

# **Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**

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Thursday, March 29, 2018

Chair

Ms. Julie Dabrusin

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● (0955)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.)): I am going to begin this meeting. We're running a little bit behind.

I would like to welcome everyone to the 101st meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. Today we are doing our study on cultural hubs and cultural districts in Canada.

[Translation]

Our witnesses today, from the Canadian Arts Coalition, are Frédéric Julien, and by video conference from Toronto, Kate Cornell.

[English]

We have Jayne Engle from the McConnell Foundation.

[Translation]

We also welcome Monique Savoie, from the Société des arts technologiques.

We will begin with you, Mr. Julien and Ms. Cornell. You have a total of  $10\ \mathrm{minutes}.$ 

[English]

Mr. Frédéric Julien (Co-Chair, Canadian Arts Coalition): Good morning.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about cultural hubs and cultural districts in Canada.

The Canadian Arts Coalition is a collaborative, non-partisan movement spearheaded by a group of national arts service and membership organizations. Collectively, we represent thousands of artists and hundreds of arts organizations across the country.

Today we'd like to highlight the need for affordable housing for artists in cultural districts, the need for greater coordination between the federal government and the provinces on cultural infrastructure, and the need for specific funding for the maintenance of cultural spaces both old and new.

Last year the Canadian Arts Coalition was reassured to see its Arts Day recommendation about the Canada cultural spaces fund included in budget 2017. As you know, the cultural spaces fund is an ideal mechanism for helping arts organizations renovate older infrastructure and initiate feasibility studies for new buildings. In addition, the coalition was pleased to see the allocation of \$1.3

billion in dedicated funding to cultural and recreational infrastructure as part of the investing in Canada plan.

First, I would like to talk to you about the value of cultural districts in creative cities. Artists work in precarious conditions and are poorly remunerated, even at the peak of their careers. Canadian artists and cultural workers have much higher levels of formal education than the overall labour force, yet their average income is 32% lower than other workers. Artists are also much more likely to be self-employed and to hold multiple jobs. Economic challenges are particularly significant for retiring artists, most of whom have been unable to save any money for retirement.

In spite of these economic challenges, artists are broadly acknowledged as catalysts of revitalization and of place-making. The advocacy body Americans for the Arts argues that cultural districts help "strengthen local economies, create an enhanced sense of place, and deepen local cultural capacity". Indeed, a three-year study conducted by the Knight Foundation and Gallup found that aesthetics and social offerings, which include vibrant nightlife, places to meet people, and arts and cultural opportunities, were among the strongest predictors of a feeling of attachment to one's community. Similarly, Canadian studies conducted by the Canadian Arts Presenting Association and Community Foundations of Canada found that cultural spaces and programming contribute to a sense of pride and a sense of belonging in the local community.

When artists establish in a neighbourhood, they contribute to its vibrancy and attractiveness, but this beautiful story is often short-lived. Soon local businesses start to flourish, new businesses come in, land value increases, and artists are then driven out of the area because of skyrocketing property value, municipal taxes, and rent. This gentrification story is all too common in urban centres, but well-planned, multi-function cultural districts could resist gentrification and sustain the pivotal role of artists in the creative city.

In response to these issues, a few affordable housing projects for active or for retired artists have been built in the last decade. Performing Arts Lodge in Vancouver, Performing Arts Lodge and Artscape Triangle Lofts in Toronto, the coopérative d'habitation Lezarts and the coopérative d'habitation Cercle Carré in Montreal, and projet Sherpa in Quebec are among them.

These cities are recognizing the leading role that culture must continue to play in the development of downtown by supporting these housing projects. Affordable housing for artists, however, still only exists in large urban centres, and the number of available units remains insufficient compared to the demand. Certain projects combine housing as well as studio, rehearsal, and performance spaces, providing artists with affordable living and working conditions.

The Canadian Arts Coalition recommends the construction of more affordable housing, including mixed live-work infrastructure for Canadian artists in order to create more sustainable and vital cultural districts.

Next, I would like to ask Kate Cornell to speak on the importance of multiple levels of funding for cultural hub projects.

• (1000)

Ms. Kate Cornell (Co-Chair, Canadian Arts Coalition): Thank you so much.

I'm sorry I'm not there with you today in person.

As you've already heard from representatives from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada cultural spaces fund has been successful in supporting small and mid-size renovation projects, but doesn't have the capacity to support large-scale projects.

The cultural spaces fund can assist with the initial development of major capital projects, helping them with their feasibility studies and bringing them to shovel readiness. Then, the bilateral agreements have the resources to take these major projects to completion.

