, as well as professional development and training opportunities;
- The mobility of street artists and, if street artists perform in other European countries, where they mainly come from and go to, in which contexts they perform abroad, and which are the main problems and disincentives they encounter when planning to perform in other countries; the administrative or other barriers that refrain street artists from performing abroad.

The results of this study permit us to make several recommendations to European policy makers with a view to improving of the conditions of street artists, but also to foster creativity, the realisation of ideas, and the development of new art forms, independently of commercial success. As requested, the authors especially point out how mobility and exchange amongst street artists could be enhanced, and furthermore, proposes possible measures of creating common standards and of exchanging best practices concerning the legal, administrative, political and financial treatment of street artists.

## **1.2. Research Methodology**

The methodology designed by the evaluators incorporates:

- Mainstream European Community evaluation methodology;
- Methodology for policy analysis.

More specifically, the evaluators have used the following methods to gather information from primary and secondary sources:

- Review of official policy documents;
- Review of other evaluations that have been carried out in the area;
- Data collection through questionnaires and surveys;
- Tables and statistics;
- Interviews with key policy makers.

In order to ensure systematic consideration of the various stakeholders and actors, the evaluators have developed survey methods, semi-structured questionnaires and assessment forms. They have also used statistical information and data, where considered appropriate.

### **1.2.1. The methodological phases**

The methodological approach focuses on four distinct phases of the evaluation:

#### ***1.2.1.1. Phase 1: establishment of the study framework***

The setting up of the survey framework and structure consisted of:

- Preliminary identification of all relevant key documentation (secondary data).
- Formulation of the 9 key evaluative questions as proposed in the offer. This then led to:
  1. Break down of the key evaluative questions into simple intermediate questions, and provide a framework for rapidly identifying information gaps;
  2. Define the judgement criteria;
  3. Set up types of analysis and indicators;
  4. Identify sources of information;
  5. Identify types of results;

- Establishing quantitative and qualitative indicators for each judgement criterion identified (this in turn has determined the scope and methods of data collection);
- Defining proposals on the basis of the evaluative questions (their corresponding judgement criteria and associated indicators) for the following:
  1. Suitable methods (sociological, statistical, anthropological, policy analysis, etc.) for data and information collection from literature, interviews, questionnaires, case studies, etc.;
  2. Appropriate methods of analysis, again indicating any limitations;
- Following the terms of reference, an analysis was done of the results expected.

The definition and production of the tools to collect the primary and secondary data based on the evaluative questions and corresponding sheets and on the identified sources and descriptors.

#### ***1.2.1.2. Phase 2: collection of primary and secondary data***

The primary data is that directly collected from the targets via the questionnaire or the interview. The secondary data is comprised of the reference documents (policy-oriented, legal, etc.) concerning the research subject.

- **The collection of secondary data:**

Reports and studies, articles, books, research, Internet sites (artists/companies, festivals/venues, networks), crossed with the thesaurus and the data base of Le Goliath (Directory-guide of street arts and circus arts published by HorsLesMurs) and the Circostrada website ([www.circostrada.org](http://www.circostrada.org)), viewing of videos of past shows was done gradually on the basis of requests formulated with the stakeholders (networks, companies, local administrations, events and festivals organisers, cultural institutions managers, researchers, journalists) who possess the information concerned.

- **The collection of primary data:**

Four questionnaires were sent by email to a representative sampling of stakeholders in the European Union: 252 institutions, 1 052 artists/artistic companies, 88 venues, 361 festivals, 113 residencies, 72 professional collectives (unions, networks, specialised web site, resource centres, etc.).

Focus groups with the stakeholders made it possible to deal with qualitative data, obtain details on malfunctions or anomalies and formulate recommendations on the part of the participants. Thus, several travels were organised in the framework of European seminars, dedicated to street arts or performing arts:

Ghent (Belgium) on November 8-9, 2006; Helsinki (Finland) on November 9-12, 2006; Cherbourg (France) on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006; Zagreb (Croatia) on November 22-24, 2006; Riga and Tallinn (Latvia and Estonia) on November 19-26, 2006, Barcelona and Madrid (Spain) on February 7-11, 2007.

The use of observation and participatory and interactive consulting methods provided added value to the factual survey because it obtained data relating to a still fragile social and policy framework. This adds another dimension to the explanation of certain particularities.

### ***1.2.1.3. Phase 3: Analysis of the data collected***

The consultant team has carried out an assessment of the situation of street artists in Europe by considering the terms of references of the present call and on the basis of the collected data and in conformity with the pre-defined criteria in the evaluative questions.

Once the data-gathering phase has been concluded, a key action leading to the final report was the validation of the available data coming from different sources.

The study is based on a relative extensive reliance on existing information and data produced, at European and local levels. A certain attention was given to the validation of quantitative data, from non-EC sources, when estimated pertinent.

Information coming from primary sources (in the form of interviews or questionnaires) has been examined taking into consideration the socio-political context of the interviewed person, previous to drawing any final conclusion.

On the basis of the standard evaluation sheet indicators or describers were looked at, sources of information validated and intermediate results of the analysis produced: focus groups reports, political and strategic suggestions.

### ***1.2.1.4. Phase 4: Synthesis and recommendations***

The last phase was targeting at:

- Detecting and identifying problems, as well as good practices;
- Pinpointing the strengths and weaknesses of the sector;
- Drawing conclusions from the analysis in a final report;
- Formulating, based on these conclusions, policy and operational recommendations that can be applied in the very short term to remedy the weaknesses identified and improve the situation;
- Making strategic recommendations that will render it possible in the longer term to strengthen the forms of artistic expression that are still vulnerable.

The work involved in the study (the questionnaires and interviews, the observation of facts, the detection and verification of the issues, the recording and validation of the answers, the tests, the written and oral report) was carried out with rigor and precision, objectivity and clarity, discretion and confidentiality, transparency and quality.

## **1.3. Documents and techniques used in data collection**

- The primary data was collected by means of a questionnaire sent to the partners and resource persons of the street arts networks in Europe.
- A panel of information source persons was selected depending on the first census carried out in the pre-survey. The questionnaire was drafted and tested on a panel of resource persons and information source persons in the different countries, then sent by regular mail or e-mail to the directors of structures and festivals and to the professional milieu of street arts.

- The information was centralised by HorsLesMurs and a follow-up and two relaunches initiated according to the returns recorded.
- The analyses were enriched by data available elsewhere, university research work, studies or seasonal evaluations of the organizing institutions.
- Periodic and targeted quantitative or qualitative surveys conducted in diffusion venues served as a complement to present and refine the results.
- In order to ensure a systematic consideration of the stakeholders, we developed survey methods, semi-structured questionnaires, etc.

### **1.3.1. Aesthetic forms of street arts in Europe**

Questions on the aesthetic forms of street arts were integrated in a questionnaire on aesthetics forms, publics, means of production and diffusion compiled by HorsLesMurs and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs to artists and companies in order to collect data on the way they define their own artistic creations.

The thesaurus specified was the one HorsLesMurs uses when integrating street arts shows in its European data base (one of its permanent activities).

To point out the different artistic forms (disciplines and know-how), Anne-Karine Granger worked from statistics established on street shows registered from January 2002 to January 2007.

This researcher also studied the programmes of the most important festivals in Europe in the same period and view a selection of videos.

**Videos consulted at HorsLesMurs (captation of shows and festivals):  
Street Arts Aesthetic Forms**

Country of the Organisation	Category of Organisation	Number consulted	Year of captation
Germany	Artistic Group	13	from 1987 to 2006
Austria	Festival	3	from 2001 to 2004
Belgium	Artistic Group	21	from 1991 to 2005
Belgium	Festival	2	from 2001 to 2004
Denmark	Artistic Group	1	2003
Spain	Artistic Group	25	from 1987 to 2006
Spain	Festival	5	from 1991 to 2005
France	Artistic Group	134	from 1987 to 2006
France	Festival	14	from 2000 to 2004
Hungary	Artistic Group	1	1990
Ireland	Artistic Group	2	1996 + 2003
Ireland	Festival	1	2003
Italy	Artistic Group	8	from 1990 to 2006
Italy	Festival	2	1998 + 2001
Netherlands	Artistic Group	21	from 1994 to 2005
Netherlands	Festival	2	2000 + 2003
Poland	Artistic Group	12	from 1987 to 2004
Poland	Festival	4	from 1987 to 1998
Portugal	Artistic Group	5	from 1994 to 2006
Czech Republic	Artistic Group	4	2003 + 2004
Romania	Festival	1	2004
UK	Artistic Group	20	from 1996 to 2005
UK	Festival	2	1997 + 2003
Slovenia	Festival	1	2000 + 2005
Sweden	Artistic Group	1	1997

### 1.3.2. What is a street artist in Europe?

Anne-Karine Granger collected relevant reports on these issues (statuses, education, etc.).

### **1.3.3. Institutional and intellectual recognition**

A questionnaire on intellectual and institutional recognition of street arts had been compiled by CRCMD and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs. Interviews to critics, researchers and organisations had been carried out by Joanna Ostrowska and Juliusz Tyska. Aims were to:

- Investigate the existence of an “institutional” or common definition of street arts in the different State members;
- Evaluate the level of intellectual and political recognition in the European Union;
- Estimate the involvement of public/private institutions in street arts development and structuring;
- Collect, as far as they exist, the national statistics for street arts funding and grants.

Primary data collected has been compared by the one collected during the preliminary survey on public policies in favour of street arts and circus arts in Europe, carried out last summer by CRCMD for HorsLesMurs/Circostrada network. Results were compared to main national and European studies on cultural policies, using existing tools as Ericarts, etc.

### **1.3.4. Street arts and artists in the urban space: urban development and regulation**

A questionnaire on street arts relations with urban space (social, economical, urban aspects) had been compiled by Krisztina Keresztély and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs. Interviews to organisations and artists had been carried out by Krisztina Keresztély and Levente Polyák.

The study is based on the analysis of existing studies and questionnaires and interviews conducted towards representatives of some important street art events all across Europe. As questionnaires and interviews were based on the same guideline of questions proposed by the author, all responses are easy to compare. Therefore the analyses refer to the two sources in the same time. Aims were to investigate:

- Rules and permissions to organise open air events;
- Positions and integrations of street arts events in the urban space;
- The localisation of street arts events;
- Spatial effects, social effects, cultural organisational effects and economic effects;
- Sustainability of street arts events.

### **1.3.5. Street arts publics**

Questions elaborated by CRCMD on existing data on publics had been integrated in the questionnaire on aesthetics forms, publics, means of production and diffusion (compiled by HorsLesMurs and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs) to key organisations in order to collect existing data on this issue.

Due to the evaluation calendar (during winter 2006), it wasn't be possible to undertake a field survey in the framework of festivals and events (generally in summer time). Nevertheless, the solid results of the Eunetstar survey had served as a basis of comparison with the results



obtained in other surveys already conducted, on the European as well as the local level. CRCMD also compared the existing results with surveys on cultural practices and used existing studies and reports (see bibliography).

### **1.3.6. Methodological elements for Means of production and diffusion**

A questionnaire on aesthetics forms, publics, means of production and diffusion had been compiled by HorsLesMurs and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs to key organisations in order to ascertain for the structures (festivals or venues open all year) and artists (companies). Anne Tucker investigated the realities, limits and potentials of the current experience of street arts companies/artists touring throughout the European Union, taking particular account of:

- The context in which shows are presented (in festivals, seasons or throughout the year);
- How much international touring exists and what are the limits of expanding this;
- Funding opportunities for festivals;
- Funding sources for bringing work in from abroad;
- How much knowledge promoters have of work being made outside of their national borders;
- The size and scale of street shows on the circuit, their technical requirements etc and the range and scales of work presented;
- Other issues concerned with international touring – language-based performance, travel costs, safety requirements.

Anne Tucker also investigated the realities, limits and potentials of the current experience of street artists' means of production in the European Union, taking particular account of:

- The context in which shows are created (in festivals, seasons or throughout the year);
- How much international production exists and what are the limits of expanding this;
- Funding sources for creation, residency, etc.;
- How much knowledge promoters have of funding and grants opportunities;
- Co-production networks;
- Other issues concerned with international production – language-based performance, travel costs, safety requirements.

Anne Tucker was not involved in the compilation of the questionnaire. She collected the filled questionnaires and carried out interviews in a short time: responses for promoters were usually from the artistic director or coordinator, responses for artistic companies were usually from an artist or the tour manager. She faced the lack of existing data and statistics (for example on human resources: permanent team, administrative and/or artistic, or average costs of production of shows, etc.).

She collected secondary data, in particular data from a previous study made for the Arts Council of England in March 2005 which included an extensive survey of the range and scale of shows presented in 62 European festivals. Data from this was used to ascertain how much knowledge

promoters have of work being made outside of their national borders other issues concerned with international touring – language-based performance, travel costs, safety requirements the number of national/international companies hosted and from which countries how festivals/programmers choose artists and companies to invite:

- Number of countries visited per year;
- Number of hosting structures in each country visited;
- Number of performances (in the country of origin and abroad) during the season, in each country visited, in each hosting structure.

### **1.3.7. Methodological elements for Mobility and co-operation**

A questionnaire on mobility of street artists and co-operation had been compiled by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo and Judith Gabay-Neisse and sent out by HorsLesMurs to directors and members of “historic” street show networks and key organisations in order to:

- ascertain individual understanding of mobility and co-operation issues;
- establish stakeholders’ participation in trans-national mobility and co-operation projects;
- overview realities, limits and potentials of networking;
- ascertain knowledge of funding and grants opportunities;
- establish the problematic aspects that complicate street arts works and exchanges at the European level;
- point out the non-artistic skills required to managers, directors and to performers, if they want to gain a truly international dimension.

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo used existing European studies and reports (*see Bibliography*).

## **1.4. Strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approach**

### **1.4.1. Strengths**

- Data obtained by interviews and questionnaires were cross-referenced; a real internal consistency appears;
- The survey succeeded to investigate in the different European countries the evaluative questions (*see 1.1*);
- This is the first survey on Street Artists in Europe and the method employed can be repeated;
- Street arts professionals relayed HorsLesMurs requests of information on their sector and the milieu reacted very quickly providing useful data;
- The sleeping partner was always reachable to give details on the work he was expecting.

### 1.4.2. Weaknesses

- The most important challenge faced in this study is the time framework given for drafting the final report. Time is a key factor for ideas to mature and for quality to be assured at the conceptual and drafting levels.
- An added constraint was the timing, especially the timing for the interviews. This was unfortunate as it coincided with the vacation period and the holidays of the end of the year 2006. Furthermore, the departure of Floriane Gaber, co-tender, disturbed the research and caused a delay of 32 days. The timing did not allow for any in-depth study of audiences, because the majority of Street Arts events and festivals take place during summer time.
- As the majority of Member States doesn't establish statistics like for other art forms (e.g. number of companies/artists, amounts of grants and subsidies for this sector at national, regional or local levels, etc.), the survey suffers from a lack of comparative data.

### 1.5. Range of data

The research team consisted of:

- Yohann Floch (Project Leader) from HorsLesMurs (France)
- Serge Chaumier, Anne Gonon and Laetitia Di Gioia from the Centre of Research on Culture, Museums and the Dissemination of Knowledge (CRCMD) at the University of Bourgogne (France) – intellectual and institutional recognition and public issues;
- Maddalena Rusconi and Elena Di Federico from the Fondazione Fitzcarraldo (Italy) – mobility of creation and co-operation in the European Community;
- Judith Gabay-Neisse (Belgium) – methodology;
- Anne-Karine Granger (France) – definitions of street arts and street artists;
- Anne Tucker (United Kingdom) – means of production and diffusion;
- Joanna Ostrowska and Juliusz Tyska (Poland) – intellectual and institutional recognition / synthesis note on Poland case;
- Stanislav Bohadlo (Czech Republic) – synthesis note on traditions and modernity;
- Krisztina Keresztély and Levente Polyák (Hungary) – street arts in the urban space.

Total of 119 filled questionnaires	19 countries	45 answers on intellectual and institutional recognition	Country	17 answers on mobility and co-operation	Country	41 answers on aesthetics, publics, production and diffusion	Country	16 answers on urban space	Country
1	Austria		Austria	1	Austria		Austria		Austria
12	Belgium	6	Belgium		Belgium	6	Belgium		Belgium
4	Croatia	2	Croatia		Croatia	2	Croatia		Croatia
2	Denmark	1	Denmark		Denmark	1	Denmark		Denmark
4	Finland	2	Finland		Finland	2	Finland		Finland
12	France	2	France	3	France	4	France	3	France
8	Germany	3	Germany	1	Germany	3	Germany	1	Germany
2	Hungary	1	Hungary		Hungary	1	Hungary		Hungary
11	Italy	4	Italy	2	Italy	3	Italy	2	Italy
4	Netherlands	2	Netherlands	1	Netherlands	1	Netherlands		Netherlands
2	Norway	1	Norway		Norway	1	Norway		Norway
2	Lithuania	2	Lithuania		Lithuania		Lithuania		Lithuania
8	Poland	2	Poland	2	Poland	2	Poland	2	Poland
14	Portugal	5	Portugal	2	Portugal	5	Portugal	2	Portugal
3	Ireland	1	Ireland		Ireland	1	Ireland	1	Ireland
3	Romania	1	Romania	1	Romania	1	Romania		Romania
4	Slovenia	2	Slovenia		Slovenia	2	Slovenia		Slovenia
4	Spain	2	Spain		Spain	2	Spain		Spain
19	UK	6	UK	4	UK	4	UK	5	UK

Total of 51 interviews	19 countries	10 interviews on intellectual and institutional recognition	Country	14 interviews on mobility and co-operation	Country	21 interviews on production and diffusion	Country	7 interviews on street artists in the urban space	Country
3	Belgium		Belgium	1	Belgium	2	Belgium		Belgium
2	Croatia	1	Croatia		Croatia		Croatia	1	Croatia
1	Czech Republic		Czech Republic		Czech Republic	1	Czech Republic		Czech Republic
7	France		France	2	France	4	France	2	France
3	Germany		Germany	1	Germany	2	Germany		Germany
1	Hungary		Hungary		Hungary		Hungary	1	Hungary
1	Ireland		Ireland		Ireland	1	Ireland		Ireland
3	Italy		Italy	2	Italy	1	Italy		Italy
1	Latvia		Latvia		Latvia		Latvia	1	Latvia
1	Luxembourg		Luxembourg		Luxembourg		Luxembourg	1	Luxembourg
1	Malta	1	Malta		Malta		Malta		Malta
3	Netherlands	1	Netherlands	1	Netherlands	1	Netherlands		Netherlands
1	Norway		Norway	1	Norway		Norway		Norway
8	Poland	6	Poland	1	Poland	1	Poland		Poland
2	Portugal		Portugal		Portugal	1	Portugal	1	Portugal
2	Romania	1	Romania	1	Romania		Romania		Romania
1	Slovenia		Slovenia	1	Slovenia		Slovenia		Slovenia
3	Spain		Spain	1	Spain	2	Spain		Spain
7	UK		UK	2	UK	5	UK		UK

## 1.6. Evaluative card

The evaluative question was a tool used only by each consultant, permitting his/her to better structure his survey as well as the survey's tools: questionnaires, interviews, reports. The standard sheet is structured as follows:

Standard evaluation sheet																				
<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Q1</b></div>		< ----- <b>Question number</b>																		
<b>Question related to ... :</b> (one of the main themes to which the question refers)																				
<b>To (theme of the question)</b>																				
<div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Key question:</b> (the sub-question in relation to the main theme)         </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 10px 0;"> <div style="width: 15%;">           I-  IA  IB  IC         </div> <div style="width: 85%; text-align: center;">           Evaluation or judgement criteria:         </div> </div>																				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%;">           ----- &gt;   <i>Version of the evaluative question in key intermediate questions that make it possible to refine its comprehension and to answer it in stages.</i> </div> <table border="1" style="width: 80%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Types of analyses:</th> <th>Indicators and descriptors:</th> <th>Source:</th> <th>Expected form of the result:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>IA</td> <td>IA</td> <td>IA</td> <td>IA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB</td> <td>IB</td> <td>IB</td> <td>IB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IC</td> <td>IC</td> <td>IC</td> <td>IC</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <div style="width: 15%; text-align: right;">           ----- &lt;         </div> </div>					Types of analyses:	Indicators and descriptors:	Source:	Expected form of the result:	IA	IA	IA	IA	IB	IB	IB	IB	IC	IC	IC	IC
Types of analyses:	Indicators and descriptors:	Source:	Expected form of the result:																	
IA	IA	IA	IA																	
IB	IB	IB	IB																	
IC	IC	IC	IC																	
----- >  <i>Time line by evaluation and/or judgement criteria of the types of analyses envisaged</i>		<div style="display: flex;"> <div style="width: 30%; padding-right: 10px;"> <i>Time line by judgement criteria of the indicators or descriptors enabling the analyses to be enriched.</i> </div> <div style="width: 70%;"> <b>Sources of information</b> making it possible to provide information about the indicators and descriptors:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- questionnaires</li> <li>- interviews</li> <li>- documentary revues</li> <li>- follow-up system, etc.</li> </ul> </div> </div>																		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"></div> <div style="width: 40%;"></div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: right;"> <b>Expected formalization of the results</b> by evaluation and/or judgement criteria - critical analysis - synthesis table - graphics, matrix - typology, etc.         </div> </div>																				

## ANNEX 2 – SECTION A: THE AESTHETICS OF STREET ARTS IN EUROPE

Contribution by Anne-Karine Granger – January 2007 – for the study on ‘Street Artists in Europe’

### 1. The roots of street arts

Street arts undoubtedly have their roots in European theatre that developed in the streets. A general historical outline, starting with the Greek theatre, will cast further light on these ancient practices. It is commonly believed that that was where modern street arts originated. Certainly there are links with some artistic forms – parades, travelling shows, circus arts – and the artists see themselves as part of that tradition.

In her study entitled *Qu'est-ce que le théâtre de rue*, Anne Gonon takes a close look at those connections. Is there a link between Greek theatre and present-day street theatre? ‘The fact that they both take place in the open air does not make them similar because although Greek plays were performed outdoors they were not street theatre.’ They were soon confined to amphitheatres and so had their own setting. This form of theatre has a dual role of celebration and protest: celebration of the unity of the town and questioning of its paradoxes, conflicts and failings. That ambivalent theme is part of the fabric of modern street theatre.

In the same way, the festive processions in honour of Dionysus were probably the forerunners to Carnival or the Feast of Unreason. They were similar to modern street parades by companies that aim to build the crowd and carry it along with them. But again, the religious aspect of those events must not be overlooked. Because of the codes and rules governing them, those ‘implicit laws’ differ from today’s street theatre in two important respects. In other words, if there is a connection, it is more in form than in substance.

Historians of street theatre also cite mediaeval theatre. An essential feature of those plays, which underwent a renaissance around the 10th century, was that they were inspired by and for religion. The early performances developed in churches and had liturgical themes. Gradually the clerics established the foundations of theatre.

Is there a connection and a dramatic continuity between Greek performers and the mime artists of the Later Roman Empire and medieval clerics and jugglers? That is extremely doubtful. There were jesters and entertainers at court between the 5th and the 9th centuries, but they were not actors. ‘It is true they were talented (impersonators), but it would be going too far to say they were actors’<sup>90</sup>. There are no references to theatrical performances in the west in that period. It was the farce performed by brotherhoods that really heralded the start of character-based theatre. In the Middle Ages, plays started to be performed on a platform (stage). Again, that form of theatre is related only distantly to street theatre. Medieval theatre troupes performed in the open air, but their aspiration was to perform in a theatre and they found ways to distance themselves physically from the crowd, mainly by introducing boards to form a stage.

From the Passion plays to the Feast of Unreason, from Carnival to itinerant jugglers and storytellers, the resemblance to present-day street arts is tenuous. One of the main differences lies in the religious background to the development of theatre. Moreover, the theatricality of

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<sup>90</sup> Jomaron, Jacqueline, *Le théâtre en France: du Moyen Age à nos jours*, Paris, L.G.F, 1993.

these mediaeval practices was still embryonic and they were more impersonation than real acting. As far as the connection with festivals is concerned, the commonly held view is obviously far from the truth. Although they were an opportunity to let one's hair down and reverse the social hierarchy, they were also supervised, manipulated and even orchestrated by the rulers, who used them as a form of social control. Machiavelli advises, 'The prince should arrange festivals and games for the people at certain times of year. Popular festivals can be used and diverted for other social or political purposes, to assert one's position and thereby maintain the established order'<sup>91</sup>.

This use of festivals for other purposes is similar to modern problems with street festivals. They are an opportunity to watch performances, stay out in the streets until late, wander about eating and drinking, but, directly or indirectly, they are always under the supervision of the local council that organises them or provides the venue. The authorities 'lend' the streets and public spaces for the festival, but they never relinquish control. To a certain extent, street arts in their current form in France are akin to those mediaeval festivals they are said to resemble, but the similarity is more in social regulation and crowd control.

Finally, the claim that street arts follow in the tradition of jugglers, barkers, puppeteers and clowns is perhaps an attempt to give them a historical identity by making them part of the long tradition of live shows. But the researcher Philippe Chaudoir believes that the analogy is misleading; an important difference is the type of public space in which the artists from those different periods perform. The public spaces in which the Feast of Unreason, Carnival and travelling shows took place were nothing like the public spaces that street artists have chosen to work in since 1968. The public spaces these 'interventionists' have tried to revive are seen as a medium of communication for exchanging and forming opinions. This contemporary trend is an attempt to foster togetherness. For those performers, the street is a space to be transformed into a public gathering place. Their aim is for the community to reclaim the public space. This concept of a public space can often be abstract, but in street performance it is a very physical concept.

Furthermore, street entertainers choose to perform in the street. That might seem so obvious that it does not need to be pointed out, but it is fundamental: street entertainers are an urban and anti-establishment phenomenon. They go 'outdoors' because they refuse to stay 'indoors'. They do not want to be hidebound by institutions; they want to reach out to the public, seek new artistic experiences, go back to their community roots. In that respect, street artists have very little in common with the mediaeval travelling showmen; in fact, they are deeply rooted in their time. On the other hand, they revive the old traditions from which they claim to take their inspiration, not nostalgically or with the idea of going back to them, but in a syncretic approach that seeks to draw on the past in order to move forward.

## 2. Framework

### 2.1. Definitions

At the moment it is hard to find a definition that everyone in Europe agrees on. Different countries, different festivals, and different artists use different terms, and these can only be seen as indicators: street arts and street theatre (France), travelling theatre and arts (Belgium), theatre in situ (Netherlands), new forms of artistic expression (Spain), animation (Germany), entertainment (Britain), urban culture or communication, street shows, open air shows, shows in

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<sup>91</sup> Summary from Gonon, Anne, *Qu'est ce que le théâtre de rue*, study by the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Lyon, 2001.

public spaces, in open spaces, etc. However, it is important to decide on a generic name for these many different forms of entertainment; they have to be given a higher profile. In Britain the word art seems too elitist in its connotations and it is often suggested that new terms should be found so as not to define the image of the theatre companies too narrowly<sup>92</sup>.

The fact that so many different names are used raises questions about the notion of art and also about the notion of the street, which varies according to whether one is in northern or southern Europe (cultural habits are dependent on climate in particular), in the east or the west (for reasons of tradition or politics)<sup>93</sup>.

## 2.2. A dominant form

In 2000 the French Ministry of Culture made grants to around a hundred companies that worked mainly in the street. Because of the diverse techniques they use, the government subsumes them all under the general heading of street arts. Almost half of them are linked to the theatre, but there are also many musicians, dancers, mime artists, puppeteers, jugglers, acrobats, trapeze artists; some work with plastic art installations, special effects or pyrotechnics, or even combine several of those forms. At festivals where they are brought together in various combinations, the audience do not always distinguish between styles. Fire-eaters, parading clowns and stilt-walkers have taken the place of strong men and bear leaders in the squares and markets. When they are not holding out the hat for themselves, these ‘pavement pounders’ (Michel Crespin uses the term ‘cogne-trottoir’) are invited by local councils to perform at festivals, parades, son et lumière shows, historical reconstructions<sup>94</sup>. Although they still perform in a traditional style, for other artists the city becomes a theatre with the street as the stage, the buildings as scenery and passers-by as spectators, or even participants.

In this ‘general topology of the field’<sup>95</sup>, Philippe Chaudoir emphasises the pre-eminence of the theatre and, more generally, identifies two main sub-groups employing two different techniques. One group uses the body as the main vehicle of expression; the other uses technical methods. The first group includes circus acts, aerial acts, acrobats and theatre; the second, plastic arts, special effects (fireworks and pyrotechnics), sound and music. Although these classifications and labels are only a social construct, they nonetheless reflect one of the most important characteristics of this field: its diversity<sup>96</sup>.

*Goliath*, the directory of street arts and circus arts published by HorsLesMurs, a national association for the development of street arts and circus arts subsidised by the French Ministry of Culture, has carried out a survey of street performance companies, asking them which artistic category they belong to.

The range of descriptions shows how diverse the field is, but ‘theatre’ is the largest group; 26% of companies define themselves as theatre groups (see note 2 at the end of the report).

<sup>92</sup> In ‘Table ronde Formes du théâtre de rue’, Rencontre internationale *Théâtre de rue: État des lieux*, Festival international de théâtre de rue d’Aurillac, August 2005.

<sup>93</sup> Y. Floch (coord.), *Enquête préliminaire sur les politiques culturelles en faveur des arts de la rue et des arts de la piste en Europe*. Study by the Centre de recherche sur la culture, les musées et la diffusion des savoirs (CRCMD), Université de Bourgogne, HorsLesMurs, Paris, 2006.

<sup>94</sup> Clidière, Sylvie, preface to *Goliath*, op. cit.

<sup>95</sup> Chaudoir, Philippe, *Discours et figures de l’espace public à travers les arts de la rue*, op. cit.

<sup>96</sup> Gonon, Anne, *Qu’est ce que le théâtre de rue*, op. cit.



## 2.3. An alternative approach

It is difficult to define artistic innovation. Art is constantly changing. Old forms are replaced by new, which in their turn become old. So street arts have reinvented, in contemporary urban settings, forms of theatre and popular festivals that come from very ancient traditions, for example theatre on the boards, carnival, travelling fairs.

Street arts are innovative not so much because they offer completely new forms of entertainment, but because their approaches are an alternative to the rules and practices that predominate in other artistic fields, for instance:

- the choice of urban space;
- a different attitude to the audience.

In addition

- the rejection of traditional scenography in which all eyes are fixed on the same point;
- a non-hierarchical structure and fragmentary use of specialist and technical languages.

Aesthetically, street arts are now going through a phase in which there is a new desire to break down barriers and this is also starting to emerge in other artistic fields. Contemporary dance 'gets down' into the street and brings in movements like hip hop. People working in the theatre are asking whether they have a duty to involve themselves in social issues and to seek closer contact with the public.

### 2.3.1. Contact with the public: the essence of the performance

Contact with the public is a fundamental element of street arts. The spectators play an essential part in the performance and it is reliant on them. That contact is a form of encounter which emphasises the balance of power that might be established between actors and the public, a reminder that audience reaction can either carry the performance along or destroy it.

In their desire to alter the traditional relationship with the audience, artists want spectators to be active and reactive, at risk of never being certain whether the public are on their side. That delicate balance means building a relationship through impromptu actions, the effect of surprise and amazement. Hence the importance of the body in the response to those artistic performances that seek to create a kind of collective identity, whilst eliminating the distance between performers and public.

Street theatre breaks down the impassable barrier between audience and actors and bridges the gap between the stage and the body of the theatre. This 'crossing of the line'<sup>97</sup> brings together two coexisting worlds, the world of the performers and the world of those who are watching and listening to them.

Contact with the public stimulates creativity. That relationship must also be given special attention and a specific artistic language so that new types of relationship can be created. The relationship with the public must be at the heart of street theatre, precisely because this type of

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<sup>97</sup> Dort, Bernard, *La pratique du spectateur*, Paris, P.O.L., 1995, p. 40.

performance is an alternative to plays in the theatre. Face-to-face contact in street arts is totally different from the distance between players and audience in the theatre and so it is a new form of theatrical mediation.

### 2.3.2. The language of (urban, rural, industrial) space

For street artists public space is more than just a background. It is an integral part of the show because the town is a physical, social, ideological and political entity that stimulates dramatic creation within its walls. So certain requirements are common to all the artists:

- writing specially tailored to structures;
- physical contact with and sensitivity to an area, a town;
- multisensory attention to urban and rural settings (sight, hearing, smell and touch);
- political, social and ideological contact with the space occupied;
- making people look differently at ordinary places;
- making the story part of the town's memories and history.

Using the town, for example, as a setting is a long-term project. Detailed location research (traffic flows, natural light, identification of districts, daily use of the space by the community, etc.), rehearsals in public in order to gauge and respond to audience reaction, identification of the social fabric, are all parameters that the artist has to work out in order to adapt the production to the surroundings. However, that assumes that the event will be unique and ephemeral. Certainly there are shows that can successfully combine specifically urban creation and adaptability but those are still fairly rare.

## 3. Ethics and aesthetics

As we have seen, street arts do not fit into any specific category of live performance, because in fact they embrace all categories. Thus they do not constitute a single category in the usual sense of the word; they are diverse and ephemeral. They create a sort of paradox that defies any attempt at strict definition. But it is the general trends, the inter-relationships, that are diverse, rather than individuals.

One way of describing street arts would be to say that they exist on the 'margins' of live performance. But that does not mean they are marginal; quite the opposite. What is written in the margin is often a commentary, a clarification, an 'addition to the text', so that it always relates to the text, and sometimes even differentiates it completely<sup>98</sup>.

### 3.1. An ethic of social issues

In her report<sup>99</sup>, Franceline Spielmann explains that the ethical stance of street artists is a common attitude shared by many. Thus it is not just an individual ethical position, a personal commitment, it is a street arts ethic represented by many artists. She notes: 'Their aim here is to take away the everyday associations of any private or public space that can be used communally

<sup>98</sup> Dapporto, Elena, *Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement*, op. cit.

<sup>99</sup> Spielmann, Franceline, *Les questions de formation, qualification, transmission dans le domaine des Arts de la rue*, op. cit.

as an artistic venue. Those places no longer have just one purpose. They are opened up for the dialogue between audiences and street entertainers.’

This means that they might be places as different as a whole town during a festival, or the route of a parade, advertising hoardings, cellars, a moat square, a riverbank, a large cloister. Besides that, quite a few street artists try to exercise a direct geographical and social influence by talking to the decision-making authorities about local planning.

‘Regardless of the type of artistic performance, transforming places in this way stimulates the imagination that is absent from daily life. Re-kindling that imagination can alter the relationship people have to reality and, for example, to the public space they occupy as citizens and not anonymous individuals. That is not the only intention in playing on the imagination, even when it is through entertainment. The street artists always try to bring the individual into contact with otherness (in reference to their own commitment). That is why most productions deal with issues as well as providing entertainment’.

It is understandable, therefore, that since the question of space is an ethical issue, it is translated in the creative process as a set of fundamental artistic problems, not a set of technical questions to be answered, although the latter also have their place. ‘This dual intention, to transform the surroundings and stimulate the imagination in the context of daily life, means that street arts have to adopt many different forms and artistic styles and a mixture of languages is used as necessary for each creative work. Each work has its own forms and languages.’

### 3.2. An aesthetic that transforms

To quote Guy Scarpetta<sup>100</sup>: ‘All writing involves a latent aesthetic ... where the aim is no more to write readably than unreadably, but to make legible what is not yet legible ...’.

What is meant by a latent aesthetic? Obviously something that at the same time overlaps with and supports the ethical stance of street arts.

One can assume that street arts creators and performers feel a certain dissatisfaction with (not despair at) forms and content: forms and content of the State, of society, forms and content of the way these are expressed. Their wish and intention is to turn that dissatisfaction into performance. That is the latent aesthetic, which as such is impossible to formulate theoretically or descriptively (although they might of course talk about it)<sup>101</sup>.

It is a latent aesthetic because their aim is to find, to invent, a new language, a new artistic writing form in order to transcend that dissatisfaction. Creative work, which is in itself new and unexpected, never springs from nothing; it is based on previous knowledge (if only experience) which already takes it in a certain artistic direction.

‘The genius of street arts is that they understand that, in order to achieve them, they had to draw on that existing knowledge and on real audience reference points (such as public spaces or social situations). But it is also important to re-awaken the audience’s imagination.’<sup>102</sup>,

<sup>100</sup> Scarpetta, Guy, *L’impureté* - Figures, Editions Grasset, May 1995, pp. 19 to 24.

<sup>101</sup> Spielmann, Franceline, *Les questions de formation, qualification, transmission dans le domaine des Arts de la rue*, op. cit.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

And that is where the transformation comes in: the aim is not to portray public or social reality, even if to challenge it, or to present a different use from the 'subjects' of the creative process. Thus the audience might be shown not a different reality, but a different view of reality that is hidden or not yet readable.

#### 4. Specific forms of writing

Dramatic art, staging, performance, writing ... What terms can be used to describe the work of the street artist without having to fall back on traditional theatre? The word 'writing' seems inappropriate since it clearly comes from the theatre and its relationship with the text. According to Philippe Chaudoir, the term writing will be used in reference to a dominant model, the conventional theatre model. In fact, it should be made clear that this is scenographic writing. Street theatre does not usually involve writing in the sense of meaningful words and text written before the work is staged. The writing entails manipulating the space, dialogue with the urban setting, body language, etc. The real work companies do on actors and the creation of characters and history must not be overlooked. How can that work be reconciled with the absence of a text?

Street theatre, because of its close relationship with the public, only exists at the moment it is being performed and actors must to some extent be able to improvise in order to respond to any situation. Thus meaning is conveyed not just by text but through a whole range of expression.

'Writing' must be understood in its broad sense: bodies, postures, gestures, space, images and sounds as well as words. Producing street theatre involves multimedia writing (which can be expressed through various channels of communication: voice, sound and gesture). In situ, street theatre also has to be written for the urban setting, the street or square where it is to be performed. It must be set in a 360-degree landscape that is largely created by the performance itself. Some people prefer the term 'dramatic art', which embraces these and other aspects<sup>103</sup>.

Alongside the various forms of street art they offer and their special relationship with the public, street arts practitioners have built up a whole range of skills and know-how previously unexplored or unused in live shows. In the early years, creators often acquired new skills in an attempt to escape from the conventional, from performance, from the 'straitjacket' and their financial constraints. Little by little, certain teams built up a stock of knowledge acquired from their continuous study of:

- urban spaces as public space;
- the relationship with various audiences, including those who were not part of mainstream culture;
- non-hierarchical use of borrowings from the various forms of live performance;
- mixed languages and variety of writing;
- artistic choices expressed in 'unexpected juxtapositions' and 'unusual combinations';
- different strategies for different places, audiences, projects<sup>104</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> Gonon, Anne, op. cit.

<sup>104</sup> Dapporto, Elena, Aims analysed in *Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement*, Matisse – UMR CNRS 8595, Université de Paris 1, January 2000.

Michel Simonot lists the specific characteristics identified by the street artists that the working group on street arts spoke to. The list is as follows<sup>105</sup>:

- ‘- the street is first and foremost a spirit, and only then a place or a space:
- we are, above all, not in “conventional” settings;
- our work is interdisciplinary, a mixture of styles;
- there are special acting techniques;
- we experiment, we do not follow the rules;
- we are free, we have no institutional constraints;
- in our shows, we look at everyday life in an imaginative way;
- unlike stage performers, we have direct contact with the public;
- performances are inspired by the relationship with the audience, we work directly with them;
- our relationship is with a crowd, passers-by, in other words a non-selected, non-elitist audience;
- the whole population is our audience, since we are in their midst;
- our productions are designed to be adaptable to different situations (venues, commissions, etc.);
- solidarity is a fundamental value, both in life and in the troupe, and between troupes;
- with us, there is no separation, no hierarchy of roles: acting, building, setting up and taking down ...;
- we are directly involved with the materials, the production;
- and also with the weather, the climate, street life;
- we travel from place to place, we are not confined’.

Just by bursting on to the scene, street artists transform any venue into a performance space. Actors suddenly appear and, by drawing a virtual circle, establish a performance space. A distance is created between actors and passers-by, who thus become spectators. That is the strength of street arts: the distance creates a parallel world that we know claims to be real.

## 5. Artistic techniques

Here we shall continue to investigate certain fields of research in order to define artistic forms of street arts in more detail. The aim will be to describe the modes of expression, and the diversity of this field, by attempting to classify the art forms.

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<sup>105</sup> Simonot, M., ‘L’art de la rue: scène urbaine, scène commune’, op. cit.

### 5.1. Interdisciplinary nature

Street arts are part of a wide-ranging polymorphous movement in which directors, actors, artists, scenographers, and video directors work together with the same aim: to put on an artistic show in the middle of a public space, in direct proximity to the public. It is that collaboration that forms the basis of what we now call street arts.

Street arts are difficult to classify because of the various ways in which companies describe themselves. However, most artists consider themselves to fall into the category of 'street theatre', closely followed by circus acts.

The next most frequently mentioned forms are urban plastic arts and street music. Street artists are also moving with the times, gradually introducing plastic art and sound installations, urban scenography, and videos. They are interlinked with other art forms and disciplines, drawn from architecture, town planning and multimedia<sup>106</sup>.

### 5.2. Artistic typology

The typology used here is from the DVD 'Images de la création' produced by HorsLesMurs. The definitions are suggested by the journalist and author Thierry Voisin.

#### Activism/protest

Theatre has always had a link with politics. In the 1970s, it was a form of protest, political activism or agit-prop. Ideology was more important than the artistic aspect. At that time the artists were at odds with society and institutionalised theatre that conformed to the rules. Now, many street artists, following the example of Bertolt Brecht and his epic theatre, are once again adopting a militant stance, showing the world as it is and encouraging the audience to take a critical view of a society with mass homelessness, unemployment and illegal immigration.

That category includes clowns, street theatre companies, and solo performers who have only their bodies and their words with which to harangue the crowd, whilst many challenge the spectators with an impressive range of effects.

Examples: La cave à Théâtre, Generik Vapeur, Turbulence, Agence Tartare, Kumulus.

Examples of clowns: Léandre and Claire (Spain), 2 rien merci (France), Bris de banane (France), Elastic (Belgium), Kufr (Czech Republic).

Street theatre is sometimes inspired by the theatre of origins, by the first touring companies to perform in public squares, which is still often provocative. Many companies challenge, satirise and poeticise modern urban society, taking the audience by surprise because the underlying tone behind the joking is always critical or frankly disturbing.

Companies: Délices Dada (France), Annibal et ses éléphants (France), le Cercle de la litote (France), KK Compagnie (Germany), Aksident (Belgium), Wurre Wurre (Belgium), Desperate Men (United Kingdom), Strefa Cisy (Poland).

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<sup>106</sup> Clidière, Sylvie, preface to *Goliath 2006*, op. cit.

## Dance in public spaces

Dance, in streets, squares, parks, on horizontal and vertical, flat and uneven surfaces, is also an established form in public spaces. In those settings it is freed from the shackles of tradition, its elitist image and the technical constraints of the stage, creating new spatial relationships with the architecture and the moving audience. In the hubbub of the town, it uses movement and gesture to reveal to the audience what they would not normally see or be able to imagine.

Examples: Ex Nihilo, Compagnie Retouramont, Cie Beau Geste, Artonik (France), Tango Sumo (France), Die Audio Gruppe-Benoit Maubrey (Germany), Lemmings (United Kingdom), Malaje (Spain), Producciones Imperdibles (Spain), A.I.E.P (Italy).

## Urban festivals and storytelling

One of the skills of street artists is to bring the people of a town or district together and tell them a story. To surprise them, capture their attention and then transport them into a reverie, a communal dream world, as if it were still possible to live together without social or cultural barriers. At the end of the performance every member of the audience is left with memories of a sensual, communal celebration. And thus a new urban mythology takes shape year by year.

Examples: Transe Express, Cie Off, Oposito, Royal de Luxe.

This category includes music, circus acts, parades, pyrotechnics and stilt-walking. These various disciplines are often combined in urban festivals and storytelling, each contributing a dynamic element to the moving stories that appeal to all the spectators' senses.

**Circus acts** include trapeze artists, tightrope walkers and dancers, fire-eaters, stunt artists and jugglers. These extreme experiences appeal to the artists and lead them to perform often impressive, difficult and graceful feats.

Companies include: Theater Titanick (Germany), Couleurs mécaniques (France), Clinch (Netherlands), O Bando (Portugal), Chipolatas (United Kingdom).

Typical examples of street parade companies are found mainly in France, Spain and the United Kingdom: Cie Macnas, Oposito (France), Brayse (France), Cie Off (France), Generik Vapeur (France), Xarxa Teatre (Spain), Neighbourhood Watch Stilts International (United Kingdom).

These are often associated with companies using giant figures and structures, incredible machines, which are sometimes gigantic like those of the Royal de Luxe troupe, as tall as the buildings, built for street parades through the town.

Companies: The Lunatics (Netherlands), Dogtroep (Netherlands), Transe Express (France), Theater Titanick (Germany), Metalovoice (France).

Pyrotechnists such as Groupe F (France), Carabosse (France), Theater of Fire (Ireland), Flup & Ju Bedrijf (Netherlands) are also associated with this group.

The stilt-walkers who often walk in front of, alongside or at the end of these big parades are represented in many countries by companies such as Stalker (Australia), Grotest Maru (Germany), Irrwisch (Austria), Alien Voyagers (Netherlands), Biuro Podrozy (Poland).

## **The heritage of fairground theatre**

Alongside the tradesmen's stalls at 17th and 18th century fairs in Paris were theatre booths showing curiosities, sideshows and entertainment. Some street artists have revived these popular entertainment in their own organic performance spaces (marquees, yurts, booths, lorries) that fit the bodies of the actors and the performance like a second skin. They perform an entertaining repertoire, sometimes mingling irreverence with parody, interacting very closely with the audience.

Examples: L'Illustre Famille Burattini, 2 rien Merci, Cirkatomik, O.p.U.S.

This travelling theatre also has close links with puppetry and object theatre, which often appeal to a smaller audience or at least have an ability to concentrate on quieter storytelling. Typical examples are Turak (France), Mr Barti (Denmark), Teatr Viti Marcik (Poland), Circolando (Portugal), Stuffed Puppet (Netherlands).

The street music that of course accompanies urban festivals and storytelling also springs from the popular tradition of song peddlers who accompany themselves on mechanical organs. Nowadays it has become an original creative trend that interacts with the urban environment, either sublimating it or perverting it and making people look at their everyday surroundings differently. In their shows, companies such as Les piétons (France), Muziekmaatschappij (Belgium), Ricciotti Ensemble (Netherlands), Audio Gruppe (Germany), and Hoodwink (United Kingdom) work with musical instruments (accordion, brass, percussion) or machines that they make to explore new sounds or different relationships with the material.

## **Transformation of the town**

Street artists are fascinating because they erupt into the town. They flout public order, change the rules for vehicle and pedestrian traffic, alter the normal uses of public space and buildings. But it is not this public disorder, however appealing it might be, that makes the entertainment. The story the artists invent in the town they have transformed makes all its inhabitants look at their familiar surroundings in a different way – and they will go on doing so.

Examples: T.Public-Association d'idées, Ici Même, Délices Dada, Décor Sonore.

## **The spectator as performer**

The public space has become an open stage. Performers are not separated from the audience. There is no orchestra pit, no fourth wall between the stage and the body of the theatre. Spectators are not fixed in one position. They are fully involved in the performance, as willing or unwilling accomplices. Sometimes they even become part of the action. The show cannot happen without them. They are the leading players, even the playwrights, because sometimes they have to write the play or the scene in which they have been invited to act.

Examples: Allegro Barbaro (France), Les Souffleurs-Commandos poétiques (France), Les Goulus (France), les Cubiténistes (France), Lackaal Duckric (France).



## Visual arts

Happenings, performances, parades, installations: street artists work against a background of architecture laden with history and symbols which they exploit or transform, using various media (calligraphy, light, sound, video). They make people see the town in a different way. New generations of artists, working more with the plastic arts, film and puppets than with theatre, and bringing in all kinds of disciplines, even use new technologies to expand the range of feelings and emotions, without in any way toning down the critical sharpness of their approach, which is much more important than the show itself.

Examples: KompleXXKapharnaüm, le Caravansérail, Amoros and Augustin.

These visual arts are related to urban plastic arts; artists, scenographers and photographers are like performers, working within the urban setting. They set it free, make it vibrant by exposing its fragility and the romance of its hidden corners. Like architects of the ephemeral, they produce an immense work of plastic transformation.

In their productions, companies like Ilotopie (France), Groupe Zur (France), Totem, compagnie du bout du monde (Belgium), Fura dels Bau(s) (Spain), Serbay (Tamer) (Netherlands), and Boilerhouse (United Kingdom) are constantly reinventing a sensitive approach to our environment.

## New urban poems

Unlike cathedral builders and in contrast with the extravagance of the big popular festivals, some street artists prefer the ephemeral to the complete, the elusive to the constant, the invisible to the immutable, poetry to reality. With fleeting images, they alter the urban space so that spectators lose all their spatial and temporal landmarks and the mystery of another life, another town, is revealed to them. The ordinary everyday appearance of the town is transcended<sup>107</sup>.

Although they are often placed in the festivals and urban storytelling category, companies such as Transe Express (France), Cie Off (France), Oposito (France), and Royal de Luxe (France) also use these more evanescent forms. Artistic directors are often intent on exploring more intimate channels of expression, since their very strong relationship with material and structures can distance them from simpler and more direct channels.

## The real and the artificial

Planners find that many forms are linked to the new technologies that are now widely used. Younger generations have made these technologies part of their lives and it is impossible now to live without them. The spread of these media raises questions about the role of street artists and the relevance of what they say. Although they agree that technology does not change mental attitudes, they point out that the number of companies becoming skilled in the use of light, sound and video technology is on the increase. In fact, some companies (such as KompleXXKapharnaüm-France) work on the boundaries; they incorporate new technologies, but demystify them, projecting huge images but with proximity sound that does not fill the whole space, and continue to combine the use of technology with dance (e.g. Osmosis).

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<sup>107</sup> Classification established by Voisin, Thierry.

‘The temptations of technology therefore have to be qualified. Many of the shows are still fairly physical, with live performers. Cie Off, Ilotopie and Générrik Vapeur remind us that real human beings are there with their instruments. There are always living statues at tourist sites in capital cities. Live performance will always have its place, even though artificial techniques are becoming more common.’<sup>108</sup>

### 5.3. Breakdown of disciplines

Analysis of the table of figures from the HorsLesMurs European database, January 2002 to January 2007.

#### 5.3.1. Overall figures

Of 8 772 shows in the survey, 80% did not mention one main discipline. Street arts shows are largely multidisciplinary.

The most common discipline was still street theatre, with 3 382 shows. After that were circus arts with 1 681 shows, then music with 1 303. The figure for urban plastic arts was 727 shows, and for puppets and object theatre 452. That was followed by dance, with 364 shows, town parades with 360, and pyrotechnics with 242. Although they were often mentioned because of their impressiveness, the figure for giant structures was 160.

Apart from that distinction, of the 20% of shows with a main discipline, theatre was first, with 842 shows (9.6%), followed by street music with 235 (2.68%) and circus acts with 218 (2.49%). There were 143 puppet and object theatre shows (1.63 %), very close to the figure for street dance, which was 116 (1.32 %). Other categories were urban visual arts with 74 shows, parades with 57, pyrotechnics with 40, and magic with 12. For giant structures, a less common but impressive form, the figure was 8 shows, whilst for street opera, a tiny but still significant category, there were 2 shows.

#### 5.3.2. Refined data

To refine this initial approach it is necessary to consider which disciplines are involved in the shows within each category and to what extent the performers saw those specific disciplines as the primary artistic source for their shows.

##### 5.3.2.1. *Theatre: the main discipline in 842 out of 3 382 shows*

Street theatre (text) was at the top with 1 072 shows, in 403 of which it was the main discipline. Many of the artists were clowns, with 490 shows, in 91 of which that was the main discipline, followed by gestural theatre with 476 shows, in 76 of which that was the main discipline. Musical theatre was significant with 371 shows, in 68 of which that was the main discipline, whilst theatre in general accounted for 228 shows, in 55 of which that was the main discipline. Many companies work in mime (193 shows, in 16 of which it was the main discipline), travelling theatre (178 shows, in 56 of which that was the main discipline) and storytelling (153 shows, 38 of which that was the main discipline).

<sup>108</sup> Songy, Jean-Marie, in ‘Théâtre de rue, un théâtre de l’échange’, *Etudes Théâtrales*, 2007.

The figure for theatre on the boards (75 shows, in 14 of which that was the main discipline) was similar to that for *commedia dell'arte* (74 shows, in 17 of which that was the main discipline). Shadow theatre, with 40 shows in one of which that was the main discipline, also has its emulators.

Action theatre, mask theatre, experimental theatre and jesters were smaller in number, but there are companies that work in those fields.

#### ***5.3.2.2. Circus arts: 1 681 shows, in 218 of which these were said to be the main discipline***

A large majority with juggling (361 shows, in 41 of which that was the main discipline), followed by stilt-walking (348 shows, in 85 of which that was the main discipline) and acrobatics (289 shows, in 21 of which that was the main discipline), often linked to aerial acrobatics (203 shows in 30 of which that was the main discipline).

A second category is tightrope walking (100 shows, in 2 of which that was the main discipline) and fire-eating (64 shows, in 4 of which that was the main discipline).

Trick cycling (42 shows, in 3 of which that was the main discipline), the high wire (40 shows, in of which that was the main discipline), stunt dancing (33 shows, in 2 of which that was the main discipline) and stunts (30 shows) formed another group, with strongmen (29 shows, in 2 of which that was the main discipline) and live robots (29 shows, in 4 of which that was the main discipline).

Finally, in smaller numbers, unicycles, tightrope walking, sword swallowing, dressage, whip cracking, rollerskating and the trampoline: 4 shows, in *[figure missing in the original]* of which those were the main discipline.

#### ***5.3.2.3. Urban plastic arts: 727 shows, in 74 of which that was the main discipline***

Most urban art installations are plastic art installations (192 shows, in 24 of which that was the main discipline) and visual installations (156 shows, in 7 of which that was the main discipline).

In urban scenography there were 127 shows (in 12 of which that was the main discipline), together with urban plastic arts (89 shows, in 14 of which that was the main discipline) and audiovisual installations (87 shows, in 10 of which that was the main discipline). The figures for urban sculpture (57 shows, in 3 of which that was the main discipline) and urban painting (19 shows, in 4 of which that was the main discipline) were slightly lower.

#### ***5.3.2.4. Giant structures: 160 shows, in 120 of which that was the main discipline***

A distinction must be made between fixed giant structures (53 shows, in 2 of which they were the main discipline) and moving giant structures (67 shows, in 4 of which they were the main discipline).

### ***5.3.2.5. The final category, street music (1 303 shows, in 235 of which that was the main discipline), shows the diversity of forms on offer***

In the general category of street music there were 275 shows (in 61 of which that was the main discipline), closely followed by street singing with 225 shows (in 38 of which that was the main discipline).

The next largest groups were brass bands (148 shows, in 59 of which that was the main discipline), traditional music (146 shows, in 18 of which that was the main discipline) and sound installations (120 shows, in 13 of which that was the main discipline).

The third group in the music category consisted of percussion groups (113 shows, in 21 of which that was the main discipline), experimental music (90 shows, in 8 of which that was the main discipline) and electronic music (87 shows, in 2 of which that was the main discipline).

Lastly mechanical music (56 shows, in 4 of which that was the main discipline), one-man bands (20 shows, in 8 of which that was the main discipline) and choirs (21 shows, in 3 of which that was the main discipline).

The new category of street opera demonstrates the inventiveness of street artists and the importance of their experiments. At the moment there are only 2 shows, but it has been attracting attention.

## **5.3.3. Simplified groupings**

### ***5.3.3.1. Theatre***

Theatre that goes back to its origins, the first touring companies performing in public squares. Companies: Délices Dada (France), Annibal et ses éléphants (France), le Cercle de la litote (France), KK Compagnie (Germany), Aksident (Belgium), Wurre Wurre (Belgium), Desperate Men (United Kingdom), Strefa Cizy (Poland).

### ***5.3.3.2. Circus acts***

These include: aerial arts, stunts, fire-eaters, tightrope dancers, high-wire artists and jugglers. Companies include: Theater Titanick (Germany), Couleurs mécaniques (France), Clinch (Netherlands), O Bando (Portugal), Chipolatas (United Kingdom).

### ***5.3.3.3. Music***

Street music comes from the popular tradition of song peddlers who accompany themselves on mechanical organs. It has become an original trend in contemporary art in the urban environment. Companies include: Les piétons (France), Muziekmaatschappij (Belgium), Ricciotti Ensemble (Netherlands), Audio Gruppe (Germany), Hoodwink (United Kingdom).

### ***5.3.3.4. Visual arts/urban plastic arts***

Architects of the ephemeral, plastic artists, scenographers and photographers similar to performers, working within the urban setting. Companies include: Ilotopie (France), Groupe Zur

(France), Totem, compagnie du bout du monde (Belgium), Fura dels Bau(s) (Spain), Serbay (Tamer) (Netherlands), Boilerhouse (United Kingdom).

#### **5.3.3.5. *Puppets and object theatre***

Companies include: Turak (France), Mr Barti (Denmark), Teatr Viti Marcik (Poland), Circolando (Portugal), Stuffed Puppet (Netherlands).

#### **5.3.3.6. *Dance***

Companies include: Artonik (France), Beau Geste (France), Tango Sumo (France), Die Audio Gruppe-Benoit Maubrey (Germany), Lemmings (United Kingdom), Malaje (Spain), Producciones Imperdibles (Spain), A.I.E.P (Italy).

#### **5.3.3.7. *City parades***

Cie Macnas, Oposito (France), Brayse (France), Cie Off (France), Generik Vapeur (France), Xarxa Teatre (Spain), Neighbourhood Watch Stilts International (United Kingdom), Galway Festival in Ireland, Stockton International Riverside.

#### **5.3.3.8. *Pyrotechnics***

Companies include: Groupe F (France); Carabosse (France), Theatre of Fire (Ireland), Flup & Ju Bedrijf (Netherlands).

#### **5.3.3.9. *Monumental structures***

Incredible machines, sometimes gigantic like the one of the Royal de Luxe troupe, an art form that has been an instant success. Companies include: The Lunatics (Netherlands), Dogtroep (Netherlands), Transe Express (France), Theater Titanick (Germany), Metalovoice (France).

#### **5.3.3.10. *Stilt-walkers***

Companies include: Stalker (Australie), Grotest Maru (Germany), Irrwisch (Autriche), Alien Voyagers (Netherlands), Biuro Podrozy (Poland).

#### **5.3.3.11. *Clowns***

Companies include: Léandre and Claire (Spain), 2 rien merci (France), Bris de banane (France), Elastic (Belgium), Kufr (Czech Republic).

**Statistics of disciplines used in street arts shows**  
**HorsLesMurs European database, January 2002-January 2007**

<b>Total number of shows:</b>	<b>8 772</b>	<b>100%</b>
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<b>Classification of street arts disciplines</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Circus arts	218	2.49
Urban visual arts	74	0.84
Giant structures	8	0.09
Street dance	116	1.32
Magic	12	0.14
Puppets and object theatre	143	1.63
Street music	235	2.68
Street opera	2	0.02
Parades	57	0.65
Pyrotechnics	40	0.46
Theatre	842	9.60
Main discipline not specified	7 025	80.08

**General category shown in bold type**

Sub-category below

<b>Street arts discipline</b>	<b>Number of shows incorporating one of the disciplines</b>	<b>Stated by performers to be main discipline in show</b>	<b>%</b>
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<b>Circus arts</b>	<b>1 681</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>12.97</b>
circus arts	63	10	15.87
acrobatics	289	21	7.27
aerial acrobatics	203	30	14.78
equestrianism	5	1	20.00
living robots	29	4	13.79
sword swallowers	5	0	0.00
stuntmen	30	0	0.00
fire-eaters	64	4	6.25
stunt dancing	33	2	6.06
dressage	6	0	0.00
stilt-walking	348	85	24.43
balancing acts	100	2	2.00
high wire	40	6	15.00
whip cracking	4	0	0.00
tightrope walkers	9	6	66.67
juggling	361	41	11.36
unicycle	12	0	0.00
rollerskating	5	0	0.00
strongmen	29	2	6.90
trampoline	4	1	25.00
trick cycling	42	3	7.14

<b>Urban visual arts</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>10.18</b>
Urban plastic arts	89	14	15.73
Audiovisual installations	87	10	11.49
Plastic art installations	192	24	12.50
Visual installations	156	7	4.49
Urban painting	19	4	21.05
Urban scenography	127	12	9.45
Urban sculpture	57	3	5.26

<b>Giant structures</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5.00</b>
Giant structures	40	2	5.00
Fixed giant structures	53	2	3.77
Moving giant structures	67	4	5.97

<b>Street dance</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>31.87</b>
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<b>Magic</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12.12</b>
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<b>Puppets and object theatre</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>31.64</b>
Puppets and object theatre	258	91	35.27
Puppets	111	38	34.23
Object theatre	83	14	16.87

<b>Street music</b>	<b>1 303</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>18.04</b>
Street music	275	61	22.18
Street singing	225	38	16.89
Choirs	21	3	14.29
Brass bands	148	59	39.86
Percussion groups	113	21	18.58
One-man bands	20	8	40.00
Sound installations	120	13	10.83
Electronic music	87	2	2.30
Experimental music	90	8	8.89
Mechanical music	56	4	7.14
Traditional music	146	18	12.33

<b>Street opera</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.00</b>
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<b>Parades</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>15.83</b>
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<b>Pyrotechnics</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16.53</b>
Pyrotechnics	238	40	16.81
Special effects	4	0	0.00

<b>Theatre</b>	<b>3382</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>10.18</b>
Theatre	228	55	24.12
Jesters	2	0	0.00
Clowns	490	91	18.57
Commedia dell'arte	74	17	22.97
Storytelling	153	38	24.84

Mime	193	16	8.29
Mask theatre	10	3	30.00
Street theatre (text)	1072	403	37.59
Theatre on the boards	75	14	18.67
Action theatre	13	4	30.77
Shadow theatre	40	1	2.50
Experimental theatre	7	1	14.29
Travelling theatre	178	56	31.46
Gestural theatre	476	76	15.97
Musical theatre	371	68	18.33

## 6. Conclusion

Although street arts are part of the long history of theatre, it is not true to say that they are the successors to Greek or mediaeval theatre, because concepts of actors and public spaces in contemporary society are very different from what they were then. The reference to that history by many participants therefore reflects more of a syncretic approach, an attempt to draw on the past in order to move forward, than nostalgic evidence of roots.

Artistically, street arts draw on a wide range of skills and disciplines. They bring in directors, plastic artists, scenographers, video makers and technicians, who work to produce an artistic project in the heart of the public space, in direct proximity to the audience. Street arts include theatre, circus arts, urban plastic arts, music, dance, pyrotechnics, multimedia. Shows take place in the open air, in one spot or moving around. They range from giant structures to performances on the most intimate scale. Artists have strong roots in the theatre and are highly inventive in their use of non-textual writing. The shows are a perpetual work-in-progress as they are tailored to performance venues: town centres, outlying and rural areas. Some companies even collaborate with the fields of architecture and town planning. Lastly, the unique relationship with the spectators through interaction and audience participation is a very strong part of the creative process.

However, the wide range of techniques means that the artistic quality of shows is variable. Whilst some forms are successful and original, others have dramatic weaknesses, or are more in the nature of entertainment than pure creation. Because of the variety of forms, the field is difficult to define and the definition varies from one country to another: street arts and street theatre in France, travelling theatre and arts in Belgium, in situ theatre in the Netherlands, new forms of artistic expression in Spain, animation in Germany, entertainment in the United Kingdom, urban culture or communication, street shows, outdoor shows, shows in public spaces, in open spaces, and so on. Thus the generic name for these various performances is crucial; they need to be more precisely identified.

Since very few resource centres and video collections have been set up so far, street artists have no real opportunities to look objectively at contemporary artistic creation in their field. Furthermore, no research has been done on their cultural consumption. Nothing is known about their other sources of artistic inspiration.

Writing for street shows is therefore based on new skills, influenced partly by the desire to move away from the conventional and partly by financial constraints. So the urban space as public space, the relationship with different audiences, the non-hierarchical borrowing from various live performance disciplines, the mixture of languages and various kinds of writing, the artistic choices reflected in unexpected juxtapositions and unusual combinations, and the different



performance strategies depending on the venue, the audience and the project, are under constant review<sup>109</sup>.

That might be described as a latent aesthetic in street arts because their aim is to invent a new language to transcend dissatisfaction with the forms and content of the State, society, means of expressing and reporting on it. Street arts are important because they are based on real public reference points (public spaces or social situations, for example), but they awaken the public's imagination. That is where the transformation comes in: they do not portray a public or social reality, even to challenge it, or suggest changing its use. Rather than creating a different reality for the audience, the aim being to look at reality in a different way, to find in it what is hidden or not yet readable.

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<sup>109</sup> Dapporto Elena, Analysis of aims in *Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement*; Matisse – UMR CNRS 8595, Université de Paris 1, January 2000.

## ANNEX 2 – SECTION B: WHAT IS A STREET ARTIST IN EUROPE?

Contribution by Anne-Karine Granger – January 2007 – for the study on ‘Street Artists in Europe’

### 1. Background

Street arts, unruly members of the live performance family, have evolved from a unique combination of geographical, historical and cultural factors, rooted in Europe’s cultural heritage. ‘Religious or secular, political or hedonistic, light-hearted or intellectual, these experiences in seeing and living have sometimes crystallised into knowledge and rules of varying degrees of strictness<sup>110</sup>’.

Like the special place that theatre occupies in the collective memory, street arts cannot be summed up in purely artistic terms. Looking at their position in society, historical movements, cultural discourse and the field of academic research, street arts are a model of astonishing diversity whose complexity derives from its apparent contradictions. They are now trying to establish a place for themselves in the history of live performance, in which every European country has created cultural emblems, choosing a period and a genre that it regards as classic. Although theatre is a strong influence, it is not the only one.

We know that towns have been an integral part of the work of painters, novelists and poets since the end of the 14th century. Towns are the physical and organic, historical and social fabric for their creation. ‘Languages are intermingled in the urban environment and versatile performers, orators and pyrotechnists, operators and technicians go along with that. For them, the town is a site on which to build works in progress and a society to be challenged by intentional acts. That is why they explore all its dimensions, from the historic centre to the outer industrial areas, from basements to above the rooftops’<sup>111</sup>.

So the connection between street arts and the evolution of towns goes beyond the strict confines of art. How can we identify landmarks that help integrate them into the public imagination? How can we define their collective identity? National social and political culture is partly reflected in the hierarchy of authority and prestige in the theatrical world. Street arts, often seen as a popular art form, have come to a crucial point in their historical development: at the risk of losing their spontaneity, they are now being officially recognised<sup>112</sup>.

The reason many of the performers talk about the legacy of the 1970s is that that was when they themselves became involved in the movement. The sociologist Philippe Chaudoir stresses the unique nature of this movement, which is influenced by the past but deeply rooted in its time: ‘... [this] apparent resurgence of festive events, which derive from tradition but take more or less new forms, is basically part of an urban, social and political crisis, by which they are largely inspired ... [These] new organisers, new shows, new events, engage with their period ... the fundamental aim [of this engagement] being to give new meaning to the idea of urban activity, urban life’<sup>113</sup>.

<sup>110</sup> Pradier, Jean-Marie, ‘Théâtre occidental, théâtre et société’, *Encyclopédia Universalis* 2006.

<sup>111</sup> Wallon, Emmanuel, senior lecturer at Paris-X-Nanterre University, ‘Arts de la rue’, article in *Encyclopédia Universalis* 2007.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Chaudoir, Philippe, *Discours et figures de l’espace public à travers les arts de la rue*, Editions op. cit.

In France street arts grew up in the artistic and political protest movement between 1960 and 1980. In other European countries, the circumstances were different: for instance, the restoration of democracy in Spain, the development of artistic creation and practice on the margins of the official Communist system in Poland, reaction to the commercialisation of the arts in the United Kingdom. More generally, there was a sharp rise in the number of companies, shows and festivals in the 1990s, and performances attracted larger audiences of all kinds<sup>114</sup>. However, the exponential growth in the number of such events and their audiences was not matched by growing official recognition.

## 2. Framework

### 2.1. Working conditions for artists

The information in the following chapter is taken from the study commissioned by the European Parliament on the status of artists in Europe.

The work of artists accounts for a considerable proportion of the labour force in Europe. It is situated at the heart of the creative sector, serving both public arts organisations and private media and cultural industries. Whether they are authors or performers, professional artists will usually generate intellectual property rights, the income from which is insufficient to sustain them in their creative work, except in a minority of cases. Despite the flourishing culture/creative industry markets, creative artists work in much more precarious circumstances than those in other professions.

‘Atypical (project-based) and casual employment, irregular and unpredictable income, unremunerated research and development phases, accelerated physical wear and tear ... high levels of mobility’ and the existence of small businesses trying to develop prototype products ‘are among the key features not taken account of in the existing legal, social security and tax structures’<sup>115</sup>. A detailed look into the status of artists in the EU Member States would reveal that, even in countries that have long been considered welfare states, that precarious position is common to all artistic work at present.

### 2.2. Roles of the State and the market economy

‘In recent years the employment status of many groups, including professional artists, has been influenced by a diminishing role of the State and by a globalisation of market economies.

For example, the economy of culture in countries of western Europe has been, over the past 20 years, marked by the privatisation of the audiovisual sector, the reduction of national cultural budgets, the opening up and extension of the European public space and the preponderance of imported products transmitted via radio, TV, cable, etc. This has profoundly altered the conditions for creation and production.

Artistic creation finds itself settled into an economy of projects which are more often than not managed by small and medium-sized enterprises whilst, in the distribution sector, large-scale national and international groups dominate the market. Whilst some groups, e.g. literary authors, may be less affected by such changes, others, such as performing artists, see them as serious

<sup>114</sup> Y. Floch (coord.), *Enquête préliminaire sur politiques culturelles en faveur des arts de la rue et des arts de la piste en Europe*, op. cit.

<sup>115</sup> European Parliament study, *The Status of Artists in Europe*, November 2006.

interferences with their ideas and professional practices and may even consider changing their work or working status altogether<sup>116</sup>.

In most of the Nordic countries, with the exception of sectors like design or architecture, artists are more reluctant when it comes to setting up their own enterprises. The data produced by the Eurostat survey shows that, in 2002 the share of self-employed and entrepreneurs in the cultural sector in Norway and Denmark or Finland was 17% and 19% respectively, as compared with countries such as Italy and Ireland, where this proportion was much higher at 47% and 35% respectively. Sweden, with a figure of 27% self-employed in the total cultural workforce, comes closer to the average for EU25 which stands at a proportion of 29%. Freelance workers in the Nordic countries rely more often on relatively stable sources of temporary contracts or, partly, on additional salaried income. Salaried workers mainly work in the performing arts (*arts vivants*). A principal characteristic of the Nordic model has long been the extended system of public grants and the availability of long-term guaranteed income, which are seen as contributing to ensuring employment security and artistic freedom.

Over the past fifteen years the post-socialist countries have shared a slow and difficult transition process during which former models, institutions, laws and regulations have been gradually replaced by western variants. Although the public authorities have been working hard to replace old bodies of law with new ones, the application of these laws in practice requires multiple efforts to address a variety of obstacles, including insufficient institutional capacity to implement them. Old mentalities and forms of behaviour are persistent. Calls are made for societal values to adapt to new paradigms: a new role for the state, new attitudes towards work, self-management, etc. Public institutions and professional organisations in the cultural sector have been slow to adapt to change and to play the role of mediators in promoting artistic work. These changes surely cannot take place overnight and will take years, decades and maybe even a whole generation before they can be fully achieved.

Another common feature among post-socialist countries is the shift from paternalism to interventionism. Whilst in the west paternalism is not necessarily considered as a contradiction to entrepreneurial spirit and often forms a corporatist element of the welfare state, its eastern version is a legacy of *étatisme*, originating from the concept of a 'nanny state', breeding a culture of dependency and bringing beneficiaries under central control. This negative connotation provided a justification for the new democratic authorities to abolish not only guarantees of full employment, but also the former social security systems, all of this marked with an ideology of self-help, individual responsibility and entrepreneurialism. In a situation where the new state regulations are not yet in place, and market-oriented cultural production does not yet offer new opportunities for many artists, there has been a widespread resistance among artists to the often vague perspectives of newly developing social security and pension schemes, labour laws, taxation systems, etc.<sup>117</sup>

### 2.3. The status of artists

'The status of artists varies from one European country to another. So the profession is not defined in the same way in all countries or cultures. The French definition of a 'professional company' and, in particular, a professional artist, refers mainly to the administrative system and

<sup>116</sup> Results of a recent survey of German artists, Dangel, Caroline; Piorkowsky, Michael, Burkhard; Stamm, Thomas: *Selbstständige Künstlerinnen und Künstler in Deutschland - zwischen brotloser Kunst und freiem Unternehmertum?* Berlin: Deutscher Kulturrat, 2006.

<sup>117</sup> European Parliament, *The Status of Artists in Europe*, Suzanne Capiou, Andreas J. Wiesand, November 2006.

the system of unemployment benefits for intermittent workers. If such a worker can survive financially on his art, he is eligible for the corresponding administrative status. In countries that do not have that system for determining status, the transition from amateur to professional status is based on other factors and the distinction is more blurred.<sup>118</sup>

The French system of intermittent work seems to be a special case, although two other European countries also stand out in that regard: Belgium and the Netherlands. Since July 2003 Belgian artists may be regarded as employees if they work on commission. In the Netherlands, since a law passed in 1999, artists may be paid employees for a maximum of four years over a total period of ten years. In Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden, Italy and Austria, artists find it difficult to obtain unemployment benefit because they are not entitled to benefits if their only work is as an artist.

