Municipalities and the Prevention of Violence:
The Contributions of the Arts and Culture

Cynthia E. Cohen, PhD, Brandeis University
with Kitche Magak, PhD, Nila Premaratna, PhD, and David Briand[1]

Introduction

Throughout history and across societies, the arts and cultural work have contributed to the prevention and creative transformation of violent conflict. They have offered ways for members of communities to appreciate each other's cultures, to non-violently confront abuses of power, to address the legacies of historical violence, and to imagine and create futures that are more just, less violent and more vibrant. This paper explores the actual and possible contributions of arts and culture to the prevention of violence, focusing on municipalities in the 21st century.

This paper is designed to contribute to an inquiry that ultimately will "develop, test and disseminate policy frameworks and guidelines that will enable municipalities to address more effectively the root causes of violent conflict and allow municipal, national and international actors to better understand how to respond to localized conflict in a coordinated way and to avoid its escalation." Specifically, it responds to a request from The Hague Institute of Global Justice to identify frameworks for in inquiry that will focus on the prevention of violence at the level of the municipality through the "lenses of the arts and culture."

We undertake this inquiry at a time when our communities have been experiencing particular forms of violence. Recent events and current conditions in the United States – including the exposure of the epidemic of violence perpetrated by police against members of the African American community, and the brutal incarceration of Black men in particular – compel us to examine municipal actors with a critical lens. We must address the reality that municipalities are all too often perpetrators of violence: sometimes in its direct manifestations (as in police brutality) and sometimes in structural conditions (such as in housing and mental health policies that result in high levels of homelessness).

In Kenya, we are recovering from post-election violence that revealed the depth of ethnic divisions in our country, reflected in cities as well as in rural areas. In 2007, the incumbent Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, defeated Raila Odinga, a widely popular Luo who had been predicted would easily win the election. Gangs, which had already organized themselves along ethnic lines, exploded into violent conflict in response to the election and its aftermath. Young men flooded the streets in portest, and there were deadly clashes between gaings and commumies diided along political allegiances and ethnic lines.

In Sri Lanka, we are just beginning to come to terms with the effects of the brutal civil war that held our country in its grip for decades. One of its legacies is suppression of dissent and freedom of expression by the national government, which attempted to beautify the commercial capital as if to cover up the painful legacies that require attention. Beautification of Colombo is in stark contrast with the progress (or the lack thereof) of a state-led reconciliation process in the country. Militarization of the society and continued use of violence and fear is an integral part of this process of beautification. The newly constructed walking paths, luxury shopping malls, and parks add to a veneer of serenity and orderliness in the city. This veneer hides the violence that took place at a larger level in the country, and more specifically the violence that was leashed upon the unwanted inhabitants in the city. People and peddlers were forcibly evicted, and their homes and marketplaces were demolished to make room for parks, luxury shopping malls, and walking tracks. Colombo was and to a certain extent, still remains a hub of these activities, subjected to a stern regime of transformation. In the midst of infrastructure development, the calls for a genuine reconciliation process went unheeded. Thus, in the recent years after the war, Colombo played a key role in complying with the national policy as a perpetrator of direct as well as structural violence that affected a majority of its disadvantaged inhabitants.

Organization of the paper: First we reflect on the underlying conditions that give rise to violence, and, in a very general way, arts-based and cultural resources that can be engaged to address these underlying conditions and list some of the manifestations of violence. Then we present key elements of an arts and cultural lens, including the range of activities it addresses, the nature of aesthetic engagement, and several paradigms of arts-based activities functioning as research. We also consider urban design as the intersection of aesthetics and municipalities.

The body of the report concludes with consideration of significant frameworks from the field of conflict transformation and human rights, noting in general terms the ways in which arts-based and cultural initiatives offer resources to address the kinds of violence highlighted with each:
- Development
- Security
- Coexistence and Reconciliation
- Human Rights
- Trauma Healing

Following the body of the report, case studies and examples organized according to these same frameworks offer a felt sense of the strengths and limitations of different arts-based and cultural approaches, and an appreciation for the challenges faced by those who work in this field.

Why focus an inquiry into violence prevention on cities? The Hague Institute for Global Justice, articulates a clear rationale for focusing on cities as strategies are planned for the prevention of violence:

> With half of the global population living in urban areas, towns and cities, urbanization can be an important positive force for development but it can also exacerbate poverty, inequality, social exclusion and weak governance in developing and developed states. It is argued that urban contexts, and in particular, cities, will be the main context of future violent conflict (Kilcullen, 2013). With global trends in devolution and decentralization,

city municipalities play a pivotal role as the 'clearing house' for conflict management and resolution, and may be better situated to address transnational challenges, compared to national governments. Specific and often contested issues include: planning, housing, policing, migration, employment, access to public services, and access to public space and resources.

Riots/protests in London (2011), Paris (2005), Stockholm (2013), Istanbul (2013), and São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (2014), among other examples, demonstrate in different ways how weaknesses in city municipal governance and resistance from citizens can quickly escalate and trigger latent structural causes such as social and economic inequalities and marginalization. Therefore, it is not surprising to see evidence that protracted civil conflict and large-scale violence often begins in cities. Some examples would be the popular protests for equal rights in housing and education in Belfast (late 1960s) and against overcrowded shelter and overwhelmed basic services in Mogadishu (early 1990s). Finally, in war, the city often carries the greatest impact in terms of physical destruction and suffering (e.g., Sarajevo, Aleppo).

Towards more effective forms of local governance and responses to conflict, municipal institutions are ideally situated to identify potential sources of conflict and to understand its dynamics as they are closest to citizens and their needs. Moreover, these institutions are in the best position to represent citizens and to increase their involvement and participation in the prevention and mitigation of conflict. From a research perspective, cities can be regarded as 'microcosms of broader societal fault lines and tensions affecting a nation' and, as such, they can be used as 'laboratories' for innovative peace-building practices (Barber, 2013).

In order to explore how and when municipal actors can actually maximize their effectiveness in preventing violence, the project will test the core assumption that devolved or decentralized power produces a more effective response to preventing the outbreak and escalation of violent conflict. Key questions include:
- What are the drivers of violent conflict at the city municipality level? Where relevant, how do these causes relate to national and international conflict?
- Which (formal and informal) institutions and actors help prevent and mitigate conflict? What role do city municipalities play?
- How can effective prevention strategies be designed and what role should municipalities – and mayors in particular – play?

**Conditions that Give Rise to Violence
and Related Arts-based and Cultural Resources**

Capitalist economic structures, patriarchy, racism, xenophobia: These large interlocking hierarchical patterns of social organization function on local, national and global levels, giving rise to the structural violence of institutions as well as to direct acts of violence perpetrated by states, municipalities, communities and individuals. In the world where we live violence seems ubiquitous. The arts can create spaces for exposing and challenging these hierarchies. Humor and

other approaches to expanding the social imaginary can be crafted to subvert established power dynamics, shaking people into the awareness that social transformation is both necessary and possible.

Theoretical debates about the relationship among these dynamics, and how they influence institutions, the social contract of s society and the ethical decisions of individuals, are beyond the scope of this paper. They do, however, create the larger context for the challenges described in this section.

Migration to cities: We live in an era of unprecedented levels of migration into cities both from rural areas within the same country and also from other parts of the world, i.e. from areas where poverty, violence and the effects of natural disasters (including the effects of climate change) create conditions of danger and constrained opportunities. These displacements and migrations contribute to tensions in urban environments, fueling competition over resources, exacerbating problems of inadequate housing stock and infrastructure, creating congestion, and intensifying misunderstanding and mistrust across barriers of culture, status and language.

For those displaced, migrations disrupt families, communities, and the cultural patterns that have imbued life with meaning and created important contexts for the interaction of more mature and younger members of communities. In these new settings, younger people often adapt more easily to the new culture, shifting the generational balance of power in ways that can contribute to patterns of alienation. In such contexts, younger people become vulnerable to recruitment into gangs and extremist groups that offer protection and belonging, and that construct new patterns of activity and meaning, sometimes expressed through violence.

Arts and cultural activities can be crafted to minimize the dangers that are associated with mass migrations into urban centers. They offer:
- ways for communities to feel 'at home' in new contexts, as they sing, dance, construct shrines and gardens, cook foods and re-enact rituals that are familiar and imbued with meaning. Such embodied expressive forms can help ground people as they adapt to new environments, and make choices about how to maintain or revise cultural practices, and whether and how to share traditions with new neighbors. They can provide opportunities for younger and older members of displaced communities to interact, where embodied values are transmitted, and bonds of shared meanings are cultivated and expressed.
- opportunities for diverse communities to present their stories and expressive forms to each other, to celebrate shared and diverse elements of cultures, and to learn about neighbors whose ways may be unfamiliar or even distasteful
- contexts for young people to come together to creatively express frustrations and aspirations in ways that can be acknowledged by and influence the actions of municipal workers
- opportunities for people to nourish the capacities required for resilience, inviting energizing engagement of cognitive, emotional, sensory and spiritual faculties, and support people and groups to imagine and begin to work for a different, better future

Poverty and inequality: In contexts of urban poverty, the absence of life opportunities can itself be a kind of violence – in the sense of diminishing the agency of people who lack access to

adequate food, housing, educational opportunities, health care, and clean environments. In some urban contexts, poverty is associated with drug use, gang violence, domestic and sexual violence, abuse of police power, unjust patterns of incarceration, and violent political unrest.

On a global level, although economic inequalities have declined somewhat across countries in recent years, they have risen within countries; and the distribution of income across the globe remains uneven.[2] Inequality contributes to social instability and undermines trust.[3] The denial of political voice or influence to those at the lower end of the inequality spectrum can cause social tensions, political instability, and violent conflict.

Within the United States, traditional economic models explain inequalities in terms of the distribution of skilled and unskilled laborers. Other important factors are related to patterns of immigration. There is a strong correlation between crime and inequality within urban areas[4], including a high correlation between the rate of murder and income inequality. Envy is more likely to be directed toward near neighbors than geographically dispersed fellow citizens. Inequality within cities can also generate violent political uprisings.[5]

In these contexts, the arts and cultural practices can be crafted to:
- Draw attention to the conditions of poverty in ways that support witnessing circumstances that might otherwise be too difficult to bear
- Expose the underlying economic structures that give rise to extreme poverty and inequality
- Enhance people's sense of agency as they compose and present, in various media, the narratives of their lives and communities
- Provide opportunities for disciplined, focused attention and the development of skills
- Engage communities in income-generating creative work
- Offer productive and life-enhancing channels for the expression of rage, grief, frustration, etc.
- Engage communities in creating images of a future with more equity and opportunity

Unaddressed Legacies of Past Violence. Societies in the 21st century bear the legacies of colonialism and slavery, as well as the violent militarized conflicts of the 20th century. Sometimes these societies perpetuate violence into the new millennium; sometimes they seek to

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[2] See http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/reports/InequalityMatters.pdf; p. 23

[3] Ibid. p. 70

[4] Glaeser, Rsseger and Tobio, "Inequality in Cities," Journal of Regional Science Vol. 49 #4. p. 617

[5] In 2014, Boston was determined to be the city with the highest income inequality, based on a comparison of the incomes at the 20th and 95th percentile. The cities with the next highest rates of inequality in the US are as follows: New Orleans, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Providence, New Haven, Washington DC, Miami, San Francisco and New York. When incomes not just in the cities but in the metropolitan areas are compared, the Boston/Cambridge/Newton area ranks 6th in the nation in terms of income inequality. One study indicated that inequality seems to impact poor households specifically through the housing market, by making rental housing less affordable relative incomes. Berube and Holmes, Brookings Institute, January 14, 2016. http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2016/01/14-income-inequality-cities-update-berube-holmes)

come to terms with the legacies of events that created trauma on both individual and collective levels.

Municipalities are bound up in these conflicts and legacies, because cities themselves have been fought over by competing sides, and because the people who migrate to and populate them sometimes have been enemies in their native countries and still identify with adversary military or political formations. Municipal security officers and paramilitaries operating in cities may have repressed, threatened and/or frightened populations, or may have failed to protect people from assaults by others. Furthermore, in post-violence settings, legal proceedings, monuments and memorials are often housed in cities.

In relation to unaddressed legacies of violent conflicts, the arts and cultural practices can be crafted to:

- Draw attention to abuses of human rights and other harms
- Re-humanize former adversaries to themselves and each other
- Provide opportunities for members of adversary communities to share stories, create more complex stories, and develop more nuanced understandings of their own identities
- Support communities to mourn losses and empathize with the suffering of the other
- Contribute to reparations schemes, especially symbolic reparations
- Invite people to let go of bitterness
- Engage communities in imagining a better future

Alienation. Although we live in a world in which peoples and countries are increasingly interdependent, often relationships are characterized by alienation, or a sense of separation or division between groups or among sub-groups. The sources of alienation include inequalities, unaddressed legacies of historical violence, and hostilities surrounding differences in cultures, ideologies and beliefs. The dehumanization of one group by another is often related to patterns of violence: the more we perceive others as lacking the features of humanity, the easier it becomes to inflict violence upon them;conversely, the more our relationship with another group is characterized by the dynamics of oppression and violence, the more likely we are to perceive them as less than fully human.