In consultation with our provincial colleagues at ArtsBuild Ontario, we have heard that trying to raise funds for cultural infrastructure is unpredictable and inconsistent, based on region and province. With a significant absence of parallel programs to the Canada cultural spaces fund at the provincial level, arts organizations are left in a compromised position of lobbying provincial governments for discretionary matching funds for their cultural infrastructure projects. Currently, the bilateral agreements are the only regulatory indication that the provinces need to consider cultural hub projects. Therefore, the Canadian Arts Coalition recommends that future provincial bilateral agreements be permanently required to include a broad consideration of new cultural projects.

In addition to challenges with the provinces, the federal government needs to better communicate with the municipalities about cultural infrastructure. Many Canadian municipalities are acutely aware of the importance of culture in sustainable development, and have designed complex municipal cultural plans and policies as a result.

For example, many municipalities allocate 1% to public art commissions from each dollar spent on public infrastructure to enhance their built environment, make their cities more attractive to tourists, and improve citizens' quality of life. Municipalities play a vital role in the development of cultural districts. It is therefore essential for the federal government to communicate with municipalities about cultural infrastructure.

Unfortunately, that municipal funding is inconsistent, especially in underserved communities. In consultations with our colleagues, the coalition has heard the need for more arts spaces and cultural hubs in rural and remote communities, among francophone minorities, and especially in indigenous communities.

For example, on Tuesday you heard from our colleagues at Qaggiavuut in Nunavut. A proposed performing arts centre in Nunavut is an excellent example of the urgent need that exists in underserved communities. Therefore, the coalition recommends that the Canada cultural spaces fund continue to prioritize underserved communities.

Next, our colleagues who run cultural and community hubs contribute to a sense of belonging in many urban centres. The coalition would like to draw attention to the fact that many of the existing hubs, including the dance centre in Vancouver, are struggling to remain open. Hydro and heating costs make it expensive to operate these vital centres, especially when the buildings include theatres, galleries, and studios, which have unique, specialized requirements in heating and lighting. This is a gap in the funding system that the members of the coalition want to bring to the government's attention.

To conclude, the Canadian Arts Coalition wants to thank the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for the opportunity to speak on the major complex topic of cultural hubs and cultural districts.

The coalition sees its colleagues at major arts organizations succeeding to build cultural hubs in urban centres, but a lack of opportunity for mid-size and smaller arts organizations to develop innovative hubs of their own.

In practice, the funding from the Canada cultural spaces fund cannot be fully effective unless municipalities and provinces come on board

The Canadian Arts Coalition respectfully suggests that the federal government consider cultivating cultural districts and creative cities whenever it invests in infrastructure.

Thank you so much.

**●** (1005)

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we will go to Ms. Engle from McConnell Foundation for 10 minutes, please.

Ms. Jayne Engle (Program Director, Lead, Cities for People, McConnell Foundation): Thank you so much, Madam Chair, and committee members. I appreciate the opportunity to be here.

I am honoured to speak on behalf of McConnell Foundation today. The timing for such a study couldn't be better. Many signs indicate that we're at a transformative moment in how we collectively create our communities, our cities, and even our society, and cultural hubs and districts have a vital role to play in that transformation.

I'm honoured to be able to speak on behalf of McConnell Foundation today and the timing for such a study couldn't be better. Many signs indicate we're at a transformative moment in how we collectively create our communities, cities, and even society; and cultural hubs and districts have a vital role to play in that transformation.

By way of background, McConnell is a private, Canadian, philanthropic foundation that develops and applies innovative approaches to social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges. We do so through granting and investing, through capability building, through convening, and through co-creation with grantees, partners, and the public.

We envision a Canada in which the economy and social systems advance the well-being of all people. We're committed to reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, and we seek to unleash the resources and creativity of individuals and organizations from all sectors to solve social challenges.

Arts and culture are woven throughout our work, particularly in our indigenous initiatives and in the work that I lead, our cities initiatives, which is where I will focus my testimony.

Cities for People and Future Cities are two of the initiatives that I lead. Cities for People aims to foster inclusive, urban innovation in ways that contribute to the well-being and greater equality of all people. We see cultural hubs as central to that, and by "inclusive, urban innovation" we mean socially inclusive as well as inclusive of all forms of innovation, science, technology, engineering, and so on. Social innovation is foundational to that.

If we had a patron saint, it would be Jane Jacobs. It was she who said that cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because and only when they're created by everybody.

Back in 2004, Richard Florida wrote about the creative class as a key driving force for economic development. What was not foreseen was how uneven that growth would be, and evidence from his latest work *The New Urban Crisis* is that there is a rapidly rising trend of urban inequality, particularly in more technologically innovative cities.