The transition from amateur to professional also depends on the training received, its standard and the circus and street arts training facilities developed in each country.

## 2.4. Contracts

A common feature of the majority of artists nowadays is a structural instability in their conditions of employment, and this instability is not generally offset by measures to make their position more secure.

Engagement under a *project-based, short-term contract* has become the norm in the European Union and is allowed by law (Belgium: contract for clearly defined work; France: fixed-term contract is customary), whilst artistic work is sometimes treated like temporary work (Italy; Belgium for casual employers)<sup>119</sup>. The length of contracts for those working intermittently in the entertainment industry has been declining steadily over the past 20 years. The case of France is a good example: between 1987 and 2001 the average length went down by 72 % (from 20.1 to 5.7 days). The number of contracts rose by 130%, but average pay fell by 25%, as did the number of days worked<sup>120</sup>.

In addition, because artists have to develop their own projects, particularly if they want to receive public grants, they have to set up small commercial or non-commercial businesses in which they are partners, directors or managers. Many artists are not trained or equipped for such entrepreneurial roles, but it is noticeable that they have a strong wish to be self-employed<sup>121</sup>.

## 2.5. Employment status and legal certainty

This finding applies to most European Union Member States. It is noted in all the Member States that artists are faced with multiple forms of engagement, which are constantly changing. An employment contract follows on from or can be coterminous with a copyright or related rights assignment agreement, a civil law contract or even a public works contract. These working conditions result in a multiplicity of social security and tax statuses, which is not taken

<sup>118</sup> Floch, Y. (coord.): *Politiques culturelles en faveur des arts de la rue et des arts de la piste en Europe, Enquête préliminaire*, op. cit.

<sup>119</sup> Article 1(6) of the Belgian law of 24 July 1987 on temporary work and the provision of staff for users.

<sup>120</sup> Guillot, Jean-Paul, *Analyses et propositions des partenaires sociaux du secteur sur l'emploi dans le show*, op. cit.

<sup>121</sup> Galloway, S., R. Lindley, R. Davies and F. Scheibl, *A Balancing Act: Artists' Labour Markets and the Tax and Benefit Systems*. University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research, London: Arts Council of England, 2002.

into account in most legislation and increases the complexity and cost of social security contributions without raising the level of social security benefits.

Subordination, which characterises the existence of an employment contract, is a notion that is extremely difficult to identify in the artistic sector, particularly because of the nature of the work, plunging artists and their potential employers into the greatest of legal uncertainties. Faced with this complexity, there is a great deal of pressure on artists, who are under a link of subordination, to become self-employed (up to 70 or 80% in Poland) or to set up micro-companies which means that employers do not pay their share of the salaried workers' social security contributions (Belgium, France, Hungary)<sup>122</sup>.

Sometimes, because of the more favourable tax status of unsalaried workers and the relatively low level of compulsory social security contributions (8%), artists adopt the status of an unsalaried worker even though it does not reflect their legal reality (especially in the United Kingdom, where their rate reached 57% in 2001 for actors, variety and stage artists and film directors<sup>123</sup>). Many are then forced to carry out additional salaried activities outside the artistic sector (60%)<sup>124</sup>. Quite often, engagement contracts are not in writing, in contravention of law (Spain, Greece), and social security legislation is not always complied with (Belgium, France, new European Union Member States).

### 3. Artistic teams

#### 3.1. Motivation

There has so far been no research into the legal aspects of street arts in particular. It is therefore difficult at the moment to identify the precise characteristics of this sector or to make comparisons between countries. We can only compare the practice of street artists in the labour market with the practice of artists in general.

Despite the fact that creative activities are increasingly seen as entrepreneurial activities which contribute to economic growth, the working practices and motivations of artists must nonetheless be considered 'atypical'<sup>125</sup> in many respects:

- motivation: they do not undertake artistic projects in order to avoid unemployment or simply to earn money; their main motivation is to create;
- work structures (multi-activity): most creative artists readily switch from self-employed to employed status; they may also be heads of companies or civil servants, or combine more than one role at a time;
- geographical mobility: artists, more than any other workers, have to travel all over Europe and even the world if they wish to be famous and successful and thus better paid;

<sup>122</sup> Polacek, Richard, *Study Relating to the Various Regimes of Employment and Social Protection of Workers in the European Media, Arts and Entertainment Sector in Five Applicant Countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia*, op. cit.

<sup>123</sup> *The Creative Industries*, op. cit.

<sup>124</sup> Staines, Judith, *From Pillar to Post*, op. cit.

<sup>125</sup> McAndrew, Claire, *Artists, taxes and benefits – an international review*, London: Arts Council of England, 2002. Capiou, Suzanne, *La création d'un environnement juridique et économique approprié pour les activités artistiques – nécessité et urgence d'une intervention publique*, produit sur demande du Conseil d'Europe, Strasbourg, 2000. Menger, Pierre-Michel, *Portrait de l'artiste en travailleur*. Paris, Seuil (La République des idées), 2003.

- rapid growth of the industrial and economic environment: there are countless small businesses, even individual businesses, alongside very large multinational groups that have been formed from the takeover of cultural undertakings by financial and industrial groups;
- promotion of creative work: the creative dimension tends to be part of every sector of the conventional and social economy (e.g. publishing, cultural tourism, heritage development, organisation of events);
- evaluation of the result: artistic success is not necessarily financial or media success;
- financing: artistic innovation and the quality of the cultural sector cannot be judged solely in terms of return on investment; they require specific forms of government action, together with private and non-commercial contributions, and increasingly involve foreign partners in international co-productions, which adds considerably to production costs (arranging finance, travel, etc)<sup>126</sup>.

Observers such as Mona Cholet try to explain these conditions by using the term ‘the intellectual underclass’. She writes, ‘The precarious intellectuals come from privileged milieus or have acquired the symbolic capital of the higher classes, yet as far as their condition and incomes are concerned, they belong to the lower strata of society’.<sup>127</sup>

### 3.2. Artists in their time

Nevertheless, one of the specific features of street arts is that this sector differs from other live performance sectors, in particular subsidised or private indoor theatre.

There are two camps in the highly controversial debate on the function of art and its role in society. On one side are the advocates of art for art’s sake, who think that art should not be subordinated to a purpose. On the other side, those who think that art should be useful and creative work should have a social, political and economic function (some would say a responsibility).

Elena Dapporto’s view is that when public bodies fund the arts and promote their social development, it is possible to identify which ‘services’ the State intends to provide to society by helping artists: heritage conservation, support for creative work and cultural democratisation. In addition, there is a desire to foster national cohesion by developing public awareness and promoting the image of the country abroad.

Street arts do pursue those aims, but they also have others, for example:

#### 3.2.1. Political aims

- preservation and revival of popular culture. Street arts keep festival traditions and certain popular skills alive;
- promotion of innovative forms of creation. Street arts decompartmentalise the academic rules of the arts by linking the various disciplines (theatre, dance, music, plastic arts);

<sup>126</sup> European Parliament, *The Status of Artists in Europe*, op. cit.

<sup>127</sup> Cholet, Mona, journalist, author of *La Tyrannie de la réalité*, Gallimard, ‘Folio Actuel’ coll., Paris, 2006.

- democratisation of culture. Because they occupy public spaces, are open to passers-by and can take place in areas that are isolated or have poor facilities, street arts help to widen public access to culture;
- development of public awareness. Street arts mobilise the local population and help create or strengthen bonds between local residents;
- external influence, particularly the image of the town. Street arts are a way for towns to communicate and they help stimulate the local economy.

### 3.2.2. Cultural needs

- the need to celebrate: street artists set great store by conviviality and transformation. Festivals are not simply an occasion for having fun, they are also a way of revealing the hidden faces of day-to-day reality;
- the need for contact: street artists try to establish a close relationship with the audience. Participating in a street show together reduces the ‘intimidating gap’, whether it is between the public and the art form or between different communities;
- the need for free expression: street artists feel that everyone should be free to express themselves creatively without being hidebound by academic rules, institutional assessment criteria or market forces;
- the need to believe in myths: street artists aim to reinvent myths for contemporary society, in which they have been almost completely destroyed, particularly in the west<sup>128</sup>.

### 3.2.3. Solidarity and militancy

In the light of these last values, relationships between members of a company rely more on friendship and companionship than on the rules dictated by employment regulations or organisation charts. The collective is ‘a group of artists’ who reject the idea of stardom or individualism, a kind of alternative ‘niche’ in a world corrupted by individualism, a hub of resistance against the dominant model of the market economy.

The choice of a collective is also dictated by the fact that they work in urban settings. Troupes such as Royal de Luxe, Générrik Vapeur, Ilotopie and the Spanish Fura des Baus and Els Comedians, founder members of the street arts movement, have opted to be collectives because they had to group together as artists to perform in public spaces and really stir them up.

Solidarity is expressed in the relationships between members of a company and between companies. Within the company, solidarity helps individuals deal with the ups and downs of daily life and with the financial insecurity that threatens the survival of the company. Members of a company are always ready to invest their own assets or forego payment to enable the company to survive. Solidarity between companies is also expressed through mutual support: they lend equipment or tools, help each other without payment in setting up scenery or providing rehearsal premises. Such solidarity is only possible if the individual members agree<sup>129</sup> on certain principles and unspoken rules. It is such agreement that creates the ‘spirit’ of street arts, so often cited in protest against the market forces or official rules that govern the private sector and the subsidised theatre.

<sup>128</sup> Dapporto, Elena, *Ressources et limites dans une perspective de développement*, op. cit.

<sup>129</sup> Boltanski L., Thévenot L., *De la justification, les économies de la grandeur*, Gallimard, Paris, 1991.



In the more general context of political commitment, street artists have been involved in international humanitarian action. One example is 'Clowns Sans Frontière', which organised street arts and circus events in Bosnia during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and continues to perform in countries affected by war. Some have also taken part in the anti-personnel mines campaign. Another example of activism by street artists in civic protest movements has been the action by street groups against the rise of the far-right Front National in some French towns. But the political commitment of street artists is expressed most strongly through the topics they deal with in their performances. They mock government weaknesses and attack injustices and the failings of modern society<sup>130</sup>.

### 3.3. Four categories of artists

In his *Discours et figures de l'espace public à travers les arts de la rue: La ville en scène*, Philippe Chaudoir identifies four categories of artists: 'Passeurs', 'Marginaux', 'Encyclopédistes' and 'Troupe'. Then he defines the different approaches of each category.

The 'Passeurs' seem to adhere most closely to the principles of a shift in perception. They give the town new meaning, create social bonds, and make people more conscious of their everyday surroundings. They alter the way the urban space is perceived and yet they imagine, even claim, a connection. For them, the town is as much scenery as a product of society. They go back to the meaning of the town, make it more visible, establish social relationships through their art. Their ideas are based entirely on a metonymic shift and they bring the imagination into play. Their performances are very often lacking in narrative structure. They work wholly within a continuous time framework, making direct, almost reproductive, connections.

The 'Troupe' almost always adopts a contrasting approach, seeing the town more as a language. It bases itself on the theatre. It is detached from, even indifferent to, the main forms of activity in urban spaces. It mobilises the audience and the various sections of the population as a distinct social group. Its approach to meaning entails creating specific situations, reflected in the use of separate narratives. Its attitude to time reflects this more situational dimension, to which its takeover of the space is central. On the other hand, its approach is sometimes more projective.

The 'Encyclopédistes' have a more complex role. They might be seen as another marginal group, not because of their lack of investment, but perhaps because of a critical over-investment. Thus they systematically distance themselves from meaning, social relationships and space. They are critical of the idea that a community can be brought together, even transiently, but recognise the effectiveness of interaction. They provoke by stimulating the imagination. This reflexive relationship is manifested particularly in their attitude to time. It is this group that bases itself most on a re-reading of historical models and on feedback, using the most repetitious methods but avoiding ritualisation.

The 'Marginaux' are on the whole minority groups. They have very few general aims in common with street arts and are in a sense inward-looking, focusing on the creative act itself.

'This overview shows how different and mutually supportive approaches create a movement. They include critical avant-gardes, practical leadership, militancy and pragmatism, troupes that are not highly mobilised and sometimes imitative, occasional sympathisers. If there is a movement ..., even if it has internal contradictions, the synthesis that this represents might be

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<sup>130</sup> Dapporto, Elena, summary from op. cit.

described not as a break with the past but, on the contrary, as an attempt to return to and then move on from past experience. But that comes both from memory and from selective omission. It is, in a sense, an improvised reconstruction.<sup>131</sup>

## 4. Instruments

### 4.1. Official recognition

Since the early 1990s the growth of street arts in the European cultural landscape has been dramatic. They are increasingly visible in the media, audiences are growing and companies flourishing. 'In that sense, this integration of street arts into the institutional landscape is due to the efforts of the artists, who started festivals and workshops, won over some of the critics, persuaded the authorities to support an expanding profession. These achievements meant that public bodies that had until then granted only a few companies subsidies borrowed from the theatre had to take decisions. The state is much less forthcoming in its support than it is for the other theatrical arts, but it remains committed.'<sup>132</sup> It should be noted that, despite this trend, a certain confusion reigns on several levels: artistic practices, organisation and promotion methods, public behaviour and different relationships with elected representatives.

### 4.2. Relationship with elected representatives

Street artists are in fact well aware that they do not enjoy the completely unqualified support of local councillors and MPs. Those representatives appreciate the shows the artists put on for the public and are also very much in favour of the image the town creates for itself with a day's or week's modern carnival. 'They listen to local tradesmen and know that the shows attract the public, most of them from the surrounding area. Along with manufacturers and service providers, they hope to attract television or national press coverage. Although they find the "backpackers" and the like who surround the performers a nuisance and sometimes take refuge in anti-begging bye-laws, local authorities nonetheless value the life brought to their towns for very little cost ... After a period of heavy investment, they expect the artists to strengthen community solidarity, bring life to the town centre and revive outlying areas.'<sup>133</sup>

Even though they are enthusiastic supporters of street arts, many of the people involved (such as artistic directors of festivals, culture centre planners) realise that street arts are not that highly regarded artistically. According to Nicole Ruppert, who has been co-director of the Kulturbüro since 1998, 'In Germany street arts are seen as events rather than an art form in their own right'. Consequently, street shows have to be funded from ticket sales or private investment. That view of street arts means that the shows put on are more commercial and the projects sometimes limited in scope and of a regrettably low standard. As a result, many of the shows are small and not particularly original or ambitious.

### 4.3. Training

In Europe as a whole, there are very few street arts training centres that are institutionalised or at least recognised by the government and that receive state funding. However, that unequivocal statement can be qualified. In fact, although there are hardly any public or officially recognised training centres, the companies themselves often organise 'one-off' training courses. In

<sup>131</sup> Chaudoir, Philippe, *Discours et figures de l'espace public à travers les arts de la rue*, op. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Wallon, Emmanuel, 'Arts de la rue', op. cit.

<sup>133</sup> Wallon, Emmanuel, op. cit.

Portugal, for instance, Chapatô is one of the few private organisations providing occasional training courses. Croatia has the following companies and associations: Autonomous Cultural Centre Attack, Daska Theatre's Daskaliste and Small Performers' Scene.

Local training and cultural centres, like the Maksimir Cultural Centre in Zagreb, might also organise courses. Hungary has smaller-scale free training in parks in Budapest. Most of the time street arts courses, workshops and seminars are part of a festival. In Spain (Barcelona and Valladolid), the Netherlands (Terscheling) and Romania (Sibiu), however, talks have been under way for the past three years on organising street arts training for professionals or academics.

In the absence of any specific street arts training, those working in the field generally turn to circus training, which is more developed and might meet some of their needs, or to theatre training courses, many of which are recognised by the government and award state diplomas.

France stands out as a pioneer in the political recognition of street arts. The long-awaited first national street arts college, 'Formation avancée et itinérante des arts de la rue' (FAI AR), opened in Marseille in 2004. It is based on the concept of peripatetic schools and works in partnership with creative organisations, teaching establishments and promotion and production centres in France and Europe. The 18-month course is designed for young artists who have already had arts training elsewhere, or professional artists wishing to improve and exchange their know-how.

Dominique Trichet, the director of training, points out that the Ministry of Culture and Communication announced the opening of the Marseille college in April 2005, at the same time as Le Temps des Arts de la rue. The training is funded by the Ministry of Culture (50%), Marseille city council (20%) and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional authority (30%). It also receives aid from AFDAS (an organisation that coordinates all artistic training). Fifteen trainees (on the Bauhaus model) will follow a full-time 18-month course to expand their knowledge and improve their performance skills. He notes that, 'all art forms either decline or flourish and we believe that it is vital to pass on our experience, ideas and research to a younger generation, but we need to avoid formalisation'. He adds that the training is for people who have decided to work in public spaces, have demonstrated their commitment, and have creative potential. There is no age-limit (ages range between 24 and 44, with an average age of 30). Training is completely free, even for non-French students. There were 10 French and 5 foreign students on the first course.

The training centres on three areas:

- the fundamentals are the essential aspects that those who have chosen to work in the public space need to know about. The 18-month basic training course covers 17 fundamentals (including light, sound, writing, verticality), with three weeks' work on each, followed by a creative exercise aimed at a target audience, to assess students' understanding;
- individual work builds on what students need to develop from their previous artistic experience. 'We do not train performers but designers and directors, helping them in their research'. Individual work includes a journey of the imagination: planning a two-week journey to a non-European country with different use of the public space. In addition, students have to go and work in the street arts field and present a show to the public; they also have to undertake voluntary work experience in a company being set up;

- personal creative project: this is one of the selection criteria and it becomes an increasingly important part of the training during the 18-month course. Students have to choose a tutor and at the end of the course they present their creative project in four different forms: documentary, physical presence in an exhibition space, oral presentation to an audience, a practical demonstration (not a show) for which they receive funding.

Finally, a special feature of the FAI AR training is that the teaching staff are peripatetic and work with different teams all the time, in different premises suitable for work on the fundamentals, and going out to meet the creators. Thus the teachers are not permanent. At the end of the course, a certificate of attendance is issued, not a diploma. That avoids the idea of a professional qualification that would be required to work in the field.

Another course is the 'Master 2' course on cultural projects in the public space at Université Paris I, for those wishing to become project designers and managers. There are also a number of organisations in France that raise awareness of street arts and/or organise training, mainly for culture professionals (mediators, administrators, technicians), local staff, etc. Notable examples are Atelier 231 (Sotteville-lès-Rouen), Avant Scène (Cognac), le Fourneau (Brest), the Centre national de la fonction publique territoriale (Paris and regional delegations), the École supérieure des arts et techniques du théâtre (Lyon), and the Fédération nationale des collectivités territoriales pour la culture. Lastly, Le temps des arts de la rue has a training and skills working group that is, in particular, conducting a survey of existing street arts training.

#### **4.4. Networks and collectives**

In an attempt to promote exchanges, encourage mobility amongst artists, and assist in putting on productions, several street arts festivals have grouped together or joined with production venues in a synergetic approach. Examples are:

- In Situ: International Shows Innovants en Territoires Urbains: Lieux publics has set up a platform of six leading European street arts practitioners. It is hoped that the project will receive substantial support from the European Union. The scale of the project obviously depends on receipt of the funding. But a strategic decision has clearly been made to develop public spaces in Europe and elsewhere in the world, and other partnerships are currently being considered (Shanghai, Beirut, Algiers). Members of In Situ are: in Austria, La Strada, a major festival in Graz; in Belgium, Antwerpen Open, a summer festival in the Antwerp region; in Spain, Fusic, organisers of major events in Barcelona, in the United Kingdom, UZ Production, which puts on several large street festivals, including in Brighton and Bradford; in France, Atelier 231 in Sotteville-lès-Rouen, one of the main French production centres, which organises the Vivacité festival. Around that platform is a network of partners involved in promotion and pre-purchasing (Beirut, Poznan, etc). What they have in common is the European dimension as a creative source. The idea is that the interaction between artists in different countries, the encounters with the public in the towns visited and the exploration of social issues common to European countries open up new and stimulating creative possibilities. This three-year project is deliberately restricted to one area, the development of creativity, and one artistic field, text and its context.

- Circostrada: founded by HorsLesMurs in 2003, this is the first European street arts information and exchange network for street and circus arts. It currently has around 30 members, all chosen for their knowledge of the field in their respective countries, including:

Kulturbüro, Bonn, Germany; Straattheaterfestival, Ghent, Belgium; Olé Olé, Brussels, Belgium; Oficina de Difusió Artística, Barcelona, Spain; Cirko - Center for new circus, Helsinki, Finland; Piu Festival, Brescia, Italy; Circus Arts Forum, London, United Kingdom; Total Theatre Network, London, United Kingdom; Ana Desetnica - International Street Theatre Festival, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Cirkus Cirkör, Norsborg, Sweden; Festival Novog Cirkusa, Zagreb, Croatia; Copenhagen International Theatre, Copenhagen, Denmark; Maison de la Culture de Tournai, Tournai, Belgium; Circulons!, Tournai, Belgium; La Villette, Paris, France; En Piste, Quebec, Canada; Le Prato, Lille, France; Centre des Arts du Cirque de Basse-Normandie, Cherbourg, France; Circuits-Circa, Auch, France.

The Circostrada network works on developing, recognising and organising those disciplines in Europe.

- Meridians: currently being set up, this is a reconfiguration of Eunetstar, which was a European street arts production and promotion network of nine festivals: Internationaal StraatTheater Festival in Ghent (Belgium); Namur en mai (Belgium); Stockton International Riverside Festival (United Kingdom); Galway Arts Festival (Ireland); Terschellings in Oerol (Netherlands); Coup de chauffe in Cognac (France); Malta in Poznan (Poland); Ana Desetnica in Ljubljana (Slovenia); Sibiu International Theatre Festival (Romania).

Street arts practitioners also have links to networks, collectives and cultural and artistic organisations operating at many levels (local, regional, national, European and international), such as ADCEI (Association pour le Développement culturel européen et international), Trans Europe Halles, Euromed Youth Platform, u-FISC: Union Fédérale d'Intervention des Structures Culturelles, Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Cultures (FEMEC), Actes-If/réseau francilien de nouveaux lieux culturels, European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (FEAP), Theorem - Est ouest, Projet OCRE (Opérateurs Culturels en Réseaux), IETM (Informal European theatre Meeting), Réseau des Centres culturels - Monuments historiques en Europe, Banlieues d'Europe, Apollonia - échanges artistiques européens.

## 5. Specific action

In 2003 the Fédération des arts de la rue asked the Minister for Culture to draw up a programme for street arts. In collaboration with HorsLesMurs, the French Ministry of Culture set up le Temps des arts de la rue 2005/2007. This was an important step towards the official recognition of street arts. The objectives are to consolidate this still unestablished sector, to foster awareness of research and projects and to promote its development by increasing State funding and encouraging funding from local authorities. Le Temps des arts de la rue also aims to break down barriers between artistic disciplines by creating links between performing arts networks and by encouraging experimentation with new relationships to the arts<sup>134</sup>.

<sup>134</sup> See *Le Temps des arts de la rue: bilan d'étape du programme 2005/2007*, op. cit.

Isabelle Durbigny, a representative for le Temps des arts de la rue, says: 'Le Temps des Arts de la rue, a three-year programme to develop street arts, was started in 2005. The initial plan, in 1994, covered support for written projects, recognition of companies, festivals and national street arts centres. Aid for writers was added in 1999 and in 2002 a basic framework was put in place for a support policy. When the programme was launched in 2005, the Minister for Culture announced new measures (and pledged EUR 2 million in funding). A steering committee representing the various partners involved in street arts (central and regional government, professionals) was also set up to work in the specific area of street arts. The committee set up nine working parties to look into and re-define the issues involved. Nine topics were identified as their main terms of reference: in particular, the relationship between artists, the public and the local authorities; participation in recognition of the classification of street arts and support for young artists; the opening up of national multidisciplinary theatre to street arts by planning at least three productions; training; support for new masters' degrees in cultural projects; the broadening of knowledge; support for an ongoing research network (CNRS); the extension of ONDA (Office nationale de diffusion artistique) promotion services to street arts. One of the key measures was the designation of nine locations in France as national production centres, with extra funding'.

In 2006 further measures were introduced, in particular grants for writing for/in public space and the launch of two studies, on street arts audiences and street arts aesthetics. 2007 is a year of consolidation, with the establishment of a structure for dialogue with local councillors and authorities, a charter for town planners on general planning principles benefitting street artists, a guide to welcoming people to the public space. The committee has visited the regions to open a dialogue with the authorities and to promote plans to support street artists.

## 6. Conclusion

Seen in the light of their position in society, their history, the cultural discourse and the field of academic research, street arts are a model of extraordinary diversity, whose complexity lies in its apparent contradictions. Like most artists, they generate intellectual property rights, but their income is irregular and unpredictable and their research and development work unremunerated.

According to Anne-Marie Autissier, a senior lecturer at the Institut d'Études européennes at Université Paris VIII, the status of artists is an issue of growing importance, to which very few European countries have given proper consideration. Whether or not artists are classified as street artists, it cannot be said that there is such a thing as a status for artists. It is more a question of adjustments to employment law, social security and tax law. These take account of the specific nature of artistic work, but are not a status as such. Moreover, it is very difficult to define artist status since the concerns and careers of artists vary a great deal according to the individuals and backgrounds specific to different countries and cultures.

However, despite this great diversity, some constants can be identified. For example, artists might have other work in addition to their artistic activities, which presents problems in that European tax systems are very inflexible. They do not make it easy for people to switch from one tax category to another.

Another constant is that their motivations are undeniably ‘atypical’<sup>135</sup> in many respects:

- motivation: they do not undertake artistic projects to earn money; their main motivation is to create;
- work structures (multi-activity): most creative artists readily switch from self-employed to employed status; they may also be heads of companies or civil servants, or combine more than one role at a time;
- geographical mobility: artists, more than any other workers, have to travel all over Europe and even the world if they wish to be famous and successful and thus better paid;
- promotion of creative work: the creative dimension tends to be part of every sector of the conventional and social economy (e.g. publishing, cultural tourism, heritage development, organisation of events);
- evaluation of the result: artistic success is not necessarily financial or media success;
- financing: artistic innovation and the quality of the cultural sector cannot be judged solely in terms of return on investment; they require specific forms of government action together with private and non-commercial contributions, and increasingly involve foreign partners in international co-productions, which adds considerably to production costs (arranging finance, travel, etc.).

Although these ‘atypical’ characteristics have an impact on street artists, they are notable for their strong awareness of their spatial, political and social environment, using the urban fabric to make people more conscious of places, relationships and practices. Besides their knowledge of festival traditions and popular skills, the links they create between different disciplines (theatre, dance, music, plastic arts), and their ambition to widen public access to the arts, they meet the need for celebration, communication, free expression and a belief in myths. They show solidarity and they are activists.

Nevertheless, street arts are often seen as events rather than an art form in their own right, and the development of training, for instance the recent opening of the FAI AR, would help to increase their standing. The organisation of the profession through European federations and networks is a step in that direction and Le Temps des arts de la rue in France is an important step towards the recognition of street arts.

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<sup>135</sup> McAndrew, C., op. cit.; Capiou, S., op. cit; Menger; Pierre-Michel, op. cit.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION C: POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL RECOGNITION

Contribution from the Centre de Recherche sur la Culture, les Musées et la Diffusion des savoirs (CRCMD – Laetitia Di Gioia under the supervision of Serge Chaumier) – January 2007 – as part of the study on ‘Street Artists in Europe’.

### 1. The concept of cultural policy

#### 1.1. The problem of definition

The idea of a public policy on culture is a recent one and raises some difficulties relating, firstly, to the ‘cumulative concept offered by the anthropological approach (...), and the ambiguity of the concept itself’<sup>136</sup>; which makes it ‘difficult to define and demarcate the actual domain that public action should cover’<sup>137</sup>. Secondly, culture as an object of policy comes up against the problem of legitimacy in regard to the social actors involved, unlike education or health. In fact, ‘the question of the autonomy of artistic and cultural creation was in part directed against the state’<sup>138</sup>. Its protection then leads to circumscribing the establishment of a cultural policy. We must therefore on the one hand identify the processes for legitimising a policy within a State and, on the other, note the extent to which the Culture/State relationship may vary among European countries.

In his article ‘Approches politistes des politiques culturelles’, Ioana Popa points to the need to place forms of public action in a historical context. In his view, ‘the genesis of cultural policies cannot be confined to the origins of the various forms of support given to arts and culture by the public authorities but also consists in integrating and institutionalising the various forms of intervention [...]. Those processes are only possible, however, in the context of specific historical and national conditions.’ Public intervention and institutionalisation encouraged by a particular historical context then seem to be the determining criteria for the legitimacy of a cultural policy: ‘the State thus becomes the real point at which culture is defined (Dubois, 1999), occupying an increasingly important position, through the distribution of State aid, in the process of cultural legitimation and authentication’<sup>139</sup>. This supplants ‘the monopoly previously held by intellectuals and artists’<sup>140</sup>.

Moreover, ‘cultural policy is not the result only of a variety of State intervention practices but also of the intellectual processes and specific methods used to legitimise those practices.’<sup>141</sup> In France, for example, although the creation of the autonomous Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959 was due mainly to a desire for cultural democratisation, that kind of legitimation was transformed into the idea of a cultural democracy ‘seen, for its part, both as the recognition and the development of cultural diversity (regional, community, ethnic, and so forth) and as a challenge to traditional cultural hierarchies (e.g. ranging from ‘legitimate’ to ‘minor’ arts), henceforth regarded as the reflection of social hierarchies’<sup>142</sup>. Consequently, ‘public intervention

<sup>136</sup> Popa, Ioana, *Approches politistes des politiques culturelles*, CNRS, Institut des sciences sociales du politique, p. 1, proposed article for the site of the Observatoire des mutations des industries culturelles <http://observatoire-omic.org>.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.



helps (...) to transform the status of certain practices in the sense of culturally “ennobling” them (Dubois, 1999)’ and plays a large part in ‘extending the range of areas that may then come under the heading of cultural policy’<sup>143</sup>. That meant that cultural policy began to recognise ‘forms of creation that were previously dismissed or sidelined (graffiti, tags, photos, cartoons, rock, [to which may be added circus and street arts]), as well as the emergence of a certain cultural relativism, which recognised the “right to be different” (Dubois, 1999)’<sup>144</sup>. That article by Ioana Popa helps us briefly to clarify the methods of legitimising a policy area. Without pretending to identify systematically or precisely the historical, political and institutional context of all the European States that responded to the survey, it does seem important to set out the underlying pattern. The overview that follows is an attempt to do so.

## 1.2. Types of intervention

The concept of ‘cultural policy’ differs in the various European countries. Whilst the English definition has ‘a potentially totalitarian connotation’<sup>145</sup> and therefore implies a certain distrust (hence the preference to refer to arts policy), in France, according to Robert Lacombe, that concept ‘presupposes and assigns to the state the definition of and responsibility for a specific area of public policy, which is supposed to respond both to the requirements of cultural democracy and to the legitimate demands for support for art.’<sup>146</sup> Robert Lacombe refers back to the definition given by Philippe Urfalino in his work entitled *L’invention de la politique culturelle*<sup>147</sup>: a ‘totality made up of ideas, of political and administrative practices placed in an intellectual and political context.’ On the basis of that definition, Robert Lacombe highlights the ‘indissociable nature of support policies for live performance and national models of cultural policy and political culture.’

If we then adopt the typology defined by the author, we can identify three sets of countries on the basis of their institutional organisation and the distribution of their powers in the cultural sphere:

- ‘federal or highly decentralised States’ such as Belgium, Spain and Germany assign cultural powers to linguistic communities, regions or Länder.
- States that delegate cultural powers to ‘arts councils’, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, apply, in varying ways, what is called the principle of arm’s length management. Here, the arts council is relatively independent of government and parliament.
- Lastly, there is ‘the model of the centralised cultural State, where the ministry of culture has the predominant power’, embodied in particular by France and Portugal.

Those politico-administrative considerations reflect different perceptions of the role of culture in society, which is in some cases closely tied to the idea of the nation-state (France), in others entrusted to private or semi-public bodies (United Kingdom, Ireland, Nordic countries), in others to federal authorities (Germany) or communities (Belgium, Spain). They give us a rough idea of the institutional context in which a cultural policy can be developed. By placing cultural

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Lacombe, Robert (introduction by Emmanuel Wallon), *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d’organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>147</sup> Urfalino, Philippe, *L’invention de la politique culturelle*, La Documentation française, Paris, 1996.

policies in a new context, they allow us to take stock and suggest that in no case is it a question of trying to impose one model (whether French, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon or whatever) over another. But over and above those differences, the European countries' cultural policies are based on a common approach, 'linked to the development of the cultural sphere itself and of its economic and social role'<sup>148</sup>.

### 1.3. Common denominators

Certain fundamental principles do in fact underlie the common approach that marks western European cultural policies. Anne-Marie Autissier identifies them in her article entitled 'Politiques culturelles des États européens: pour une nécessaire refondation'<sup>149</sup>. Those common denominators are as follows:

- the necessary artistic freedom;
- culture, as an object of public policy;
- the need to preserve and restore the established heritage and the national repertoire of artistic works (principles regarded as 'guarantees of the exercise of democracy'<sup>150</sup>);
- institutionalisation of cultural authorities;
- support, however unequal, for contemporary creations;
- recognition of regional cultures and languages;
- predominance of local authorities as the main source of funding for cultural activities.

The common cultural priorities of those policies lie in:

- 'the primacy given to heritage as the foundation of national identity' until the late 1970s (e.g. Italy);
- cultural democratisation, which leads to 'access for all to culture and gradual opening up to contemporary art forms, in particular live performance, [...]' (inspired by the Swedish social democratic model);
- encouraging 'all forms of artistic expression, whatever their origin, provided they enrich the national public space' (Belgium and the Netherlands)<sup>151</sup>.

Finally the author makes it clear that these common approaches have had a strong influence on the ex-Communist countries of eastern Europe that are now EU Member States or new neighbours. It should be pointed out that art and culture played a major role in the propaganda of the Communist regimes, which led those countries to acquire cultural facilities they cannot now abandon. That approach also explains their current cultural landscape, in which the visual arts and theatre are generally poorly supported, if not neglected, whilst the independent (non-governmental) sector has been kept alive thanks to outside support<sup>152</sup>.

<sup>148</sup> Autissier, Anne-Marie, 'Politiques culturelles des États européens: pour une nécessaire refondation', in *Espaces Temps.net, Textuel*, 29.03.2006, <http://espacestems.net/document1917.html> p. 3.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 5-6.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 15-16.

Today, in the context of globalisation and the end of the welfare state, cultural policies have become destabilised and the European countries must re-establish them by decentralising them and engaging more with all cultural actors, be they local authorities or associations and networks. Anne-Marie Autissier also calls for support for and wider dissemination of such initiatives in order to help ‘national cultural policies to acquire the tools for closer multilateral cooperation’, and for ‘greater account to be taken of new specific art forms and a better approach to relations with audiences’<sup>153</sup>.

Whilst the approaches to cultural policy of the various European countries reflect certain common denominators and similar priorities, profoundly rooted in the spirit of democracy, their differences and the way they developed were to affect the instruments and quality of that ‘multilateral cooperation’, the recognition of ‘new specific art forms’ and ‘the approach to relations with audiences’. Those three aspects have a close bearing on the question of the political and intellectual legitimisation of street arts.

#### 1.4. Street arts in the context of live performance

Although policies of support for live performances exist in most European countries, they do not always relate to the same areas of art. Street arts are very often relegated to the fluctuating limits of a certain concept of culture and of live performance. Live performance can be characterised by its universal dimension in that ‘it is, in the west, a unique feature of civilisation’<sup>154</sup>, which has made a profound contribution to ‘forming a common European area’<sup>155</sup>. Moreover, live performance gives prominence to ‘an ephemeral moment that is shared in common’<sup>156</sup>, unlike the individual relationship that is established with a work of the plastic arts. It is deeply rooted in a social, political and cultural environment. That means its definition can change, ‘given that the integration of what are known as minor arts (operetta, jazz, circus, puppets) has been followed by the inclusion of new expressions of popular culture (e.g. rock music, chanson, street arts, electronic music)’<sup>157</sup>.

That is the crux of the matter: as ‘new expressions of popular culture’, street arts face a real problem of political awareness and recognition in Europe. In the review *Mouvement*, Jean-Marc Adolphe and Pierre Sauvageot write: ‘At European level, definitions of “street arts” are proliferating’<sup>158</sup>. Various expressions are used, from one country to another, one festival to another, one artist to another: street arts and street theatre (France), travelling theatre and arts (Belgium), theatre in situ (Netherlands), new forms of artistic expression (Spain), animation (Germany), entertainment (Britain), urban culture or communication, street shows, open air shows, shows in public spaces, in open spaces, outside the walls, urban arts... That plethora of terms raises questions, on the one hand, about the concept of art, which in its contemporary form tends to flirt with if not be mistaken for the everyday, and on the other hand about the concept of the street, which varies from northern to southern Europe (here it is largely the climate that shapes habits and customs as well as cultural practices) and from western to eastern Europe.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>154</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>158</sup> Adolphe, Jean-Marc, Sauvageot, Pierre, *A la rue*, op. cit., p. 97.

Any study of street arts must, therefore, take a Europe-wide approach to the question, as the respondents to this survey certainly noted: ‘We wish to point out that the notions of street art [...] have not been more precisely defined in the survey resulting in difficulties in pinpointing the companies and individuals active in these fields and consequently any other information linked to them, all the more so as it is a field that intertwines with various other expressions and developments which define and understand themselves in different manners’<sup>159</sup>.

### 1.5. The status of the artist

One final, major point, which highlights the interdependence between the status of the artist and cultural policy, needs to be taken into consideration. The status of the artist varies from one European country to another<sup>160</sup>. That means the various countries and cultures accept different definitions of that professional sector. The French definition of a ‘professional company’ and, in particular, a professional artist, refers mainly to the administrative system and the system of unemployment benefits for intermittent workers. If such a worker can survive financially on his art, he is eligible for the corresponding administrative status. In countries that do not have that system for determining status, the transition from amateur to professional status is based on other factors and the distinction is more blurred.

The French system of intermittent work seems to be a special case, although two other European countries also stand out in that regard: Belgium and the Netherlands. Since July 2003 Belgian artists may be regarded as employees if they work on commission. In the Netherlands, since a law passed in 1999, artists may be paid employees for a maximum of four years over a total period of ten years. In Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden, Italy and Austria, artists find it difficult to obtain unemployment benefit because they are not entitled to benefits if their only work is as an artist...<sup>161</sup>

Overall, the situation can be summarised as a general lack of job security for artists in Europe; only a minority of them can survive solely from their work as artists whilst the remainder have to rely on other employment too. The countries of northern Europe, however, seem more concerned with the status of the artist than their southern counterparts<sup>162</sup>.

## 2. Comparative study of public policies on street arts

The years from 1960 to 1980 saw the emergence of street arts in Europe in very different contexts: the return to democracy in Spain, the artistic and political protest movement in France, the development of artistic creations and practices on the sidelines of the official Communist institution in Poland, the reaction to the commercialisation of the art market in the United Kingdom, etc. Overall, the 1990s were marked by the spectacular growth of the sector, in terms of the number of companies, performances, festivals and attendance by a wide variety of audiences<sup>163</sup>. Today, in face of that proliferation, we must look at the degree to which the political and public authorities recognise the sector. Despite growing public enthusiasm, such

<sup>159</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the Directorate for cultural development and cultural policy, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia (Zagreb, Croatia)

<sup>160</sup> See the European Parliament study on: ‘The status of artists in the European Union’, produced by ERICarts, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?language=EN>.

<sup>161</sup> See the article in *Libération* – 8 July 2003 – ‘l’Europe du spectacle éclatée: peu de pays ont un système particulier pour les artistes et les techniciens’, p. 6.

<sup>162</sup> Autissier, Anne-Marie, op. cit. p. 13.

<sup>163</sup> See study by Floriane Gaber, *Les publics des arts de la rue*, EunetStar network, April 2005.

recognition is far from apparent. For most of the cultural organisations in the sector, this is, therefore, a major issue.

## 2.1. Disparity in terms of recognition

The degree of political and artistic recognition of street arts varies according to European country, whilst also remaining very low in regard to other disciplinary sectors at European level. Yet a movement towards legitimisation seems to be emerging in some countries, whilst in others institutional recognition is still at a very early stage.

Street arts are globally acknowledged to be a fully-fledged art form and, therefore, a cultural activity in most western European countries, aside from a few nuances and exceptions. In Spain, political recognition of street arts varies by region as well as by town. For instance, it is mainly in Catalonia and around Madrid that this sector is a recognised form of art and cultural activity.

In the United Kingdom, street arts are seen as having a certain entertainment value that appears to detract from their artistic legitimacy, even if they are given a certain political priority and are recognised as having some artistic merit as a result of the growth of international festivals. In the view of Edward Taylor of the Whalley Range Allstar Company in Manchester, 'it's beginning to be seen as having artistic merit but is very rarely reviewed in the media. [...] This is the main area that street arts work in the United Kingdom, mainly in the commercial sector but also as part of festivals and public events ...'

In Portugal, Italy and Germany, street arts tend to be regarded as entertainment. According to Nicole Ruppert<sup>164</sup>, co-director of the Kulturbüro since 1998, 'in Germany, street arts are regarded as entertainment rather than a fully-fledged form of art.' In the case of Italy, Cristina Giacobino of the Directorate for the Promotion of Cultural Activities, Education and Entertainment (Piedmont region, Italy) states that 'the government does not officially recognise the street arts as a self-existing sector of theatre arts.'<sup>165</sup>

In eastern Europe, the status of street arts varies. The survey in fact shows that Hungary and Croatia do not clearly recognise street arts as an art form. If projects are supported, it is usually under the heading of 'new media' or 'youth culture'. In Slovenia, the situation of street arts looks better. According to Goro Osojnik, Artistic Director of the Ana Desetnica International Festival of Street Arts in Ljubljana, 'street theatre is considered one of the performing arts, together with drama, dance, puppets, etc.'<sup>166</sup>.

Northern European countries currently give more recognition to circus arts than to street arts, which still find themselves in a difficult situation in Finland, Norway and Denmark.

## 2.2. Non-specific and limited public intervention

This disparity in the status of street arts, sometimes regarded as a genuine art form and cultural activity, sometimes as commercial entertainment, has led to two systems of funding. In some cases public support, although in general not specifically aimed at street arts, has tended to

<sup>164</sup> Public lecture given on Thursday, 10 March 2005 in the series of lectures entitled '*Les jeudis de la Sorbonne*', on the subject '*Les projets culturels européens pour quelle idée de l'Europe?*'

<sup>165</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the Directorate for the Promotion of Cultural Activities, Education and Entertainment, Entertainment Sector (Turin, Italy).

<sup>166</sup> Reply to the survey by an artistic director from Ljubljana, Slovenia.

increase, perhaps to compensate for the absence of a policy specifically targeted at this sector; although it may sometimes be institutionalised in the form of dedicated services and mechanisms. In other cases, private investment plays a larger part.

In the latter cases, where street arts performances are regarded as entertainment, there is a tendency to rely on income from ticket sales and private investment. That approach leads to performances of a more ‘commercial’ nature, which can at times mean that the projects on offer are regrettably poor in quality and small in scope; that partly explains the predominance of numerous small-scale performances that are hardly innovative or ambitious.

Moreover, that concept of culture and public support for it does not always meet with the same acceptance as it does, for example, in France. In this case private investment plays a special role, which must be taken into account in the approach to cultural policy. More generally, private funding of culture is far more highly-developed in northern Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon countries than in France or Spain, which do not have the same tradition of philanthropy and private investment. Even if most of those countries have a ministry of culture or act through the intermediary of arts councils<sup>167</sup>, they look at the public support and political recognition desired by street arts from a different perspective.

Public intervention in support of street arts is not targeted specifically at them in most European countries. It exists to the extent that public funding is given to projects, festivals or companies linked to street arts in a specific or limited manner and funding is granted under the aegis of the ministry of culture or the arts council in the framework of existing mechanisms aimed at other art forms. In fact, that public support is not guided by a cultural policy clearly aimed at the sector. It is not specific to street arts. The fact that there are no funding programmes dedicated to the sector partly explains why it is difficult to identify the specific proportion of the overall amount of funding that is allocated to street arts.

Street arts organisations must then turn to the mechanisms designed for the theatre or circus arts – that is very much the case in Scandinavia, Finland and Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain (although some regions such as Catalonia are now becoming increasingly aware of the specific nature of circus and street arts), and Croatia.

Three countries, however, take much greater account of the specific nature of street arts. They have adopted a specific policy and set up special administrative bodies and funds for street arts, recognising them as a fully-fledged art form. Those countries are Belgium, Ireland and France. It is also worth noting that the United Kingdom is beginning to modify its political and institutional approach to street arts. Spain also stands out by its established political recognition of street arts, although it is still in the process of formulating cultural policies in support of the sector.

We should therefore also note that France acts as a driving force not only in terms of having given political recognition to street arts as an art form for almost thirty years but also by allocating far more funding than other countries. Having said that, we must also admit that street arts nevertheless remain the ‘poor relatives’ in France in comparison with the mechanisms and funding for the theatre, opera and dance.

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<sup>167</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d’organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 42.

### 2.3. The dominant role of local authorities

In other respects, even if the State does not generally conduct a cultural policy in support of street arts, local authorities and municipalities, in particular towns<sup>168</sup>, seem to attach a certain importance to them. They both organise and fund street events. Their objective, however, seems to relate more to the benefits of bringing the town to life and making it attractive by organising ‘entertainments’ than to an awareness of that art form and a political desire to promote the creation and dissemination of street arts.

Taken together with the fact that there are very few training schemes specifically for street arts, this suggests that the development of cultural policies for the sector depends mainly on the level of dynamism and demand for support on the ground. Unlike cultural policies for conventional and institutionalised sectors, which develop and take shape as a result of the impetus given by the State, in this case the policies develop and are formulated in direct response to the *fait accompli* or because of an urgent need to prevent a crisis.

### 2.4. Federations, associations and unions

It may be noted at once that there has been little mention of national or university studies of these sectors; even where they do exist, the professional milieu tends to be unaware of them. Nevertheless, there is a growing number of studies in France, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Ireland. Generally they highlight the blatant lack of any resource centre that would centralise, classify, disseminate and coordinate the studies or projects relating to street arts in Europe and, in that sense, help structure this area at national and European level by passing on information. That salient feature, which emerges from the replies to the survey, reflects the fragile structure of the professional circle in most European countries. Professional networks of street arts do, however, exist in France (Fédération nationale des Arts de la Rue<sup>169</sup> and regional federations), the United Kingdom (the Independent Street Arts Network (ISAN) for promoters, and the National Association of Street Artists (NASA)<sup>170</sup> for artists), in Belgium (De Vlaamse Federatie voor Kunsten op Straat or Fédération des Artistes de Rue), in Italy (Federazione Nazionale Artisti di Strada). In Scandinavia and eastern Europe the replies to the survey do not mention any kind of organisation of the sector.

### 2.5. Training

It is not surprising to find that the situation of street arts training reflects the general lack of recognition of the sector. Overall there are very few street arts training schemes that are institutionalised or at least State-recognised. Often it is the companies themselves that set up one-off training schemes, often at festivals. In the United Kingdom, ISAN organises a few

<sup>168</sup> See article: Fourreau, Eric, *Financements publics de la culture en Europe: les collectivités locales en première ligne*, La Scène, Paris, June 2003.

<sup>169</sup> Born 1997.

<sup>170</sup> In reply to the survey, a member of NASA and an independent producer (Edinburgh, Scotland) describes the role of the British network: ‘NASA is an independent national network of UK-based Street Artists working to develop professional practice through networking, peer support, sharing of information, collaboration and advocacy. It is a network for both individual artists and companies creating work for the street and other outdoor contexts. It acts as a forum for discussion, exploring common issues and methodologies in order to engage with peers, audiences, promoters, local authorities, development agencies, funders and the media to support the development of the sector. NASA organised a national three-day meeting of street artists in early 2006 and intends to organise similar performances on an annual basis. There is a lively online discussion group with over 130 member artists and artist organisations. So do join now and encourage membership! NASA welcomes new members at any time.’

professional training schemes financed by the State and local authorities, but they do not lead to any qualification. Professional training in street arts appears to be developing in Italy. Although it is neither financed nor recognised by the State, it is emerging as a result of the support of local as well as national authorities. There are also a number of private organisations that run these types of training: F.N.A.S., Centre in Certaldo, Ambaradan in Torre Boldone, Kiklos, Theatre en Vol, Teatro Nucleo, Teatro Due Mondi, Int.nl School 'Circo a Vapore', to mention only a few referred to in the survey. Another example is Chapitô in Portugal, which is one of the few private organisations to run occasional training schemes. In Croatia the following companies and associations were mentioned: Autonomous Cultural Centre Attack, Daska Theatre's Daskalište and Small Performers' Scene. Local educational and cultural centres, such as the Maksimir Cultural Centre in Zagreb, may also arrange traineeships. In Hungary, mention was also made of smaller, free training schemes ('free training like get together'), which take place in the parks of Budapest. In Spain (Barcelona and Valladolid), the Netherlands (Terschellings) and Romania (Sibiu), however, discussions have been underway for three years on organising street arts training schemes for professionals or university students<sup>171</sup>.

In general, in the absence of specific street arts training, street artists turn to circus training, which is more highly developed and can respond to specific aspects of their needs, or to theatre training, which receives far greater recognition from the State and can lead to a national diploma.

France<sup>172</sup> stands out as a pioneer in the political recognition of street arts. In fact, the long-awaited first national college of street arts opened in Marseille in 2004: Formation Avancée et itinérante des arts de la rue (Fai ar). It is based on the principle of peripatetic training and works in partnership with arts organisations, educational establishments and promotion and production centres in France and in Europe. This training is aimed at young artists who have already done some artistic training elsewhere or at professional artists who want to improve their knowledge and exchange their know-how. The course takes 18 months, is free and sets no age limit.

There is also a French training scheme geared purely to street arts, aimed this time at future project designers and managers: Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 'master projets Culturels dans l'espace public'. Other training schemes choose to include street arts in their more general approach to live performance. France also has a number of organisations that aim to raise awareness of and/or provide training in street arts, targeted in particular at professionals in the field of culture (mediators, managers, technicians) or local staff. They include in particular Atelier 231 (Sotteville-lès-Rouen), Avant Scène (Cognac), le Fourneau (Brest), la Papeterie, le Centre national de la fonction publique territoriale (Paris and regional delegations), the Ecole supérieure des arts et techniques du théâtre (Lyon), the Fédération Nationale des Collectivités territoriales pour la Culture, etc. Finally, Le Temps des arts de la rue has set up a 'training and skills' group, which is conducting a survey of training schemes available in this field.

Quite logically, the political recognition of street arts goes hand in hand with a policy of support for training, even if the introduction of professional training in street arts is still at a very early stage. In Ireland, the Arts Council is endeavouring to improve the recognition of street arts by a policy of support for professional training, in order to develop a sector that remains weak: 'Training is seen as a propriety for the Arts Council to grow a new generation of street arts

<sup>171</sup> See *Le temps des arts de la rue (2005-2007): programme en faveur des arts de la rue lancé en 2005 par le ministère de la Culture et de la Communication(DMDTS)*, op. cit.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.



performers.<sup>173</sup> It would seem that in the absence of other options and means, professional training schemes are very often organised in the context of international festivals, rather than on a national basis, and look from the outset to the international dimension: 'In the field of street theatre education it is of vital importance that we work internationally'<sup>174</sup>.

### 3. The situation of street arts in several Member States

This selective approach to the situation covers two groups of countries and is based on an analysis of replies to the questionnaires:

- States that give political recognition to street arts. The following States have defined a political approach and set up specific funding mechanisms, sometimes supporting professional training schemes: France, Belgium Ireland and the United Kingdom. This category also includes Spain, where some regions such as Catalonia are formulating a policy and measures in support of street arts, as well as Slovenia and Poland.
- States that have not yet given political and artistic recognition to street arts but where there is some activity on the ground in this sector: Portugal and Italy, where street arts are very much alive, Germany, with its proliferation of festivals, Finland and Norway, as well as Denmark and the Netherlands, where there is little appreciation of street arts.

#### 3.1. Specific cultural policy or strong cultural support

##### 3.1.1. France

French cultural policy on street arts is fairly recent<sup>175</sup>. In the 1980s local and in particular municipal authorities were the first to respond to the emergence of new forms of performance by supporting festivals. Moreover, the distinction drawn between socio-cultural shows drawing on popular tradition and cultural events organised by national cultural establishments has produced a real separation between 'creation and animation'. Street arts, with their anti-establishment views and protests, found themselves marginalised, excluded from the recognised cultural networks and from the Ministry of Culture's funding mechanisms. Nonetheless, a few pioneering initiatives were supported, largely thanks to 'the determined action of certain officials fired with enthusiasm for these art forms' such as Lieux Publics and the Festival d'Aurillac, as were certain companies (e.g. Royal de Luxe and Ilotopie).

In the 1990s street arts were associated with circus arts and came under the Directorate for Theatre and the Performing Arts of the Ministry of Culture. Elena Dapporto and Dominique Sagot-Duvaouroux identify the factors that led to improvements in the situation. On the one hand, the Ministry's political priorities changed and it began to take more account of musical diversity, other forms of performing arts and other forms of artistic expression, grouped under the heading of 'urban culture'. This was also a response to the cultural marginalisation of urban environments described as 'difficult' and depopulated rural areas. On the other hand, street artists were becoming more mature and sophisticated in their artistic activities and aesthetic research; they showcased them. They also softened their original anti-establishment stance and

<sup>173</sup> Reply to the survey by a specialist in circus, street and performance arts from the Arts Council of the Republic of Ireland (Dublin, Republic of Ireland).

<sup>174</sup> Reply to the survey by an artistic director and actress (Sassari/Sardinia, Italy).

<sup>175</sup> Elena Dapporto, Dominique Sagot-Duvaouroux, *Les Arts de la Rue, Portrait économique d'un secteur en pleine effervescence*, op. cit., p. 265ff.

sought to engage in dialogue with the Ministry. At that time, street artists were in fact facing an economic crisis that weakened their structures and the sector as a whole. According to some writers, it was the difficulties caused by the cancellation of a number of shows following international events linked to the Gulf War that ‘triggered a movement of collective protest by street artists calling for ministerial recognition of the sector as a whole<sup>176</sup>.’ The aim was certainly to establish a structured plan of aid for street arts, rather than isolated support measures for selected companies. This laid the foundations for a policy in support of street arts.

During that period, Lieux Publics was reorganised as the Centre national de la création des arts de la rue and HorsLesMurs, the national centre of resources for street and circus arts, came into being. State intervention then took the following pattern:

- ‘ - labelling supply by identifying a small number of teams that could serve as a reference base for the sector;
- setting up a structured network of local production and promotion centres to ensure continuity of action;
- support for high-quality works according to criteria recognised by the Ministry, paying particular attention to proposed projects and writings on the basis of two specific aid forms;
- protection of new measures by a centrally controlled system of funding<sup>177</sup>.’

The Ministry therefore supports the sector with ‘specific measures under the direct control of the central authority’ in order to protect the sector while it becomes consolidated. In 1998 the Ministry set up a directorate for music, dance, theatre and performing arts (DMDTS), which covers all forms of live performance, including circus and street arts. This meant they were integrated in the common system whilst, however, still coming under two separate budget headings. In 1999 they were given priority under the Ministry’s action plan. Other centres have also emerged and been recognised and supported by the Ministry of Culture. A national consultative committee specifically for street arts was set up to evaluate requests for artists’ residencies and production aid, as well as requests for aid for artistic creation. There are also aids for writing, administered by the DMDTS.

At the turn of this century, with the reform of theatre companies, street arts companies could be offered three-year contracts which gave them greater financial stability. The regional directorates of cultural affairs (DRAC), ministerial departments decentralised on a regional basis, decide on the award of contracts in cooperation with the DMDTS and after obtaining the opinion of a committee of experts. The DRAC also grants production, equipment and investment aid for festivals and production sites. In 2002-2003, and then again in 2005-2006, when larger amounts became available, the number of contracted companies could be increased, as well as the support for residencies and production sites<sup>178</sup>.

In 2003 the Fédération des arts de la rue requested the minister responsible for culture to draw up a programme for street arts. In cooperation with Hors les Murs, the Ministry of Culture (DMDTS) set up ‘Temps des arts de la rue 2005/2007’. That was a milestone in official recognition of street arts. The challenge was to consolidate a fragile sector and make its research and proposals more widely known. Its development was to be promoted by increasing State

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid., p. 268-269.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 270.

<sup>178</sup> See explanatory summary of all these mechanisms in the guide *Le Goliath* 2006, op. cit.

financial support on the basis of new measures and by encouraging local authority support. Another aim of *Temps des arts de la rue* was to decompartmentalise the various artistic disciplines by promoting links between live performance networks and by experimenting with new relationships with the arts<sup>179</sup>. In more practical terms, the Ministry labelled dedicated sites of street arts (which became street art creation centres) and significantly increased the proportion of the national budget earmarked for the creation and production of street arts.

Street art companies can also turn to other mechanisms administered by the Ministry, although these are not specifically dedicated to them. Some organisations allocate promotional aid, such as the Office national de diffusion artistique (ONDA), which helps to promote performances, and CulturesFrance (ex-AFAA), which may help companies to become more widely known abroad by paying for their transport costs. Professional copyright agencies may also support projects to create and disseminate works: ADAMI, SPEDIDAM, association Beaumarchais (society of playwrights and composers – SACD)<sup>180</sup>.

Lastly, we should highlight the important role played by local authorities in this process of legitimisation. In fact, although the French State traditionally plays the central role in cultural matters, which is reflected in large-scale intervention through the Ministry of Culture in particular, local authorities remain the main source of funding of culture<sup>181</sup>. Either they include a cultural section among the mechanisms under their responsibility (national contract, municipal contract, State-Region Plan contract) or they set up support mechanisms for creation, production and promotion and help with the running and equipment of festivals. The predominance of festivals within the system for promoting street arts also means that the municipalities are ‘the principal commissioners of street artists’<sup>182</sup>.

It is also worth pointing out that the artistic approach of street arts, i.e. to project the performance into the urban space within a specific spatial and social context, is intrinsically linked to the town, seen as both a particular area and a population. For the town, street arts therefore represent a ‘qualitative issue’ in regard to the way they understand and use the urban space, a ‘local issue’ to the extent that they lead to a rediscovery of the local area, for example through parades, ‘a federative issue’ in that street performances promote contacts and partnerships, a ‘citizens’ issue’ in that they (re)establish the dialogue between inhabitants and between inhabitants and their living environment<sup>183</sup>. The current mood of decentralisation tends to reinforce that creative confrontation. We shall see that this remark is far from confined to the French case.

### 3.1.2. Belgium

In Belgium the culture/state relationship is marked by the principle of subsidiarity: the state does not intervene directly in cultural affairs. It does, however, act by general regulation and by awarding grants. So the federal state has no cultural powers as such. The trend towards federalism that began in the 1970s led to the birth of territorial entities, the regions (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels-Capital), and linguistic communities (French, Flemish, German-speaking).

<sup>179</sup> See *Le Temps des arts de la rue: bilan d'étape du programme 2005/2007*, op. cit.

<sup>180</sup> Le Goliath 2005/2006, op. cit.

<sup>181</sup> See national statistical survey conducted in 2000-2002 by the Ministry of Culture and Communication / Department of Studies, Prospects and Statistics (DEPS), Notes of the DEPS – No 21/July 2006 – MCC/DDAI/DEPS – Public Statistics – [www.culture.gouv.fr](http://www.culture.gouv.fr)

<sup>182</sup> Dapporto Elena, Sagot-Duvaurox Dominique, *Les Arts de la Rue, Portrait économique d'un secteur en pleine effervescence*, op. cit. p. 25.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., pp. 321-325.

The regions have no cultural powers but are responsible for tourism. The linguistic communities have more specific responsibility for culture and education.

In Flemish Belgium, state support for street arts has existed since 2005, when the Flemish Arts Decree recognised certain festivals and companies. At the level of the Flemish community, three festivals are now recognised and are allocated a total of EUR 1 000 000. The provinces are also developing policies for street arts, as in the case of the province of Limbourg, which was one of the first to take action in this sector. The main towns that subsidise festivals are Ghent, Hasselt and Antwerp.

In French-speaking Belgium, street arts have been subsidised for more than 20 years. Today they form an official part of the policy conducted in support of fairground, circus and street arts. They have been acknowledged as an art form. In any case the Ministry of the French Community recognised them in 1999, and in 2000 set up a service aimed broadly at circus, fairground and street arts within the general service for theatre art (Directorate-general for Culture, Ministry of the French Community of Belgium). The aims of that department are to 'promote, encourage and develop artistic creation, dissemination and initiatives at professional level in the French community within the areas under its responsibility. Those aims are translated by the award of grants to companies and festivals, support for the creation of shows, and promotional activities (Le Nomade and Renc'Arts in particular)',<sup>184</sup>.

In 2003 the Parliament of the French Community adopted a decree on the recognition and subsidising of the professional sector of theatre arts, with specific reference to street arts. Four types of aid were introduced:

- grants for creative work (Piste aux espoirs, Piste de lancement, Namur en mai...) and continuing education;
- selective aid;
- two or four-year agreements;
- five-year programme contracts.

There are also advice centres for project sponsors. This support mechanism is completed by an advisory committee, the Commission d'Avis, made up of experts in the sectors concerned, which advises the Minister for Culture.

The sponsors of street arts therefore have access to aid for the creation (EUR 30 350 in 2005) and repetition of shows, which cannot be allocated for more than two years running, operating aid for companies (EUR 32 000 in 2005), aid for festivals, which can be requested after two repeats of the festival, and aid for creation centres. In 2005 the department responsible for the circus, fairground and street arts told us that three productions were allocated aid, to the tune of between EUR 8 000 and EUR 12 000. 'The Ministry's objective, for all the areas that come under the circus, fairground and street arts service, is to stabilise the most important and creative companies by granting adequate structural subsidies and to give increased aid to creation by allocating more funding for shows and creation centres',<sup>185</sup>.

<sup>184</sup> Extract from the *vademecum* of the circus, fairground and street arts service.

<sup>185</sup> Reply to the survey by the director of the Service du Cirque, des Arts forains et des Arts de la Rue, Ministry of the French Community Wallonia-Brussels / Directorate-General for Culture (Brussels, Belgium)

Aid can also be requested from other French Community services: the Service de la Diffusion (for promotional aid), the Service général des Arts de la Scène, the Centre de prêt de matériel, the Commissariat général aux Relations Internationales (for aid for tours abroad) and the body set up to provide information on and promote the theatre arts of the French Community, Wallonie-Bruxelles-Théâtre (aid for tours abroad). The provinces and municipalities also take cultural measures and give support for festivals, generally for the dissemination of works. The Province of Namur, for example, supports the ‘Namur en mai’ festival. It seems that in Wallonia the towns take little action, Namur and Liège being the exceptions.

This seems rather inconsistent with the trend observed in most European countries, where the chief local authorities, i.e. the municipalities, are primarily concerned with street arts festivals. In that sense, it is worth highlighting the initiative taken by the city of Brussels, which has established a specific policy for hosting street artists and performances: the ‘Espaces Spéculoos’. It would indeed seem that all the towns that host street arts festivals give some, however symbolic, support. Yet most of the actors consulted regretted the lack of resources allocated to the sector. The reason for the policy-makers’ hesitant stance seems to lie in the continuing prejudices against street arts: ‘most of the time, decision-makers have the impression that street arts are amateurish, makeshift, and do not require any substantial resources. Hence the lack of resources allocated...’<sup>186</sup> Nonetheless, new companies and new festivals are being created in Belgium<sup>187</sup>. It is also worth noting the creation of a federation and the Guide Nomade.

### 3.1.3. Republic of Ireland

The Republic of Ireland gives fairly open political recognition to street arts as a fully-fledged art form: ‘Street Arts are considered to be a legitimate art form – there is a formal policy in place at the Arts Council, which offers a framework for practitioners to apply for funding and also for local authorities and festivals to request grants’<sup>188</sup>. Street arts are perceived more as an artistic and cultural activity by both public authorities and the general public, which also sees them as an entertainment, rather than as a commercial show.

State intervention here takes place mainly at national and local level. Historically, the role of local authorities in culture has always been rather small, unlike in most other European countries. They account for about 15% of public expenditure on culture<sup>189</sup>, as a result of the highly centralised nature of the Irish State. Over the last ten years or so, however, Ireland has been moving towards decentralisation and reorganising the local authorities, giving them a significant role to play in cultural affairs. That new role is spearheaded by the Arts Council, which bases its action on cooperation and subsidiarity. That should allow local cultural policies to develop much more over the coming years.

The Irish embodiment of the arm’s length system, and independent of the government and in particular of the Ministry of Art, Sports and Tourism, the Arts Council draws up three to five-year plans; it defines the political priorities that form the basis of the funding mechanisms. The

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> In reply to the survey, the director of the Service du Cirque, des Arts forains et des Arts de la Rue listed some 70 street arts companies in the French Community, together with about 30 amateur companies. She also pointed out that ‘the total amount allocated to live performances of circus, fairground and street arts in 2005 was EUR 535 000, aside from the amounts allocated by the Art Education Fund to ESAC and the academies and those granted under the heading of continuing education.’

<sup>188</sup> Reply to the survey by a specialist on the circus, street arts and shows in the Arts Council of the Republic of Ireland (Dublin, Republic of Ireland).

<sup>189</sup> *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, 2006 edition, Council of Europe / ERICarts.

Irish Arts Council has been supporting street arts for some years, but July 2006 marked the first time it adopted a definite policy in support of circus and street arts and performances. The Arts Council has a specialist in the sector and a permanent staff member working with the local authorities. That official relays the policy objectives and helps fulfil them. Thanks to the existence of these two institutional levels, the Arts Council's policy can be discussed and implemented regionally and locally.

The Arts Council is currently considering new funding schemes for artists and organisations. It is consulting street arts performers about various projects, including setting up a documentation centre for street arts, circus and shows, and creating a national support organisation for the sector. It is seeking to diversify its partners in order to develop training programmes for all levels. It would like to be able to promote the programming of shows, support training in that sector, develop networks, and so forth. These areas of policy development in support of street arts are centred on two main ideas, which are highlighted by meetings and consultations between institutional players and artists: advocacy and recognition. 'Advocacy: the Arts Council needs to be an advocate for this area of practice and the artistes within it. There are environmental issues including resources (physical) and working conditions (taxation, health and safety, insurance), which The Arts Council is best placed to impact on with local and central government. - Value of The Arts Council: The artistes within these fields place a high value on the importance of the Arts Council recognising the worth of artists within this sector. This makes it easier to secure funds from other sources but also affirms the practice at a societal level',<sup>190</sup>.

The Arts Council allocates various types of aid to companies and festivals: investment, production, projects, and promotion. In 2005 it financed three street arts projects: Bui Blog, Macnas and Spraoi, amounting to a total aid of around EUR 900 000 a year. In 2006 the Arts Council set up a special fund for production and tours, although no aid has yet been allocated. At regional level, the local authorities allocate aid for street projects by directly funding the show or festival, or by offering a residency project. At municipal level, aid for street arts is usually granted in the context of festivals or educational projects for young people. The artists may also be supported by residencies and promotion centres. These may be funded by the Arts Council, or by the local authorities where they are located. The Arts Council and the central government can also offer promotional aid via the budget earmarked for tourism.

It should be noted that parades are part of a very old cultural tradition in Ireland. They are well-established and held in most cities during holidays such as Saint Patrick's Day and Halloween. These parades are part and parcel of Irish culture and cultural policy must take them into account. They are therefore generally financed by the public authorities. In 2006, for example, more than EUR 1m was provided for the Saint Patrick's Day celebration in Dublin. However, even today street arts are not very developed and there are still few companies<sup>191</sup>. 'There is a low number of artists working in the street arts sector in the Republic of Ireland. Only four or five companies or practitioners undertake work on a regular basis'<sup>192</sup>. The sector's development prospects will depend on the impact that this new cultural policy, encouraged by the State unlike in most other countries, will have on the ground.

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<sup>190</sup> Reply to the survey by a specialist in circus, street arts and shows from the Arts Council of the Republic of Ireland (Dublin, Republic of Ireland).

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

### 3.1.4. The United Kingdom

For more than thirty years, the number of outdoor shows has been considerably increased. The millennium celebrations and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Queen's coronation acted as catalysts. Most cities have street festivals on their calendar of events, which means that there are very many throughout the country. There are now 200 companies, mostly of them small, some twenty major festivals and several hundred multidisciplinary events that include street arts in their programming.

Although 'too much UK work is still about animation work and costumes on stilts [...] there is considerable and growing amount of shows with more ambitious aims...' <sup>193</sup>. There seem to be some links between this revival and the French scene (where street arts are subsidised), which is acting as a artistic and political driving force. As Anne Tucker, Artistic co-Director of Manchester International Arts <sup>194</sup>, rightly points out: 'Royal de Luxe's visit to London in 2006 will hopefully start to improve the status of street arts.'

The replies to the survey show that companies still feel some anxiety about the artistic recognition of street arts. In the view of Edward Taylor from the Whalley Range Allstar Company in Manchester, 'it's beginning to be seen as having artistic merit but is very rarely reviewed in the media. [...] This is the main area that street arts work in the United Kingdom mainly in the commercial sector but also as part of festivals and public events...'

Anne Tucker confirms this, pointing out that '[There is a] very low recognition nationally – most people think street arts is busking or jugglers and clowns. [There is] very little interest from the media. [...] Locally, there is more value placed on having street performances, but still almost no value placed on the skills of promoters at organising successful events using street arts (atmosphere, type of people who come, quality of work, use of space etc.' Yet Edward Taylor acknowledges that some progress has been made in recognising the originality of these performances: '[...] street art is now seen more as a separate activity with its own aesthetics and philosophy rather than what groups did in the summer between winter and spring projects, as happened in the 70s.'

In his report entitled 'Street Arts Healthcheck' (2006), David Micklem describes the situation of street arts in the United Kingdom, examining their recognition, their methods of work and the role of festivals. He notes that not all cultural and artistic circles give equal recognition to street arts: 'Relatively, street arts have a low status within the arts in the United Kingdom. Among artists, producers, promoters, critics, funders and government, the perception is that the work of street arts is poor and carries little artistic value. "Street arts" is a contested term, comprising a broad range of work from busking to pyrotechnic displays' <sup>195</sup>. That can be explained in part by the 'absence of a critical framework', which 'further embeds a notion that this work has less value than other forms of artistic expression' <sup>196</sup>. David Micklem also points out that the United Kingdom still perceives British street arts in a rather negative way, compared with the productions of, say, France or Spain. He explains that this is due mainly to the development of commercial partnerships, which, motivated by the search for a better image, do not contribute to artistic innovation: 'Many companies and artists will engage to some extent with commercial partners who value visual impact over artform development. Consequently, much of the work

<sup>193</sup> Reply to the survey by a director of the company, Manchester, UK.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Micklem David, *Street Arts Healthcheck*, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

produced in the United Kingdom makes little contribution to artform development. Inevitably, as this work forms the bulk of the sector, it is what most audiences have experienced',<sup>197</sup>.

Today, the Arts Council sees street arts as a political priority: 'The Arts Council values street arts in all its diversity. It is one of the artforms we have identified to focus on, and we will continue to work with partners to help develop outdoor work in this country',<sup>198</sup>. Although it has been accused of boasting of its street arts policy yet not taking the necessary funding measures, the Arts Council wants to take a cross-arts approach to this issue: 'Because street arts connects with several Arts Council departments, it is especially important that we talk across the organisation about the significance of this work and further develop a genuinely cross-arts and inter-regional approach to street arts in England',<sup>199</sup>.

With regard to UK cultural policy, let us remember that the Culture/State relationship in the United Kingdom is situated within a practical and pragmatic socio-economic context. One of the first institutions responsible for culture was the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, set up in 1942 by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

Since then, culture has consistently been regarded as a social matter and support for the arts has depended on their 'social utility'. Robert Lacombe notes that even today, artistic quality only rates seventh (after educational value, cultural diversity, social inclusion, etc.) in Arts Council England's list of priorities for the grant of subsidies.<sup>200</sup> That approach, which was also to influence the Nordic countries, does not yet work in favour of street arts: 'the government culture dept funds the Arts Council, and social inclusion is an important issue to them, so I suppose they "support" street arts', but not directly at all [...]'<sup>201</sup>. Moreover, culture is also a private matter, as embodied by the arm's length principle used when setting up arts councils, to avoid the propaganda risks of a State-controlled culture.

After Jennie Lee, Minister for the Arts, pointed cultural policy in a new direction during the 1960s, giving more support to artistic practice, the Thatcher years brought cuts in public spending on culture. Live performances, unlike cultural heritage, which had a more obvious symbolic impact, suffered severely. With the changes in the political scene in the 1980s, cultural funding shifted from the public to the private sector. That dealt a blow to the British alternative scene, which was very active at the time, and led to the predominance of more commercial productions in the street arts sector, leading to poorer quality and less inventiveness. In the early 1990s, the proportion of the total budget allocated to culture stagnated at around 0.22%, which obviously had an impact on creative and artistic dynamism. In the face of dwindling audiences, the number of 'sure-value' productions rose at the cost of innovation and quality<sup>202</sup>. In 1992 it was decided to set up a ministry for culture: the Department for National Heritage, replaced in 1997 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. However, it was to be the Arts Councils of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales that were to assume responsibility for artistic policy, including live performance and the visual arts.