Patterns of alienation are have come to characterize relationships between segments of Muslim communities and the countries and cultural institutions associated with "the West." Imperialist conquests of Muslim countries, cultural stereotyping based on misrepresentations in the media, violent extremism and xenophobic reactions all reflect and engender alienation. Hologram-like, patterns of alienation can effect relationships among individuals, relationships within and between local communities, between members of subordinated and dominant cultures, and, by extension, relationships among or large collectivities bound together by shared narratives and beliefs.[6]

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[6] Ahmed, Akbar. "We Can Avoid Another Paris and Defeat ISIS if We Remember This History," *Huffington Post*, 11/18/2015. Retrieved 2/23/16 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/akbar-ahmed/paris-isis-defeat-history_b_8593272.html

In many communities, patterns of alienation also can come to characterize relationships between younger and older people. This can be especially true in context of migration, when traditional dynamics of power are inverted as younger people more readily learn the language of the host community and become immersed in new cultural ways. The cultural knowledge of elders can seem irrelevant to the new cultural context.

Similarly, alienation can scar relationships between women and men, manifesting and reinforcing abusive dynamics of power. Domestic violence is one dimension of gender-based violence, which also includes female infanticide, sexual violence and human trafficking.[7]

These underlying conditions have contributed to numerous manifestations of violence in urban areas. In recent years, we have witnessed extremist violence in cities throughout Europe, Africa and North America, as well as increasingly visible racialized police violence (and other forms of direct and structural racist violence) in the United States. Sex trafficking in urban areas throughout the world continues to plague women and children, and men as well. Gang violence, associated with poverty, inequality, displacement and alienation, also disproportionately affects cities.

Artistic and cultural initiatives designed to respond to, and prevent, alienation can be crafted to:

- Restore agency and resilience
- Correct stereotypes by presenting positive aspects of cultures
- Present the stories and the suffering of victims of abuse in ways that dignify
- Engage people in activities in which they explore commonalities and differences and build relationships of respect, reciprocity, and growing trust
- Create contexts for conversations between members of groups that have become alienated from each other

Different kinds of structural and direct violence, fueled by the underlying dynamics explored above, are manifested, and can be addressed, at the level of the municipality. These forms of violence include:

- Assaults based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, political ideology
- Extremist violence
- Police violence
- Sex trafficking
- Gang, gun and drug-related violence
- Domestic violence, including the abuse of women, children and older people
- Election-related violence
- Environmental degradation, climate change, and related injustices

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[7] "Gender-Based Violence," in *Gender: Topic Guide,* produced by GSRDC. Retrieved 2/2316 at http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/gender.pdf

The Lens of Arts and Culture

Scope: The range of activities indicated by the phrase 'the arts and cultural work' is very broad. The arts include both oral and written literary forms, vocal and instrumental musical works, drawing and painting, photography, movies and three-dimensional works as well as performative modes such as scripted and improvisational theater and dance. Cultural work cultivates and harvests the knowledge embedded within collective folk expressions like embroidery patterns, lullabies, and folk architecture. These forms are densely packed with meaning, having been polished by centuries of transmission from one generation to the next.

The artistic works and cultural forms to be considered as resources for preventing urban violence therefore, include rap music composed by young people at a makeshift studio, concerts performed by cross-community orchestras, and a public folklore project facilitating exchanges of lullabies and stories. They include murals created by children on borders between culturally segregated neighborhoods, and light shows projected onto skyscrapers in a city center; soap operas performed as radio broadcasts and performances of poetry, music and dance on municipal buses. People engage in these forms as creators, performers, audience members, producers and critics. In some cases, art and cultural projects focus on the processes of creating, with less concern for the product. In other instances, it is the beauty and power of the produced works that reach beneath people's defenses and open possibilities for reflection, learning and transformation in the direction of less violence and greater justice.

The nature of aesthetic engagement: Engaging with the arts can generate, for both individuals and collectivities, for creators and spectators, special qualities of attention and response such as disinterestedness, committed participation, meta-cognitive alertness, receptivity, and serenity. These qualities of attention and response afford unique opportunities for learning, empathy, reflexivity, creativity, innovation and experimentation. The engagement with a work of art or cultural form that gives rise to these special qualities can best be understood within the framework of aesthetic experience.

What is unique about aesthetic experience such that is can become such fertile ground for learning and for creativity? First, by definition, aesthetic experience engages us on multiple levels: sensory, cognitive, emotional and spiritual as well. Art symbols convey multiple meanings simultaneously through, for instance, color, texture, shape and composition, scale, rhythm, timbre, shape and composition, etc. Forms such as abstract paintings and instrumental music link our senses with rational faculties, as we see ourselves seeing, notice ourselves hearing, and become aware of ourselves as makers of meaning. Rather than perceive the world through existing linguistic categories, an aesthetic encounter allows us to apprehend the world through our senses, and therefore to create new patterns of meaning.

It is partly for this reason that the arts stimulate creativity and imagination. Sociobiologist Brian Boyd argues, in fact, that engaging with fictional worlds and artfully crafted objects are universal

human traits that, in evolutionary terms, enhance the chances of survival.[8] The capacities to imagine fictional worlds and animate focused attention to opportunities and risks have been key to human survival.

These defining features of aesthetic engagement help explain why and how the arts and cultural work are particularly effective resources for addressing violence. Human beings tend to find the inter-animation of sensory and rational faculties especially enlivening, causing states of alertness and awareness that are infused with feeling. These qualities of presence can be harnessed to address some of the key educational tasks and challenges associated with interrupting cycles of violence. For instance, to understand meaningfully our own or another's suffering requires knowledge that is both cognitive and heartfelt. We must be simultaneously engaged, but detached enough not to be overwhelmed by the intensity of our own responses. The arts can be crafted to invite just such responses: alert calmness, engaged detachment, and awareness that is laden with feeling. In addition, the arts can help us become critically aware of the symbolic structures through which we compose meaning, and invite enough of a pause to interrupt the 'fight or flight' response, which is activated in contexts of threat. This level of meta-cognition is often helpful in the prevention of violence, as former enemies reassess the symbols embedded within enmity discourses, and can begin to see that what has been accepted as 'truth' is one possible interpretation among many.

Another defining feature of the aesthetic domain is that it involves us with forms that are bounded in space and/or time, boundaries within which viewers can focus more intensively than in the ongoing flow of life. The bounded quality of artworks and performances, and the formal structures of the form, support witnesses, survivors and even perpetrators of violence to confront and work through the legacies of painful history that might otherwise be too overwhelming to face.

The power of the arts to engage and sustain our attention arises also from the fact that aesthetic forms acknowledge and mediate certain tensions – for instance, between innovation and tradition, the individual and the collective, randomness and rigidity, passion and discipline, etc. Artists and cultural leaders can work within these tensions to construct forms that enliven but do not overwhelm. In contexts of oppression and violence, when people's perceptual capacities may have been blunted by boredom, fear or guilt, forms of expression that are in themselves enlivening can create conditions for learning and communication.

Because of the simultaneous engagement of rational and sensory faculties; because of the intensity of engagement made possible by the bounded nature of formal structures; and because the forms themselves generally avoid certain extremes, (such as utter disregard for, or utter allegiance to, accepted conventions) the interface between human perceivers and works of art can give rise to aesthetic experiences. Taken together, these defining features of aesthetic experience allow for a kind of reciprocity between the sensibilities of the perceivers and the objects of their perception. This reciprocity can most readily be understood as a midway point between two other kinds of transactions between perceivers and objections of perception:

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[8] Boyd, Brian. *On the Origin of Stories: Evolution, Cognition, and Fiction.* Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009.

analysis and propaganda. In <u>analysis</u>, the perceiver "controls" the object by breaking it down into sub-parts and/or investigating it in relation to pre-existing categories. In <u>propaganda</u>, the expressive form has been designed to manipulate, seduce or coerce the perceiver.

By contrast, in the case of aesthetic apprehension, the perceiver and the perceived are equally weighted. Expressive forms are designed with perceivers' sensibilities in mind; and perceivers open themselves to the resonances and reverberations evoked by the object or event. In other words, when a work of art works, *as art,* it is because the sensibilities of the viewer or listener are anticipated in the expression itself. It is this calibration of the form of expression with the sensibilities of the viewer (challenging but not overwhelming, stimulating but not assaultive, sometimes soothing but not boring, etc.) that give rise to the perception of beauty; and it is through beauty that a work of art issues its invitation. Recent research has focused on the significance of beauty in supporting witnesses to attend to the suffering of others, gaining awareness required for taking action to ameliorate the suffering.[9]

The making and receiving of art, therefore, requires awareness of the other, a sensitivity akin to respect. With the conditions that give rise to urban violence -- poverty, crowding, diversity that can feel jarring and overwhelming, alienation of young people from the culture-bearers of their communities as well as from the dominant culture, unaddressed legacies of past violence and oppression – this quality of aesthetic experience alone makes cultural work and the arts valuable. When the homes and centers of community life have been destroyed, and when the dignity of an ethnic group has been assaulted through long-standing oppression, the arts can remind people of their dignity, of what it is like to be acknowledged and respected, and, in time, to acknowledge and respect. As aesthetic engagements enliven people, they can support communities to confront painful history and assist them in grappling with change. Individuals and communities can find sources of power that are non-violent and non-coercive.

Art as research: While much of this paper represents theoretical and practical research about the arts and cultural work in relation to the prevention of violence at the level of the municipality, it also recognizes that art-making itself can be considered a mode of knowledge generation. The processes of making artistic and cultural productions themselves can be understood as research methodologies. They allow us to understand and apprehend the world through modalities that are not exclusively rational, and that incorporate insights about and through human perception, emotion, and experience.

According to Stephen Wilson, a professor of conceptual design at San Francisco State University, the arts can function as an independent zone of research, the place where "abandoned, discredited, and unorthodox inquiries" can be pursued. In addition, "...artists are likely to to integrate widely ranging cultural issues in their research," and "incorporate criteria such as celebration and wonder...Artistic valuing of creativity and innovation means that new perspectives might be applied to inquiries."[10] He writes:

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[9] See Sommer, Doris. *The Work of Art in the World.* Duke University Press, 2013; and Thompson, James. *Performance Affects: Applied Theatre and the End of Effect*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

[10] Wilson, Stephen. *Art As Research.* San Francisco State University. 1996. Web. See: www.sfsu.edu/swilson/papers/artist.researcher.html

The appropriate contours of this involvement are not yet defined. Much experimentation is required. How can research settings learn to be open enough to benefit from the unorthodox contributions artists might make? How can artists learn to involve themselves in the ways and byways of researchers without losing touch with their artistic roots?...

I am not claiming that artists should act exactly like researchers. If they did, they would be unlikely to make any unique contribution. Contemporary art often includes elements of commentary, irony and critique missing from "serious" research. Similarly, scientists and technologists strive toward objectivity; artists cultivate their idiosyncratic subjectivity as a major feature of what they do. The "research" that artists created will most likely look different than that produced by traditional researchers. It would work like art always does - provoking and moving audiences through its communicative power and unique perspectives. Still it might simultaneously work as research - using systematic investigative processes to develop new technological possibilities or to discover useful new knowledge or perspectives.[11]

The spirit of art as research was captured by the great African-American writer James Baldwin, in an essay published in 1962, and, interestingly, cited recently in "The Arts of Change," an essay by Darren Walker, the recently appointed president of the Ford Foundation: "The artist cannot and must not take anything for granted, but must drive to the heart of every answer to expose the question the answer hides."[12]

In what ways are artists and cultural workers taking on roles of researchers? There are several models we might incorporate into the Municipalities and Violence prevention project:
- Odin Teatret in Denmark, under the direction of the theater master Eugenio Barba, has developed conceptions of both pure and applied research "designed to experiment with the effectiveness of the tools of theatre craft in intervening in the quality of human relationships."[13] One interesting dimension of Barba's approach is the study of 'tacit knowledge,' or

> knowledge-in-life that doesn't belong to a single individual, but to a tradition, and which evolves as it passes from one generation to the next, by means of a net of personal relationships. It is 'tacit' because it is embodied knowledge, and therefore does not use the circulation speed and the abstraction capacity that characterises written or oral words. What is lost in amplitude is gained in depth…[Tacit knowledge] doesn't deal with an archaic knowledge, but with a precious cultural legacy that represents a minority but complementary dimension compared to the transmission of information through words of technologies that save time and reproduce images and documents...The information...consists of an actual putting-in-form of the body-mind of another person. It concerns

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Originally stated by James Baldwin and cited by Darren Walker, in "On the Art of Change," April 20, 2015, see: https://medium.com/@FordFoundation/on-the-art-of-change-cef0864c4930.