Perhaps even worse, this trend is often perceived as inevitable, but we think it should be exactly the opposite, that is, the technological innovation now possible in our digital age should be enabling of societal innovation that unleashes the creativity of artists and the agency of all people in building greater equality of opportunity.

Cultural hubs cannot be collaborative spaces just for the creative class. The opportunity is for them to be democratizing spaces. *Sharing Cities*, the book co-written by one of our current McConnell Cities for People fellows, Julian Agyeman, advocates seeing the city as a commons. By that, we mean the city as a shared resource that's generative, and produces goods for human need and human flourishing.

The city as a commons means that the city is a collaborative space in which urban inhabitants are central actors in managing and governing city life and urban resources, ranging from open spaces and buildings to neighbourhood infrastructure and digital networks. We've learned through several of our pan-Canadian civic engagement strategies and listening processes that these ideas resonate for Canadians. That is, the importance of our urban commons has come out loud and clear, as has the importance of place-making and the contribution of our civic assets to better urban life

By civic assets, we mean the libraries, schools, post offices, theatres, churches, and parks that make up the backbone of a city, and where we do together what we can't do alone. These spaces, however, are often disused, underutilized, and ready to be repurposed and connected in new ways that we can harness in the digital age, not only to build community resilience for everyday life but also to be greater resources in times of disaster.

I'd like to share some examples now, because these civic commons or cultural hubs and districts are exactly where there is a huge opportunity to recreate and reimagine our cities and communities.

Of course, we all know a quintessential cultural district of Canada in Montreal, even on an international stage. I'm sure the committee knows this well, so I won't spend time on it, but I'd be happy to answer questions.

In the remaining examples, I'll focus on cultural hubs, which are largely unrealized potential, in the sense that they hold central shaping elements for future city building. The examples I'll give are primarily from Toronto and Montreal, but the approaches are widely applicable for communities across the country.

Cultural hubs enable collaboration and innovation among multiple disciplines in the creative and social innovation sectors. They happen in tangible places such as at Evergreen Brick Works in Toronto, or the gardens at Montreal's Olympic stadium by La Pépinière, Espaces Collectifs.

### **●** (1010)

They are about civic engagement, neighbourhood service, and community resilience for everyday life and also at times of crisis. Cultural hubs can nurture and incubate young creative entrepreneurs, such as Ateliers créatifs does in Montreal, and Artscape in Toronto and Vancouver. They can incubate small business start-ups, as the Centre for Social Innovation and La Pépinière do. They can host such major events as Brick Works and the new Future Cities centre that's being built there. They can provide unprogrammed, openly accessible creation spaces, such as the Art Hives network.

Hubs are neighbourhood-based. They can have a regional draw, and they often incorporate aspects that are publicly accessible. They can include both permanent installations and ephemeral uses, indoor or outdoor, and they require a mobilizing vision. Cultural hubs can be essential civic assets that form the building blocks of our future cities and communities.

I'll quickly run through a few examples.

This is a place-making academy. It's an example of citizen citybuilding training and refugee welcoming. It was built collectively by local residents last summer.

This wish tree is about listening to kids and their dreams of the city. It's a mini hub that can be transported to multiple locations.

Le Village au Pied-du-Courant is a cultural hub that plays a role in nurturing, connecting, and providing conditions for growth and scaling of cultural microenterprises. A couple incubated last summer were tiny ventures. They included a small cricket farm for high-protein food, and an indigenous flower growing business providing alternatives for fresh flower importing.

Being tested this summer is a project called MR-63. It's an experiment with disused metro cars as cultural spaces.

Transitory Laboratory is about connecting spaces without people to people without spaces. It's how the Futures Cities Montreal hub program is being deployed.

We launched this Future Cities hub just a few weeks ago. It's a unique multi-sectoral partnership between the City of Montreal—Mayor Valérie Plante is in this photo—McConnell Entremise and la Maison de l'innovation sociale. New city policy has made it possible. Enshrined in the city's new heritage action plan is a commitment to offer city-owned vacant buildings as community-serving assets for such hubs.

Cultural hubs can have a variety of business models, people, and sectors. Salon 1861 combines a beautiful special event space of a former church with a co-working space, community centre, and restaurant. It is now officially Canada's second Impact Hub, part of the global network of one hundred plus Impact Hubs. The first one was here in Ottawa, in partnership with Community Foundations of Canada.

The several Centre for Social Innovation locations in Toronto have proven themselves essential to the social, cultural, and economic life of the city.