The broad lines of Arts Council England's policy are similar to those of the ministry. It gives special priority to artists and their funding and equipment needs, as well as to professional

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>200</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit. p. 210.

<sup>201</sup> Tucker, Anne, *UK Street Arts and Mainland Europe: Opportunities and barriers to exploiting work from England in the rest of Europe*, op. cit.

<sup>202</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit. p. 211.



training and promotion at international level. The Arts Council wants to provide more regular funding for arts organisations and offer them advice. It wants to promote cultural diversity and to give young people wider access to art and art training. It is also keen to maximise the economic potential of the arts by boosting audiences and securing private participation. Lastly, it should be noted that the department's budget, and therefore that of Arts Council England, has grown substantially: by more than 117% between 1998-1999 and 2005-2006<sup>203</sup>.

The last few years have, therefore, seen growing support for street arts. Ever-increasing funding has been allocated to festivals and street performers, and to research. The funding is allocated for investment, as well as project creation and production, promotion, project aid and grants. However, the grassroots actors are quick to point out that support is very unequal in terms of which art forms are assisted. 'The Arts Council have said that street arts is a priority. Certain groups [...] receive core funding as well as project funding. The problem is that artistic forms which have traditionally been well funded continue to keep their hands on the money so funding for street arts is still difficult ...'<sup>204</sup> Here it is worth mentioning two professional networks that are endeavouring to improve the political perception of street arts: the Independent Street Arts Network (ISAN)<sup>205</sup> and the National Association of Street Artists (NASA)<sup>206</sup>.

Robert Lacombe's work<sup>207</sup> refers to an opinion poll conducted in 2001 by the National Statistics Office. It shows that street performances are becoming an important cultural practice in England: 23% of respondents said they had been to a street arts, circus or carnival event in the past year, i.e. only 3% fewer than those who had gone to the theatre. The Arts Council then decided to formulate a policy for those arts, which were now included under the heading of theatre.

Several national surveys were then conducted. One of them, dating from 2001 and targeted at companies, artists, promoters and others involved in street and circus arts, highlighted the lack of specific funding for each of those sectors: 'There were some requests to make funding available specifically for circus and street arts. The criteria of existing schemes were the subject of criticism among some respondents because they were not felt to be appropriate for street arts or circus (...)'<sup>208</sup>. A report on street arts published in 2002 reflects the new approach: *Strategy and Report on Street Arts*<sup>209</sup>. In it, the Arts Council officially recognises their artistic value, undertakes to provide them with broader access to funding, to take account of their international character and to develop professional training.<sup>210</sup> In 2002 Arts Council England set up separate street theatre and circus funding systems. Today it has an official responsible for street arts to ensure that the policy is applied properly. The replies to the survey also make clear that this new policy has helped improve attendance at street performances by an existing audience that is also tending to become more specialised. The media occasionally reflect this greater visibility, which in fact depends more on the capacity of companies and festivals to catch people's interest than on the artistic quality of a performance.

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<sup>203</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>204</sup> Taylor, Edward, op. cit.

<sup>205</sup> [www.streetartsnetwork.org](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org)

<sup>206</sup> [www.nasauk.org](http://www.nasauk.org)

<sup>207</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit. pp. 235-236.

<sup>208</sup> Jermyn, Helene, *Street arts and circus: a snapshot: Size, activities and relationship with the funding system*, op.cit, pp. 33-34.

<sup>209</sup> Hall, Felicity, *Strategy and Report on Street Arts*, op. cit., 2002.

<sup>210</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., pp. 235-236.

Since then, Arts Council England has published David Micklem's report, which takes stock of the sector and confirms its position. It has also embarked on a study of the mobility and movement of UK street artists in Europe. A general report begins by restating the Arts Council's definition of street arts: 'In the *Strategy and Report*, the Arts Council defined street arts as encompassing dance, music, circus, pyrotechnics, theatre, comedy and spectacle. It has a diversity of practitioners using many forms from situationist street theatre to samba musicians, to large-scale puppets, and it has been used as a form of political performance as well as focus for participatory work. Street arts take place outside in sites that do not have the usual signifiers of a performance space, such as formal seating, lighting or staging. It takes places in streets, parks, shopping centres, and markets and can be site specific, ambulatory or static'<sup>211</sup>. Today, street arts practitioners remain on the whole optimistic about the future of this sector.

### 3.1.5. Spain

In Spain the late 1970s marked the return to democracy and the end of an authoritarian and centralised regime that had assumed a monopoly over culture and kept it in check, rejecting multilingualism and restricting the creativity of cultural production. This was followed in the 1980s by a period of social, associative, artistic and cultural flowering, the *Movida*. The public authorities showed a firm resolve to make cultural policy a priority. Since the 1990s, however, cultural policies in Spain have been in a state of crisis.

Today there is a movement towards decentralisation and recognition of the multinational and multilingual nature of the Spanish State, which organises the institutional system and defines cultural policies. The 1978 Constitution draws a distinction between three levels of territorial power: the central State, autonomous communities, and the local corporations, which include the provinces and the municipalities. Culture comes under the responsibility of these different levels. The role of the State in cultural matters is assumed mainly by the Ministry of Culture; created in 1977, it disappeared in 1996 when the People's Party came to power and was re-established in 2004. Under its aegis, the National Institute for Theatre Arts has taken on responsibility for the promotion, protection and dissemination of theatre, music, dance and circus performances in Spain and abroad. It also coordinates the autonomous communities.

According to the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, 2006 edition, the central administration pursues the following five main priorities:

- preservation of historical heritage;
- promotion of cultural arts and industries in the sectors of cinema, books and theatre arts;
- inter-ministerial cooperation, concentrating mainly on communication with the autonomous communities;
- dissemination of the Spanish language and culture abroad;
- renovation and development of major cultural institutions.

'Central government is therefore left with a limited area of responsibility in terms of public policy-making, though it has considerable weight in underlying policy through its constitutional

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<sup>211</sup> Tucker, Anne: *UK Street Arts and Mainland Europe: Opportunities and barriers to exploiting work from England in the rest of Europe*, op. cit., p. 2.

mandate and its control of culture vis-à-vis foreign policy, not to mention its continued control over the best-known and most influential cultural institutions.<sup>212</sup>

In Spain, therefore, the regional and local levels play a predominant role in cultural affairs. The autonomous communities have legislative and executive powers. They have set up a *consejería* (department for culture) or autonomous secretariat, equivalent to a ministry, or have given responsibility for culture to a secretariat for education. They, in particular Catalonia, regard culture as a major building block for creating their own identity. Like education, culture is regarded as a key strategic axis. The municipalities conduct their cultural policy through a department of culture and another dedicated to festivals. After the Franco regime, when this was forbidden, the street acquired a symbolic meaning and the reclaiming of the street today explains the town councils' strong commitment to culture with the organisation of festivals, fairs and musical events. The provinces have powers at supra-municipal level only, but they are now tending to expand their cultural services and institutions.

Cultural life in Spain is rooted in popular and liturgical traditions that have long regarded the public space as a site of performance. There is a strong tradition of circus, puppets, gestural theatre, mime, dance and street arts. It is also worth noting that in Spain amateur theatre and circus performances are highly developed and represent an important activity in both artistic and economic terms<sup>213</sup>.

Street arts could obviously not develop until the post-Franco period. Public support for that sector dates back to the late 1970s. One of the earliest festivals, 'La Fira del teatre al carrer de Tàrraga', was first held in 1980.

The Ministry of Culture can support street arts under various programmes designed mainly for the circus and theatre. Several types of aid have been set up under the programme of aid for the promotion of the theatre throughout Spain. They cover the promotion of dramatic art and contemporary Spanish drama, the promotion of children's and youth theatre, and partnerships. There is also a programme of aid for the international promotion of theatre projects. Lastly, there is a programme of aid for the promotion and development of theatre communication. It provides aid for festivals, events, *férias* and theatrical activities organised either by local corporations or private theatre managers, or by non-profit-making bodies, publication, and for theatre communication with the autonomous island communities of Ceuta and Mellila.

In the case of the autonomous communities, the economic and cultural context is very different. Robert Lacombe's study shows that the autonomous communities of Catalonia, Madrid, Andalucía and Galicia have the largest number of live performance companies (all disciplines included)<sup>214</sup>. Public intervention by the Spanish regions is, however, very variable. Castilla-La Mancha has no policy whatsoever on culture and there is apparently little street arts activity in that region. 'At present, the Castilla-La Mancha government has no specific action programme in that area and there are no circus or street theatre companies in the region...'<sup>215</sup>. Catalonia appears to be the exception in Spanish cultural policy; it has introduced various types of aid through the cultural department of the Catalanian Government, the Generalitat de Catalunya:

<sup>212</sup> *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, op. cit.

<sup>213</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., pp. 283-284.

<sup>214</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 288.

<sup>215</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the department of culture of the Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha (Toledo, Spain).

- for the programming or running of professional theatre and circus activities (private programming venues with regular programming);
- investment to improve infrastructure and/or buy equipment;
- production or promotion projects for the professional theatre and circus (three-year agreements);
- Several types of aid are earmarked solely for professional theatre and circus activities:
  - in the context of the three-year agreements on cooperation with theatre and circus companies, production companies and programming venues with their own productions;
  - for the organisation of theatre and circus festivals and *ferias*;
  - for the production and operation of shows;
  - for the adaptation into another language of shows produced in Catalan;
  - for tours abroad by Catalan groups, performers and artists.

Although Catalan cultural policy covers the circus, it seems to exclude street arts. Marginalised in terms of artistic activity, street arts are still eligible for some funding schemes and are proving dynamic despite attracting little attention from policy-makers.

In its cultural policy the city of Madrid attaches some importance to street arts in that they encourage a certain rapprochement between culture and the citizens: ‘El Ayuntamiento de Madrid promueve la organización y realización de actividades culturales en la calle, esto es debido a que el acercamiento de la cultura a los ciudadanos, propicia el conocimiento de primera mano y la participación directa de ellos en la cultura, sobre todo si éstas se realizan en sus distritos, en sus barrios, debajo de sus viviendas’.<sup>216</sup>

The city of Leioa (Biskaia/Basque Country) is also showing signs of a growing interest in street arts. They come mainly under the ‘ferias of street artists’ sector of the municipal cultural service. Since 2001, they have been financed by the city council, which grants production, promotion and project aid. It appears that there are no specific aid for street arts at regional, Basque Country level or at the local level of Floral de Biskaia province, even though the authorities may provide isolated funding under other schemes. Street arts do, however, appear in the Basque Plan for Culture, under the heading of theatre arts.

Today, culture and live performance are in crisis. Professional groups are expressing anxiety about the ‘growing cultural fragmentation’<sup>217</sup>. ‘Regionalisation is often perceived as a brake on contemporary creation, given that the public authorities give priority support to productions of the same kind’<sup>218</sup>. There is also evidence that resources have been cut, if not frozen. Lastly, there is a serious need for legislation specifically geared to live performance, which would encourage private sector aid.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Reply to the survey by the Director-General of Cultural Projects, Area de Gobierno de las Artes (Madrid, Spain).

<sup>217</sup> National Congress of Alternative Theatre, Sitges, 2000, quoted by Robert Lacombe, op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>218</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., p. 306.

### 3.1.6. Slovenia

Street arts first appeared in around 1975, in particular as a result of the organisation in Ljubljana of two special international festivals: the spring festival (held four times from 1979 to 1983) and the summer festival in Metalka (held three times from 1986 to 1988). They received wider recognition after the Ana Desetnica Festival in the 1990s.

Although there is no specific policy line geared to them, street arts are regarded as a fully-fledged art form, accessible to the public and deserving of support: 'Street theatre is considered one of the performing arts, together with drama, dance, puppets etc.', according to Goro Osojnik, President and Programming Director of the Ana Desetnica international street arts festival in Ljubljana.

At national level, the government has supported street arts since 1978 through the Ministry of Culture. Although subsidies remain small, they do cover many street arts companies. The support mechanism is based on an annual invitation to tender. Two types of aid can be allocated: for production and post-production, and for supporting dissemination abroad. Since 2003, the Ministry of Culture has been supporting the twelve largest independent cultural producers and organisers on the basis of a three-year agreement. The invitation to tender is renewed every three years (the next one will be issued in 2007). At local level the municipalities can also intervene, although that depends very much on their size.

Today those funding schemes are on the increase and companies and young artists no longer hesitate to apply. Street performances are well attended by the public and becoming more visible in the media. Street arts have become a real priority for local authorities, as in the case of the urban region of Ljubljana for the period 2007-2013. One of the projects is to set up a network of cultural producers from different fields of art, such as street arts, puppets, literature and books, music, etc.

## 3.2. Non-specific cultural policy or poor cultural support

### 3.2.1. Portugal

At a time when street arts began to flourish in most of western Europe (apart from Spain), in Portugal culture remained under the control of the Salazar dictatorship. Until 1974 it was one of the main areas that the anti-liberal and nationalist totalitarian regime exploited for propaganda purposes, deciding on cultural activities and the value to be attached to them. After that, the return to democracy was accompanied by a period of government instability which, until the 1980s, made it difficult to formulate an approach to cultural policy. So it is only recently that Portuguese governments have confirmed the importance of cultural policy. The three, successive teams of social democrats concentrated first of all on heritage and on literature, disregarding live performance, visual and audio-visual arts and cinema. Not until 1995 was culture placed, for the first time, under the aegis of a Ministry of Culture. Between 1995 and 2002, however, Portugal went through a period of severe budget cuts. Moreover, between 1995 and 2005 there was a succession of no fewer than six ministers for culture. This shows that Portuguese cultural policy is as recent as its institutionalisation. It should be noted that the Portuguese institutional system has adopted a model that combines the arm's length principle

with interventionism, recognising the need for the State to intervene in cultural sectors that would not be viable if the law of the marketplace were applied blindly<sup>220</sup>.

According to the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*<sup>221</sup>, Portugal's cultural policy focuses on four main objectives: decentralisation and development of professional networks, international dissemination of Portuguese culture, improving professional qualifications in the cultural sector and, lastly, promoting cultural diversity aimed at balanced support for the various forms of culture. In that context, it is easier to understand why there is no dedicated department for street arts under the Ministry of Culture. Accordingly, the respondents to the survey note that street arts are a very recent artistic development, dating back less than five years. They certainly tend to be regarded as an artistic activity, but mainly in the field of animation.<sup>222</sup> Nevertheless, the Institute of Arts, which comes under the Ministry of Culture, is allocating ever more aid to street arts projects.

Street artists are calling for aid for the entire field of theatre arts. Since 2004 the main artistic disciplines (dance, music, theatre) have been joined by cross-disciplinary projects. Street arts, like the new circus, now come under those budget headings. In fact most requests for aid come from local authorities, such as the towns hosting these events in order to promote free cultural activities for the people; they are the main sources of funding for street performances. Some of them may provide financial support for street performances and for their dissemination, whilst international tours may receive funding from the Office for International Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Culture, the Department for International Affairs of the Institute of Arts or the Camões Institute under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Promotional centres may also apply for subsidies from the Institute of Arts or from private foundations such as the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

A new impetus seems to have emerged in recent years. Street arts are now becoming better known and more widespread, especially now that they are flourishing in France and other European countries. Portuguese organisers and programmers are showing an increasing interest. Given the poor level of public intervention, the professional sector is finding it difficult to organise itself: 2004 saw the first meetings of street arts companies; in 2005 the 'Movimento das artes de rua' signed the first street arts manifesto<sup>223</sup>, evidence of the emergence of a rudimentary but real dynamic force. Moreover, street arts now accompany other national events, such as the 2004 World Cup when the government decided to promote and present performances of street arts in several Portuguese towns.

### 3.2.2. Italy

Cultural policy in Italy gives strong priority to national heritage, which accounts for more than 40% of world heritage listed by Unesco; live performance has never been a priority and the budget allocated to it in 2000 accounted for only 10% of total spending on culture<sup>224</sup>. The Italian institutional system is marked by a move towards decentralisation in which the State continues to play an important role<sup>225</sup>. After the Fascist period, the Ministry of Culture was closed down. In 1985 a first framework law was adopted to enable the State to intervene in support of live

<sup>220</sup> All these historical and institutional data are taken from the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, Council of Europe/Ericarts, op. cit.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>222</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of Artelier – Associação Teatro Nacional de Rua (Loures, Portugal).

<sup>223</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of Artelier.

<sup>224</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit. p. 321.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., pp. 332-337.

performance, with the creation of the Single Fund for Performance (FUS), under which the State commits itself to three years of funding. The Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activities was set up in 1995. Decentralisation took the form of setting up four levels of responsibility for culture: state, regions, provinces and municipalities. It should be noted that the regions 'are entrusted with legislative powers and have broad cultural powers' and that the municipalities are recognised as being very active in the cultural field<sup>226</sup>. Since the constitutional changes of 2001, live performance falls 'purely within regional legislative competence'<sup>227</sup>. Robert Lacombe also makes it clear that the state continues to play the central role here, assuming 50% of total cultural expenditure, and that 'the regional and local budgets still rely heavily on financial transfers from the state [...]'. The political context of cultural affairs is currently affected by the financial crisis in the sector, which the various governments (changing from year to year) are not able to resolve. Furthermore, live performance is not specifically covered by any framework law (the only law on the sector dates from 1985) that, taking account of the growing decentralisation, would regulate the procedures governing state support. The need for such a law has been recognised. The policy on live performance concentrates primarily on opera and repertory theatre. Like modern dance, the arts of the theatre, circus and street arts are developing outside the institutional circuits of dissemination.

The Italian Government does not recognise street arts as a fully-fledged art form:

- 'Government does not officially recognise the street arts as a self-existing sector of theatre arts'.<sup>228</sup>
- 'Street arts are considered in general a minor form of culture and theatre. [...] Street arts are also considered as a means to attract attention to commercial areas [...] Street arts are generally considered more as a form of entertainment and animation than as an artistic activity, because in general street arts in Italy is identified with stiltwalkers, firespitters, clowns, mimes, etc. The entire area of urban theatre and creation of performances involving more than two or three people is not very well known'.<sup>229</sup>

Although since 2000 central government has financed certain street arts projects (aid for investment and dissemination), public intervention remains confined to isolated and specific cases. Companies that perform both street theatre and indoor theatre want subsidies for both types of activity. It is, indeed, difficult to identify them as being purely a conventional theatre company or purely a street company. What is clear, however, is that no specific aid mechanism exists for street arts, nor is any support given for training. Yet the local authorities are now allotting them more funds. 'More and more small towns or villages are becoming interested in street arts as a means to promote their existence and also to stimulate the local people. [...] In the last years a lot of emphasis has been put on the role of culture as promoter of the local economy'<sup>230</sup>. That is particularly true of the Piedmont region: '[...] the only region having issued a specific law for street arts is the Regione Piemonte: by this law a special fund is determined year by year, in order to support many city councils involved in the organisation and promotion of street arts festivals'<sup>231</sup>. Overall, the degree to which street arts are being recognised and promoted seems to differ from northern to southern Italy (possibly also for economic reasons). For their part, the towns try to make it easier to put on street shows by granting operational and

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., p. 334.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

<sup>228</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the Directorate for the Promotion of Cultural Activities, Education and the Performing Arts, Performing Arts Sector (Turin, Italy).

<sup>229</sup> Reply to the survey by an artistic director and actress in Sassari/Sardinia, Italy.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the Directorate for the Promotion of Cultural Activities, Education and the Performing Arts, Performing Arts Sector (Turin, Italy).

technical support and promoting communication.

Nevertheless, a professional structure seems to be developing. A professional network, the National Federation of Street Arts (FNAS), based in Rome, provides a wide range of information on festivals and other performance venues, possible sources of funding, professional training, etc.<sup>232</sup> In that context, it also supports university studies. The federation also organises workshops for professionals and awards a prize for original productions, the Cantieri di Strada. The focus of its activities seems to be moving more towards protecting the interests of individual artists. The federation is now recognised by the Ministry. 'Even if several street theatre companies are members of the FNAS, they are not very active and therefore the policies of the FNAS are very much orientated towards the interests of the single artists. The FNAS is the only official organisation, which has undertaken attempts to improve the situation of street theatre in Italy. It has obtained a first recognition in the sense that now it is possible to apply for subventions for street theatre at the Ministry of Culture. The budget for street theatre is however very low in comparison with other fields of theatre'<sup>233</sup>.

Overall, the replies to the survey demonstrate the artistic dynamism of this field: attendance at shows is rising, as is the number of companies and productions; the dissemination of shows is improving thanks to the development of festivals and other programming centres, and street arts are tending to become more visible in the media.

### 3.2.3. Germany

Germany is one of the main markets for the dissemination of street arts in Europe. In that sense it plays an important role. Street arts appeared in Germany in the early 1990s. Outdoor performances tended to take place in the summer, after the conventional theatre season had ended. They offered an alternative to the traditional municipal beer festivals. Several projects of that kind were set up under the heading 'outdoors and free of charge'. The mid-1990s saw a wide variety of events. Street arts in Germany suffered, however, from the crisis engendered by unification. Today there are around 100 street festivals in Germany: Open-Flair (Eschwege), La Piazza (Augsburg) and Welttheater der Straße (Schwerte) in 1984 and Tollwood (Munich) in 1986, followed in 1994 by Via-Thea-Festival (Görlitz). A few companies confine themselves to programming street performances, whilst most include street arts in their programming or activities.

Despite this artistic dynamism and public enthusiasm, street arts are not yet recognised as a fully-fledged art form. In contrast to France, Italy, Spain and Poland, however, in Germany street arts are not really rooted in tradition. They are still regarded with some caution and artistic and aesthetic reservations and are often described as 'sloppy' and not considered very 'elegant'<sup>234</sup>. They are viewed as 'animations', commercial products simply meant for sale. The organisers are both public and private. In some cases the municipal or Land cultural service will organise or commission a festival, in others private initiatives or organisations assume the financial risk of the first production of a festival and subsequently develop it along more commercial lines.

<sup>232</sup> See website of the *Federazione Nazionale Arte di Strada*: [www.fnas.org](http://www.fnas.org)

<sup>233</sup> Reply to the survey by a specialist in circus, street arts and performance at the Arts Council of the Republic of Ireland (Dublin, Republic of Ireland).

<sup>234</sup> Reply to the survey by Nicole Ruppert, Director of Kulturbüro (Bonn, Germany)



In principle, culture does not come under the responsibility of the State in Germany. The *Länder* are responsible for culture, as guaranteed by the 1949 Basic Law. For their part, 'towns and municipalities have the constitutional right to determine their cultural policy'<sup>235</sup>. A breakdown of public expenditure on culture in Germany in 2003 clearly shows that most public action in the field of culture takes place at local level: – communes: 55%, - *Länder*: 38%, - Federal State: 7%.<sup>236</sup> 'Each *Land* and each town carried out its cultural responsibilities on the basis of its own interests without any "national cultural policy" in mind'<sup>237</sup>. There is, however, a very marked trend towards cooperation (via cooperation agencies, forums and conferences ...) between the various public authorities. The Federal German State's concept of culture had given rise to a wide variety of cultural policies responding to specific local characteristics, which creates 'a dense and fairly homogenous pattern of cultural institutions throughout the country'<sup>238</sup>, each with its own cultural administration, priorities and funding procedures.

A brief survey of the German cultural landscape highlights the importance attached to theatres and orchestras (in the wider sense of music, dance, opera, theatre). Whether municipal or regional they are funded almost exclusively by the municipality or *Land* in which they are located. Another striking feature of German cultural life is the very large number of festivals, generally sponsored by the towns. Public funding is more usually diversified, which means the State can intervene with additional funding.

Since unification and the crisis it engendered, a national cultural policy has been emerging. Aside from the political and socio-economic upheavals, the Unification Treaty forced the Federal Government to take over responsibility for culture so as to ensure that political unification did not lead to the suffocation of East German culture. To that end, it established the Chancellery Secretariat of State for Culture in 1998 and the Federal Cultural Foundation in 2002.

Against that background, it is easier to understand why national cultural policy has not yet concerned itself with street arts. Moreover, the German system prefers political recognition to come primarily from the regional and local authorities. The survey has highlighted the activity of the *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia, which grants subsidies to street arts via the Secretariat for Culture. It should be noted that this *Land* has one of the strongest economies. It is also one of the most advanced in terms of public/private partnerships, especially since the 1998 reform, which encourages sponsorship. Festivals are nearly always funded by municipal and local authorities. We could say that the strong public presence has some bearing on municipal decisions. There are also two foundations that give financial support to street arts: the Lotto-Stiftung Niedersachsen and the Kultur-Stiftung NRW. Within the Kultursekretariat Gütersloh association in the *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia, between 12 and 15 towns work together to organise German and foreign summer tours for companies. The association's budget for street arts amounted to EUR 80 000 in 2005 (promotional aid). Companies can apply for grants from the Fond Darstellender Künstler or from the Kulturstiftung NRW foundation.

This sector, therefore, has a rather European outlook, as emphasised by those who support a national cultural policy. That is partly because other European countries actively encourage the development of street arts, and partly because they realise that this art form makes a valuable

<sup>235</sup> Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit., p. 172.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid. p. 171.

contribution to theatre arts. 'We hope that it will be through greater cooperation within Europe that this artform will be fully appreciated'<sup>239</sup>.

### 3.2.4. Finland, Norway

Northern European countries seem to underrate street arts, unlike circus arts, which receive political recognition with dedicated funding facilities. That applies to both Finland and Norway, countries on which the survey respondents give us some information.

The situation of street arts is difficult in those countries. It should be remembered that they are fairly new States. Norway was a colony of Sweden and Denmark for centuries and only became independent in 1905. Finland was under Swedish and then Russian rule until it gained independence in 1917.

Norway's institutional and artistic history does not therefore go very far back. 'The professional theatre is young in Norway'<sup>240</sup>. The first and only Norwegian theatre school was founded 50 years ago and the alternative theatre school (Fredrikstad) only dates back a few years, as does the cinema school (Lillehammer). 'So Norway is a poor art society, and most of the funds go to build and establish and run conventional arts like fine art, symphony orchestras, theatre buildings with ensembles and opera, etc.'<sup>241</sup>.

Although the objectives of Norwegian cultural policy are artistic quality and innovation, alongside the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage, and easy public access to a rich and diverse range of cultural events, street arts remain in a very fragile condition. Judging from the replies to the survey, there is no public intervention specifically for street arts, although street artists can apply to the funding mechanisms designed for the theatre.

The Norwegian Arts Council and the Department for Foreign Affairs do have funds available for disseminating works abroad, but applicants must prove that their projects are of high artistic quality. They have to be 'formative', i.e. they have to convince the funders, especially the public funders, that they form part of a contemporary aesthetic framework, that they represent genuine artistic research, and that they can serve as a basis for the development and establishment of contemporary theatre art scene in Norway. These projects are often connected with major festivals, such as those in Bergen, Harstad and Tampere.

Norwegian respondents to the survey also emphasised that the political decision-makers are aware that Norway lags behind the other Scandinavian countries. Even though it is difficult to find public funding for contemporary circus, for example, the institutions are aware of its existence. 'They more or less know Norway is light years behind ...'<sup>242</sup>. The new government (2005) declared that one of its main ambitions is to increase the proportion of the budget earmarked for culture from 0.8% to 1% over the next ten years.

In Finland, although the development of live performance and cultural policy since the early 2000s means that contemporary circus is now being recognised as an independent art form, street arts have not yet obtained the same degree of recognition. They remain fairly underrated.

<sup>239</sup> Reply to the enquiry by Nicole Ruppert, Director of the Kulturbüro (Bonn, Germany).

<sup>240</sup> Sverre Waage lists five professional street companies; he also points out that other street arts projects exist and have been developed, here and there, by theatre companies.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

Public intervention is still local and isolated. Most public funding comes from the towns – for example Tampere<sup>243</sup>, which hosts local festivals that include street performances in their programming – although the Ministry of Education can intervene at national level, as can the Arts Council of Pirkanmaa at regional level. There are also promotional aids and aid for tours abroad in order to promote Finnish culture in the world, as well as specific grants for art information centres.

### 3.2.5. Hungary

After the political upheavals in 1989/1990, Hungarian cultural policy was defined around two poles: maintaining national traditions, and increasing liberalisation on the model of western European countries. The Hungarian cultural landscape has the following features:

- institutional theatre on a large scale but undergoing a financial crisis; independent theatre that receives much less funding and is developing to the best of its ability on the margins of the official promotional agencies and where possible turning to audiences abroad;
- ‘a (fairly) healthy’ musical sector, which has always been an unquestioned political priority; it is also worth noting the revival of traditional music, strongly supported by the public authorities;
- lastly, festivals play a very important role in making the artistic scene more dynamic<sup>244</sup>.

Public intervention for live performance is organised under the Ministry of Cultural Heritage (NKÖM), which mainly supports the major theatrical and musical institutions, and the National Fund for Culture (NKA), which funds national works, commemorations and festivals, the presence of Hungarian artists at international exhibitions and innovative art forms<sup>245</sup>. It is also worth noting the role of the Hungarian secretariat of the Soros Foundation, which organised a programme (2002-2003) of support for contemporary art and theatre networks. That foundation seems now to have withdrawn its support for Hungarian artistic life. Private partnership schemes are poorly developed in Hungary.

That is the context against which respondents to the survey point out that official support for street arts is very limited. The Hungarian Government provides no funding for street arts. Certain organisations may do so; but they are generally private, such as the ‘cultural houses’ (themselves supported by local authorities). The municipalities can also support this kind of project. Those replies confirm Robert Lacombe’s findings: ‘Hungarian cultural policy in support of live performances has a very cautious policy of aid for contemporary creation or new forms of theatrical expression (what is called alternative theatre and, *a fortiori*, circus and street arts), which, incidentally, have not been supported by any of the governments that have held office since the transition to democracy.’

<sup>243</sup> The cultural department of the city of Tampere states that its EUR 80 000 a year allow it to support companies and shows which include street arts performances. The average amount of such support ranges from EUR 2 000 to EUR 15 000. The city subsidises three or four street arts productions in this way.

<sup>244</sup> For a historical and political overview see Lacombe, Robert, *Le spectacle vivant en Europe: modèle d'organisation et politiques de soutien*, op. cit. p. 355-378.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 368.

### 3.2.6. Croatia

Since achieving independence in the early 1990s, Croatia has gradually opened up economically and culturally. The early years of 2000 were marked by a shift in cultural policy towards the recognition of cultural pluralism. That more balanced approach to tradition and new acceptance of national and multicultural components reflect the country's shift towards a more decentralised system and more direct cooperation with NGOs.

The *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, 2006 edition, identifies the general objectives of the government's cultural policy: cultural pluralism (aesthetic and multiethnic), creative autonomy, the increase and diversification of sources for financing culture, polycentric cultural development, encouraging cultural participation as a new quality of life and cooperation between the public and the private sector to increase efficiency, quality, employment and innovation. The most ambitious goal is bringing culture into the focus of interest of the country, which the Ministry of Culture is pursuing in cooperation with a team of independent experts. One of the priorities of the Strategy of Cultural Development is to democratise access to culture and art, mainly in schools and through the media. Another major subject of political and cultural debate is cultural decentralisation.

Like contemporary circus, street arts seem to face a difficult situation in Croatia. There is no policy covering them. The Ministry of Culture gives very little and then only indirect support, mainly by funding festivals which occasionally include street performances in their programmes. '[The] Ministry of Culture does not get involved in producing street art shows, neither helps the festivals strictly dedicated to the street art. There is no recognition of the street artist as a real artist, but just a sort of entertainer that wants to earn some extra money on the street'<sup>246</sup>. According to the Ministry<sup>247</sup>, since street arts projects are generally 'marginal' and form part of festivals or other more complex projects, responsibility for evaluating them comes under various committees, very often the Council for the New Media, which is also responsible for alternative and 'youth' culture. Street arts are not recognised as a fully-fledged art form but regarded as 'new media' or 'youth culture'.

The Ministry of Culture may fund them by funding festivals that include street performances in their programme. Very few street performance productions or shows have been subsidised, however<sup>248</sup>. The Croatian Ministry of Culture has stated that it is not in a position to specify the exact amount of funding allocated to street arts projects. It is equally difficult to find out how many productions of that kind it has funded: 18 projects have received support, some of which have links with street arts, to which must be added events taking place at festivals.

The City of Zagreb gives regular support to street arts activities; for example it finances the Cest is d'Best festival to the tune of EUR 13 700. The municipalities of Zadar, Pula, Split, Osijek, etc. have also assumed financial commitments (the Varazdin municipality part-funds the Spancirfest). In fact, the towns seem to be competing with each other to organise and finance festivals in order to bring their streets to life; their support for festivals tends to coincide with their activities to attract tourism. Some funding is allocated for international tours, but to date

<sup>246</sup> Reply to the survey by the vice-president of a cultural centre in Zagreb, Croatia.

<sup>247</sup> Reply to the survey by a member of the Directorate for Cultural Development and Cultural Policy, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia (Zagreb, Croatia).

<sup>248</sup> In his reply to the survey, giving a broad definition of street arts, the vice-president of a cultural centre in Zagreb estimates that there are around ten street companies in Croatia. He points out that amateur practice of street arts is well-developed, with about 100 groups. Nearly 80 street shows were presented in 2005.

very little of that has gone to street arts. There is no specific aid for touring abroad in that sector, although applications for aid may be made when the Ministry announces funding proposals.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Although the findings of this survey are rather summary in relation to the mindsets that do or do not promote State recognition of street arts, we can nevertheless posit that the inclusion of street arts in cultural policy forms part of the new Culture/State relationship that is now emerging throughout Europe.

France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Spain and Slovenia, which all recognise the artistic value of street arts, are developing an official policy of support in reaction to a well-established grassroots dynamism, although very often also in the face of an economic crisis in the sector. Ireland is a remarkable case here, because the situation is the reverse. Whilst the sector is poorly developed, despite the survival of a strong tradition of urban parades, the state, acting through the Arts Council, has chosen to create more favourable conditions for the work of street artists.

At the same time, local authorities are playing a greater cultural role thanks in part to the political recognition of street arts. Most European countries no longer doubt the importance of local and, in particular, municipal authorities as the main sources of funding for culture. Their cultural role is also strengthened by the trend towards decentralisation (which accentuates the role of federal bodies or regionalisation) that is found right across Europe.

Lastly, we must emphasise the link between the street artists' artistic approach – occupying new creative spaces, which are often urban, developing new forms of artistic expression and performance, and renewing the relationship with the audience – and the new concerns of the towns, which are responding to the growing phenomenon of ghettoisation, or deciding to include cultural programmes in their strategy to attract tourism or to inject a new dynamism into the local economy.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION D: BACK TO RITUAL – BACK TO EUROPEAN TRADITIONS

**Traditional street art forms composing the European heritage: How have street artists in contemporary creation rediscovered these forms?**

Synthesis paper by Stanislav Bohadlo – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

*“The theatre should be  
the common ritual action  
of both actors and spectators”*

A. Artaud

### 1. Introduction

The article on street theatre is still missing in the Taylor’s The Penguin Dictionary of Theatre published in 1979<sup>249</sup>, though the new phenomenon had well-known historical roots and period production elsewhere. What is worse, the chapter on street theatre is missing even in the Oscar G. Brockett’s History of the Theatre Inc. 1999.

Masks, outdoor playing and the close and participating audience define the pagan and antiquity transformation of the human behavior from the ritual patterns and tribe or society functions into the medieval (church mask-faces), renaissance, baroque and new age masks and street theatre acting. They reflect the similar needs for common and socially open mirror of the society. The in-between period of acting *inside the theatre-building* represented the structured, ruling aesthetics dependent, institutionalized and socially determined form of the theatre for certain and special audience. The Dionysus processions in ancient classical Greek are surprisingly akin to the contemporary actions on the European street performances for gathered crowds, applying many similar features, situations and tools such as masks, costumes, close interaction with viewers, combination of dance, singing, music, circus, magic, tilt-walkers, juggling, happenings, water areas, smoke, fireworks, improvisation and masks again to create the spontaneous ritual for everyone.

### 2. What is the most traditional in European theatre history?

Looking at the Encyclopaedia Britannica 1<sup>st</sup> edition of 1771, the standard definition of a theatre<sup>250</sup> emphasizes the “public edifice” where the action is performed. After that the qualities of actors, the play and finally the whole area connected to actors and spectators are mentioned. This is the concept maintained in ancient Greek theatres, overtaken by renaissance theatres such as Gonzaga’s one in Sabbionetta or Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre in London. The same definition works well for the public and/or court baroque theatre and opera, the same for the Enlightenment (Classicist) theatre and opera, romantic performances and even most of 20<sup>th</sup> century productions. The theatre **building** and its lay-out have been a typical mechanism for social divided people since the early history. In fact, such a lay-out is a mirror of the society estates and classes throughout centuries. There is the VIP row, there are rich ticket owners in other front rows, there is a special ruler box, other levels of boxes for nobility or modern notables, top

<sup>249</sup> Taylor, John Russell: *The Penguin Dictionary of Theatre*, Harmondsworth, London, 1979.

<sup>250</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol III, Edinburgh 1771, p. 895.

gallery for standing theatre-goers etc. Traditional theatre building is an evident tool for displaying the existing social scale and for anesthetizing the roots of spontaneous theatre ('mausoleum' according to Robert Nichols, 1991).

To simplify, everything which is not played or performed in an 'appropriate' building, where there is no seated audience with their tickets and no other facilitating background means and support (printed programs, well dressed people, ushers, refreshments, toilets) is more or less street theatre. When an actor leaves the theatre-building he loses most theatrical prejudices and preoccupations. In both concepts, the acting must be very good, in the street theatre, however, acting itself is enough for a high quality performance and highly appreciated creation at all. Everything else is not so much important, can be reduced or substituted, transformed or ad hoc newly created from the available urban space and situation. The public may be randomly constituted and socially and professionally mixed. This is the main aspect of freedom and creative freedom in the street theatre concept. "I can take any free space and call it the open stage" starts Peter Brook his famous lecture *The Empty Space*. There is an attempt in the last two decades to formulate the general formula that would embrace all kinds of performances starting from animal rituals, human rituals in everyday life (greetings, professional roles) up to games, sport matches, dance, ceremonies and theatre. Theatre is only one of them. Whether a performance becomes theatre it depends on the circumstances and aims. If there is some purpose and a goal then it tends to be ritual. If there is prevalently an entertainment as the goal then it is theatre<sup>251</sup>. The new quality of the street theatre consists in combining and diffusing these aspects which brings the street theatre back to ritual. Even Jerzy Grotowski defined his 'Poor Theater' concept as the profane ritual where the public is allowed to present<sup>252</sup>.

### 3. Historical inspirations – street theatre in the past

Street theatre roots should be searched in the sacred processions from Athens to Eleuzina. Then Thespis is known to drive his performances on the cart to Athens in 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Compare to ancient **Greece** (dynamic) and later authors' theatre, the **Egyptians** had been playing the same (static) rituals for more than 3 000 years. The Memphis Drama annually played on 21<sup>st</sup> March since 2000 BC as the mystery procession included boats and followed the legend about Usirus's passion, deaths and resurrection. The audience spontaneously took active part in performed battles and often got injured as the result of deep involvement. Herodotus 450BC saw two such performances in Egypt where Usirus played the same role as Dionysus in Greece during the procession "on the street".

The triumph entrances of Roman commanders and Emperors (trionfi) from winning wars were spectacular shows for free Populus Romanus and slaves as well. After the theatres had been banned in Rome by Emperor Justin (529), the actors and (vulgar) pantomimes moved to the streets and markets, which was permanently accused and unsuccessfully prohibited by Christian authorities till 10<sup>th</sup> century. In his travel memoirs, the 11<sup>th</sup>-century Persian writer Nasir-i Khusraw describes a ceremony for opening a dyke on the river Nile: an ensemble of long trumpets and drums playing appropriate melodies was followed by a procession of 10 000 horsemen and 10 000 others. These huge popular open-air ceremonial performances and parades were occasions for itinerant actors, jesters, shadow puppeteers, storytellers, dancers, singers and instrumentalists to display their talents.

<sup>251</sup> Schechner, R.: *Performance Theory*, Toutledge, New York 1988.

<sup>252</sup> Grotowski, J.: *Towards a Poor Theater*, 1968.

**Christianity** created the new liturgy which – often happening outside – was some kind of a performance (costumes, incense, candles, music). Even later the service moved to basilicas and churches (theatres of mystery and faith) but some services still took place outside the church (burials). Liturgical drama used to one of them becoming very popular in 12<sup>th</sup> century everywhere in the Christian Europe. There were several days long passion plays as part of urban festivities (Alps, Flanders, France), some of them developed into separated scenes such as Three Marias, Ungentarius, Nativity, Three Kings, some were positioned to the certain place like the Way of Cross or Calvary. The oldest note of *Sacre rappresentazioni* in Florence dates back to 1448. During the Easter play in 1583 the whole market place in Luzern was taken for the performance. Also, such church ceremonies like *translatio Sancti* (Saint's relics translation), pilgrimage and street preachers contributed to the street performing.

At the same time the church was banning any pagan or profane art. The more the repeated **prohibitions** against barnstormers and homeless acrobats and musicians, histrions, jackeurs, minstrels, mimes, spilmans, spilwîps, charmers (with animals), migrant quacks and homeless followed the early medieval Europe. It was easy to get the audience within the medieval settlement, where people were living and working on the street (still typical for back roads in Rome, Naples, Venice and Spain) and markets. The Wheel of Fortune, illusionists and street magicians attracted the crowd. Even in 1986 A. K. Lingo attempts to deter people from watching street theatre or procuring the services of healer-actors in the street<sup>253</sup> even now-a-days, which was very efficient method to sell medicine. Medieval announcements, witch burning and public executions were considered as a theatre as well – look at the Campo di Fiore in Rome where executions were made even in 18<sup>th</sup> century (*giustizia de' condannati a morte per causa di Religione, e per altre cause gravissime*). Even in 1722 Piazza Navona in Rome was mentioned as the place 'dove stanno Ciarlatani' – another street spectacle. **Knight carousels, tournaments, traveling** suits of kings, bishops or knight as well as crusades and battles turned into theatrum on the street and roads for viewers. Alborada, a 'dawn song' was a morning serenade or song performed in honour of an individual or to celebrate a festival; it is similar to the albada, an open-air concert performed at daybreak under the balcony or windows of an honoured individual. In the mid-15th century it was customary for the instrumentalists of noble Spanish households to perform the alborada at dawn on the most solemn festival days of the religious calendar and on other important days.

**Renaissance celebrations.** The coronation entry belonged among typical capital-city events. During the festive entries of Charles IX and his wife Elisabeth, Archduchess of Austria, into Paris for her coronation (1571) a 'Chariot triomphant' decorated with statues of Cybil, Neptune, Pluto and Juno was presented to the King by the city besides five triumph arches built in Paris. There was a dumb-show after the entry of William, Prince of Orange, Count of Nassau into Ghent (1577) where allegorical figures were handing the power of the city to him. A letter survived describing the festivities at the Old Prague Square (1570) with and artificial 'mountain and devils on it spitting fire, launching rockets and surrounded by fantastic girds'. There was also a procession of historical and mythical figures and horrifying Gods directed by Giuseppe Arcimboldo.

Journey of Margaret of Austria through Italy to marry Philip III in 1598 lead through Italian cities Hostia, Ferrara, Mantua, Cremona and Milan. Of course it was the nobility Habsburg dynasty trip including Philip III (Felipe III) (1578-1621), King of Spain, Margaret (Margarita) of Austria (1584-1611), m. Philip III, King of Spain, Albrecht (Albert), Archduke of Austria

<sup>253</sup> Lingo, Alison Klairmont: *Empirics and charlatans in early modern France: the genesis of the classification of the 'other' in medical practice*. Journal of Social History; Summer 1986, Vol. 19, Issue 4, p. 583.



(1559-1621), joint ruler of the Southern Netherlands from 1598 and large accompaniment. Their city entrances were followed by many Triumphes and pomps. Besides the regular closed performances and festivities, there were many outside shows followed by the regular people. The bridge was made across the river Ardesio near Dolce with triumphal arches at either end, built using boats chained together. Artillery Salvo fired by the 2000 troops guarding the bridge. Another procession by water was done on specially decorated barges, first across the Po and then downstream to Ferrara while there were banquets, music and dances provided onboard. In Ferrara there were masquing and dancing by land and water. Theatrical performance and comedy was performed to end the ceremonies at Ferrara. After entry into Mantua the procession of the noblemen bearing the Queen's litter was organized. After the hunt the fireworks, which lasted until 2 am was seen.

**Carnivals** have always been the background for street actions. Venice – ‘la Serenissima’ converted itself into the big open-air theatre scene during the carnivals. Not only street and markets but channels, bridges, embankments and gondolas were included, too. In addition there was annually another show on the sea with rich decorated boats and vessels presenting the Doge’s (and Venice’s) engagement to the Sea. The carnival provoked artistic creativity in everyone. The people were anonymous behind their masks and started acting. Thus carnival was and still is (in Venice, Rio de Janeiro) the total street theatre. French farce and sottie or German Carnival plays (since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Hans Sachs) were developed for market places in other countries, later even out of carnival season. “Carnival [fighting the globalized spectacles] manifests its theatrics all around us, as authority figures and norms of behavior guiding our socialization become questioned and their rigid structure turns problematic” (Mueller, 2000). Contemporary carnival is more controlled, a safer theatre than ones in the Middle Ages. Carnavalesque has four themes: the tumultuous crowd, the world turned upside-down, the comic mask and the grotesque body. Contemporary carnival is a polyphonic (many voiced) expression by those without power, sometimes sanctioned by those in power as a way to blow off steam<sup>254</sup>.

The era of **building theatres again** after ancient models in Ferrara (1486), London (1576), Vicenza (1584), Sabbionetta (1588-1590) etc. underlined the uniqueness of the street performances. **Commedia dell’arte** then founded the huge source of theatre acting with its vitality, sensuality and spontaneity for next three centuries having developed the character reserve of over 100 types for any kind of the following theatrical actions. The export to other countries started soon. The first Italian companies started acting in Spain (1535) in the atriums of Corpus Christi fraternities. Very soon the law prohibiting actors emerged in Spain in 1598. Renaissance celebrations and square performances (Florence) were enlarged by elaborate “triumphs” which Leonardo da Vinci and other Renaissance artists designed. These street-works, incorporating music, verse, costume and mobile constructions on floats, may well have been the only contact between the common people and the major professional artists of the time, apart from the occasional distant glimpses of an altarpiece. Vasari designed triumphs for Cosimo I in Florence, and oil-sketches of designs for processions by Rubens still exists. P. Brueghel junior documents by his famous painting *Boerenkermes* the stage on the street in Netherland. Besides English corrales, Inigo Jones and later Sir James Thornhill designed spectacular masques for performance at Court, but there was still a strong and continuous medieval tradition of mysteries and other works played to a crowd in a cobbled courtyard outside the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh even in 1971<sup>255</sup>.

<sup>254</sup> Boje, David M.: *Theatrics of Control: Tamara of Spectacle, Festival, and Carnival*, 2001 [http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/pages/theatrics\\_of\\_control.htm](http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/pages/theatrics_of_control.htm)

<sup>255</sup> A. Henri was struck with the closeness of the work of the young English artists to this medieval tradition.

**Protestant school drama** (originated in Strasbourg) and **Jesuits street theatre** (the first in Köln 1581) exploited the identical form of performances for larger public on the street (stage on barrels) in order to support the ideological conviction and belief of viewers. This popular tool kept spreading out rapidly and covered even small and remote towns and locations in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries throughout Europe. Dance of Death and Theatrum Mortis scenes (Jesuits stage designs *Gran teatro Barocco* in Soprony) copying the pattern of theatrum sacrum: teatro-scenatronfo-apoteosi<sup>256</sup> became one of the frequent church theatre subdivisions. After 1637 when the professional Italian opera was introduced to the public Teatro di San Cassiano in Venice, the polarization between theatre building and off performances even increased. Baroque era itself originated the idea of the world as a theatre – theatrum mundi, where Deus is the stage manager, everyone is an actor and they play everywhere, public space and streets including. **Baroque festivities** highlighted with Coronations and Weddings remained as the impressive whole-life memories for participants. During the Habsburg – Gonzaga coronation in Prague (1628) there were besides regular Italian opera and oratorium performances, and Jesuit play the English actors with Pickelhering and street (court) entertainers “giocolieri che danzeranno” and “marionettisti”.

Having converted to Catholicism the entry into Rome of Christina, Queen of Sweden through the Porta del Popolo (1655) was a big performance for Romans and the whole Europe. The procession led by the papal Magistro Ceremoniarium, followed by Roman, Florentine and German gentry was ended with the fireworks – an obvious show for everyone. There were fireworks as well for the entry into Lille of Louis XIV. (1680) accompanied by The gigantomachia, with was the artificial mountain on which the giants appear. Procession through the streets of Dresden held by Friedrich August I. (1695) was described as ‘Götter Aufzug’ (Gods Parade). Similarly, the entry into Cracow of Friedrich August, Elector of Saxony (1697), for election and coronation of the King was a magnificence parade and wealth and power demonstration including many military troupes, companies and listed noble individuals with twenty camels decorated with gold. The *Sieg-Streit/deß Lufft u. Wassers* by Anron Bertali (Fr. Sbarro), choreographus Aless. Carducci took place at the Viennese Burgplatz in 1667. There was nobility present followed by the wagons and four symbolic Earth Elements: Air with 30 winds, Fire (Vulcano), Water and Earth. Professional theatre companies traveling in Italy, in England and after 1700 all over Europe contributed to repertory, acting art and national tradition sharing.

**Water Music** festivities inspired by Venice celebrations spread to other ports, rivers (Haendel’s Water music or Prag’s Musicae navales on the occasion of St John of Nepomuk day on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1708 – 1795) and lakes (Gonzaga’s Mantova water performances). The “Gloria d’Amore” was a water spectacle in Parma (1690) designed by Aurelio Aurelii Domenico Mauri and Antonio Vezzani to celebrate the wedding of Odoardo II Farnese, Duke of Parma, and Dorothea Sophia, Princess of Pfalz-Neuburg. Originally the Roman cardinals supported generously the comedians as stated in 1668<sup>257</sup>. Later on comedians (comici) and their performances were considered a reason for riots and thus **prohibited** “in any place of the city” (1673)<sup>258</sup>. On behalf of the Pope, the Rome Governor prohibited in **1689** anybody to ‘organize or realize (publicly or privately) any type of carnival entertainment. Specially prohibited are: parties, balls, moresche,

<sup>256</sup> Bardi, Terézia: “Il teatro della morte”, in *Barokní Praha – barokní Čechie*, 1620 – 1740, Scriptorium, Praha 2004, s. 889; Bardi, T. – Fagiolo, M. – Knapp, E.: *The Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Design*, Budapest 1999.

<sup>257</sup> ‘Si ordina di dare 50 scudi in moneta ai comici, che hanno rappresentato le commedie, «per un palchetto nel loro teatro». Il mandato dovrà essere preparato a nome di Antonio Loli.’ [Cardinale Chigi], Roma 24.2.1668, I Gonzaga e l’Impero. Itinerari dello spettacolo, Florence 2005, HERLA CD database P675.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid. 5.1.1673, Roma, A173.

bagordi, masks or travesties with inappropriate costumes, Commedie, Giudiate, Burattini and any kinds of performances (spiritual ones included) on stages, carts or afoot, both got by heart or improvised. There are various punishments for violators in the course of the carnival<sup>259</sup>.

Italian opera companies when bringing the performances from Italy across Alps as far as the new courts and aristocratic estates, they had to play and sing outside, since no appropriate opera buildings were available. This is the case of Prague Coronation opera for Charles VI (1723) by Fux, or Orlando Furioso by Bioni in Kuckus (1724). There was a unique chance for the non-court people to see it which in Kuckus-Spa continued till 1738. The principal performers of both London theatres were engaged for the patriotic masque by Arne which was given in an open-air theatre at the Prince's residence at Cliveden on 1 August 1740. C.P.E. Bach's remark that 'it was seldom that a musical master passed through [Leipzig] without getting to know my father and playing for him' must refer to performances of the collegium musicum, which took place on Wednesdays between 4 and 6 p.m. in the coffee-garden 'before the Grimmisches Thor' in the summer. Originally **military music** served in army but after the new hautbois spread across Europe the new ensembles of French hautbois played outside and inside. A band of six young 'Hautboisten', led by a French musician played at Zeitz castle in 1698 and was sent to Vienna at the request of the Habsburg court in 1700.

The **19<sup>th</sup> century parades** were the important mode of communication in a stratified and conflicted society. S. Davis covers the period between 1790 and 1860, but she mostly analyzed the parades in 50s. The streets were never truly open to all for parades. For example women rarely appeared in parades; black could serve as musicians but risked injury if they paraded in support of issues they deemed important. Moreover, some parades were used to sustain bigotry and injustice just as others were used, especially by working people, to strive for greater socioeconomic or political justice<sup>260</sup>.

**Jazz music and minstrel shows** belong to the street arts as well. Battles of bands (battle of music) were events at which bands attempted to outplay one another in the manner of a Cutting contest. Such trials of skill originally occurred spontaneously when New Orleans bands, engaged in open-air advertising (or "ballyhoo"), encountered one another in the street; the wheels of the wagons on which the musicians rode were tied together to prevent either from escaping before the contest was decided. The attention these competitions attracted led promoters to set up similar events for financial gain.

Jean Caspard **Deburau** (1796-1846) created in Paris the old-new pantomime ideal of melancholic Pierrot figure in the white floppy costume. Born in Bohemia he innovated the traditional commedia dell'arte principle and incorporated it into the French and world theatre practice.

German spoken drama dominated the repertory at the Town Theatre of Bratislava for most of the century, a rare exception being during the directorship of Ferenc (or János) Pokorny (1830–

<sup>259</sup> Il Pro Governatore Generale di Roma, Cardinale di Santa Cecilia, dietro espresso ordine del Pontefice, proibisce a chiunque di organizzare o eseguire (in pubblico o in privato) qualsiasi tipo di divertimento carnevalesco. In particolare si vietano: Festini, Balli, Moresche, Bagordi, Maschere o travestimenti con abiti impropri, Commedie, Giudiate, Burattini e qualsiasi tipo di rappresentazione (anche spirituale) su palchi, carri, o a piedi, «tanto imparate a mente, quanto all'improvviso». Essendo banditi tutti i tipi di divertimento per tutto il corso del Carnevale, si prevedono diverse pene per i trasgressori.

Papa, In Roma, Nella Stamperia della Rev. Cam. Apostolica. 1689; Ibid. 7.2.1689m HERLA A175.

<sup>260</sup> Davis, Susan G.: *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia 1986.

44) who mounted an eight-month opera season each year, with guest performers from the Kärntnertortheater and the Városi Színház (Municipal Theatre) in Pest, as well as **open-air performances** in summer. In Cagliari (1858) the municipal authority founded the Banda Civica, which gave open-air concerts, suppressed in 1917. There The Nuovo Teatro Diurno (1859) was originally an open-air theatre until 1869. After 1860 open-air ensembles became very popular in Arles where regular concerts consisting of dances, overtures and numbers from fashionable operas and operettas were made. During the summer 1864 F. A. Barbieri became the artistic director of the Campos Eliseos, Madrid's first open-air concerts in the gardens.

#### 4. Contemporary street theatre – inspiration from the present

**Circus** and other derived forms are contributing and revoking the medieval forms of public entertainment and animal shows. The traditional characters were renovated and transformed even in the **silent movie** grotesque, criticism and humor (Charlie Chaplin).

The 20<sup>th</sup> century **media** especially television made theatrum from watching sports with cheerleaders and from Olympic Games opening/closing ceremonies in stadium and ice-rings. Televised catastrophes and wars brought another public theatrum where children easily do not recognize what is real and what is a fiction.

Also, there were constant **revivals** for the street theatre development. Dramatist Edward Gordon Craig has advised the actors to imitate marionettes (1920). This theatre was then closely linked with **political theatre** and agitating theatre. It was a typical ingredient of the 1<sup>st</sup> May parades and demonstrations where allegoric wagons, masks, military units, anti-capitalist banners and scenes, dancers and brass music were included. There were even allegoric boats and trains and fireworks included. Another mass show was the huge collective exercise at a Prague stadium – 'Spartakiada'. Paradoxally it was watched over those who did not participate. Totalitarian street 'art' during the communist 1<sup>st</sup> May parades was a pushed and unfree way of employing street theatre means in a very vulgar and low artistic way.

For nine years, the **New York Street Theater Caravan** has been traveling around the country performing for poor and working-class audiences. Their itinerary might serve as a map of social, movements over the past decade: ghettos, prisons, migrant labor camps, Indian reservations, mining and textile towns. Drawing characters from their travels and from history, they've created an original repertory of plays and skits that pose radical questions. (The skit portrays a football game between management and labor in which the goal is a contract.) The union used a strategy of solidarity to win. Marketa Kimrell's politics have caused her trouble throughout her adult life. A Czechoslovakian refugee (1953) was denied U.S. citizenship until the year 1980, originally because she had the wrong friends in Hollywood during the McCarthy era. Then she was blacklisted from television in the early 1960s<sup>261</sup>. In the 1960s these utility goals were overcome (in United States) by rising ideas and deeds how to bring the alternative (fringe) theatre to people whilst they do not attend theatre buildings.

American **Living theatre** (1960s) shaped new political rituality and praised empty space as an attempt to involve the street theatre methods in modern theatre. It witnessed the Living Theatre with its theatrical production "Paradise Now," the Performance Group with its theatrical production "Dionysus in '69," the Free Store with its theatrical production "Che" and others. A theatrical reaction against discontents was often a novel show, full of thrills and titillation for the

<sup>261</sup> Hauser, Dedra: *Art and Agitprop*. Nation; May 1980, Vol. 230, Issue 13, p. 403-408, 6p.

bourgeois theatre's jaded sugar daddy, old reliable audience. 'There was another kind of relevance going, however Street Theatre. It harked back to a really old version of relevance, that of the classical Greek theatre or medieval churchyard plays'<sup>262</sup>.

What seems to have distinguished **Bread and Puppet** from other theatres is that they actually did break with the theatre and with the theatre audience (the Becks of the Living Theatre wanted to but they could not). This involved an element of political organization, at least of collaboration, an analysis of its possibilities and limits. It is impossible otherwise to explain its mode and capability of playing in open squares in Poland (during the Prague Spring in 1968), puppet festivals in Siberia, in Nicaragua, where in two weeks' rehearsal ended with an Easter show a third of the village were participants. This could have been done only outside the theatre<sup>263</sup>.

The political motivation in the 1970s and 1980s stepped down to clear room for creating street theatre **own aesthetic**. Arts de la Rue appeared at the beginning of 1970s in France. Location theatre (site specific), capture the street and open air programs and off programs as parts of traditional festivals were born. Circus tents, traveling projects like Czech Dragon Theatre co-productions (Czech Republic – Denmark), Mir Caravane (1989) as a four month tour through 10 European towns, Theatre in the motion (Brno), C. Turba's Festival 2000 (Prague), Forman Brothers shows on the steam boat in Prague were spreading very fast and included some East-European groups and countries (Poland, Czech Republic) even before the 'Orange Revolution' in 1989.

**Squat-Theatre** originated surprisingly in Hungary where the Group of Underground Theatre came from, and via France (1976) emigrated to New York to spread out its new activity. They won the first attention after producing the Fast Change performance in a Budapest park in 1971. From sexual harassment and political double-meanings it was censored and banned from public performances. The apartment performances continued in Hungary till emigration. They played in an abandoned church, in a house built up of dressing boxes. They did 'Journal Theatre' (1975) as the daily improvised new scenes. They played on the various levels of reality and art – their "stage" was also seen from a street which made up the second audience and confronted the random viewers with themselves<sup>264</sup>.

**"Two angels wrestle with each other"**. The angel of creativity, the angel of criticism. And both do a little clowning.<sup>265</sup> This coexistence is quite old, not only 20<sup>th</sup> century invention. Let us focus on the role of street theatre in the creation and reproduction of the Irish revolutionary movement of the 1790s. We can see how Jim Smyth learned from "riots" in 1759, 1779 and 1784. Street theatre and public spectacles served as a recruiting tool in the 1790s, especially The Volunteers' prologues, epilogues, interludes, masques, operas, songs, and dances<sup>266</sup>.

**Straßentheater** in Germany is another example: The political and agitating theatre originated in the end of the 1960s in West Berlin and Western Germany. That was the birth of the Freien Theater. Das Sozialistische Straßentheater (SST) played in West Berlin the scenes from the military plot in Greece during the demonstration. Other groups in Frankfurt, Hamburg, Köln and

<sup>262</sup> Adcock, Joe: *Philadelphia Street Players*, Nation; January 1969, Vol. 209, Issue 19, p. 611-612.

<sup>263</sup> Nichols, Robert: *Street Theater*. Nation; April 1991, Vol. 252 Issue 15, p.531-534.

<sup>264</sup> Squat-Theatre. Lexikon Theater, p. 5615, LexTheat. Bd. 2, S. 399) (c) Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, München].

<sup>265</sup> Nichols, Robert, op. cit.

<sup>266</sup> Burke, Helen M.: *The Revolutionary Prelude: The Dublin Stage in the Late 1770s and Early 1780s*. Eighteenth-Century Life; November 1998, Vol. 22, Issue 3, p.7.

Munich followed. They performed in front of workshops and school, too. The texts were mostly Montages from authentic materials. The scenery was limited to banners and costumes. This simple and surface-like street theatre was later replaced with more elaborated one (Zentrifuge or Zan Pollo Theater in Berlin)<sup>267</sup>.

The movement known as Orange Alternative emerged in Poland in early 1980s and it continued to operate even though the original conditions of the socialist reality changed. **In Poland, from a relatively small and vanguard form of street theatre it grew to a form of manifestation of one's discontent with the world of symbols.** A similar movement exists in Hungary. In this work the Orange phenomenon is analyzed as a form of response to dichotomous organization of social space in the pre- and post-revolutionary period in Eastern Europe<sup>268</sup>.

The term Street theatre was used in 1991 in NYC differently for two motion pictures Reviews. *My Own Private Idaho*, directed by Gus Van Sant; *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*, starring Lily Tomlin and written by Jane Wagner, directed by John Bailey<sup>269</sup>.

In 1994 the British music troupe Stomp features music, part of which are elements of street theatre such as recycled urban material as percussion<sup>270</sup>. In 1992 E. Larsen reports on the populist appeal of public puppetry, part political activism, part street theatre and part pure unadulterated fun<sup>271</sup>.

S. Slyomovics explores (1991) how much of Palestinian theatre production in Israel and the Occupied Territories confirms the daily experiences and observations of audiences: boundaries blur between performance onstage and the street theatre of the intifada. It heightened consciousness of details of daily life<sup>272</sup>.

A street theatre performance in Milwaukee called *Rome is Burning* was designed to protest and rekindle interest in local issues<sup>273</sup>. Passersby who stayed long enough learned that this was not a protest at all, but street theatre. Conceived during the height of the Persian Gulf war, the performance was designed to rekindle interest in domestic issues. It is one of a growing number of public actions by artists in cities from Buffalo to San Diego, focusing attention on everything from AIDS to the environment. "It's an experiment in citizenship," says Rob Daniel, son, a Milwaukee filmmaker and participant in the event, "based on the populist notion that individuals' ideas and suggestions are empowering. It's an exercise in hope in the face of catastrophe." "ACT UP has certainly been an inspiration," says Barbara Lattanzi, one of the organizers of Rome Is Burning. "Groups have sprung up all over the country who are manipulating media images to their advantage. The idea is they're employing performative aspects. It's subversive but playful at the same time." Lattanzi, a visiting lecturer at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, was one of eighteen people arrested last year at an artist's performance protesting censorship in Buffalo, New York. In that performance, artists who felt they had been sold out responded by holding an auction to hawk lifelike sculptures of

<sup>267</sup> Straßentheater. Lexikon Theater, Bd. 2, p. 407-408) (c) Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, München.

<sup>268</sup> Misztal, Bronislaw: *Between the state and solidarity: One movement, two interpretations--the Orange alternative movement in Poland*. British Journal of Sociology; March 1992, Vol. 43, Issue 1, p. 55-78, 24p.

<sup>269</sup> Rafferty, Terrence: *Street theatre*, New Yorker; 10/7/91, Vol. 67 Issue 33, p. 100, 3p.

<sup>270</sup> Ferguson, William: *The well-tempered trash can*, Esquire; June 1994, Vol. 121 Issue 6, p. 32, EBSCO.

<sup>271</sup> Larsen, E.: *Punch and Judy at the barricades*, Utne Reader; May/June 1992, Issue 51, p. 36, EBSCO.

<sup>272</sup> Slyomovics, S.: *Palestinian theatre under Israeli censorship*, TDR: The Drama Review; Summer 91, Vol. 35 Issue 2, p. 18.

<sup>273</sup> Woodburn, Judy: *Citizens protest while Rome burns*, Progressive; May 1991, Vol. 55, Issue 5, p. 11, 1p, 2bw.

local officials. Milwaukee artists were inspired by the Buffalo event, and asked Lattanzi to participate in Rome Is Burning. In another controversial action, Lattanzi's Buffalo group trailed mainstream camera crews and filmed coverage of local news. The filmmakers wanted to show how "objective" reporting skews the public's perceptions of events. Videotape figured prominently in the Milwaukee performance. The Senate and People of Rome are distributing tapes to public-access cable channels, hoping to inspire a larger audience to participate in political theatre.

### **Total Art. Environments, Happenings, and Performance**

Born in United States, the open space, mostly streets, random public and anti-theatre attitudes appeared in the period 1952 – 1963 in both Western and Eastern Europe – often as the tool for political protests – in the total art, environments, happenings and performance art productions. What is common with the street theatre concept is the presence of unusual (non-theatrical) space, mystery and closely present non-theatrical audience. The acting action and actors are mostly missing while the “action” springs from the visual artist instead of. Allan Kaprow melted palaces of ice-blocks in city streets, Yves Klein was throwing gold-dust into the Seine in Paris, Otto Piene did *Light Ballet* in Düsseldorf (1959), J. J. Lebel and Alain Jouffroy worked in Venice, Paris, Wolf Vostell in Barcelona, Cologne, Amsterdam, Wuppertal, Spur Group Manifesto was active in Munich, Zero Group demonstration in Düsseldorf, music experiments connected with action performed Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne, Festival of Mistifs started in London, Adrian Henri did the *Death of a Bird in the City* in Liverpool, Stanley Brown did installations in Vienna and Amsterdam, John Arden opened the *Festival of Anarchy* in Yorkshire, Milan Knížák in Prague etc. The urban framework is given as a result of inhabitant concentration in larger cities and in reusing or newly using the unique coexistence of people and city structures. The common quality all these activities share is their inability to fit into a preconceived artistic framework. Soon, there were many new technologic features involved such as electronic music and movie technics participation starting with IT equipment (1970 in New York). What is the most inspiring and striking down element? Probably the huge and temporary interference with new environments. Projects like *Wrapped Coastline* (1970) using the long strips of textile or plastic material or Christo's *Valley Curtain* hanging the huge red fabrics between two hills in (1972) approved the impression we experience from the large form contrast of the nature and technology. “The term ‘environment’ refers to an art form that fills an entire room (or outdoor space) surrounding the visitors and consisting of any materials whatsoever, including lights, sounds and colours”, describes the new phenomenon Allan Kaprow. Similarly, “the term ‘happening’ refers to an art form related to theatre, in that it is performed in a given time and space. Its structure and content are a logical extension of environment”. In spite of the proclamation, it is typical that these creators and theoretists in one did not mention nor used any acting and actors. In all Communist countries, the espousal of any radical new art form was likely to be construed as a political action. During the brief period of artistic freedom which ended under Soviet tanks in 1968, Czechoslovakia was the most active of Eastern European countries in this area. Just how serious this activity could be is seen from the *Black Happening* of the poet Josef Honys, who arranged a fake funeral for himself as a ‘Mystification Event’, invited his friends, and then in fact committed suicide unknown to the friends<sup>274</sup>. There were other productions of this type in Bratislava, Belgrad and former Yugoslavia as well.

<sup>274</sup> Henri, A., *Total Art. Environments, Happenings, and Performance*, Oxford University Press, New York – Toronto 1974, p. 128.

## 5. Contemporary street artists rediscover traditional street forms – entertainment and/against politics

There are two ways how the traditional street art forms are being identified and brought back to the contemporary cultural life. The first one rediscovers the traditional forms for creating the modern, actual replicas in the street theatre performances themselves. The most complete collection of street theatre means are simply offered from the *commedia dell'arte* situation in Italy. It includes all the constitutive elements such as developed types and roles (Arlechino, Lazzi, Brighella, etc.), costumes, masks, language, body language and mimics, humor, sarcasms, actuality and improvisation on the street. The latter uses these elements and forms to implement them into the regular stage performances. This process can be identified as the 'dialectical theatre'<sup>275</sup> where both areas take advantage of the old patterns of spontaneity and theatricality. The traditional stage theatre and companies adopt some of the street theatre means and aesthetics and on the other hand, the street theatre may grow up from the serious artistic schooling, actors' training and from the traditional authors and plots adaptations. In the end of the day they coexist nowadays and may stimulate each other for the future. As an typical example of the both sides of one coin is Dario Fo (Nobel Prize Winner 1987) who started using drama as the criticizing and protesting tool against capitalism, communist party, church, Italian government, women exploitation and other social tensions after 1968. For this reason he developed his own language (*grammelot*) and transformed the elements of medieval religious drama, pantomime, *commedia dell'arte* and period live patterns into the new and beloved theatre (*Mistero Buffo*, 1969). It is him who pushed the satire to the very edge and who showed how to make the top theatre imagination incorporating all kinds of historical and popular forms. He became an example for the new high level street theatre performances in Italy, in Europe and all over the world. Also, Luca Ronconi is one of those who implemented into his mysterious and mythical plays (*Orlando furioso*, 1969) the new, open space where visitors could choose from many simultaneously running scenes.

The Free Theatre of Munich, Germany brought to life (1982) the small Brazilian street group Grupo Galpão in order to make dramatic shows accessible to the general public and to create plays rooted in the daily life of Brazilians. Before starting such a new project and, in fact, exporting street theatre abroad (outside Europe), it presupposed to formulate and teach the basics: *commedia dell'arte* equipment, street-stage performance language, both scenic and verbal, tricks of magic, banners and stilt walking, tightrope, acrobatics, circus techniques, clown make-up, juggling, fire breathing, pantomime, *commedia dell'arte* inspired props and sketches, sword fighting, circensian elements, choice of words, social criticism, irony and satire, closer physical contact with public up to the public involvement. The new and unpredictable components were Brazilian music and the environment of Brazilian dancing carnival. The newly established group added experience for all the human senses (vision, smell, taste, hearing and touch) when playing for children. They attempted to leave the theatre building in the middle of a performance together with the audience creating the snake or train and ending on the street. They discovered the new urban space such as the store window. The result was marvelous: national and international awards and "everybody from pickpockets to well-dressed gentlemen gave them standing ovations wherever they played"<sup>276</sup>. Moreover, the street environment de-emphasized verbal language and introduced the colloquial, erotic (prostitutes) and even vulgar expressions. They involved the didactic methods and took advantage from presenting the roles

<sup>275</sup> Alves, J. C. M. – Noe, M.: *From the Street to the Stage: The Dialectical Theatre*. Practice of Grupo Galpão, Luso-Brazilian Review, XXXIX 1 0024-7413, Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System 2002, s. 79 – 93, EBSCO.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., p. 81.



of deaf and mute persons to reduce the formal language even more. There are evergreen topics and themes as love affairs, politics, extra-marital affairs, religiosity always ready and easily resonating with any audience. Then there are the new ones like feminism, globalization, terrorism etc. In the 1990s, the street theatre groups started adapting the classical authors and plays (Molière, national history), translating them into the new street theatre methods and aesthetics.

Student 'flippy theatre' demonstrates the active and didactic reactions on the actual society and social topics using bare stage, campus corners to play at, and banners or flip-over illustrations to substitute the scenic equipment. The form was borrowed from a 16<sup>th</sup> century circus sideshow act called a *bankelsang*. A bankelsang was a single sheet of pictures, showing a number of drawings illustrating some historical or contemporary event; a narrator with a pointer told the story. The German playwright Bertolt Brecht revived the bankelsang in the 1930s as a theatre form to deal with contemporary social problems. The actors often switch for 'breakout' technique and call the audience to participate with simple music instruments or just bottles or soft-drink cans to play on.

There is even a direct political activism in Canada nowadays. "People feel they have no outlet within the parliamentary system to effect change ... Because free trade deals are done behind closed doors"<sup>277</sup> and New Democratic Party conservatives were less likely to protest in early 2001. Similarly there were street theatres performing activists during the convention of the American Israeli Political Action Committee in Washington D.C. in 2002. Another demonstration by Rainforest Action network, Green Peace and Amazon Watch took place in 2006 at the Bank of America's annual investor conference. Tactics used in the demonstration included street theatre, the use of bullhorns and distribution of fliers. World Social Forum (WSF), an international summit of social movements in 2006, suggested a profound canniness about self-presentation that owes something to the radical street theatre of the 1960s and 1970s. The street theatre in these cases, however, is too much used as a functional tool to address people mainly politically and has little theatrical ambitions.

On the other hand, the street theatre protesters against the Republican National Convention in New York City (2004) was full of creativity: pedaling bicyclers outfitted with cardboard horse heads, shouting "The Republicans are coming!", a half-hour recitation of the First Amendment - the group will talk into cell phones to avoid looking like protesters - near Ground Zero on August 31<sup>st</sup>, about 3,000 people encircled the World Trade Center site on August 28<sup>th</sup> and chimed 2,749 bells for the 9/11 victims to "ring in peace and justice and ring out war and the suppression of liberties", about 100 women draped in American flags and wearing anti-Republican "protest panties" performed a "mass flash" on Sept. 1, etc. "There is another world: Space, theatre and global anti-capitalism" comments Sophie Nield the 2006 protest situation in USA<sup>278</sup>.