[13] See: http://www.odinteatret.dk/research.aspx

information that cannot be separated from the physical presence, the net of relationships and biography. In them, the two faces of the word 'discipline' - field of knowledge and behavior manner - coincide.[14]

Many ensemble theatre companies in cities around the world incorporate the teachings of Eugenio Barba into their work, including *Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani,* described in Case Study #9, in the appendix. Another group with Barba-informed practice is *Dah Teatar,* based in Belgrade, Serbia, working under the direction of Dijana Milošević. *Dah* has focused much of its practice on supporting Serbian people to acknowledge the harms that were inflicted in their name by the Slobodan Milošević regime, and to confront the losses that have resulted from ethnic cleansing. *Dah* generally performs devised works that emerge from months and years of rehearsal/research, sometimes capturing unspeakable truths through creative and sensitive use of images and sound. In *Dah's Invisible City,* a project with particular relevance to research on municipalities and violence prevention, artists researched the narratives and artistic expressions of the ethnic communities that had lived in Belgrade's neighborhoods prior to the war that divided the former Yugoslavia into different states. Working in collaboration with the municipal bus company, *Dah* artists became 'strange passengers' riding in costume on regular buses bringing people to and from work. As the bus traveled through different neighborhoods, the artists performed music and dance, told stories and recited poetry. The purpose was to remind the citizens of Belgrade of the diversity of their city -- including the diversity that still remains and that which was eliminated in the war. The 'research' aspect was continued as the responses and reactions of the 'regular' passengers were documented and assessed. Version of *Invisible City* projects have been performed in several European cities with support from the EU.

- "Dialogical Aesthetics" refers to a body of theory and practice inspired by concepts developed by the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin. Artists whose work is based in this emerging trend creatively orchestrate "collaborative encounters and conversations, well beyond the institutional confines of the gallery or museum."[15] In a rigorous yet accessible exploration of dialogical aesthetics, Grant Kester documents several examples. For instance, in Zurich, Switzerland, an arts organization conceptualized and facilitated a series of conversations among politicians, journalists, activists, and sex workers focused on the dangerous situations faced by drug addicts in Zurich who had turned to prostitution to support their habits, many of whom were virtually homeless and subject to violent attacks by their clients and harassment by the police. The conversations took place on a small pleasure boat cruising on Lake Zurich, far from media attention. Over several weeks more than 60 key figures (including policy-makers with sufficient authority to implement decisions) reached a consensus to create a boarding house that would serve as a place to sleep and a safe haven for homeless prostitutes and drug addicts. Other examples include a series of interventions with police and young people of color in Oakland California, described in the sub-section below on security.[16]

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Kester, Grant H. *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art.* pg. 1 Berkeley: U of California, 2004. Print.

[16] Ibid.

The artworks described by Kester emphasize process over object-making. They are linked to research in the sense that they generally engage people from disparate sectors of communities learning about themselves, each other and multiple perspectives on a problem or issue, all through facilitated conversations, with artful attention to creating contexts that allow for honest exchange on challenging topics. Such works also attend to creative ways of sharing of messages, and to involvement of or outreach to policy-makers.

Kester's dialogical aesthetics has much in common with Design Labs for Social Innovation[17], processes that bring together various stakeholders to develop a common understanding of a problem, from which stakeholders can adapt an innovative solution. The Design Lab concept integrates group psychology and group dynamics; complex adaptive systems; design thinking; and computer modelling and visualization tools. Although Design Labs differ, they tend to share a few common elements: 1) Broad-based research; 2) co-creation of solutions; 3) Specialized physical environments; 4) Clear process design and facilitation; 5) Rapid prototyping; 6) Multidisciplinary support staff; and 7) continual learning by change lab staffs.[18]

• Another approach to art <u>as</u> research involves inviting artists to create works responding to a situation or imagining how circumstances might be different in the future.

A paradigmatic example is an exhibition, *Legacy of Absence,* hosted by the Reyum Institute for Arts and Culture, a small NGO in Phnom. In the year 2000, the organization presented works which pondered the absences produced as a result of the Pol Pot era, asking questions such as: How do the missing and murdered affect the living? What traces of the dead haunt the present? How can the reasons for so many absences be understood and set to some kind of rest by those who come after? As time goes on, how are killings and their causes remembered or forgotten, repressed or made into myth?

The exhibition in Phnom Penh was generated by a larger international project called "The Legacy Project"[19] (which aims to assemble art work produced in a wide range of societies that have suffered from trauma during the 20th century. Working with Reyum, The Legacy Project distributed a statement and a series of questions asking Cambodian artists to respond to their theme. The works which resulted were then exhibited.[20] For many Cambodians, this exhibition created the context for their first conversations about the legacy of the Pol Pot period.

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[17] For more on Design Labs for Social Innovation, visit:
http://sig.uwaterloo.ca/sites/default/files/documents/Paper_FINAL_Lab%20for%20Social%20Innovation.pdf.

[18] For example, The Brandeis program Creativity, Arts and Social Transformation experimented with Design Labs in its inaugural year. Reports can be found here: http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/cast/news-events/2015_AnnualReport.html.

[19] For more on The Legacy Project, visit: http://www.legacy-project.org

[20] Those works can be viewed here: http://www.reyum.org/exhibitions/exhibit5/exhibit.html

In an analysis of the exhibition, Reyum's co-director, Ly Daravuth, noted the importance of indirectness and non-verbal approaches to addressing painful legacies. For instance, he created an installation for the Legacy of Absence exhibition that included an audio track of the Khmer lullabies that the Khmer Rouge had appropriated and adapted the lyrics for the purposes of their own propaganda. Unexpectedly, visitors to the gallery quietly approached Daravuth to ask if they could have a CD of the songs.

- In another example, Broadsided Press, a small publishing company that invites visual artists and poets to create broadsides that are distributed for free for people to download and post in their communities. They have recently issued calls for poets to respond to visual works inspired by the current crises surrounding refugees and the war in Syria and the lead-contaminated water in the city of Flint, Michigan. Projects such as this one[21] allow communities and citizens of the world to witness the sensibilities of artists as they respond to acts of violence and their aftermath. What understandings of the crisis emerge when artists are invited to comment, explore, react, respond?

Intersection of aesthetics and municipalities: Urban design

A full treatment of the contributions of urban studies and urban design to questions surrounding the prevention of urban violence and the amelioration of its effects is, of course, beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, there are a few key aspects of the study of cities that overlap with aesthetic perspectives, that could be useful in framing our inquiry into municipalities and violence prevention.

Citing research into diverse local influences on holders of innovative patents as well as original sounds of musicians, scholars of creativity assert that the "sheer density of the city – the proximity of all those overlapping minds….makes it such a inexhaustible source of creativity."[22] Cities attract people of different backgrounds, with different knowledge-sets, creating conditions for people to be exposed to a much wider range of worldviews than in rural or suburban areas. Of course these differences can lead to conflicts and violence, but they also contain the seeds for creative approaches to addressing the problems that arise in contexts of such density and diversity. Good urban design can provide the spaces and situations for people to connect with others who may be unlike them – whether culturally, ethnically, racially, or economically – in positive ways. Spaces of cultural exchange, such as festivals, community centers, or food and craft fairs, are neutral ground where different people can be in contact with each other and experience the curiosity, creativity, and uniqueness of each other's cultures and communities.

By creating opportunities for city inhabitants, even from communities in conflict, to participate together in creative efforts, artistic and cultural initiatives can offer citizens structures that facilitate civic engagement and relationship-building. These kinds of initiatives can validate each community's narrative of itself, while juxtaposing them in ways that add nuance to their

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[21] http://broadsidedpress.org/responses/2015syrianrefugees/

[22] Lehrer, Jonah. "How Creativity Works in Cities: Author Jonah Lehrer Talks with Us about the Nexus of Creativity and Cities. Florida, Richard. *CityLab*. The Atlantic, 2 May 2012. Web. See: http://www.citylab.com/design/2012/05/how-creativity-works/1881/

significance. Newcomers and old-timers can be introduced to each other in affirmative ways. Differences can be experienced respectfully, and disparate elements can be brought into relationships that are generative, vibrant and peaceful. Historically, commercial exchange also has served some of these functions.

A recent resource for urban planning practitioners echoes this view:
> The city can be defined as a physical, social, economic and political entity that grows out of the shared civic conception that individual actions must be moderated for the benefit of the community…The street is a delineated area for communal use, framed by a collection of individual structures, whose purpose is to serve the functions of circulation and exchange…. Streets provide the place to interact, with those we know and those we don't.[23]

It is not only the activities that can be planned within cities, but cities themselves that can be planned with such interaction in mind. The renowned urban planner Jane Jacobs defended the old urban neighborhoods from being bulldozed in the name of urban renewal by arguing that casual exchanges on neighborhood streets were essential. "She saw the city not as a mass of buildings but as a vessel of empty spaces in which people interacted with other people. The city wasn't a skyline – it was a dance."[24] The physicist-turned-urban-scholar Geoffrey West argued that the "positive-feedback loop of urban life"[25] makes everyone more productive.

Cities are the most important invention in human history, he writes, because they
> are the idea that enabled our economic potential and unleashed our ingenuity. Once people started living in dense clumps, they created a kind of settlement capable of reinventing itself, so a city founded on the fur trade could one day give birth to Wall Street, and an island in the Seine chosen for its military advantages might eventually become a place full of avant-garde artists. Cities are this inexhaustible source of ideas.[26]

Communities themselves can be imagined as canvases, with the role of the cultural worker to bring all of the elements, even those narratives that appear mutually exclusive, and the communities whose interests may seem to conflict, into a generative relationship. This is the vision that animated The Oral History Center, as described in Case Study #8.

The significance of small interventions in municipal landscapes is heralded by Jaime Lerner, a renowned architect and planner who served three terms as mayor of Curitiba in Brazil, and two terms as governor of the state of Paraná. He is the author of *Urban Acupuncture: Celebrating Pinpricks of Change that Enrich City Life,* a small book that features dozens of precise, quick initiatives that have made a substantial improvement in the quality of life in cities. He notes, for instance, the role of Korean shopkeepers in New York City, who keep many neighborhoods safe

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[23] See Urban Design: Tools and Resources For The Planning Practitioner: http://tandf.msgfocus.com/files/tfinf_tandf/user_447/Urban_Design_FB_final.pdf

[24] Lehrer, Jonah. "A Physicist Solves the City." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 18 Dec. 2010. Web. See: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/19/magazine/19Urban_West-t.html

[25] Ibid.

[26] Geoffrey West, in Lehrer, Jonah. *Imagine: How Creativity Works*. Houghton Mifflin. 2012. P. 188

by keeping their stores open and well-lit, 24 hours a day and the revival of old cinemas in Brazil with the effect of reviving cultural identity and recuperating a collective loss of memory.

Frameworks from the Fields of Conflict Transformation and Human Rights

Recent book-length works, reports and conferences attest to an emerging trend to link the arts and cultural initiatives to distinctive approaches to addressing both the underlying causes and the immediate manifestations of violence. In this section of the report, we discuss these approaches briefly, and point to case studies and brief examples of the appendix.

Development: In 2011, the UN General Assembly recognized that culture is an essential component of human development. Culture represents a "source of identity, innovation and creativity for the individual and the community and is an important factor in social inclusion and poverty eradication, providing for economic growth and ownership of development processes."[27] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark articulates the rationale for linking cultural approaches to the eradication of poverty and addressing inequality and alienation, all conditions identified here as contributing to violence in municipalities:

> Art and Culture embody some of the fundamental qualities of being human – such as creativity, expression, communication and sociality. Studies show that these aspects are also important building blocks for people and societies to combat poverty, build peace and promote human rights and democratic development. The ability to solve problems, exercise one's voice, engage in public debate and build social capital are capabilities and assets that are essential to the process of empowerment… Active involvement in cultural activities by marginalised groups such as women, youth and ethnic minorities can enhance their standing in their community, challenging prevailing power structures."[28]

Case studies of arts-based development initiatives in Houston, Texas and Nairobi, Kenya, are located in the appendix. Also in the appendix are three brief examples of youth-oriented economic and human develop visual arts initiatives from Cambodia, South Africa, and the US.

An analysis of these examples generates the following opportunities for municipalities:
- Young people can develop artistic skills and talents to earn a living through the arts; cities can create such opportunities directly, or support NGOs or educational institutions that would offer apprenticeships and training for young people
- Arts festivals and celebrations can offer people opportunities not only to earn money, but to build relationships and capacities that allow them to take a stand – as artists and as citizens – in favor of non-violent approaches to conflict resolution (as opposed to election-related violence, for instance)

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[27] A/RES/65/166, Culture and Development, Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, February 2011.

[28] For more on Danish Development, see: http://um.dk/en/~/media/UM/English-site/Documents/Danida/Goals/Strategy/Strategi_Kunstogkultur_UK_web.pdf p. 6 and 8

- Community-based redevelopment initiatives can draw on the creativity of artists and urban designers to reclaim entire neighborhoods from the kind of degradation that leads to drugs, gang violence, violence directed against women, etc.

Security: 'Security' as a framework traditionally focused on the actions of states, and the defense of states against military aggression. <u>Human</u> security framework has broadened to person-centered safety, and multi-sectoral interventions aimed at strengthening resilience, preventing violence, and strengthening capacities for agency, communication and ethical action. Effective human security efforts address cross-cutting threats and underscore the universality and interdependence of a set of freedoms that are fundamental to human life.