This photo is what is known as the "kiln" building at the Evergreen Brick Works, with Geoff Cape, Evergreen founder and CEO, describing his vision for its role as an anchor hub of Future Cities Canada. This space, generously funded in part by Canadian Heritage, will be launched later this year. Future Cities is a new collaborative infrastructure that we're building to accelerate innovation in order to transform cities for the benefit of all. Founding parties are Evergreen, McConnell, Community Foundations of Canada, and la Maison de l'innovation sociale.

We draw some of our inspiration internationally from Fab City hubs in Barcelona, where place-making, maker spaces, education centres, and "fab labs" come together to invite civic engagement in publicly accessible, neighbourhood-serving, city-making hubs.

Future Cities Canada will include a strategy for a cultural hubs network across the country, starting with these anchor hubs in Montreal and Toronto, here in Ottawa, and very soon others.

Finally, the vision of one kind of cultural hub is an agglomeration of activities. Participatory City in London is building a neighbour-hood-based network as a cultural hub of sorts.

I'd like to close with three recommendations. One, we welcome federal involvement in the Future Cities hubs network, which I've outlined, as a network of cultural hubs across the country. Two, we recommend creation of a civic assets development fund for cultural hubs or other incentive structures similar to historic tax credits in the U.S. and the ArtPlace program in the U.S., to name just a couple.

#### (1015)

Three, we recommend setting up digital and data strategies that address some of our current challenges and consider how to better democratize data assets.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

[Translation]

We will now hear from Ms. Savoie, from the Société des arts technologiques.

You have 10 minutes, please.

Mr. Nantel, did you have something to say?

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Just a moment, Ms. Savoie.

Madam Chair, Ms. Savoie told us that she has a slide show for us. It is mostly charts.

[English]

It's only in French, but it's mostly graphics. So, if you may—

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Why don't we allow it?

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Peter.

[Translation]

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Monique Savoie (President-founder, Society for Arts and Technology): Thank you for inviting me.

I will try to answer your questions first by presenting a model that has existed for 25 years. Sometimes I even say that I am the grandmother of the digital arts in Quebec.

The Société des arts technologiques, or SAT, now sees itself as a model of the social economy. I will give a quick presentation on that aspect of the SAT. The second part pertains to the issue of the day, that is, how to create this great Canadian network. Finally, I will provide some information about SAT's economic work.

The SAT was founded in 1996. From the outset, its mission was threefold: creation, research, and training in the digital arts. From the outset then, we reached out to the new generation of creators and researchers in the digital era. I say "creators and researchers" because too often we forget that the arts, which are also a research field, are part of the social sciences. So we must remember that the arts are a research field.

I distributed a postcard from the SAT. On the back, you can see the various spaces and activities we offer.

It was an abandoned market on Saint-Laurent Boulevard, across from the Monument National. When I opened the doors, there were 600 frozen pigeons inside. No one would have been interested, but I have to say that, in the digital age, there are many initiatives and projects around the world that also intersect with heritage.

We had the double mandate of launching the first project, which also launched the Quartier des spectacles, or entertainment district, and included with us the whole new generation of artists born in the digital era and who now work with these art forms.

In 2011, we added the dome or Satosphere, a large projection screen. There is a restaurant on that floor. It is part of the localvore movement, that is, cuisine that features products from local farmers. The administration and production facilities are also there. I would also point out that we also have a research centre, a production centre, and a training centre on the premises.

What role does the SAT and its centres play today? In my opinion, we are right at the crossroads of innovation, that is, between universities and industry. When young people graduate from university nowadays, they need a first chance and a first job. They need a place that includes people, tools, facilities, and a context, and the SAT is that meeting place for those young graduates. It is also a networking centre, because it is where they find like-minded people who want to start up companies.

When I say I am the grandmother, that is because it was at the SAT that the Moment Factory was created, and it was at the SAT that artists founded C2 Montreal and other companies. These spaces are very important because they are also physical spaces where people can meet. We are talking about the virtual and digital world of course, but people still have to meet in person to make babies.

The SAT is recognized, because it also offers models. A lot of young people pursue higher education after coming to the SAT. We know there are not enough post-secondary students in Quebec. The SAT is that space for innovation and incubation between these two main sectors.

We also talk about the circular economy. Once again, we host creation, research, training, production, and dissemination activities, and then we archive everything. It is clear that the SAT is a model that supports itself. I will come back to that. We are obviously part of this big family of hubs.

We chose our name nearly 25 years ago, but if we had to change it, it would be "Société + art + technologie", since the big issue is to figure out how the arts and technology interact with society.