Performance advertising is another supermarket policy how to influence the buyers. The actors pretend they themselves are buyers with the full baskets of articles and lots of suggestions and recommendations giving to other people there.

<sup>277</sup> Torrance, Kelly Jane: *The need for street theatre*. Report / Newsmagazine, National Edition; 03/05/2001, Vol. 28, Issue 5, p. 52.

<sup>278</sup> Nield, Sophie: *There is another world: Space, theatre and global anti-capitalism*. Contemporary Theatre Review; 2006, Vol. 16 Issue 1, p. 51-61.

The street theatre methodology may serve as a conciliating process between two antagonists ethnicities or sub-cultures. There is a good example from Peru Indians and Mestizos. Using popular culture as a lens, the transformations took place in images of race and urban social identities. Through changing forms of street theatre urban groups worked out new identities by weaving together, juxtaposing and contesting different cultural forms. These are the Dance of the Inca in the 1900s that addressed Indian/white relations, and carnival where relations between mestizo and white were played out for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>279</sup>.

Another feature of the contemporarily street theatre activities may be the ethnic or cultural self-conciseness. The summer street theatre performances on each first Saturday in Puerto Rico entitled 'Celebrations, Legends, Other Business, and Recollections from the Past' are supported by the city council to recover the historical awareness among its youngest inhabitants. Rapid fire-pace across the Old Town leads the viewers together with a narrator or culture interpreter along the street to another square. There was a slave market and struggle between slavers and abolitionists performed, followed by the African-influenced Catholic ceremony, newspaper boys, the old secret language of Abanico which used to enable boys and girls talking to each other under the strict social conditions, etc.<sup>280</sup>

Nithya Balaji and her public health colleagues founded an NGO called Nalamdana, which brings information about public health to the urban slums and rural communities in India (2005) through street theatre and other educational outreach programs. The same method was developed through social theatre in Bangladesh. LOSAUK organization uses theatre as its main tool--theatre that is both socially responsible and entertaining. People listen to the actors, enjoy their performances, and in the process learn what can be done to improve their own lives. LOSAUK trained a cultural team to perform in the open-air. The first type of program was a research-based program that entertained the audience but was not participatory. LOSAUK gradually changed its method, developing a network with local community based organizations and the local cultural organizations. LOSAUK conducted a good number of workshops and street theatre performances for them<sup>281</sup>.

Also, in Pakistani Punjab there appeared the special type of street theatre during the era of General Zia-ul-Haque's Martial Law regime in 1979-1989 focusing on the woman issues<sup>282</sup>. Nature of the relationship between the Pakistani 'Islamic' state and society; State's coercive relationship with its female citizenry; National versus ethnic identity; Gendered politics.

Sue Harris underlines the success of the Aurillac Festival of Street in France in 2004. She noticed it was the real reflection on the changing status of alternative dramatic practices in the country. It facilitates the growth of street theatre into a major showcase for popular experimental performance, applying the concepts of spontaneity, community participation and exploitation of urban spaces<sup>283</sup>.

<sup>279</sup> Wilson, Fiona, Indians and Mestizos: *Identity and Urban Popular Culture in Andean Peru*. Journal of Southern African Studies; Jun2000, Vol. 26 Issue 2, p. 239-253, 15p.

<sup>280</sup> Murphy-Larronde, Suzanne, *San Juan Takes to the Streets*, Americas, January-February 2003, Vol. 55, Issue 1, p3.

<sup>281</sup> Ahsan, Nazmul, *Social Theatre in Bangladesh*, TDR, The Drama Review; Fall 2004, Vol. 48, Issue 3, p. 50-58.

<sup>282</sup> Azfal-Khan, Fawzia, *Street Theater in Pakistani Punjab*, TDR, The Drama Review; Fall 1997, Vol. 41, Issue 3, p. 39.

<sup>283</sup> Harris, Sue1, *Dancing in the Streets: The Aurillac Festival of Street Theatre*. Contemporary Theatre Review; 2004, Vol. 14, Issue 2, p. 57-71.

On the other hand it was/is easy for business companies to hire a group of actors to perform street theatre like JWT did at the National Beer Wholesalers Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada to revitalize the image of the company in October 2005.

## 6. Living closer to street – living closer to European citizenship

Looking at the EU area and its single countries we are aware of comparing different territories, climatic conditions, cultures, different speed of economic developments, organizations, all kinds of attitudes etc. Within last 15 years, however, the political, economical and social changes in newly EU incorporated countries are enormous including cultural integration and sharing. Both "europeanization" and globalization processes are being woven together. They sometimes combine rediscovered European elements which were abandoned and suppressed during the communist totalitarian regimes, and non-European traditional and contemporary elements which are new to all the EU countries. On the contrary, the **art is** a phenomenon, which is much more socially and valuably **stable** than other features of a society and its culture. Art can be found everywhere. It may have many levels of artistic value and could be understood and shared across the ethnicities, language, behavior and other barriers. Especially arts that are independent on spoken or written language, such as sculptures, paintings, instrumental music, dance, ballet, cartoons, happenings, circus and combined forms of street theatre. There is one important and approved principle derived from the historical sociology and art-history throughout the centuries: There is no direct and linear ratio between the artistic creation and the wealth of a given community, noble estates, religious entity, knighthood, kingdom, urban and semi-urban areas, towns, cities and countries. The top valued and generations-addressing art was often born in miserable social and/or materialistic conditions. Grotowski intentionally looked for such conditions within his *Poor Theatre*. See the unavoidable conditions of Russian (non-conform) artists before 1990 and economically paralyzed theatre in Russia after 1990. The other thing is, that the possible reward and better social status always attracted and pushed talented artists to look for culture centers, foreign countries, patrons, employing institutions, artistic commissions and well paid positions – shortly for urban areas. Such a support later on enabled artists to employ all their talents and creativity in order to reach higher artistic and social appreciation, to win their public and to influence their followers. The bad side of this social ladder climbing is the misuse of advertisement and business.

From these characteristics it is obvious that (1) generally the art itself is enough flexible and enough communicative to become a regular **tool** for linking cultures and different nations in the frame of EU (which is happening daily in Europe anyway). Even more, (2) the art which **does not need spoken or written language** and which is '**closer to street**' has almost no limits in addressing foreign (European) public, and foreigners can easily address the local inhabitants. Among those (3) the street art forms have ambitions to become the **universal and unlimited speakers** of different national cultures and of the united Europe at the same time. The main topics, themes and civilization guidelines are the same or very similar as the result of the common history, existence and experience in Europe such as: contacts with the Roman Empire, ancient Greek inherited culture, "barbaric origin", Christianity, Latin as the universal language, united in crusades, wars, reformation, overseas discoveries and trade, crafts, money, arts, print, politics etc.

We see in the history of Gypsies how their music and dance were never connected to a special place and how this space-non-determined art survived for say eight centuries. They carried their space along. The theatrical space is one of the 20 features of any theatre as stated by D. J.

Hopkins in 'Mapping the Placeless Place: Pedestrian Performance in the Urban Spaces of Los Angeles'<sup>284</sup>. Street theatre carries its stage along as well.

In the post modern and globalized world the street theatre might best create, reflect and share the new European identity and, at the same time can keep the national culture idioms and traditional elements in it. The street theatre language, mode and practices, for centuries approved, have ambitions to be all in one, the paramount art, the commonly understandable background culture, creative attitude and education for the widest social spectrum with open and promising chances for the European future. The "two Angels" are always present tightening the string between creativity and criticism. That's why the street theatre remains dynamic and can initiate, shape and heal new community, social, national and political conflicts and European processes. Street arts help to create, maintain and participate in the European citizenship and this heritage is rich, diverse and need to be valorized and protected. That is why it should be supported in the interest of each individual, each family, community, institutions, each EU country and the European Union as the whole.

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<sup>284</sup> Hopkins, D.J., *Mapping the Placeless Place: Pedestrian Performance in the Urban Spaces of Los Angeles*, Modern Drama, Summer 2003, Vol. 46, Issue 2, p. 261-284.

## NOTE 1

A new evaluation and guidelines were done at the *European Meeting of Fringe Theatre Groups* in St. Pölten, Austria in June 2005. Dragan Klaic divided European theatre situation into four groups as it is shown in the table. Even though he does not mention 'street theatre' separately, it is obvious that it belongs to the 3<sup>rd</sup> column together with Experimental theatre. Comparing other columns we see clearly how promising characteristics the Experimental/Street theatre has. It has its own inner power "(...) to reaffirm theatre as a public space and public service, as a viable platform for expression and development of creativity, valuable for local, regional, national, European and global citizenship, as a challenge to the collective memory and collective imagination"<sup>285</sup>.

<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Repertory</b>	<b>Experimental/Street</b>	<b>Amateur</b>
for profit star driven entertainment producer rules	non profit ensemble <b>art. excellence</b> director rules	<b>precarious</b> vision experiment visionary/ guru	altruistic community based imitative collective creation
New York B'way London West End & similar spots, prospering despite high cost & risks	Survived 1968 crisis and the end of Cold War. Future?	Fo, Grotowski, Brook, Mnouchkine, Barba, Fabre ...	1960-70s: student stage, early inter- national contacts
Part of cultural industry. Spin-offs through digital media. Aggressive marketing, replicated globally.	Routine prevails, rising costs, loss of profile, graying audience. <b>Planning matters more than artistic outcome</b>	Multiplication, developed own infrastructure. International collaboration networks, festivals.	Crisis, became superfluous by the explosive growth of the cultural industry

The participants established the **European Off Network** emphasizing the networking practices with following objectives.

- Engaged cultural policies and content related esthetical network of performing artists;
- Strengthening the national and international visibility of fringe theatre and its discourses;
- Forming of an international political lobby for independent performing art with alignment on Brussels and on national governments.

The Documentation project was set and 17 participating countries presented their own situation review in this field followed by all kinds of international performances.

<sup>285</sup> Dragan Klaic, Contradictions and Chances of Theater Systems in Europe, 2005, <http://www.freietheater.at/material/thema106euoff.pdf>

## Street/fringe theatre in Europe against subsidy ones<sup>286</sup>

### *Austria*

About 300 independent theatre and dance groups in Austria improved after 1989 having been supported from The Austrian Association of Independent Theatre. The late eighties and the nineties have been a time, when some fringe groups could start their own venue. But artists who produced enthusiastically for 10, 15 or more years are now confronted with inadequate social security: the precariousness of work. In Austria fringe groups have small opportunities to tour. Fringe venues that show as well performing art often have not enough budget and political backup to dare programming that is not event and does not satisfy spectator-quota. Many productions are on stage for very short periods. Fringe groups in the field of children theatre already built their own little touring systems at schools and other venues. They show mobility in a very high degree, supplying children of even smallest villages with qualitative art.

The budget situation of Fringe Theatre differs a lot in Austria, depending in which of the nine federal states of Austria and for how long an artist is working.

Fringe groups only have access to federal subsidies. In 2003 the Republic of Austria put 24,8% of its whole budget for art into the sectors music theatre, theatre and dance. 77.3% (134 million Euros) of these funds went to the Bundestheater-Holding (Burgtheater, Vienna State Operahouse, Volksoper Vienna). Most artists went to work in Vienna – some do productions in Carinthia in summertime.

In Niederösterreich (Lower Austria cultural policy seems focused on events, summer theatre and festivals which gives the street theatres a chance to benefit from this strategy.

In Oberösterreich (Upper Austria) one independent group – theatre Phönix – has achieved the transformation into a substantially funded theatre. Salzburg provides for fringe theatre an annual budget of 264.560 Million Euros. In Steiermark (Styria) exists a regional association of independent artists „Das Andere Theater“. It could achieve a monthly poster with production-dates. Graz and Steiermark (European Capital of Culture 2003) has about 27 fringes groups. Tirol is probably the country with most amateur theatre groups in Austria. Vorarlberg has about 15 independent performing groups with a very wide spectrum. Wien (Vienna) as city and federal country of Austria is the most generous supporter of fringe performing art in Austria (10% of the whole budget). The general intention of ongoing reform is to fund less independent artists with higher grants to produce „higher quality“ performances.

There are available:

1. Production-grants with a total budget of 4 million Euro including inter- and multicultural theatre and productions for children and the youth;
2. Concept-grants: 14 fringe groups are funded.

<sup>286</sup> Situation of Fringe Theatre in Europe - Country Reports. Abbreviated reports by Barbara Stüwe-Eßl, Petar Todorov, Nebojša Borojević, Bohumil Nekolny & Ondrej Cerny, Tomáš Žižka, Jochen Brockstedt and Rolf Dennemann, Nickolas Kamtsis, János Regős, Angelica Zanardi, Jeton Neziraj, Agnieszka Kochanowska, Victor Scoradet, Jadranka Andjelic, Anna Gruskova, Simona Semenic, Lena Gustavson, Hans Läubli and Jost Nyffeler, Sean Aita <http://www.freitheater.at/material/laenderbe405.pdf>

Fringe theatre still means having a big amount of artistic independence – the main reason for a lot of artists to explicitly work in this field.

### ***Bulgaria***

18 years after the so called ‘soft revolutions’ in former Soviet block, the Bulgarian theatre scene still suffers from the ‘fear of freedom’ syndrome. After 1989, when the ideological control on the arts field suddenly disappeared and the artists did not have to hide their political and aesthetical preferences any more, the feeling of freedom quickly lost its excitement and most of the artists, respectful part of Bulgarian society, were blocked and helpless. Unfortunately Bulgarian theatre scene kept the socialist concept with new people which secured to the employed artists minimal wages but almost killed any kind of constructive ideas.

It still blocks broader development of a fringe scene as well as the independent initiatives in the field. Basically there is no market for fringe theatre productions – no accepting venues, no touring agencies and no independent production houses - and there is basically almost no money in Bulgaria to produce such projects. This is the big chance for street theatres from abroad!

The few municipality theatres in the country are run under exactly the same model as the state theatres. The fringe/independent/street companies do not have a direct access to state funds for maintenance and administrative costs. They can only apply for very limited money just for particular projects.

The few Bulgarian independent groups in the last 15 years were used to get support mainly from SOROS Center for the Arts – Sofia (which stopped the program in Bulgaria in 2001) and a little bit from Swiss cultural program in Bulgaria (Pro Helvetia) which is still running an office in Sofia. Even the fringe theatres are pushed to do very commercial low budget projects, or to co-operate with partners from abroad and to do international co-productions. In general the fringe companies in the field of drama and puppet theatre are very commercially orientated and they do small low budget touring productions (companies like Perpetuum Mobile, Ariel, Tzveti etc). A phenomenon is the drama theatre company La Strada, the only one of that kind which managed to create so far high quality projects, with a cooperation of a few state theatres in Sofia.

The most interesting artistic work comes from fringe companies in the field of physical theatre and dance. There are a few companies which cooperate mainly with partners from abroad and they tour outside the country (New Forms Theatre, Kontrapunkt, Den Gri X Foundation, Arepo Group etc).

Bulgarian theatre and dance scene still needs a radical reform which can facilitate the street theatres. They expect help from EU after entering of Bulgaria in the Union in 2007. At least this is the dream of the independent artists.

### ***Croatia***

Croatian fringe theatre scene appeared mainly in the 1970s. Leadership of the organized Croatian amateur theatres in cooperation with prominent theatre critics stimulates and encourages unique and original artistic theatre companies as opposed to imitative dilettante theatre groups (BRAMS, the leading alternative theatre festival in former Yugoslavia in the eighties. Those theatres make a core off today's Croatian alternative theatre (Lero, Dubrovnik;

Daska, Sisak; Pinklec, Čakovec; Inat, Pula; and from Zagreb Kugla glumište - today Damir Bartol Indoš), while noninstitutional professional theatre groups and theatres represent another wing (Theatre Exit, Mala scena, Kufer, Bad co, Montažstroj – Zagreb; Traffic, HKD teatar – Rijeka etc.) International Festival of Students Theatres (*Kazališta*) IFSK in Zagreb in the 1960s was precursor of festivals such as Eurokaz in Zagreb, MAK, SOS in Sisak, Male scene in Rijeka, PUF in Pula, where both, Croatian and international fringe theatres, perform. Theatre magazines Frakcija, Kazalište, Zarez, Vijenac very often presents Croatian fringe theatres. The main event in the last 10 years for the Croatian fringe theatre is PUF Festival (Pula Art /Umjetnički Festival) in Pula.

During wartime, when a large part of Croatia was occupied, while Dubrovnik and Sisak suffered the direct war threats, the founders of the festival decided to locate this theatre manifestation in Pula, which was spared from the direct war devastation. They represent Croatia on incomparably more international festivals than any other Croatian theatre institution.

### ***Czech Republic***

In the 1990s the state monopoly on running theatres came to an end and most theatres were transferred to the control of local councils (44 ensembles); private production management began mainly in the sphere of musicals and dozens of theatre and dance companies were formed as independent nongovernmental organizations. Czech theatre has a multifaceted theatrical network in which, thanks to tradition, there is a predominance of classical repertoire theatres with a permanent ensemble. There is also tradition of professional support for the puppet theatre. Several festivals are held annually: International Festival Divadlo/Theatre in Pilsen, the Festival of European Regions in Hradec Kralove, Four Days in Motion, Theatrum Kuks, the International Frontier Theatre Festival in Cesky Tesin, Fringe Festival Prague. Amateur theatre activity, which in the Czech lands has a fertile, multi-faceted and active tradition, is also supported from public funds. The Czech law dictates that any legal resident or physically able person may manage/operate a theatre company. The basic difference between public and private theatre companies lies in access to public resources. Whereas State and municipal theatres have this access guaranteed by law, the remaining private subjects do not. Since the first half of the 1990s the Ministry of Culture created a grant system designated to support civic associations (non-profit organizations). This development made it possible for a varied range of unofficial theatre activities, experimental work, festivals and workshops of smaller and newly founded companies in a wide spectrum of genres and kinds to receive grants and other financial support. Sources of funding in the Czech Republic other than public are extremely limited. During the period of transformation important assistance has been provided by foreign foundations and institutions. There is no large and wealthy private cultural foundation or clearly conceived donor activity.

There are professional theatres with permanent companies in twenty-two cities and towns. In a number of places there are professional theatres of various types (e.g. drama theatre and puppet theatre). In the 1990s, with the liberalisation of the cultural environment, a number of smaller companies and groups renovated some small spaces as studio theatres, theatre clubs and small stages, but in small percentage. They frequently used non-theatrical spaces as first pioneers (halls, amphitheatres, historical monuments, public spaces) for their projects. In this sense, the Czech theatre really did experience a boom.

Undeveloped civic society constantly struggles with economic and social-cultural losses and problems. Competent institutions are not solving the issue of the third sector which is crucial for



civic society. Mamapapa Association (2005) is developing a strategy for its own activities to find the solutions for these problems and improve conditions for the realization of the projects. Main activities in this period - symposiums, seminars, workshops and unique artistic events - had focus on education, open communication, reviving and spreading out different models and examples that were already being proved to be good, cultivation of mutual respect between non profit and commercial sectors - as well as the state authorities noticing such events and supporting them.

In the moment, mamapapa is continuing with the development of the LightLab project - an open interdisciplinary platform and mobile technological studio for the creation of a theatrical miracle.

### ***Finland***

The Street Theatre Project aims at developing Finnish Street Theatre in the region of Satakunta, on the southwest coast of Finland. The members of the Street Theatre Project are amateur theatre companies led by professionals. The Project will facilitate the exchange of ideas and know-how transfer. The aim is to create career opportunities for the young professionals in the field of theatre. The aim of the transnational cooperation between Finland and Spain is to develop creativity and intercultural dialogue, to give a broader knowledge of history, folklore and culture in all its forms and take advantage of the cultural heritage in both countries. Combining skills from the Spanish and Finnish disciplines in Theatre, Street Theatre, Multidisciplinary/performance art, Mime, etc. will produce artistic innovations in the field of street theatre. The workshops will encourage cross-border artistic exchange and collaboration. The focus of cooperation is on the professionals working in the cultural sector, particularly in the theatre. Workshops are also designed to encourage students to train for culture-related careers. Participation of students will contribute to improving the communication between students and professionals, thus promoting innovation in education. Furthermore, workshops will encourage people of all ages to use performing arts as a gateway to active involvement in cultural life. The aim of the workshops is to produce and exchange ideas, methods and cultural knowledge of Street Theatre. The cultural features of both countries will be shown in the future performances. The performances will tour in Finland and Spain. The Street Theatre Project will provide the participants with opportunities for networking with local partners in the fields of performing arts, education, tourism, business, etc. The company **Ulp** is an Amateur Dramatic Society founded in 1993 and has around 220 members of all ages and levels of experience. Ulp has a core creative team that steers the group to a professional standard. Ulp produces 4–6 productions each year directed by professionals. Ulp often attends theatre festivals, in which they have had a great deal of success over the years. Ulp aims at stimulating young people's passion for theatre by providing them with the widest possible range of theatre experience.

The company **Leikkiteatteri-yhdistys** is a network for a wide range of cultural organizations for the young. The group leaders of the Leikkiteatteriyhdistys have participated in the creation of this concept of combining drama, theatre and crafts providing young people of different age groups with theatre skills. That's how experience of performing or creating things by hand will be available for a wide group. The program includes workshops, interactive performances, theatre camps and after-school programs. The activities are led by professionals in the cultural and educational sector.

**Porin Teatterinuoret** is a leading non-professional theatre society for young people in Finland. All the drama teachers and the directors of the Porin Teatterinuoret are professionals in theatre

or in some other field of culture. It has over 300 members. Around 200 people between 9 and 29 take weekly part in workshops and other activities, where they can learn a whole range of drama and other theatre skills. The company produces approximately 10 plays each year.

**The Regional Arts Council of Satakunta** promotes international activities in the cultural sector in the region of Satakunta. **The Regional Artist in Theatre is closely involved in the planning of the Street Theatre Project.** This ensures the best expertise in networking and resourcing.

### *Germany*

From one-person-theatre to multitudinous ensembles, whether they have their own stage or not; the Independent theatres are at home in all genres, whether puppetry-theatre or dance, and they play for all types of audience - for children or adults; often, they cross the borders of the different arts, sometimes they offer pure language theatre. Increasingly, they do no longer work in established ensembles, but in production companies, where professionals come together for one project, often at stages and venues such as Kampnagel in Hamburg or Sophiensäle in Berlin, which function as production venues and not as a form of municipal theatre with its own ensemble.

The war between independent and established theatres from the 1970s is over. The number of co-operations and of professional producers and actors who change between both forms increased blurring the boundaries. A lot of municipal and state theatres work experimentally; a lot of independent theatres work conventionally, either still or again. Some independent theatres can function better on the basis of experimental work; some municipal or state theatres function better on conventional work. Sometimes, however, the reverse is the case. **Measured on the demand of the audience, every form is justified, no matter who does what.** Various forms of aesthetic ideals and types of work approach can be found in independent and established theatres. The one thing to ascertain is that in both forms, we find a **wide base and a small quality top.**

And, if there is a hideaway of theatre avant-garde, then **this avant-garde can be found in the small top quality of the independent theatres.** Intransigent, though, are the structures of both systems positioned towards each other. On the one side, the so-called independent one, people work project-related, without security or reliability concerning social or planning matters, the **money available is invested to its best part into the artistic work.** Artists work free-lance or self-employed and enjoy no financial security between projects. On the other side, **the established one, the best part of funds is invested into running an enterprise** which has huge difficulties to raise money for the actual production of plays, much to the chagrin of the artists engaged there. In Germany, all independent theatres taken together, an estimated number of more than 2000 groups, have a budget of approx. 30 million Euros, whereas the state and federal theatres – about 200 – have a budget of approx. 2,000 million Euros.

The Bundes Verband Freier Theater appeals to the local governments to offer abandoned spaces for theatre performances for free<sup>287</sup>.

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<sup>287</sup> [www.freie-theater.de](http://www.freie-theater.de)

## *Greece*

There are 2 kinds of private theatres in Greece: (1) commercial Theatres that belong to big managers who promote firms and stars; (2) **non-profit Repertoire Theatres**. Some of these are supported by the Government. The second category theatres are the most dynamic part of Greek theatre. Small, medium or large theatre groups create with inspiration and vision and present many performances **in various spaces**. Leaving apart National Theatres in Athens, Thessalonica and 16 municipality theatres all over Greece there are about 150 theatres in Athens which centralizes 90% of the theatre movement-production in Greece. In the other cities of Greece there are about 50 more. **Most of the theatre spaces were not designed from the beginning to function as theatres**. Very few were built and designed or transformed to be a theatre. These few are large theatre buildings that belong to foundations or to the Church, and present well known names and Stars.

The rest of the theatre spaces are old warehouses, large neo-classical buildings, old movie theatres, **old factory spaces or even basements and garages** that were transformed more or less into theatre spaces. **And this is what is most interesting**. Furthermore, it is also very interesting and “healthy” to think about what one will do and what the mind of theatre people will invent in order to find a space that will host their dreams, sensitivity and imagination.

Naturally, to the gaiety and desire of the people of the theatre comes to answer the misery and “un-generosity” (financial and ethical) of the organized Greek State. Politicians that do not respect or appreciate art in general, do not understand and underestimate theatre.

In the last 40 years, no government has had any kind of cultural policy. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Culture supports financially only about 50 private, non-profit, theatres where the debts are also very high. This happens because another **paradox** exists in the theatre area. While creation blooms and develops in so many performances and theatres (a unique phenomenon in Europe) **the audience diminishes**. There is again a gap which can be filled up with much cheaper street theatre programs.

## *Hungary*

The Association of Hungarian Alternative and Independent Theatre (AHAIT) was founded in 1994 by ten groups. It could really give a help for these groups to get out of the **'amateur' ghetto** that always brought a pejorative connotation in the Hungarian professional theatre life. Soros Foundation had been the first and only supporter of them beforehand, Culture Ministry came later with grants.

Since spring 2003 the General Assembly of AHAIT has been emphasizing progressivity, innovation, independent creation and, ultimately, a profound change in Hungarian Theatre Regime. Our conviction is that after having integrated into the European Community it is untenable the outdated Hungarian theatre structure which **spend about 10 million Euros on the mainstream state supported theatres**, while the whole range of alternatives gets about 500 million HUF (€ 200 000). We all do believe that the pawn of multicoloured theatre lies in the personal and unique relation. The biggest problem of the operation of alternative and independent theatres is that, in spite of the foreign examples, we do not attach importance to the **institutionalisation** of this type of theatres. In fact the case is right the contrary. Even if it is true that these institutions look like they would resist to any institutionalization being much more mobile than the traditional theatres. Mobility here means personal theatre thinking, sensibility for

unique process of creation where the training, the experimentation, is an organic and natural part of the creation. Our conviction is that the cultural market of EU is made to move by these decentralized, small institutions holding the right of sovereign decision making, owning fiscal strength to buy and sell productions that can contribute to the renewal of theatre art. Most of the Hungarian fringe groups **work among catastrophic infrastructural conditions. Protection of common interests, lobby work, promoting changes of theatre structure.**

The Hungarian theatre world is **much more permeable** today than ten years ago. There are no rigid barricades between the 'stone theatres', the alternative and amateur theatres. But the non-state maintained field of Hungarian theatre gets around 1% of the whole expenditure on theatres. In Hungary there is no relevant private sponsorship that would show serious interest in supporting our community. So we can only count on those funds that the state offers: the category of "Prominent Companies" and the rest (145 million) was spent on the others living on a day-by-day base like beggars. The representative festival of AHAIT in Budapest SZASZSZ is based on pre-selected participation and spread out all over the city.

The Kolibri International Festival of Street Puppeteers in Budapest presents puppetry, youth theatre, concerts, exhibitions and many-day non-stop family theatre program right in front of the theatre building on Jókai square for the past fourteen years. Generation differences (conflicts) dissolve at such times. While the bigger children are watching performances, mothers with prams can freely move about with the smaller ones between the playground and the seats. Their integration is all the more easier because the adults who come to a performance with children are emotionally motivated to worriedly see how the performance affects the children and if they are satisfied, they themselves also relax and accept the collectiveness in becoming an equal member of the audience and an integral part of the performance.

Another street theatre production is offered by the Iron Rooster International Puppet Festival in Győr and International Street Theatre Festival in Nyírbátor.

### *Italy*

At the end of the century a new theatrical generation emerged. The protagonists of this new wave are theatrical companies born and grown far away from the normal theatrical network, and often also from the theatres: it is easier to see the shows produced by these young people and also younger people in places of aggregation like social centres and discotheques and it is easier that they work in disuse and isolated shacks in sheds. They use a theatrical language that, as all theatrical avant-gardes assert, put on the same place all the elements that share to the theatrical event (therefore they don't use only the word, sometimes announced, but also the body, the music and the sound and the scene). The contaminations between the theatre and the other arts, and other aspects of the truth are preferred. This new levy developed by auto-pedagogy, often explicitly declared. Scenic engines of amazing and fascinating complexity are often able to establish a relation with the public. Therefore the actor has to reform its role. These companies investigate about the reasons and the modalities of the non performable of the real and don't search anymore an automatic tuning with the sensibility of the spectator; indeed the scandal, the provocation becomes an indispensable ingredient in order to hook, amaze, upset; even if it happens within a mechanism of rules, **spaces**, most rigid semiotic flows, where there isn't space for the distraction or the reverie of the observer. The conditions of the communication - as says McLuhan - become the same object of the communication. Beside this trend originated in the nineties, is it possible to identify in the last years a new way to make theatre. This is characterized both by a direct communication and **an extreme simplification of the scenic**

**installation.** These performances, which can be included in the definition of “narrative theatre”, are sustainable only due to the presence of only a few or one actor.

An independent theatre not linked to political power and financed by privates does not exist in Italy. The Italian theatrical system is in fact based nearly exclusively from the always more insufficient fund municipal, provincial, regional and government. However the access to these funds is possible only when other official institution recognizes the companies. Therefore after a long period of touring, the wish to find a stable place in which continuing their own artistic search is prevalent. This aspiration also diffused in Italy **during the Italian Renaissance.**

In Italy exists a line of demarcation between the theatrical experiences of the centre-north and those of the south, where it is even more difficult for the companies to reach a system of stability. The funds to the category of theatre, for the year 2002, were equivalent to 24 % of the total, and were split in 12 different categories where **street theatre was in the end of the support.**

To summarize, in Italy the “independent” companies are forced to face, with enormous efforts and risky economical investments, the long and difficult bureaucratic procedure, that only in some cases bears artistic acknowledgement and financial support.

The commedia dell’arte is the living tradition in Italy able to perform everywhere as on-man show or group creations. There is a profound scholarly background and interests behind, too. The small events like one night action the Notti bianchi in Abbiate Grasso are followed by large festivals in Mantova with water performances. The Sbandieratori is the flagwaver group, founded in 1976 by a group of young men who wanted to reintroduce the medieval Italian art of flagwaving. Studying from original documents dating from the 16th century, they created a choreography that is true to the tradition of the ancient “Gens Corana”. The result is a spectacular show of whirling and swirling, tossing and exchanging of flags, which is both aesthetically beautiful and an impressive demonstration of skill.

### ***Kosovo***

The first independent theatres in Kosovo were established only in the beginning of the 1990s after Yugoslavia began to disintegrate. Those were times when almost all cultural institutions, including theatres, were closed by the Serbian regime. Two or three theatres that were established then carried out their activity in places like coffee shops, away from police attention. This was a kind of **political theatre** with shows referring to violence and oppression, the Milosevic’s regime was applying on Albanians. The aesthetics was not the primary concern of the ones involved and they worked mainly with no budget at all on volunteer basis. After the war, there was a certain euphoria in creating and establishing independent theatres, though the majority of them did not manage to function and to survive. This lack of independent theatres is due to mainly two reasons: lack of institutional state support and **lack of tradition** and especially lack of management skills. In this time, there is no support for independent theatres. However, actual developments speak of hope in the field of theatre, with more independent theatres to be established and more qualitative shows to be seen. Street theatre might be the solution.

## *Poland*

After the political changes in 1989 which brought the abolition of censorship the alternative theatre became independent theatre, which basically meant without the financial protection of the government. This status is a basis of the structure and specific character of the independent theatre in Poland. Nowadays there is a whole range of theatre productions, which are called independent:

Performances of amateur theatre groups, student theatre, which is developing very well at the moment and which organizes a lot of festivals – the most important in Gdańsk, Olsztyn, Kraków and Częstochowa, experienced artists evolving from amateur theatre. Some of them, as for example the director of Sopot Fringe Theatre Centre, Ewa Ignaczak, were given their own place to work. This kind of institutions is financially supported mainly by city authorities.

**Street theatres – most of street performances are prepared by theatres which also work on stage.** Some of them have achieved international success, as Dreams Theatre from Gdańsk or Biuro Podróży Village theatres, independent theatre, etc. Although the tradition of independent theatre in Poland is very strong, drawing its inspiration from the work of Jerzy Grotowski and the social centered performances of Eight Day Theatre from Poznań, there is always a struggle of how to survive working in fringe theatre. Most of them became centers for fringe theatre providing opportunities for education, participating in interesting projects on the borderland of theatre, organizing important festivals. They learned from their cultural history that **limitations inspire development.**

## *Romania*

In the late nineties, it was almost fashionable for graduates of theatre academies to found a cultural foundation whose aim was the administration of an independent theatre. This might have helped Romania to look good – at least statistically: there were a lot of free theatres registered, but hardly one to really exist and function. And that one was called, for instance, Teatrul Inexistent – The Nonexisting Theatre. This fringe group, initiated and led by Theodora Herghelegiu, has produced in the meantime more than twenty plays, many of them very successful. On the one hand, the subsidized theatres presented no major differences compared to the repertoires before 1899. Now, there are about 150 graduates a year, in a country with less than sixty subsidized theatres.

So, young, daring, aggressive performances about real life from nowadays were introduced by those few independent groups, who managed to make their way through a hostile territory (at least from the legislative and financial point of view). Although, for years, they were treated with condescendence or even hostility by the critics.

In Bucharest, for instance, there are only two independent theatres with their own house: ACT, located in a basement, and ARCA, located in an attic. This is why more and more **cafes, bars and clubs are hosting or even producing theatrical performances.**

## *Serbia*

The tradition of performing arts in Serbia, like in the whole former Yugoslavia, was mainly formed, developed and supported by the State, until the 1990s. Independent initiatives started in the 1980s, ad-hoc groups were formed (gathering artists on a project-by-project basis) and it was

these groups who began to challenge the political and cultural system. During Milosevics time in Serbia, in the 1990s, institutional theatres lost much of their financial support due to the general economic crises. At the same time, they were pressured to serve to the regime through the creation of false picture of reality and the ongoing war - mostly by presenting low level “entertainment” theatre. Meanwhile, in contrast to that situation, independent professional theatre companies began to appear representing freedom of thoughts and cultural opposition to the regime with strong anti-war activities. Dah Theatre Research Centre was the first, formed in 1991 and throughout the mid of the 90ies other companies followed. Since 2000 and since the democratic changes occurred in Serbia, state bodies have begun to finance independent performing arts companies (although in limited amounts) for the first time in our modern history. The need for exchange between old-fashion state and independent companies has developed. New life is all predominantly happening in the frame of independent, non-governmental organizations that shows vitality and rich source of creative energy.

All independent companies today are formally associations of citizens, registered under Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

They face the strong resistance from the old bureaucratic system. **The city councils today represents the only safe source of support for independent theatre organizations in Serbia** Lack of stability threatens to destroy and stop the process that brought many good results.

### *Slovakia*

There are about 23 “independent” theatre groups in the country which means, as declared there, that they work on the basis of civic associations (NGO). Among them one could find commercial groups, small one/two-persons puppet theatre groups, community theatre working with mentally handicapped people and maybe four or five professional groups that can be labeled as alternative or experimental theatre. Amateur fringe theatre or “freies Theater” groups are not included.

It is well known that in former socialist countries theatre used to have an exceptional status. Theatre professionals, especially actors, played a remarkable role not only in theatres controlled by the communist regime, but also supplied a lacking elite. After the changes, theatre professionals very naturally - but shortly - slipped into the new political life.

Four years ago, the last of the great symbols of the theatre-politics connection, Václav Havel, left his position of the highest political authority in the Czech Republic (former Czechoslovakia). The golden theatre time is over. The ideological support is over. Theatre can count on itself only.

After 18 years, theatre in Slovakia is divided into still in socialist times living, by state and local authorities supported theatre ensembles, and in so called **independent theatres which try to be dependent, because their existence is (with some exceptions) in permanent danger**. Due to lacking legislative and financial support, it is almost impossible to establish a fringe theatre group and run it for a longer time. Slovak theatre productions are very rarely invited to international theatre festivals, talented theatre people run away, mostly to Czech republic (by the way, a problem that concerns Slovak science as well).

Of course, it is necessary to confess the “theatres” fault as well. Especially in Slovakia, the **19<sup>th</sup> century bourgeois so-called repertory** theatre is still being promoted as a dominant theatre model. “Bourgeois” form of theatre, of course, has been losing contact with a “healthy”

audience. In schools, asylums, hospitals, refugee camps... On the fringe, the periphery of society. It means to strengthen the social dimension of theatre. It means to show people that theatre could be present in their everyday life. Pointing to the street theatre practices, aesthetics and audience.

### ***Slovenia***

Unfortunately, financial dependence on the Ministry and City councils results in managerial and consequently artistic dependence of theatres. There are two ways of financing – program financing and project financing. Self-employed artists have to pay higher taxes, which results in greater financial need of independent organizations, or on the other hand in greater financial need of self-employed artists. In Slovenia independent institutions practically cannot exist without public institutions. **The biggest problem lies in space facilities.** In Ljubljana, for example, there are only three small and badly equipped independent theatre venues. Pejoratively speaking about institutionalization I refer to the lack of artistic freedom, lack of liability for new praxis, lack of inclination to experiment, lack of responsibility to artistic innovation, lack of interest in interdisciplinary approaches, lack of consideration for diversity of audience, lack of consideration for diversity of aesthetics etc.

Independent organizations apply for Culture 2000 funds not because of concept but because of existential issue of survival. Nevertheless, **the impact of the international support** affects the financial, artistic and of course organizational sphere of independent organizations.

The Slovenian independent institutions present their work worldwide, meanwhile the public cultural institutions present their work mostly nationally and in the states of former Yugoslavia.

### ***Sweden***

Fringe theatres are situated **in most parts of Sweden**, with a high variety in genre, artistic design, continuity, personnel and constitutions. However, a majority are to be found within the area of the three largest cities of Sweden: Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. The independent theatre companies in Sweden may receive subsidies from three main sources: the Swedish National Council for Culture, the County Council and the Local Council. However these subsidies are far from sufficient to properly support the companies.

Only 4% (5,7 million euros) of the government's total subsidy for theatres in Sweden were sent to fringe theatres in 2003 performing for 18% of the total audience reported in 2003. Thanks to creative ways of making an income many companies succeed in being self sufficient up to 50%.

**The 2001 investigation showed that the independent theatres are financed far below reasonable proportions to what they are presenting to the public.**

### ***Switzerland***

There is no a fringe theatre scene in Switzerland: there are about 10 different fringe scenes. First of all we have very **big differences between the French, Italian and German speaking parts of Switzerland.** They more or less work separately. In the last decade more and more actors and directors **switched from the fringe scene to the institutional theatre and vice versa.** There is no strict borderline any more. The Swiss fringe theatre developed a great diversity in the eighties and early nineties. **A lot of groups existed as a counter part to the highly subsidized**



**municipal theatres.** The New Capitalism of the nineties made the fringe theatre tending to become a scene of individuals who worked in different groups and projects.

The fringe theatre scenes are located in the bigger cities of Switzerland where there are theatres, or rooms to be discovered and a certain public support. There are special fringe theatres for touring groups. There is a high pressure everywhere. The municipal theatres diminished their ensembles out of the need to save money. Actors with a long experience in the institutional theatre and young ones tend to switch to the fringe scene. The identity of the fringe scene has become scattered because the municipal theatres took over a lot of things which were first initiated by the fringe theatre: opening new rooms, **discovering alternative places like old factories, projects integrating other art forms, getting closer to the audience, introducing new, provocative plays, projects and playwrights.**

The possibilities for fringe theatre groups to tour have increased in the last years. Zürich as the economic center of Switzerland has the biggest alternative theatre scene. The struggle to survive is hard.

### ***United Kingdom***

In the UK overall responsibility for Arts and Culture rests with the governmental DCMS (Department for culture, media and sport). The national Arts Councils are responsible for providing funds for the large state theatres and for the Independent sector, and although a high proportion of funding is taken up in supporting an infrastructure of regional repertory theatres, since the arrival of lottery funding there has been an increase in support for independent and alternative arts. The UK has a thriving fringe and alternative theatre scene with a complex layer of “revenue funded”, “project funded” and “un-funded” companies, organizations and venues. With regard to revenue funding in the South East region alone there are over 100 companies being funded in this way. The best funded of the independent groups in this selection is given over 300,000 euros a year about a half which gets The Nuffield state theatre Southampton. The National Lottery Grants are available for irregular funded companies, “Decibel” is the funding program for independent black and Asian theatre in the UK.

There is a strange anomaly in the work of the Independent theatre in Britain in that outside London fringe groups are paid to perform their shows. However; in the capital there are a number of venues which have a high profile but do not pay actors and charge extortionate rates. The Grand Theatre of Lemmings dedicated to creating original comedy theatre, the Lemmings have been touring since 1984. The first stage show *Laugh I Could Have Died* opened the same year and performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1985 to excellent reviews. By 1986 the Lemmings had started touring internationally and played to audiences in Israel. In 1988 their international reputation developed further when they became one of very few British companies invited to perform at the World Exposition in Brisbane, Australia and at the Silk Road Exposition, in Nara, Japan. In recent years they have made a name for themselves as **one of Britain's foremost Street Theatre** companies performing at major British and European festivals.

The best example of street theatre sharing ability can be illustrated by the **Europe Street - a celebration of European diversity** festival in Beijing celebrating the 30th anniversary of EU-China Diplomatic Relations (2006). During the two-day fair, a series of street theatre performances was presented where street theatre forms dominated the unique European culture presentation for Chinese.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION E: STREET ARTS AND ARTISTS IN THE URBAN SPACE: URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION

Contribution by Krisztina Keresztély, assisted by Levente Polyák – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

### 1. Introduction

Street arts, artists using public spaces for diverting citizens, offering free spectacles for the inhabitants of any cities or settlements are one of the typical examples on how different forms of urban culture can resuscitate in different periods and with different objectives and meanings. Street arts also prove that never any urban, social or cultural phenomenon can be considered as entirely “new”. We often prone to simplify our understanding on some recent phenomenon by treating it as if it emerged only since the last few decades. We speak about ‘globalisation’ as a phenomenon appeared in the early 1980s, although it is evident that the economic or cultural characteristics that we are labelling as ‘globalisation’ had been existing for a long time before the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The same is available in the case of current discourses treating culture as an emerging sector of the new economy, and, as a result, as a new factor determining urban development. Albeit one thing is evident: culture and city are never, were never, and will never be separable: they suppose each other, they can never function one without the other.

The present study will commit the same fault: it will analyse the role of street arts, and of artists in the city as the result of a ‘newly’ embedded relationship. Albeit this relationship between city and street arts can be at least “traced back to the middle age’s pantomimes, buffoons, acrobats playing around the fairs in squares or in other open spaces”<sup>288</sup>. Nevertheless, this chapter will examine the role of contemporary street art and artists more as a punctual situation and less as the result of a long-term historical development. We wonder how in the recent European scene street art’s role in the urban space is conceived by the persons who are involved in it. How do they describe their objectives and their aims when performing in public spaces of a city; what are the main difficulties they have to face; how do they estimate the sustainability and the effects on the long run of their performance on urban space and on urban society?

The chapter will be set up according to the following structure: first, the theoretical and historical background of the relationship between street arts and urban development will be drawn. Second, the role of street art in the city will be analysed through the vision of artists and organisers themselves. The third part will give the conclusion of this chapter.

### 2. Background: relationship between urban development and street artists in Europe

In spite of the plea expressed above we feel useful to put the contemporary relationship between street arts, artists and the city in a more global context, in order to explain some correlations. This presentation will be guided by five approaches.

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<sup>288</sup> Chaudoir, P. *Arts de la rue et espace public* (1999).

## 2.1. From a form of social protesting to a tool of urban planning and urban regeneration

After a long ‘silence’, street art movement re-emerged during the 1960s and 1970s. Post-modern street art developed as one of the new types of urban arts. Parallel to other forms of expression reinforced at that period, street arts searched to stress on some political and social considerations such as solidarity, human rights, free expression, etc. The 1960s and 1970s were also the period when the need to find new ways of artistic expression permitted to extend the conditions of creativity. Art became much wider than the ‘simple’ creation of art pieces: creating new communities, expressing social or political ideas in new, provocative ways, or finding new spaces for art activities – all these became part of artistic creativity. The present study is particularly interested by the latter, namely the research of new urban spaces for creation and presentation.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the launching of several urban movements such as the occupation of empty houses (squatt), the re-use of industrial buildings or the creation of alternative cultural venues in the outskirts of cities. During the 1960s and 1970s, in the same time as alternative forms of art expression began to find their ideal places in the abandoned, often meaningless urban spaces, cities went through a deep crisis of urbanisation. As a result of previous, functionalist urban development, traditional city-centres had lost their attractiveness and became abandoned areas. The phenomenon even led urban researchers to predict the danger of the ‘americanisation’ of European cities. Urban policy discourses formulated the new objectives of urban planning: to revive and regenerate old city centres, and to re-activate urban life in general.

Urban planners designed new structures for the cities: the permanently increasing belt of new neighbourhoods around the old historical centres were planned to be re-structured by new sub-centres. In France this was the period of the creation of New Towns around Paris and the larger cities; in some socialist countries, it was the moment of the creation of sub-centres with services and transportation within large prefabricated housing areas. As Philippe Chaudoir points it, the change of paradigm in urban planning was not enough to re-generate urban life: ‘During the same years, urban planners noticed being incapable to generate urban life and they thought being able to find it again with the help of street arts’<sup>289</sup>.

Street arts, but art and culture in general became again a subject, and even more, one of the main elements of urban policies. Reinforcing urban solidarity, reanimating and regenerating urban streets and urban centres, re-using abandoned urban spaces, integrating excluded social groups – all these notions came into the heart of new urban cultural movement. Franco Bianchini, author of several studies and books on the relationship between urban regeneration and culture in European cities<sup>290</sup> also highlighted this phenomenon.

Following the social, cultural and political movements of the 1960s, mainly in medium sized cities governed by left-oriented municipalities in Italy, urban policies began to refer to these movements. Organisation of street events and festivals became an important issue for these urban policies, aiming to achieve the same results as social-cultural movements of the 1960s.

<sup>289</sup> ‘Les urbanistes constatent, dans les mêmes années, leur incapacité à faire de l’urbain et croient pouvoir atteindre leur objectif en passant par l’intermédiaire du théâtre de rue pour le retrouver’, Chaudoir, P., *Arts de la rue et espace public*, op.cit., p. 2.

<sup>290</sup> Bianchini, F and Parkinson, M. (eds), *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration - The West European Experience*, Manchester-New York, Manchester University Press, 1993.  
Bianchini, F. “Cultural Considerations in Inner City Regeneration”, *Culture and Neighbourhoods*, Vol. 1, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 79-97, 1995.

Gathering people in public spaces, at events that are free of charge seemed to be a good way to enhance social integration and the revival of old city centres. In the 1970s, the role of culture in urban regeneration was still apprehended as a social action. It was only from the mid 1980s that cultural development and cultural policy of cities obtained an economic aspect, as a result of the public sector's crises and the cut of cultural sectors' public subsidising<sup>291</sup>.

Philippe Chaudoir describes the same phenomenon from the special aspect of street arts<sup>292</sup>. Street arts had reappeared as an important field of urban arts during the 1960s and 1970s: in the same moment as urban planners recognised the danger of emptying cities traditional centre and increasing the number of neighbourhoods without meaning, called by Chaudoir, *les non lieux*. Along the 1970s, street arts had been developed as integrated parts of social urban development and policy making.

Street arts projected a new conception on public space. Instead of regarding it as a functionalist space, on half-way between home and other 'useful' spaces in the city (for work, for shopping, for leisure or for culture) it proposed to treat public spaces as common places, usable by everyone. Public spaces appear in street art movements as places for meeting, for relaxing, for going out, and, of course, for culture and for arts, available for all. Street arts gave new identities to old city centres, and as such, became tools of urban regeneration process.

## 2.2. Culture and creation as part of a global economic development

Culture, no doubt, obtained a new, enlarged and emphasized role in spatial and urban development since de mid 1990s. This new role is related to the deep and global transformation of economies, a process that had begun in the 1980s and that has expanded on the whole globe and on almost all sectors by the 1990s. The new economy, also called global economy (again a notion that is treated as a new one although rooted in the Middle Ages...), is partly based on the increasing weigh of immaterial sectors (services and IT, knowledge-sector or tourism.). Culture, cultural production and cultural services became one of the most developing sectors of the new economy<sup>293</sup>.

Global economy performs another particularity as well: the parallel feature of concentration and de-concentration. On the one hand, economic production is concentrated in the largest urban areas (the "global cities"). On the other hand, de-concentration helps the revival of regions or cities that had lost their economic potentials as a result of economic or political transformations. In the era of global economies, competitiveness is one of the key notions, referring to the fact that any location, any community or even any person can only keep its attraction and therefore can only develop if it is able to obtain some special knowledge or some unique attraction. This rule became a core element of urban policies: cities and regions all seek to develop their special offer, special image and identity in order to maintain their competitiveness. Here again, culture will obtain a high importance. Why?

Transformation of urban policies is also related to the weakening of the public sector, the reinforcing of the role of private investments and the gradual decreasing of subsidies allocated for local development. The practice of urban planning has entirely changed through the past decades. Today, we may say, there is practically NO urban planning, but mainly strategy

<sup>291</sup> Bianchini, F. "Remaking European cities: The role of cultural policies", op.cit, p.1-21.

<sup>292</sup> Chaudoir, P., *Les Villes en scènes*, op.cit.

<sup>293</sup> Scott A., *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, London: Sage, Zukin, S., 1995, and *Cultures of Cities*, New York, 2000.

making. It means among others the preparing of scenarios on how to make the city attractive for investments, tourists, or new migrants.

One way to become attractive is to become ‘original’. Different. To develop something unique, that will serve as a label for the city in the future. And that is the way culture today was introduced into urban development. Culture has a double meaning: creation on the one hand, and the ensemble of characteristics of a special place or community, in other words, identity on the other. Culture is able, in the same time to create and to represent (maintain) local identities. And the term *identity* almost covers that little specialty that can make a place to be special and attractive... Culture became a key factor for urban development, and this for a double reason: related to its determining role in the new economy and related to its determining role in the creation and maintenance of regional and urban identities. The presence of sectors relevant to culture and creativity, i.e. the strength of the ‘creative economy’ became a key condition of urban competitiveness<sup>294</sup>.

Through its complex roles culture is now a determining sector for urban planning and urban strategy making. Cultural development as a transverse objective of urban development can be considered as one main tool of urban policies. Street art is one of cultural sector’s branches that represent the strongest relationship between art, urban space and urban development.

### 2.3. Street arts impacts...

Partly based on the definitions proposed by Philippe Chaudoir<sup>295</sup>, this chapter will describe the main impacts of contemporary street arts on cities.

#### 2.3.1 ... on urban space:

The first and most evident is the effect of street arts on urban space. Street art event may play long lasting effect on urban spaces even if the event itself has only short-term direct input on the city. A street art event may change the whole urban area; temporarily transforms the use of the place and the relationship between the space and its inhabitants... It may give a new history for neighbourhoods, may transform their old customs, and may contribute to their identities. It generates new symbols and a new meaning of space.

These strong spatial impacts on the city intervene more specifically through public spaces, where street art events take place. As it has been formulated above, street art strongly contributes to the changing of the conception of urban societies on the use and sense of public spaces. It introduces a new, less functionalist and more community-based vision on these intermediate spaces.

Estimating street arts’ impact on the urban development is quite a difficult exercise. As it will be presented on the following pages study as well, one of the possible methods is to ask street artists themselves about their conception on the role played by street art in the city. But one has to be careful with this type of analysis. Although street artists are conscientious concerning their role in cities, playing a direct effect on urban development is generally not between the direct objectives of street art events. Street artists may therefore under-estimate the impact of their events on the city as a result of the fact that in the majority of cases they do not analyse their

<sup>294</sup> Landry, C., *The Creative City*, London: Comedia, 2000.

<sup>295</sup> Chaudoir, P., op.cit.

long term impacts. The opposite may happen as well: artists or analysts of street arts tend sometimes to overestimate the influence of street arts on urban space...

### **2.3.2 ... on social cohesion:**

As a second impact on cities, street art may generate social cohesion. Chaudoir defines it as the effect played on the 'public-inhabitants' [public-population, translated by author]<sup>296</sup>. According to his analysis, street arts are integrating the everyday inhabitants of the city by transforming them into spectators, and as such, pushing them to become the active public of street arts spectacles. When inhabitants pass in by a street art event, they either stop to watch it, or on the contrary, leave it. Through their behaviour, they give their personal opinion and as a result, become active parts of the event.

From the point of view of the urban society, the most important is that people, inhabitants meet each other in entirely different circumstances than on other days. Instead of running, they meet while standing and observing the spectacle. By standing there, they meet a largest number of persons than on normal days: anybody can stop and enjoy the event for free. Through this influence on urban society, street arts and festivals became the core element of urban regeneration policies during the 1970s, as described by Franco Bianchini<sup>297</sup>.

### **2.3.3. ... on urban economy:**

The third effect is played on urban economy. As it has been stressed above, the economic potential of arts in general and of street arts and festivals in particular, is a more and more pertinent phenomenon of urban development. A wide range of effects on urban development can be considered as the consequence of this potential. Street art events and festivals may generate economic growth by attracting new investments, from those of small commercials till the installation of big cultural investments. They may promote the international image and the attractiveness of the city and as a result increase even more its economic potentials. They can also become elements of cultural tourism.

It is difficult to measure these effects. While street arts do actually attract economic potentials, investors and other economic actors do not contribute in the same way to the financing of street art events. It does not mean that these events are never sponsored; many of them are. But the capacity of their economic attractiveness and the weigh of the sponsorship they enjoy are certainly not in parity. This difficulty can be explained by the fact that a large part of street arts play mainly symbolic effects on the city and that is still not measurable by economic categories.

### **2.3.4. ... on urban and cultural policies:**

The fourth impact is played on urban and cultural policies. It is a complicated process that has entirely changed through the last few decades. In the 1960s, the appearing of the new roles of street arts as a form of post-modern art expression was still based on its protesting and provocative character that made of street art a critical movement facing the political power. Street art has always kept its role in social cohesion and in the democratisation of public spaces. But as soon as public policies recognised the necessity of enhancing social and spatial integration in cities, street art movements were used as part of cultural policies aiming to generate social changes. Therefore, the relationship between local powers and street art

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<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Bianchini, op.cit.

movement has changed. Instead of provoking local and national policies, street art became one of the tools for urban and cultural development by the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In several Western European countries, street art is subsidised by national cultural funds: for instance, in the United Kingdom<sup>298</sup> or in France.

Street art is also often used by local policy makers. For municipalities, it is a form to make publicity of their area and to attenuate the social tensions characterising this area. In Paris, almost every week-end of the summer months is charged by street events organised in the different districts of the city. These events always contain some street art spectacles (music or small performances). In Budapest, in one regenerated neighbourhood of the city, a new 'cultural street' has been created by the local municipality, and to promote it, the mayor of the district initiated the organisation of a local street art festival lasting longer and longer every year...

Of course, these changes does not mean that the protesting or provocative character of street arts have entirely disappeared during the last period. It only shows that as all other disciplines or branches, street art is also diversifying: there are initiatives sustaining political aims, there are profit-oriented ones, while some others are representing different social, urban, or cultural interests often in a provocative manner...

#### **2.4. Perception of street arts' role in the city in the different parts of Europe**

The aim of this sub-chapter is not only to explain how communist regimes tended to prohibit street art movements under socialism. The reactions of state policies to the different movements or initiatives were never black and white, even in communist times. In Hungary, cultural policies followed the strategy of *divide et impera*, and supported, tolerated or prohibited cultural events according to their political weigh. The same is available for street arts. In Poland as well, street arts occupied an important role in the country's cultural life. However, it is evident, free expression has never been a direct subject of street events in these countries, in spite of several alternative events that were still tolerated by the central political power.

By the 1990s and 2000s, in post-socialist countries, street arts continued to occupy a different position as in Western European countries. First, as a result of the withdrawal of public financing from cultural sector, an important segment of street art movement, with other types of the 'off' culture remained omitted by cultural subsidising. Second, as a result of the weakness of the civil sector and the lack of the recognition of citizens' 'responsibility', all events willing to enhance social cohesion and urban restructuring remained marginal for almost the whole decade of the 1990s. Street art only developed in countries where it already had its traditions (like in Poland, in Croatia, and very partially in Hungary), and it could not develop in countries where it had no traditions (like in Latvia). In these countries, street art events and festivals are very often in conflict with local authorities that consider them as dangerous events, that are disturbing local life, creating disorder and frightening the potential urban investors from the urban areas. (This is less the case for events attracting direct economic or urban input as for example, festivals financed by private founds or events promoting local development related to a municipality.)

In several cases, in eastern European countries, street arts still play the provocative impact on local and national policy-making. They tend to call attention to urban subjects that in other parts of Europe are already integrated in public spatial policies, such as the necessity of urban rehabilitation face to demolishing. One of the reasons of this particularity is certainly that urban

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<sup>298</sup> Reports of Hall, 2002 and Jermyn 2002.

development is still in another phase in this part of Europe: many deteriorated, run down areas still need adequate policy-making in order to be integrated in the urban development. In this mission, street artists very often find themselves in conflicts with local actors: not explicitly with the local municipality, but also (and maybe even more), with the economic investors who want to shape the areas according to their interests. As a result of their weak budgets, Municipalities are often subordinated to these investors. In these circumstances they are logically against street artists even if the latter intend to take in charge some duties of the municipality, such as social and spatial integration or the reinforcing of public solidarity.... This has been stressed by the representative of the New Theatre Institute of Latvia from Riga, specialised in the organisation of festivals in peripheral, abandoned areas: 'There is a need for a different attitude from the part of the municipality. While working on state-owned sites, the duration of our presence is always limited. The state and the city aim to sell the land to private businesses as soon as its value reaches a certain level. For instance, the cultural events organised in abandoned factories are endangered by private businesses which are more and more willing to rent out these spaces for a market price. The same scenario is obvious in the case of the old port territories, where certain buildings were given to cultural NGOs for a limited time, in order to attract audience and potential investors, buyers. The same with the old military district, when it gets popularised, the state gets it back from the cultural NGOs, and sells it. All these processes turn the situation of the independent cultural infrastructure into a more difficult one'<sup>299</sup>.

These problems are of course not unknown in Western European countries either. However there is still a great difference in how street arts are considered, and, as a result, how they are regulated in these countries. Here, street arts and their objectives are treated as integral and useful parts of the artistic and social movements in general: they are not only tolerated but also subsidised by the public sector. On the other hand, they have to respond to more and more severe regulations. In the former socialist countries, street art events that want to reveal some social or spatial inequalities are very often considered by local power, but also by local inhabitants as a provocative and dangerous movement that only wishes to destroy civil values...

## **2.5. Street arts, festivals and the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programmes?**

Street arts and culture in general are today entirely accepted as determining factors of urban development. The European Capital of Culture (ECOC) program had been created during the 1980s in order to help European cities to represent their cultural life on a European level. By the 1990s, the main objectives of ECOC have been gradually transformed and the programme acquired a new approach. The main objective of the programme is hence to help cities to improve their position in the international urban competition by increasing their economic and tourism performance; to help them to create new jobs and new opportunities for investments, to reinforce their urban identities, to enlarge their cultural activities and to integrate excluded social groups into these activities. In one word, ECOC programme acquired an up-to-date vision on the role of art and culture in the development of cities.

As it has been stated in the report of Robert Palmer concerning the role of street art in ECOC programmes: 'All ECOC cultural programmes included projects taking place in public space. Street parades, open-air events and festivals appeared prominently across the board. For some cities this was very high on their agenda and was often part of a strategy to increase participation in culture. Both the creation of art in public spaces and the organisation of specific

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<sup>299</sup> Interview with a member of the New Theatre Institute of Latvia.



events in public space were given considerable attention, and were generally the projects that received the most public and media attention<sup>300</sup>.

From the point of view of street arts ECOC programmes in the different cities covered entirely different types of events. Opening events and large scale parades were (and are) the most visible and most favourite forms of street art events: 'Over half of the cities cited their opening event, usually involving some form of outdoor celebration, as being one of the most successful projects in terms of public attention. These opening events generally consisted of an evening, day or weekend of festivities and events that attracted large crowds (Brussels, Porto, Graz, Copenhagen each recorded an attendance of over 100 000 people and Lille recorded an unexpected 600 000 people). Many respondents spoke of the opening event as one of the most memorable occasions of the year where cities came to a standstill as people filled the streets'<sup>301</sup>.

Great parades attracted several tenths of hundreds of people. In that sense, street art obtained a role in attracting crowds and as such communicating the event and the whole ECOC year towards other cities and countries. For instance the Zinneke Parade in Brussels was attended, by 300.000 spectators.

The other typical form of street art is the transformation of public spaces and street objects of the city through street art events or graphic arts... This has happened in Lille where the projects entitled *Metamorphoses* had been willing to transform the public space and to apprehend people's perceptions on the old and new forms of spaces. In several cities, the whole proposal for the one-year programme related to ECOC year was based on a conception relying public space and culture. These programmes proposed to transform the general perception of the city about its public and natural spaces through special cultural and art events. Such were the programs relating culture-city and water: the river programme in Prague, or the Waterprogramme on Rotterdam's canals...

Street art obtained different emphasises in different ECOC cities. For instance, in Luxembourg (1995) street art occupied an important place even if it was not *the* priority of the ECOC programmes. Among others, works of Niki Saint-Phalle had been exposed in the street in order to show contemporary art to citizens and people walking in the city<sup>302</sup>. Some cities where street arts were of high importance during the programmes: Bruges (2002), Graz (2003), Lille (2004). Cities where it had a less important role: Copenhagen (1996) or Salamanca (2002)<sup>303</sup>.

### 3. The city seen by street arts operators

This part of the study is based on the analysis of questionnaires and interviews conducted towards the representatives of some important street art events all over in Europe. Questionnaires had been distributed and forwarded to the author of this chapter by HorsLesMurs, while interviews have been arranged directly by the first, in form of 20-30 minutes telephone conversations. All contacts had been released to the author by HorsLesMurs. As questionnaires and interviews were based on the same guideline of questions proposed by the author, all the responses reacted to almost similar questions. Therefore the analysis will refer to the two sources in the same time, and will only mention their origin if there is a divergence

<sup>300</sup> Palmer/RAE Associates, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture*, Study prepared for the European Commission, Brussels, 2004.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Interview with Claude Frisoni, Luxembourg 1995.

<sup>303</sup> Palmer, op.cit.

between the two questionnaires. Questionnaires have been analysed in a quantitative way, according to four main topics as follows:

- Regulations and permissions;
- Relationship between street arts and urban spaces – the choice of area;
- The different impacts of street art on the city;
- The opinion of street artists about the sustainability and the long term chances of their event.

After a first evaluation, 16 questionnaires and 6 interviews remained as usable for further comparison and analysis. Tables figuring in the following part of the study will be constructed by these 22 cases<sup>304</sup>. In the tables figuring on the following pages, ‘1’ will indicate the positive answer to the question; ‘0’ indicates when the answer is negative and ‘x’ indicates when the person did not answer to the question.

### 3.1. Regulations and permissions

To begin with the most practical aspect of relationship between street arts, artists and the city, questionnaires and interviews have dealt with problems of rules and permissions. What permissions are needed to organise a street art event in the different cities, and which authorities have to be connected in order to get these permissions? What types of regulations exist in the different countries and which are the authorities initiating these rules? What are the main difficulties artists and organisers have to face when claiming permissions? Are there common problems or trends in the different countries?

Before analysing the answers, two remarks have to be made. The following analysis of questionnaires will concentrate on how artists consider the problems related to regulations and permissions in their countries. Although the extent of this research did not allow us to verify the concrete regulations country by country, the following short text intends to give a general overview on regulations in Europe with a specific view on two cases representing two extreme situations: Hungary and France.

#### **Street art regulations in Europe**

Overprotection or ignorance?

By Levente Polyák

The European Union is often accused of being a mere economical cooperation structure whose cultural dimension is less tangible than its economic processes. Nevertheless, the cultural spheres and cultural industries that have their roots in the separate nation states, are also increasingly globalised, and in certain measures, „Europeanised“. A distinct feature of the European culture and urbanity is the traditional quality and accessibility of its public spaces, its agoras, which are often described as necessary spatial conditions for the *dénouement* of a democracy. Investigating the status quo of European culture and cultural politics, one is inevitably confronted with the question: how is culture present in these spaces? Or to put it in another way: how do

<sup>304</sup> For the list of companies and persons interviewed, please consult the annex. Another interview has been carried out on ECOC programme.

these spaces represent culture? And which culture do they represent? What is the measure of their accessibility? Can we still talk about the presence of the unpredictable and the fortuitous in these spaces?

Although there are efforts to harmonise regulations concerning street arts and cultural events taking place in public spaces, researches show that there is still a great variety in the way arts occupy the street and the square. This variety is partly due to the radically different traditions of the use of public space in the member states, and to the heterogeneity of the organisations involved.

In order to see the problematic of diversity of the regulations concerning street arts and cultural events in public spaces, I propose to imagine a street theatre production that travels all through Europe, from France to Hungary, and thus faces different administrative acts at each location, potentially detouring the original artistic concept. The vague comparison of the French and Hungarian cases highlights the different attitudes expressed by the authorities.

In France one witnesses an increasing specification of the public space, with a regulation specialised to assure all details of the event. In Hungary, on the contrary, the travelling theatre would find several legislative layers, coming into operation according to the property and legal structure of the planned location. From an Eastern European point of view (see the interview with the New Theatre Institute of Latvia), the regulations in the West are very restricted, exaggerated indeed, aiming to cover all possibilities. The same phenomenon from a theoretical perspective could be described as a systematic overprotection of the public space that renders it predictable and inaccessible for certain productions. In this view the permission of an event is given not because of the artistic quality but because of the technical preparedness, where security exigencies often function as pretexts for cultural and political censorship.

As José Rubio<sup>305</sup> states it, security issues occupy an increasing part of the work of the street art organiser. While preparing an event, one has to contact both the municipality and the prefecture, the former being responsible to assure the order and security in the public domain. The applications for authorisation need to be handed to the municipality long before the planned date of the event. This temporal distance depends on the scale and importance of the event, but may even mean 4-5 months. A technical dossier also has to be given to the municipality, and has to contain an inventory of the potential dangers and the means of prevention at the organisers' disposal.

Another problem is the unsatisfactory accessibility of the regulations; they are relatively unknown, or difficult to understand. Consequently, another task is to inform the organisers and the street artists about the modifications regularly. The harmonisation of the European Union law system leads to further complications, especially concerning the decorations and pyrotechnics where there are new obligations and constraints introduced.

In contrast to the standardising tendencies, the regulation of the street arts and cultural events in public spaces is rather fragmented in the Eastern countries of Europe. In Hungary, for instance, the disintegration of the public realm, including urban public spaces reflects the conditions of the confusing structure of property and responsibilities. To understand the features of the post-socialist urban space, one has to take into consideration the tradition of its uses. In the eastern side of the iron curtain public spaces were almost uniquely used for the official political representation parades, where spontaneous use and civilian gatherings were practically suspended for decades. The fall of communism thus brought along a vacuum of meaning in the public spaces, where a

<sup>305</sup> Interview with technical director, La Villette, France.

long process had to run its course until street events became regular. This project was, among others, the duty of the artist communities, like in the case of the Cest is d'Best festival in Zagreb, whose role in the reanimation of the public space is inestimable: it was the first theatre event held in the streets after the war.

In Budapest the decentralising laws of the early 1990s gave quasi-autonomy to the municipalities, villages, towns and districts, who also inherited an important proportion of the formerly state-owned properties, including the housing stock and certain public spaces. This fragmentation of responsibilities led to a diversity of regulations, also in what concerns the use of public spaces. In Hungary there are no specific regulations for street performers, nor are there any regulations for street festivals except for those guarding the public order of the city. Nevertheless, the organisers of an event in the public space have to face the various layers of legislation, which is not an obvious task: it sometimes culminates in a conflict between Budapest and the local authorities involved.

This is what happens each year in the case of the Sziget Fesztivál (Island Festival). The festival, being the largest cultural event in East-Central Europe, takes place on an island of the Danube, in the north of Budapest. While the festival is an essential cultural, tourist and economic resource of the capital, the neighbouring districts are generally more concerned with the undisturbed tranquillity of their habitants, that is, their voters. For a number of years the local mayors were consistently trying to prohibit the festival mainly alluding to the supposed violation of the noise regulations. Since then, the festival has to be preceded by repeated proof-measurements of noise.

Nevertheless, the main concern of the organisers of street events in Hungary is not the rigidity of the legislations, but the lack of integrated cultural strategies in respect to the urban space. To acquire for authorisation of the use of public space, organisers have to hand in their application responding to specific regulations concerning gathering, trading, pyrotechnical and noise limitation. The duration of the authorising process is approximately one month. In the case of larger events, like the Sziget Fesztivál, the organisers have to cooperate with the local municipalities, the city council, the police, the local and regional transport companies in the same time.

The difference in the attitude of authorities towards art events in the public space reflects the general position given to the arts in the public policies. Refusing the one way street of elitism, street arts have to balance between political intentions and social situations. Despite the immense difference between the countries of Europe, some of the cultural changes are the same. Public and street arts all around Europe are endangered by the attempts to subordinate art to urban and economic development, while reducing it into an instrument.

### 3.1.1. Main types of regulations

Responses to interviews and to questionnaires were very diverse concerning the question of regulations and permissions. The lack of steady information on this very topic can be explained by several facts:

- In the majority of cases, a technical director or manager is responsible for applying for permissions. In some cases, the technical manager is one of the artists or organisers, but sometimes it is a distinct person. In the latter case, artists, to whom questionnaires had been addressed to do not know all the procedures related to the event, only those that are directly concerning their work. As Chloë Dear underlines in her answer when asked to

precise regulations: ‘Better to ask those presenting the work as it is not something that I, as a producer, have to be concerned with. It is the festival that arranges all these but I am very aware that these exist’<sup>306</sup>. Or the same with Verena Corwall, form Arts Council, who answered to the same question: ‘not known’...<sup>307</sup>

- Laws and regulations dealing with the same problem are not always defined in the same manner in different countries. For instance, in Croatia, ‘public order rules’ require organisers to maintain public order and to leave the area after the festival as clean as it was before the event. In other countries this rule is comprised within the permission for the occupation of a territory. In some countries there exist some special rules. In Italy permission is needed for events that finish after 12pm, in Germany normal working hour regulations have to be respected.
- In two cases, respondents of the questionnaire clearly stated that there were NO regulations and rules concerning street art events in their countries. Although this statement cannot be considered as a real probability, we suppose that it has to be the consequence of the respondent’s lack of information.

In spite of these difficulties, questionnaires permitted to draw the main lines of regulations in European countries. The most frequent regulations are related to noise and fireworks. The regular appearing of these two specific fields corresponds to a general attention paid to them even at the level of the European Union: by 2010, the EU intends to introduce a general rule on fireworks<sup>308</sup>. These regulations are therefore already part of the policies of European countries to make their juridical system conforming to EU standards. Permissions required for the occupation of public space is an obvious part of street art events. These permissions are generally delivered by local municipalities. The most frequent rules, as it has been stated above, are related to public order. These rules appear in different forms: as rules concerning the disturbing of traffic, the acquirement of permits for blocking and moving cars (in Italy), permits to organise an event lasting over midnight (Italy), rules for the maintenance of official working hours (Germany). Several regulations subordinate the permission of the event to specific external conditions as some weather restrictions in Germany prove it. Specific regulation related to artists is the law on Authors’ Rights. Although it has only been mentioned concerning Italy, this regulation is one of the most important international rules concerning artistic production.

### 3.1.2. Authorities responsible for permissions mentioned by interviewees

Answers concerning authorities responsible for permissions mentioned by artists and street art organisers gave a more homogenous picture (*see Table 1*). Two main authorities are: the local municipalities and the local police prefectures. As answers has confirmed street art events are first of all considered as *local* events, where main responsibilities are kept at the local level. This fact also explains the strong diversity of answers for the first question, namely concerning the types of permissions needed for street art events. The claim of Cloë Dear, from NASA can be considered as available for all European countries: ‘every local authority in the United Kingdom has their own set of rules when it comes to the use of its streets and open spaces for performances’.

<sup>306</sup> Questionnaire completed by an independent producer at NASA – National Association of Street Artists, Scotland.

<sup>307</sup> Questionnaire completed by a member of Arts Council, Ireland.

<sup>308</sup> <http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:ILlajYmnG2AJ:europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do%3Freference%3DI%2F06/1892%26format%3DHTML%26aged%3D0%26language%3DEN%26guiLanguage%3Den+rules+Eu+fireworks&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1> (see also framed text).

Permissions that are only obtainable from state level authorities exist in France and in one other case in the United Kingdom. The same statement is available for the regional level.