Human security encompasses:
- <u>Government</u> security - the relationship between security forces--i.e. police and military-- and the citizens these forces are supposed to protect. In some cases, police forces protect citizens from threats; in other cases, police forces themselves comprise threats from which citizens need protection.
- <u>Homeland</u> security - the protection of citizens and other residents from extremist threats from both inside and outside a state, often by military or police, but also through creative and preventive actions on the part of citizens.
- <u>Personal security</u> - the conditions that allow individuals to feel safe in their lives in terms of stable and adequate housing; absence of threats from crime, terrorism or domestic violence; and psychological and economic well-being.
- <u>Environmental security</u> - addressing threats to fragile and vulnerable ecosystems through protection and management of the environment and natural resources. Such threats are increasing rapidly due to climate change and environmental degradation.
- <u>Human rights security</u> - addressing necessities that are declared essential for human dignity, such as food, health care, sanitation, cultural rights and water security.

Case studies and examples of arts-based and cultural initiatives aimed at increasing security can be found in the appendix. They are focused on several initiatives in North America, including a homeland security project in British Colombia, Canada, and initiatives in the US that address the relationship between police and residents in Boston, Massachusetts; Portland, Maine; and Oakland, California.

These initiatives suggest that municipalities can engage the resources of arts and cultural work to:
- Strengthen the resilience of communities that are vulnerable to extremist propaganda by creating spaces for expression, communication, support, and trust, and where historical grievances can be acknowledged
- Strengthen relationships between government officials and members of communities targeted by extremist propaganda
- Build relationships of respect and mutual concern between police officers and young people in neighborhoods plagued by poverty, gangs, gun violence and drugs
- Build a sense of empathy on the part of police officers for the challenges young people face, especially young people from marginalized communities

- Rehumanize members of the police force and young people in marginalized communities, to themselves and each other
- Celebrate creativity, and engage people in activities animated by an ethics of reciprocity, caring, tolerance and respect.

Coexistence and Reconciliation: Coexistence and reconciliation are two conflict transformation frameworks that emphasize the quality of relationships between communities that are adversaries or enemies, or that have become alienated from each other due to existing dynamics of oppression and/or inadequately addressing legacies of past violence.

In its minimal form, coexistence refers to the condition in which individuals and communities on the opposite sides of conflicts have ceased to injure each other intentionally, and agreed (even if begrudgingly) to the other's right to exist. Reconciliation refers to the transformations of relationships of mistrust (characterized by violence, slavery, oppression, occupation, etc.) to relationships of warranted trust.

It is important to note that in many instances, people who have lived in conditions of long-standing oppression or who are emerging from situations of violence may have experienced traumas and sustained injuries that have impaired their capacities for coexistence and reconciliation. Initiatives at the level of municipalities allow for the kinds of face-to-face interactions where such conditions can be noticed and addressed.

Building relationships of trust in the aftermath of violent conflict generally involve some culturally-inflected versions of the following seven processes (not necessarily undertaken in this order):

- Appreciating each other's humanity and respecting each other's culture
- Telling and listening to each other's stories, and developing more complex narratives and more nuanced understandings of identity
- Acknowledging harms, telling truths and mourning losses
- Empathizing with each other's suffering
- Acknowledging and redressing injustices
- Expressing remorse, repenting, apologizing; letting go of bitterness, forgiving
- Imagining and substantiating a new future, including agreements about how future conflicts will be engaged constructively.

In the appendix to this report, readers will find two case studies: The Oral History Center, a coexistence initiative based in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the US; and *Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani,* a theatre group that accompanied Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. There are also brief descriptions of theatre initiatives in Northern Ireland and Gujarat, India, designed to support former enemies to empathize with each other's suffering.

From these examples, it is clear that work at the level of cities can contribute to the rebuilding of capacities required for coexistence and reconciliation, and also to the rebuilding of relationships of trust and trustworthiness.

About coexistence:
- It makes sense to identify artists and cultural workers who are building relationships with members of communities and find ways to support the extension of their work.
- Even small organizations that exist over a period of time are able to generate creative and responsive projects based on relationships of trust that are established in early projects.
- Even in contexts of racial tensions and violence, people are willing to spend time engaging creatively with people from adversary communities, if a framework is created that validates their stories and their cultures and offers time- and space-limited opportunities to interact with the others.
- People of different cultures and ages can grow to trust each other when they create something beautiful together, and when they see their work appreciated by others in the larger community.
- Bringing into relationship shared modes of expression – such as lullabies, needlework, crafts, work songs, etc. – allows people to both acknowledge commonalities and appreciate differences.
- Oral history projects can enlist artists working in various media to help community people shape their stories in ways that others can hear. For the work of facilitating relationships across difference, and other violence prevention activities such as the mourning of losses, the combination of oral history with the arts is more powerful and effective than either approach alone.

About reconciliation:
- Arts and cultural initiatives can be crafted to engage individuals and communities in encountering past violence that might otherwise be too painful to face. They can be crafted to enhance people's empathy for the suffering of the other; to dignify experiences of marginalized people by representing it in aesthetically compelling works; to support communities to imagine a less violent, more just, more vibrant future.
- The work of reconciliation involves addressing ethical complexities, such as weighing imperatives toward justice and mercy, dignifying the suffering of survivors without falling into the traps of perpetual victimhood, honoring past harms but in ways that build relationships that can sustain communities into the future. The arts can be crafted to support communities to address such complexities.
- In the aftermath of civil wars, municipalities are often the home to rural people who migrated to the cities. Cultural work initiatives can support urban and rural people to understand each other's expressive forms, values and ways of life. As in the case of *Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani* in Peru, artistic productions can invite urban elites to imagine the suffering, and experience the full dignity of rural people who have been marginalized and who might remain invisible.
- By extension, the arts can engage members of marginalized communities to enhance their capacities to compose their life experiences into stories and to express themselves in ways that invite others to hear, and to render visible, those whose lives are generally invisible, including incarcerated people, homeless people, victims of sex trafficking and domestic violence, etc.

Dr. Salomon Lerner, the president of Peru's Truth Commission, has captured the significance of the arts in the central dimension of reconciliation, namely to face the past and to imagine and create a better future:

> Art restores meaning in bringing us, as responsible human beings, face to face with the undeniable facts and circumstances. Through this encounter with the undeniable, our collective life as captured in a work of visual or dramatic art, we are perfecting our moral judgment, and, above all, feeling the challenge and hearing the call to act, for the sake of our own ethical identities. This may be the key to the transformative power of art over a violent past that seems irredeemable, immutable, but which is always subject to the creative force of our imagination.[29]

Human Rights

Freedom of expression is perhaps the most fundamental of all human rights, because it is the prerequisite for human communities to name their own experience and to alert local, national and international communities to abuses of human rights. All too often, artists risk imprisonment, exile and even assassination, when repressive governments (at any level), seed to censor artistic expression, rather than protect freedom of expression, especially expression that is critical of the government and dominant institutions.

In the appendix, readers will find a case study of Chandraguptha Thenuwara, a Sri Lankan artist who uses painting, sculpture and installations to generate discussion about conflict, violence and the government's encroachment on civil spaces, particularly in the urban landscape.

Artists, peacebuilders and human rights activists can be reminded by this case study that the creative spaces of cultural productions – including theatres, exhibition halls, music sung in neighborhood pubs, innovations in embroidery patterns -- sometimes escape the gaze of censors. The ambiguity of meaning inherent in the nature of the art symbol in some instance can provide a measure of protection.

Trauma Healing

People whose lives are bound up in one or more of the underlying causes of violence, or in one or more of its manifestations, are at great risk of becoming traumatized. According to the American Psychological Association, traumas are emotional responses to terrible events such as rape and natural disasters; at first, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms. [30] Healing from trauma allows people to reclaim lives in the present; painful memories do not go away but individuals and communities can take some measure of power in relation to them by shaping their meaning. Embedded in different cultures are different approaches to trauma healing.

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[29] Excerpted from "Memory of Violence and Drama in Peru: The Experience of the Truth Commission in Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani" by Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres, delivered in Spanish at Brandeis University, December 1, 2011; translated by Tess Wheelwright. Available at http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/Lerner_Speech_Dec2011_EnglishTranslation.pdf

[30] For more from the American Psychological Association on trauma, see: www.apa.org/topics/trauma/

Recovery from trauma can contribute to the prevention of further violence, as survivors strengthen capacities to perceive the world more clearly, discern when trust is or is not warranted, and take measures to increase their own safety. They might also regain some sense of emotional equanimity so that they can engage in processes of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. In the appendix, readers will find an inspiring example of survivors of sex trafficking in India, who through dance therapy and engaging in traditional dances, reclaimed their sense of agency and became part of a widespread effort to reach out to other victims of trafficking.

Municipalities can learn from the Kolkatta Sanved example:

- There is strength in arts initiatives that are started by people from the local community.
- Activists can combine folk expression with knowledge of therapeutic techniques and concepts to reach their audiences in deeper, more effective ways.
- It is possible to exponentially extend the reach of initiatives by training survivors of trauma to become trainers and facilitators themselves.
- Municipalities can notice who is doing good work locally and support it, rather than bringing in outsiders who may not have the trust of the community. If municipalities can identify a process or organization that's working for a small group, they can support it and allow it to grow without distorting it or starting new initiatives.
- Techniques like that of Kolkata Sanved can be used in conjunction with other kinds of initiatives, but dance offers a unique kind of empowerment--reclaiming the body. All kinds of violence can take a toll on the bodies of victims. When direct assault on the body is central to the violation, embodied methods of healing can be particularly effective.

Conclusion

This report proposes frameworks that can be used to further explore the potential of violence prevention initiatives at the level of the municipality, using the lens of arts and culture. We have considered conditions that give rise to violence and named some of the manifestations of violence that are prevalent today. We have also explored the scope of arts-based and cultural initiatives, and discussed the nature of aesthetic engagement, which is central to the transformative power of the arts. We have also briefly considered several approaches to artistic processes *as* research, and the nature of the intersection of aesthetics and urban study, in the form of urban design. Finally, we noted several frameworks from the fields of human rights and conflict transformation, approaches to addressing both the underlying causes of violence and its manifestations, all of which incorporate the arts. We have noted lessons that municipalities can learn from an analysis of work that is aligned with these different approaches.

Readers of this report familiar with the arts and social transformation field will note that we have not undertaken a comparison of the efficacy of, or lessons from, work that reflects different approaches to combining aesthetic and socio-political effectiveness – namely artist-based and community based productions, collective expressive forms such as ritual, artists' collaborations with activities, and expressive arts and the various expressive therapies. However, works based

in all of these traditions are included in the case studies and examples in the appendix, and at a minimum it is possible to conclude that all of these approaches do make constructive contributions and are worth considering. Future studies, including case studies of particular cities, will allow for further analysis of these questions.

Readers are encouraged to read the case studies and examples in the appendix. The stories there reflect a wide variety of approaches to work in this field, and offer more of a felt sense of the strengths and limitations of different approaches, and an appreciation of the challenges faced by those who work in this field.

APPENDIX I
Case Studies And Brief Examples

This appendix presents case studies and brief descriptions of arts-based and cultural initiatives organized according to frameworks from the fields of conflict transformation and human rights.

DEVELOPMENT

1) **A Better Eastlands Still Possible: An Urban Youth Peacebuilding Initiative in Nairobi, Kenya,** prepared by Kitche Magak with David Briand

Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya, is one of the fastest growing metropolises in Africa, with an estimated population of over 5 million currently. Like most sprawling metropolis in Africa, Nairobi has its share of urban-related problems including the "evil triplets" of poverty, ignorance dsand violence. Eastlands is one of the seventeen sprawling sections of Nairobi City, and a mixture of middle- and low-income groups. The area derives its name from its location to the east of the city centre. Eastlands is home to an estimated one-fifth of Nairobi's population.

Eastlands experiences violence in multiple forms associated with poverty, lack of opportunity, and a legacy of tribal conflict, including gender-based violence, gun violence, inter-ethnic or tribal violence, and gang violence. Gangs in this area have formed along ethnic lines, especially in Dandora, a residential estate that is the epicentre of violence in Eastlands, where gangs reflect the country's major ethnic divides. The Mungiki, one of Nairobi's most violent gangs, is Kikuyu, while the Soldiers of the Old Man is Luo. The rivalry between these gangs, and that which existed between the tribal communities of Nairobi as a whole, exploded into violent conflict in response to the Kenyan presidential election of 2007.

In the 2007 election, the incumbent Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, defeated Raila Odinga, a widely popular Luo speculated to easily win the election. The reaction was swift: young men flooded the streets in protest, and there were deadly clashes between gangs and communities divided along political allegiances and ethnic lines. The Kibaki government enforced a news media blackout, prohibiting live broadcasts of the violence. Kibaki and his Party of National Unity were accused of vote rigging, but the election commission ignored these accusations.[31]

A Better Eastlands Still Possible (ABESP) is an umbrella organization made up of several anti-violence arts and cultural initiatives, which grew out of the work of Mugabe Were. Were was elected a Kenyan MP in December 2007 after a campaign that had centered on youth mobilization and small youth projects as alternatives to violence. Originally from Dandora, Were and his efforts had widespread grassroots support and in the midst of the post-election violence, he continued his peacebuilding efforts working with the warring communities. Were was

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[31] Gettleman, Jeffrey. "Disputed Vote Plunges Kenya Into Bloodshed." *The New York Times*. 30 Dec. 2007. Web. See: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/31/world/africa/31kenya.html; "Odinga Rejects Kenya Poll Result." *BBC News*. 31 Dec. 2007. Web. See: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7165406.stm

murdered outside his home on January 29, 2008 in an attack some claim to be politically motivated.[32]

Following his death, a group of youth who had participated in Were's initiatives came together to start Better Dandora Possible (BDP), which was born of the realisation that the poor eastern parts of Nairobi such as Dandora, Korogocho, Mathare, Kibera all face similar challenges. As their efforts expanded, the many different projects of BDP came together in 2009 under the umbrella of ABESP. The use of the word "Eastlands" in the name is more metaphorical than geographical, as ABESP works with groups and audiences in many areas around Nairobi that experience similar types of poverty and violence. The group of artists and practitioners in ABESP came together to work with the authorities to address systemic violence, particularly police violence, and other forms of violence, including gender-based violence, that pervaded the city. State and non-state bodies almost immediately enlisted the group to champion peacebuilding in Nairobi in general, but Eastlands in particular, the low-income areas of which were the epicentre of post-election violence. ABESP became an umbrella body for artists committed to peaceful coexistence and talent nurturing.