Artists are the artisans of the future. The SAT has a creation and production centre. It welcomes artists in residence and offers international exchange programs, networking workshops, events that support emerging creation, commissions, as well as technical solutions for artists in residence. It has a theatre with 1,800 seats for all SAT activities; that is extremely generous. It is a multipurpose venue with multiple possible configurations.

We export our expertise. The SAT disseminates its works, including through a network of planetarium immersive theatres. The SAT model can be exported in whole or in part.

**●** (1020)

We are currently providing training to Cuba, and we will be opening the Sonar Festival, in Barcelona, with arts performances. Further, our research is now being exported and even copied. The SAT receives roughly 100 to 125 foreign delegations every year. We also serve as a showcase, which is a very important role.

I will talk about the research program later. That being said, it was very important for us to make research a focal point of our activities because we can play a significant role in this way. At one time, we received funding from the new media research networks fund, which allowed us to develop tools that were designed and produced by artists.

I like to point out that, although artists are the worst possible clients, the advanced research they do meets the standards of engineers and architects the world over. Like it or not, there will be more and more of it. So we develop software with these extraordinary clients who are artists. They spur on the researchers and engineers, of whom the SAT has 12 as part of our permanent team.

I think we could have an important tool one day by reimagining the relationship between the arts and engineering. Artists can spur on these new trades, whether the engineers were trained in Quebec or in Germany. It makes no difference. On the other hand, if some of them know how to work with artists or artisans who spur on their expertise, that means we can send more capable engineers into the world.

We also use software solutions. Later on, I will show you a project that comes directly from research. We develop products and do design and prototypes.

We are part of a culture of the development of tools and technologies that have a direct impact on our society. We are involved in the community. We do networking, hold a symposium, and collaborate with international, national and local institutions. We offer training. So I am talking about passing on knowledge. Our campus has now developed beyond the basic structure in an amazing way.

For the past six years, we have been offering digital training to plastic arts teachers with the Montreal school board. We host school groups, hold camps every weekend, and day camps in the summer. We offer in-home training for seniors and teach them to store their photo albums on WordPress. This allows them to indicate the names and years for their photos. Lord knows how tricky things can get if that is not done.

The SAT offers training for people aged 5 to 97. Our approach is transcultural, transgenerational, and transdisciplinary. The SAT has a cross-cutting approach. Our model includes creation, production, training, research, dissemination, and networking. Our physical space gives us a way to showcase our work and to quickly make versions of our research results by appealing to the public for feedback. I also mentioned that our work is exported, something that is growing.

To sum it up, the SAT has roughly 100,000 visitors per year, presents 854 artists, 519 of whom are from the new generation, and 274 activities. Further, 26 festivals use our premises. That amounts to a total of 708 presentations and includes our creations, performances, private outside events and, increasingly, the training we offer. We also hold an annual symposium on the immersive experience.

I can also share some additional figures. We currently have 290 employees, whether they are full-time, part-time, or paid professional fees. We are a cultural entrepreneur and the majority of our people are under the age of 35. Our building and facilities are an asset valued at \$14 million and our payroll is \$2,620,000. We occupy 44,000 square feet on Saint-Laurent Boulevard.

With regard to communications, the SAT has a presence on all platforms. We publish an information letter with a readership of 36,000 people, and we have supporters and subscribers.

A while ago, we considered certain questions with our colleagues. I am referring to networks, libraries, and theatres in particular, but no one is part of a network.

What are we missing to form a network?

At the SAT, we have brought together centre directors and technicians. So we wonder how we could design a tool that would allow us to create an interface.

**●** (1025)

What I mean is creating a tool that is part of the consoles in our theatres to connect our theatres, to create a permanent link between them. So it would be a tool that—

**The Chair:** Ms. Savoie, I have to interrupt you because your 10 minutes are up.

Ms. Monique Savoie: My speaking time is up?

The Chair: Please conclude your statement very quickly.

**Ms. Monique Savoie:** One of the very novel aspects of this tool is that it has wheels. Twenty-one of them are now in place in Quebec. They also allow for improvements in the use of cultural equipment. Consequently in these rooms we can now receive chambers of commerce, and hold network events and cultural activities. In my opinion, if Canada has built an economy, it is thanks to its networks.

Today, we have the CANARIE network. The Department of Canadian Heritage should perhaps communicate more with CANARIE and Economic Development Canada for Quebec regions. Indeed, we must again view the cultural sector as being an economic sector

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Savoie.

Ms. Monique Savoie: Thank you.

**The Chair:** Since we began the meeting a bit late because of technical difficulties, we will have six-minute rounds during our question and answer period.