In some cases special permits are needed to be purchased from further public authorities. Representative of Sziget festival in Budapest mentioned the obligatory compliance with the Budapest Public Transport Company, the National Railway Company or the National Bus Company. In case of large cities, as Paris or cities with decentralised administrative system as Budapest permits may be purchased on the two tier administrative level: the city and the district. This has been underlined by 2r2c company organising events in the southern 13<sup>th</sup> district of Paris as well as by the Sziget festival of Budapest.

Although street art events are organised specifically in public spaces it may happen that part of the space is in co-ownership. In that case special agreements and permissions have to be purchased from the other – mainly private – owners of places. Between the interviewed artists only 2r2c mentioned this type of permit. 2r2c is a cooperative of companies, of independent artists and of other cultural structures in order to help organising and promoting contemporary street arts and circus. Their activities are based on a permanent relationship with local communities and inhabitants of neighbourhoods recently getting through deep urban transformations and gentrification<sup>309</sup>.

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<sup>309</sup> Interview with 2r2c

**Table 1 - Authorities for permission**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	AUTHORITIES FOR PERMISSION					
		municipality	state	region	police	other public*	owners**
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	1	0	0	1	1	1
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	1	0	0	0	0	0
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	0	0	1	0	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	1	0	0	1	1	0
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dominique Aussage	France	1	1	1	0	0	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1	0	0	1	0	0
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	0	0	1	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	1	1	1	1	1	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	1	1	0	0	0	0
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	0	0	1	0	0
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	1	0	0	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	1	0	0	0	0	0
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	1	1	1	0	0	0
MALTA	Poland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Arts Council	Ireland	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

\*: other public institutions such as administrative levels, assurance, health etc. institutions, etc.

\*\*.: owners and other private occupants in case if the venue of the event is in co-ownership.

### 3.1.3. Safety rules

As safety is the most important and sometimes the most costly part of art events and festivals organised in public spaces, questionnaires intended to reveal whether street art companies and organisations obtain any financial or practical support for their security assurance. On other word: who is assuring and who is financing the maintenance of public security during the events? (see Table 2.)

Answers have drawn quite a clear picture here as well: in half of the cases (11 of 22) the local police prefecture is responsible for order and security. As a public body, security assurance is one of the tasks of local police therefore it is in general a free service for street art events once

they obtained their permits for performing in the public space. In other 5 cases the local municipality finances the security assurance, as a form of subsidy sustaining the street art event.

In 8 cases safety insurance has been realised – at least partly – by private resources. In this case organisers have to find themselves a solution for security assurance. The biggest structures – such as cooperative of companies (2r2c), organising companies (New Theatre Institute of Latvia or Ute Classen Kulturmanagement) or festivals with big budget (Sziget), organisers may finance private or semi-private companies assuring security.

**Table 2 - Security assurance**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	SECURITY ASSURANCE				
		organisers themselves	police, free	police payed by organisers	municipality	private, organisers' financing
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	0	0	0	1
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	X	X	X	X	X
Villette	France	1	0	0	0	0
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	0	0	0	1	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	0	0	0	0	1
Sziget	Hungary	0	1	0	0	1
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	0	1	0	0	0
Dominique Aussage	France	1	0	0	0	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	0	1	0	0	0
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	0	1	0	1	0
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	0	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	1	0	1	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	1	0	0	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	0	1	0	1	1
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	1	0	0	0	0
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	1	1	0	1	0
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	0	0	1	0	0
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	0	1	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	0	1	0	0	0
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	0	1	1	0	0
MALTA	Poland	0	1	0	0	0
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>

Questionnaires could not highlight other types of security assurances, especially that of health insurance. According to the main organiser of health assurance measures of the Sziget, largest festival in Hungary, here as well there is a difference between Eastern and Western European practice: 'Organisers of festivals in Hungary are ready to invest in security measures. While in Holland or in the United Kingdom, organisers of a large festival with even ten hundred



spectators do not finance any special health assurance (or they just realise the obligatory minimum), in Hungary festival organisers tend always to perform above the obligatory minimum. The reason of this is very simple. Accidents and cases of death may result in the formation of a very negative image on festivals. While in Europe, two or three cases of grave accidents is an acceptable minimum, in Hungary even one case would put in danger the income related to ticket selling<sup>310</sup>.

Well, an oppressing statement of a proud and self-confident doctor from Budapest, that is hard to accept entirely. However, it shows that security and health assurance is a basic preoccupation of festivals' and large art events' organisers. Without being too cynical, one may say that marketing and also economic interests of organiser companies are in this case in the service of consumers, and tend to ameliorate, year by year the precautionary measures...

### **3.2. The choice of area**

In the second group of questions, interviews and questionnaires queried how artists had positioned and integrated their event in the urban space. Questions have been formulated concerning the localisation of the event. The objective was not only to see which part of the city has been in the hart of the event – centre, peripheries or territories in-between the two - but also to get information concerning the type of neighbourhood where the spectacles went on.

Questionnaires gave occasion for closed answers: artists had to choose between certain types of locations proposed in the questionnaire. In the same time, interviews permitted more detailed and more extended questions: they did not only propose a largest choice in the types of spaces occupied within the city, but also highlighted the reasons for the choice of a given locality.

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<sup>310</sup> 'Napi online news': <http://www.napi.hu/default.asp?cCenter=article.asp&nID=303133> (translated by author).

### 3.2.1. The type of location

**Table 3 - The location of the event**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	LOCATION OF EVENT		
		city centre	Between centre and peripheries	suburbs/peripheries
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0*	1*	1*
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	1	0	0
Villette	France	0	1**	0
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	0	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	1*	1*	0*
Sziget	Hungary	0	1**	0
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	1	0	0
Dominique Aussage	France	0	1**	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	1	0	0
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1*	0*	1*
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	1**	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	1	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	1*	0*	1*
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	1*	1*	1*
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	1*	1*	1*
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	1	0	0
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1*	1*	0*
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	1	0	0
Theatre Association A PART	Poland	1*	1*	0*
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	1	0	1
MALTA	Poland	1*	1*	0*
Arts Council	Ireland	1*	1*	1*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>

\*: several locations selected

\*\* : one-place event (festival) in intermediate area of the city.

Table 3 shows a gradual decrease of location choices from the centre to the peripheries. The majority of events are located in the city centre, concentrating economic and tourism attractions. Intermediate areas, between the centre and peripheries are the second most attractive areas for street art events, especially in largest cities (as Paris or Budapest). And finally, the less of the events are organised in suburban areas.

This picture seems to be quite surprising in the light of the often mentioned objectives of street art events, such as integration of abandoned urban spaces or social cohesion. Albeit city centres are the areas the less exposed to the negative effects of social and spatial discrepancies... The picture can be attenuated however if one takes into consideration that in 10 answers of the 22, several, at least two types of locations have been appointed. Parallel, according to 4 events organised in one permanent venue, are located in the intermediate areas of cities. Taking into consideration these factors, the picture on the location of street art events become less astonishing.

### 3.2.2. The type of neighbourhoods

**Table 4 - Type of neighbourhoods**

EVENT/COMPANY	COUNTRY	TYPE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD(S)							
		residential	complex	historical	new housing	brown-field	Regenerated	green-field	rural
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0*	1*	0*	0*	0*	1*	0*	0*
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Villette	France	0*	0*	0*	0*	1*	1*	0*	0*
C'est is D'Best Festival	Croatia	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
New Latvian Theatre Institute	Latvia	0*	1*	1*	0*	1*	0*	0*	0*
Sziget	Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
1 Manchester International Arts	UK	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
2 Le Village	France	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
3 Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
4 Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1*	1*	1*	0*	0*	0*	0*	1*
5 ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
6 Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
7 La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	1*	1*	0*	0*	1*	1*	0*	1*
8 Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	1*	1*	1*	0*	1*	1*	0*	1*
9 Bash Street Theatre	UK	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
10 Bath FRINGE/ Streets Ltd.	UK	0*	0*	1*	0*	0*	0*	1*	0*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

\*:more than one choice have been selected

The answers concerning the type(s) of neighbourhood(s) where the events take place reflect the results of the previous table, but also show some nuances in the localisation of events (*table 4.*). Here again, the absolute favourite location for street art events is in the historical areas of city centres in 15 between the 22 questionnaires. But after a second analyse one has to discover the nuances as well. One part of the events located in the historical areas (centres) of cities are organised in cities of countries that has recently gone through a deep economic, social and spatial transformation (for instance, Ireland, Croatia or Latvia). As a result, these historical city centres still often represent as much social and urban problems as the peripheries do in other countries. Other events are organised in the historical centres of cities that have recently went through a functional change from loosing de-industrialised city to a city with flourishing cultural and creative economies (as Manchester). Again in the case of another group of events the central location is explained by the small scale of the city (Teatro Municipal de Faro in Portugal or Bath Fringe in the United Kingdom). Finally, another factor attenuating again the picture: in 8 cases between the 15, several locations have been selected.

An unambiguously positive feature is that the second most used type of space is that of brown-field areas: abandoned and run down industrial sites that constitute one of the major problems for urban policies. The majority of cases in the frame of the present list of street art companies and events are issued from France, but also from Germany, the United Kingdom and Latvia. The latter is one of the most interesting cases representing the aim for saving social and urban values in Latvian cities but also in other rural areas: ‘The location usually depends on the topic. We organise events all over the city, but most often in the city-centre. But we are also investigating new territories. As there are only 5-6 theatres in Riga, which is a very small number, we are forced to look for new locations. We discovered several post-industrial spaces where we organise events, mostly site-specific projects. These spaces in industrial areas allow us to develop new concepts and involve people and architecture in different ways. We also organise specific programs on the beach, in the streets and in the fortress. We often focus on site-specific projects: we develop coproductions with resident artists’<sup>311</sup>.

Within spaces with dense or relatively dense urban construction the less prevalent types of location are the ones that are mostly exempt of social and urban problems, such as regenerated or new housing areas. These areas have but limited interests for street art events as generally they are less open for the sometimes ‘disturbing’ noisy events in the streets. That is the reason why residential areas are in general less frequented by street art events as areas with complex functions (economic, commercial AND residential). Some events take place in green-field or even in rural-type areas within the suburbs or the intermediate neighbourhoods of cities.

### 3.2.3. The choice of location

This point has only been figuring between questions asked in the telephone interviews, and as a result these answers are less representative as the previous ones. It is interesting however to see what were the typical choices (*table 5*):

**Table 5 - The choice of the area**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	CHOICE OF AREA		
		area-based	event-based	external reason
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	1	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	1	0
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	X	X	X
Cest is D’Best Festival	Croatia	1	0	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	1	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

There is almost an equal partition between two alternatives. The first is when the venue of the event is determined even before the conception of the event. As it was the case of Cest is DBest festival in Zagreb: ‘We chose the City Center without any research done because it has functional spaces for stages and it is in the most visited part of Zagreb.’<sup>312</sup> However is still seems to be less characteristic as the other possibility when the location is chosen considering

<sup>311</sup> Interview, New Theatre Institute of Latvia.

<sup>312</sup> Interview with a member of Cest is D’Best.

the aims and objectives of the event... Meanwhile the choice of location has never been related to external reasons (political reason or lack of space.)

### **3.2.4. Partnerships**

The previous groups of questions intended to reveal the position of the street art event within the spatial structures of the city. The second group of questions queried about the social/organisational integration of street arts through the partnerships that have been created by the artists and street art organisers (*table 6*).

**Table 6 - Cooperations and partnerships**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	COOPERATIONS / PARTNERSHIPS					
		municipal	state-level	local institutions	non-profit	international	inhabitants
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	0	1	1	0	1
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	1	0	1	1	0	1
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	0	0	1	1	1	1
C'est is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	1	1	1	1	1
New Latvian Theatre Institute	Latvia	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	1	0	1	1	0
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	0	0	1	1	1	1
Dominique Aussage	France	1	1	1	0	0	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	1	0	1	0	0	0
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1	0	0	0	1	1
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	1	0	1	1	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	1	0	0	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	1	0	1	0	0	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	0	1	0	0	1
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	1	0	1	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	0	0	0	1	0	1
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	1	0	1	0	0	0
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

The question related to partnerships and cooperation only registered the partnerships that have been bound for other reasons than the direct financing of the event<sup>313</sup>. The picture drawn by the answers can be considered as quite positive. One may observe that street art events are in general very open for other partners, even in case of cooperation that are not related to financing. This openness, underlining the flexible and social character of these events, correlated with one of the initial hypotheses of the present research.

<sup>313</sup> The present study did not contain any questions about the financing of the street art events, as this topic has been dealt with in other parts of the research project.

The majority of partnerships have been established with different local institutions and associations as well as with other non-profit associations. Sometimes as a result of the differences of terminologies in the diverse countries, these two types of partnerships can overlap one the other. Partnerships with the local municipality and with the inhabitants (or their special associations) are still very prevalent. The relatively weak performance of relationships with state-level and international organisations show that street art events have more interests in local, social cooperation and have in general less influence on a the national or international level.

Another question interested about the special relationship between street art events and the local municipality. It intended to reveal whether artists and organisers can count on any specific support from the latter. In the majority of cases, municipalities do give free technical support for street art events: light, sound system, etc. It also helps to obtain in an easier and quicker way the permits needed from other authorities and particularly the police prefecture. There are however exceptions of this positive engagement of municipalities. In Germany, municipality only supports the street art event if it is financed by public funds. If it is a private event, it has to pay for all technical services. In the United Kingdom, local municipalities give no help to street art events. As the art director of Manchester International Arts mentioned: ‘You have to pay in Manchester!’

Most typically in East-Central Europe, street art events are often in conflict situation with local municipalities. The case of the New Theatre Institute of Latvia has already been quoted. Sziget festival in Budapest also had to face similar problems with the conservative-led local municipality that wanted to prohibit the festival giving place to events initiated by the gay communities. As already mentioned above, in this part of Europe street art events are still often treated as dangerous for public security and public order...

#### **4. Impacts of street arts on the city**

The third group of questions invited interviewees to evaluate the most important effects played by their spectacle or event on the city. Four main topics were determined: spatial, social, cultural-organisational and economic effects. Within all groups several sub-types have been proposed. After all queries concerning the different effects, a special question has been added in order to know whether those had been identified as primary, direct influences, figuring between the objectives of the event, or if they were just secondary, complementary ones.

##### **4.1. Spatial effects**

The main difficulty of this series of questions was that although the following terms of urban development are used in everyday language, their exact meaning is not always clear for someone who is not specialised in the subject. Therefore when analysing the answers, we carefully read the short texts (if there were any), written by the interviewees, and decided according to our knowledge to which group of spatial effect these could be integrated. In this way we obtained a maybe more subjective but hopefully more correct result. Spatial effect is between the main objectives of almost one third of the events (*table 7*).

‘Creation of public spaces’ signifies in this context if the event contributes to the creation or the changing of functions in a part of an area by creating a new public space, labelled by the event. For instance, the occupation and the use for new purposes of an industrial building can be mentioned in this group.

‘Regeneration’ signifies that the event contributes to a positive way of urban renewal in the neighbourhood, i.e. a regeneration that is not only related to the physical rehabilitation but also to the maintenance of cultural and social values in the given area.

**Table 7 -Spatial effects**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	SPATIAL EFFECTS				
		creation of public spaces	regeneration	urban restructuring	simple use of space	is it a prime effect?
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	0	0	1	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	0	0	0	0
Villette	France	1	1	1	0	1
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	0	0	0	0	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	1	1	0	0	1
Sziget	Hungary	1	0	0	0	0
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	1	1	0	0	1
Dominique Aussage	France	X	X	X	X	X
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	0	1	1	0	1
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	1	0	0	0	1
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	1	0	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	0	0	1	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE/Streats Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	1	0	0	1
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	0	0	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	1	0	0	0	0
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	1	1	1	0	0
Arts Council	Ireland	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>

‘Urban restructuring’ refers to a wide-scale influence of the event on the whole city. Changes of local functions in a given area or neighbourhood give to these latter a new position within the urban structure, i.e. generates the transformation of this urban structure in general. ‘Simple use’ means that there is no special consequence of the use of a certain space, either because of the short period of use, or because of the lack of any intention of organisers and artists.

The answers proved that street art events mainly play an effect on the level of the neighbourhood, either in form of creating new spaces, or in the form of contributing to the



regeneration of an area. Nevertheless these events are only rarely enough ‘strong’ to generate transformations on the level of the whole city. The very nice exception is the case of La Villette in Paris. One has to mention however, that la Villette is a public institution, and is integrated in a large scale state investment created in order to change the urban and social disintegration of this area in the Northern part of Paris.

## 4.2. Social effects

**Table 8 - Social effects**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	SOCIAL EFFECTS				
		integration of locals	Integration of excluded groups	new methods of solidarity	professional relationships	prime effect?
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	1	1	0	0	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	0	0	1	1
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	0	1	1	0	1
C'est is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	1	1		1
New Latvian Theatre Institute	Latvia	1	0	0	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	0	1	1	0
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	1	1	1	0	1
Dominique Aussage	France	1	1	0	0	1
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1	0	0	0	0
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	0	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	1	1	0	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	0	0	0	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE/Streats Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	0	0	0	1
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	0	0	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	1	0	1	0	0
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	1	1	0	1	1
Arts Council	Ireland	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

For street arts, effects played on the urban society are of basic importance. The first two questions are concerning the effects on social cohesion. ‘Integration of locals’ is related to the attempts for social cohesion on the local level, concerning the inhabitants of the neighbourhood

where the event takes place. 'Integration of excluded groups' is querying whether the street art event or festival has a general aim to enhance social integration and to attenuate social exclusion on the local level or even on the level of the whole city. 'New methods of solidarity' refers to an even more specialised effect, when street artists or organisers of events voluntarily work out new methods and actions for enhancing social cohesion and solidarity. The fourth question indicating 'professional relationships', is on the contrary, a quite narrow approach of social effects when the ambition of the event – among others of course - is to strengthen professional relationships.

Almost all interviewees stated that their event or festival did play some social effects. Main effects are played on social integration and on social inclusion. The two effects are on general mentioned as parallel ambitions of artists and organisers. In some cases, social inclusion did not figure between the goals, as for example, in Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa in Italy:

‘Question: integration of local inhabitants?

Answer: Yes local inhabitants are involved – not so much in the artistic field, but on the personal level and through the performances.

Question: Integration of excluded groups?

Answer: We have not yet really worked on this level’<sup>314</sup>

La Villette shows a specific case: as a public institution, it does not play an explicit role on the local level. Their purpose is to enhance social integration and to invent new forms of solidarity on the level of the city in general: "Effectuer l'environnement urbain, c'est effectivement la mission de la Villette. Nous visons à structurer les relations habitants-ville"<sup>315</sup>.

Introducing new forms of solidarity is maybe one of the most subjective questions, and those who assigned to be aware of such a goal of their events (6 positive answers) have done it for different reasons... The representative of Cest is DBest in Croatia underlined that the festival has a crucial role in the revival of cultural and social life in Zagreb after the war: 'Cest is D'Best was the first open air festival held in Croatia after the war. Since 1997 it has brought back the life onto the streets, influenced and inspired other festivals. Now there are about 3-4 big open air festivals in Croatia. It brought back street communications, thus acted as a democratising force'<sup>316</sup>.

Sziget festival's role in the introduction of new forms of solidarity is related to its unique position as the largest rock festival in Central Europe. During the one week festival, the organisers supported the installation and presentation of minority or marginalised cultural groups: gay tent, gipsy (roma) tent, Krishna tent etc. At that time this was one of the first 'democratic' initiatives and the organisers had to resolve strong political conflicts provoked by the local conservative local municipality.

Professional cultural relationships as a possible part of the social effects of street arts have only been mentioned by two interviewees. It seems logical to conclude that street artists completing the questionnaires did not think of professional relationships as a kind of social effect of street arts and festivals.

<sup>314</sup> Questionnaire completed by an artistic co-director in Sassari/ Sardinia, Italy.

<sup>315</sup> Interview with technical director, La Villette, France.

<sup>316</sup> Interview with a member of Cest is D'Best.

### 4.3. Cultural organisation effects

What is the role of street arts and festivals within the cultural organisational structure of the city? Did the interviewed artists feel like having contributed to the creation of a (or some) new cultural facilities in the city? Namely, do they think that their event or festival did become a stable ‘institution’ within the city? Or, did it contribute in a sensible way to the enrichment of cultural services of the city? (*table 9*) The effect that street arts may play on the cultural institutional system or the service sector of the city is in general not considered as a strong influence by artists and organisers. Nevertheless it is observable that this role if it appears between the event’s, it is considered in a much conscientious way by artists than the other effects: all of the interviewees who stated the presence of these effects considered that they were between the primary objectives of their activities.

**Table 9 - Cultural organisational effects**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS		
		(new) cultural facilities	(new) cultural services	prime effects?
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	1	1
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	1	0	1
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	1	0	1
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	1	1
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	0	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	1	1
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	1	1	1
Dominique Aussage	France	X	X	X
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	0	0	0
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	0	0
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	0	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	0	1
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	1	1	1
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	1	1	0
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>

#### 4.4. Economic effects

**Table 10 - Economic effects**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	ECONOMIC EFFECTS			
		tourism and economic attraction	international image	new jobs	Is it a prime effect?
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	0	0	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	1	1	0	1
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	1	0	1	0
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	1	1	1	0
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	0	0	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	1	1	0	1
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	1	1	0	0
Dominique Aussage	France	1	0	0	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	1	0	0	0
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	1	0	0	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	1	1	0	1
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	1	1	0	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	1	0	0	0
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	0	0	0	0
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	1	1	0	1
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	1	1	1	0
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Economic effects, and especially the attraction on cultural tourism was mentioned in the largest number of questionnaires. Would it mean that the interviewed artists and organisers believe strongly in the economic impact of their events and festivals? It does not seem very probable, as the economic effect has almost never been mentioned as being between the prime objectives of the street art events. And so important economic consequence, as the creation of new job opportunities has practically never been acknowledged to be a measurable effect of the events either.

It is more realistic thus to believe that the effects on cultural tourism and on the improving of the international image of the city have been mentioned in a positive way because they are often considered today as being between the most evident consequences of cultural activities. These

impacts of cultural events have been strongly emphasized by the media, or by the marketing prospectuses of festivals and municipalities during the past few years. Cultural tourism is a permanently increasing sector. It may thus seem *evident* that a street art event or festival, as any other cultural activities should have an economic effect on the city, and namely in form of attraction on cultural tourism.

#### 4.5. Conclusions

When recapitulating the results of this third group of questions, one may admit that we obtained a positive picture on the opinion of street artists and street art organisers concerning the main impacts of their events in the city. The responses reflect the opinions of an ensemble of open-minded people, quite sensible for social and spatial problems of cities. The four sub-themes (spatial, social, organisational and economic effects), have been acknowledged by them as being almost of equally great importance. Yet a slight inclination has been shown up for social and economic effects (26 and 24 positive answers totally), while spatial effects came out as less emphasised but still important (20 positive answers). The less significant turned to be the role of street arts as being a new element of cultural organisational life, or as contributing to cultural services (only 13 positive answers) that absolutely explains the flexible and thus often ephemeral character of street art events in the cities.

**Table 11 - Recapitulating of effects**

RECAPITULATING	SPATIAL EFFECTS	SOCIAL EFFECTS	ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS	ECONOMIC EFFECTS
Total number of positive answers*	20	26	13	24

\*without the answers to the question: 'is it a prime effect?'

#### 5. Sustainability and future perspectives

Question on the general sustainability and future perspectives of street arts is of course not suitable in a questionnaire dealing explicitly with the questions on the role of street art in the city. Nevertheless it is always important to give a short look on the future expectations of interviewees. This questionnaire therefore only concentrated on the perspectives of the artists and organisers concerning their activities *within the city*, and did not mean to analyse the financial, political, or cultural perspectives of street art in general...

**Table 12 - Sustainability in the city**

<i>EVENT/COMPANY</i>	<i>COUNTRY</i>	<i>SUSTAINABILITY</i>		
		<i>only short term results</i>	<i>long term results</i>	<i>permanent event</i>
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	1	0	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	1	1
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	0	0	1
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	0	1	1
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	1	0	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	1	1
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	0	1	0
Dominique Aussage	France	X	X	X
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	0	1	1
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	1	0
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	1	1
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	1	0
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	X	X	X
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	0	1	0
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	X	X	X
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	0	1	1
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	0	1	1
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>

When estimating the sustainability of their actions, artists and street art organisers seemed to agree in the long-term results of their events. Although the majority of these positive answers originated from representatives of permanent events, this general opinion shows that there is a conscious acknowledge of the need of such events in all the cities in question: ‘Our project has been fulfilling every urban effect given on the list above and the effects are more visible and present in our city as time goes by.’<sup>317</sup>

Companies and cooperatives of companies whose activities are not related to a special city or area usually see their role differently, and expresses it as being only ephemeral, as in the cases of the New Latvian theatre of 2r2c in France. The positive vision expressed by interviewees on the values that street art events and festivals represent in the city explains their determination for continuing their projects. Although several between them underlined the uncertainty of their financing conditions: ‘The present the political context is very difficult, it is not easy to preview

<sup>317</sup> Cest is D’Best.

the sustainability of the festival.<sup>318</sup> ‘Our festival has a permanent problem with financing. The city government have no conditions to pay for what we offer with our programmes and thus opening some possibilities for new cooperation’s, expanding, and developing new ideas.’<sup>319</sup>

**Table 13 - Future perspectives and plans**

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	FUTURE		
		No future	Uncertain, but they try	Sure that they continue
2r2c, la coopérative de rue et de cirque	France	0	1	0
Festival internacional de artes de rua	Portugal	0	0	0
Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette	France	0	0	1
Cest is D'Best Festival	Croatia	0	0	1
New Theatre Institute of Latvia	Latvia	0	1	0
Sziget	Hungary	0	0	1
Manchester International Arts	United Kingdom	0	0	1
Dominique Aussage	France	0	1	0
Teatro Municipal de Faro	Portugal	X	X	X
Theatre en vol, societa cooperativa	Italy	0	0	1
ASBL Blizz'ArtS	Belgium	0	0	1
Festival of Fools	Ireland	0	0	1
La Fédération des arts de la rue	France	0	0	1
Ute Classen Kulturmanagement	Germany	0	1	0
Bash Street Theatre	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Bath FRINGE / Streets Ltd.	United Kingdom	X	X	X
Ass. Teatro Nacional de Rua	Portugal	0	0	1
Gruppo Percussioni Dadadang	Italy	X	X	X
Thatre Association A PART	Poland	0	1	0
NASA Association of Street Artists	Scotland	X	X	X
MALTA	Poland	0	0	1
Arts Council	Ireland	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>

In spite of these often difficult situations, **no** interviewees estimated that there was no future and no possibilities for continuation. Still, the number of those who underlined the uncertainty of the situation and the effort that they have to make in order to continue functioning seems to be modest (5) compared to those who expressed a more positive vision. The majority of interviewees assigned new plans: the extension, the delocalisation of their activities, or the research of new partnerships.

<sup>318</sup> Interview with a member of FIAR, Portugal.

<sup>319</sup> Interview with a member of Cest is D'Best.

## 6. Conclusion

Street arts play an important role in cities, although it is difficult to measure its concrete impact on urban development. In the first part of this study we attempted to summarise how these impacts can be described in a theoretical way. Since the 1960s, the integration of street arts as one element of urban development was a parallel phenomenon with the increasing role of culture in general in urban and economic development. During the past decades a bilateral approach between urban policies and street arts can be observed. In some countries this phenomenon also appears in the form of a permanent public financing of certain street art events and festivals. But how street art may intervene in cities? In this chapter, four fields of impact have been determined and examined:

- The impact of street art on the spatial development of the city;
- The impact on social cohesion, or, as Philippe Chaudoir has written, on the ‘public-inhabitants’;
- The impact on urban economy, and on the economic attractiveness of the city;
- The impact on urban development and on cultural policies.

Street arts are the more and more considered as a good and useful method for cities to enhance their attractiveness and to improve their images. This appears very clearly in the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) programmes. Street arts events are used here as large events attracting crowds of people in order to call a wide attention on the city, or as artworks aiming to change the conception of the city on its own public and natural spaces.

In the second part of the chapter, the analysis of interviews and questionnaires has been depicted following four main questions:

### - Regulations:

- Regulations that are present almost in all countries are related to noise, to fire and to the occupation of public space. Concerning these regulations, countries try to create laws that are conform to the European Union’s directives. EU plans to create a common law on fireworks in the following years.
- Permits for street art events and festivals are purchased in the majority of cases, by the local authorities: the local municipality and the local police prefecture. In some countries, or in the case of some events, other permits are needed as well, for instance from the local transport companies or from health insurances...
- Rules and regulations are still very strongly remaining the competences of local authorities. That explains also the high level of diversity of rules in the different countries.

### - The relationship between street art and the urban areas:

- The second group of questions related to the localisation of street art events in the city gave some surprising results. The theoretic part of this study has highlighted the strong vocation of street art in social and spatial integration. Albeit in the more practical approach it turned out that a slight majority of the events are concentrated in city centres and historical neighbourhoods, i.e. in the urban areas that maybe represent the less of the problems related to social and spatial exclusion. In the analysis, we searched for some



explanations to this contradiction: those events are held in recently transformed larger cities, or in very small settlements; city centres are in general mentioned with other urban areas as well etc.

- Brown field areas have been appointed – already matching our initial hypothesis – as second most favourite choices of urban spaces.
- Integration of street art events in the cities remains strongly on the local level. At least that has turned out from the question analysing the types of partnerships created by artists and street art organisers.

- The impacts of street art on the city:

- Spatial effects are related to the creation of new urban spaces and to the regeneration of the neighbourhood where the street art event takes place. Smaller is the number of cases when the street art event is considered to play an effect on the restructuring of the whole city.
- Social effects mainly comprise two impacts: the first is on the integration of local inhabitants, the second is on the integration of excluded groups. Again, introduction of new forms of solidarity, i.e. a more general and wider form of social integration is rarely mentioned as a social effect of the event.
- Organisational effects: street artists and organisers do not consider too big importance to the possibility of creating new cultural facilities or new cultural services in the city. This result is absolutely in line with our initial hypothesis concerning the flexible and ephemeral character of street art that is often in contradiction with institutionalisation.
- Concerning the economic effect of street art events, the majority of interviewees underlined the impact on cultural tourism. On the other hand they rarely mentioned economic attraction as one of their primary objectives, and neither had they given any importance of their event as catalyst of other economic impacts such as the creation of new jobs.
- As a conclusion, one might consider that the opinions of street artists and organisers about the impacts of their event on the city show quite an equalised picture.

- Sustainability and future perspectives:

- Artists and organisers emphasised their willingness to continue their activities even if in some cases they have to face financial difficulties. These answers show that street artists and organisers of events are conscientious of the importance of their role in the city.
- It is important however to underline that this positive and optimistic result on the sustainability and the future perspectives of street arts have only been expressed from the very point of view of their relation with urban development.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION F: STREET ARTS AUDIENCES

Contribution by the Centre de Recherche sur la Culture, les Musées et la Diffusion des savoirs (CRCMD – Anne Gonon under the supervision of Serge Chaumier) – January 2007 – as part of the study on ‘Street Artists in Europe’

### 1. Context

‘Even if artists and art works did not wait for the European Union before circulating, facing audiences and benefiting from it, it is time we realised that the enlargement of the European Community is not just to do with markets but also with links and cross-links’<sup>320</sup>.

With the accession of Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007 the European Union has become a grouping of nearly 500 million inhabitants. Could they be regarded as 500 million potential spectators? Whilst José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, observes that the most urgent issue is to find out ‘what Europe can do for culture and what culture can do for Europe’<sup>321</sup>, the very prospect of looking at the potential audiences for street arts in Europe is dizzying. Yet, given that there certainly exists a dynamic of street arts that encompasses the huge territory of Europe, it should be possible to reflect on their audiences. We are using the plural because of the immense variety of individuals that make up these audiences. A brief survey clarifies some basic, common problems.

So far there has been only one Europe-wide study of audiences for street arts<sup>322</sup>, and there is a clear need for research on the subject. Many local studies<sup>323</sup> have been undertaken in various European countries which show that the grassroots actors are keen to learn more and to supplement their own intuitive and pragmatic knowledge. Street arts festivals (which, admittedly, remain the main means of promoting this sector) certainly attract audiences. Crowds turn up to venues in Brighton (UK), Aurillac (France), Sibiu (Romania) or Bologna (Italy). It is difficult to know anything definite about the thousands of people who fill the streets. Who are they? Are they spectators? Onlookers? Surveys adopt very different approaches depending on the country where they are conducted. Pierre Bourguignon, Mayor of Sotteville-lès-Rouen (France), who commissioned a study<sup>324</sup> in 1998 of audiences at the Viva Cité festival, takes the ‘market research’ approach. He believes the purpose of such studies should be to consider ‘how our cultural practice, our cultural action, can be more focussed in relation to the only issue that is important to us, i.e. how we and our fellow citizens can work continuously on creating the living environment’<sup>325</sup>. Research in the United Kingdom focuses more on public satisfaction and, in particular, on the economic and social implications of events in the heart of the city. Despite the different approaches, the statistics and findings of these studies provide project sponsors with sound information. Identifying the audiences for street arts is also a crucial tool for achieving recognition and legitimacy for a sector that has turned the relationship with the

<sup>320</sup> Adolphe Jean-Marc, ‘Quelques rues plus loin...’, in *Rue européenne*, special supplement taken from *Mouvement*, No 35/July-August 2005 (no page numbers).

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Gaber, Floriane (coord.), *Les publics des arts de la rue en Europe*, Eunetstar network, HorsLesMurs, special edition, 2005.

<sup>323</sup> See Bibliography.

<sup>324</sup> SCP Communication, *Viva Cité*, 1998. Summary of study available from Atelier 231, Centre national des arts de la rue.

<sup>325</sup> Bourguignon Pierre, quoted in Gonon Anne, ‘De la connaissance à la reconnaissance’, in *La relation au public dans les arts de la rue*, col. Carnets de rue, L’Entretemps, 2006, pp. 111-112.

public into a major aesthetic challenge. Yves Deschamps, an established street performer in France, puts it pragmatically: 'All forms of studies, whether quantitative or qualitative, are justifications for getting hold of (...) means to be put at the disposal of the artists so that they can meet the public that is not mentioned, that is not quantified, that is to say around 80% of the population!'<sup>326</sup>

Street arts pose the acute question of winning over those who are excluded from art and culture, known as the 'non-public'. 'The underlying question in Europe is how to stay in touch with others'.<sup>327</sup> Jean-Raymond Jacob, artistic director of the Oposito company, points out that the main purpose of circulating art works remains the artists' profound desire to go in search of other people, to listen to them and communicate with them through art. How do street arts, by shifting the territory of art, help reduce the artistic and cultural gap from which all the peoples of Europe suffer?

For street artists, occupying the public space is a vital aesthetic choice, a means of engaging with the people. At European level, there is not just **one** public space, there are **many** public spaces. There are striking disparities between them, and the way artists use the public space and their relationship with it differ fundamentally between, for example, Catalonia and Austria. That inevitably results in different practices and audiences. In Spain the streets are quite definitely alive. Festivals, religious processions, secular and religious feasts offer many pretexts for taking to the street. Javier Martinez, artistic director of the Teatro y Artes de Calle (TAC) festival of Valladolid, is attempting to replace these strictly circumscribed forms of animation with the dissemination of contemporary creative works. 'The street is an open physical space, a public space that can be occupied by art forms that address the public in a different way. The street is a particularly interesting frontier zone, for it allows us to speak about our relationship to the town, the relationship of life to the town'<sup>328</sup>.

With the creation of 'Roman Summer' in the mid-1970s, the streets of Rome suddenly attracted millions of inhabitants for whom the town had become synonymous with fear following the difficult years of terrorism. Roman Summer became a pioneering artistic and cultural event that led the population of the Italian capital to reclaim the public spaces. Another example is Romania, which has a different history, a different legacy. Even today, making use of the public space remains a delicate matter because it remains a symbolic space to be occupied following the recent years of dictatorship. It is within that contrasting landscape of physical and symbolic public spaces that European audiences for street arts can be identified.

## **2. An issue with global connotations**

### **2.1. The diversification of audiences**

#### **2.1.1. Common trend: homogenous audience**

The question of street arts audiences in Europe cannot be isolated from the far wider question of audiences for culture and live performance. Thanks to the surveys of cultural practices, habits and behaviour that a great many European countries have been conducting since the 1970s, we

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<sup>326</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>327</sup> Jacob, Jean-Raymond, quoted in Vernis, Dominique, 'La ville charnelle', *Rue européenne*, op. cit. (no page numbers).

<sup>328</sup> Martinez Javier, quoted in Martin-Lahmani Sylvie, 'Territoires: rue, Europe, monde', in *In Situ, Voyages d'artistes européens*, col. Carnets de Rue, L'Entretemps, 2006, p. 13.

now know the social factors that determine attendance at performances, as well as its various genres (opera, concert, theatre, dance, etc.). One comparative international study even showed that, barring a few exceptions, the same factors (education, age, gender, income, place of residence) always influence or determine the access to such events.

If culture is to be posited as a factor in the creation of a European identity, then we cannot accept the exclusion of a huge section of the population. Approaches, activities and resources for resolving that problem differ very widely from one country to another. The principle of cultural democratisation, as perceived in France, looks rather utopian to some actors in French cultural towns. Supporters of the arts and culture in countries where no public policy has yet emerged regard it as purely intellectual. The issue of culture for all must, however, be regarded as fundamental. Audience diversity emerges as a European challenge.

### 2.1.2. What new audiences?

In England that challenge is seen as one facing artists and players on the ground. Between 1998 and 2003 Arts Council England funded a huge programme entitled the New Audiences Programme<sup>329</sup> to support a variety of innovative activities addressed primarily at people not engaging with the arts. It was designed, firstly, to target groups that were disadvantaged (by disability, hospitalisation, prison, etc., by their positioning in terms of geography – rural area, cultural desert, etc.) and, secondly, to try out new types of activity, especially by developing projects outside the artistic and cultural institutions and projects directly involving the people. The New Audiences Programme maintains that the worlds of art and culture cannot remain deaf to developments in society and must show creativity in their search for the ‘non-public’.

‘When you’re looking to develop a new audience, where do you begin? Examining the changes in society, whether on a local or a national basis, is a good start. Responding to those changes is the challenge: planning strategically for change and finding creative ways forward’<sup>330</sup>.

Street arts fit very well into this endeavour (which goes beyond their field of activity) to reach new audiences. The New Audiences Programme, like other grassroots surveys, reflects the impact of art moving into new territories. Just as industrial wastelands occupied by artists become new spaces for artistic and cultural practices, public space becomes, through the work of urban artists, a potential site for engaging with art and, therefore, a common space to be shared. Although there is clearly no question of denying the legitimacy of theatres or museums, there is a real problem of access to them. Seen from that angle, street arts seem in a position to take up the challenge of democratising culture.

## 2.2. Links between the promotion of street arts and audiences

### 2.2.1. European festivals

There is a growing enthusiasm for festivals throughout the European Union. Thousands of festivals, some entirely local, others on an international scale, are held every year. Some are built around an artistic niche whilst others seek primarily to attract large crowds. A study<sup>331</sup>

<sup>329</sup> [www.newaudiences.org.uk](http://www.newaudiences.org.uk)

<sup>330</sup> *New lifestyles, The Audience Issue*, in *Essential Audiences*, ArtsProfessionnal, 5 May 2003 ([www.artsprofessionnal.co.uk](http://www.artsprofessionnal.co.uk)).

<sup>331</sup> Klačić Dragan, Bollo Alessandro, *Festivals: challenges of growth, distinction, support base and internationalization*, Tartu, Culture 2000, 2004.

based on a project sponsored by the city of Tartu (Estonia), which discusses the challenges linked to the development, organisation and internationalisation of festivals, sets out their virtues and limits.

‘Could there be a more obvious way to give a boost to the local cultural circumstances in a town or a city than to start a festival? Thousands of cultural operators have come to this idea and many succeeded to shape a unique and much appreciated formula. Many others started a festival only because everyone else is running one, without developing a sharpened sense of distinction, and remaining in an imitative mode. Whoever thinks of initiating a festival had better consider the following questions: what is the artistic purpose of this festival? Who needs this festival? Who will constitute its primary audience? Who will benefit from the festival and how?’<sup>332</sup>

In the case of street arts, the floodgates opened in Europe in the 1980s. France has already celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Aurillac (2005) and Chalon dans la Rue (2006). In the Netherlands, the Oerol festival held every June (launched in 1982) attracts some 40 000 spectators to the island of Terschellings (much of which is a nature reserve) in the north of the country. The United Kingdom has about twenty street arts festivals. One of them, the Stockton International Theatre Festival, held in a region (the Tees Valley) also much loved for its natural beauty, expects around 200 000 spectators every summer. In Spain, where the Fira del teatre del carrer de Tarrega, in Catalonia, remains an important venue, the Festival Internacional de Teatro y Artes de Calle in Valladolid has become a major attraction over the last few years. Some eastern European countries have a fairly established street arts tradition, such as Poland, where companies on the margins of official institutions managed to circumvent the bans. The festival of Malta, in Poznan, although not devoted purely to street arts, has now become the venue of a new generation. In Romania, on the other hand, only the Sibiu festival seems to welcome creative work regarded as ‘experimental’.

These few examples show that street arts are part of a more general move towards making festivals out of European cultural practices. Although most of those who initiated street arts festivals were not really aware at the outset of that trend, they actually found themselves faced with the same issues common to all festivals. The first research work carried out under the European Festival Research Project (EFRP)<sup>333</sup> that started in May 2004 notes, indeed, that festivals of whatever type are affected by similar problems, especially in regard to their impact on the people.

‘Festivals have become emblematic for the issues (...) and contradictions of current cultural practices, marked by globalisation, European integration, institutional fatigue, dominance of cultural industry and shrinking public subsidies. Festivals reshape the public spaces in Europe, assert new focal points beyond the traditional cultural centers and further the intercultural competence of all parties involved’<sup>334</sup>.

There are complex tensions between international and local presence, support for contemporary creation and mainstream programming, ephemeral and long-term events, and so forth. That means that those running street arts festivals have to grapple with the same difficulties as other disciplines. A festival is an issue for a town. By occupying public spaces, street arts festivals place themselves very much in the eye of the storm.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>333</sup> <http://www.efa-aef.eu/efahome/efrp.cfm>

<sup>334</sup> Klač, Dragan, *Conclusions of a preparatory meeting of festival researchers*, EFRP, Brussels 1-2 May 2004 (no page numbers) (<http://www.efa-aef.eu/efahome/efrp.cfm>).

'Festivals tend to be rather exposed in the media, closely watched by the professionals, attractive to the sponsors and funded by the public authorities for reasons that do not always have much to do with arts and culture'<sup>335</sup>.

### 2.2.2. Local presence: relations with local inhabitants

Festivals may sometimes have a real impact on local development. Their influence, whether regional, national or even international, brings many benefits to the local area. Pride in the fame of a festival can foster social cohesion and there is no longer any shadow of a doubt that festivals play a dynamic economic role. By attracting outside visitors, they boost consumption and may even go so far as to create jobs (albeit temporary ones). Under those circumstances, it is easy to see why many local councillors and authorities are keen on festivals (especially if they take place in public spaces).

Apart from their local impact, festivals also have some influence on the type of audience they reach. Street arts festivals in particular can play a role in urban development policy. As a result of their siting in a town, they may shift the urban centre of gravity and draw the attention of locals and visitors to forgotten or abandoned areas. They inspire a new perception of the town and change its flow during the festival period and perhaps even in the longer term. The question of the site of the festival, 'where?', almost systematically leads to the more crucial question of the nature of the audiences, 'who?'. The location of a festival within the urban fabric largely determines public participation and the target audience. So it is more a question of knowing what audience to try to reach than of how many people to tempt into the streets. As their attendance figures make it clear, street arts festivals that offer free events in public spaces are particularly successful. From the St Patrick's Day festival in Ireland to the Detmold Internationales Strassentheater Festival in Bonn (Germany), hundreds of millions of spectators crowd into the streets.

The local presence of a festival and its relations with the local population are also a major factor in its longevity. The need to engage with local inhabitants becomes more acute if a festival has international aspirations. It must foster relations with the local population whilst at the same time seeking the legitimacy it needs in order to be recognised as an international festival. In so doing, large festivals can become factors of local development whilst also forming part of the European artistic landscape they are helping to construct. Several Anglo-Saxon studies lay great emphasis on the need to establish a link between the festival and the local population, who are entitled to be the main spectators. In Brighton<sup>336</sup> (UK) measures that involve the local inhabitants in the festival (Children's Parade, Carnival Encounter, etc.) play an important role in engaging with the community. In Ireland<sup>337</sup> the many festivals offering events that are mostly free are characterised by having both a national presence, with spectators coming from all over the country, and a strong local economic and social impact. A study<sup>338</sup> conducted by De Montfort University in Leicester on the economic and social impact of cultural festivals in the East Midlands emphasises that nearly 70% of people questioned said they were more inclined to attend other events in future. Festivals therefore produce a number of benefits for the local population (economic and social impact and effect on cultural practices).

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Sussex Marketing, *Brighton Festival 2004, Everyone benefits...* A study on the economic and cultural impact of Brighton Festival upon Brighton and Hove, September 2004.

<sup>337</sup> AOIFE, *Irish festivals, Irish life. Celebrating the wealth of Ireland's festivals*, an AOIFE (Association of Irish Festival Performances) report researched and written by Fiona Goh Consulting ([www.aoifeonline.com](http://www.aoifeonline.com)).

<sup>338</sup> De Montfort University, *Festivals and the creative region. The economic and social benefits of cultural festivals in the East Midlands*, Key findings from a study by De Montfort University, Leicester.

Street arts play a key part in relation to the wider issue of how to promote festivals. At this stage, we must look at their specific predisposition to reach the non-public, to engage with the local population and, in the long term, to move away from the strictly event-based system characteristic of festivals.

## Conclusions

- We cannot look at street arts audiences in Europe outside a more general framework. Although we need to identify their specific characteristics, there are other far wider issues. The background to the question concerning us is made up of three major problems.
- The diversification of audiences for culture, live performance in particular, and the possibility of reaching ‘disadvantaged’ audiences are two challenges that face a Europe of culture in its entirety.
- Since the main way of promoting street arts in Europe at this point remains through festivals, street arts audiences today are mainly festival-goers, with the basic characteristics that kind of promotional context implies.
- Presenting artistic events in an outdoor environment, with free and open access, has a strong impact on attendance.

## 3. Specific features of street arts audiences

‘The audience for street arts is significant. A recent pilot study (2001) carried out by the social survey division of the Office for National Statistics indicates that over a 12 month period, 18% of respondents had attended street art, carnival or circus compared to 22% at a play or drama, 11% at pantomime and 10% at a dance event. The survey also showed that 23% were 16–24 year-olds and 25% were 25–34 year-olds. The survey also shows that there were “no noticeable class differences in attendance for... street arts” (as well as carnival and circus), which is to be expected given the nature of street arts sites, in particular, and these artforms generally’<sup>339</sup>.

In France, the most recent study<sup>340</sup> of French cultural practices, dating from 1997, found that 29% of survey respondents had attended a street show in the past year. Those encouraging figures must be taken with a pinch of salt. The surveys in question do not dwell on the semantic complexity of the term ‘street’: what does it mean to the spectators? Do they see it as including the musician they pass at the market or the living statue they saw on holiday? The attendance figures are equally precarious. How can one quantify an audience when it consists of a crowd taking part in an event that is free of charge and open to all? Despite these difficulties of methodology, which are intrinsic to the subject under consideration, the available surveys do provide some valuable information.

<sup>339</sup> Hall, Felicity, *Strategy and report on street arts*, op. cit.

<sup>340</sup> Donnat, Olivier. *Les pratiques culturelles des Français, enquête 1997*, La Documentation Française, Paris, 1998.

### 3.1. Impact of occupying the public space

Given that engagement with the public is a key part of the project, there is a strong likelihood that street arts festivals and shows create conditions that will tend to attract particular audiences. The survey conducted by the nine festivals forming part of the European Eunetstar<sup>341</sup> network, in association with local studies, provides evidence of the formation of a composite public. The ‘non-public’ appears within it, which shows that street artists are able to appeal to and bring together the general population. Before looking at the socio-professional characteristics and cultural practices of the audiences concerned, we must analyse three factors that determine the practice of street festivals and performances.

#### 3.1.1. The ‘festive’ factor

Looking at why spectators will attend a festival, Dragan Laic and Alessandro Bollo identify three types of possible motive: ‘interest and involvement in the festival as a whole; interest and appeal of a show/artist; desire to have a pleasant and rewarding experience’<sup>342</sup>. Street arts festivals, most of which are founded on a festive approach to cultural practice, attract an audience that is motivated by a combination of the first and the second type of motive. Spectators at Eunetstar network festivals questioned about the festive atmosphere said they particularly appreciated it (70% in Sibiu, 76% in Ghent, 86% in Cognac and 95% in Oerol). This shows that the festive factor plays a part throughout Europe in the practice of street arts audiences. Spectators are attracted by the image of the festival as a whole. The fact that festivals concentrate a variety of performances and a large number of individuals over a short period is a factor in their attraction. Quite apart from wanting to enjoy themselves, spectators are also attracted by the relaxed and friendly atmosphere surrounding street performances. Far from being what are perceived as ‘conventional’ rituals, street performances break the barriers between artists and spectators and in so doing make art more accessible. The presence at a good many festivals of refreshment areas where spectators can have a drink, get to know one another and sometimes actually meet the artists certainly plays a major role in giving the impression of bridging the gap between artists and spectators.

The influence of the festive factor does, however, raise the question of the spectators’ main motivation. Aside from the warm and friendly atmosphere, are they really there to attend shows? Street arts festivals face the difficulty of trying to fulfil a double objective: providing a good festival atmosphere, and getting the spectators to discover contemporary artistic creations.

#### 3.1.2. The factor of free entry and free movement

Whilst the use made of the public space plays an obvious role in the spectators’ appreciation of the extraordinary festive spirit that exists in the streets during festival time, the principles of free entry and free movement also deserve consideration. Making shows free of charge is not the miracle solution to attracting the non-public but it is important in the mind of the spectator.

<sup>341</sup> Eunetstar was a European network for the production and promotion of street arts covering nine festivals: Internationaal StraatTheater Festival in Ghent (Belgium); Namur en mai in Namur (Belgium); Stockton International Riverside Festival in Stockton (UK); Galway Arts Festival in Galway (Ireland); Terschellings in Oerol (Netherlands); Coup de chauffe in Cognac (France); Malta in Poznan (Poland); Ana Desetnica in Ljubljana (Slovenia); Sibiu International Theatre Festival in Sibiu (Romania). (<http://www.eunetstar.org>).

<sup>342</sup> Klačić Dragan, Bollo Alessandro, *Festivals: challenges of growth, distinction, support base and internationalization*, op. cit. (no page numbers).



The relationship between street arts and free entry is a complex one. Whilst some people think free entry forms part and parcel of the street arts philosophy, others believe it depends on whether the type of show can justify payment. Nevertheless, everyone agrees that it is logical not to charge for a show performed in a public space. Festival organisers take different approaches to charging: some make their entire programme free whilst others almost systematically charge for tickets. Most performances shown in European public spaces remain free today, as was confirmed by respondents to the questionnaires. The philosopher Jean-Louis Sagot-Duvaurox points out how crucial it is not to charge at a time when society is largely based on mercenary values.

‘To engage the public in the production of free goods is a political choice, a choice made by politicians, both men and women, in face of the needs and propositions of society. The survival and development of street arts depend on those choices.’<sup>343</sup>

Aside from the philosophical questions that free entry raises in relation to art (if it is free does it have no price? and therefore no value?), many spectators are happy with it. Of spectators questioned in Ljubljana, 61% said they particularly appreciated the fact that they did not have to pay. The percentage in Cognac was 65%. Not having to pay means access to culture that would otherwise be denied, often for lack of money. It is regarded as an effective factor of democracy. In any case, spectators are aware of the political commitment reflected in the fact that they are attending performances for free. This is demonstrated by the fact that 90% of spectators questioned during a study of audiences at English street arts festivals (2003) regarded it as a good use of public funds<sup>344</sup>.

Freedom of charge and free access to public spaces also have an impact on the practices of street arts spectators. Most of them say they appreciate the fact that ‘you can leave when you want’ (65% in Oerol, 76% in Poznan and Cognac, 80% in Namur and as many as 84% in Ljubljana). This ‘authorised zapping’<sup>345</sup> is another attraction. As a form of individualised consumption, it is closer to what is encountered in leisure activities rather than in traditional culture (certainly in relation to theatre, dance, circus or musical performances in institutional venues). For spectators, the festive factor, i.e. free entry and freedom of movement, are synonymous with freedom as such. In return they accept that sometimes the conditions for attending shows may be poor. Only 35% of spectators questioned complained of the conditions. They accepted the context within which shows were put on, with its advantages and disadvantages. This confirms that street arts promote a relaxed relationship with culture.

### 3.1.3. A social outing

Although the ratio of family outings to outings with friends varies considerably from one country to another, street performances and festivals are areas of sociability. The different types of outing chosen roughly reflect the distribution by age groups. For example, the Coup de chauffe festival in Cognac is visited mainly by families (32% say they were accompanied by their spouse and 23% by their children) whilst the Malta festival in Poznan is a meeting place

<sup>343</sup> Sagot-Duvaurox Jean-Louis, ‘Les valeurs de la gratuité’, in *Espace gratuit?*, special edition of Mouvement No 29 (June-July 2004).

<sup>344</sup> *National Street Arts Audience*, Independent Street Arts Network (ISAN), summer 2003, p.4 ([www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk)). The study concerned audiences at seven British street arts festivals: Xtrax/Decibel Showcase (Manchester), Streets of Brighton (Brighton), The Big Weekend (part of Cardiff Summer Festival), City of London Festival (London), Merseyside International Street Arts Festival (Liverpool), Garden of Delights (Manchester), Slough Arts Alive (Slough).

<sup>345</sup> Gaber, Floriane, *Les Publics des arts de la rue en Europe*, op. cit., p. 8.

for friends (37% came with a friends and 36% with several friends whilst only 7% came with their spouse and 3% with their children). Other available studies corroborate the fact that the practice of street performances is seen very much as an opportunity to get together. Almost 40% of respondents attending the Mai des Arts dans la Rue festival that takes place in several villages in the region of Morlaix in Brittany (France) said that one reason for their outing was ‘meeting family, friends or acquaintances to enjoy some time together’<sup>346</sup>. Performances are pretexts for meeting others, going out, using the public space as a meeting point for exchanges of view and discussions.

The presence of children varies widely according to the country concerned and the promotional context. The Eunetstar survey notes that children hardly ever attend festivals. Apart from Namur and Cognac where 26% and 23% respectively of those questioned said they were accompanied by children, the figures are very low (8% for Ljubljana, 7% for Ghent, 3% for Oerol and Poznan). Conversely, the study of audiences at British street festivals showed a greater presence of children. On average, taking six such festivals, nearly 40% of those questioned were accompanied by children. Manchester is a particularly telling case: 53.5% of respondents attending the Xtrax/Decibel Showcase were accompanied by children, as were 58.8% attending the Garden of Delights festival. The study identifies the conditions for attending shows (free entry, free movement and free access) as the factors that make street festivals ‘family friendly’<sup>347</sup> occasions that allow parents to introduce their children to artistic events.

### 3.2. Socio-demographic and economic trends

The survey carried out by the Eunetstar network gives a fairly clear picture of the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics and cultural practices of the spectators questioned. Despite profound differences in terms of demographic composition, basic trends emerge from the comparison between the nine countries in which the survey was carried out. The results in fact echo our finding that audiences of live performances in Europe share some common features, as we said earlier, in that what are called ‘advantaged’ groups appear to be over-represented. Yet the non-public is certainly present, which shows that street arts manage to reach the whole spectrum of the population.

#### 3.2.1. Typology

Apart from the Sibiu festival, where men make up the majority, and Namur where the balance is equal, the audience of street arts festivals tends very much to be women. In Cognac 56% of those questioned were women. The proportion rises to 61% for Oerol and reaches 63% for Poznan. That result is consistent with a survey conducted in France and suggests that the feminisation of cultural practices it revealed is not a purely national phenomenon.

That situation, ‘far from reflecting a secular (or natural...) predilection on the part of women for what is beautiful and arouses feelings, or an immutable division between gender roles within the context of leisure activities, is the result of profound social changes (...) since the late 1960s.

<sup>346</sup> *Enquête sur le public du Mai des Arts dans la rue en Pays de Morlaix*, conducted in May 2004. Internal Document of the Fourneau, Centre national des arts de la rue. Available on request (no page numbers).

<sup>347</sup> *National Street Arts Audience*, op. cit., p. 12.

(...) Women from generations born from 1960 onwards have higher qualifications than their male counterparts, often having an education in literature and the arts (...)<sup>348</sup>.

That analysis clarifies the findings of the Eunetstar survey. The feminisation of street arts audiences clearly goes hand in hand with the youth of those audiences. Regardless of the inevitable special cases, young people attend street festivals in huge numbers. That phenomenon alone is a fundamentally positive point, given that young people tend to shun cultural events (outside compulsory school hours). Taking the average of the seven countries concerned, 30% of those questioned were aged below 24 and 27% between 25 and 34. More than half (57%) were under the age of 35. We must, however, note some marked disparities. In Oerol the figure for those under 35 falls to 32%, whilst 34% of those questioned were aged between 35 and 49. In Cognac the distribution between age groups seems more balanced, with a stronger presence of those aged between 35 and 49 – although less marked than for Oerol. Eastern Europe has strikingly young audiences. In Poznan 63% of those questioned were under the age of 24. And in Ljubljana 74% of the audience was aged under 34.

Despite those striking disparities, we should note one major phenomenon, alongside the feminisation of audiences, which obviously cannot be attributed to the sector itself. Street arts manage to reach a relatively varied spectrum of age groups, especially in western Europe (Belgium, France, Netherlands, UK), whilst most live-performance-related artistic disciplines are characterised by audiences that are very much divided into sectors in terms of age. Roughly speaking, modern music attracts young audiences, as does urban dance, whilst classical music and ballet attract older generations. Street arts seem capable of attracting all of them. That is one of the points made by Michel Crespin, an established French street arts performer, in his definition of what he regards as the characteristic ‘public-population’ of this art form.

‘My definition of the public-population (...) is in three parts: extremely wide cultural pass band, extremely wide social pass band and extremely wide generational pass band. (...) [That] I think is the basis of the public. (...) [The artist] may have, before him, at the same time, in that open space he has chosen as a performance space, people from an extremely wide cultural range, or from other cultures, people who are completely different socially, and completely different generations.’<sup>349</sup>

Although the conditions for attending street performances mean they are not very accessible to older people (who have to stand, often in the heat of the sun), those aged over 50 are not automatically excluded and they are present. The uniting power of street arts is particularly strong here and highlights their capacity to reach the general population and, therefore, to bring all its components together.

### 3.2.2. Social groups

Public surveys are a useful means of validating, or in some cases invalidating, the actors’ intuitive and pragmatic knowledge on the ground. The professional street arts sector has little doubt about the artists’ admirable ambition to use the public space to reach everybody. It must be admitted, however, that the ‘perform outdoors=mass audience’ equation seems a little simplistic. The Eunetstar survey casts doubt on some received ideas.

<sup>348</sup> Donnat Olivier, ‘La féminisation des pratiques culturelles’, in *Développement culturel*, Bulletin of the Département des études, de la prospective et des statistiques, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, No 147, June 2005 (<http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/deps>).

<sup>349</sup> Crespin, Michel, interview of 9 August 2005.

As we have seen, in eastern Europe audiences tend to be distinctly younger and female. Logically, they are generally students and graduates (in Poznan 64% of respondents were trainees or students). That is also where we find the largest audience of senior executives and the liberal professions (18% in Poznan and Sibiu). In western Europe the distribution of socio-professional groups in the audiences reflects the actual composition of the population of the town in which the festival takes place. Cognac, for example, is marked by a high proportion of retired people and the presence of company directors, whilst Namur has a high number of employees and intermediate professions. A basic trend emerges, however, as in eastern Europe. High-level socio-professional groups are over-represented in comparison with the national averages. On average over the seven countries, 17% of respondents were company directors, managers or senior professionals; 7% had an intermediate profession and 18% were employees or worked in the services sector. That over-representation of high socio-professional groups logically corresponds to higher than average educational qualifications. Although it is difficult to equate the declared levels of study, the level of those questioned was ‘distinctly higher than the averages in the European Union of 25 (available figures for 2003)’<sup>350</sup>. The strong presence of young people, especially in eastern Europe, is the logical consequence of that strong trend. In western Europe the level of education remains relatively high in spite of the lower presence of young people. On average 49% of respondents had secondary-level education, 44% higher-level (university and beyond), whilst a mere 4% only had primary level.

Street arts, like live performance in general, inevitably attract the higher social groups in large numbers. The Eunetstar study shows the strong influence, on street arts too, of factors identified as determining for cultural practices (socio-professional group, level of education, etc.). Only a voluntarist policy could remove that systematic bias.

### 3.2.3. The non-public

That finding might seem depressing. Yet the figures also reflect the presence of individuals whose socio-professional profiles would generally make them less interested in cultural practices. Alongside company directors, teachers and employees, we find students and pupils in large numbers, as well as 10% of workers and farmers and 4% of pensioners. The latter three groups are categories usually seen least often in theatres and at cultural events in general. In that regard, the definition of a ‘popular public’ proposed by Jack Lang, Minister for Culture under President François Mitterrand, may serve as a point of reference.

A popular public constitutes ‘a sample, a reduced model of the population as a whole, in all its sociological components’<sup>351</sup>.

Although we cannot state that the street arts public or audience, as reflected by the available surveys, is a popular public, we can still assert that it tends to be so and (without oversimplifying) that it manages to attract population groups not found at other events to attend live performances. It is true that these socio-professional groups are far less represented than the national averages. The Straattheater Festival in Ghent attracts 12% of workers and tradesmen, whilst they account for 20% of the working population in Belgium. So street arts do not fall entirely outside the basic trend found at European level. Whatever the country, the working classes remain relatively absent from cultural practices. Yet street arts do better here than other artistic sectors.

<sup>350</sup> Gaber, Floriane (coord.), *Les Publics des arts de la rue en Europe*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>351</sup> Lang, Jack, *L’Etat et le théâtre*, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1968, p. 177.

As regards the presence of an audience of working class origin, we must underline the impact of the socio-demographic composition of the town where the festival is held. That has quite a strong influence on the composition of the audience it attracts. The Viva Cité festival in Sotteville-lès-Rouen (France) is a classic example. Sotteville-lès-Rouen is a working-class town, with a very strong tradition of railway employment. The festival is very well attended by the inhabitants of neighbouring Rouen, who have distinctly higher socio-professional profiles. Yet the figures clearly show that the inhabitants of Sotteville are assiduous visitors and have a strong presence within the audience. Of the inhabitants of Sotteville attending the Viva Cité festival, 42% are employees and workers<sup>352</sup>. That shows how relevant it is for the local people to have a festival on their home ground which unites them and turns them into an audience.

Without trying to be naively optimistic, we can say that the presence of this non-public, albeit relatively small, is good news. In an area where cultural institutions still find it difficult to reach those who do not normally frequent them, street arts succeed, by using the public space, by not charging and by the art forms they offer, in triggering a certain cultural democratisation.

### **3.3. Mixed audiences**

Whilst live performance in its different guises (contemporary music, contemporary dance, contemporary theatre, etc.) tends to appeal to various sectors of the public, creating niches that are not very porous, street arts bring together a composite public characterised by the coexistence of very diverse types of audience, leading to equally varied spectator practices. The aim, then, is to build up loyal audiences, to stabilise their practices and motivate them to focus on certain art forms.

#### **3.3.1. Street arts in relation to other cultural practices**

It has been shown that the over-representation of advantaged socio-professional groups goes hand in hand with a high level of cultural practice. Since that over-representation also applies to street arts, it means that one section of the public has more highly-developed cultural practices than the average. As we have seen, in Europe as a whole, more than half of those questioned about their practices (by national institutes or, for example, by Eurostat) said they had not visited any cultural institution or event over the past twelve months. Although that is also true of those interviewed by the Eunetstar network, the proportion there is distinctly lower than for the rest of the population. There is an even more blatant difference of proportion in some cultural fields, such as cinema, visits to historic monuments, museums and exhibitions. Those questioned attended or visited them far more than the European average. The biggest difference is found in relation to theatre attendance. Nearly three quarters of respondents said they had been to the theatre over the past year, whilst the same applies to only one fifth of Europeans. On average, of those questioned, 6% said they had not gone out at all over the past twelve months, 10% had gone out for special occasions (1 to 2 types), 34% had gone out occasionally (3 to 5 types), 26% quite often went on cultural outings (6 to 7 types) and 17% went frequently (8 to 10 types).

In general there was a very high level of cinema and theatre attendance among the interviewed audiences. It is also worth noting the enthusiasm of respondents at Sibiu for dance, at Poznan for opera, at Cognac for the circus (which corresponds quite closely to the range of events offered by Avant-Scène, which organises the Cognac festival and subsidises street and circus arts).

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<sup>352</sup> SCP Communication, *Viva Cité*, op. cit.

However, in Namur (which does in fact have a Royal Opera House), 90% of respondents said they had not visited it over the past year and a mere 8% said they had, whilst the national average is 9%. Once again the audiences at Poznan, Sibiu and Ljubljana are distinct from those at the other festivals because of their over-consumption of certain cultural practices. At those three festivals, fewer than half of those questioned said they had never gone out over the past twelve months. The audiences for those three festivals were much more inclined towards the cinema, theatre, rock, jazz, exhibitions and museums, as well as classical music and visits to historic monuments.

The types of outings those interviewed at the nine festivals tended to go on were fairly varied and an analysis by class (i.e. by group of individuals with the same characteristics) suggests a fairly high proportion of 'conventional', otherwise known as 'multicultural' outings. These groups make wide use of the wide range of cultural events on offer, without any preference for one over another. For those spectators accustomed to cultural outings, street arts form part of that range available. Street arts are a potential cultural practice, in the same way as dance, theatre or exhibitions at the modern art museum. We must not underestimate the importance of that point: it shows that the audience for live performance recognises street arts as a discipline. There is still a gap today between indoor and outdoor theatre and each camp stereotypes the productions of the other. No doubt some spectators share these clichés, which are to some extent conveyed by the professionals and artists themselves. The variety of types of outing by the spectators questioned shows that they include street arts in their practice in the same way as other art forms. Even if they undoubtedly do not derive the same kind of satisfaction from them, street art performances clearly give them pleasure and contentment. The particular context of street performances is not seen as a barrier by this audience, which is accustomed to the codes of indoor theatre. On the contrary, they too appreciate free entry and freedom of movement.

### 3.3.2. 'Aficionados' of street arts

Street arts audiences are generally faithful and regular attendees. Although figures vary considerably from one event to another, about one third of respondents in the Eunetstar survey said they were 'regular festival-goers'. To some extent, the answer to the key issue of the spectators' motivation for attending that we discussed earlier can be found here. The survey of street arts festivals in Britain found that 62% of those questioned had come specially to attend performances<sup>353</sup>. The festive atmosphere is important but spectators tend to come along to discover the actual works. The crowds at street festivals are made up in part of spectators rather than passers-by blindly wandering the overcrowded streets.

The Eunetstar survey confirmed the presence among these street arts spectators of a category of audience whose existence connoisseurs of the sector had intuitively suspected. These are the fans of street arts, the 'aficionados'<sup>354</sup>. More than half of respondents said that in addition to the festivals where they were questioned they had seen a street performance over the past twelve months and that they had been to other street festivals. Street arts pose a serious semantic problem, as we have said, and it is difficult to evaluate to which art form people are referring. The difficulty of categorising artistic genres applies not only to the street arts sector and the survey reveals above all the predilection of a large section of the public for a particular sector. Of those questioned, 81% said they 'loved the street performances' at Oerol and Namur. The figure was 82% at Ghent and Cognac. It falls to 73% at Ljubljana, 68% at Sibiu and 63% at Poznan, which may be because the festivals in those three towns do not exclusively present

<sup>353</sup> *National Street Arts Audience*, op. cit.

<sup>354</sup> Gaber, Floriane (coord.), *Les publics des arts de la rue en Europe*, op. cit.

street arts performances but include many indoor shows. These findings support the idea that spectators do not attend by chance.

That particular audience can itself be divided into two groups. It consists, firstly, of spectators who also have other highly-developed cultural practices. That is the 'multicultural' group referred to earlier. It includes street arts in its spectrum of cultural practices, which shows that offering a wider range of artistic forms benefits those who are already involved. Secondly, nearly half those 'aficionados' have engaged in few if any cultural practices over the past years and therefore attend nothing but street performances and festivals. Although they represent far from the majority, within the non-public they represent a sub-group of street arts fans. In Ghent 42% of aficionados do not engage in much cultural practice. In Cognac, of the 29% who do not practice much culture, 25% are aficionados. That means that today there is a niche audience, which is purely amateur and no doubt knowledgeable, for street arts. Assuming that street artists still want to reach untapped audiences, it can only be a good thing that they have managed to attract a loyal following who are generally reluctant to engage in cultural practices.

### 3.3.3. Building up loyal audiences

We can identify a third type of audience within that composite and heterogeneous street arts audience in Europe. As we have seen, what is known as the 'conventional' audience greatly appreciates the freedom of movement, having the choice to stay or go, etc. The practice of street performances is fairly relaxed. That 'authorised zapping' has a dual impact. On the one hand it allows regular theatre-goers to try out a more popular practice, tending towards entertainment. On the other hand, that exceptional freedom and the symbolic link it can establish with the artistic event offered induces those who rarely or never engage with culture to attend street festivals and performances far more frequently than any other cultural activity. The recognised barriers to access to performances and art in general (having to go through the door, pay an entry charge and, in some cases, not be able to leave when they want) disappear. The reality here is that persons regarded as the non-public are present.

This novice audience has to be turned into a captive and loyal audience. Like street arts themselves, the audience for this sector is characterised by certain paradoxes. The EUNETstar survey tells us that 60% of festival-goers do not know what they will be seeing. Either they have come upon the show 'by chance', by happening upon it, or they do not take the trouble to find out more about the shows they are about to attend. These attitudes reflect a kind of floating audience, more interested in entertainment than in deliberate cultural practice. That is shown by the fact that only 20% of those questioned said they had looked at a festival programme. This kind of approach is clearly characteristic of street arts and their open-air context. It can be interpreted in two ways. It could reflect a certain disregard for the artistic quality of the event. The spectator is not really making a choice. He is not selecting or appropriating the art work because he does not know what he is seeing. Conversely, that kind of opportunist approach may lead to the discovery of contemporary art forms that the spectator might never have deliberately chosen to see.

This issue of the spectator's relationship with the work is not specific to street arts, but they illustrate it particularly well. The technological changes and aesthetic upheavals that have marked 20<sup>th</sup>-century art have clearly blurred the boundaries between culture and leisure, the world of art and entertainment. According to Olivier Donnat, 'the majority see leisure time as a time for relaxation, pleasure and social interaction'. Street performances are situated at precisely that crossroads: they are both an artistic production and entertainment. The number of people

who say they particularly like the festive atmosphere at festivals is enough to prove that, as is the large proportion of people who attend them with friends and family. Perhaps that is where we may see the emergence of an audience on the margins of the conventional means of engaging with art and culture. Yet this marginal practice must not let us forget that the objective of the artists, and of the festival organisers, is to bring about an encounter between art and the public, in order fully to reconcile the artistic and social dimensions of cultural development.

## Conclusions

- The survey conducted by the Eunetstar network supports and clarifies the results of local surveys of street arts audiences and national and international surveys of live performance audiences. Although street arts are also partly determined by socio-professional and educational factors, they still manage to bring together more diverse and more popular audiences. Moreover, street arts audiences have several distinguishing features.
- The street arts public is particularly heterogeneous. That is shown by the capacity of the artists to reach the population in all its diversity. All age groups are represented there, as are all socio-professional categories. Although the distribution between them does not exactly reflect the national averages, what are usually the most under-represented, if not absent, classes of live performance audiences are well represented.
- The heterogeneous nature of street arts audiences attracts composite audiences with a variety of cultural practices and attitudes. Spectators used to the code of the indoor performance are found side by side with fans solely of street arts and with new spectators whose attention still needs to be drawn to that art form.
- Numerous factors intrinsic to the street arts partly explain these findings, which have a welcome democratising aspect. Freedom of access, performance in the public space that becomes a shared space, free access (where applied), the festive atmosphere and, above all, the desire to relate to the audience that is integral to the artistic creation are valuable variables of which the audiences are very aware.

## 4. In search of the non-public: street arts at the forefront

‘The relationship any piece of street arts has with its audience will always differ from the relationship that more formally staged pieces have. Street arts audiences can always, and often will, walk away from work if it does not engage them sufficiently. (...) The audience is participating in an event within a specific situation, and in a specific spatial context, in a way that is qualitatively different from the way in which a theatre audience relates to a play. It is the freer relationships with the audience, and with the environment, which cannot be controlled that are the defining characteristics of street arts. The challenges that come from these relationships, and the opportunities for spontaneity that they present, provide a depth of inspiration and stimulation for the artist that more traditional forms often cannot<sup>355</sup>.

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<sup>355</sup> Hall, Felicity, *Strategy and report on street arts*, op. cit.



## 4.1. Impact on local development

If we look at the question of street arts audiences in terms of cultural democratisation, we must question the almost exclusive way that artistic genre is promoted in a festival context. As we have seen, the festivalisation of cultural practices has a strong impact on audiences. If there is no festival in their town, very few spectators are likely to travel elsewhere specifically to discover artistic events. Those who do undertake that kind of cultural trip tend systematically to belong to the advantaged sectors of society. This means that the desire to reach everybody, which is at the heart of the street arts event, requires performances to meet the people halfway, and to take place where they live. Because they can be performed anywhere, street arts reveal themselves to be an effective tool for attracting audiences, if they are offered alternative promotional contexts.