One of the many peacebuilding efforts by ABESP is hosting public music and theatre performances in Nairobi. These performances tell stories--in song lyrics and theatre narratives--about living through poverty and violence, which is deeply resonant with the target audiences in these communities of Nairobi. A forum between the performers and the audience usually follows the performances, providing an opportunity for community members to engage in discussion about the issues addressed that they can identify with from their daily lives. Many performers have been trained in the pedagogy of the Theatre of the Oppressed.[33] Some acts and troupes have been hired by NGOs like Care Kenya and USAID to perform plays with specific focuses and then direct the conversation with the audience around that focus--HIV/AIDS, for example. This approach of forum theatre gets the discussion of these topics out in the open, allowing people from the community to engage with the social issues in their communities and each other in a safe environment. For instance, gang members are known throughout the communities, and in some cases they join other community members at the performances and engage in the discussion, which sometimes results in their confession and expression of wishes to leave that life. Police who are also present allow them to surrender their guns--a direct consequence of dialogues based around peacebuilding arts events.
Performances centering on issues of sexual assault and rape provide the opportunity for survivors of these acts of violence to speak publicly about the attacks on them. This kind of social therapeutic initiative raises awareness of the the issues in the community.

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[32] Gettleman, Jeffrey. "Would-Be Peacemaker Killed in Kenya." *The New York Times*. 29 Jan. 2008. Web. See: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/30/world/africa/30kenya.html

[33] Pedagogy of the Theatre of the Oppressed was cultivated by Brazilian arts practitioner, Augusto Boal, whose work echoes Pedagogy of the Oppressed cultivated by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. See: Boal, Augusto. *Theatre of the Oppressed*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1985. Print; Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Continuum, 2000. Print.

Police brutality has been reduced drastically in this area because the forums provide the opportunities for police to engage with young people and other community members, to get know them on a personal basis. Dispelling this animosity can provide a space where trust can be built, and this trust between the police and the community can aid in violence prevention. If a community member knows about a potential crime, there can be communication with police, and police can prepare themselves to contact the potential criminals to warn them against carrying out any criminal acts. In this way, the police and community members can work together to prevent violence instead of falling into the familiar dynamic of *us* vs. *them*.

Lessons for other municipalities from A Better Eastland is Still Possible:
- Communities need to be supported to solve their own problems; they must be willing to solve their own problems. Eastlands' problems have been reduced drastically because the people of Eastlands themselves chose to take action to reduce violence.
- Groups working in different related areas coming together under one umbrella, coordinated through one initiative, can be effective. This makes it easier to get funding for a large initiative rather than many small ones.
- Municipalities must work with police to reduce the schism between the people in the community and the police.
- For ABESP activities follow link listed below[34]

2) Project Row House, Houston, Texas, USA, prepared by David Briand
Background
The Third Ward in Houston, Texas is one of six of the city's historic wards and, historically, a hub of African-American arts and culture. The neighborhood is the home of the Eldorado Ballroom, a music venue that featured performances from major African-American artists such as Count Basie and Ray Charles. Historically Black university Texas Southern University, founded in 1927 as the Houston Colored Junior College, is also located in the Third Ward.

Like so many other urban areas across the United States, in the latter half of the twentieth century, the Third Ward experienced an economic decline as accelerating deindustrialization led to a scarcity of manufacturing and industrialized labor jobs. In addition, the construction of Texas State Highway 288 isolated the neighborhood from the city's commercial center in Downtown Houston. Similar to the deleterious impact of the Cross Bronx Expressway on communities of color in the South Bronx in New York City[35] this infrastructural change undertaken to increase the flow of commercial interest into Downtown Houston caused the geographic displacement of the Third Ward from the city's economic center and further entrenched the segregation of the neighborhood. The effects of this displacement and lack of economic opportunity were such that, by the end of the twentieth century, parts of the Third Ward had experienced a rise in poverty, drugs, and violence. As recently as 2013, one neighborhood in the Third Ward was deemed one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the U.S.[36]

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[34] See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RgldE_JSH8

[35] Gonzalez, Evelyn Diaz. *The Bronx*. New York: Columbia UP, 2004. Print.

[36] See: http://www.neighborhoodscout.com/reports/19879437/#crime

Third Ward TX, is a documentary about Project Row House (PRH), an arts and urban revitalization initiative. When PRH began in 1993, the Third Ward was no longer a thriving community, but rather one marred by abandoned lots and deadly drug abuse. The neighborhood had been depleted of its people starting in the 1970s, when urban blight began to drive longtime residents away. The documentary begins with one resident recalling, "In my neighborhood, where I was raised, it looks like a bomb had been dropped down in there." Another described her neighborhood as "...nothing but filth all around in the streets."

While residing in the Third Ward in 1993, artist Rick Lowe was confronted by a resident of the Third Ward who told Lowe that his landscape paintings were not what the community needed. He recalls being told, "While your work hits on all the issues that are relevant to low-income communities, people in those communities already know what the issues are. We don't need people to come back and tell us what the issues are. We already know. We see it. We live it. If you're an artist and you're creative, why can't you create some kind of solution?" This conversation led Lowe and a group of fellow artists to purchase twenty-two of the neighborhood's historic but dilapidated row houses--shotgun-style, single-story houses that housed generations of African-American residents, in the Third Ward as well as in many African-American communities in the U.S. The team, with volunteer help from fellow Third Ward residents, refurbished the houses and began to convert them into art galleries featuring work by artists from within the community on the inside and outside of the houses. As construction progressed, more residents of the Third Ward observed the activity and began to volunteer their time and talents, turning the work into a community effort. Thus, Project Row Houses was born.

Since its establishment, Project Row Houses has grown beyond these initial properties and now includes properties encompassing five city blocks, creating an attraction not just for local residents but also generating interest from greater Houston. Galleries host rotations of different artists' work, some local and some from beyond Houston. Part of the growth of PRH includes the Young Mothers Program, spearheaded by Deborah Grotfeldt, which offers parenting classes and up to two years of subsidized housing in one of seven PRH refurbished row houses for single mothers who are enrolled in college. Other programs include a collaboration with Rice University to design and build affordable housing units in the Third Ward as well as the establishment of community markets, which feature a variety of local vendors selling their merchandise. As a result of the success of PRH, Rick Lowe was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship in 2014.

Impact

Project Row Houses is an example of how urban development and the arts can be used to foster community engagement and prevent violence in municipalities. In the context of racial discrimination and the ongoing economic, psycho-social and cultural legacies of slavery, coupled with the geographic barrier of the new highway, parts of the Third Ward experienced a downward spiral so that they were not longer able to sustain individual or collective life. PRH is

an effort to interrupt and reverse that spiral of structural violence inherent in segregated and neglected urban spaces, to animate the space of the neighborhood and enliven the imaginations of its residents with economic and cultural opportunities that change the way residents understand themselves, each other, and their community.

Violence remains an ongoing issue in the Third Ward, but one positive outcome of the creation of PRH is that the Third Ward is no longer defined by its social problems. Instead, through the combination of economic development, urban design, cultural work and the arts, PRH has created spaces for residents to interact in cultural activity, engage in commerce, and gather with each other. The spaces of the row houses further enliven the community by featuring the aesthetic beauty of the work of artists on the insides and outsides of the galleries.
The cycle of violence can be internalized in communities when they become defined by their social problems --violence, drug use, poverty-- by outsiders as well as residents. Residents can become alienated from the sense of power within them and the potential power within their community--the power of its imagination, creativity, and initiative. The interruption of the cycle of violence requires a restoration of capacities as individuals as well as in communities. By creating the spaces for interaction and collaboration, PRH was able to rebuild the trust in the community between the residents and to inject positivity back into the neighborhood. When the first row houses were being rebuilt, residents who volunteered in the refurbishments began to recognize that they already had capacities that would allow them to contribute, and play a role in the re-invigoration of their communities. They empowered themselves through community and through a sense of purpose, and this empowerment spread through their example. With this sense of purpose, dignity and agency could be restored in the community. Restoration of a sense of dignity is a prerequisite for people to solve their own problems, not only alone but together.

Part of the success of PRH is due to the fact that it is built on the culture of the residents of the Third Ward, rather than an imposition from outside forces. It took these celebrated historical houses and built on rhythms and textures of life from African-American community--oral communication, music, and children's games, for example. PRH would not have been as successful if outsiders rebuilt the houses; having the hands of the neighborhoods' residents in the construction gives people the connection to the space and to everyone else with whom they volunteered. In this way, people come into contact with each other and can make connections to rebuild the web of the community. This is cultural work through development -- rebuilding a community by affirming its culture and enabling the residents of the Third Ward to live together – nonviolently, creatively, and even joyfully.

Certain aspects of the work of PRH also address the systemic issues that lead to violence. The Young Mothers Program, with its support of mothers enrolled in college as well as parenting classes, contributes to the parental stability that can aid young families in emerging from poverty, provide alternatives to gangs and drugs, and create the stability and economic opportunity to prevent alienation from the community. The mothers involved in this program and their children become much less vulnerable to sexual violence and economic exploitation that accompany poverty and homelessness.

Municipalities can learn much from PRH and promote development for community spaces that preserve or express the cultural heritage of the residents so that the sense of identity of the

neighborhood is not lost. By investing in the people of the community, specifically people who in poverty and are vulnerable to structural and direct violence, municipalities (in collaboration with artists, foundations and urban planners) can ameliorate the structural causes of violence rather than only reacting to the symptoms through, for example, more policing. Municipalities can (1) relate to local cultures as resources and (2) build communities so people become agents of change, not clients to outside agencies. Municipalities can also be on the lookout for local leaders like Rick Lowe and invest in them and their capacities of construction--not just of buildings, but more importantly, of communities.

Artists, cultural workers, and other civil society actors can also take lessons from the success of PRH, especially the way that an initiative as simple as buying abandoned row houses and transforming them into spaces to display art can inspire the transformation of an entire neighborhood. Furthermore, just as PRH evolved from gallery spaces to include a housing program and public markets, among other initiatives, urban development projects can utilize the talents and energies of residents to evolve these projects to address issues and challenges faced by the neighborhood.[37]

3) **Three brief examples of youth development initiatives through the visual arts – in Cambodia, South Africa, and the United States**
In Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the **Reyum Institute for Arts and Culture** offered cultural opportunities to the young people of a city still reeling from the legacy of a genocide that took place two decades earlier. In addition to an exhibition space for works of art and local cultural expressions such as stitching styles and farming implements, Reyum offered an after-school art program for 200 children per year. The programs include learning traditional and contemporary Cambodian techniques in stained glass, large scale mural painting, portraits and illustrations. Young people were introduced to wood-carving, collage, installation art, printing techniques, drawing, and sculpture through cultural exchange workshops for commercial projects building income generating skills of participants.[38]

In Johannesburg, South Africa, **Artist Proof Studio** implements development strategies that reduce risks of violence by addressing poverty, inequality, and alienation in post-apartheid South Africa. The legacy of apartheid permeates the municipality of Johannesburg as whole communities still have scant resources and violence between the black and white community, as well as within the black community, both persist, despite the *de jure* end of racial segregation and discrimination. APS is a printmaking educational institution founded by two artists, Kim Berman and Nhlanhla Xaba, as an interruption to the patterns of violence among young adults where they can learn to do printmaking and create lithographs. Among other sources of support, the South African artist William Kentridge supports APS via income from the sale of his own works. Some students get on a career path to become teachers themselves through the apprentice program at APS, and some go through proficiency trainings to become skilled artists and get commissions for artistic work through the institution. APS is a communal space where people

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[37] For further reading regarding Project Row House: Kimmelman, Michael. "In Houston, Art Is Where the Home Is." *The New York Times*. 16 Dec. 2006. Web: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/17/arts/design/17kimm.html?pagewanted=all
[38] For more on the Reyum Institute for Arts and Culture, visit: http://www.reyum.org/

can come together and produce commerce via professional skills, development and physical artwork.[39]

In Boston, Massachusetts, USA, **Artists for Humanity** is one of the largest employers of young people. The organization hires youths as artists and designers during after school hours. According to their website, 83% of their youth employees are from low- to very low-income diverse families; about 54% live in the Boston neighborhoods most affected with violence. High-school students learn a variety of artistic skills and earn high school credits for the integrated arts education they receive while working at AFH. In 2014, the organization achieved a 100% graduation rate through the combination of experiential learning provided through arts employment, academic workshops, tutoring and an integrated arts/STEM curriculum. The students stay for four years to cultivate their skills, enabling them also to form connections and networks in a professional sphere.[40]

These initiatives create ways for young people to generate income by developing their artistic talents and skills to earn a living through the arts. In resource-constrained environments with limited employment opportunities for youth, these projects increase their capacities for professional life by learning a trade that they can use and market. Cities with resource constraints for youth employment can benefit from mentorship with skilled tradesmen or artists to alleviate poverty and offer youth productive activities, which can reduce risks of violence. They can cultivate an identity as an artist and give young people hope for the future in neighborhoods where that hope is scant. Municipalities are positioned to help support such youth initiatives by commissioning work of young program participants creating far reaching impact on poverty alleviation, violence reduction and income generation.