We will begin with Ms. Dzerowicz.

[English]

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Great. Thank you so much. Since we only have six minutes, and not seven minutes, I'll try to speak a little quickly.

First, we had three phenomenal presentations. Thank you so much.

My first question is going to be directed to the Canadian Arts Coalition. Hi, Kate. Thanks for joining us. I'm from downtown Toronto. Cultural hubs are very much organically started, and one of the things I loved about today is that we saw the breadth of different cultural hubs that exist out there, and they very much fit the communities or the needs of their local areas, and I love that.

My question is this. How do we, as a government, get out of the way to allow for this organic development of hubs? We need to make sure we're out of the way to allow them to happen. My whole area has completely evolved because the artists got together and started their own development of the area; but then how can we be there to support its continued development once it's actually been formed? It's a bit of a case of "get out of the way to allow for it, but then be there when they actually need us to be there."

Another aspect is this. I'm always very city oriented, but this country's large. We have a lot of small cities, and we have a lot of rural areas. How would your response differ for any of those areas?

Maybe I would just get either Frédéric or Kate to respond to that, and then I have a very specific question for Ms. Engle.

• (1030

**Mr. Frédéric Julien:** Okay. That's so many questions and so little time.

To get this out of the way, often municipal bylaws can be more of a problem than federal regulations, so that's not a matter we need to discuss here.

In terms of supporting and getting out of the way, once those hubs are established by artists, there is a need for operations funding to enable them to continue their work. Programs, for example, such as the Canada arts presentation fund support 600 organizations across the country in urban and rural areas, many of which operate a cultural facility that serves as a hub. This is one way that the government can provide support.

Of course, governmental intervention that comes from Canadian Heritage will often be focused on the artistic component of the programming, which is a given because it's Canadian Heritage; but sometimes it would be good to consider getting out of the way to enable more community-driven and -oriented activities to take place and be supported by these funding programs.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Okay. Thank you.

Here's my question to Ms. Engle. I'm very familiar with the McConnell Foundation. I'm a very big fan of a lot of the projects you fund.

When you're looking at the cultural hubs, I think sometimes there's a mix of private funding, public funding, and groups like yourself. Is that the right mix? That's one question for you.

Does it address the needs that, I think, were mentioned earlier by Kate in terms of the operational funding? Everybody's always looking for operational funding, and no one ever wants to provide operational funding. You came up with three recommendations, and then you mentioned Barcelona as an example. I wouldn't mind you maybe letting us know if you think there's a country that does this well in terms of supporting....

I would love to hear that and maybe hear a little bit more about your civic assets development fund and the digital and data strategies.

I know it's a lot, but in whatever time we have left I'd be grateful to hear of anything that you'd be able to provide to us.

**Ms. Jayne Engle:** Again, there are a lot of questions, but I'll try to be quick.

Yes, absolutely, multi-sectoral, I think, is key in getting these done for the various strengths and thought processes that the different sectors bring. One of the reasons we initiated the Future Cities initiative was that we're finding that it's really not possible for one sector to act on its own. By building these kinds of collaborative infrastructures for this kind of work, we think that the quality can be much better. It's necessary for funding, but it's also quite valuable because of the strengths that each sector brings.

Many cities have fantastic innovations, but two of the cities where I think they come together really well in ways that are examples for us are Barcelona and Copenhagen, where there is a very strong, collaborative infrastructure to bring multiple domains and public, private, and civil society bodies together to invest in and pay attention to. Of course, there's the layer of the European Union, as well, in those cases.

Participatory City, in London, which I mentioned, is another great example of that, where, again, it's a mix of public, philanthropy, and some private sector funding there.

I'll stop there.

The Chair: You have a half a minute.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Is there anything more? You said one of your recommendations was to create a civic assets development fund. Can you talk a bit more about that?

Ms. Jayne Engle: Yes. One of the things that we're all finding increasingly is that we have these extraordinary assets strategically located in our cities—libraries, post offices in particular, schools, etc.—and we see those as holding huge opportunity for investment to be reused, but very often they lack the kind of investment that's needed.

We think leveraging resources from different sectors by setting up a fund, ideally at a federal level, that can be supplemented by others, could actually provide a huge opportunity for urban and community revitalization. As I mentioned, it's not just for an everyday basis. One of the things they found in New York after Hurricane Sandy was that these kinds of civic assets were essential in times of disaster, and having them technologically enabled and also connected to each other could also enable them to provide the kinds of disaster resilience that we actually increasingly need.

**●** (1035)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will now go to Mr. Shields for six minutes, please.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

To the witnesses, I very much appreciated your presentations. They were very interesting.