### 4.1.1. Difficulty of access to street arts

The degree to which the street arts sector in Europe is recognised or has legitimacy varies considerably by country. Whilst France is at the forefront (although players in the French professional field rightly consider that the battle is far from won), other countries are only just beginning to identify the sector given the near absence of cultural policies. In a European context that is relatively uniform in terms of how festivals are promoted, France offers a fund of new experiences in that regard, and therefore in terms of reaching new audiences.

Since the 1990s festivals have been a target of criticism. The Aurillac festival (France) is an example of the recurrent anti-festival polemics within the sector. Hosting a few dozen ‘official’ companies and more than 400 ‘fringe’ companies, the organising team endeavours to organise the meeting between hundreds of performances and hundreds of thousands of spectators over a period of four days. Here we will address only two questions, relating to audiences, which is the subject at issue. Even if the festival broadens the range by offering dozens of events that take place in the town at the same time, it does not necessarily play the card of clarity for the spectators. That applies primarily to ‘fringe’ shows. Given that, as we have seen, the public does not tend to select the performances they will attend themselves, it is difficult to organise an adequate encounter between the event and its audience. At times, the conditions surrounding performances are poor. A brass band passes in the vicinity of a performance that has no sound system, a show meant to be performed in the street is enclosed in a courtyard, and so on. In other cases, the very fact of opting to attend a particular performance at a festival may become an obstacle (one that is more invisible than the entrance doors to a theatre) for quite a number of people.

So we must say that today it is very difficult for festivals to carry out their mission of cultural democratisation. Yet from the point of view of creation and the promotion of the artists, the large European festivals are nevertheless pillars of the sector because they are its showcases (in some cases, Aurillac in particular, at international level) and because they actively support contemporary production. In France many grassroots actors have addressed this question. Looking at it in association with the ability of street arts to occupy the public space and, more generally, a given area, they have considered new forms of encounter between street artists and their potential audiences. ‘When street arts combine with development’<sup>356</sup>, new forms of mobilising audiences emerge.

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<sup>356</sup> Besnier, Yannick, ‘Quand arts de la rue et développement local se conjuguent’, *La Relation au public dans les arts de la rue*, op.cit, p. 105.

#### 4.1.2. Duration of presence and local area

In order to reach other audiences local actors endeavour to move away from two principles that have tended to exert a stranglehold on street arts at festivals: unity of site (a single town) and unity of time (very short period, usually in summer). Culture is a resource to be drawn on in local development projects. It can bring together, at local level, the energies that exist within that area and create synergies. In that kind of dynamic process, the question of the audience tends more to be a matter of the local population appropriating a cultural project. It is a question of working for the local people, with them, with a view to involving them in the project and, by extension, transforming them into an audience for the duration of the performance. Attendance at performances is not an end in itself but a stage in a much longer process of engaging with culture, art and artists.

Since 2000 the region of Morlaix in Brittany (France) has been the site every May of performances linked to creative residencies. Initiated by Le Fourneau, a national street arts centre, and a local association (les Mordus des Arts de la rue), the Mai des Arts de la Rue (MAR) festival is designed for the whole area around Morlaix, potentially reaching 28 communes. By moving performances and spectators from place to place, the MAR festival creates flows of movement in the area and raising awareness among the inhabitants.

‘An area can be developed only by its inhabitants, who have to be the actors involved. (...) Only the inscription of an action in time allows it to take root locally and [allows] the emergence of new practices by the inhabitants’<sup>357</sup>.

A project can take root locally if there is cooperation with local associations, elected representatives and inhabitants keen to be involved, rather than being parachuted in from nowhere. That kind of approach makes use of the potential of street arts to venture on the road. Since street artists do not need any formatted infrastructure (theatre or concert hall), they can work and produce anywhere, whether in a large city district or a small village of 50 inhabitants. A survey conducted by Le Fourneau<sup>358</sup> in 2004 shows the success of that approach, emphasising among other things the movement of inhabitants from one village to another, the audience’s liking for the performances on offer and the desire to discover other art forms.

#### 4.2. Impact of audience participation

Under the New Audiences Programme developed in the United Kingdom, a large number of experiments were conducted involving audience participation in projects. There can be many forms of participation. The findings show that the principle of participation in a project is an extremely useful way of engaging with art and culture.

‘Particular successes have become evident through using participatory methods to draw in “hard-to-reach” audiences, where one-to-one attention – the interchange between the professional artist and the group or individual – is especially important. People from excluded groups have often been first reached by participatory work, which may seek to combat disadvantage. Elsewhere, arts organisations have specifically encouraged participation as an

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>358</sup> *Enquête sur le public du Mai des Arts dans la rue en Pays de Morlaix*, op. cit. (no page numbers).

entry point into an artform or a venue and then built a relationship with participants through education and outreach work<sup>359</sup>.

#### 4.2.1. Effects of artistic residencies

Today, the principle of participation is relatively well developed in live performance shows and at times tends towards the demagogic. The idea is that under the pretext of public participation the show is democratic and the spectator plays an active part. Such assumptions are prejudicial to the very principle of public involvement by diminishing the real impact it can have if it is handled carefully and sensibly. Whilst the principle of public involvement seems to be particularly effective in the case of disadvantaged audiences, street arts show that it also bears fruit in any kind of encounter of this kind with the public.

The principle of artists' residencies is not exclusive to France or to street arts. The Pronomade(s) project in Haute-Garonne puts their benefits into sharp focus. Between April and October this national street arts centre organises, at département level, a season of combined street arts, circus, theatre of objects and so on, which is aimed at establishing a relationship specific to the inhabitants and spectators. The Pronomade(s) team promotes the principle of residencies, periods during which the artists, working in preparation for the coming show, have day-to-day contacts with the inhabitants of the village where the show will be held. The inhabitants are involved in the process at very different levels. Their barn may serve as a storeroom or a games room, they may put up some of the artists, lend out material, etc. In that way they become the artists' temporary neighbours, using the same living space. The involvement of the local population and their transformation into an audience also occur at this very simple but quite fundamental level of everyday relations. By promoting this kind of encounter between artists and local people, Pronomade(s) establish a new relationship between the two.

Aside from that, the team's aim is to raise people's awareness of art so that slowly but surely they will include this cultural practice in their everyday life. In that sense, David Moralès, who is involved in the Pronomade(s) association in Haute-Garonne, is a kind of typecast example of 'cultural democratisation'.

'I am the "non-selected, non-elitist" public. And that's not all. It is true that the day I discovered street arts I was on my way to see my daughter play music! In the end, I met artists, people, a family near enough... One day I came across street arts and the result was that I became open to art, full stop'.<sup>360</sup>

A study of audiences conducted in 2006<sup>361</sup> stresses that the audience is local, given that 65% of spectators live in Comminges, the area covered by Pronomade(s)' activities. The survey also reveals the presence of a large number of neophytes, with nearly 30% of spectators saying it was the first time they had come. The fact that the performance is free is clearly also an incentive, even though those questioned did not necessarily give that as a main reason for coming. In fact 63% of that neophyte audience attended free performances. The study also confirms the existence of 'monomaniacs': 25% of spectators questioned did not visit any other live performance venue. The season offered by the national centre was their only opportunity to

<sup>359</sup> Rose Catherine, 'Audience participation', *Essential Audiences issue 69*, Arts Council England, New Audiences Programme (<http://www.newaudiences.org.uk/resource.php?id=306>).

<sup>360</sup> Moralès David, 'Bonjour, merci de m'accueillir', in *La Relation au public dans les arts de la rue*, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>361</sup> Dedieu Chloé, *Les publics de Pronomade(s) en Haute-Garonne*, study carried out at sixteen different interviews between April and July 2006 (unpublished internal document).

discover performances. Of the total, 77% lived in the Comminges area. These findings confirm the success of Pronomade(s) residency work in inducing the local population to appropriate an artistic and cultural project.

#### 4.2.2. Audience inclusion in performances

New audiences are likely to be reached by the development of art projects that involve the people in the very act of creation. Such enterprises are precarious and complex. The artists have to be very clear about the status and function they allocate to the inhabitants involved. There are a great many methods of involving local people in performances, from conversations used as the basis for writing to theatre workshops where games that are played form the heart of the creation. Although some of those methods are not specific to street arts, the publicising of performances in the public space gives that act a particularly strong and symbolic significance for those concerned.

This principle of inclusion is the ultimate step in the encounter between the artist and the population he seeks to address. The mobility of artists in Europe therefore seems as important as the mobility of the audiences themselves. The confrontation with others, through the medium of art, may have as much effect on the artists as on the population concerned. Cutting across frontiers and languages, common issues emerge, evidence of the cross-border nature of Europe and the concerns of its inhabitants.

For five years Square Télévision, a local street project, has been broadcast in 25 towns, in France, Belgium, Austria and Portugal: ‘The broadcasting context is the neighbourhood. We go out and meet people and capture their stories: we project their words and pictures on the basis of an oral declaration of trust. From one country to the next, we find common themes, concerned with the regeneration of a neighbourhood, the transformation of public space ... and still a few differences in everyday urban life’<sup>362</sup>.

The example of the KompleXXKapharnaüm collective illustrates this, whilst not being the only striking example of that encounter between artists and the people which lies at the heart of artistic creation. All artists who have had the opportunity to encounter audiences from other countries tell of that interchange and of the benefits it brings them and their art.

### Conclusions

- The fundamental issue for art and culture, in every European country, is how to enable the largest possible number to experience cultural works. Without being Messianic, we can say that street arts are pointing the way to new methods of engaging with the people, underlining the fact that attendance at a performance cannot be a kind of pause in the process of the discovery of art.
- In France, as in other countries, the desire to move away from festivals responds to the artists’ fundamental desire to engage with people who have not been reached by culture. Within that dynamic, and with the prospect of a Europe of regions and neighbourhoods, the development of alternative promotional projects based on working in a particular neighbourhood over a long period of time is evidence of the capacity of street arts to be an instrument of local development and of uniting audiences.

<sup>362</sup> Duforeau Pierre, quoted in, Martin-Lahmani Sylvie, ‘La ville: médium et message’, in *Rue européenne*, op. cit. (no page numbers).

- Whilst many studies show the need to involve the public in artistic and cultural projects, street arts, by putting relations with the public and the position of the spectator at the heart of their artistic process, show that they have the potential to be a driving force of social cohesion.
- From that point of view, the mobility of street artists needs to be improved and supported. By going abroad to meet the inhabitants of other countries, the artists confront their own vision of the world with that of other cultures and encourage the emergence of a common, cross-border identity through an artistic act that is federative because it includes the public, who are transformed into the audience.

## 5. General conclusions

‘When street theatre artists go off to perform their show abroad, they open themselves to an encounter from which they hope to return changed: when the original work crosses a border and is presented to a different audience, in a distant town, it is certainly being transported, transposed, indeed transferred: it is to be hoped it is also a vehicle of transformation... Without that, the company would merely be booking another tour date’<sup>363</sup>.

Whilst a work transposed abroad is necessarily also transferred, it also arrives charged with its own integrity and identity. The foreign spectator perceives that, receives it, and leaves a changed person. The street artist also returns from his travels a changed person and leaves spectators marked by his visit. Whilst we are now beginning to gain a better understanding of the socio-professional profiles and cultural practices of street arts audiences, we still know very little about how they respond to performances – and nothing at all about the response to foreign performances. It is undeniable, however, that they may well have a strong impact, like any other art form that is in tune with the sensibilities of the individual who encounters it.

Today the studies on street arts spectators have shown progress in the area of democratisation and the encounter with untapped audiences. They show that in spite of the huge challenges posed by sociological determinism street arts have the ability to bring together a composite audience, where spectators familiar with cultural institutions, fans purely of street arts and novices attracted by the festive spirit appear side by side in a public space recognised as a common space. They also show the need for new efforts to find ways of engaging with audiences excluded from culture. From difficult urban districts to rural villages, street artists, in their own country and elsewhere, draw no distinctions and are willing to encounter everybody.

The fundamental dual issue of access to art for all and the emergence of a common culture at local level is both national and supranational. Artists did not sit and wait for cultural policies and international programmes before going off to confront audiences throughout Europe. In that respect street artists, who raise national issues and place the relationship with others at the heart of their approach, do more than any other group to raise the question of audiences in Europe. ‘Urban activities, unusual approaches to living together, the need to bring art out of its shell, to combine it with conviviality and festivals, all this modestly but surely defines the contours of that desire for Europe that can be fostered by artistic exchange’<sup>364</sup>. We are in fact talking very much of desire, the desire that inspires both artists and spectators of street arts in Europe.

‘The desire to bring theatre into the street, Europe – the world’<sup>365</sup>.

<sup>363</sup> Wallon Emmanuel, quoted in Martin-Lahmani Sylvie, ‘Territoires: rue, Europe, monde’, in *In Situ, Voyages d’artistes européens*, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>364</sup> Adolphe Jean-Marc, Sauvageot Pierre, ‘Au désir d’Europe’, in *Rue européenne*, op. cit. (no page numbers).

<sup>365</sup> Martin-Lahmani Sylvie, ‘Territoires: rue, Europe, monde’, op. cit., p. 14.

## **ANNEX 2 - SECTION G: STREET ARTS IN EUROPE: MEANS OF PRODUCTION**

Contribution by Anne Tucker – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

### **1. Context in which street performance/installation artists are working**

#### **1.1. The History**

Street performers have existed throughout history, in public spaces where people gathered for commercial, social or religious purposes. Street performance was used for entertainment, for education, for political proselitising and for marketing/selling. Performers were highly skilled at holding their audience, at disguising themselves (using masks, puppets and costume) in order to examine controversial or dangerous topics in accessible ways. The history of street performance has been catalogued by social historians across the world.

Styles of street performance have varied according to economic and political circumstances. Commedia del'Arte developed as a radical form of communication in Italy, where archetypal characteristics became recognisable simply by their marks/costume, without needing to say a word! Across the catholic world, Carnival, masquerading (now known across the Caribbean simply as 'playing mas' ) became a tool for oppressed people to break out legitimately for one day a year and mock their masters, using giant puppets, masks, stilts, wild dancing and music. More recently, in Spain, the Franco dictatorship prevented regional languages (eg Basque and Catalan) being used by people - the tradition of street performance in these two (now) autonomous regions is far greater than in other parts of Spain. Additionally, puppetry for adults has always been very popular – an excellent and imaginative way of communicating with people – puppets can be thrown quickly back into a suitcase if danger lurks and the manipulator melt back into the crowds. It was only in 1975 that Spain and Portugal emerged from dictatorship to take their place with other democratic countries in Europe.

In the Communist East European countries, the street theatre that started to emerge from Poland seemed very identifiable - highly visual, often working with topics of desperation, violence, war and isolation. Stilts were frequently used, and an atmosphere generated of humans being very 'tiny' in comparison to authority, trying to capture a few moments of humanity and intimacy. In Great Britain, a thriving outdoor theatrical tradition was whittled almost entirely away with the exceedingly Conservative Government of Mrs Thatcher. Funding cuts forced companies to collapse entirely or move to France, Holland and Belgium, where street performance was welcomed and encouraged. There still remain a large number of performers of British origin in and around Amsterdam, (working alongside Dutch and Belgian artists) and in France (working around Fotsbarn, a Cornish company who 'dramatically' left England in the 1980s). The first revival of street arts in England in the current 'festival' tradition, did not emerge until Stockton in 1988 - and remained almost unique in England until the mid 1990s. The vast majority of street performance companies that survived between 1980 and 2000 were small and/or designed to work as busking entertainment

Today, however, the situation is evolving steadily.

## **1.2. Street Festivals Today**

There are a very large number of street festivals across Europe. Every country in the EC holds at least one festival that features street artists alongside indoor performing or visual or multimedia arts; a few countries do not have a festival dedicated purely to street arts, but around half have more street festivals than they could count easily, with new ones added every year. France has many more street festivals than any other European country and the scale and ambition of some of the festivals there is impressive. Artists perform predominantly at festivals in their own countries, though international touring is growing. Some large-scale companies have only survived because they are able to work a pan-European circuit, because of the scale and cost of their shows.

## **1.3. Annual programme of Street Arts**

It is clear both from festival organisers and artists, that there exist few opportunities for professional companies to get work outside of the festival (summer) season. In Britain, there is now a significantly higher use of street artists for traditional festive occasions – Easter, Halloween, Christmas and New Year and Christmas (again, usually at a festive occasion). France is pioneering the use of street shows at small events throughout the year, especially connected to shows being presented where there are Creation Centres. This is partly in order to spread the number of working months that artists are able to get paid work, and also to encourage audiences to come to see different street arts shows away from a festival context. Networks of promoters and artists are being established in hubs around towns and cities, whose aim is to maximise the opportunities for artists to tour around a locality, establish workshop activity and interventions in local towns and villages. Much of this is being undertaken as part of a three year long initiative in France entitled *Le Temps des Arts de la Rue*.

## **1.4. Street arts/community arts**

In several countries, community arts (defined as artists working directly with communities on creative projects of interest and relevance to those communities, rather than to an artists' agenda) is thriving and growing. Respondents to the questionnaires describe spending part of their year working on projects in a variety of media with local people, including developing local festivals and parades, alongside their professional street performance timetable.

## **2. Festivals use of artists**

Festivals are organised in the main by independent non-profit creative individuals and organisations or local government departments, or by individuals contracted to a local government body with the purpose of running a festival.

The artistic policy of festivals is very varied and suits the artistic aims and purposes of the artistic directors or their management committees. All festivals programme a selection of the following, in varying proportions:

- (a) existing street arts performance and installation work, that the festival 'buys-in' for a particular time;
- (b) unique site-specific professional performance/installations created especially for the festival, that will be designed to enhance particular local architecture or landscape;

- (c) new performance/installations that the festival may commission (or co-commission, with other organisations) designed to premiere at a festival but continue to tour elsewhere;
- (d) community performances and installations that share the public space at the festival with professional companies. Festivals may directly commission some of these.

*"We+ try and commission as much work as possible as it helps the flow of new work keeps coming. We try and use safe funding for this work (sometimes commissions fail and we need to be sure we do not lose the sponsors because this happen)."*

*"Our festival is basically a festival that works with groups on a location. The group finds itself a place somewhere in the city and develops its program on this specific place. It often means for the organiser to bring performers in a good position to do their thing. We invest in all kind of technical and environmental adjustments for the group to make it possible for them to make their best performance at that place."*

*"we do not have money to commission artists to make new permanent shows. We are able to give money to artists from our region, to make a special thing for the festival, and if they can tour this afterwards that is a bonus."*

There are dozens of different quotations about how festivals work – some in depth research on this would be very useful for artists, so they can know who to approach with which proposal.

## **2.1. In and Off/Showcasing**

Street festivals have many different contractual arrangements with artists, paying varying amounts of artists overall costs. In the ACE research, one of the questions concerned how great a proportion of costs are covered by programmers.

Many festivals pay 100% of costs. One wrote *"we pay everything without asking questions!"* Those that do claim that artists should not be exploited although some admit the sense in negotiating on a package (several days work, travel costs as part of a tour to a number of different festivals, some days holiday between bookings).

Some festivals said they pay a proportion (50%, 80%, 90%) of fees and all technical costs. I imagine a couple of these consider themselves to be showcase opportunities for artists.

Many festivals, especially in France, have a 2 tier system of contracts, known as the 'in' and the 'off' programme. The off programme may be curated or (in the case of Aurillac) open to all. In the street arts ecology, the 'off' programme gives the chance for young companies, or companies trying out new shows, to get chances to test out their work and perform to a willing audience, without a fee. The rationale for this is also that such performers are getting a 'marketing opportunity', to be seen by festival directors from other festivals and through that to get paid bookings.

Respondents in the ACE survey described what they pay for the 'off' programme. This ranged from 'nothing' to some technicals and accommodation/food, or a reduced fee and proportion of technicals. Some have a flat rate payment (€100 and €150 per person). Very few pay travel expenses. In some festivals 'off' performers can 'pass the hat' to raise something from the audience towards their expenses.



Showcase or marketplace festivals also exist in some countries (they are very common in Spain); there are also two in England. The principal behind these is that all artists are performing especially for visiting programmers (though they nearly always take place as part of a public event and the audience may not be aware that many programmers are there to see work). Significant efforts are made by the festival organisation to attract programmers- accommodation and even travel may be paid, sometimes food and social opportunities are arranged. Detailed guides to all performances are supplied to all attending, along with companies' contact details. The largest of these festivals (Tàrrega in Spain) attracted nearly 1 000 programmers in its heyday, and regularly 2 – 300 programmers may be found at the larger festivals in Europe. (NB Aurillac Festival in France is larger, but very avidly does not consider itself a showcase festival)

*"It's complicated to calculate the costs (apart from cachet) of foreign companies. Some events, like our 'feria' works by covering the costs of companies so they are not out of pocket but without a fee. What we do is to spend our money on promoting these companies, generating a market so they can more easily get bookings in the future. But it is hard to know what is the starting point for foreign companies, that is to say, to know whether it is worth it for them to come to an event like ours and to what level they can lower their costs so as to be able to come."* Artists say that attendance at these is essential. All artists who have been, claim decisively that an appearance at Chalon, Aurillac or Sotteville is essential in France. For getting work in other parts of Europe, programmers and artists described Hasselt, Namur or Gent in Belgium, Oerol in the Netherlands, xtrax (Manchester) or Brighton in the UK, Tàrrega, Valladolid and Lekoia in Spain.

*"Showcases play a big part for us creating new contacts, as well as meeting promoters on 'normal' festivals."*

*"There are a number of influential festivals in Europe to which promoters go to look for new acts. Most European festivals will not book a show they have not seen."*

*"Through showcasing at Chalon and Aurillac, occasionally we are approached at other festivals."*

The x.trax showcase in Manchester, England, undertakes comprehensive valuation of each edition, requesting feedback from all artists taking part, about the amount of work (contracts or interest only) that they have gained as a direct result of participating. They have recently produced an Economic Impact Survey which shows:

- “• there is a clear demand for the x.trax showcase from programmers and artists.
- it is successful at generating bookings for artists .
- it is economically valuable to the sector; each showcase generating circa £1 000 000 worth of bookings for the artists.
- services to the sector in addition to the showcase are valued by artists and there is ongoing demand for their continuation”.

These events (especially Aurillac) are so big that they can be unwieldy and confusing for programmers, and difficult to access for artists who do not already know people. It is possible that increased networks, especially local federations of artists, will make this an easier option for people. French artists already work together to present a number of shows in one location at

Aurillac and Chalon. Perhaps foreign countries may start to look for funds to help support a number of artists attending one of these – they can be a substantial financial risk. Showcases can also be ruthlessly damaging and companies have lost a show completely as a result of performing it when it was not ready:

*“ We rarely attend these (as if you perform when you are not ready it sets you back years), but we did receive interest after being at x.trax, as they prefer you **not** to go with a brand new show”.*

## **2.2. Difficulties and Limitations at Festivals**

Artists have a number of requirements in order to make sure that their shows are presented in a successful way.

### **2.2.1. Technical equipment**

Most companies provide a technical specification of materials and machinery that the host needs to provide. In some towns in mainland Europe (especially France) local councils are likely to provide all of this without charging, but this is not the case anywhere in the UK or many other countries. The technical rider may involve a significant extra cost, which must be known and built into the budget right at the start. There may be confusions arising from misunderstandings over requirements, companies forgetting to mention key elements, or different names or specifications in different countries for artists’ needs – eg voltage, theatrical lighting, floor coverings, stages/raised platforms. There may also be issues about insurance and driving licences for industrial plant needing to be hired. Communication difficulties may occur through incorrect translation of requirements in different languages. This may be helped by national street arts networks developing ‘glossaries’ of key vocabulary needed in the world of street arts.

### **2.2.2. Refreshments, hospitality**

Festivals are spoken about by artists across Europe in terms of the quality of the hospitality they receive, the practical arrangements (or lack of) for accommodation and meals, the amount of staff support for sorting out problems and queries and the general level of welcome. In larger festivals in Europe, there is frequently an artist canteen providing hot meals and the space to relax and meet other artists and staff. This is immensely valued and undoubtedly contributes to artists getting rest time and performing better. Respondents mention tiredness as a result of long distances travelled and a show needing to be performed the evening of arrival. Programmers respond that if this is not stated in the technical and other arrangements, it is not thought to be needed.

### **2.2.3. Crowds**

Crowds may be very large at festivals that have been running for a number of years and attract huge numbers. This can be difficult for artists whose shows are not designed for large crowds. Many festivals are now providing raised seating banks, in order to accommodate large audiences; this can ruin a show that is not designed for this kind of presentation. Several respondents to questionnaires mention that they rarely know much in advance about where they will be sited and have little flexibility once they have arrived. Programmers asked about this question request that maximum information is given on technical requirements sheets about the size of audience that is appropriate.

### **2.2.4. Inappropriate Spaces/Noise Clashes**

This arises from a number of different reasons, some unavoidable e.g. unforeseen road works. However, frequently this situation could be avoided with clearer information from artists about their space requirements – and the priority for these (eg a source of amplification may be less important than a quiet secluded space, if the two are not both possible); organisers need to know the limits of their sites and create a programme to fit these rather than conflict with them. A common difficulty may be the simultaneous programming of strolling and static performance in the same area. Most artists recognise this as an inevitable consequence of ‘animation’ and do try and minimise this inconvenience for each other. Much more damaging is the proximity of street theatre and amplified music. Some street festivals avoid programming bands on stage for this reason. However, with the growth in banked seating for larger audiences, amplification for street theatre is becoming more common and, as a result, more invasive.

### **2.2.5. Financial Complications**

Artists complain that at times they are hit with tax reductions that they had not been forewarned about. In the same way, artists need to be clear in advance with programmers if there are royalty fees to be paid in addition to fees.

### **2.2.6. Security**

Safe parking for vehicles and security of props, sets and costumes is essential for artists. Costs of this need to be built into the initial budgeting of festivals, rather than thought about at the end when the budget is all spent. Lack of respect for artists’ needs is a frequent complaint and many are extremely anxious about security.

## **2.3. Recommendations**

- Each nation produces information on its own festivals and the circuit for touring street arts. This should be updated regularly.
- Each nation to select a relevant organisation to host and maintain this information and make sure artists know of its existence.
- An organisation (eg Circostrada) to continue to present information on street festivals across Europe,
- Comprehensive information specifically on showcase/marketplace festivals across Europe to be compiled and maintained, again by Circostrada.
- Key information on how festivals select artists should be included, and what proportion of costs are paid in different places.
- Glossaries of key technical vocabulary needed for street arts companies (especially amplification, lighting and industrial machinery) to be available in different European languages.

### 3. The funding opportunities available

#### 3.1. Funding for street arts across Europe

In spite of the vitality of the festival circuit, it is a consistent perception among presenters, cultural officers and artists that the street arts remain of low value as an art-form and are very badly under-funded. Budgets are extremely small, in comparison to every nation's budget for the conventional performing arts (in complete contrast to the number of people keen to watch such work).

It is extremely difficult to ascertain with accuracy at this point what budgets are available. Many respondents (both those returning questionnaires and those interviewed by telephone) did not know and were unsure how to find out how much money was available. In many countries, respondents wrote 'almost nothing', or 'less than 1%' or 'it is impossible to find out'. Street arts rarely appear as a discreet budget separate from performing arts, or theatre, or even education.

*"Money is hard to get because when you apply also indoor theatre is applying in the same area. When you have a very good written application you can ask until € 150.000 from the national government" (Netherlands).*

*'There is no street arts policy in Portugal. No. Only in 2004, during the European football championship, the government got involved in promoting and presenting street arts in several cities, as a cultural program for that time. [However, although] there isn't a specific regulation for the street arts, ... artists working within this field usually apply to grants of the field of theatre'.*

Some countries admitted there was no street arts budget for production at all.

*"The one-day street productions for their own events may have been produced, but never an independent street shows that would continue the life of their own" (Croatia).*

*"Ministry of culture does not get involved in producing street art shows, neither helps the festivals strictly dedicated to the street art. There is no recognition of street artist as a real artist, but just a sort of entertainer that wants to earn some extra money on the street." (Hungary)*

*'There are few very interesting and professional street festivals and street theatre groups in Poland. Unfortunately there is bad situation in areas of financial support, position in cultural landscape, managing, production area and information here.' (Poland)*

*'Non existing I'm afraid. The cities and Festivals welcomes street artists, and make some systems, rules and infrastructure, but mainly sees it as up to the street artists to take care of themselves and finance themselves from the hat. The few that works on a regular basis, make their earnings from the hat and from organizers of markets, days, and Festivals.' (Norway)*

*'Until the middle of the 90s there were a multitude of functions which especially featured European street theatre. This offer of street theatre was drastically reduced as a result of the financial crisis brought about by the reunification of Germany and the effect it had on the taxpayer's pocket. The budget is becoming less from year to year. As an organizer you always have to fight for your street art festival and convince and sensitize the policy from that kind of*

*culture. The rating for street art is in general too low. The governments from the cities don't have financial margin anymore and so they reduce social and cultural benefits. The situation will exacerbate from year to year...and the question if we can afford to this kind of culture will also be queried from year to year.' (Germany)*

*'Dutch street theatre is entering a difficult period, minimal funding less and less new productions. Minimum performance possibilities. They are earning relatively less and less on the street-festivals, it is hard to exist. The major festivals are all suffering from reduce financial support, which immediately has his effect on the program. Generally speaking the major festivals want more [from the artists] for less. The other effect is the quality of Dutch street theatre is not improving, it is being overtaken by all our neighbours, Help!!.' (Netherlands)*

In countries where there is established funding for street arts, money comes from a variety of sources, national, regional and local; most festivals and companies are funded through public money. Respondents claimed minimal interest from private enterprise (from nothing to 10%) – with the exception of Romania's single festival which has 20% private investment. Some festivals acknowledge support in kind from commercial sources and in some places, commercial organisations directly fund the local Town Centre partnership, which then funds street arts.

In Belgium and France, there is a national recognition of the role of street arts, with decrees and statutes (however, calculation of the figures given for Belgium, the street arts uses just 0.04% of the cultural budget!) In Belgique Francophone, there is also a special fund called 'Art et Vie', which offers a 'guarantee against loss' to agreed festivals; otherwise, Namur is nearly alone as a town investing directly in its street festival; whereas in the Flemish half of Belgium, there is significant regional and city investment – Gent, Antwerpen, Hasselt and the province of Limburg.

In France the Ministry of Culture and its regional departments (les DRACs) fund many different street arts projects – festivals, creation centres and companies, a training programme and a national development agency, along with the current street arts development initiative Le Temps des Arts de la Rue. Individual towns and cities also invest significant amounts of money in their annual festival programme. Additionally, there is regular interest and support from local media – the press, radio and television – enabling the profile of an event to be higher than could be gained from expensive advertising.

However, even with this level of support, some programmers feel they need to be loyal to their home-grown performers:

*"Yes it's true we do support many small street theatre companies in France which are already very fragile, in a social context that is in crisis. But we do want to be able to meet and programme other foreign groups."*

In Italy, support comes indirectly, to the local authorities:

*"The only region having issued a specific law for street arts is the Regione Piemonte by this law a special fund is determined year by year, in order to support many city councils involved in organization and promotion of street arts festivals. Most city councils try to give operational help and support in order to ease performances, to detect proper pedestrian areas for shows, providing parking and service facilities. They also issue local laws in this context."*

The Irish Arts Council has come closer to street arts via the country's immense tradition of parading:

*‘Ireland has been involved for a number of years through the funding of festivals through the Arts Council. More recently in 2006 a specific Circus, Street Art and Spectacle policy has been adopted by the Arts Council. Street theatre as such is quite thin on the ground in Ireland but the culture fully embraces street spectacle (parade based work) and this is firmly embedded in the Irish culture. As festivals are programming more street theatre work there has been a small rise in the number of Irish street theatre companies but as there is little training available this has slowed growth’*

In some countries, a number of street arts companies receive regular funding to maintain themselves, as well as for making shows. In the UK and Ireland, these are known as ‘annually funded’ (there are around 20 companies in total), in France they are ‘conventionnés’ (around 29 companies). There are a small number of funded companies in Belgium, Holland and Spain. Other countries declared that they both funded artists yet had no budget for street arts. In one of these cases, they described artists as working indoors as well as out (Finland).

The vast majority of small companies have no grant, they create all their work and tour it in order to make a living.

*‘There are many companies working in street arts that actually don’t require a subsidy in order to work regularly - they rely on the paid circulation of their shows through a big number of towns’ (Portuguese Cultural Officer, this opinion not endorsed by companies!)*

Many do not live only from their role as street performers; they work in education, in indoor theatre, in other professions entirely; some own vehicles or buildings that they can rent out in winter and earn a small income from that.

*‘One of the difficulties [in trying to define how many companies are working in the UK] is that there are a lot of people who do street arts part-time and, by necessity, support themselves some other way’.*

Some artists I spoke to said they did not go for grants as the administration was so arduous that they would spend more time than was worth it for the money they would get. Another artist expressed reservations about being ‘conventionné’ as the pressure was immense to have to produce a new show every year, whether the artistic muse was there strongly or not! In their opinion, this resulted sometimes in shows having to be presented when not ready.

France has the most enlightened system of artist support, known as the ‘Assédic’, where artists (of all persuasions, where they have seasonal or irregular work, not just street companies) may claim a form of stipend at quiet times of the year. This is one of the keys to the astonishingly productive street arts scene in France, with hundreds of companies producing new, often extremely high quality work every year. Another key is the extensive network of Creation centres, designed to enable artists to create work with the maximum of support and the minimum of practical deterrents – see Part 4 of this paper.

### **3.2. Grants for New productions**

Where money is granted directly to artists (as opposed to the festival structures) the range of knowledge was also very thin. Estimates varied greatly, from € 5 000 to € 50 000 with everything in between. Few of the very large companies responded to this question – perhaps because each show is so different, perhaps because the respondent is not in charge of the budget,

perhaps because grants to larger companies cover maintenance of the organisation as well as the show and cannot easily be separated.

*‘Companies can ask the "Fond Darstellende Künster", the "Kulturstiftung NRW" to give subsidies for a new project. "Theater Titanic" receives a total amount of institutional grants of € 50 000 for their new project. The total budget of the production is € 300 000, which they have to finance by their own. The "Landesstiftung Baden-Württemberg" finances the new production of "Theatre Panoptikum" with an amount of € 550 000’ (Germany).*

I was informed by one respondent that on average, the larger French shows may receive € 150 000, but this was not endorsed by several artists! It could be a useful piece of research, to find this out and link it to the amount of money needed to create shows large enough for audiences of 10 000.

Several festivals help fund new work for artists to perform at their festivals. This money is usually called ‘commissioning’. Several different festivals may co-finance expensive projects, in order to see new shows appear every year. This is done individually, with artists writing funding applications to festivals as well as official funding agencies, explaining their new project and what is needed. In reality, across Europe, most companies approach or are approached by festivals who know their work very early on, to discuss future plans and collaborations.

In France, there are direct links between festivals and creation centres, and to the production of new shows. Commissioning is a very common way of generating new product – the large festivals are directly responsible for much of the large and middle scale projects emerging from France today.

### **3.3. International co-productions**

In the last five years, a small number of international projects have been set up, through the European Community Culture 2000 initiative. Two of these are specifically designed to support new work being created and toured around Europe.

#### **3.3.1. Eunetstar**

Formed in 2003, this programme involved co- organisers from Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), UK, Netherlands, France, Poland and Ireland, with two other countries working as partners on some projects (Slovenia and Romania). The Eunetstar brief involved support to artists and festivals in a number of different ways – in addition to supporting new productions, there was mentoring of artists, ‘a network of scouting and spreading’, necessary qualitative research and reports.

#### **3.3.2. In Situ**

Also formed in 2003, this programme involves organisers from seven different festivals in five European countries (Spain, France, Belgium, UK and Austria) working together to “support the creation and presentation of high quality artistic projects with an inter-cultural dimension and based on collaboration between artists from numerous European countries, dealing with common concerns and adapted to the diversity of European languages.” Over three years they have been involved in the creation of nine new projects, which have toured across borders within the EU.

These networks have been successful in enabling funds to be generated for the creation of new work of scale. They have both produced books full of colour photographs and articles, as part of their advocacy of the street arts. Both of them will continue for a second three year period, with slightly different foci.

The difficulties that have emerged during the life of these networks have mostly concerned issues of cultural difference, communication difficulties arising from there being no common language used by everyone and the specific challenges incurred by members all being very overcommitted and busy in their own spheres.

It is envisaged that further networks may be set up to investigate collaborations in other related spheres. Eg there is an embryonic trans-European network for showcasing small scale street theatre and circus shows, led by Italy.

### **3.4. Recommendations**

- Proper research is done by each nation into what funding sources are available for production of work (this was extremely difficult to find)
- Each nation produces information on funding opportunities for artists.
- National street arts networks produce information on commissioning policies and principles for artists
- Eunetstar and In Situ continue to spread information about their work
- New pan-European commissioning and diffusion networks are encouraged and supported as part of Culture 2000.
- Advocacy is undertaken from the European parliament to improve the status of street arts across the nations, and point out its special opportunities as a tool for fostering stronger links and connections between residents in member states.

### **4. The size and scale of street shows on the circuit**

There is an extremely large variety of scales and types of show on the street festival circuit; many different artforms are used separately and together – street theatre (with and without text), street dance, puppetry (large and small scale), physical theatre/mime, maskwork, comedia dell'arte, circus, circus skills-based street theatre, street music, booth shows for limited numbers, walkabout and stilted shows. Of the festivals having an off programme, the biggest proportion of off shows (by a big margin) are circus. Few festivals programme dance on stage, many do not have music on stage either.

There is a clear division in types of street performance. The majority of shows are clearly 'animation' pieces, designed to fill squares and streets with life and energy, performers and audience co-existing in the public space in a continuous flow of entertainment and interesting experiences. The aim of this kind of show is to appeal to everyone, whatever age, often in family groups and generate a real sense of exhilaration and bonhomie.

Other shows are much more theatrical and may be very large scale, needing to take place in spaces removed from the milling public. These may require greater concentration from a dedicated audience, they develop a range of different atmospheres and emotional responses



from their audiences; some feel very like ‘theatre without walls’, others use the surrounding environment or architecture very deliberately to enhance the effect of their message.

Into this category may also be added small intimate shows that are hidden in courtyards and down alleys, in quieter spaces in parks or on water, in tents or booths and using unusual spaces and buildings. In towns like Aurillac in France, the audience has to travel a fair distance to reach some shows, as there are not enough appropriate spaces closer than a taxi ride.

In many peoples’ opinions, there are not enough of these theatrical experiences:

*‘We need to have new writing, more focused and innovative shows and performances. Most of the shows created now are lightweight, made so for economic imperative. Too often they are designed to appeal to all, so they sell easily. Very few large scale productions are made.’*  
(Belgium)

#### **4.1. Visual and media installation arts**

In addition to performance work, there are a growing number of companies from a visual arts tradition who are finding outlets through the street arts festival circuit. Festivals commission artists to create environments, decorations, temporary outdoor sculptures and interactive games, light- and sound-scapes. They may be self-standing, of hung in on and from buildings, trees and street furniture. Festivals that use a special area (parks or courtyards separate from the daily passage of pedestrians through town) are more likely to develop this area of work.

Additionally, some festivals work directly with shops and other commercial premises, introducing artists to design shop windows thematically linked to the festival, or encouraging shops to take part themselves. One year at x.trax in Manchester, shops and businesses were encouraged to ‘paint the town red’ – over 60 organisations got involved. Angers transforms their town into an imaginary world each year - under the sea, ‘la vie en rose’, the city streets transformed into a garden, sprouting grass. Installations are sometimes made for courtyards, riverbeds and ruined castles, where these form part of a festival.

#### **4.2. The Number of Companies**

The H/C questionnaire asked respondents how many street companies exist in their country. Many had no idea, or directed me to their cultural ministry (who also did not know in some cases!) Some claimed that the number fluctuates rapidly with variable funding, several claimed that it was hard to know what was to be included:

*‘Please let us define first what ... a 1 man juggler busker show: is it street art or not? I do not have an idea about all these small shows. Or although I am pretty well informed, I might have missed some young newcomers doing their first show’.*

*‘Here a question: What is professional street art company? Is there a certain level of training or education, or practical experience or just the fact that you get your living out of your art?’*

There was also not a clear distinction between professional and amateur companies, especially as many young groups work in other fields, in order to be able to earn a living. Only in France and Belgium are there financial support mechanisms for a number of intermittent/seasonal entertainers.

*‘....And also there free lance members do other jobs. Do you count them?’*

Numbers varied from no professionals, only amateur, to 1000 in France. An astonishing variation for one small continent, which shows how much work there is to be done.

The ACE survey looked at the prices paid for shows of different scales (2005 prices). Programmers were asked to give the 'range of costs' they might pay per show for small scale, medium scale or large scale work. The responses ranged from:

**Small scale** (audience of up to approx 500) from € 150 to € 2 500, with a couple of respondents saying they would pay up to € 8 000 for a good small scale show.

**Medium scale** (audience of 500 - 3 000) from € 3 000 to € 12 000 with a couple prepared to pay up to € 15 000.

**Large scale** (for an audience of over 3 000 up to 10 000) from € 10 000 to € 40 000 with some (astonishingly low) replies of € 2-4 000!

Several people objected on principle to this question. Comments ranged from 'this is impossible, it varies every year:

*"We choose shows we want rather than spending our budgets mathematically" "Every show is unique", "the range is huge", "they all depend on the number of people, as well as the size of the show", "we sometimes book cheaper shows in middle range than in small range" ...*

Most festivals with budgets of € 50 000 or less programmed no large scale work.

However, large scale shows are regularly booked across Europe as 'stand alone events', to celebrate/commemorate a special occasion or the inauguration of a space or landmark.

Programmers have some fairly strongly held opinions about which countries produce different styles of work – and in what conditions:

*"We know very little about British work and who to talk about it with and there is a prejudice about the costs. The image of the impresario, the marketing manager and the businessman involved in British work is not new."*

*"For large scale outdoor performances we tend to look more into France, The Netherlands and Spain."*

*"About the stilt shows: a lot of companies there do exactly the same: only walking on stilts in nice costumes and we really are looking for **theatre** on stilts!"*

*"We appreciate this culture which is so different to American culture, much richer, more inventive and based on feelings and a true sense of humanity."*

*"Each country has its own criteria. English TV is different to French or Belgian. Its normal that this difference shows itself in theatre shows."*

And yet, conversely ...

*"I don't care about the country. The work has to be of good quality and this is the main reason to invite a company. Secondly are the technical and financial limits. If I'm not touched by a performance or performer, I don't invite him, even if he comes for free. We don't have an off festival, to avoid that everybody can come and so we can't guarantee the quality anymore. Good products sell themselves. If you look at e.g. producciones imperdibles, well, they have 3 groups doing the same performance because the demand is so big."*

#### 4.3. Number of Productions

The HorsLesMurs questionnaire asked respondents how many street arts shows had been created in 2005. Not surprisingly there was very little information – the majority of respondents claimed they had no idea, some from the same country ‘guessed’ with sometimes very different results (Belgium: 3-5 to Portugal: 400) . It was clear that there is a problem of definition for some respondents:

*‘The number of shows produced is not possible to assess, since again, as in the case of the new circus, they are primarily a local level activity, not included in the statistical data of the State Statistics Office. In any case they are more numerous than new circus shows.’*

H/C also asked further questions about shows, which again did not produce very useful responses. Questions such as ‘how many artists do you use to make a show? How long do you rehearse a show\*? And how long do you keep a show running? produced very inconsequential answers (and some irritated, even angry responses).

*‘I have worked on projects with a touring team of 15 which involved a further 8 artists and am currently working on a project with just 5 artists to create it and a touring team of 6. I have seen projects with 38-100 people touring!’*

*‘Impossible to say - If I speak about our shows we perform them as long as they are still interesting for us and still attract audiences. We often renew them. So we perform them at least 200 times. They last from 1 hour to 1 and a half hours.’*

*‘400 shows over 4 yrs’*

*‘This will depend on the success, marketing, international touring’*

*‘150 times,’*

*‘5 yrs’*

*‘12 shows a year.’*

#### 4.4. Cultural Diversity

The European Union is growing in size every few years; in 2005 a host of new countries joined, many former states of the Soviet Union; in 2007 Romania and Bulgaria have been added. The cultures of the twenty five countries are extremely varied, with many different languages, social habits, economic fortunes, religions and educational experience. Additionally, there has been an increasing level of immigration into the nation states of people originating in countries elsewhere in the world that were formerly part of European empires and colonies.

These factors have put increasing strain on many social structures (beyond the remit of this report to define these). However, it is a key role of cultural organisations and structures to find

ways to foster greater harmony between differing peoples, to aspire to creating a Europe that is inclusive and expansive; that reflects and promotes the very different arts and creative talents of people with enormously different experiences.

The street arts have yet to achieve any of this diversity. There are very few projects or shows seen at street arts festivals made by people from minority cultures within the EC; Black, Asian and Chinese people appear only very occasionally in shows, always created by 'white-led organisations'. This is partly a result of the time it takes for new residents to feel safe and comfortable within their adopted country; it is partly economic, social or religious differences; it is also (and most importantly for the purposes of this report) resulting from isolation, from a lack of knowledge of understanding of how to be involved, of a lack of confidence or the necessary tools to aid involvement.

There are small moves afoot to change this situation. In the UK, cultural diversity is now a key plank of all arts policy and there is priority money for shows made by Black-led organisations. Additionally there is specific support for these by cultural organisations working in the street arts, to give specialist help, mentoring and advocacy.

*'In creating the outdoor show we relied on x.trax heavily for support. Making the jump from performing venues to working outside was quite a big challenge and x.trax helped us a lot, gave us a lot of time and encouragement.'*<sup>366</sup>

Greenwich and Docklands Festival in London, England, has a contract with the Mayor of London's office to produce events for Trafalgar Square every summer. These are all designed to celebrate different aspects of diversity – racial difference and physical/learning disability. Over the last three years, they have specifically encouraged arts groups who work indoors to develop street arts projects for the square. There are new projects emerging every year from several cultural minority groups – of South Asian, Caribbean, African, Chinese, Arabic and Turkish origin; additionally they have commissioned projects with two groups of disabled performers. This is very exciting and pioneering work. This summer they are working with French company Oposito to connect their show 'Les Trottoirs de Joburg' directly with young Black Londoners in an exciting collaborative performance.

In 2006, the Ana Desetnica Festival (Ljubljana, Slovenia) hosted 'The fair of Cultures', a day of street performance and exhibitions with involvement from all the countries that were formerly part of Yugoslavia – Croatians, Slovenes, Bosnians, Montenegrans, Herzegovins and Serbians. This was an extraordinary event, the first time any such gathering has taken place since the civil wars and massacres of the 1990's. Its success has given much confidence to organisers and participants, along with a greater understanding of what kind of work is most effective.

There is great scope for much more work to be pioneered and encouraged in the area of diversity – and there is nowhere better for linking peoples than on the streets.

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<sup>366</sup> Maggie Clarke: *Economic Impact and Value of the x.trax Services*, Arts Council of England 2006.

## 5. Means of production available – studio space, creation centres, ‘run-in time’

### 5.1. Resources available

Artists need spaces to make their work – from initial devising and design (which may take place almost anywhere) to making space and rehearsal areas. Where companies are using large scale structures and props, they need correspondingly large spaces, with tall entrances and ceilings, ‘dirty workspace’ for metalwork, welding and carpentry. And once shows are made, there needs to be adequate storage facilities at reasonable cost.

All these things are extremely hard to find in most countries. Artists usually resort to renting bus garages, old warehouses or disused industrial spaces. In the UK these are getting harder and harder to find, as former mills and warehouses are being converted into expensive apartments. Recently a couple of French companies had to leave their workshop base in Paris as the value of these properties for conversion was too high to enable artists to continue to occupy them. This will happen more and more as land values rise, across Europe.

*‘The main thing that emerged was that companies **had** found spaces to work in, but often with zero security of tenure so there were several (even many) stories of them getting evicted from their space at very short-notice, often because of regeneration. Even cultural regeneration still seemed to result in street companies getting thrown out. It was shocking how often this had happened.’ (England)*

Currently there are few specialist creation spaces:

In Ireland: *‘Macnas and Spraoi [the country’s 2 largest companies] both have their own creation studios and they produce narrative based parade work.’*

in England:

*‘The Stockton Space is very new, it only opened last summer. It has good workshops and making space, a huge barn and kitchen facilities. It is a little bit far from civilization – but that is good if you are making noise. For its first year artists will be fully supported to be there. Stockton BC are monitoring how people find it.’*

Additionally, just this week the London Olympic organization has commissioned a survey into the feasibility of setting up a creation centre in London, as a legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games.

In Spain, there is one public access centre, owned and managed by Catalan company Els Comediants. In Belgium there are a few places – La Roseraie (the base for the FAR), Espace Catastrophe, Latitude 50, Dommelhof; other big festivals – Namur, Gent and Antwerpen - have access to workspaces for their artists at certain times of the year.

France is the leader in this aspect of street arts development. There is a network of 11 Centres Nationaux pour les Arts de la Rue (CNAR), that are mostly grouped around towns where large festivals take place, including Chalon, Aurillac, Angers, Sotteville, Cognac, Brest. Lieux Publics, in Marseille, is the most important of these, hosting a continuous programme of creations, and stimulating conferences, debates and publications, all with the purpose of aiding the development of street arts in the country. In addition to the CNARs, there are another 86 artist residences where work is created, they are smaller and owned/managed by individual companies.

Creation centres vary in style and what they offer companies and expect from them. They each have an artistic policy of the kind of work they want to do, and what they can offer – this may vary from offering accommodation and travel to money for costumes/props and sometimes money for artists. There is often high quality technical support and usually very well stocked workshops. Some places expect artists to perform for the public at the end of a residence, sometimes not. Occasionally students and others come and work with artists to watch them. Artists companies send written proposals to creation centres that interest them. If accepted, artists may be invited in residence for between 2 and 4 weeks.

*‘There are many more available resources for creation in France as opposed to here (the UK), whether that be:*

- a) money just for creation (ie not tied in with / dependent on touring – and at the end of a creation period, the work may just not be ready to tour);*
- b) residency opportunities for all stages (from early on to full-scale rehearsals);*
- c) a wider range of funders in France although the amounts each give are less (as opposed to larger whacks which are possible to get from the Arts Councils here);*
- d) more commissioning from festivals in France, more festivals taking work in its first year. ‘*

*“Companies in France are used to the opportunities and demands of working in creation centres – living together for long chunks of time, everyone together. Greater involvement of everyone within the French team in the creation of the work (perhaps this is just a difference in company ethos or the fact that French companies have had more experience of working with larger groups of people)”.*

There are other cultural differences that affect the success (or otherwise) of artists work. In France again:

*‘Longer development times are standard in France – Metalovoice were really surprised at the regime we imposed as they (and they are not atypical) are used to developing work over a couple of years with regular developmental periods where the entire creation team comes together for a week or more... and I would say Boilerhouse’s approach was also not typical of the UK where development periods tend to be short or non-existent... and in some cases, UK companies do not even devote much time to rehearsal. In France, continued development of the work once it is on the road is the norm with directors touring with the work even if they do not have a touring role, at least in the first year, since touring provides opportunities to develop the work.’*

Artist companies and programmers from other parts of Europe are investigating the success of France’s creation centres; people are considering whether this extremely successful model may be adapted for local use. There is useful information on Lieux de Residences in France, Belgium and Spain, on HorsLesMurs website [www.horslesmurs.asso.fr](http://www.horslesmurs.asso.fr).

Much can be learned from the French experience of developing larger projects – the necessity to ‘take a long view’ of the time it takes for a new show to be ‘finished’; testing work on live audiences is an essential part of the development process, which means that shows develop once on the road. The French are very aware that ‘reworking time’ must be built into the life of a show and methods for funding this process form part of the thinking within Le Temps des Arts

de la Rue. Other countries struggle to find funding for initial rehearsals, let alone reworking, so this model should be watched avidly as a model for improvements elsewhere.

An essential aspect of the creation and development process for street arts must be the existence and maintenance of quality, reliable and regular of training. This is both to encourage new young people to enter the field of work and learn fast how to make the most of opportunities that are available, and also to keep people who have been involved for a while refreshed and keen to embark on new possibilities.

However, the patterns of training provision are extremely sketchy. Once again, France stands well in the lead, with an ambitious training programme in constant development – the FAI AR ([www.faiar.org](http://www.faiar.org)). This professional body advises on training methods, sets up courses as apprenticeships, commissions training packages and materials and contributes to a national debate on training.

Lieux Publics organizes training, including an interesting annual project entitled ‘Remue Meningen’ – an initiative that sees representatives from 5 different theatre companies with new shows in development invited to spend a week together in Corsica, discussing their projects with each other and specialists from relevant art forms.

Other countries offer little in the way of training. There are theatre schools and courses in circus skills in most countries, but it is extremely rare to find college courses that specify street theatre techniques.

*‘Circus schools and theatre practitioners run short course and masterclasses in different aspects of performing arts and visual skills (puppets, masks, carnival etc), but there are no full time courses’ (Ireland)*

*‘Training programs are usually not funded at public level, but FNAS have been able to realize training programs thanks to some local and national administrations. They run trainings generally from Oct. to May + short summer stages.’ (Italy)*

*‘The street artists organisation NASA are planning to do a ‘needs assessment’ of the sector (from an artists’ perspective) and will focus on professional development and capacity building too. ISAN occasionally runs short courses teaching Local authority staff how to plan a day-long street festival in town.’ (England/Scotland)*

*‘French FAIAR is brilliant project, generally unknown in Italy. But Luigi Fusani (teacher and enthusiast of street arts) is trying to work in this direction. That is to work in connection with the FAIAR and to understand how to collaborate in a concrete way. Since some time we are working on a project to create a centre for street arts creation, production, etc.’*

*Namur in Belgium offers 2 or 3 apprenticeships for 4 – 5 months leading up to each festival in May. Youngsters are given as broad an experience as possible of the workings of the year-round organisation les Arts Forains.*

Croatia manages to organise activity within the education field:

*‘Significant educational activities in this field are carried out by the Autonomous Cultural Centre Attack which organizes Attack’s workshops, as well as the Daska Theatre’s Daskamiste and Small Performers’ Scene. Workshops are sometimes organized within the framework of*

*culture and community education centres, for instance, in Zagreb, within the Culture Centre Maksimir. Occasionally, workshops, training course, etc., are also organized within festivals that are wholly or partly devoted to street arts. However, for the time being, institutionalized street arts training programmes do not exist. The only possibilities are attending workshop, seminars, etc., organized as part of a festival or by an association.'*

In England, a small number of 'international fellowships' is offered to artists to work with others from a different country. This has existed for a long time for the conventional (indoor) performing arts; but the last three years has seen this extended to cover street artists. It is hoped that this may continue (although it has been of some concern that artists themselves were not able to propose their collaborations. The exchanges were 'decided' and artists found to fill them).

*"Some initiatives sound hopeful at the start and then you discover that the funders make all the decisions. For two years we tried for an international fellowship to work with Lucie Lom – and the money was given to partnerships not set up by the artists themselves and of limited value to those who participated."* [H/C]

## **5.2. Recommendations**

- Training opportunities across Europe need to be much more deeply investigated, to include their content, how they are funded, what qualifications are available (this research produced almost no knowledge or conflicting evidence from the questionnaires about what was available).
- Information to be kept and updated at agreed national resource bases and by Circostrada.
- Politicians from culture from across the EC should visit creation centres in France to see the quality of such places as creation spaces, alongside the links with festivals in the same place and local communities around the centre. Advocacy to be done as a result of this initiative, to encourage greater investment across Europe in 'places to make shows'.
- Information available to artists about what is required to devise, make, rehearse and tour a street show.
- Opportunities for experienced artists to cross to different countries to work alongside artists from abroad, and for young companies to 'shadow' a more experienced one, so as to learn fast about the requirements of such work.
- Greater links made in each nation with training providers at colleges in the host country and complimentary courses abroad. A scheme equivalent to Erasmus to be investigated, in an attempt to lessen the very wide gap between street arts production companies in parts of Europe (especially France) and other countries.

## **6. The use and value of marketing**

Marketing is a weak link that unites every questionnaire I have examined or telephone interview I have made. Festivals claim not to know about companies, companies do not know how to reach festivals so that they start to communicate with them.



**Artists:**

Many artists are poorly resourced and cannot or do not provide glossy high quality publicity to mail to festivals.

*"But more often the publicity helps to get us the booking after they have already seen or heard about us from somewhere else. We rarely get a booking just by sending out publicity randomly."*

Yet others claim:

*"Web site and mail outs are very important."*

*"We have just mailed out to European festivals and are getting a good response."*

From the ACE survey (which is mostly about British companies abroad) it is clear that programmers have difficulty finding out about foreign groups unless they have seen them:

*"I know very little about the work of English companies, because of their very poor visibility in France."*

*"Other people do not attend [foreign] festivals therefore they do not know what the work is about. I really think that the festivals should promote themselves better abroad as well as the artists."*

*"NO, we see very little work and have very few proposals. I think that those in government in charge of selling British work abroad do not have a network of street festivals in their address books."*

Artists need to market their work – in as many different ways as possible. Publicity is useful, ideally in several languages. Street arts as an artform generates a selection of wonderful images, that successful companies exploit very effectively. However, it is perhaps worth pointing out that cultural differences in aesthetics may give rise to surprising difficulties:

*"The images (photos or videos) often seem unattractive to us, 'too much glitz', humour is often the most important aspect, little or no poetry, images often linked to carnivalesque themes ..."*

*'Relying on publicity is deceptive. It looks impressive on paper, but the show itself maybe empty, vacuous and lacking any theatrical depth.'*

Use of the internet, emails, the telephone, all are helpful to reinforce contact. Appearance at showcasing events is a good way to be seen by programmers. Once a company is known, word of mouth travels fast between programmers and artists. Lists of principal showcase festivals in each country are available from Hors les Murs / Circostrada. Building a trip to a local showcase could be an intrinsic part of creating a marketing budget.

## 6.1. Language problems

These do appear to be a problem in some cases:

### *a) When setting up bookings*

Both artists and programmers described feeling inadequate and unconfident making phone calls in other languages. Two different respondents said that apart from having a good show, the greatest asset a company can have is foreign language speakers! Another commented that email is a great advantage as you can read it slowly with a dictionary if necessary.

### *b) Performance*

Shows with text can cause a problem; audiences not understanding can throw performers off balance (when expecting a laugh, there is dead silence). Some companies would rather not tour abroad in certain circumstances. Others either work in international street performer lingo (a mix of their mother tongue with words picked up from the place they are visiting) or request key words in the host language or, in some cases, translate the whole show. This can be problematic in circumstances where very strong accents or strange intonation cause problems with the audience's comprehension.

It is useful to encourage companies to be imaginative about how to make their shows understandable. This may require workshops or masterclasses (or suggest they learn a foreign language!).

## 6.2. Agents or not?

One way of approaching marketing is for artists to work with an agent, who will promote their shows on their behalf as part of their larger portfolio. This may be a very useful way of getting established, provided companies make sure that their shows are being promoted in an appropriate way. Here photographic images may be crucial, so they stand out amongst many others in a brochure.

Possessing an international agent can help considerably in a company's attempt to negotiate cultural differences, language issues, legal and other restrictions.

The disadvantage of agents is that it may be an expensive way of getting bookings. Agents may take up to 25% of any fee; some agencies try and get the maximum fee for their artists from programmers – but may end up getting very few bookings for artists as they are too expensive to programme. Agents may not be entirely transparent in their arrangements with artists, which can give rise to mistrust, which is not helpful to either party. Programmers frequently prefer to negotiate directly with artists:

*'Some companies go through often very expensive European agents, that work in a very showbiz way. Could they direct themselves directly to festival directors or small producers, who can set up mini-tours around their own dates. It's a bit more risky but often much pleasanter for both artists and organisers.'*

### 6.3. Recommendations

- National agencies to take on the role of website host for street arts companies. These need to create good databases with opportunities for video streaming and slide shows; and publicise their existence to artists, programmers and other stakeholders.
- Funding to be prioritized to enable this to be set up and managed (a minimum of one per nation) and effectively marketed to artists and programmers.

## 7. How much do professionals know about their field of work and elsewhere

### 7.1. Lack of information and knowledge

Lack of information is a major reason for artists not making more steps to get themselves into other countries and is also a problem for many programmers.

Artists feel they do not know enough about other European festivals. They learn most by talking to each other and festival directors. Some say they really enjoy large festivals where there are artist resting and eating facilities, so they can meet performers from different countries. Some good friendships have been made. Several artists feel that they are alone in not knowing what to do. The degree of isolation felt by some is very disturbing. Much effort needs to be put into generating artist participation in national networks.

The X,trax showcase in Manchester offers all participating artists a seminar together (before the event) at which registered programmers are described, the artistic principals of their festivals, styles of work they are looking for, sometimes available budgets and other points of interest. This is always considered extremely useful by artists.

#### ***Programmers:***

Some programmers also suffer from lack of information:

*"We have very few contacts with any companies apart from French."*

*".... lack of money to go and see and therefore get to know international work at festivals abroad".*

The international festival circuit is large and vibrant; programmers attending these meet each other in different festivals, discuss companies, make plans to share work, tour projects, seek inspiration. Every year there are more programmers looking for shows to bring to their events. But there is still a very large number of people who know little about other festivals, especially outside of their national (or regional) boundaries. It is enormously stimulating to visit other festivals, partly to find work, partly to experience different ways of presenting shows, different ideas for the shape of a festival, different ways people behave and relate to each other, the artists, and other aspects of the town – green space, shops, cafes. It should be one of the great attractions of Europe drawing closer, that people from different countries visit each other's workplaces as well as for holidays.

In discussions with festivals, there is a very wide difference in both knowledge of and (surprisingly) interest in visiting other festivals. There needs to be better access to useful information, encouragement to see travel as an important developmental tool and support to programmers while at foreign festivals.

## 7.2. Communications and networks

Links and Communications between Street Arts interested organisations (festivals, artists and structures) have a variety of communications needs:

- artists selling their work;
- programmers finding out about artists;
- knowledge about funding and opportunities;
- keeping in touch with other like-minded people.

### *National Networks*

Some countries have a much stronger web of communications than others. This is not surprising as their existence directly reflects the strength of the festival infrastructure and number of artist companies in a country or region. It is also clear that most countries have very strong links in other areas - such as mainstream theatre or circus. Artists seem to be members of such networks, until there is enough impetus to form a street art-specific network.

Of existing networks, there is a variation between those that include promoters and artists or those that serve just one. There are clearly advantages of both. One of the most recently organised networks consulted existing groups (during an international festival attended by members of several different national networks) before setting up theirs.

Networks serve to facilitate communication between artists and programmers on many different topics –

Data collection: acting as an important resource for the street arts community and other parties – local authorities, journalists, etc.

Information sharing: on festivals and events, funding, training opportunities, searching for creative people for projects, issues of poor treatment at events, contractual difficulties, health and safety issues, licences, searching for spaces to work.

Developing political campaigns: for funding, against over stringent licensing or police harassment, for better press coverage.

Sharing ideas for key developments: developing cultural diversity, creating genuine access opportunities for people with disabilities, making closer links with the established arts, training opportunities, creation spaces...

Between them, the existing networks do a mix of all of these. With the now extensive use of the internet, websites are well used and form an excellent source of information. Some networks (e.g. NASA in England) have a continuous interactive chat-box, where artists post comments, queries and thoughts.

Some of the Existing Networks are below (again, respondents had not always heard of their own let alone other networks. The only one that seemed well known was Circostrada/HorsLesMurs):

- Denmark: Dansk Artist Forbund and there are interest groups within jugglers, magicians, clowns, etc.
- England/Wales: ISAN - Independent Street Arts Network (open to all, but predominantly promoters), and NASA – National Association of Street Artists (artists only), [www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk).
- Italy: FNAS National Federation of Street Arts [info@fnas.org](mailto:info@fnas.org).
- Belgium: De Vlaamse Federatie voor Kunsten op Straat (initiative of the Internationaal Straattheaterfestival and Theater op de Markt).
- Le Club des Grands Evénements, initié en 2006 par le Ministre au Tourisme de la Région Wallonne.
- La FAR (Fédération Artistes de Rue – artists only) [www.la-far.be](http://www.la-far.be).
- Germany just founded in 2006 – c/o Kulturbüro Bonn (J.u.N. Ruppert).
- Netherlands: there are several websites [www.straattheater.nl](http://www.straattheater.nl) (for small scale street entertainment), [www.straattheater.info](http://www.straattheater.info) (for street performers in Amsterdam) [www.straattheater.net](http://www.straattheater.net) for all street arts people, has an excellent record of performances and photos.
- France: La Fédération des Arts de la Rue – for everyone working in street arts, it now has Regional branches made up of people within each region.
- There appears to be no network in Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic and Norway.

### 7.3. Recommendations

That these information networks are expanded within each nation and between nations. All the limitations in the extent of this research have arisen because respondents to questionnaires know such different (and patchy) amounts of information.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION H: STREET ARTS IN EUROPE: MEANS OF DIFFUSION

Contribution by Anne Tucker – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

### 1. The context in which street arts are being presented

It is clear that the vast majority of street arts presentations across Europe take place within the context of a festival or special event. There are many different reasons for this:

- **Economic:** street arts festivals are seen in many places as opportunities to drive tourism and inward investment to towns and small cities. A far greater impact can be made by bringing a number of different companies together at the same time, to change the atmosphere entirely from the day to day to something exhilarating and unusual; increasingly large numbers of visitors are attracted and a significant amount of income accrues to the local economy - hotels, shops, restaurants, bars, car parks and public transport, local services and others.
- **Civic Pride/Marketing:** tourism is a crucial element in a place's view of itself – many tourists will return home and speak highly of the place, if they have had an enjoyable time. Festivals encourage tourism, towns are 'on show' for the visiting public. This is particularly strong in street festivals across Western Europe, where France, Spain, Belgium and Holland have been championing their street festivals for over 20 years.
- **Political:** in some areas (particularly in France) street festivals have been virtually 'adopted' by local elected politicians as examples of their successful managing of their town, of doing things that appeal widely to their electorate in a truly open and democratic way.
- **Funding** – funding structures in some countries are organised such that it is much easier to raise money to run a specific event than to organise a long season or an annual programme. Several respondents described that funding was available for festivals to pay for artists but not for artists to fund themselves.
- **Social Inclusion Agendas:** this is becoming more significant in parts of Europe, where democratising of culture is seen desirable and arts on the streets are accessible to all and designed to cross cultural and age barriers (in a world that seems to be becoming successively more segregated and compartmentalised, whether by culture, interest, class or religion). In Germany this extends to cultural democracy – as theatres are embracing a street arts model as a way to encourage audiences back into the theatre.

#### 1.1. Dedicated Street Arts festivals

There are a very large number of street festivals across Europe. Every country in the EC holds at least one festival that features street artists alongside indoor performing or visual or multimedia arts; a few countries do not have a festival dedicated purely to street arts, but around half have more street festivals than they could count easily, with new ones added every year. France has many more street festivals than any other European country and the scale and ambition of some of the festivals there is impressive.

## **1.2. Annual programme of Street Arts**

It was clear both from festival organisers and artists, that there exist few opportunities for professional companies to get work outside of the festival (summer) season. In Britain, there is now a significantly higher use of street artists for traditional festive occasions – Easter, Halloween/en, Christmas and New Year and Christmas (again, usually at a festive occasion). France is pioneering the use of street shows at small events throughout the year, especially connected to shows being presented where there are Creation Centres. This is partly in order to spread the number of working months that artists are able to get paid work, and also to encourage audiences to come to see different street arts shows away from a festival context. Networks of promoters and artists are being established in hubs around towns and cities, whose aim is to maximise the opportunities for artists to tour around a locality, establish workshop activity and interventions in local towns and villages. Much of this is being undertaken as part of a three year long initiative in France entitled *Le Temps des Arts de la Rue*.

## **1.3. Festival Promoters**

Street arts promoters largely from non-profit organisations, theatre companies or community associations. In some countries the festival director and staff are all volunteers with day jobs elsewhere (this was especially apparent in Italy where programmers were very hard to speak to as they had no office and were not free in the daytime). One German and one English respondent described their associations as ‘commercial’ in that they have to earn their living through selling the services of their organisation in order to ‘earn’ the time to organise their own festivals.

This is an unsatisfactory situation as such organisations are not stable and may find it extremely difficult to put the necessary time into organising aspects of a festival.

In several countries, festivals are also organised by local government departments, or by individuals contracted to a local government body with the purpose of running a festival. This is particularly the case in France and England. In many cases this makes a much simpler and easier relationship between artistic and logistical production of a festival, but not always! In England, council services are now frequently almost independent from each other and goods and services must be purchased in the normal way. In France, many festivals are directly supported by the local authority, who provide many or all logistical requirements, from machine plant, to road closures, to cleaning, to providing staff to help manage the festival in action, which is extremely beneficial to any festival.

## **1.4. Funding for street arts across Europe**

In spite of the vitality of the festival circuit, it is a consistent perception among presenters, cultural officers and artists that the street arts remain of low value as an art-form and are very badly under-funded. Budgets are extremely small, in comparison to every nation’s budget for the conventional performing arts (in complete contrast to the number of people keen to watch such work).

It is extremely difficult to ascertain with accuracy at this point what budgets are available. Many respondents (both those returning questionnaires and those interviewed by telephone) did not know and were unsure how to find out how much money was available. In many countries,

respondents wrote ‘almost nothing’, or ‘less than 1%’ or ‘it is impossible to find out’. Street arts rarely appear as a discreet budget separate from performing arts, or theatre, or even education.

*“Money is hard to get because when you apply also indoor theatre is applying in the same area. When you have a very good written application you can ask until € 150 000 from the national government.” (Netherlands)*

Some countries admitted there was no street arts budget at all.

*“The one-day street productions for their own events may have been produced, but never an independent street shows that would continue the life of their own.” (Croatia).*

*“Ministry of culture does not get involved in producing street art shows, neither helps the festivals strictly dedicated to the street art. There is no recognition of street artist as a real artist, but just a sort of entertainer that wants to earn some extra money on the street.” (Hungary)*

In countries where there is established funding for street arts, money comes from a variety of sources, national, regional and local; most festivals and companies are funded through public money. Respondents claimed minimal interest from private enterprise (from nothing to 10%) – with the exception of Romania’s single festival which has 20% private investment. Some festivals acknowledge support in kind from commercial sources and in some places, commercial organisations directly fund the local Town Centre partnership, which then funds street arts.

In Belgium and France, there is a national recognition of the role of street arts, with decrees and statutes (however, calculation of the figures given for Belgium, the street arts uses just 0.04% of the cultural budget!) In Belgique Francophone, there is also a special fund called ‘Art et Vie’, which offers a ‘guarantee against loss’ to agreed festivals; otherwise, Namur is nearly alone as a town investing directly in its street festival; whereas in the Flemish half of Belgium, there is significant regional and city investment – Gent, Antwerpen, Hasselt and the province of Limburg.

In France the Ministry of Culture and its regional departments (les DRACs) fund many different street arts projects – festivals, creation centres and companies, along with the current street arts development initiative Le Temps des Arts de la Rue. Individual towns and cities also invest significant amounts of money in their annual festival programme. Additionally, there is significant support from local media – the press and television, enabling the profile of an event to be higher than could be gained from expensive advertising.

In Italy, support comes indirectly, to the local authorities:

*“The only region having issued a specific law for street arts is the Regione Piemonte: by this law a special fund is determined year by year, in order to support many city councils involved in organization and promotion of street arts festivals. Most city councils try to give operational help and support in order to ease performances, to detect proper pedestrian areas for shows, providing parking and service facilities. They also issue local laws in this context.”*

In some countries, a number of street arts companies receive regular funding to maintain themselves, as well as for making shows. In the UK and Ireland, these are known as ‘annually funded’ (there are around 20 companies in total), in France they are ‘conventionnés’ (around 50 companies). There are a small number of funded companies in Belgium, Holland and Spain.



Other countries declared that they both funded artists yet had no budget for street arts. In one of these cases, they described artists as working indoors as well as out (Finland).

The vast majority of small companies have no grants, they create all their work and tour it in order to make a living. Many do not live only from their role as street performers; they work in education, in indoor theatre, in other professions entirely; some own vehicles or buildings that they can rent out in winter and earn a small income from that. Some artists I spoke to said they did not go for grants as the administration was so arduous that they would spend more time than was worth it for the money they would get. Another artist expressed reservations about being 'conventionné' as the pressure was immense to have to produce a new show every year, whether the artistic muse was there strongly or not! In their opinion, this resulted sometimes in shows having to be presented when not ready.

France has the most enlightened system of artist support, known as the 'Assédic', where artists (of all persuasions, where they have seasonal or irregular work, not just street companies) may claim a form of stipend at quiet times of the year. This is one of the keys to the astonishingly productive street arts scene in France, with hundreds of companies producing new, often extremely high quality work every year. (Another key is the extensive network of Creation centres, designed to enable artists to create work with the maximum of support and the minimum of practical deterrents – see Production of work.

### **1.5. Income from festivals**

Most of the festivals involved in the questionnaires or interviewed claimed that street festivals were usually free to the public. In these cases, the artists are either paid to perform free to the audience or they are allowed (and sometimes encouraged) to pass the hat at the end of the show. In large festivals, this can be tricky, as every show involves a plea for money at the end – the more ingenious the better!