SECURITY

4) **Arts-informed dialogue in the Punjabi community of British Columbia.**
In British Columbia, Canada, Professor Michelle LeBaron works with community members to strengthen security through a project aimed at resilience and social inclusion. Four years ago, Professor LeBaron noticed that the Government of Canada in its new counter-terrorism strategy identified three distinct pillars – intelligence, security and resilience. The resilience aspect of the national policy has to do with assuring that communities are strong, and that they are aware of people who feel excluded. When someone experiences belonging, they are less vulnerable to violent extremist rhetoric. The policy goal involves increasing social cohesion and deepening partnerships with communities to prevent violent escalation either within or outside Canada. In the unthinkable but possible eventuality of a violent attack, this work would also contribute to the capacity to come together again in the aftermath.

Professor LeBaron, along with colleagues Dr. Karen Bhangoo Randhawa of the University of California, Berkeley and Professor Carrie MacLeod of the European Graduate School, was able to obtain research funding for a rather unusual project in the national security domain: arts-

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[39] For more on Artist Proof Studio, visit: http://www.artistproofstudio.co.za/

[40] For more on Artists for Humanity, visit: http://afhboston.org/

informed dialogue. She points out that one element which keeps the fabric of communities together – very important to fostering belonging and a sense of connection – is the arts. "Not only do the arts bring people together," she explains, "but people involved in the arts take license to express a range of views, including ideas that may be unpopular or outside shared narratives. By revealing a wide spectrum of perspectives, artists often play a constructive and important role in drawing attention to things that are not immediately apparent or widely understood."

The project's arts-based approach has catalyzed conversations about belonging, community coherence, violence and racism – all things having to do with inclusion and exclusion. Continuing work with Punjabi communities in British Columbia explores a spectrum of ideas about twin ties to countries of origin and adopted homes. Sometimes, when tensions flare in a homeland, a few people locally advocate destructive tactics. This advocacy is less persuasive to community members who experience robust inclusion in their adopted home. To learn more about these phenomena, Professor LeBaron organized focus groups and individual key informant interviews, and used a variety of arts-based approaches along with dialogue. Working collaboratively with Punjabis, she encountered a very strong sense of identity, affiliation, language and culture, as well as a very clear connection with the Punjab and strong opposition to the policies of the Indian government that continue to be prejudicial towards Punjabi language and culture.

"Punjabi people in British Columbia are extremely entrepreneurial and important contributors to our social and political life, historically and in the present day. They have encountered destructive racism for over a hundred years, from the *Komagata Maru* incident forward—and they have shown tremendous strength," Professor LeBaron asserts. "One of the participants was the target of a racist attack on campus that took place during our work together. This brought home to all of us the devastating effects racism continues to have, and how it undermines resilience."[41]

Concern about Canadian youths' vulnerability to violent narratives is very relevant today. The arts not only improve experiences of social cohesion, they provide a forum in which people can explore a wide spectrum of views in a safe context, without which youth can feel marginalized and turn toward less peaceful means of expression or—in a few cases—join extremist groups. "Through the arts, there is an opportunity to test ideas and express emotions of frustration, fear and anger that might otherwise be pushed underground," Professor LeBaron explains.[42]

5) **The Medicine Wheel Youth Program in South Boston, MA, USA**
Medicine Wheel, an arts organization in a neighborhood of Boston, has undertaken multiple projects that aim to improve the capacities of at-risk youth.[43] South Boston, an historically Irish-

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[41] Research @ Allard Law. *Enacting Resilience: Using the Arts to Explore Belonging and Inclusion.* The University of British Columbia. 18 Jan. 2016. Web: http://research.allard.ubc.ca/enacting-resilience/
[42] Ibid.
[43] For more on Medicine Wheel, visit: http://www.mwponline.org/

American neighborhood, is currently becoming increasingly gentrified, but in the 1970s, it exemplified urban race-based violence. In an attempt to integrate Boston's segregated schools, the municipality enacted a policy of forced busing that brought white children from South Boston into the schools of Roxbury, an historically Black neighborhood, and Black children from Roxbury into South Boston schools. Busing was met with violent protest, and the legacy of that racism and violence can be felt and seen in Boston's still segregated neighborhoods.

Medicine Wheel, an organization founded by artist Michael Dowling, creates opportunities for young people who have previously been incarcerated or on probation to avoid future contact with the criminal justice system. Dowling works with at-risk youth to build their personal capacities through engagement in arts initiatives that transform public spaces such as abandoned lots, and reclaim them for public art and community life. He refers to his work as "Art as Threshold," because these art projects can be a way of moving away from the revolving door of the criminal justice system, entering spaces of community and spiritual engagement. The process of transformation comes from the young adults' relationships with him and with each other, as they labor together to accomplish a goal and find dignity in working toward a public good. Not only are they building their own capabilities, they are physically rebuilding and beautifying their community by transforming spaces of urban blight into art.

This interruption of violent patterns in communities of at-risk youth not only gives them a safe space and something to occupy their time, but also gives them a sense of direction and community. Programs like these can be early interventions before further violence takes place, violence that could result in cycles of incarceration and alienation for the young people, as well as inflicting trauma on the community. Instead, under Michael Dowling's direction, they are earning artmaking, self-discipline and determination, as they collaborate with and rely on each other.

Another Medicine Wheel program pairs at-risk youth with police from the neighborhood's precinct. Together, police officers and young people create bronze sculptures of their hands, creating opportunities for the participants to realize each other's humanity. This shared experience is about building relationships between young people and police through the conversation that occurs when they are working together to do creative work. The conflict that exists between police and at-risk youth on the streets is left at the door, and this interaction can occur on neutral ground where the stereotypes and dehumanization of each other are undone. They are challenged and transformed as they work and talk together.

Patterns of violence exist between individuals as well as within individuals, and within communities as well as between communities. These kinds of art projects can touch these interconnected layers so that when alienation and anger exist within young people, especially young men, as a result of poverty and institutionalized racism and discrimination, relationships with the 'other' can be built around artmaking that allows them to gain a sense of efficacy. These artistic forums allow for work on internalized violence, one of the multilayered effects of working in the arts.

Municipalities can get young people and police involved in artmaking projects together. Working with at-risk youth can be an alternative to just jailing them, which would save money

by getting them involved in productive activities that heal and empower them. Municipalities can help kids not fall further into the criminal justice system, avoid going to prison, and give them a sense of connection, purpose, and efficacy where they have something to do other than be out on the street, vulnerable to drugs, guns and gangs.

6) **Art at Work (AAW), Portland, Maine, USA**

AAW is a national initiative, piloted with the city of Portland Maine, to improve municipal government through strategic art project engagements between artists, city departments, unions, elected officials and the community. Taking an assets-based approach, AAW leverages creative intelligence and talents of municipal employees, artists and community members to come up with better and more sustainable solutions to complex issues. Launched in 2007 by artist Marty Pottenger, the initiative includes artmaking workshops led with local artists (incorporating the media of poetry, collages, photographs, printmaking or music) within the city's departments. Utilizing creative intelligence and the processes of making art, AAW is able to inspire innovation, envision positive outcomes, increase community dialogue and foster a collaborative environment within department offices and with the community.[44]

One AAW project aimed to improve security at the municipal level regarding police-community relations. The Forest Cities Time project in 2010, organized a collaborative duet performance of two plays entitled "Radio Calls" with Portland police officers and "The Weeping City" with students of color from Portland High School. The Weeping City, is a production by Maine Inside Out that works with formerly incarcerated youth to give them new opportunities. Both performances touched themes of safety and community specifically on police and youth relationships. The collaborative process in the duet performance offered increased possibility of understanding and impact. The event concluded with a facilitated dialogue where participants discussed changes in police-community relations and the possibility of new security initiatives.

7) **Teens, Educators, Artists Media Makers (TEAM), Oakland, California**

In one of the most in-depth exploration of social circumstances, popular media representation, and public policies regarding urban juveniles through visual arts practice, Suzanne Lacy developed a complex 10-year series of projects in Oakland, California. Lacy, along with a host of collaborators operating under the acronym TEAM (Teens, Educators, Artists, Media Makers), produced large-scale projects including workshops and classes for youth, media intervention, and institutional program development that led to the formation of Oakland, California's first youth policy. One particular project, offered students (primarily of color) a space from which to speak to each other and broader audience; focus on active, creative listening; developed empathetic understanding among students and between them and the viewers of the work. The project entitled *The Roof is on* Fire began as a 15-class media literacy project, and evolved into an hour-long documentary performance that was broadcast by an NBC affiliate, local news and the national news network CNN. 220 teenagers gathered in 100 cars on a rooftop garage came together to talk openly, with no script. They addressed topics relevant to teens such as sex, violence and gender roles in front of an audience and cameras. Suzanne Lacy's work eludes categorization as visual art, performance art, film, or even education, public policy advocacy, or political intervention. In creating such macro events, Suzanne Lacy and her TEAM go beyond

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[44] For more on Art at Work, visit: http://www.artatwork.us/

influencing young people's lives by impacting public media that otherwise contributes to stigmatization of youth from high violence communities.[45]

COEXISTENCE AND RECONCILIATION

8) The Oral History Center, Cambridge, MA, USA
Prepared by Cynthia Cohen

Cambridge, Massachusetts enjoys an international reputation as the home of world-class institutions of higher education, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Fewer people, however, know that it is also home to diverse cultural communities, including African-Americans as well as immigrants from Portugal; the West Indies; South, East and Southeast Asia; as well as Central and South America. In 2015, over 65 languages are spoken in the Cambridge Public Schools, which translates its website into eleven languages: Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Portuguese, Somali, Korean, Japanese, Gujarati and Nepali.

In the 1970's, community life in next-door Boston was fraught with racial tensions, as the city complied with a court order to bus children out of their own neighborhoods in a failed attempt to achieve racial integration in the public schools. In 1979, a racially motivated shooting incident in the Boston public schools found an African-American football player severely wounded, and a series of murders left 12 Black women dead in Roxbury, the geographic center of the city's African-American community. During this same period, a series of fights broke out in the hallways of the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, ultimately leading to the murder of a Portuguese American boy in January 1980.

At that time, I personally was working as a music educator, storyteller and as an activist in the movement against violence against women. I had begun to establish a relationship with the Cambridge Arts Council, a municipal arts agency, for which I worked as a storyteller in nursery schools, older people's centers and city-wide festivals. In 1979, with support from a federally funded employment assistance program (CETA, the Comprehensive Education and Training Grant), the council had hired me to gather stories from the women of Cambridge's diverse communities, and I produced a small booklet, "From Hearing My Mother Talk: Stories of Cambridge Women." Based on relationships established through that project, the Council invited me to apply with them for funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Youth Programs for a project we called "The Cambridge Women's Oral History Project."

Through the Cambridge Women's Oral History Project (CWOHP), young women (12 – 18 years old) interviewed older women about choices they had made in their lives. The project was designed so that two young women of different cultural communities would interview two older women, one from each of their communities. Training to conduct oral history interviews focused on enhancing young people's capacities to listen with focused and respectful attention to people who are different from them, and especially to become aware of themselves as listeners and to add to their communicative repertoire a kind of listening that elicits the stories that people need

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[45] For more on "TEAM", see Suzanne Lacy's artist statement:
https://www.cla.purdue.edu/waaw/cohn/Artists/Lacystat.html

and wish to tell. An advisory group that consisted of artists, scholars, young people and older people and agencies that served them oversaw the project. Through the advisory board meetings, the trainings, the interviews, and feedback on drafts of a slide-show script, the project facilitated a great deal of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue. Through the project, young African-American and Portuguese women visited each other's homes, often for the first time, even though their neighborhoods were contiguous. The CWOHP produced a slide tape show, which was shown in many community settings, and an exhibit of photography and excerpts of narrative. The slide show was eventually translated into Portuguese, Spanish and Haitian Creole, and shown as the basis for discussion in organizations that serviced these linguistic communities in the city. All of these screenings and exhibits created more contexts for conversation within and between communities.

The Cambridge Women's Oral History Project laid the groundwork for three other projects that focused on women's stories (The Cambridge Women's Quilt Project, Common Threads and Stories in Fabric), followed by a major public school initiative called "Lifelines" that involved 6 middle school teachers in designing and conducting oral history projects on different topics in their classrooms, grades 5 – 8. By 1983, with the completion of The Cambridge Women's Quilt Project, the initiative spun off from the Cambridge Arts Council to form a non-profit, non-governmental organization, called simply The Oral History Center.