To begin with, Canadian Arts Coalition, you mentioned the words "small" and "medium". What's your definition of "small"?

**Mr. Frédéric Julien:** I'm thinking of an artist-run centre as a very specific example of the smallest kind of arts organization.

Kate?

**Ms. Kate Cornell:** I have a couple of examples of smaller organizations that have come together to propose the idea of a cultural hub. In Davenport riding, Theatre Gargantua, Théâtre français, and Obsidian Theatre are working together on a proposal. In Montreal, there's Playwrights' Workshop. Those organizations are run by a staff of two or three or four. They can be quite small but because they are talking to each other and willing to collaborate, it makes the project that much more innovative and interesting.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Yes, I have that in my riding. It would be in a town of 1,000. There was an old service station type of building. The guy hadn't been able to sell it. They turned into an arts centre. Rosebud, a hamlet of fewer than 50, is now a cultural arts hub with a lot of production, with a theatre school. They have a passion play in the summer in the badlands. Okay, that's what "small" means.

You talked about gentrification, the process that happens when they move in, it's cheap, and they move out. I hear about multi-use. If they become community hubs, not cultural hubs, somebody else in that hub has got skin in the game and wants them to keep it alive. Would that make more sense than calling it strictly a cultural hub? It would be a community hub and draw other pieces to it.

Mr. Frédéric Julien: This is a very relevant question because as we prepared for this hearing today we went back to our membership and asked what they thought we should highlight. Actually, we heard conflicting views about community hubs versus cultural hubs, so there is definitely a model that exists out there where cultural hubs are also community hubs. There have been studies around the world that have found that those hubs that are more rooted in the community tend to be more sustainable in the long term, less dependent on public funding, more resilient. There's a model that needs to be explored. Because the study was on cultural hubs today, we did not go too far into this notion of community hubs, but it is definitely a very important complementary matter.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** I think that's critical in what you're saying. If the process is such that they start and they disappear, that's not what we want. We want sustainability. If you don't have sustainability, we're going to need a different model.

One of the things you mentioned was municipalities and the 1%. I know of a city of a million people where something has gone badly wrong, because they had the 1%. They would bring in art designed by foreign artists. Nobody knew what it was until it appeared. In the last election, they elected a council that's going to get rid of that 1%. They've not only upset their local residents, but the indigenous communities as well, because the art didn't connect to the people in the city, nor the indigenous communities. It insulted them. That city council is going to vote against that 1%.

That's a problem, when the arts committee sits isolated and doesn't have that connection to and support from their citizens. That's when things go wrong. You love to see that 1%, but when you get a disconnect, then we lose it, which is wrong.

With your project, I think I'm seeing the economic value of what you brought to that project, because you brought many different pieces. I saw in 2010 a \$3.5-million federal grant, and then \$366,000, so you've not identified any other funding source.

• (1040)

Ms. Monique Savoie: Actually, you have a picture.

You can see the amount received from

[Translation]

the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Montreal Arts Council, the Ministry of Economy, Science and Innovation of Quebec, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Land Occupancy of Quebec. We also received a subsidy from the city centre and a subsidy from the borough of Ville-Marie.

To the right of the table, you can see a list of SAT's independent revenues

This year, we will finish the year with independent revenues of 71%, and 7% recurrent operational assistance funding. This means that the SAT lives on the basis of what it produces.

We received precious government assistance to build the structure. As I said earlier, we were to submit a request to obtain a subsidy from the New Media Research Networks Fund, thanks to which we earned almost \$1 million, year after year. But the program was cancelled and has never been replaced by anything similar.

Today, if we want artists to play a role as full-fledged researchers, there is no program that aligns with that at Canadian Heritage. We are going back to models we knew in the past.

At this time, the SAT does not receive one penny from Canada, and that has been the case since 2011. We may have been your worst investment; when we opened the building, we were already sidelined because we no longer had access to those funds.

In the eyes of the Canada Council for the Arts, we suddenly became a centre that was of no interest. The operational assistance we had received every four years was withdrawn in favour of annual funding. Whereas two years before, we had been classified as an underfunded but key organization, all of a sudden we became an uninteresting organization. Our operational assistance was withdrawn and we were given annual funding of \$35,000 a year, and we are somewhat reluctant in the face of that.

If we want a resumption of operational funding, we have to have special projects that span two years. Canada is not a part of the project.

The Chair: I have to interrupt you.