However, a number of respondents claimed that there were situations and circumstances where entry is charged. In some cases this is the only way to fund the festival, in some cases it is in order to limit numbers for small entry shows. At one festival in England, nominal entry is charged at an enclosed site in a park, as a way of counting visitors and keeping bicycles out, as well as giving visitors the chance to feel they are part 'investors' in the event the following year. In the Netherlands, it is a principal adopted by festival organisers to charge for theatrical presentations, which they describe as 'locatie theater'. All Dutch outdoor theatre festivals charge the public to see shows. I have not ascertained definitively whether this is a funding requirement or an economic or ideological necessity (opinions differ – some further research would be useful on this).

In Belgique Francophone, festivals have to show some income in order to qualify for grant aid. In some cases the audience pays to enter the whole festival, in Namur in Mai, much of the festival is free and visitors pay to see the tented booth shows (arts forains). The festival has created its own monetary currency for the weekend – les sous!

At many of the larger festivals, overcrowding may be a big problem; ticketed shows are becoming more common as a way to control numbers. These tickets may cost money or they may be free. Some festivals can only invite large shows if they draw an income from the performance. In these cases, there is often a large part of the festival that remains free and animated (Aurillac and Chalon in France do this now).

## **2. Difficulties and limitations at festivals**

### **2.1. Crowds**

Crowds may be very large at festivals that have been running for a number of years and attract huge numbers. This can be difficult as directors need to constantly source large shows of high quality, to form a centrepiece for their festivals. This is not always easy, as there is not always the product available. For this reason, international touring is essential for European companies, so as to maintain a sustainable amount of work for festivals, and enough bookings for the show to justify the high cost of its creation and touring. There are not many large scale shows or installations developed in any one year; there is always an anxiety on the part of programmers at large festivals about what they can programme to interest and excite their audiences.

"Since our festival attracts large numbers we are obliged to present shows for large audiences and very visual. We have to look abroad for many of these shows"

In connection with audiences, it is useful to ascertain what kind of people come to street arts festivals – and whether those are regular arts attenders or not. There has been some audience research undertaken by Eunetstar, and several other audience surveys by different countries in the last few years that make interesting reading. It is certainly an illuminating thing to discover that most of the Eunetstar festival audiences are already art lovers. Which will come as a surprise to many. It is also interesting to find out which shows people like and why, what their overall impressions are of such a festival in their midst, and how they would like to see such events develop. More research of this nature will broaden the scope of this sociological trail.

### **2.2. Public Space**

There are growing problems about space as European towns and cities become ever more developed. Street arts originally took over the streets from traffic, giving them 'back to the people'. This has proved too effective, as many towns are now heavily pedestrianised, with the resulting homogeneity of the public spaces that remain – streets full of planters, seats and encumbrances, squares with café tables encroaching into possible performance space, car parks that have been privatised and 'regenerated' – no longer rough bare ground on the edge of town, they now have lanes, tasteful bushes and signage, and, more seriously, the company owning them makes a large income from the cars using it, which they do not want to lose for a week for a large show to set up on the site.

### **2.3. Finance**

There are additional financial issues in France connected with taxation. Arts events are exempt from tax, but a small number of tax inspectors are looking at town festivals as 'marketing events' rather than arts events, with unfortunate financial results.

### **2.4. Security**

In some countries, security is a major issue. Theft and vandalism of outdoor performance rigs can mean that ugly fencing has to be erected everywhere; and the cost of overnight (and daytime maybe) security is high. This adds extra burdens to the cost of shows involving large structures, unless they are located in internal courtyards or other safe spaces.

### 3. International touring

From previous research (ACE), it is clear that the majority of festivals (58 out of the 60 surveyed in 2005) either invite international artists as a matter of course or strive to do so. Reasons for this are multifold:

**Scale** - the big festivals must invite international groups for prestige (3 festivals).

**Definition** - the whole conception of the festival is to be international. This also included one festival stating 'because we are part of a European programme' (Interreg) (13 festivals).

**Quality:**

- a) there is not enough good work in our own country (10 festivals),
- b) it gives opportunities to see the great range available (14 festivals);
- c) there is good quality work abroad (20 festivals).

**Variety** - it makes our festival more varied and interesting, different cultural patterns enrich our own (9 festivals).

**International co-operation and cross-cultural understanding** (12 festivals).

**'global village' - there are no frontiers** (6 festivals).

**Opportunities** for local people to see international work (4 festivals).

**Financial Support and encouragement offered** by embassies and consulates of foreign companies (2 festivals).

*"My closeness to other European countries and the enlargement of Europe encourages me to work more to open up work with international groups."*

*"I think that now that we have the euro, we should programme companies from every country that uses the euro!"*

#### 3.1. What Proportion of the Programme is made up from International acts?

(ACE) This question was answered by most festivals, and ranged from: 10% to 100%. Interestingly there was no obvious correlation between well-funded festivals and the proportion of international artists they booked.

As a generalisation, festivals in France use the lowest proportion of international artists and Belgian and Italian festivals the highest (the majority of those who cited 'lack of national artists' as a reason for why they used international groups came from these two countries).

4 festivals did not answer this question and 2 claimed it was impossible to generalise, there were such variations every year.

Of the artists consulted, they all greatly enjoyed international touring for reasons of cultural cohesion, meeting interesting people from different backgrounds, expanding their cultural horizons and of course expanding the market for their work. It was clear that some companies travel very widely – groups interviewed have visited festivals and events in all continents, including Africa and Latin America.

Artists from European countries appear to have greater success touring countries in other continents that have historical connections with their host country. This may be because of similarities in language, but also shared institutions and stronger links resulting from earlier colonial relationships. There is obviously some potential in the different European countries embracing work from other countries in Europe and, through this, opening up new markets further round the world.

### 3.2. Artists Working Abroad

How do artists get international bookings? Predominantly from being seen directly somewhere or recommended by one programmer who has seen them to another.

"First Imaginarius booking came from Frank Wilson recommending us"

### 3.3. Showcase/Marketplace Festivals

All artists who have been claim decisively that an appearance at Chalon, Aurillac or Sotteville is essential in France. For getting work in other parts of Europe, programmers and artists described Hasselt, Namur or Gent in Belgium, Oerol in the Netherlands, xtrax (Manchester) or Brighton in the UK, Tarrega in Spain:

"Showcases play a big part for us creating new contacts, as well as meeting promoters on 'normal' festivals".

*"There are a number of influential festivals in Europe to which promoters go to look for new acts. Most European festivals will not book a show they have not seen."*

*"Through showcasing at Chalon and Aurillac, occasionally we are approached at other festivals."*

These events (especially Aurillac) are so big that they can be unwieldy and confusing for programmers, and difficult to access for artists who do not already know people. It is possible that increased networks, especially local federations of artists, will make this an easier option for people. French artists already work together to present a number of shows in one location at Aurillac and Chalon). Perhaps foreign countries may look for funds to help support a number of artists attending one of these – they can be a substantial financial risk.

Showcases can also be ruthlessly damaging and companies have lost a show completely as a result of performing it when it was not ready:

*"We rarely attend these (as if you perform when you are not ready it sets you back years), but we did receive interest after being at x.trax, as they prefer you **not** to go with a brand new show"*

### 3.4. Funding for Artists to go abroad

Few people had accurate information about whether it was possible to get money from institutes or the governments for international touring. Respondents from the same country gave contradictory information at times. However, the principal sources of international funding are:

Poland: Ministry of culture, local and regional authorities, upon production of an invitation.

England and Wales: Foreign and Commonwealth Office Board of trade, British Council.

Ireland: Culture Ireland.

Italy: Ministry of Culture.

Belgium: Commissariat Général aux Relations Internationales (CGRI).

Germany: (rarely) Goethe Institute.

Slovenia: Slovene Ministry of Culture. They can also apply for support from the Ministers reserve.

France: CulturesFrance (formerly AFAA) Institut Francais.

Spain: Basque and Catalan Governments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Instituto Cervantes (very occasionally).

In view of the contradictory information (and lack of knowledge by many respondents), I think this area should be researched more extensively; as a way of encouraging foreign touring.

#### **4. Challenges concerned with international touring**

##### **4.1. Lack of information and knowledge**

Lack of information is a major reason for artists not making more steps to get themselves into other countries and is also a problem for many programmers.

##### ***Artists:***

Many artists are poorly resourced and cannot or do not provide glossy high quality publicity to mail to festivals.

*"But more often the publicity helps to get us the booking after they have already seen or heard about us from somewhere else. We rarely get a booking just by sending out publicity randomly."*

Yet others claim:

*"Web site and mail outs are very important"*

*"We have just mailed out to European festivals and are getting a good response".*

Artists feel they do not know enough about other European festivals. They learn most by talking to each other and festival directors. Some say they really enjoy large festivals where there are artist resting and eating facilities, so they can meet performers from different countries. Some good friendships have been made. Several artists feel that they are alone in not knowing what to do. The degree of isolation felt by some is very disturbing. Much effort needs to be put into generating artist participation in national networks.

##### ***Programmers:***

Some programmers also suffer from lack of information:

*"We have very few contacts with any companies apart from French."*

*"... lack of money to go and see and therefore get to know international work at festivals abroad."*

#### **4.2. The High Costs of Transport between countries**

This was cited several times as being prohibitively high. It appears that larger companies from some European countries (notably Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands) are able to access funding to offset some part of their travel costs.

*"Yes travel costs are a problem – especially for theatres from such countries as France or UK as they hardly get any support for the transport costs"*

*"Yes though the support that many companies receive from their respective governments is a great help".*

Some festivals described the active work between partners in a geographical region to organise a tour of particular artists, so the travel costs can be shared.

#### **4.3. Language problems**

These do appear to be a problem in some cases:

- a) When setting up bookings: both artists and programmers described feeling inadequate and unconfident making phone calls in other languages. Two different respondents said that apart from having a good show, the greatest asset a company can have is foreign language speakers! Another commented that email is a great advantage as you can read it slowly with a dictionary if necessary.
- b) Performance: shows with text can cause a problem; audiences not understanding can throw performers off balance (when expecting a laugh, there is dead silence). Some companies would rather not tour abroad in certain circumstances. Others either work in international street performer lingo (a mix of their mother tongue with words picked up from the place they are visiting) or request key words in the host language or, in some cases, translate the whole show. This can be problematic in circumstances where very strong accents or strange intonation cause problems with the audience's comprehension.

It is useful to encourage companies to be imaginative about how to make their shows understandable. This may require workshops or masterclasses (or suggest they learn a foreign language!)

#### **4.4. Taxes**

Several countries have forms of taxes that are incurred when international performers are invited. This can put immense strain upon an already stretched budget and may tip the balance between inviting an international artist/company or not. German programmers suffer from The "Ausländersteuer" on all foreign artists. This tax is payable by the promoter.

In some cases, such as Great Britain, the Foreign Entertainers tax is payable by the artists. This can be an immense shock if it is not explained by the promoter. However, payment may be waived in various circumstances and in any case all EU artists are entitled to earn up to € 7 000 free of tax, although exemption still must be requested.

In some cases, arrangements may be made with the cultural institute from the country the artist comes from, which enables a waiving of the taxes. In other cases, two countries may 'exchange' artists, which again may alleviate the need to pay taxes.

Accurate information needs to be available to the street arts circuit about such things.

Of course, for artists within the EU, Value Added Tax (IVA/TVA or equivalent) is not paid on fees, nor are work permits required. However, this is not the case for visiting artists from beyond the EC boundaries. It would certainly be advisable for each nation to research the appropriate methods of organising these.

#### **4.5. Health and Safety Legislation**

This is gradually becoming a more complicated issue for outdoor event managers everywhere. Legislation on this is particularly stringent in the UK, where nothing is permitted without a clearly drafted 'safety statement' covering every possible contingency:

- (a) Safety of materials used (with individual assurances where pyrotechnics or other inflammable materials are in used);
- (b) Safety of built structures;
- (c) A description of the process of any performance or installation, including information on any activity that could cause a risk to anyone in the audience, with details on how accidents and injuries will be minimised;
- (d) certificates of safety of dangerous appliances;
- (e) public liability insurance;
- (f) trained stewards.

These requirements are becoming more common in mainland Europe each year. It is important to acknowledge that adherence to such rigorous conditions inevitably takes up significant amounts of extra time (preparing and presenting paperwork ) and incurs extra costs. In the UK, changes in the regulations mean that the costs of stewarding have increased dramatically over the last two years.

#### **5. Knowledge of the national and international field**

The international festival circuit is large and vibrant; programmers attending these meet each other in different festivals, discuss companies, make plans to share work, tour projects, seek inspiration. Every year there are more programmers looking for shows to bring to their events. But there is still a very large number of people who know little about other festivals, especially outside of their national (or regional) boundaries. It is enormously stimulating to visit other festivals, partly to find work, partly to experience different ways of presenting shows, different ideas for the shape of a festival, different ways people behave and relate to each other, the artists, and other aspects of the town – green space, shops, cafes. It should be one of the great attractions of Europe drawing closer, that people from different countries visit each other's workplaces as well as for holidays.

In discussions with festivals, there is a very wide difference in both knowledge of and (surprisingly) interest in visiting other festivals. There needs to be better access to useful

information, encouragement to see travel as an important developmental tool and support to programmers while at foreign festivals.

Links and Communications between Street Arts interested organisations (festivals, artists and structures) have a variety of communications needs:

- artists selling their work;
- programmers finding out about artists;
- knowledge about funding and opportunities;
- keeping in touch with other like-minded people.

Some countries have a much stronger web of communications than others. This is not surprising as their existence directly reflects the strength of the festival infrastructure and number of artist companies in a country or region. It is also clear that most countries have very strong links in other areas - such as mainstream theatre or circus. Artists seem to be members of such networks, until there is enough impetus to form a street art-specific network.

Of existing networks, there is a variation between those that include promoters and artists or those that serve just one. There are clearly advantages of both. One of the most recently organised networks consulted existing groups (during an international festival attended by members of several different national networks) before setting up theirs.

Networks serve to facilitate communication between artists and programmers on many different topics.

Data collection: acting as an important resource for the street arts community and other parties – local authorities, journalists, etc.

Information sharing: on festivals and events, funding, training opportunities, searching for creative people for projects, issues of poor treatment at events, contractual difficulties, health and safety issues, licences, searching for spaces to work.

Developing political campaigns: for funding, against over stringent licensing or police harassment, for better press coverage.

Sharing ideas for key developments: developing cultural diversity, creating genuine access opportunities for people with disabilities, making closer links with the established arts, training opportunities, creation spaces.

Between them, the existing networks do a mix of all of these. With the now extensive use of the internet, websites are well used and form an excellent source of information. Some networks (e.g. NASA in England) have a continuous interactive chat-box, where artists post comments, queries and thoughts.

Some of the Existing Networks are below (again, respondents had not always heard of their own let alone other networks. The only one that seemed well known was Circostrada/Hors les Murs):

- Denmark: Dansk Artist Forbund and there are interest groups within jugglers, magicians, clowns, etc.



- England/Wales: ISAN - Independent Street Arts Network (open to all, but predominantly promoters), NASA – National Association of Street Artists (artists only) [www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.streetartsnetwork.org.uk).
- Italy: FNAS National Federation of Street Arts [info@fnas.org](mailto:info@fnas.org).
- Belgium: De Vlaamse Federatie voor Kunsten op Straat, (initiative of the Internationaal Straattheaterfestival and Theater op de Markt), Le Club des Grands Evénements, initié en 2006 par le Ministre au Tourisme de la Région Wallonne; and
- La FAR (Fédération Artistes de Rue – artists only) [www.la-far.be](http://www.la-far.be).
- Netherlands: there are several websites [www.straattheater.nl](http://www.straattheater.nl) (for small scale street entertainment), [www.straattheater.info](http://www.straattheater.info) (for street performers in Amsterdam) [www.straattheater.net](http://www.straattheater.net) for all street arts people, has an excellent record of performances and photos.
- France: La Fédé (La Fédération des Arts de la Rue) – for everyone working in street arts, it now has Regional branches made up of people within each region, ONDA (Office nationale de Diffusion Artistique) agency to support the development and dissemination of performing arts in France. For programmers [www.onda-international.com](http://www.onda-international.com).

## 6. What is the size and scale of festivals in Europe

Several countries hold large festivals, alongside many smaller ones; significantly, all are unique –a wide variety of scales of work exist; many different artforms are used separately and together; festivals present work in a variety of different ways:

Some are clearly ‘animation’ events, designed to have squares and streets bubbling with energy, performers and audience co-existing in the public space in a continuous flow of entertainment and interesting experiences. Such events take place by day and at night and fire, laser lighting and pyrotechnics often form part of the programme. The aim of these is to appeal to everyone, whatever age, often in family groups and generate a real sense of exhilaration and bonhomie.

Some involve rather more theatrical presentations, which may be very large scale, that need to take place in spaces removed from the milling public. These may require greater concentration from a dedicated audience, they develop a range of different atmospheres and emotional responses from their audiences; some feel very like ‘theatre without walls’, others use the surrounding environment or architecture very deliberately to enhance the effect of their message. Into this category may be added small intimate shows that are hidden in courtyards and down alleys, in quieter spaces in parks or on water, in tents or booths and using unusual spaces and buildings. In towns like Aurillac in France, the audience has to travel a fair distance to reach some shows, as there are not enough appropriate spaces closer than a taxi ride.

### 6.1. The market Place/Showcase

The street arts economy recognises that artists need to work in many different places, in order to be able to continue to make and perform shows. One excellent way of encouraging this process is the showcase or marketplace festival. Every country has a (usually small) number of these. Some festivals (including very many in France, as well as the ‘big 3’ – Chalon, Aurillac, Sotteville) are organised so that artists may be seen by visiting programmers from other festivals. Of course, programmers can go to any festival (and they do); however a showcase

festival usually organises certain things to make the experience useful and productive for programmers:

- (a) there is likely to be detailed information on all the companies performing, including contact information - some festivals have a book.
- (b) the programme is carefully composed so that all (or nearly all) shows can be seen over the festival period.
- (c) festival staff are available to help programmers find their way, meet other programmers and artists and make the most of the festival.
- (d) sometimes programmers have access to the artists rest space, so communication can result there.
- (e) a few festivals get financial aid to enable programmers (usually only international ) to have free accommodation.
- (f) there may be talks, discussions and proposals from companies with 'work in progress' or plans for new shows that they would like to find commissioning partners.

Showcase festivals are extremely useful ways of finding work. Programmers are well advised to see work 'live' as well as guessing what it is like from publicity. The Cultural Industry Departments /Cultural Offices of Chambers of Commerce in towns across Europe could play an active role in encouraging the opportunities afforded by such market places. In addition, the British Council has been known to pay travel costs for programmers coming from other countries to see British work, more cultural institutes may start to do this too.

## 6.2. Numerical Findings on Festival composition (60 festivals mainland Europe, not UK)

Festivals' annual budget for street arts: this ranged enormously from:

Over 1 million Euros	6 only	1 Holland, 1 Belgium, 1 Denmark*, 1 Spain, 2 France.
500 000 - 1 million	2 only	Belgium, France.
100 000 - 499 999	20	mostly Belgium, Holland, France.
50 000 - 99 999	19	across Europe.
under 50, 000	14	included all Swiss and Italian festivals.
No answer	12	

\*I think this includes indoor programming

## 6.3. Number of outdoor companies per edition

A huge variation, depending on whether festivals 'bought' existing shows or 'commissioned' new site specific work

<i>Budgets of</i>	<i>Number of Outdoor Companies Programmed</i>
Over 1 million	235, 20, 4-6 (where festival has only a small % of outdoor work).
500 000 - 1 million	20.
100 000 - 500 000	10 - 60, with the majority 20 - 40.
50 000 - 100 000	10 - 30, most 15 - 20.
under 50 000	10 - 30, most 20 - 25.

It was clear that the 'off' programme influences much of this variation. Also several festivals pay no fees as they are 'showcases'.

#### **6.4. Range of Costs for Different Scales of Work**

A very wide range of answers - depending on the artistic policy of the festival. There was very little consistency, except that the festivals under € 50,000 rarely programmed large scale work at all.

Several people objected on principle to this question. Comments ranged from 'this is impossible, it varies every year,' 'we choose shows we want rather than spending our budgets mathematically' 'Every show is unique', 'the range is huge', 'they all depend on the number of people, as well as the size of the show', 'we sometimes book cheaper shows in middle range than in small range'.

#### **6.5. Art forms programmed**

All art forms were cited in different combinations, by different festivals: Circus skills-based street theatre, Street theatre with text, Physical street theatre/mime, street music, street dance, booth shows for limited numbers, puppetry, walkabout shows. Of the festivals having an off programme, the biggest proportion of off shows (by a big margin) were circus. The only generalisations were that very few festivals programme dance on stage, many do not have music on stage either.

#### **6.6. Proportions of costs Paid for by Promoters**

Most festivals/events fall into one of three categories:

- (1) Those where all (or most) artists costs are paid – cachet/fee, travel costs, accommodation, per diems, technical costs.
- (2) Those calling themselves showcases/trade fairs where there is a range of options. None of these pay full cachet/fees but beyond that:
  - some pay all expenses but no cachet/fee;
  - some pay only part of the expenses eg only travel, only technical costs, only accomodation/per diems, or give a flat rate towards the artists' costs.
- (3) Festivals which have an 'on' and an 'off' programme. In these the 'on' artists fall into category (1) and the 'off' into category (2).

In addition, there are some very new or community festivals where nobody is paid, artists are either performing in the hope that their event is later recognised and funded, or are amateur/community organisations.

In most festivals, unpaid performers are able to "pass the hat", but at some they may not.

Many festivals pay 100% of costs. One wrote "pay everything without asking questions!" A few festivals pay a proportion (50%, 80%, 90%) of fees and all technical costs. I imagine a couple of these consider themselves to be showcases.

Respondents have been much clearer about what they pay for the 'off' programme. This ranges from 'nothing' to some technical costs and accommodation/ food, or a reduced fee and proportion of technical costs. Some have a flat rate payment in euros (100 and 150 per person). Very few pay travel expenses. In some festivals 'off' performers can 'hat'.

## 7. Global recommendations

- Advocacy on behalf of street arts' role in social cohesion and other key aspects of the EC's mission.
- Financial commitment to enable more effective lobbying in nations that make clear the integral relationship between art produced and the places and structures that show it.
- Stabilising 'ephemeral events' to the same level as building based arts projects.
- Agitating for more money to support promoter organisations being able to learn from their equivalents in countries that are much further developed.
- Further research into the constituency of street arts audiences.
- Initiatives to be pioneered to encourage year-round activity in street arts.
- Greater sharing of information between promoters about markets beyond Europe that they may access because they have historic connections (usually former colonial states)
- Research and advocacy on behalf of nations creating funds to support companies' extra costs resulting from touring internationally.
- Significant work to be done to ensure at least one national 'showcase/marketplace' event (or equivalent) that presents artists' work responsibly, targets programmers and facilitates exchanges, debate and the chance to see a lot of different shows.
- Each nation to promote all opportunities for other professionals to see street arts shows abroad (especially showcase festivals that are designed to facilitate this).
- Research to be collated on taxes, licenses and other legislation required for international touring. This information to be updated regularly and housed at one national contact organization per country.
- Compilation of health and safety legislation currently required in the UK which will probably spread across Europe.
- A budget allocation for supporting the existence and stabilization of national development agencies to be key sources of all necessary information.
- A budget allocation for supporting the existence and stabilization of national development agencies to be key sources of all necessary information.
- One of the trans-European networks (In Situ/Eunetstar/Circostrada) to undertake annual meeting/conference to share new developments and 'set' development proposals for the following year. Results of this to be used by national development agency.



## ANNEX 2 - SECTION I: STREET ARTS IN EUROPE: MOBILITY AND COOPERATION

Contribution by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo (Elena Di Federico under the direction of Maddalena Rusconi) – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

### Introduction

The core problem for street arts in Europe is the **lack of recognition**: in most countries street arts are not recognized as a real art form, but as entertainment. Thus, they are not involved in the public financial support to culture, as it happens instead for indoor theatre and other forms of artistic productions. Specific education centres and production centres too are missing, due to this attitude, and street artists – as well as artists working in other fields – can encounter serious problems in living on their artistic activity.

The **lack of financial support** from national public institutions and governments, linked on its turn to the lack of recognition, is the main practical problem within the EU countries, with some exceptions – notably France. Yet it is not to forget that the lack of funds for culture in general is a common problem among many countries, not related only to street arts.

The keyword to bypass the lack of public support is **networking**. International – and national, where existing – networks provide first of all a chance for meeting, discussion and confrontation among members, fostering artistic and professional inspiration and building relationships and trust; they are the starting point for projects aiming at supporting new productions and the mobility of artists and companies, for education and performance. Also, international networks are eligible for EU funds, thus bypassing financial problems of the single members.

Besides networking, **lobbying** would help street arts professionals to make their voice be heard at the institutional level, but mindset sometimes hinders common actions.

At the same time, an awareness of common needs and problems is arising and the situation seems to be slowly improving in most countries. Academic researches, debate and conferences aim at focusing on the importance of street arts as a truly cultural production, having also a social value – working on social cohesion of people with no distinction of social class or age, helping recovering abandoned or problematic urban spaces. It is not to forget that street arts, taking place in public spaces, involve all kind of people, including those who never attend “classical” events such as indoor theatre, so that it can be a tool for approaching people to other forms of art<sup>367</sup>.

The lack of recognition leads also to other two parallel problems: the **lack of production centres** in many countries, on one hand, and the **impossibility to live only on street art activity**, on the other. This means that in many countries street artists can only work at their shows in their free time – because their primary work is different – and with limited budgets – because they self-finance their productions – , thus needing long times – even some years – to

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<sup>367</sup> “There is growing recognition by funders and policy makers that street arts reach audiences missed out by current live arts providers and attract audiences that hesitate to enter formal cultural spaces such as theatres and concert halls”, states the Position Paper “Street Arts in Scotland”, written by Sreetnet in January, 2005.

produce new shows; meanwhile, they can have problems in touring festivals if they offer always the same show<sup>368</sup>.

According to the operators, France is the country in which public policies have found a good way to deal with street arts: first of all, they are supported not only in financial terms, but also in terms of fostering creativity and inspiration; secondly, a minimum salary is granted to artists during the period in which they do not perform (the “intermittences”), thus allowing them to live on their arts.

## **1. Main problems encountered when working internationally**

### **1.1. Financial issues**

#### **1.1.1. Lack of public support to street arts**

As written in the introduction, the lack of public support to street arts does not imply only a lack of public money, but also the lack of specific education centres and of production centres in many countries. All these problems derive from the fact that street arts are not recognized as “art” but as “entertainment”, and are therefore excluded from the public funding for culture – and it is not to forget that some countries do not support culture, in general.

The lack of support to street arts is a serious obstacle to mobility of artists and companies, to their specific education, to their artistic activity and to the production of shows. In fact, in many countries there are no specific education centres (for example in Scotland), and specific education is provided through private workshops held within the companies; many countries lack of production centres (e.g. Italy), so that companies have to self-produce new shows or to co-produce them with festivals or networks.

In the practice, cooperation and networking among professionals and festivals, at a national and international level, help bypassing the obstacles: networks can apply for European funds (in first place Culture 2000 programs), share the costs of production and mobility among the members, support new companies, but first of all they provide a chance for confrontation among professionals from different countries, an exchange of opinions and experiences, an artistic inspiration.

In order to change the mindset and to make the artistic – and social – value of street arts recognised, lobbying is the solution proposed by the operators: artists and professionals can become a “critical mass” and make their voice be heard at the institutional level, asking for a change. Lobbying then is what some of the professionals are trying to do, but times are long and making different mindsets find a common line can be difficult.

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<sup>368</sup> It is important anyway to remember a specificity of street arts, clearly explained in “Strategy and Report on Street Arts”, by Felicity Hall, 2002: “*Street arts are a seasonal form. Because performances take place outside there are a limited number of months in which programmers can see work, which they can then programme for the following year. This means that artists have to keep work in their repertoire for up to two years. The low-level income gained by artists throughout the year, (...) means that financial and temporal opportunities to develop new work are limited*”.

### 1.1.2. Alternatives to public funds

When public funding are lacking or are not enough, it is necessary to find other means to get money. European programs such as Culture 2000 are looked at positively. In fact, some of the organizations contacted got C2000 funds and managed to organize international festivals, invite companies from different countries, as well as conferences and symposiums focusing on the problems of street arts.

Again, the main problem linked with this kind of funding seems that of money: i.e. the main part of the total amount is paid only at the end of the project: therefore, the problem to find money to pay in advance for the productions still remains, at least in part. Moreover, obviously EU programs can only be applied to by EU countries.

Two elements are worth mentioning. In first place, contacted operators seem familiar mainly only with the framework of Culture 2000; secondly they seem to ignore the possibility to apply to other EU programmes (education, social cohesion), where street art practices could also be funded. In general, besides cash flows issues, no one has mentioned the efforts and the skills necessary to successfully apply to EU funds or the (personal) success rate.

Private supporters can be another way to find money. For instance, private foundations, bank foundations, TVs, newspapers, private enterprises are the typologies more frequently mentioned. Public institutions, such as cities, municipalities, regions, sometimes support festivals and projects. Both kinds of supporters often do not provide money, but technical service, such as lights, vans, cars, or cleaning the streets after the festivals.

Anyway, the operators stress that it is not so easy to get private support, and also that sometimes they are not prepared to look for this kind of support, due to the specificity of their way of working.

The Position Paper “Street Arts in Scotland”, by Sreetnet, published in January, 2005, spotlights a risk linked to the support from the corporate sector for street arts in Scotland: though this practice “enables practitioners to work without significant support from funding bodies and provides the sector with an enviable degree of self-sufficiency”, on the other hand “corporate clients usually request only certain types of performance that represent a small part of an individual’s/company’s repertoire of skills. Corporate clients are also unwilling to book experimental work or pieces that are too challenging or content-driven. Thus this kind of work limits the growth of artists by constantly demanding entertainment-orientated work”.

Networks and co-production often remains the best solution: through networking, festivals and companies can find money more easily, eventually applying for EU funds; professionals, festivals and companies can get in touch and build partnerships; costs can be shared among the members of a network, for example mobility and performance costs – when inviting foreign companies – or production costs – in case of co-productions.

When looking for alternative ways to finance their activity, street artists and companies often find it difficult to fill in forms and dealing with bureaucracy matters. Forms provided are considered “too complicated” and not clear, sometimes requiring the help of other professionals or being discouraging. “The lack of access to funding is a source of great frustration; either because of lack of appropriate amounts of dedicated funding, or insufficient information given about available and appropriate funds. This lack often manifests itself when practitioners make



*initial inquiries about possible funding, and are unable to reach the appropriate officer, or find that there is no appropriate officer at all.*

*Additional frustrations include the non-eligibility of individual artists for certain funds. (...) This, plus the lack of administrative resources generally within the sector, has led to a situation where street arts artists feel that making applications is a waste of time.*

*With notable exceptions there is little knowledge or experience of the specific problems and opportunities involved with street arts within the funding system at national or regional level. This means the decision making process for funding is particularly difficult for officers as well as practitioners” (Felicity Hall, “Strategy and Report on Street Arts”, January 2002).*

### **1.1.3. Taxation of incomes<sup>369</sup>**

The main problem concerning taxation derives from the fact that each country has its own rules, different from the others, and that rules for companies performing abroad – or, vice versa, for festivals inviting foreign companies – rely upon bi-lateral accords, changing again from country to country.

Live performance organisations and artists working abroad have to pay withholding taxes to the tax authorities even if they are performing in another EU country. When returning to their EU country residence, then, they have to deal again with their national tax authorities, which might also impose taxes on the foreign income.

Bilateral tax treaties have been signed between all EU countries just to avoid this “double taxation”. According to those treaties, a live performance company or artist who has already paid taxes abroad should receive financial compensation in his/her home country in the form of a tax credit or a tax exemption. However, the mobile live performance organisation and artist will still have to complete all the formalities in order to clear the tax situation with the residence country’s tax authorities and in order to avoid “double taxation” or excessive taxation.

The administrative workload required avoiding double taxation and excessive taxation clearly discourages artists and companies from being mobile or from hosting mobile organisations. As the landscape is fragmentary and complicated, it is almost impossible that managers know perfectly the tax regulation of all EU countries, and that they are able to calculate exactly the complete cost of productions and incomes – on which taxation is imposed. Festivals therefore have often to engage professionals who deal with the issue, thus adding other expenses to the budget. The general feeling of the professionals in the live performance sector is that *“the most mobile sector in the EU is discriminated against when providing services in other EU countries due to specific tax legislation which does not exist for any other “mobile” economic sector in the EU”*<sup>370</sup>.

The solution proposed by all the interviewees would be to find a common rule to be shared at the EU level.

<sup>369</sup> For a survey of problems, different taxation systems in Europe and useful resources to keep up-to-date, see also “Tax and social security. A basic guide for artists and cultural operators in Europe”, by Judith Staines, March 2004. A brief scheme summarizing national rules is included in the Annexes of the present paper.

<sup>370</sup> From “Study on the impediments to mobility...”

In fact, researches recommend to follow three principles when performing abroad:

1. not to assume that tax and social security are organised in the same way as in one's home country;
2. using networking skills to get advice from colleagues having already worked in the foreign context;
3. always check to have the most updated information<sup>371</sup>.

The first step may be to state that all companies pay taxes to their home country, wherever they come from; the second step would be then to establish common lines within the EU, so as to harmonize national regulations.

#### 1.1.4. Surviving on street arts

Artists are generally paid only for the days they actually perform during festivals, while for the rest of the year there is no guarantee for them to receive money. In fact, this makes it almost impossible to live only on street arts, forcing artists to have another job (e.g. teachers, private offices, public or government employees) and thus dedicating to street arts only in their free time, with obvious consequences on the time requested for the production of new shows and identity. Only a few work in the artistic field, for example in theatres.

The system named “intermittences”, used in France, is recognized by many operators as the best way to provide social and financial guarantees to artists, as well as a way to recognize the dignity of their work. In fact it grants a minimum salary to performers also during the periods of inactivity, making it possible even to live on street arts – which is almost impossible otherwise.

### 1.2. Administrative issues

#### 1.2.1. Safety rules

The problems concerning safety rules concern two main aspects: first of all, there is a huge local specificity, as rules are different in each country, sometimes in each region within the same country (as for example in Germany), or even in each festival (as for example in Belgium); on the other hand – as stated in previous researches<sup>372</sup> – security commissions establishing those rules are made up of people who generally deal with indoor theatre, i.e. with different kinds of performances, environment and dangers. This makes rules sometimes do not take into account the specificity of street arts performances, and impose constraints which influence the “magic” of the show – being sometimes so strict as to influence even too deeply the creation<sup>373</sup>.

<sup>371</sup> Judith Staines, Tax and social security, March 2004.

<sup>372</sup> Security issues are among the issues listed in the “Strategy and report on street arts” by Felicity Hall (2002); interesting remarks on the theme can be found in “Street arts in Scotland”, January 2005.

<sup>373</sup> Streetnet points out, in the Position Paper “Street Arts in Scotland” (January 2005): “*The world in which street artists operate is becoming increasingly regulated, particularly with respect to health and safety. Although this is a necessary requirement to ensure high standards of health and safety are maintained for performers and audience members alike, the fear is that performances and events will soon become so restricted by regulations that it will no longer be possible to produce the spectacular productions that so excite audiences (and everyone involved in creating them). Increased regulation as well as the related massive increases in insurance premiums<sup>373</sup> have become major issues for street artists. To work within relevant safety standards with no loss of performance quality, the street arts sector needs to do two things:*

The fact that safety rules vary a lot from country to country can cause problems to companies when travelling and performing abroad, as well as to directors when choosing performances to include in the programme of their festivals.

The safety rules more frequently named by the professionals concern the separation between audience and performers, the presence of security people among the audience, and restrictions to fire shows.

Sometimes the space where the performance takes place must be physically separated from the space where the audience stands (this happens in Portugal, for example). This influences deeply the “magic” of the show, because it makes much harder for the audience to feel as a part of the show which is going (perceived therefore like a show, and not like a magic, parallel reality). The same effect is given by the presence of security people (policemen etc.) among the audience, a rule adopted by some countries such as Ireland.

Fire shows are submitted to very strict rules in some countries (as Italy and Holland) while are a core element in many Spanish performances. This means that festival directors cannot invite important foreign companies whose speciality concerns just fire shows.

According to many operators, self-regulation by festivals and companies, successfully applied in some countries, and security commissions made up of professionals of the field, would be the solution to this problem.

### 1.2.2. Conditions of employment for performers

The uncertainty in the form of engagement and in the contractual issues leads to a lack of social and personal guarantees for performers<sup>374</sup> (artists often have no choice but “cultural self-employment”, as an interviewee said), as well as it happens for other social categories. Clearly, for those having another work and dedicating themselves to street arts only in their free time, there are other sources of social guarantees and assistance.

The difficulties related to social security are closely linked to the employment status of the workers, who can even belong to different employment status at the same time. Also, working on different live performance projects across the border does not automatically mean keeping one’s original employment status. It is important to remember that in this artistic field professional opportunities with very different employment models “*suddenly appear or disappear in a more unforeseeable way than in any other sector of the economy. There is no established model or practice or any rule which mobile live performance workers in the EU would systematically follow for their careers which can turn in completely unpredictable ways*”<sup>375</sup>. Mobility makes it all more complicated from the point of view of social security.

Unemployment benefits and health insurance too are regulated on a national basis: therefore, in countries in which there is not this kind of guarantee for artists, if a performer has an accident or

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- *making sure that practitioners are highly trained (another reason why professional training and development is so necessary in Scotland); and*
  - *it must become involved in the setting and regulating of these standards.*

*In the UK, the street arts/circus sector has already become aware of the need to do this rather than passively wait for standards to be decided by outside agencies with poor understanding of the way the industry works”.*

<sup>374</sup> Different kinds of contracts and forms of employment are listed in “Tax and social security”, by Judith Steines, March 2004.

<sup>375</sup> From “Study on impediments to mobility...”, January, 2007.

health problem he cannot count on this form of protection. This problem is linked to the lack of unemployment support, already stressed among the financial problems.

Again, the solution proposed by the operators would be a regulation at a European level<sup>376</sup>, inspired by the system adopted in France of the “intermittences”, granting a minimum salary to artists in the periods in which they do not work.

Problems concern also contract practice: it still happens that a festival does not provide a regular contract to a company, and if it does not pay for the performance, the company itself cannot take a legal action against anybody, because in fact there is no contract. Luckily this kind of malpractice are decreasing, but there are still some episodes; in this cases anyway a part of the fault is of the companies, who accept irregular conditions, though it is true that it might be the only possibility – especially for small companies – to perform. Unfortunately, this kind of episodes do not regard only street arts field.

### 1.3. Mindset issues

As written in the introduction, the main “mindset issue” concerns national governments and deal with the lack of recognition of street arts as a “real” form of art by some national governments. It has already been underlined also that the main concrete action to overcome the situation is lobbying, and that this kind of activity can clash with traditional mindsets and difficulty in cooperation among professionals. Yet, something is going on.

#### 1.3.1. Professionals – directors

Some operators suggest a change also in the mindset of professionals, such as festivals’ directors. A “common vocabulary”, first of all, would help to share meanings, needs and ideas (“to speak all the same language”), starting from a commonly shared definition of what street arts are.

Then it would be important to have a more practical approach to the needs and problems on which almost everybody agrees: according to some operators, in fact, problems are often faced in a “mystical” way, rather than focusing on the way to handle them in practice.

The solution proposed agreed with the need for communication and circulation of ideas and knowledge, besides that of people and expertises: therefore, opportunities to meet among professionals, to discuss and to confront with each other, such as symposiums, conferences and meeting, are pointed out as the most useful tool. In other words, networking and lobbying appear to be the keywords for a successful change in the approach.

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<sup>376</sup> The European Parliament study “Mobilité des artistes et sécurité sociale” by Ericarts, released in November, 2006, contains an explanation of the importance of unemployment insurance for artists: *“L’assurance chômage est appelée à jouer un rôle-clé dans la vie quotidienne des artistes tout au long de leur vie active. Le travail artistique est en effet caractérisé par sa nature intermittente et engendre une multitude de contrats de courte durée, de périodes de travail non rémunéré (perfectionnement, apprentissages de nouvelles techniques, étude de rôles, recherche). Dans ces conditions, l’accès des artistes à l’assurance et aux indemnités de chômage, ainsi que le maintien de leur assurance s’avèrent primordial pour nombre de professionnels.*

*Plus que tous les autres travailleurs, les artistes exercent leur activité partout en Europe, et dans le monde, et sont confrontés quotidiennement aux problèmes administratifs et juridiques de la circulation européenne qui freinent leur mobilité professionnelle”.*

(Voir: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?language=EN>).

Individual initiative too can help: some operators stress the importance of travelling, building relationships with other professionals and gain a deep awareness of what goes on in the rest of the world, so as to be able to keep always one's mind open.

Some professionals working in "Eastern" Europe maintain that cooperation with foreign partners, though recognized as a useful tool to bypass a set of practical obstacles as well as a source of inspiration, is not a habit for them, due to a different "tradition" in the way of working. Directors and managers aware of this should probably change their mindset and get inspired by "Western" professionals – and again, mobility, confrontation and networking are the most helpful tool to change the attitude.

Finally, some operators focus on the problems related to the artistic dimension itself: they state that in street arts there is a domination of *"fun, family and popular acts"* at an international level, while the organizers should be *"open for serious, experimental, "artistic" and "adult" topics and forms of expression in street arts' act"*. Actually, some artistic directors already include some "different" works within their festivals, letting the audience know that *"something different exists"* and aiming at *"growing up"* together with the audience.

### 1.3.2. Companies and performers

As already written, a few tricks still take place between festivals making irregular – or no – contract and companies accepting these conditions, otherwise they may not perform. This attitude, which is negative above all for the companies themselves – as it leads to a lack of security and financial guarantees – derives, according to some operators, from a lack of "self-recognition" by the artists, who feel forced to accept irregular treatments in order to get the chance to perform.

## 2. Focus on mobility

### 2.1. The importance of mobility

Artists are by their own definition open to new experiences and willing to grow up, improve and experiment, especially in such an "unconventional" and creative field as street arts. Mobility therefore is the keyword for artists – not only street artists – and concerns both the "artistic" dimension (education, training, inspiration<sup>377</sup>, etc.) and the "market" dimension of their work (visibility of the company, appreciation of its productions and engagement in foreign festivals, etc.)<sup>378</sup>.

According to most of the operators, creators and street artists must travel, open their mind, make experiences abroad and confront their own knowledge and practice with other professionals in other contexts. *"The mobility in the artistic field, the mobility of arts and artists, are thought to*

<sup>377</sup> "(...) the interaction and influence of cultural talents upon each other through mobility gives rise to new cultural products which can significantly improve the quality of life. Therefore the mobility of talent should not be viewed simply as a means to economic growth; it must also be seen as a contributor to human development more broadly" (Tony Addison, "The International Mobility of Cultural Talent", September 2006).

<sup>378</sup> "Successful touring and commissioning partnerships are the essential frameworks for the development of new and existing work, the very building blocks of the street arts sector", states the report from the ISAN conference held in Winchester on December 2005.

*accelerate the mobility of ideas, leading to the mobility of innovation and finally to the stimulation of productivity*”<sup>379</sup>.

Yet mobility can also be necessary, especially concerning specific education for artists born in countries where no vocational training for street artists is provided. A survey<sup>380</sup> showed that in Scotland, for instance, there are no specific education centres: young people are therefore obliged to move to other countries – mainly to England – to get a proper education, but once they are abroad, very often they do not get back. This causes of course serious problems to the Scottish national street arts activity.

Concerning the “market” features, by showing their own performances in festivals – especially in the big ones – companies can make themselves known abroad, which is the best form of advertising and therefore the main chance to be invited by new festivals.

Mobility is a basic issue also for companies’ and festivals’ directors: travelling means keeping in touch with colleagues, weaving relationships and building trust, as well as keeping up-to-date with what is going on in the rest of the world – which is, on its turn, a matter of inspiration. Without a confrontation with the rest of the world and the mixing with other genres – such as music, dance, circus, etc. –, festivals “*keep walking around in a circle*”.

## 2.2. Obstacles to mobility

As pointed out also in the “Study on impediments to mobility in the EU live performance sector”<sup>381</sup> by Pearle\*, mobility in the EU requires live performance organisations “*a sound knowledge of the legislation and regulations of more than one EU country*”, especially concerning:

- Visas and work permits for third-country nationals, as not all EU countries are within the “Schengen” area and not all live performance workers who are not EU citizens can travel without a visa inside the EU.
- Social security regulations which have to be applied differently according to the nationality and the employment status of the artists.
- Taxation and in particular bilateral agreements on double taxation and national rules on withholding taxes and value-added tax (VAT).

<sup>379</sup> From “Mobility and cultural cooperation in the age of digital space”, 2006. Yet the same work points out that “*a mobility rate in itself may not tell much. It is important to explore if it enhances the innovative capabilities and conditions of the ones that have chosen to move and then, as a consequence, the rest of the society as a whole (and not only the host). If mobility keeps on being a part of human character, policies should be supportive and possibilities should be explored to enhance the positive effects of migration*”.

<sup>380</sup> From “Street Arts in Scotland”, Position Paper by Sreetnet, January, 2005: “*The lack of training institutions in Scotland for physical theatre and circus limits the technical abilities of Scottish-based artists. The result is that once a certain skill level has been reached, practitioners either get stuck in a rut, give up their dreams or leave Scotland to train elsewhere (...) Once they have left, many choose not to return as there are more employment opportunities for street artists and circus performers in places like southern England. (...)it is not only professional artists who suffer from the lack of training opportunities in Scotland. Without professional development of artists, there is a knock-on effect on the ability of the sector to offer quality training to children and young people, some of whom will form the next generation of street artists*”.

<sup>381</sup> Richard Poláček, “Study on impediments to mobility in the EU live performance sector and on possible solutions”, Pearle\*, January 2007.

Also the employment status of the performers has a huge influence on the general situation of the workers; live performance workers in fact often have several working statuses at the same time, in particular in a context of mobility. For example, a self-employed live performance worker can take up an employment as an “employee” for a short period of time in another EU country, or s/he might have several employment contracts in several EU countries at the same time, or alternate employment statuses for limited periods of time during his/her career. It has been stressed by most professionals that often street artists have also a different work – not concerned with street arts nor theatre, sometimes – and can dedicate to street arts only their free time.

Each area seems to be affected by the same problems<sup>382</sup>:

- EU and national rules are too different and ill-adapted.
- EU rules and national rules are not adapted to the patterns of mobility of the live performance sector. (...)EU harmonisation [is missing] and therefore national rules apply. This “fragmentation of the legal space of the EU” (...) clearly complicates life for live performance organisations and workers who wish to be mobile inside the EU.
- Rules are also often too complex and not transparent enough in order to allow EU live performance organisations and workers to be naturally frequently mobile (...).
- National administrative procedures are too complex, burdensome, time-consuming, incoherent and expensive.
- Due to the diversity of rules, national administrative procedures are consequently also not adapted to the patterns of mobility. They are described (...) as becoming increasingly cumbersome, time-consuming, inflexible and in some cases incoherent and even expensive. Again, the diversity and complexity of administrative procedures is in itself an obstacle to mobility inside the EU.
- Information about applicable rules and procedures is insufficient.
- In general, many (...) organisations declared that their own staff is not well enough informed about applicable rules and procedures. However they nearly all reported that the national authorities themselves are not always well informed about applicable rules in a context of mobility inside the EU. Individual live performance workers are in general insufficiently informed about their rights in the case of short-term or long-term mobility.
- Financing and funding are problematic.

This issue has been mentioned by many organisations as problematic. Venues, festivals and live performance organisations and workers in the new EU Member States all reported that they are in a difficult financial situation in general and that there is often no special national funding available in order to show their work in other EU countries or to bring over to their country companies from other EU countries. (...)

Concerning the financial problem, an issue to be taken into account is the different value of money in different countries, above all the difference between “Eastern” and “Western” countries. Living and working in an “Eastern” country can cost much less than in a “Western” one; thus “Eastern” companies produce less expensive shows, which can catch the attention of

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<sup>382</sup> The following paragraph is taken from “Study on impediments to mobility...”

“Western” festivals. Yet the difference in the value of money and in the cost of life makes it expensive for “Eastern” companies to travel and to pay for the accommodations etc. while the crowd is performing abroad; on the other hand, “Western” companies requires fees which are much higher than the average in “Eastern” countries, so that “Eastern” festivals cannot always afford to pay for these productions... in other words, the circulation of performers, companies and productions at an international level, mainly between East and West, can be put into a danger by this financial difference.

*“Generally speaking, mobility in the live performance sector inside the EU is very much in a “push-pull” dynamic. There are undeniably clear moves to support mobility inside the EU through measures adopted at EU level and by Member States, for example via the coordination of social security systems at EU level, the establishment of a European health insurance card or cultural exchange programmes. However there are also clear signs of continued resistance to facilitate mobility, such as burdensome procedures to obtain E101 forms for posted live performance workers, the reluctance of member states to give up their withholding tax rules for non-resident performing artists or - due to security concerns and the fear of immigration - the restricted visa and work permit regulations for third-country nationals touring with EU live performance companies inside the EU.”<sup>383</sup>*

### **2.3. Ways to support mobility**

To cover the costs of mobility (including travel costs, accommodation, previous visits to the site in order to check unexpected obstacles – such as the presence of trees, electric spires etc.), if there is no public support, it is necessary to find money through private sponsors.

International networks – some of which support explicitly artists’ mobility – can collect money from their partners and use it in order to support the mobility of companies among the different festivals involved in the network. They also support directors’ mobility, as their travelling around to see many different festivals is considered a core element of their work.

Otherwise, there is the chance to apply for EU funds; but most professionals agree that the EU Culture 2000 programme is too bureaucratically burdensome and too complex, especially for smaller companies and venues. In the end, some of the festivals directors interviewed state that they have no chance but to pay for themselves when travelling.

## **3. Focus on cooperation**

### **3.1. The importance of cooperation**

Cooperation has a huge importance in term of creativity: giving artists and professionals a chance to meet, to confront, to discuss and to share ideas and needs, it is a big source of inspiration. Also, when a production involves different partners, the presence among them of some important festivals or “names” can be a guarantee for other festivals interested in buying the show.

The support to creation also gives the opportunity to share production costs among partners and, in the case of networks, to apply for EU funding; moreover, companies involved in a co-production with festivals will perform for free in those festivals, with a mutual advantage –

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<sup>383</sup> From “Study on the impediments to mobility...”



festivals cuts off costs and companies have sure bookings, granting them the chance to be seen and known by other professionals and festivals<sup>384</sup>.

Last but not least, cooperation allows festivals and companies to get a truly international dimension.

In general, the importance of cooperation practices are explained by the words of a professional: *“I believe 1+1 is not always 2, it can be 3 or more, it depends on the relations between 1 and 1...”*.

### 3.2. Obstacles to cooperation

The lack of public money is the main obstacle named by the organisations contacted, also concerning cooperation projects – and, above all, concerning co-productions.

Some operators then state that in their country there is not the habit of cooperating with other partners, as the traditional mindset leads to a mostly independent and individual work. Yet cooperation is recognized as a possibly useful tool to make bigger and more successful productions, so a change in the mindset is encouraged.

### 3.3. Ways to support cooperation

Local institutions and private sponsors (including local TV) sometimes provide money to pay for the travel and accommodation of companies.

Sometimes the support received from private sponsors consists not of money but of tools, cars, buildings etc., easier to receive.

- **Festivals as promoters:**

Some of the main festivals contacted act as “showcases” for other festivals and companies: they give national or foreign companies the chance to perform within their festivals, thus showing their works and getting the opportunity to be contacted by other festivals in other countries. For instance, the Spanish festival contacted has a cooperation projects with the main festivals held in the other regions of the Country, and each year they are granted to perform in the main one – which has a high international recognition; the festival contacted held in Romania created a “Bourse du spectacle” which allows foreign companies to provide information and materials to the professionals interested, so as to made themselves known within the festival.

- **International cultural organizations:**

Local expressions of European organizations (e.g. Goethe Institutes in Germany, Arts’ Council in UK, Instituto Cervantes in Spain, local bureaus of Istituto Italiano di Cultura) are a good link among different countries and festivals.

The Spanish interviewee stresses the importance of proximity: *“we have for instance a very good collaboration with Istituto Italiano di Cultura because it has a bureau here in Tarrega and the president works as a link between Spain (mainly Tarrega) and Italy! Being neighbours it is*

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<sup>384</sup> Coproductions therefore can be very helpful for companies settled in countries with no production centres. Companies can ask financial support from a festival: once their new show is ready, they go and perform for free in that festival (and in the other which eventually have supported the production), also more than once. When this kind of cooperation is at the national level, it generally fits only for small productions, while at an international level bigger productions are possible.

*easier to know each other, to gain confidence and to build trust – thus developing our activity also in other countries.”*

In fact, weaving relationships, building trust and creating formal or informal networks are the best tools, generally speaking, to support cooperation.

Some festivals develop partnerships and collaborations with foreign or international institutions, depending on the project partners: for example, the American Fund for Mutual Understanding, Eunetstar, Polish-German foundation, AFAA – Culture France.

- **Networks:**

Eunetstar, Circostrada and In Situ are the international networks more often named by the operators, when talking about how to find cooperation partners and how to build international relationships.

- **EU programmes:**

EU Culture 2000 programme supported some of the projects mentioned by the professionals. Some of them yet note that European funds (at least, a part of the total amount) are actually provided only at the end of the projects, so that the problem to find money in advance still remains.

Some of the operators refer to the difficulty they find in applying for EU funds in terms of bureaucracy: they complain filling in forms is a too long and too difficult work.

- **Internet:**

The Web can be a powerful tool to find partners and to know the other festivals; within networks, it provides a great opportunity for members to keep in touch: it is “*a rapid and egalitarian method of communication which has revolutionised their way of working*”<sup>385</sup>.

#### **4. Differences among countries**

Differences among countries concern all the aspects related to street arts: public support and recognition, taxation, rules, status of artists, but also the tastes of the audience (kind of performance, humour, “hot” topics, etc.) and the tradition of festivals.

A first rough distinction can be made between East and West and between North and South.

East and West appear to be very different from each other, not only in terms of street art tradition and audience’s taste but also concerning today’s practice and international attitude, the main reason being the difference in the political landscape during the XX century. The difference between Northern and Southern countries mainly derives from weather and climate, influencing the length of the festivals season and the habits of people to spend their time in the street.

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<sup>385</sup> Streetnet, “Street Arts in Scotland”, January 2005.

Concerning bureaucracy and status of the artists as well as public support and recognition, most of the operators agree that France is the country where it is easier to work, because the government supports and funds street arts, festivals have more freedom and a long tradition, and artists have more guarantees. What characterizes the French landscape is not just a financial support by the government, but a true investment on artists, companies and festivals: not just “giving money”, but supporting inspiration and creativity – as well as making it possible to live on one’s art, thanks to the minimum salaries granted by the “intermittences” system. According to the professionals, this system granted a huge stability – from the economic and the professional point of view – to companies, which could develop their creativity and could count on a constant composition of the crowd, also when touring abroad; but in 2003 the law changed the way to calculate the unemployment indemnity, and the whole system became more fragile. In fact, today artists can find themselves forced to work for more companies at the same time, so the stability of each company is compromised and the mobility is harder – as companies cannot always count on the same crowd for a long tour, for example.

It has been pointed out during the interviews that other artistic fields – such as dance and traditional theatre, for example – seem to suffer on this change even more than street arts.

Many professionals agree with the fact that Belgium too is highly improving working conditions for street artists and is giving a huge support to creativity and production.

Concerning taxation, as already written, differences exist among countries and different agreements rule the relationship between two countries. Safety rules too vary a lot among countries as well as within the same country.

For all these fields, what is generally suggested by the operators is an harmonization of laws and rules within the EU, so as to make it easier to manage an international work: the need for a “*European mindset*” is underlined.

Concerning the taste of the audience and the kind and topics of performances, each country has its own tradition and mindset, but in this case variety means richness not an obstacle: this diversity must be saved and kept as a value. On the other hand, it is possible that a specific production is not appealing for foreign festivals because, for example, of the sense of humour<sup>386</sup>.

#### 4.1. Institutional support

As already written, in some countries, for instance France and Belgium, the governments support very well street arts, not only in financial terms but also supporting inspiration and creativity. This happens because of a precise mindset which considers street arts as true forms of art and culture, not as entertainment, and this attitude has an important result on the number of production centres, companies and festivals held in those countries.

It is to remember anyway that in some countries (for instance, Bulgaria) culture as a whole is not supported by public funds, therefore the global attitude of each government towards culture should be kept in mind when considering this kind of problems.

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<sup>386</sup> From the Arts Council England report on “UK Street Arts and mainland Europe”, 2005: “*The Belgians and Dutch gave the most positive responses to UK based work (citing the British sense of humour as a salient factor). French festivals seem to have the greatest difficulty with UK based work. ‘The British aesthetic is very limited - in terms of what we understand by ‘shows’ in France. Very many animations rather than shows unfortunately’*”.

In France, festivals also have a strict connection with universities, mainly those of architecture, theatre, anthropology. This gives festivals and companies a huge professional preparation and a deep consciousness and knowledge, while studies and researches are developed also at an academic level.

## **4.2. Mindset and traditions**

The tradition from which street arts derive changes a lot from country to country. It is to remember that, once again, differences exist also among regions within the same country; yet it is possible to find some typical elements for each country or geographical area.

In “Eastern” countries the street arts come from a long tradition of street events, linked to religious (and laic) celebrations; they developed during dictatorship times because artists could only bypass censure by going out on the streets and performing through mimic, parody and satire. In “Eastern” countries the audience is generally well acquainted with theatre, whose tradition developed – again – during dictatorship times (e.g. in Romania with Ceausescu).

In Spain, the street art tradition finds its roots in the popular tradition of religious celebrations in the street. Concerning the kind of performance, here fire is the protagonist of many performances.

In Italy, where the roots of street arts are in the traditional “Commedia dell’arte”, in the Fifties street arts were almost destroyed by an intellectualist approach fighting this art because not enough “intellectually structured”. Therefore, Italian festivals were cut out from international circles.

Many companies attain a high artistic level but, as there are no production centres in this country, they produce and perform mainly abroad, worldwide; except for co-productions, the work nowadays is mainly based on self-production.

Having said that, it is possible to find a first difference concerning street arts tradition between Mediterranean countries and the Northern countries: Mediterranean countries generally have a longer tradition of street arts, and people are more used to spend their spare time in the streets, they *live* the street. Climate and weather have a huge impact on this: in Spain the good temperature allow festival season to last longer than in Norway, for example.

Audience and mindset change from country to country, therefore the kind of performance and its contents cannot be the same everywhere. In some countries such as France and Belgium, for example, naked performers are not a problem, while reactions in other countries, such as Italy, can be very different. Also, “original” shows can be appreciated more in some countries than in others where “traditional” performances are more suitable. Fire shows, typically Spanish, are appreciated in many other countries; yet safety rules can put serious limits to the use of fire, thus discouraging directors to invite Spanish companies to perform in their festivals.

## **4.3. Companies’ and professionals’ expertise; international approach**

Concerning the tradition of street arts and consequently, the expertise of the companies, in such countries as France, Germany, UK, companies are more expert and have a longer experience in working at an international level, respect to “Eastern” countries such as Romania, whose international work is just at the beginning.

A truly international attitude requires a certain skill in speaking foreign languages, but this is not always so easy to be found among professionals. An open-minded attitude, fostering an effort by professionals to learn – or to speak – other languages, sometimes lack, so that for instance some non-French speaking companies state it has been hard for them to get in touch with French festivals – although the companies spoke English.

In little countries such as for example Slovenia, the market for street arts is quite little too. This means that it is difficult for artists to live on street arts – in fact, they all work in other artistic contexts: theatre companies, etc. – and, on the other hand, for the organizations it is not so easy to cooperate or to find partners.

#### **4.4. Rules**

Security rules can be more or less severe according to the country and to the festival. For example, in England security people are present during the festivals, side to side with performers and audience: this has an influence on the way the festival goes on, and this security approach does not always respect the performance's nature. In Ireland the political situation has led to adopt strict security rules during festivals.

In Portugal, for example, the space where the perform goes on must be clearly separated from the space where the audience stands, again influencing the “magic” of the shows – the audience cannot feel involved in a parallel reality, but always has very clear that it is only a show.

In Holland there are strict safety rules concerning fire shows, due to a fire accident which happened a few years ago during a festival.

### **5. Non-artistic skills for a successful career**

Working internationally in a landscape which is formally united but actually contains a lot of differences among countries, also some non-artistic skills acquire a huge importance, besides the artistic ones which are the basis for a successful career. Different skills are required to festivals directors, performers and companies managers, but some common element can be found, notably organizational skills.

Generally speaking, it seems to be very important to be able to put together the passion, which is necessary to work in the street arts field, the somehow “philosophic” attitude which allows keeping one's mind open, and some very practical skills which are necessary to carry on an international activity.

#### **5.1. Language and communication**

Speaking different languages is obviously a basic tool for mobility, useful not only for performers but also for technicians, managers, directors. English and French seem to be the most useful languages, which should make it easier to travel and to work internationally – though some respondents to the questionnaires state that some French festival refused their English-written applications. During meetings, speaking at least some words of different languages can “*change the approach and make you seem more nice*”.

The operators do not agree on the importance of language skills for performers. Some of them state that artistic skills in communication (through gesture, mimics, etc.) are much more

important when performing; in some countries such as Belgium, for example, foreign performances strictly based on texts are refused by many festivals, because texts should be translated to be understood but would then lose something of their artistic original value. The fact that a company shows a piece with a mainly textual content written in a foreign language, is one of the main reasons why that company will probably not be involved in a festival.

Other professionals on the contrary state that text-based performances are much more requested in other countries, and add that some forms of “national humour” can be mainly based on words, more than on mimics.

Communication is important to promote a company in foreign countries and in festivals where it has never performed. Means of communication include performing and providing material, with different degree of importance: sure being seen at work – “in situ” – is the best way to make one’s own activity appreciated, therefore festivals work also as a “showcase” for companies. Yet providing information and material – for example by mail, or during some festivals which give this chance to companies, working as “bourses de spectacle” – can be useful to let directors know that the company exists<sup>387</sup>.

## 5.2. Knowing the field

Knowing the audience is very important both for companies and for festival directors.

Companies in fact can choose appropriate topics and the right approach (humour, kind of performance etc.) for that audience, in order to prepare a performance which can be really appealing, catching, suitable for a certain mindset or a particular sense of humour. As already written, some topics (e.g. violence) or some contents (e.g. naked performers) can be not suitable for some audiences.

Knowing the field, directors can choose the program of their festival according to the taste of the audience. It is to remember that, as street festivals do not require to pay a ticket, the best way to understand if the audience likes the festival is to see if they stay or they go.

From a more artistic point of view, as the aim of street art is to change people’s life – if only for a while – it is important to have “clear eyes” and to know what is surrounding the performer, in terms of social and urban context. *“A festival deals with the social and physical space and wishes to change the social reality, so it tries to understand its own audience and to widen it by finding the right language to involve for example ethnic minorities or people from the suburbs; festival sometimes try to find urban spaces in decadence and to make them live again through the performance”*.

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<sup>387</sup> From the research “UK Street Arts and mainland Europe”, by Arts Council England (2005): “UK based respondents had mixed feelings about the usefulness of sending unsolicited company information. Some felt it is essential to send colour publicity (of the same high quality that European companies use); some said that publicity is only useful as a backup once work has been seen or recommended and is not a cost effective way to market themselves; some have done no international mailings, one has done one for the first time this year and is awaiting results”.

### 5.3. Attitude: internationality and flexibility

When talking about international work, the core element is mobility. For the performers, exchanging experiences and confronting with other artists is a huge source of creativity and helps gaining the awareness of what is going on in the rest of the world. Education too can get a huge improvement from experiences abroad.

Concerning festival directors, travelling allows them to open their mind, to increase their knowledge and also, seeing a work performed *in situ*, to evaluate if it fits with their festival. In fact, they have to visit several festivals each season.

When dealing with cooperation projects, it is of vital importance to accept the differences and try to work with them, taking them as a challenge and as a chance for confrontation and mutual development and not as an obstacle. An open-minded attitude therefore is another important tool within the international attitude set. Advantages of international cooperation, from an artistic and a managing point of view, have already been described, but sometimes the traditional way of working does not include this approach – this happens in “Eastern” countries, for example, but also in Germany.

Finally, in a work which requires a lot of travels and obliges to face many unexpected events, and in which performances take place in completely different and “unconventional” sites, flexibility is a keyword. While in conventional theatre, for example, the surroundings are always the same, no matter the country where the performance takes place, in street arts performers never know what they should expect. Rules and restriction very different from the ones in the home country; simply a tree in the exact place where the performance takes place; the natural light which is not perfect for the show and is different from what one expected... it is impossible to make a check list before leaving (and sometimes previous visits to the site are required to have a clear idea of how the site is).

Also, flexibility is required instead of being sure to find perfect and comfortable accommodations, or to expect one’s own food abroad.

### 5.4. Networking

Especially concerning directors and managers, networking is one of the words more frequently used by the operators.

Networks help opening and feeding the debate among professionals of street arts, collecting problems, reflections, needs and actions and conveying them to all social agents, attaining a dimension of “critical mass” whose voice can be more powerful than that of the single members. From a more practical point of view, as already written, networking helps bypassing financial and structural problems: they help finding partners with whom starting co-productions and allow the members – as a whole – applying to EU funds.

Also, the trust built within a network has a practical relevance for artists and directors in case of co-productions: for example, the partners of the co-production can guarantee for the artistic quality of the work with directors, who may not know the company involved but may trust in what the peers say – even if, of course, the decision to insert a show in a program come only after having seen the work).

Of course, the idea behind a network is not the naïf concept of having some partners from different countries: to ensure a good work the members must share ideas, projects and dreams, so as to be able to work all together for the same aims.

## 6. Keywords and key-sentences

It is possible to resume the main outcomes of the research through four keywords and key-sentences:

1. Recognition.
2. Networking.
3. Communication and confrontation.
4. One Europe, one law.

The lack of recognition of the cultural value of street arts has been focused as the core problem, from which all the practical obstacle listed derive. A change in the institutional mindset is required by the professionals, who try to foster it through lobbying – not an easy action.

Networking is the tool to gain a truly international dimension: it is a way to bypass obstacles, such as the lack of funding or the lack of production centres in some countries, and a way to keep one's mind open, to foster the debate, to support mobility, to promote creativity and co-productions.

Communication and confrontation are the key to work internationally, and require also some non-artistic skills to professionals.

Finally, some of the practical problems encountered when working internationally could be solved by adapting common guide-lines and by harmonizing the situation within the EU, though saving the traditional differences among countries.

## 7. Recommendations

What the street art professionals contacted ask the EU concerns two main aspects: recognition of the artistic value of street arts, and a European regulation concerning taxation and safety rules.

### 7.1. Recognition

Fostering the recognition of the cultural and social value of street arts, at a Communitarian level and in each single member country. Though the EU cannot interfere with the single national policies<sup>388</sup>, it could recommend recognizing the artistic dimension of street art productions and

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<sup>388</sup> The study "Mobilité des artistes et sécurité sociale" written by ERICarts at the request of the European Parliament and released in November, 2006, points out the role of the EU: *"L'Union européenne n'est pas compétente pour harmoniser les droits nationaux en matière de sécurité sociale. Son domaine d'action se réduit à coordonner les législations nationales, à créer des ponts entre les différents régimes nationaux, l'objectif étant d'éliminer les obstacles à la liberté de circulation des travailleurs à l'intérieur de la Communauté européenne. L'Union ne peut par conséquent adopter des instruments d'harmonisation de certains principes ou de certaines règles."*

*Les systèmes de sécurité sociale dans l'Union diffèrent tant par leur philosophie, leurs modes de financement (par des cotisations sociales obligatoires, volontaires, calculées sur les salaires ou sur d'autres éléments, par*



the social value of street art festivals. From such a change in the mindset, public support to street art should derive, dealing not only with financial issues – including street arts in the cultural field and therefore allowing it to receive public funding, in countries where this happens – but also with a “practical” support, opening creation and production centres.

At the same time, a different treatment for artists is suggested, which allows them to live on their art.

Inspiration for these matters might come from the French approach, recognized as the best one at the moment in Europe.

## 7.2. Common rules

Taxation systems and administrative issues should be based on common lines for all member countries, so as to make it easier for managers and directors to handle these issues directly. Previous researches<sup>389</sup> have already proposed solutions for the artists in general, who have to face the same administrative and bureaucratic problems listed by the street art professionals involved in this research.

Safety rules, common to all countries, should be established by security commissions made up of professionals of street arts, who know the specificity of these performances and the need of artists and companies.

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*l'impôt,...) que par leurs modes de gestion (centralisée auprès d'organismes publics, ou confiés à la gestion d'une multitude d'organismes publics, privés ou mixtes)".*

<sup>389</sup> Parlement européen, "Mobilité des artistes et sécurité sociale", by ERICarts, November 2006, see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?language=EN>.

The study "The status of artists in Europe", drawn up by ERICarts at the request of the European Parliament, contains proposals for an EU Parliament action, such as to “*Invite the EU Member States to coordinate their difference social security regimes*”, “*Provide unemployment insurance for freelance and self-employed artists*”, “*Adopt measures to financial social security programmes which are suited to self-employed persons*”, “*Permit the pursuit of an artistic activity during periods of unemployment in which benefits can continue to be drawn and to consider the development of artistic practice or artistic projects as job-seeking*”, see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?language=EN>.

## Synthesis 1

Summary taken from O. Audéoud, "Study on the mobility and free movement of people and products in the cultural sector", April 2002

Field	Genuine obstacles and serious difficulties	Minor hindrances and shortcomings
<b>Training for, taking up, and pursuing arts professions</b>	<p><i>Access to the profession</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the fact that for professional purposes certain Member States do not recognise qualifications issued in others.</li> </ul> <p><i>Pursuit of art professions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the obligation to use the services of a specific professional for the pursuit of art professions</li> </ul>	<p><i>Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-insufficient or no co-operation and exchanges at the Community level between training institutions in the Member States schools and vocational training centres</li> <li>-the lack of a real policy for training in the arts in the European Union;</li> <li>-insufficient teaching of artistic subjects in secondary schools;</li> <li>-insufficient teaching of foreign musical repertoires in national music schools;</li> <li>-insufficient teaching of foreign languages in Conservatories and academies;</li> </ul> <p><i>Pursuit of art professions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the obligation to open a bank account in the host country;</li> <li>-the establishment of a quota for national artists in international co-productions and foreign productions;</li> <li>-problems in promoting disseminating artists' work outside their country of origin.</li> </ul>
<b>Employment and social protection status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-loss of entitlement to unemployment benefit and pension's payment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-comply, on behalf of his employer in the other country, with the formalities concerning payment of social security;</li> <li>-absence of insurance for work-related accidents;</li> <li>-loss of entitlement to paid leave;</li> <li>-when calculating pension payments, problems of tracking artists' careers when they have worked in another country;</li> <li>-problems involving payment of entitlements (pension, social security, unemployment) due to the lack of coordination between the national organisations concerned.</li> </ul>
<b>Taxation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-tax rates applied to artists (income tax rates and the VAT rate);</li> <li>-the problem of dual taxation imposed by the country of origin and the host country on migrant artists and cultural workers;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-possibility of smoothing out the taxable income of artists and cultural workers;</li> <li>-disparities in tax treatment of subsidies;</li> <li>-differences in tax treatment of subsidies;</li> <li>-lack of information on the different tax legislation in force in the EU.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the existence of specific taxes peculiar to certain Member States;</li> <li>-the deductibility of professional costs incurred by artists outside their country of origin;</li> <li>-differences between the exemption systems used in the Member States.</li> </ul>	
<b>Funding arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the inadequate nature of certain mechanisms for granting subsidies and aid;</li> <li>-the high cost to artists of moving around within the European Union;</li> <li>-the insufficiency or ineffectiveness of current aid schemes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the restrictive definition of the circumstances under which grants and subsidies may be paid;</li> <li>-the lack of co-ordination between national funding systems;</li> <li>-the lack of involvement of the social partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Intellectual property rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a relative lack of co-ordination between the systems for managing and collecting rights of interpreting artists from the different EU countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the deprivation of certain prerogatives linked to the rights of interpreting artists.</li> </ul>
<b>Specific obstacles and problems</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-lack of information on the legislation of other countries and on the EU institutions, combined with the problem of finding someone capable of providing information;</li> <li>-the language barrier;</li> <li>-lack of facilities for artists and cultural workers from other countries;</li> <li>-the inadequacy of professional networks.</li> </ul>

## Synthesis 2

Information taken from “Tax and social security. A basic guide for artists and cultural operators in Europe”, by Judith Staines, March 2004. The scheme below is laid out by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo.

Concerning **taxation**, information gathered around considers three essential elements depending on which the art professional will be treated:

1. *Resident or non-resident?*
2. *What work are you doing?*
3. *Employment status: self-employed or employee?*

Taxation is the responsibility of the relevant government department in each country.

Research shows that the main areas of taxation which concern artists and cultural operators working abroad are:

- *Withholding taxes*
- *Income tax and other direct taxes on earnings*
- *Tax on royalties and copyright payments*
- *VAT.*

## Country profiles of tax regulation

[note: the scheme below, laid out by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, gathers information about national tax regulation contained in Judith Staines’ report, published in 2004; it is to point out that national regulation can have changed meanwhile.]