The Cambridge Women's Quilt Project was an especially vibrant and engaging project that generated a great deal of creativity and engagement. It was designed as an outgrowth of CWOHP, through which the project and arts council staff realized how important needlework traditions were to women of the city's various and diverse cultural communities. The idea behind the project was that women and girls would each depict a scene from their lives that they wished to record for history in 14" square fabric collages or "quilt patches"; these were then stitched together to form quilt tops, which were then layered with cotton batting and backing fabric and quilted. Much, but not all, of the stitching was done by hand.

When the project began, the organizers could not find a site in the city where all the participants would feel comfortable – in particular African-American parents would not let their girls attend sessions in the Portuguese community centers, and vice versa. The project began, therefore, in five venues in different neighborhoods. After several weeks, when the women and girls were stitching their individual patches, enough trust had been established between the participants and the artists and oral historian on staff so that women and girls were willing (and received permission) to attend quilting sessions in a common venue: a community room on the top floor of a centrally located senior citizen public apartment building. In that room, women and girls helped each other choose fabrics and stitch pieces, sharing stories and snacks as they worked. After their patches were completed, some of the project participants interviewed each other, and tapes were transcribed and edited so stories could be shared in a catalogue. During one quilting session, a singer-songwriter was hired to perform songs of women's lives; she later composed a ballad, in which the verses consisted of a poetic rendering of the stories behind the quilt patches. The melody was adapted from a traditional Portuguese lullaby The chorus lyrics are: *I'll hold the needle, you pull the thread/ We'll cut the pieces of green and blue and red//Hands young and lively, hands old and wise/stitching together/ A Patchwork of our Lives.* This song eventually became the audio track of a slide show documenting the process of making the quilts.

In the end, 52 patches were created by girls as young as seven years old and women as old as seventy-eight. They were stitched into two large quilt tops and displayed in branches of the local library as well as at the annual city arts festival. A diverse group of older women learned to re-tell all 52 stories and led "tours" when the quilts were displayed in library branches. Some of the women created follow-up projects, an exhibition of the work of skilled traditional and contemporary fabric artists called "Common Threads," and an additional project "Stories in Fabric" inspired by a visit from Chilean women activists who had stitched small tapestries, "arpilleras," that documented the lives of their children who had been disappeared by the Augusto Pinochet regime. The quilts and fabric tapestries have been shown at workshops throughout the US and Canada, in South America, the Middle East, and at the International Women's Forum in Nairobi, Kenya.

A friendship formed during the Stories in Fabric project between a Palestinian embroiderer and oral historian led to another project: "A Passion for Life: Stories and Folk Arts of Palestinian and Jewish Women." As the first intifadeh began in the Middle East, this proved to be an extremely challenging project – but one which did provide opportunities for members of these two diasporic communities to hear each other's narratives and appreciate each other's folk expressions.[46]

With new leadership in the 1990's, The Oral History Center turned its attention once more to violence in the Boston area – this time addressing an epidemic of gun violence afflicting young people in Boston. Young people were devastated by the drug- and gang-related deaths of their classmates and friends, and complained that they were expected to go on with their studies and their lives with no meaningful acknowledgement of the passing of their friends. Young people were hard pressed to imagine a more peaceful city, since they had never known a time when they were not in fear for their own safety. They created an installation of stories of their deceased friends and a series of caskets. This exhibition became the venue for mourning losses and sharing stories, conversations between younger and older neighbors who envisioned a better, less violent, more just future.

The Oral History Center existed for 15 years; its budget was raised each year from scratch. It survived on extensive volunteer labor, plus grants from local, state and federal arts and humanities funders, private foundations, and income from workshops. It contributed to the prevention of violence in a number of ways:
- Introducing to each other members of communities that had become alienated from each other in contexts where they could listen to each other's stories and create together based on shared interests and shared values
- Facilitating interactions and relationships between more mature and less mature members of communities
- Teaching listening skills

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[46] For further reading: Cohen, Cynthia E. "Removing the Dust from Our Hearts: A Search for Reconciliation in the Narratives of Palestinian and Jewish Women". *NWSA Journal* 6.2 (1994): 197–233.

- Responding to acts of violence in indirect ways that were appropriate to the context. (For instance, in response to the interracial violence in Cambridge, the Oral History Center created opportunities for people of adversarial communities to get to know each other. In response to the largely intra-racial youth violence in Boston's African-American community, the Center created opportunities for young people to mourn losses and to connect to older members of the community who could help them envision a less violent future.)

Lessons for municipalities from The Oral History Center:
- Identify artists and cultural workers who are building relationships with members of communities and find ways to support the extension of their work.
- Even small organizations that exist over a period of time are able to generate creative and responsive projects based on relationships of trust that are established in early projects.
- Even in contexts of racial tensions and violence, people are willing to spend time engaging creatively with people from adversary communities, if a framework is created that validates their stories and ~~their~~ cultures and offers time- and space-limited opportunities to interact with the others.
- People of different cultures and ages can grow to trust each other when they create something beautiful together, and when they see their work appreciated by others in the larger community.
- Bringing into relationship shared modes of expression – such as lullabies, needlework, crafts, work songs, etc. – allow people to both acknowledge commonalities and appreciate differences.
- Oral history projects can enlist artists working in various media to help community people shape their stories in ways that others can hear. For the work of facilitating relationships across difference, and other violence prevention activities such as the mourning of losses, the combination of oral history with the arts is more powerful and effective than either approach alone.

9) Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, Peru: Theatre and reconciliation

IN the aftermath of Peru's civil war, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was formed to assist the country in addressing the legacy of a period of terrible violence. A theatre company with a decades-long relationship with the various cultural communities of Peru created a partnership with the TRC, to work especially with members of indigenous communities to help them testify. This example is instructive because it illustrates how arts-based processes can help facilitate understanding between urban elites and peasant communities, whose members had been rural, but who were migrated into urban areas in large numbers.

Dr. Salomon Lerner Febres, the president of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation commission, offers a very brief background and analysis of the conflict. He writes that between 1980 and 2000,

> an armed conflict broke out within Peru, during which massive human rights violations and crimes against humanity were committed. This conflict was started by an armed Maoist organization… From the start of their violent campaign, the Shining Path resorted to terrorist methods and very soon gave over to indiscriminate attacks on the nation's

populace…Regrettably, state security forces soon entered in a competition of brutality with the revolutionary organizations, and from early on made abuse of the people a common practice.…More than 69,000 Peruvians were killed in this period, and, of these, 70 percent were rural Quechua speakers – that is to say, members of a group that for centuries had been marginalized in the official history. Therefore, this was a matter of people without a role of agency in the national drama…Their death and disappearance were thus easily digestible – because they didn't matter.

The cracks and divisions in Peruvian society….stood as an impediment to reconciliation – understood, by the Commission, as a reestablishing of the social contract among Peruvians…The listing of acts, the statistical calculation, was only a small part of the task. Just as important as the precise and objective examination of the facts was their reading and shaping – that is, a capture of their meaning in such a way as to convey a message to the country, and, especially, to the victims….[47]

Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani is a theater company that has engaged communities in Peru in addressing human rights and social issues for more than 4 decades. In the words of Roberto Gutierrez Varea, scholar and practitioner of peacebuilding performance, while many Peruvian theatre groups have actively engaged relevant social issues,

Yuyachkani stands out for the breadth and depth of its accomplishments. *Yuyachkani*, named after a Quechua word meaning "I think / I remember," is a theatre collective that actively stages social memory. Based in Lima, the group's makeup is representative of the major ethnic groups present in Peru. Most of them have been working together since 1971, creating a repertoire unparalleled in scope, quality, and longevity. In a country that has rewritten its history, burdened with the *disappearances* of entire cultural narratives, *Yuyachkani* became famous for productions that combined the political theatre aesthetics of Brecht and the anthropological theatre approaches of Augusto Boal and Eugenio Barba with rigorously researched adaptations of the *performative* forms of indigenous Peruvian culture: the dramatic dances, music, masks and costumes of its rituals and ceremonies...

The group reached a verbal agreement with the TRC to perform outreach work in the communities where public hearings were to be held.…For this purpose, the collective created two new works, adapted a third, developed a series of workshops, and prepared a number of site-specific social interventions and street art installations.[48]

The play *Rosa Cuchillo* tells the story of a mother who, after an intense search for her *disappeared* son, dies of sorrow. The actress who performs this work, Ana Correa, says that "her love for her son was such that even in death she continued her search through the Andean

[47] Excerpted from "Memory of Violence and Drama in Peru: The Experience of the Truth Commission in Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani" by Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres, delivered in Spanish at Brandeis University, December 1, 2011; translated by Tess Wheelwright. Available at http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/Lerner_Speech_Dec2011_EnglishTranslation.pdf

[48] From "Fire in the Memory: Theatre, Truth and Justice in Argentina and Peru," by Roberto Gutiérrez Varea, in Cohen, Cynthia, R. Varea, and P. Walker, eds., *Acting Together on the World Stage: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict, Volume I: Resistance and Reconciliation in Regions of Violence,* Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2011. P. 167

[cosmological] landscape, the 'World of Below' and the 'World of Above' until she reconnected with him." In this imagined scene, the mother embraces her son, experiencing a final good-bye that his disappearance denied her. Correa continues,

> Her return to our world…signifies the harmony of life and death through ritual and purification, and through that, a way to help people overcome fear, and begin to heal from *forgetfulness*…I set out to do an act of justice and to offer consolation to those who were going to undertake the painful task of telling their testimonies to the TRC. I never anticipated that this was going to open up, for me and for the public, a space for healing as well.[49]

In relation to another work, *Yuyachkani* actor Augusto Casafranca describes a moment when members of a community who had been victimized during the war responded with fear to small firecrackers that were used in a play. They started to flee the plaza, but returned to witness the rest of the play. At the play's conclusion, no one left. As a sign of completion, Casafranca offered one to a woman a flower that was part of the set, a gesture that prompted every adult and child to line up to receive a gift. Casafranca describes the moment:

> When I ran out of flowers, I gave out candles, and when I ran out of candles, I gave out dry leaves. The people received the leaves with the same passion, as if they were symbols. We started to hug each other. These are not things that we can understand rationally. It was a mutual reconciliation.[50]

Because of the theater company's work to prepare indigenous people to testify before the TRC – through workshops, candlelit rituals and street performances, as well as through composed works that were brought to marketplaces and plazas where people gathered in their everyday lives – the documentation produced by the TRC is more complete. Thousands of Peruvians achieved a measure of healing because of their engagement with *Yuyachkani*.

A consistent commitment to reciprocity between actor and citizen creates the ethical underpinning of *Yuyachkani's* productions and its on-going relationships with communities.

Lessons for municipalities:
Importantly for this study on municipalities, through performances in Lima before audiences of the urban elite, members of the European-descended Peruvian communities, the characters, stories and cosmologies of indigenous communities were presented in their fullness, bringing into the social imaginary the agency and dignity of the most marginalized. The aesthetic power of *Yuyachkani's* work encouraged those who had been silent bystanders to the devastation of indigenous communities to acknowledge the suffering of their fellow Peruvians and, in some cases, their own complicity in it.[51]

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[49] Ibid. p. 173

[50] *Acting Together on the World Stage: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict,* documentary film created by Cynthia Cohen and Allison Lund.

[51] The idea that people need to have rights to enjoy the cultural heritage of others (A/HRC?17/38 §79) and access to and have acknowledged their own cultural heritage as well as that of others is noted by the Special Rapporteur on

What is the take away for municipalities? We assume that in many parts of the world, municipalities are a combination of urban and rural peoples (rural peoples who moved closer to the cities). They may be Indigenous peoples who feel at home in very different cultural forms and sensibilities. There is a need, in situations of dehumanization, or invisibility, to prevent violence by making people visible to themselves and the other, and the arts can play a role in that if they are supported. Unlike other forms of intervention, the arts can do this because they get at the humanity that exists in all of us, a humanity that is not always visible across different strata of communities. Individual expression and community expression are common to all communities. The rights to that expression are protected by universal conventions.

For municipalities, this could also be applied to homeless or incarcerated people, who, in similar ways, become invisible, as does their suffering. The same strategies of bringing their stories to the public could be used to highlight both their plight and dignity. It is through engaging with cultural practices and artistic forms that they can appreciate and manifest their own dignity, first to themselves and then to the rest of their community.

10: Theatre of Witness, Northern Ireland

Prepared by Toni Shapiro-Phim

Theatre of Witness performances invite audiences to bear witness to stories of both suffering and compassion. Centered around dramas scripted from interviews with survivors of abuse, marginalization or political violence, as well as perpetrators of vicious aggression, the plays gain strength from the collaboration of people from all sides of a given conflict, who perform their own stories in Theatre of Witness productions. Goals of this approach to theater include the nurturing of safe environments in which to allow for self-reflection, accountability and perhaps forgiveness, and the building of platforms from which people can gain new insights and ideas for a different kind of future together. In residence in Northern Ireland from 2009 to 2014, Theatre of Witness' founder and director Teya Sepinuk, for example, developed the 2012 piece, *Release*, along with people implicated in or directly impacted by "The Troubles." *Release* is a drama in which Catholics and Protestants -- a former British soldier, former prisoners, a prison governor and a man who, as a child, had been caught in a car bomb -- explore the legacy of those years by telling their stories. The ensemble of actors did difficult emotional work, which allowed them to acknowledge and empathize with each other's suffering, creating the conditions for them to perform together on stage. Audiences – mostly people who share the same history as the actors -- were invited into a space of acknowledgement, empathy with the suffering on all sides, and of the possibility of working toward relationships of trust.