Mr. Nantel, you have the floor.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I've been writing to my daughter to ask her to remind me of the name of the contemporary artist we saw together at the Copenhagen Art Centre. The artist was actually part of the work itself. It spoke to us a great deal. The city of Copenhagen is very inspiring. I can't help but think of it since we are indeed talking about cultural districts and community hubs. I also remember the Papiroen, in Copenhagen; it's a type of gathering of food trucks and food stalls that bring a community dimension to the art of dining and of gastronomy.

I think that this morning's group of witnesses is very interesting, once again. The Canadian Arts Coalition representatives have reminded us of the need for mediation spaces, work spaces and residential spaces for artists. Based on Ms. Engle's presentation, we are really talking about projects.

Honestly, I have to tell you that I only learned about your existence this morning. It is abundantly clear that you really provide enormous support to a multitude of fresh and engaging events. The images you showed us as examples of involvement were exceptional.

However, I cannot help but go back to your presentation, Ms. Savoie. Personally, I remember that when the Spectrum de Montréal was still in existence, it was in the front of an old Toronto-Dominion Bank that had closed its doors. We don't know what the modalities were. And that is in fact the subject of my question.

We are talking about communities that are affected by the closure of certain businesses. The TD Bank was located at the intersection of Bleury and Saint-Catherine streets, and it looked like an open wound; there was nothing there. And then, you arrived.

Did you get any support at the time? If so, which government level provided it?

**●** (1045)

**Ms. Monique Savoie:** As you know, when you are a pioneer, you have to suffer in the beginning.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Yes.

**Ms. Monique Savoie:** I spoke before the standing committee in 1999 and explained that digital culture was coming and that we needed this type of equipment. I was asked whether this was a trend, and whether I thought that this would pass.

And so we had to do this ourselves; we negotiated—as you said, the building was closed—and we managed to get the space for \$3 a square foot at the time.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** And what was the local going rate in that market, per square foot?

Ms. Monique Savoie: Around \$8 or \$10.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Good for you.

**Ms. Monique Savoie:** It was very sought-after. A lot of cultural organizations that worked in the digital domain set up shop in former banks because they had fabulous electrical systems, and high ceilings. So there were several of us who recycled buildings. What I was saying earlier is that now we are recycling an old public market that was the first market in Montreal outside of the fortified walls. You are correct in saying that we are also taking over such locations and bringing new life to some neighbourhoods through these actions that make a make a difference.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Ms. Engle, from that angle, given the committee's mandate to explore the program, do you believe—some people have raised this, and personally, this is what I have retained from previous meetings—that we should concentrate on the creation of a type of label as yet to be defined, for what we call "community hub" and "cultural centre"? Those who acquire that label would be eligible for federal funding, whatever form it takes. We would like to avoid winding up with cultural centres that are too expensive to operate.

I would go so far as to say that that is to some extent what CIBL went through in the sense that the weight became too much to bear. Artists should not be condemned to misery and homelessness, but your projects seem to be inherently temporary.

Do you think that is what we should do? [English]

**Ms. Jayne Engle:** Well, I think it's ideal to be locally responsive, to make these contexts dependent, depending on local needs. As I intended to illustrate, there are so many different models and different ways to do it, and that is quite preferable.

To the point of community hubs, cultural hubs, for me, one of the reasons it is interesting to keep culture in the name is to make sure that there are artists involved. I can think of an example.

[Translation]

Laboratoire transitoire, which we created.

[English]

For the call for proposals, we had a whole range of social entrepreneurs, but we wanted to make sure there was a sampling of artists there as well. We think that in all of this there should be artists, but it doesn't necessarily have to be only artists. It depends on local needs.

I'll just make one other point, and it gets at what you said about Copenhagen. You gave the example of Copenhagen. For those who don't know about it, there's an informal space, which is actually a large portion of the city that has become this venue where food trucks are inside and thousands of people are there on any given day. It's incredible, and it's totally unregulated, by the way. It's completely illegal.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Yes? That's where I'd hang out.

**Ms. Jayne Engle:** One of the things that's interesting about it is that Copenhagen is allowing these kinds of regulatory experimentation sandboxes and trying out this kind of thing to see what happens, to study what happens, and to build up an evidence base to see if it should be enshrined in rules. I think that opportunity for regulatory experimentation is quite critical.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** I have half a minute, so I'll just ask if you have seen Christiania in Copenhagen.

Ms. Jayne Engle: Yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** Copenhagen is truly letting artists responsibly create and explore. Christiania is a complete neighbourhood of hippies who have actually been there for 35 years, and they actually sell weed—oh, we will too.

Voices: Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** On that note, I would like to to thank everyone for participating in this meeting. It was very helpful.

[Translation]

I thank all of our witnesses.

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Motion to adjourn, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

We're adjourned.

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