Austria	Withholding taxes of 20% are payable by non-resident performers.
Belgium	Withholding tax of 18% is payable by non-resident performers. Expenses are not deductible and are liable for tax. There are exemptions for performing arts companies from countries with which Belgium has a tax treaty, but these are only allowed under certain conditions and are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Other exemptions apply when the performance is financed by a public authority, for example as part of an official cultural exchange programme.  There has been considerable debate within the cultural sector over VAT. There are two VAT rates: a general rate of 21%, a lower rate of 6% and some exemptions. The lower rate (originally intended to apply to ‘necessities’ of life) applies to most cultural goods such as books but CDs attract the higher rate. The subsidised performing arts sector has been zero-rated but certain activities are now subject to the 6% rate. This is a specialist area and the promoter in Belgium must advise performers coming to work there.  Individual artists (often described as artists “acting as a physical person”) are generally taxed unless they provide proof that they pay their tax and social security in another country.
Denmark	Withholding tax of 25% is payable by non-resident performers who can spend up to six months in the country before coming under the normal tax regime. Income from royalties is taxed at 30% apart from those paid to artists from countries with which Denmark has a double taxation agreement; in which case the tax rate is lower than the normal rate or may be zero. Non-resident artists who are self-employed (or employed by a non-resident employer) will not be subject to taxation in Denmark as there is no internal provision for taxation.
Finland	Withholding tax of 15% applies to the earnings of non-resident performers. Teachers and workshop leaders are taxed at 35%. No deductions may be made for general production expenses but travel and accommodation costs can be reimbursed (against receipts) and a per diem daily allowance can be paid tax free. Performing artists coming from a national company which is owned and financed by the state may be granted a tax-free exemption.
France	Withholding tax of 15% applies to non-resident performers. Bilateral agreements exist with some countries which exempt artists from withholding tax. The reduced VAT rate of 5.5% is generally charged in the performing arts sector. Foreign companies who do business in France which is subject to VAT must register there for VAT under a change in the law since 2002.  Form E101 exempts employees and self-employed artists resident in other EU Member States from paying social security contributions in France. Artists employed in France, particularly in the

	performing arts, enjoy a comparatively high level of employment and social protection. Some of these measures may apply to foreign employers of artists who tour in France and promoters are recommended to get professional advice.
Germany	<p>Withholding taxes for non-resident performers are a complex area and advice is required from a local promoter with experience of employing foreign artists. There is a sliding scale of tax rates with a top rate of 25% and exemptions for small amounts. VAT at 16% is generally payable plus the solidarity surcharge (a special tax introduced to cover the costs of re-unification), deducted by calculating it as a percentage of the withholding tax, the rate dependent on the amount paid and whether it is paid gross or net. The German tax rate for visiting artists one of the highest in Europe and it is rigorously enforced.</p> <p>Some exemptions can be granted by the tax authorities. The German promoter must apply in advance and provide evidence that they are a non-profit, independent organisation working in the public interest and that the foreign arts company they are hiring is also a non-profit organisation. They may also be required to confirm that the majority of the fee is being paid out of German public subsidies. According to some promoters, arts projects which can be described as workshops may be tax exempted. Exemptions can be difficult to obtain and are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. An additional complication in Germany is that taxation comes under the federal finance ministries and where there is scope for interpretation, as with the exemptions to withholding tax, each region may take a different view of the same application.</p>
Greece	Withholding tax of 20% applies to non-resident performers. Lower rates may apply to artists invited by public authorities.
Ireland	<p>Withholding tax of 26% applies to non-resident performers. However, double taxation agreements with over 30 countries means that the rate is effectively reduced to zero for artists from most European countries.</p> <p>Ireland has a unique provision of tax-exempt status for self-employed creative artists, namely composers, writers and visual artists. Earnings derived from sales and copyright fees from their creative works are exempt from income tax. The 1969 Artists Exemption applies to artists living in Ireland who must satisfy various conditions.</p>
Italy	Withholding tax of 30% applies to non-resident performers. However, experiences vary as to the circumstances in which this is applied. Artists are advised to establish a clear contract with a net fee. Work with an experienced promoter who knows how the Italian tax system works. Italy has a relatively high level of personal taxes and social security costs.
The Netherlands	<p>Withholding taxes of 20% are payable on earnings by non-resident performers after the following deductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-resident artists may apply for tax relief for all direct and non-direct expenses</li> <li>- A basic level of remuneration plus the expenses taken on by the promoter for transport, accommodation and meals are tax exempt without prior approval by the tax administration. Non-resident artists have the option to file a tax return in the Netherlands but are not obliged to do so. This measure gives tax relief to higher earning artists who would have to pay additional income tax on earnings in the Netherlands (after expenses) above a certain level.</li> </ul>
Portugal	Withholding tax of 25% is deducted from the earnings of non-resident performers. Some exemptions or variations in practice can be found from venue to venue. It seems that individuals are likely to be subject to withholding tax but companies who can provide adequate proof that the tax will be paid elsewhere (e.g. official invoice with tax number, statement from their own tax office) may be exempted and paid on a fee basis. Educational activities such as workshops or lectures are taxed at 15%.
Slovenia	Withholding taxes of 25% are payable on earnings by non-resident performers. Companies are advised to make it clear in their contract that they want a net fee. It is best to invoice separately for expenses such as travel, freight, accommodation and per diems so that the local employer does not have to pay 25% tax on them as well as on the company fee.
Sweden	Withholding tax of 15% is payable on the earnings of non-resident performers who may work in Sweden for up to six months. Withholding tax is described as a 'special income tax on non-resident entertainers and artistes (LSI)'. No deductions are allowed for expenses although necessary travel and accommodation expenses may be reimbursed at cost. Creative artists who do not perform such as choreographers and theatre directors are exempt from the tax.
UK	Withholding tax at the basic income tax rate (currently 22%) is payable by non-resident performers. There is an annual tax free allowance of £1 000. The Foreign Entertainers Unit of the Inland Revenue tax administration provides a specialised advice and administration service. Promoters can apply in advance for exemption on production expenses. Claims for exemption or reduction of withholding tax are made under the Artiste Reduced Tax Payment Application.

## ANNEX 2 - SECTION J: STREET ARTS IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE: THE EXAMPLE OF POLAND

Contribution by Dr Joanna Ostrowska and Dr Hab. Juliusz Tyska – January 2007 – in the framework of the study “Street Artists in Europe”

### 1. Introduction

The space in theatre is an essential element, a statement which at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century might seem to be a truism. This space constitutes not only the shape and the form of a particular performance, but also, and maybe most importantly, it builds a kind of relation between actors and audience. Most of experiments with the space in theatre in the 20<sup>th</sup> century concerned the change of this particular relationship. The negation of Italian baroque space, and later of theatre building as an allotted area, “the temple of the arts” which could admit only the chosen, was derived from this need to establish a new, more direct contact with spectators. This contact, according to some artists, was supposed to be more easily accomplished in the space, which was not burdened with the habits of responding to theatre works, meaning in the areas which had previously been ‘non-theatrical’. Whereas such space could have turned out to be anything: a magazine, a basement, a church, and also a street or a park<sup>390</sup>.

When, after the period of restriction to a building, theatre would again start to move on to the open spaces, it seemed that it returned to its “natural environment”. For centuries it had been linked to the city life and to the reversal of cultural order. Although it was transitory and ephemeral, it seemed that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was finally locked in a building. And it was not any sort of building, since it was constructed in such a way to allow not merely for creation of community, but rather for auto-celebration. The architecture of this building, formed in the period of Italian baroque, reflected rigid social hierarchy. It was already in the twenties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that Erwin Piscator critically analyzed this space, pointing to the consequences of its arrangement: “The architecture of theatre remains in the most inextricable relation with every form of drama. (...) However, the roots of drama, as well as of architecture, originate in the social forms of the epoch. The stage form, which reigns in our times, is the antiquated form from the times of absolutism, the courtly theatre. With its division into stalls, boxes and galleries, it reflects stratification of feudal society”<sup>391</sup>. The architect, Walter Gropius, working together with Piscator on the project of a new theatre for the latter one, also added that the Italian stage, owing to complete separation of the audience by the curtain and the orchestra pit, creates “a world of deception detached from the real world; (...) [it] has this great disadvantage that it doesn’t engage the spectator in action, it does not allow for his or her active participation (...)”<sup>392</sup>.

Richard Schechner went even further in his analysis of the consequences of allotment of space in the matchbox theatre. He noticed that “as theatre was developing along with its stage frame from the 18<sup>th</sup> till the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the proscenium reaching the audience was gradually reduced, until it finally disappeared, while the common space between the stage and the audience was eliminated”<sup>393</sup>. He also draws attention to the fact, that the division inside the building, for

<sup>390</sup> The work entirely devoted to the discussed problem is *The Theatre in Non-theatrical spaces*, ed. J.Tyska, Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora, Poznan, 1998.

<sup>391</sup> Erwin Piscator, *Political Theatre*, Warszawa, 1983, p. 143-144.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid, p. 146.

<sup>393</sup> Richard Schechner, *From the Issues on the poetics of theatre work*, “Dialog”, 1976, nr 5, p. 116.

example with separate entrances for the audience and the actors, are “a variety of practice used in industry, where the production of goods is separated from their sales.”<sup>394</sup> And so as to Piscator the space of the Italian type of theatre was a reflection of feudalism, to Schechner it is “a model of capitalism in its classic form”<sup>395</sup>. “Theatres are located in the entertainment districts of city; performances are presented during the easy time of the week, or during the days generally free off work. Theatre, which constitutes a model of mercantile process, cannot disturb this process. It addresses the middle class, and so diverting their attention from their occupations would be considered as indecent. In the theatre district, the appetite of customers is whetted by array of performances (...). The competition between theatres is fierce, but the battle is fought for the clientele, not for distinctions. If such distinction occurs, it actually serves to attract more audience”<sup>396</sup>.

Also Juliusz Osterwa, a Polish theatre reformer from the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, abandoned traditional theatre houses, and he performed the staging of the great masterpiece of literature, “The Constant Prince” by Calderón-Słowacki, in the open spaces. Although he didn’t put forward such drastic solutions as Piscator, he laid greater emphasis on the ethical and social issues, rather than on the aesthetic<sup>397</sup>. As Iwo Gall wrote about Osterwa: “With all satisfaction, he performed in poor, little towns; he reckoned it a high honor and he inspired in his actors a great affection towards such work which served all citizens, the whole society and which broke away from the elitist theatre”<sup>398</sup>.

Edmund Wierciski, on the other hand, concluded his contemporary theatre in such a way: “It seems rightful to state that the current type of conventional theatre, which is after all abounding in rich traditions and cultural contributions, became a machinery resembling the factory of ephemeral emotions rather than the abode of art, because in its artistic essence it relies on a system of virtuosos and **architectural construction**, with a whole apparatus of more and more perfect, and more and more artificial means”<sup>399</sup>.

As it became clear, the abandonment of traditional theatrical space, which started at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and reached its culmination in the 70-ties, originated in grounds not primarily artistic. It was, in a way, a return to a popular practice in the history of theatre, when people gathered around the space of performance in order to call into being even a short-lasting community. Moreover, Schechner claims that theatrical spaces have existed since the beginning of our culture, and they played a vital role as the places of:

- " 1. maintaining friendly relationships;
2. exchange of goods (...);
3. presentation and exchange of dances, songs, and drama works.”<sup>400</sup>

<sup>394</sup> Ibid, p. 116.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid, p. 117.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid, p. 116.

<sup>397</sup> cf. Zbigniew Osinski, “On the Spaces outside the theatre building in Reduta 1919-1939”, in *Theatre in Untheatrical Spaces*, ed. J. Tyska, Poznań, 1998.

<sup>398</sup> Iwo Gall, *The Notes on Theatre*, quoted by Zbigniew Osinski, *On the Spaces outside the Theatre Building*, p. 143.

<sup>399</sup> Edmund Wierciski, *The Journal from the First Tour around Reduta*, quoted after Zbigniew Osinski, *Un the Spaces outside the Theatre Building*, p. 113.

<sup>400</sup> cf. Richard Schechner, *From the Issues on ...*, p. 113.

This space allowed for a meeting, and yet, as Schechner claims, “it isn’t the only alternative for a gathering of one or more groups”<sup>401</sup>.

It was actually this idea of authentic meeting, which was a noble purpose of author’s abandonment of conventional spaces, which were appropriated by the ruling power and authority, and the search for a new space for theatre. It could have become practically anything, each place making a meeting possible. The shape of this space was supposed to be a signal to establish a new form of contact between a performer and a spectator. Such spaces, which were still not governed by conventional reception of theatrical work, were also a street or the open air. As Wiercinski wrote it was “in-the-air theatre”, “taking place in the open air, in the wide areas of nature or architecture”<sup>402</sup>. These places were ‘untamed’, and one could search in them a new form of contact with the audience, or with a new type of spectators, who are themselves ‘untamed’ by theatre.

Performances created and presented outside theatre buildings were not only means to modernize theatre, but also an attempt to join in the change of cultural paradigm. Bogusław Litwiniec, who was a founder of the Open Theatre Festival in Wrocław (1967 – 1988), where outdoor performances were presented in the late sixties for the first time in Poland, wrote convincingly on this issue: “The very exit from the box of bourgeois theatre could be interpreted by a reader, who is unacquainted with the utopian spirit rejuvenating rebellion, as a act merely architectural, as a result of a search for more aesthetically effective ground for play made by the young generation of theatrical experimenters. However, what we dealt with here was not a category of beauty, but a choice motivated by the pursuit of a **way of life**. Entering our names on the signposts of the New Culture (...) we step out of the cultural frames of stage with its curtain, footlights, wings and the audience sitting back in chairs, in order to add to the list of deadly sins duplicity, hypocrisy, advertising wooing, mental torture, senility in dogmatic stereotypes”<sup>403</sup>. Julian Beck, co-leader of The Living Theatre, saw the reasons behind creating theatre on the streets in an even more uncompromising way: “The aim of guiding theatre to the streets is the disruption of repression, and the separation of art, artists and the audience (people) from the repressive art of civilization (...)”<sup>404</sup>.

The street seemed to be ideal to create this “new space”. It was a public place, where the actor looking for a new form of contact does not place himself in a privileged position. He steps out to a potential spectator, but he also surprises the audience with “the inadequacy in the face of the prevalent function and the atmosphere of the place in which it occurred”, as it was stated by Wojciech Krukowski, the leader of The Akademia Ruchu (Academy of Movement) Performance Group from Warsaw and the first postwar author, who has systematically created actions, interventions and performances on the street<sup>405</sup>.

The street theatre could also allow artists for the development of a new theatre tactic – ‘hit and run’, where the performance in a way attacked a spectator by the very fact of ‘art’ appearing in a place seemingly not assigned for it, or even improper. The street theatre was supposed to establish relations with the everyday life of random members of audience, and to involve art anew in the circulation of life. What is more, such theatre could help life gain more intensity and reality. The very comments of artists, who chose ‘creative activity on the streets’, support this

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Edmund Wiercinski, *The Journal* ..., p. 136.

<sup>403</sup> Bogusław Litwiniec, *Non-theatrical Places – the Space of the New Culture*, in: *Theatre in* .... P. 219-220.

<sup>404</sup> Julian Beck, *Life of the Theatre*..., p. 46.

<sup>405</sup> Wojciech Krukowski, *Theatre in the Theatre of Life. Akademia Ruchu*, in: *Theatre in*..., p. 225.



statement: “It is as of my whole life led to this space: the theatre on the street” (Julian Beck)<sup>406</sup>, “And then I felt the relief of tension, which was so overwhelming in the theatre house. I would sit on benches for hours and I would watch reality, as if I was recovering my eyesight” (Adam Ziajski – Teatr Strefa Ciszy/The Zone of Silence Theatre from Poznan)<sup>407</sup>.

The peculiarity of the Polish approach towards the street theatre practice may be depicted more closely by the analysis of the “goodness” concept from “The Nicomachean Ethics” by Aristotle made by Stanislaw Filipowicz. Aristotle gives an example of “the life sacrificed for the civic activity”, which could be one of the possibilities to elevate people over the level of commonplace needs, which identify goodness with pleasure, and its realization in indulgence and lack of restraint. The point in such activity is the public intervention connected to demonstration. As Filipowicz writes, “The public activity, then, is always a specific performance, since we always deal with some staging. Everything assumes some shape on the stage. There always appear some observers.”<sup>408</sup> Further on, Filipowicz reconstructs the view of Aristotle in a way, which reminds one of sociological descriptions of ‘theatralisation of life’: the life in a community is related to the necessity of civic activity, and this could be compared to the constant ‘being on stage’. One can distinguish here the demonstration and the watching (of participant and spectator), meaning two conditions necessary for performance to take place. According to Aristotle, it is a positive thing, since it bounds the individual with others. This everyday performance never gets suspended, for the reality is a process. The showiness of the world is therefore imposed on us by the very nature itself. “Everyone can pursue perfection only in contact with others, by demonstrating and looking. (...) Cooperation is always a performance. (...) The public stage is the space of auto-creation. It is here that people discover their self by committing to tasks, which make it possible to bring out their dormant potential. (...) Therefore, Aristotle presents the public interaction as an effort of formation. It imposes a discipline of authentic fulfillment. It is not about performing a part. (...) It is also not about a more splendid presentation of what already exists, but about realizing (bringing out) what is not there yet.”<sup>409</sup> The interaction on the public stage is thus not donning a mask, but a type of auto-creation. If we were to transpose these views onto the field of theatre, one could say that acting and all activity in the public space (and the street is such a space) is not a repetition, deception or constructing a world of illusion, but a form of creation, foundation of values.

To continue this line of reasoning, one can venture a statement that the undertaking on the street stage is an attempt of ‘civic activity’. To travesty the words of the great Master of theatre, Tadeusz Kantor, one might say: “No one can get away with exiting theatre”. The point of this statement is this “reality” touching upon the street theatre on many levels.

Apart from the above mentioned ‘civic activity’, which may always become a reason to begrudge the supporters of different views or simply of a different way of using the public space, one must also take into consideration the ordinary unpredictability of acting on the street. As a consequence, it also leads to the reliance on caprices of weather, as well as lack of understanding from the random spectators. They are not bound by any agreement, such as the purchase of a ticket, and thus can simply leave. If one adds the inability to make a living out of acting on the street (in the Polish climate the season lasts 5 months at its best – from May till September), and the trouble with various authorities (since the street theatre has often been used

<sup>406</sup> Julian Beck, *Life of the Theatre...*, p. 152.

<sup>407</sup> *To Discover the Rhythm of the Street. Joanna Ostrowska and Juliuz Tyszka talking to Adam Ziajski*, in: *The Wrong Way World. 10 Years of the Zone of Silence Theatre*, Poznan, 2003, p. 18.

<sup>408</sup> Stanislaw Filipowicz, *The Face and the Mask*, Kraków, 1998, p. 14.

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15.

to express protest), it becomes clear that acting on the street and in some other ‘non-theatrical spaces’, has been, or at least was a difficult life choice.

Such point of view over the role of the street theatre was opposed by a Polish theatre critic, teatrologist and social thinker, Krzysztof Wolicki, who made a penetrating analysis of this phenomenon in his essay *The Street Theater* from 1973. In the introduction to his text he gave examples of some stances opposing the „traditional” theatre, on which, from his point of view, the street theatre founded its existence. Although these oppositions have now aged, they still seem to remain the base of considering theatre in the public space, both for artists and for theoreticians of theatre<sup>410</sup>. For the sake of clarity, let me refer to the source and enumerate these oppositions:

1. The street theatre reaches out “to the people”, to those who don’t go to theatre, and tries to catch them in the act within their “passing-by” areas, where their attention is not completely absorbed by the goal they are heading for.
2. The street theatre is identified with the theatre which acts against the social order and the dominating culture, and so “it cannot and it should not take advantage of the buildings and institutions, which were prepared by this order and class”<sup>411</sup>. The only place which is liberated from this rule and which belongs to the people is the street.
3. The theatre will exist in time and place in which it will be performed – it is supposed to be ephemeral and spontaneous.
4. The opposition of the stage and the audience gave rise to the loss of contact between these both groups. Within the Italian type of space theatre gains indispensable trust of a theatergoer by means of authority (“theatre is Art, and so the remains of transcendence, (...) in theatre and through theatre an outstanding individual expresses himself (...), in theatre due to self-vivisection of the actor, the truth about human condition is revealed”<sup>412</sup>). Where the authority was violated, there is an attempt to regain it through closeness and negation of the division into two separate spaces. However this may concern not only the street. “By stepping down into the street to reach for the trust of spectator, theatre exhibits its willingness to search and thus states implicate the collapse of authority”<sup>413</sup>.
5. “The choice of the street as a space for theatre equivalent to a declaration, that the theatre spectator, whose trust is here the clue, will actually be this chaotic and dynamic crowd”<sup>414</sup>. At the same time, theatre on the street is anxious to become the self-consciousness of this crowd.

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<sup>410</sup> This is how Buguslaw Litwiniec discussed this idea in the context of the idea behind The Wrocław Festival: “The very exit from the box of bourgeois theatre could be interpreted by a reader, who is unacquainted with the utopian spirit rejuvenating rebellion, as a act merely architectural, as a result of a search for more aesthetically effective ground for play made by the young generation of theatrical experimenters. However, what we dealt with here was not a category of beauty, but a choice motivated by the pursuit of a **way of life**. Entering our names on the signposts of the New Culture (...) we step out of the cultural frames of stage with its curtain, footlights, wings and the audience sitting back in chairs, in order to add to the list of deadly sins duplicity, hypocrisy, advertising wooing, mental torture, senility in dogmatic stereotypes”.

B. Litwiniec, *The Non-theatrical Place – the Space of the New Culture*, in: *Theatre in Non-theatrical Spaces*, ed. J. Tyska, Poznań, 1998, p. 219-220.

Juliusz Beck expressed his views in a similar fashion: “The aim of guiding theatre to the streets is the disruption of repression, and the separation of art, artists and the audience (people) from the repressive art of civilization”.

J. Beck, *Life of the Theatre*, New York, 1991, p. 46.

<sup>411</sup> K. Wolicki, p. 103.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid, p. 104.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless, according to Wolicki, by founding its existence on the above mentioned premises, the street theatre becomes a theatre of false self-consciousness, since: 1. In our times, the real place of passing by is not the street, but a room with a TV set, where one may most probably meet those who don't go to theatre. 2. The street does not belong to strollers any longer, but to cars. It is also not "the very reality", but "a shopping window", another stage. Thinking about theatre in categories of another, third opposition to traditional theatre leads, according to Wolicki, to the complete negation of theatre, which "dissolved in spectacular performances, entertainment productions, and in mass culture"<sup>415</sup>. Wolicki settles the point of oppositions 4 and 5 in one statement: „When it is not the trust or the closeness that becomes the problem, it also means that this problem lies in the strength of voice, not in the meaning of what one preaches"<sup>416</sup>. "When the five oppositions became unsound, the elation of utopia passed, the readiness weakened, and the mysticism melted away, the street of the great city reveals what it is: an non-theatrical space"<sup>417</sup>.

An additional charge of Wolicki against theatre artists who create their art on the street, is that they treat it, on the one hand, as a space where they touch "the hard stone pavement of reality", and on the other hand, they carry within a nostalgic, unreal image of the street, with "organ grinders, street fairs, and limping devils raising roofs over the city. [And they] dream about the times when there were no cinemas, no television, no cars, and even non of these comfortable theatre houses"<sup>418</sup>. This image of the street, which does not correspond to reality, is a reason why theatre, instead of "creeping into" it, "turns off its screen, if it is strong enough, but it does not use it"<sup>419</sup>.

Wolicki relates his comments to the European street theatre, while he considers theatres from South America, as e.g. Chicanos Theatre from the USA, in a different way. He maintains that they help spectator "fell at home" on the street, because they appear there "not as street theatres (...), and not even as theatre at all, but actually as a technique of celebration, the populace language and the commonness of game"<sup>420</sup>.

The text by Wolicki was published in December, 1973, when the Polish street theatre did not actually exist. However, the street theatre, which appeared later on in Poland, was in a sense an answer to Wolicki's refutations. This theatre did not refer to the medieval and street fairs' traditions, but it derived from the artistic legacy of avant-garde fine arts and the theatre of counter-culture. In April, 1974, Akademia Ruchu Performance Group went to the streets with its first city action "The Bond". During this action, the performers were passing a ball of thread among themselves and among people standing at the bus stop, thus creating a delicate 'bond', which still connected them when they entered a bus. Then more actions took place: "The Step Over"<sup>421</sup> (1975), the outdoor version of "The Bus"<sup>422</sup> (1975), "The Line Stepping out of the

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<sup>415</sup> Ibid, p. 105.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid.

<sup>417</sup> K. Wolicki, *The Street Theatre*, "Dialog", 1973, nr 12, p. 111.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid, p. 111.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid, p. 109.

<sup>421</sup> "In a place where people usually spend time observing the everyday reality or make appointments, (...) passers-by continuously stumbled, within short intervals, in the field of vision of this street audience. (...) This inexplicable character of the repeated accident activated the formerly passive spectators."

*Akademia Ruchu. The City. The Field of Action*. Warszawa, 2000, p. 37.

<sup>422</sup> "The wreck of the abandoned bus (...) was filled with 30-40 passengers remaining in motionless positions and (...) a 'blind' driver for about one hour."

Ibid, p. 39.

Store”<sup>423</sup> (1976), “Happy Day”<sup>424</sup> (1976), or finally “The City Theatre”<sup>425</sup> produced in 1977 in the center of Łódź. These actions, and many more which followed, were actually, in a way, a response to Wolicki’s deliberations. The Akademia Ruchu Performance Group did not only ‘creep into’ the street, but also accepted its reality as the reality of ‘stage’, on which our everyday micro-activities and interactions are performed. It also never attempted to ‘turn off its screen’. However, the actions such as “Happy Day”, “The Street Cinema”<sup>426</sup>, or “The Red and White”<sup>427</sup> in a sense depended on a temporary ‘projection’ of their own image onto the screen of the street. This projection gave rise to a dialogue with very real reality of the street during the times of The People’s Republic of Poland. An actor, Krzysztof Żwilbris, made some interesting comments on this group’s approach to the street reality at the conference devoted to student’s theatre. The street, which Akademia Ruchu entered, was not a space belonging to ‘the people’, and the members of this group were aware of this fact. It was a space belonging to the authorities, the official culture, so it would have been difficult to ‘turn off its screen’. Thus, the artists, on entering this space, had to create such a theatrical language which, on the one hand, would be able to break through the official ‘performance of the street’ (the 1<sup>st</sup> of May marches, church processions, all-powerful position of police), and at the same time would be immediately differentiated from the official language of the street (the posters giving voice to the struggle for peace or to the increase of work efficiency; margarine advertisements, which was brought into stores instead of butter, a product in short supply). The streets of the East European cities were not to be silenced, but rather conquered.

A similar awareness accompanied the first ‘exit into the street’ by the Teatr Ósmego Dnia (Theatre of the Eighth Day) from Poznań. It is a group, which for many years shaped both the style of the Polish street theatre and also the understanding of theatre’s goals in the public space. For them, the street was also an ‘anti-theatrical’ place. However, they understood it in a different way than Wolicki. As the former leader of the group, Lech Raczak, recalled: “During socialism there were times when it was not worth thinking about the open spaces at all. It was clear that the authorities would not allow anyone to enter the street with their own message, with their own information, or ideas”<sup>428</sup>.

<sup>423</sup> “The formation of a typical line heading the entrance of a store was reversed in this action: a group of several people was exiting from the inside of the store into the street, maintaining the same patience of the timeless waiting. The characteristic feature of this variety of a line was that passers-by reacted to it with understanding, and they declared willingness to join it, to take a position at the head of it – ‘for as long as their time allowed’.”  
Ibid, p. 39.

<sup>424</sup> “This action was based simultaneous occurrences: filling the space with very loud music (it was a quotation from ‘The Summer’ by Vivaldi played from the windows of surrounding houses), and the entering, from all directions, into the wide space of the street by very garishly dressed figures. Some of them were carrying mirrors reflecting the image of the changing street, some of them were carrying armfuls of flowers or baskets with profusion of products, which were rationed at that time (citrus fruits, garlands of hot dog sausages). The action (and the music) was broken off by a ‘cut’ as suddenly as it started, leaving the surprised passers-by again in the face of the dominating gray of the street.”  
Ibid, p. 48.

<sup>425</sup> “The 16-hour cycle of activities (...) in the center of Łódź (...). Every hour, groups of several participants simultaneously realized a similar motif of action in various areas of the city.”  
Ibid, p. 51.

<sup>426</sup> Individual versions of “The Street Cinema” differed from each other, but all of them were based on a clash of movie projections in a context of a real city street.

<sup>427</sup> “The action was dedicated to passengers of the city transportation, who passing the Slasko-Dabrowski Bridge [in Warsaw], could daily look at the monotonous landscape of the frozen Wisła River. The actions (...) were based on dynamic animation of bright red strips of linen, by the continuous change of their configuration.”  
Ibid, p. 64.

<sup>428</sup> L.Raczak, E.Wójciak, T.Janiszewski, M.Keszycki: *The Theatre of the Eighth Day in non-theatrical space*, in: *Theatre in Non-theatrical Spaces*, p. 235.

Although it is possible to argue whether the street actions of Akademia Ruchu were theatre, in the full sense of the word, the stepping out into the street by The Theatre of the Eighth Day at the beginning of 80-ties was definitely 'the street theatre' (I am omitting here the two actions organized by this group during The Open Theatre Festival in Wroclaw in 1978<sup>429</sup>). The actors of the Eighth Day, however, were aware that the way they started to practice the street theatre is different from what predominated at the Wroclaw festivals, for example. As the actress of this group recalled after some years; "Before we began to produce theatre on the streets, the prevailing model had been referring to Odin, with legends, the exotic, beautiful costumes, a lot of music, good winning over evil. What we introduced was anti-aesthetic, and as a result of it, a new fashion. It turned out that it is possible to create theatre on the street, which does something more than merely bring people a dubious consolation"<sup>430</sup>.

Therefore, the street was for both of companies a hostile and a dangerous place, but at the same time, a space where one could break away from the 'ghetto of message', since one could meet there people different from the authors of performances, and possibly, people thinking in a different way. As Tadeusz Janiszewski, an actor of the Eighth Day, recalled, people came to performances to be strengthened in their conviction that "others are just like them; (...) by means of a different contact people they could confirm the belief that they were not mad or potential suicides". On the street, the actors could not be sure of such confirmation. Thus, the first emotion they recall from the first performances on the street is fear.

Both of these companies, Akademia Ruchu and the Teatr Ósmego Dnia, were driven out to the streets by a significant need. They desired, at least for a moment, to conquer the space belonging to 'them', to the authorities of the official culture. They were also driven by something, which Wojciech Krukowski named "the consciousness of social inspiration of their activity"<sup>431</sup>. In this sense, the role of theatre in this part of Europe would be closer to the role which was played by theatre in the South America, according to Krzysztof Wolicki. Both of these theatre companies have shaped such a perception of the street theatre, that at least in the Polish context, the name 'street' until the mid 90-ties meant more or less the same as political, socially involved.

The political aspect of Polish street theatre's activity was strengthened by the artistic-political movement of Orange Alternative, led by **Waldemar Fydrych** (nicknamed **Major**), which emerged in the city of Wroclaw in 1987, in the final phase of Martial Law time. Major (1953) was a graduate of Wroclaw University, departments of History and History of Art. He took his nickname in the 1970s when he was pretending to be mentally handicapped in order to avoid compulsory military service after his studies. During one of his sessions with a psychiatrist Fydrych promoted the doctor to the rank of colonel and made himself a major. "Then, when I had gone to the psychotherapeutic camp - recalls Fydrych - and lead the military maneuvers there, I became Major for good"<sup>432</sup>.

Soon after the imposition of Martial Law (December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1981) he became bored with the banality of street riots and returned to surrealist activities which he had begun during so called "Solidarity carnival" (September 1980-December 1981). His first famous action in 1982 was painting joyful dwarfs on the walls of several Polish cities. The walls were covered with

<sup>429</sup> *Cooperation-Liberte d'Expression and Poetry to the Street!*

<sup>430</sup> E. Wójciak in conversation with Monika Mazurkiewicz. The archive of the author, p. 93.

<sup>431</sup> W. Krukowski, *The Italian Interview*, in: *Akademia Ruchu*, ed. T. Plata, Warsaw 2003, p. 65.

<sup>432</sup> Waldemar Fydrych, Bogdan Dobosz, Hokus-pokus, czyli Pomarańczowa Alternatywa. (Hocus-pocus or Orange Alternative). Wroclaw, Inicjatywa Wydawnicza Aspekt, Wydawnictwo Kret, April 1989, p. 8. All other quotations marked only with page numbers come from this source.

anticommunist slogans and *Solidarity's* symbols, whose authors were being chased by police and severely punished. In Katowice, after six hours of very surrealistic interrogation, the police officer finally agreed to treat Major's action as "juvenile fancy". In Swinoujscie he was forced to write an official declaration that a dwarf is an apolitical symbol.

In the following years Major developed and fine-tuned his strategy of street happening. He undertook many trials on a smaller scale in 1986. His first big happening was organized in Wroclaw on the occasion of Children's Day, June 1, 1987. The principal characters of the event were: dwarfs (young people with red hats on their heads) giving away sweets and candies, a teddy-bear, some characters from the most popular fairy-tales and, of course, great Gulliver-sized dwarfs - riot militia men. The scenario was easy to foresee: Swidnicka Street near the street clock and Wroclaw Old Market Square were carefully watched by the secret police (Security Service) as early as the night of June 1. Then, after the clock showed 3 p.m., whoever was wearing a red hat (not including the great teddy-bear in dark glasses, an attribute of gen. Jaruzelski, or Puss in Boots) or was giving away sweets or greeting children, was immediately arrested.

The strategy invented and applied by Major and his friends is clear now, we believe. It shows the surrealist quality of "socialist democracy" under Soviet domination. It was obvious, both to Major and to the state authorities, that every street demonstration had to have the state's authorization. Unauthorized celebrations, even as innocent as the one in Wroclaw had to **belong** to the state communist power. If not, they were automatically defined as hostile to the regime. This is the true nature of a totalitarian state: every piece of public life has to be subordinated to the directives given by the authorities.

Major and his colleagues called themselves Orange Alternative to commemorate their beginnings in the roles of surrealists in 1981. Their happenings were a mixture of art, children's play and political manifestation. But probably the most important aspect of Fydrych's happenings was the therapeutic one. The events on Świdnicka Street, Old Market Square and their surroundings enabled their participants to overcome the fear, the most important and most ominous effect of communist power, and especially during the period of Martial Law. After hundreds of bloody street fights all over Poland (and in Wrocław in particular) it was not easy to face once more the riot militia forces on the street, to be arrested and interrogated. It was possible, however, and it turned out that the police were not as tough, severe and cruel as they had been before. The times had changed, the powers seemed not to be as omnipotent as in 1982-83.

The year 1987 was rich in Orange Alternative activities. After the celebration of Children's Day the inhabitants of Swidnicka Street, the Security Service and militia experienced several stormy events: a demonstration against heat on August 1, a happening on the occasion of the International Day of Peace (September 1), a happening to commemorate toilet paper (October 1, shortages of toilet paper were very painful to Poles throughout almost 50 years of communist rule; they "magically" disappeared in 1989, when communism collapsed); the celebration of The Day of the Militia (October 7), the celebration of The Day of Polish People's Army (October 12); the ceremonial funeral of toilet paper (October 15), the Eve of the 70th Anniversary of the Great October Revolution (November 6), a happening on the occasion of the National Referendum for Economic Reform (November 27), and finally the celebration of St. Nicholas Day (December 7).

In each of these events artistic and political aspects were inseparable and very well mixed. Let's quote first some fragments of Major's reports confirming his artistic intentions. After the

demonstration on October 1, commemorating toilet paper, a militia man interrogating Major says: "Do you know that it was an attempt to change the social and political system in our country?". Fydrych answers: "I appeared on Swidnicka Street in a paper sack and with the stocking on my head because I was creating art there. (...) I am creating dialectical art, influencing people's consciousness. I think everything is art, everything is an object of art. (...) The interrogation is finished. (...) A Security Service agent, who is quitting the building, confides to a colleague that he is going out into the city to create dialectical art" (58). Fydrych was perfectly aware of the political dimension of his actions. In his commentary to the Peace Day happening (Sept. 1st) he says: "An independent antifascist demonstration is not possible in this country. It is forbidden here to organize anything which has not got the approval of the authorities. Even an independent fight against AIDS would be treated as an attempt to change the political system.

It is a funny situation when they arrest people who demonstrate against fascism. When you are finally arrested you watch the legal antifascist manifestation on the TV in the militia headquarters and you see what kind of hypocrisy all that official *blah, blah, blah* about peace is. (...) I wanted to show this by organizing this demonstration" (54). In the surrealist report from the celebration of St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 7th) Major wrote openly: "The struggle with the state of torpor and separation, the struggle for the victory of unselfishness, the aspiration for the smile, breaking sad alienation, all this pushed the united forces of good and joy into action" (72-73).

The most spectacular event in 1987 was the celebration of the Eve of the 70th Anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution on November 6 with the participation of battleships "Potemkin" and "Aurore, cavalry of Budenny, real proletarians (workers from Wroclaw factories) and the Angel of Revolution. About four hundred people were arrested that evening, some of them only because they were wearing red piece of clothes, the "clandestine badge" of happening's participants.

The reactions of the communist powers were serious and they showed fear. In spite of the joyful, carnival-like atmosphere at the feasts of Orange Alternative, their young participants were being arrested, detained, interrogated, sometimes humiliated and beaten by riot militia men. The culmination of repression came later - in early Spring 1988.

Then the situation in the country started to change. In May 1988 several strikes took place in different Polish factories.

On August 19th Major organized his last happening in the Karkonosze Mountains, on the Polish-Czechoslovak border, to commemorate the "brotherly help" of the Warsaw Pact to the Czechoslovakian people in 1968. On the peak of Śnieżka Polish forces were supposed to meet their Czech counterparts and to celebrate the anniversary together. Unfortunately, the Polish forces were arrested long before they reached the frontier. Only a small Czech unit reached the fixed meeting point.

The happening in the Karkonosze Mountains was the last important event organized by Orange Alternative. The political situation in Poland began to change rapidly. General Jaruzelski, urged by Summer strikes in many Polish factories, decided to negotiate with *Solidarity*. After few months of preparation the Polish Round Table debate started in February 1989. The Berlin Wall started to shake. Waldemar Fydrych, disgusted with the bad taste of political struggle in

democratic Poland and not willing to be a public *persona*, left the country. Since 1990 to 2002 he lived in Paris. Since 2004 he has been active in Ukraine and Belarus.

Orange Alternative was protesting against the world subordinated to the utopian doctrine determined by a scientific paradigm of thought which by many thinkers, e.g. Zygmunt Bauman, is considered as the ultimate, final version of modernist way of thinking.<sup>433</sup> Therefore, was the action of artistically re-conquering a public space - a street which before Major's *conquista* was grey, anonymous, ruled by routine, totally captive. Laughter which suddenly started to sound on Swidnicka Street, in the very centre of Wrocław, was the first sign of the liberation of "real existence" in Poland. The political liberation came later.

The role of the street theatre in the political transformation seems impossible to be overestimated. As Dariusz Jachimowicz, a culture operator from Warsaw put it, "the street theatre in Poland was able to overthrow the Communism"<sup>434</sup>. It helped people break away from the reduction of their lives merely to a private sphere, and help find themselves in a large group of people who are used to the fact, that each gathering on the street, which is not summoned by the authorities, may be considered by the representatives of 'the social order' as illegal, and may lead to political repression (e.g. imprisonment for 48 hours). Moving on to the street by theatre helped people believe in a possibility to constitute a real public space in the sense of Habermas.

## 2. The street theatre festivals

With more or less such understanding of the street theatre we entered into the nineties in Poland. At that time festivals focused on presentation of street performances began to spring up like weeds<sup>435</sup>. In this sense, the appearance of many companies practicing street theatre and a huge popularity of this domain of art, both among the audience and the local authorities, was a symbolic takeover of the public space, and was supposed to serve its transformation. The festivals would appear not only in large cities, but also in quite small towns, and for their inhabitants it was the only contact with theatre. Such festivals had a dimension of local holiday of the whole community of residents. Actors appeared on the street, the space of presentation, before the shows, and behaved unlike 'the artist' standing on a pedestal, which goes along with the Polish, romantic tradition of perceiving artist's position in society. They were also technical workers, who set up decorations themselves. All of this made the future contact with spectators easier. Paweł Szkotak, the leader and director of Biuro Podróży (Travel Agency) Theatre from Poznań, which often performed in such small towns soon after the political transformation in 1989, recalled that audience did not walk off to their homes after the performances, but they often invited the actors to their places and had conversations on social situation, which were full of hope in the possibility of reshaping the political life in Poland<sup>436</sup>. Unfortunately, this social potential was not put into use.

The popularity of the street theatre in such spaces did not only have a social dimension, but also a practical one. Many small towns in Poland are not provided with any sort of infrastructure for

<sup>433</sup> See: Bauman, Zygmunt, *Modernity and Ambivalence*. London 1991; Bauman, Zygmunt, *Modernity and The Holocaust*. London 1989.

<sup>434</sup> The comment made by Dariusz Jachimowicz in the conversation with Joanna Ostrowska and Juliusz Tyszką on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.

<sup>435</sup> Before that time, there also existed festivals of the street theatre, e.g. in Wrocław or Jelenia Góra, but the way they functioned, and most of all, the role they played at that time, was different from the newly founded ones.

<sup>436</sup> The comment of Paweł Szkotak in the conversation with Joanna Ostrowska and Juliusz Tyszką on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.



theatres or shows, and the street theatre is simply the only form of theatre which could be presented in such spaces.

The ground for such treatment of the street theatre was provided by the first entirely street theatre festival in Jelenia Góra, in 1983. The guidelines of the founders were to create the “space of peculiar cultural experience on the verge of art and everyday life”<sup>437</sup>. Although it was founded during the martial law in Poland, thanks to the presence of Western European groups, it made it possible for the Polish artists to move into the street with their performances. It was because of the presence of foreign groups that censorship requirements for the Polish theatre companies were also moderated. One of the co-workers of the festival, Tadeusz Burzyński, drew such conclusions about its influence on the region: “The festival in Jelenia Góra caused (...) noticeable social and cultural consequences. (...) It won huge audience from the whole region. The towns are putting in a sort of ‘bid’ to be able to host theatres. Among the audience there are less and less onlookers, and more and more spectators. The social ground, when it comes to this festival, is so vast that this event could last the whole summer, and even 100 companies would have enough work. And, who knows, whether this festival shouldn’t develop in the future in this direction, in order to become a more widespread cultural activity in the biggest Polish holiday region. (...) There was a proliferation of theatre companies, which would prepare street and outdoor shows. There are a few dozen of such groups. It is an entirely new wave in our contemporary theatre”<sup>438</sup>.

In 1991, this spirit of political transformation gave birth to the biggest Polish festival of the street theatre, the Malta International Theatre Festival in Poznań. In the course of time, it changed its formula, abandoning the art of the street. The director of this festival, Michał Merczyński, mentioned that one of the most important ideological premises of its manifesto was: “Firstly, *Rehabilitation* of the city spaces, which were demoted in their cultural functions for more than 40 years of the rule of institutional culture. Secondly, inciting a wider audience to more open forms of participation in culture, along with the beautiful slogan: ‘The art of open spaces is the art of democracy’, and thus rendering a festival a ‘theatre celebration’, whose protagonists are not only the performing artists, but also (or maybe most of all) thousands of spectators and co-authors”<sup>439</sup>.

Juliusz Tyszkowski labeled this distinctness of interpersonal relations within the festivals as “the school of being together”. “After seven years of freedom - he wrote in 1997 - it has turned out that meetings with theatre (especially open-air, site-specific ones) are very important occasions for contemporary Polish people to celebrate being together in a large group. „Togetherness” up to now has been associated by us with compulsory parades on Work Day (May 1st), or with mass meetings in factories and offices or especially in communist countries ‘akademias’ (these were gatherings organised by workplaces or schools in honour of some holiday or anniversary; their program had an official part that was a set of long, boring, and pompous speeches, and an artistic part, which consisted of recitals and singing).”

Meetings on Malta Lake, the Jelenia Góra Market Square and other site-specific places all over Poland are occasions to celebrate being together. People come there of their own free will and want to be together with other people. It is as simple as that. During these holidays, the daily

<sup>437</sup> Tadeusz Burzyński, *Theatre reached the Pavement*, in: *International Festivals of the Street Theatre*, Jelenia Góra, 1987, p. 4.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>439</sup> Quoted after Juliusz Tyszkowski, *A few dozen of lofty comments on the Malta Festival to celebrate its tenth anniversary*, in: *Ten Years of Malta*, ed. J. Tyszkowski, Poznań, 2000, (pages unnumbered).

rules of the game that lead to aggression, and ignoring and denying of others, are suspended. New and authentic social bonds are born this way. Hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people get together, even though up to now they simply have not learned how to be with others and certainly not in such large numbers. They have not learned normal, human reactions towards others and strangers, except for situations where forms of behaviour were ruled by government and church institutions. Therefore, the fact itself, that people of their own, unforced will get together on the occasion of a theatrical holiday, proves that life is returning to normal.

Because of this, the theatre festivals are unexpectedly becoming a form of anti-neurosis therapy. It helps gradually change the habits which regulate micro-interactions. Theatre holidays soften the old habits, and build new ones, which are at least neutral; they teach patience and understanding. They certainly break our habit of aggression.

One of the general characteristics of strategy applied by organisers of these holidays and involving artists and their audience is the departure from the institutionalised cultural model. The informal model was present before 1989, but it was confined to periphery of student clubs, where alternative culture was being cultivated. Now, the world's alternative culture with all the accumulated baggage of forty years' experience is pouring out onto the Polish streets.

The destruction of border between art and reality, one of the typical strategies of the twentieth century avant-garde and counterculture, has surprising social effects. Going beyond the border of art and reality is generally perceived as a revolutionary act - it is a reflection of spiritually anxious periods in the record of human culture. From the beginning of our century, going beyond the space of art by artists has caused a dynamic interfusion of two orders - art and not art, and of two realities - fictional and real. This process is particularly important in theatre regarding the reception of theatre performances. The communication between artist and an audience is not here intermediated by a specially-designed mediating space, which usually smoothes the contact between the viewer and the theatrical game and the fiction born out of this process.

Artists usually enter arenas of daily life when they acknowledge that this mediating space was specially prepared for them to surrender, in any given epoch, to an excess of institutionalisation. The roles of viewer (listener) and performer become within it too rigid, limited by too many conventions resultant prohibitions, too removed from the everyday life expanding dynamically beyond the theatre walls, concert hall, museum or gallery.

As a result, the artistic message loses its power to integrate and synthesize daily impressions and emotions, and it is no longer an act of creation joining the ethical and developmental realms of life. Thus, that contact between executor and receiver does not cross the boundaries of the play, and the two groups do not go together towards the artistic experience.

A departure from traditional settings of Art usually requires an open manifestation of wills to soften the stiffened and petrified social bonds, in a kind of revolutionary and carnival challenge to the traditional world order. Such a departure is needed today in Poland – and it is happening but mainly through theatre festivals, and not through the routine productions of the repertory houses. (...)

Polish festival performances are not merely 'anti-stress' therapy and a chance at normal being together. They are important occasions for a few thousand citizens of a free country to take a look at each other and attempt to more closely define their actual identity.

Bored by gatherings, marches, and religious masses, and also by plush armchairs in theatre houses and the typical swaying in the audiences at 'song festivals', we dash *en masse* to Malta, the Old Town of Jelenia Góra or Zamosc and to many other site-specific places. We want to find ourselves there, in the half-real and half-fictional show-setting and game, we want to get away from daily life, without completely departing from it. Finally, we want to take a look at the Others, existing, like us, in this strange space inside the theatrical metaphor. We want to get to know them better, to know what they are like, how they behave in this new, surprising situation, when uninhibited freedom could be the freedom for aggression, to ignore all kinds of norms and even other people. We want to experience in what way theatrical convention -- the social agreement regulating the beginning and subsequent action of a show -- is created in this haphazard society, which though it wants to play, laugh, and be moved, doesn't know if it is fully capable in such a crowd under the sky. We breathe with relief when it turns out for the first time, the second and tenth, that we are able to set the convention together with actors to initiate it, then together with them sculpt it during performance, keeping respect for partners and feeling responsibility for the show's internal interactions. All this happens in the open-air, outside theatre walls, sometimes even outside town, far from the seriousness of institutions.

We look at each other in disbelief -- where do we know this from, where did we take that from? Such experience gives us hope and strength to tackle daily life, and develop our **civil** attitudes with awareness.

Social auto-experiments of this kind are possible when artistic fiction unites with a common space and the real presence of crowds of fellow-citizens with which gradually we become an audience - an integrated society with regard to following the principles of theatrical convention. Theatre has always aimed at unifying the emotions of the crowd in an integrated feeling of collective identity, by experiencing self-truth through beauty. It has not always succeeded. In addition, the crowds gathering now at the Malta Lake and in many other places of my country do not always fall under the cathartic spell. However, people do always meet at these places, and for some time they learn how to be citizens of a free society.<sup>440</sup>

In Poland, already at the beginning of the nineties, when those diagnoses seemed to be relevant towards the reality, an Italian researcher Valentina Valentini wrote about the changes happening in the Western Europe within this phenomenon: 'The choice of 'staging a play at a theatre or a desolate factory?' is no longer an alternative between revolution and restoration. On the contrary -- maybe criteria are reversed here in such a way that natural set is often used merely as 'attractive framework' for a mediocre performance. Aesthetic categories of the art of the 1960s -- the event, procession, interaction -- are currently recalled in order to monument and enliven experiences and artistic practices, which today are already history. Some artists and critics pretend, though, that these categories are still alive and present. (...) Artists of recent years, who choose the non-institutional placement of performances, no longer want to trace social changes, neither do they enter into conflict with traditional theatre. (...) Breaking with the theatre in our times does not mean breaking with the theatrical framework. Abandoning the traditional theatrical space no longer creates real interaction, exchange between 'theatre' and 'life,' but rather an effect of alienation at the meta-theatrical level.'<sup>441</sup>

<sup>440</sup> Juliusz Tyszk, *The School of Being Together: Festivals as National Therapy during the Polish 'Period of Transition'*, New Theatre Quarterly, Volume XIII, No. 50, May 1997, p. 178-180, 182. Translated by Jolanta Cynkutis and Tom Randolph.

<sup>441</sup> Valentina Valentini, *Theatre outside theatre: drama implications*. In: *Theatre in Non-theatrical Spaces...*, p. 65.

This different approach is, in our opinion, the result of different development stages of the role and function of the theatre in society. And, while at the moment of creation of 'Theatre in Non-theatre Spaces' (1995-1998) we would be willing to agree with Tyszka, the current situation seems to confirm the diagnosis of Valentini. This is due to, at least, a few reasons. As remarked by Agata Skórzyska, "inclination to transgressive behaviour, characteristic of the artistic bohemians of mid 19th century was mirrored in, among other things, creating an alternative life style. Meanwhile, at the end of the 20th century, Avant-garde strategies of shocking, crossing borders, creating daily life based on aesthetic and artistic design of modernism, became food for pop culture. Thus, they became global in character and were revealed in such phenomena as aesthetics or theatricality of daily life"<sup>442</sup>. The change, which took place in culture due to, among other things, society's transformation from the society of production to the society of consumption, the establishment of new sources of consumption<sup>443</sup>, which led to spectacularity of the public space, caused the deprivation of the street theatre of its power to change and destroy.

Street theatre, which seemed to be a way to contest the culture which sanctioned the objectifying of interpersonal relations – free of charge, in a common, public space, not governed by the rules of the market, ephemeral and spontaneous, also was the victim of those changes. Out of the current perspective, it is obvious that the road which the street theatre took from being the spokesperson of rebellion to the contemporary, comfortable entertainment for mass audience is disturbingly similar to the road taken by the indoor theatre.

Is it possible to see theatre in a street, in Poland, nowadays? Not necessarily. This is usually possible in certain, special, circumstances called festivals. The description of Schechner, already cited here, fits these events brilliantly. During the festivals, street theatres are focused on a certain part of a city – usually famous 'non-theatrical places.' What are these places? I will give examples of three, this year's street theatre festivals in Poland. Poznan (Malta) – recreational area at the Malta Lake or the 'city in the city,' i.e. the Old Slaughterhouse – allotted post-industrial area; Warsaw (Sztuka Ulicy/Street Art) – the Agrykola park, the Mokotowskie Field; Szczecin (Artysci Ulicy/Street Artists) – the castle courtyard, a university campus at former barracks, therefore, well isolated from the city. Time - allotted, one might even say - special, but it can also be described as selected in such a way that it does not 'distract from the mercantile process' and 'does not divert people from their daily routine?' The festival, similarly to the theatre quarter, 'whets consumers' appetite, offering a whole range of performances.' And is it not true that 'competition among theatres is fierce, but the battle is about clients, and not the award,' since the measure of success is the number of thousands of spectators, who came to see the performance? And even though the theatre happens without a building, it is still isolated from the 'street' – its chaos and unpredictability.

A theatre, which currently wants to enter public space - a street, a square, a trade hall or a factory, enters a reality which has already been theatricised, since – as remarked almost 40 years ago by Guy Debord – "a spectacle constitutes currently a model of socially dominating life. It is an omnipresent confirmation of a choice already taken, both in production and in its derivative consumption" and thus "performance is the basic production of the current society."<sup>444</sup> Let the examples of this theatralisation (George Ritzer uses the term 'magicality' in this context, but we

<sup>442</sup> Agata Skórzyska, *Theatre in the World of Pacified Carnival*. In: *World Reversed...*, p. 117.

<sup>443</sup> "Places, which facilitate buying lots of products and services, encourage or even force to it". George Ritzer, *Magical World of Consumption*, Warsaw 2001, p. 15.

As new forms of consumption Ritzer enumerates shopping centres, but also theme parks, excursion ships, sport centres, and even museums, hospitals and educational centres.

<sup>444</sup> Guy Debord, *Society of Spectacle*, Gdansk, 1998, p.12, 14.

consider the term 'illusion') be 'thematic restaurants,' such as Sphinx. Entering this space we enter a ready-made set posing for a specific space, such as a Paris street. We can become 'actors' co-creating such performance of illusion.

In Poland, the thesis that a commercial and entertaining theatre is not longer theatre but a manifestation of the 'society of Performance' seems obvious. We are of the opinion that also the street theatre becomes such manifestation, even though it would not like to be perceived as 'commercial and entertaining.' The theatre which appears in public space not specially designed for it, fabricated with numerous 'illusion acts,' may be treated as another symptom of the Debord Spectacle and instead of restoring contact with reality, it starts to co-create the world of simulacra.

We are going to provide a simple example. Recently, when walking in the centre of Wrocław, in an underpass at Swidnicka Street (once upon the time the very centre of Orange Alternative's happenings), one of us was accosted by two red, gigantic, shopping bags (inside them were of course people who set the two bags in motion). Those people encouraged the passers-by to visit a new shopping centre. Some 10 years ago when met by such 'bio-objects' we would be willing to assume that it was some kind of theatre action. Now, even if instead of the two bags, this place was occupied by, for example, people on stilts, in costumes and made-up, our first thought would be: 'Ah, some promotion.'

In Poland, recently, we have experienced not only the 'symbolic' measures, which transform the space - once a perfect area of activity of the theatrical 'new culture' - into a consumption space. There are other, all 'rational' measures which include open-air theatre into the stream. The night performances at the Malta Lake during the Malta Festival in Poznań are usually accompanied by unusually strong smell of fried sausages, popcorn and beer. If we add to this the fact that the permission to sell this beverage at the premises of the 'festival' was received by one company in return for 'sponsoring,' if we add a promotion based on handing out cheeses, and caps with the logo of a certain company handed out in the VIP sector during concerts, as well as allotting the space for the 'better' and 'worse' spectators, and finally 'closing' the theatre and selling tickets for outdoor performances, then instead of the 'school of being together' we have a festival of sales.

Lech Raczak - a co-founder and the former leader of the Teatr Ósmego Dnia, currently (from 1993) the artistic director of the Malta Festival, seems to be aware of the changes of the situation of theatre in the altered reality: "Ten years on from the beginning of the Malta the world has been changing at an enormous speed. Information and the mere communication act became a product, increasingly cheaper and trashy. The market takes the place reserved for the spirit, aesthetic contemplation and divine matters; there are no barricades and it is more and more difficult to find a temple free of peddlers. Because we all - meeting and talking, passing on deep or trivial information or merely repeating simple rituals - participate in a common bazaar. In this light, art, including theatre, loses meaning. No, it does not die, it does not even become peripheral - it becomes trivial by turning into a product, off-the-peg clothes - traditional for those who like antiques and Avant-garde for those open for fashion. And our festival is an attempt to oppose these processes, an attempt to renew the emotional and unbiased connection with art and fun"<sup>445</sup>.

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<sup>445</sup> Lech Raczak, *Talking about Malta*. In: *Ten Years of Malta...*, (unnumbered pages).

Out of the Malta's fifteen years' perspective, I am not sure if the aforementioned 'opposition' is still present. The festival, at the beginning, really created a type of different contact with art, but currently it has become subject to dominating trends and it is no longer opposing them. The outdoor performances are increasingly bigger and more spectacular; this is due to the fact that when inviting to them, one has to remember that possibly a dozer or so, or even more, thousands of people will come to watch them. Besides, I noticed when watching performances in public spaces that certain conventions of reception of theatre outside theatre have developed in them<sup>446</sup>. This is due to at least two reasons. The first reason is possibly Poznan-specific. For fifteen years, during which the Malta Festival has taken place in the city, the spectators have got used to the fact that performances can be staged absolutely anywhere. And even though they are performed in various places, the spectators treat them exactly the same, like 'works of art' for contemplation, and sometimes amusement. I don't think that there is anybody who still believes (including the artists) that – at least in the festival situation – invitation to a performance in a space different than the theatre building is to provoke a different, unconventional, or more direct contact between the spectator and the actor. The second reason is aesthetic in nature. The shape of the performances presented outside the theatre does not provoke any change in the spectator-actor relation. We have the traditional division into the place of presentation and the place of observation, just allotted on a field, street, or a palace. The environment is treated similarly to a set in a 19th century theatre – as a nice backdrop for the eye.

Let me quote again Lech Raczak, who already three years after his optimistic words about the distinctness of the space of Malta in the 'consumerisation' of theatre does not seem to be as certain about his diagnosis anymore. "Therefore, in this world, which also becomes more and more significant in Poland, there is only one chance of survival and it is commercialisation (...). This commercialisation is certainly in progress now. I do not know if I am to be ashamed, or proud of the fact that I create conditions for this commercialisation, creating the MALTA festival in Poznan. (...) At the festival, seen is a process which results from the necessity of theatre groups and the pressure of the audience. Performances become less and less problem-oriented, and become increasingly more aesthetic. Communication is less and less important, and the effect of spectacularity, as well as arousing admiration in some field, become the most important. (...) There is (...) less and less rebellion, less and less opposition, less and less exchange, sharing doubts, and more and more of aesthetic seduction, apparent communication and conjuring with effect"<sup>447</sup>.

Theatre withdraws from public spaces. Perhaps, one of the reasons is the fact that there is increasingly less public space in the cities. The space, once shared, owned by the citizens, to the 'people' from the Wolicki text, is now again privatised, becomes owned – of course in a more pluralistic way than in the communist Poland – by someone (a city, personified by a manager, and not community - *polis*; an owner of a shop, a car park, a square, citizens of an enclosed housing estate, private street). Moreover (remarked by Ewa Rewers) there is currently a split between the "idea of *polis* and the practices of the post modern (postindustrial) city."<sup>448</sup> Among the places, in which this split is visible, Rewers mentions, among others, the aforementioned

<sup>446</sup> During one of the theatre festivals, Joanna Ostrowska watched with her female friends – a teatrologist and a festival director, a performance of Klinika Lalek Theatre staged in open space. Since the performance was boring, and rather noisy, all three of them took to discussing traps of open-air theatre. After a few minutes a rather young spectator turned around to them and drew their attention to the fact that one does not talk at the theatre. The festival director replied: "This is street theatre, here the spectators may talk."

<sup>447</sup> Lech Raczak, *On longing in times of monologue*. In: *Theatre – the Space of Dialogue II*, Editor Joanna Ostrowska, Juliusz Tyszką, Agata Skórzynska, Szczecin 2004, p. 64.

<sup>448</sup> E. Rewers, *Post-polis*. Kraków, 2005, p. 5.

“problems with establishing, who has the right to the city’ and ‘transferring agora to the public media space”<sup>449</sup>.

The second statement is especially crucial for further reflections. The Polish street theatre of the seventies, eighties and the beginning of the nineties continued the tradition started by the Akademia Ruchu Performance Group and Teatr Ósmego Dnia in the 1970s and 1980s of the 20th century – let us remind here of the beginnings of the Biuro Podróży Theatre and its unshaken Giordano Bruno or war stories of Bosnian Muslims during the war in Yugoslavia. It was a theatre which entered the agora, trying to establish at least its substitute in the ‘politically privatized’ city. Now the agora exists, but not in the real but virtual space, and the theatre is unable to enter it, because it will cease to be theatre (perhaps our standpoint in this issue is very principled, but we insist that in order for a theatre to exist one needs direct, and not only immediate, contact between performers and recipients). Here we think that the theatre lost this battle in a walk-over, placing safety of the presentation of artistic visions in isolated outdoor spaces over interaction with the chaotic space of the living street. In our opinion, street theatre simply withdrew from the fight with the Performance, which takes place daily. Upon entering the street, it would enter a reality already theatricised once, as remarked by Guy Debord: “Spectacle is currently a model of socially dominating life. It is an omnipresent confirmation of a choice once made (...).”<sup>450</sup> Thus, the street theatre must join this self-validation performance; or contrarily – must protect itself from its own presented doubts, alternative solutions in seemingly open spaces, but as a matter of fact isolated from the normal life of a city. As a result, theatre in the street space is used to reinforce our belief that ‘as a matter of fact we are all the same.’

These circumstances, however, give birth to a communication situation, named ‘transmission ghetto.’ To illustrate it we will use the example of ‘The Ark’ by The Theatre of the Eighth Day, performed in Szczecin at midnight, at the aforementioned, well isolated from the city, university campus (because the ‘good working people’ must not be disturbed in their sleep, and the theatrical effects are best seen in ‘naturally darkened’ space, therefore, the performance cannot take place earlier). The very humanist message on behalf of millions of emigrants wandering the world was watched by a few hundreds of people, a significant part of whom was well acquainted with the art of The Theatre of the Eighth Day and without their performance was full of compassion for the wanderers. On the other hand, however, the extremely spectacular form of the performance, its theatricality, may easily cause its reception by the spectators at the pure aesthetic level, without considering the plot (especially that the subject matter of the performance is very faint and can be summarized in three sentences). The actors of the Teatr Strefa Ciszy (Zone of Silence Theatre, established in 1993) have become victims of such way of existence of theatre in open space, currently dominating in Poland. One proof is the ‘communication defeat’ which they suffered in their latest, excellent and very wise, performance. “Learning to fly” seemingly uses a technique of free play with the audience - well mastered by the Strefa Ciszy theatre. At the beginning of the performance, the spectators are invited to sit on beds, and they are presented with numbered boards. It all looks like good fun. Even when it turns out that the beds are prisons, and the ushers – prison guards. The spectators in the play space are subject to ‘mild captivity’ – no one insults them (and if so, only slightly), they are only expected to do ‘funny’ and harmless acts, such as blowing up trashy, extremely red, heart-shaped, balloons, for which they get a reward of chips and pillows, on which they can comfortably sit. The people, amused by their subjection to captivity do not react (or perhaps do not notice) when one of them – the rebellious one - disappears behind a hospital screen. The

<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> G. Debord: *Society of Spectacle*. Gdańsk, 1998, p. 12.

only rebellion summoned by the spectators during a presentation of “Learning to fly” (the Artists of the Street Festival in Szczecin, July 2006), was the defence of the pillows on which they were sitting.

When, at the end of the performance, the guards open the ‘gates of prison’ nobody moves. Only with shouted commands the actors round up the spectators from the beds and arranged in penal two rows, after which they are taken out of the space of the play. When the guards melt away, the helpless two rows stand still for a while, looking around with uncertainty, before they decide to start ‘learning to fly.’ (Actors’ reports tell us that the French spectators at the Aurillac festival reacted differently. The question remains, however, if this was due to the fact that they were more resistant to ‘captivity’ or because the French tradition of street theatre taught them an easy interaction with the performers. The defeat (or maybe not?) of the performance of The Zone of Silence Theatre shows very clearly the re-evaluations the theatre has gone through – the theatre which at its beginning wanted to stand among people, at the agora and take a vote in a matter significant for society. There is no agora in the city space, the street theatre has become an outdoor entertainment of the middle class – because it treats itself this way and as such it is treated by the spectators. Even if it still wants to take a vote in matters important for the society, it does it more and more often in a language of carnival fun. Small wonder that it is difficult to understand what it means by it. The Polish street has currently become an ‘anti-theatrical’ place, its own ‘performability’ is able to successfully suppress the theatrical action, the agora is someplace else, and no one really wants to ‘catch’ spectators in their ‘natural space,’ it is better to invite them or even ‘contract’ them through the act of ticket purchase.

We are not opponents of the street theatre (currently, a more appropriate term would possibly be ‘open space theatre’) – on the contrary, we like it very much. However, we are of the opinion that it is time to demythologize it - forget about intellectual carbon copies, which force to write about the ‘democratic,’ ‘common’ theatre that approaches people, appropriating the whole city space. This is because the theatre has changed, as well as the world around it.

A statement of Pawel Szkotak, the leader of Biuro Podróży Theatre, the director of world famous street performances, such as “Giordano” (1992) or “Carmen Funebre” (1993), “Moonwalkers” (2000), “Pigpolis” (2003) can be a sombre death knell for the street theatre. When asked, in the broader context of negotiations with the Iranian censorship regarding the performance of “Swinneapolis” (“Pigpolis”), if he can imagine the return to the times of censorship in Poland, Skotak answered: “(...) If they returned, one would have to reach for much more radical means than a theatrical performance”<sup>451</sup>.

Spectacular feature of the world imposed on us by nature, described by Filipowicz in the description of the world of concepts of Aristotle, imposes on people, including artists, the obligation to take the challenge to shape the reality in order to achieve the ‘good.’ It anticipated the activity of all the members of the process, the need of its ‘materialisation,’ authentication with one’s life. The current ‘spectacularity’ of reality pushes us only to consumption, because – as remarked by Debord – “the world (...), which is made visible by the spectacle, is the world of a product, which has possessed everything that is directly lived through”<sup>452</sup>. As added by Ritzer: “People, as spectators, do not participate in these performances, as a matter of fact they are isolated from them. They watch performances, because they are attractive; but they are performed for them, and they are not an integral part of the performances. (...) In the days of old, a performance was usually an integral part of the daily life and it took its beginning from it (e.g. a village marketplace). In the current society a performance is not an integral part of a usual life.

<sup>451</sup> *Biuro Podróży in Iran*. ‘Pyrania’ (a supplement to ‘Gazeta Wyborcza’), 20.10.2006.

<sup>452</sup> Guy Debord, *Society...*, p. 21-22.



We travel to Disney World, where far from home we make use of various forms of entertainment in a way which, to a great extent, is preset for us by the designers of the park and is in total isolation from our life”<sup>453</sup>.

Leaving theatrical buildings, which was a heroic act for the previous generation of the Polish artists, has currently lost its meaning. Instead of the street theatre we have the outdoor theatre, and this is mostly a form of industrialised entertainment. Currently, the ‘non-theatrical’ spaces also co-create “*the world of illusion isolated from the real world*”<sup>454</sup>. The revolution has turned a full circle and currently, if we would like to search ‘new culture spaces’ through a change of place of performance presentation, we actually stand in more or less the same place as a century ago.

### 3. Conclusion

The street theatre, both in Poland and in the Western Europe, reached its height in the 90-ties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Theatre artists manifest in their thinking, what was also explicite formulated by a French researcher Philippe Chaudoir among others, that for our cultural region the street is a synonym of the public space – a place where a particular community can manifest itself. The differences appear when it comes to perceiving the ancestors of the contemporary street theatre. In the Polish theatre there were no references to street fairs or ancient traditions. The starting point was rather inspiration drawn from the avant-garde contemporary art and references to ‘here and now’, the specific social situation, and what follows, also political (in this particular order). The social aspect and the social impulse were a starting point for street theatres. Therefore, in the Polish context, the street theatre was an expression of not only the democratization of art, but of general democratization, the democratization of the seized public spaces, which were yet to become the public space. The democratization of art was initially an additional element, rather than an originally assumed one. It was not until the nineties that the democratization of the public life was realized, and the slogan which led to create theatre on the street was ‘democratization of art’. This would differentiate the beginnings of the Polish street theatre from the Western.

Since the Polish street theatre assumed to enter a dialogue with the urban space (however it used to be dangerous for both performers and audience), and since at some historical moment it was the only space allowing for the open, ‘mass’ communication among people, the art of theatre became a mediator. In this way, the street theatre helped constitute the public space in the Habermas sense – the one which may give birth to the ‘public opinion’ not concocted by the authorities. Because it were outstanding artists who undertook work on the street, this social impulse gained an important artistic spirit, it made the creation of new, original means of expression possible. However, all that was a consequence of the chosen way to react to social reality. An example of a short life of the street theatre at the Malta Festival (consider the questionnaire filled in by John Schranz) seems to support this thesis – the Malta street theatre occurred as a reaction to the governmental manipulation of elections. The street becomes in this context a ‘means of expression’, which is more difficult to be ruled by the authorities than, for

<sup>453</sup> George Ritzer, *Magical...*, p. 185.

<sup>454</sup> Which does not mean that there no longer are performances staged in streets or open spaces, which escape the ‘world of performance.’ Their main value, however, is not innovative treatment of the space which is often treated quite instrumentally, but an attempt to renew the contact between the spectator and the actor which is based on the appeal to a message significant for the group. An example of such performances can be ‘Not on my behalf’ The Living Theatre, the described here “Learning to fly” of the Poznan -based The Zone of Silence Theatre or the “Simply” (taken out of a theatre hall) of the Toruń-based Teatr Wiczy (Poland). They are, however, small islands on a vast ocean.

example, the electronic media. What may prove it is not only the Polish or the Malta example, but also the example of mass protests in Belgrade and the whole Serbia (1991-92, 1996-97), called to attention by Katarina Pejovic.

The example of Malta may also prove that wherever a community has some other ways of auto-celebration and initiating holidays, which are well-grounded in tradition and have the power to gather people, it is much more difficult to bring street theatre into being, as an autonomous artistic phenomenon.

Paradoxically, the Polish street theatre still has this particular role to play – the role of constituting the public space. And it is because of “The Act on Mass Events”, which binds the people organizing theatre performances, and which caused the private space to be not merely appropriated but rather privatized (by the democratically elected local authorities or by institutions under democratic control, e.g. the police). And although agora is nowadays located somewhere else, the street theatre still has a chance to perform an important function of integrating community, even if it is by the very fact of creating a pretext for people to get out of their homes and meet with other real existences – the living people, and not merely their media projections. It is linked to the striving, which has lately appeared more animatedly in Europe, for restoration of the urban street to people instead of cars (major highways), and also to the snatching of interpersonal contacts from the virtual space, and what follows – to the revival of social bonds.

This revival of **direct** interpersonal relations seems to be in the present media-reigned world the value which was often pointed to by both the people who filled the HorsLesMurs questionnaire (e.g. the organizer of Belfast festival, who talked about “collecting people from different backgrounds in one place”), as well as by our interviewees (e.g. Pawel Szkotak). In the Polish context it was also important to integrate different age groups. We remember well the situation, when an elderly lady dressed in a white blouse with a lace collar was running after a performance-parade “Bivouac” of a French group Generik Vapeur during the Malta Festival (1995), because, in the colloquial understanding, such type of theatre belonged to ‘young audience’, and the fact that it can play a role of ‘family theatre’ was at that time a brand new discovery. Of course, it may be more difficult for such theatre to carry out such mission, since, as Marcin Herich noticed, the street is nowadays considered as a dangerous place. It should be added here, that Herich works in Upper Silesia, the region which is almost entirely employed in coal mines, and in which the economic transformations led to some deep social changes (structural unemployment).

These social changes, however, open a completely new field to the street theatre, meaning the involvement in ‘integration of the excluded groups’. The most basic level of this involvement is gratuitous quality of the theatre on the streets, which lets all interested people take part in performances, regardless of the contents of their wallets. It is a vast potential, which disregarded led, for example, to a difficult situation at the MALTA Festival in Poznan in 2005. That year the amount of free performances was reduced to only 20%, which was hailed the greatest cultural failure of that year by readers of the local newspaper, so de facto by the audience of the festival.

A deeper level of involvement into the ‘integration of the excluded groups’ is, for example, the way, in which the artists from the Teatr Strefa Ciszy (Zone of Silence Theatre) employed bums loitering at the Old Square in Poznan in their street action “The Peepholes”, and treated them as hosts of this city. As a result, since they were treated in this way, they partially took over the responsibility of the show and eagerly supported the artists in the course of the performance.

Another example is a series of actions in the public spaces, which was undertaken by the Akademia Ruchu Performance Group within a two-year project “The Raft”. The goal of this project was to activate young people from socially endangered backgrounds (e.g. from unemployed families) in the regions of Warmia and Mazury. In effect, there were 8 street actions created, which focused on a dialogue with the urban spaces, in which they took place.

Although the ‘social impact of street theatre’ is not an easy factor to be measured, or, as Pawel Szkotak put it, it is ‘a matter of faith’, it is still located within the scope of interest of authors and organizers. Its thorough examination would demand many years of research. However, there are no doubts that it is actually the social aspect of theatre’s influence that becomes the projected part of this motivation pushing them into the work in such theatre. It is also significant that many respondents emphasize the fact that the street theatre is often the only form of theatre, which inhabitants of small towns may have any contact with. In this respect, it is indeed the most democratic among all kinds of theatre.