11. PeaceWorks' *Hidden Fire,* Gujarat, India

PeaceWorks, a volunteer cross-caste initiative of India's Seagull Foundation for the Arts presented the play *Hidden Fires,* which addresses Hindu-Muslim relationships in the aftermath of the 2002 Gujarat massacres. The play, written by a Hindu playwright, was performed by Hindu actors who, in one scene, tell and embody the stories of Muslim people victimized during the riots, essentially holding both identities in one body. In another scene, the actors perform a monologue of a Hindu rioter, who easily describes his brutal acts but is later targeted and killed.

Cultural Rights in A/HRC/68/296 §2 and §3. She notes that such access contributes to critical thinking and an understanding of the realities and perspectives of others, and fosters mutual understanding.

Through these and other theatrical turns, the audience is invited to acknowledge the harms committed, the role of the government, media, and police in creating the conditions that gave rise to the atrocities, and to empathize with the suffering on all sides. In the last scene of the performance, the lights come up on shrouded bodies located around the theatre such that audience members would need to step over the "bodies" in order to leave. On many occasions, audience members remained seated for 20 minutes or longer, unable to show disrespect by walking over the shrouded figures.[52]

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

12. Chandraguptha Thenuwara, Colombo, Sri Lanka: Artistic freedom and government repression
Prepared by Nilanjana Premaratna
Sri Lanka emerged from nearly three decades of civil war in 2009. The key conflict is between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Ethnic grievances leading to the violent turn of the conflict and the undeniable ethno-politicisation of conflict parties continue to frame the Sri Lankan conflict as an ethnic conflict.

The Sri Lankan conflict went through several phases. The starting point of open violence is traced back to 1983, when an anti-Tamil pogrom was launched after the LTTE killed 13 government Army soldiers. The armed violence continued from then on, at different levels of intensity. The government and the LTTE signed a cease-fire agreement facilitated by Norway in 2002. Despite several talks, the process deteriorated due to the absence of a ground level movement for peace and a sincere commitment to peace by the political parties. By 2006, the conflict was back in the open. Following a last attempt at resuming talks in 2007, the Sri Lankan government officially withdrew from the cease-fire agreement in January 2008. The end of Sri Lankan civil war came through a carefully orchestrated military defeat of the LTTE by the government. The lead up to the final stage saw unforeseen levels of militarisation within the country. An extensive cultural campaign rallied popular support for war and significantly increased recruitments. The LTTE was militarily defeated on May 19, 2009. State troops found its leader Velupillei Prabhakaran dead in the attack and the government firmly re-established its authority over the former LTTE controlled areas. A victor's peace emerging from the elimination of its adversary reigns in Sri Lanka at the moment.[53]

The military defeat heavily relied on popular support from the citizens. Establishing Sinhala-Buddhist supremacy was a key point of mobilising for war. The government at the time represented itself as the symbolic protector of these ideals and ideology. Thus, any voices that expressed dissent to these ideals, or questioned the government that promoted and protected this ideology, were quickly suppressed or silenced. All forms of civil resistance, dissent or voices for peace were quickly labelled as being driven by 'western', 'capitalist' values and therefore being

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[52] Margraff, R., "Hidden Fires: Peaceworks' invocation as Žižekian response to the Gujarat massacres of 2002," in *Acting Together on the World Stage, Volume I.*

[53] For a further discussion, please see "The Complex Relationship between Peacebuilding and Terrorism Approaches: Towards Post-Terrorism and a Post-Liberal Peace?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 1 (2011); Holt, *Aid, Peacebuilding and the Resurgence of War: Buying Time in Sri Lanka.*

unpatriotic and traitorous. Tactics for civilian repression in the interest of the state and/or politicians' actions often took the form of smear campaigns, intimidation, attack, abduction, persecution and killings.[54] he government is also accused of using paramilitary groups to carry out these tasks when necessary.[55]A context of fear and silence pervaded, with not many daring to challenge the government. The few activists, artists, intellectuals or journalists who did, faced threats, disappeared or were forced to migrate. Statistics further testify to this situation: the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances consistently ranks Sri Lanka among the countries with the highest numbers of disappearances in the world.[56] Disappearances, arbitrary arrest and detention, assassinations and reports of similar activities come from all the groups.[57]

Today, Sri Lanka is a case in point for an enforced peace with its many ensuing complexities. In the absence of a mainstream reconciliation or a conflict transformation process, legacies of extensive militarisation are strongly felt within the island. The post-war take on peacebuilding focuses on reconstruction and development, and resembles what Goodhand calls a framework of 'stabilisation and power-building'.[58] Local and international peacebuilding beyond these delimitations were treated with suspicion and increasingly came under the scrutiny of the Ministry of Defence.[59] Suppression of dissent continued well into the post-war period, somewhat shifting only with the regime change in early 2015. Despite the recent political shift in the country, the root causes that led to or grievances that result from nearly three decades of war are still very much present. '[C]redible investigations' into the disappearances and crimes, or an 'effort to prosecute alleged violators' is yet to take place in a satisfactory manner.[60] Working for conflict transformation in Sri Lanka within this context requires navigating complex political sensitivities. It calls for unique, resilient peacebuilding strategies. With the inherent flexibility and openness for interpretation, art and artists become relevant here.

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[54] See Amnesty International., *Sri Lanka: Reconciliation at a Crossroads: Continuing Impunity, Arbitrary Detentions, Torture and Enforced Disappearances*; Darusman, Ratner, and Sooka, *Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka* for a further discussion of these conditions. The assassination of Lasantha Wickramathunga (Editor-Sunday Leader), the disappearance of Pradeep Ekneligoda (Political writer and cartoonist), the attack and fleeing of Upali Tennakoon (Editor - Rivira) and the persecution of Frederica Jansz (Editor - Sunday Leader) are a few specific examples of curtailing dissent.

[55] DeVotta, "Sri Lanka: From Turmoil to Dynasty," 133; and see Darusman, Ratner, and Sooka, *Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka,* 55.

[56] See Human Rights Watch., *Recurring Nightmare : State Responsibility for "Disappearances" and Abductions in Sri Lanka,* (Human Rights Watch, March 6, 2008) Accessed May 3, 2011.
http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/srilanka0308web.pdf; Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, "Civil and Political Rights, including the questions of: Disappearances and Summary Executions: Question of Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances," Commission on Human Rights, United Nations, January 18, 2002. http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/6623289D5FA5F96B85256D49004EFB07

[57] Amnesty International., *Sri Lanka: Reconciliation at a Crossroads: Continuing Impunity, Arbitrary Detentions, Torture and Enforced Disappearances,* 4; DeVotta, "Sri Lanka: From Turmoil to Dynasty," 133.

[58] Jonathan Goodhand, "Stabilising a Victor's Peace? Humanitarian Action and Reconstruction in Eastern Sri Lanka," *Disasters* 34, no. s3 (2010): 351.

[59] Kristine Holund and Camilla Orjuela, "Hybrid Peace Governance and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka," *Global Governance* 18, no. 1 (2012)

[60] Amnesty International, *Sri Lanka: Reconciliation at a Crossroads: Continuing Impunity, Arbitrary Detentions, Torture and Enforced Disappearances*.

Despite the repression, a handful of artists risk finding creative ways to engage with the conflict: Chandraguptha Thenuwara is an example. He uses painting, sculpture and installations to generate discussion on the conflict, violence and their insidious encroachment of the civil spaces. Thenuwara's focus is on the urban landscape. While the actual shelling and fight over land took place in other parts of the country, the topography of the conflict invariably shaped the capital, Colombo. The different phases of the conflict characterised Colombo in its own ways. Thenuwara focuses on these ordinary, seemingly innocuous elements of the urban landscape at different intervals and through his art, reveals these for the instruments of violence they are. His work draws attention to these encroachments upon civil life in the city and creates a discussion on the militarisation and violence that takes place in the country.

Thenuwara introduced 'Barrelism' in late 1990's, when the landscapes of Colombo, Jaffna and some other central cities of Sri Lanka were characterized by numerous checkpoints. Camouflaged, sand-filled barrels and tires were the primary visual sign of these check points. They had become just another accepted part of everyday life in Colombo. These barrels, commonly regarded as ugly impediments to everyday activities, served as the basis of Thenuwara's artwork at the time. The barrels initiated discussion on civil rights, freedom and state violence. They were no longer devoid of meaning; they were made into highly visible symbols of state power and militarisation. The artistic approach embraced and encouraged multiple interpretations and urged people to look beyond the normalised veneer to see the barrels as constant reminders of state violence, reminders of oppression, fear and exclusion.

As a student at the time, I was initially confused in seeing barrels being used as exhibits: barrels were everywhere; they were commonplace. I could no longer remember or imagine a Colombo without barrels. These were unavoidable nuisances I had come to accept as permanent fixtures of Colombo landscape and they simply blended into everything else. Art was supposed to be something special, something extraordinary: something that stands out. I thought the exhibition did not really meet my expectations. However, the barrels started making their presence known the following day. The checkpoints that blended in and the barbwire that adorned the walls took new meaning and stood out for me. I started noticing how much the landscape has changed, and how often I encounter signs of violence and control in my everyday life. I started noticing how the fear and aggression had become a daily routine. And I started paying more attention to what transpires at the checkpoints. I saw the tension some carry, and the fear and anxiety when someone realises that they do not have their identification with them. I started noticing how casually someone from the bus gets pulled over while the others are let go; and how no one speaks up, how no one asks for a reason. How well we all obey. How tired and resigned the people at the checkpoints look. The simple juxtaposition of a commonplace, ugly element with that of an art gallery opened up multiple interpretations that pushed me to question and contemplate what I took for granted. It highlighted the conflict, rendering it impossible for me to forget the violence. Thus, Thenuwara's work on barrel-ism confronts the signs of violence found scattered within the urban landscape and invites his audience to do the same. It pushes people out of apathy and suppression to feel the pain and to express.

Thenuwara's work in the post-war period is also significant. The exhibition 'Beautification' comes at a critical period, when there was almost no space for dissent. As described earlier, there

was little freedom to critique or challenge the government decisions during the post-war period. Dissent in all forms was labelled 'unpatriotic' and consequently suppressed. Artists, journalists and social workers pursuing democracy and human rights received anonymous threats. Some left the country seeking political asylum while others simply disappeared. Military intrusion and encroachment of private spaces of civil life continued well into the post-war phase, along with a pervading sense of fear. 'Beautification' emerges within this background in 2013 and questions the costs at which the 'urban beautification' projects of are carried out: a theme that runs through almost all the post-war reconstruction work undertaken by the former regime and has special relevance to the city of Colombo. The government undertook a major urban beautification project within Colombo that changed the landscape of the city in significant ways, and in the process, forcibly initiated a process of forgetting and erasing the violent history of the city. Urban Development was brought under the Ministry of Defence and the same military precision, resources and tactics were deployed to create a cleaner, organised, post-conflict Colombo. The city was cleared of its beggars, peddlers and stray dogs. New walkways were built along with parks and walking tracks. Undesirable houses and buildings – those that have characterised Colombo and are part of the city's history – were pulled down to make space for more profitable and pleasing-to-the eye enterprises. Memories of conflict were erased to detach the city from the violence upon which it stands. The scattered protests and resistance were quickly suppressed.

Thenuwara's work in 'Beautification' draws from elements used in this beautification project such as cement paving blocks and barbed wire. Several pieces in the exhibition based on paving bricks come together to form the floor on which the audience walks on. These bricks on one hand highlight the state violence inflicted within the city of Colombo in the name of 'beautification of the city', and on the other hand, highlight the unaddressed legacies of conflict upon which the city beautification was carried on.

I was not able to personally see the exhibition: however, the portrayal of these paving blocks with the impression of bones, barb wire and other remnants of war embedded in them is rather apt. The Colombo beautification project is carried out over the bones of civilians who died in the conflict, the efforts of those who fought for the war and the struggles of those who were evicted from their homes in the process. A statute of the Lady of Justice is broken into pieces which are scattered over the gallery floor. Through this, Thenuwara urges us to witness and confront the fact that the structured orderliness of the newly built walking paths emerges from the ruins of justice and deaths of countless people. Other works present remnants of the conflict such as camouflage, bits and pieces of military uniforms, artillery and scattered human pieces, making a direct connection with the conflict. These draw the audience into a dialogue that connects the urban violence with the larger conflict in the country. Thus, Thenuwara utilises the relatively safe and ignored exhibition space to voice a sharp political critique on state violence and suppression. As the artist himself observes, "[t]he exhibition space is still an untouched area by the politicians… they think it's not an active space… that a gallery space is where you only show the beautiful things. I am using that space to show my work with these messages."[13] The exhibition thus, highlights silenced issues and creates a dialogue on violence inflicted through state, as it is felt within the urban scape. The exhibition, through its chosen material and themes, becomes a space that challenges the pervading silence and subjugation in the post-conflict phase

of Sri Lanka. It stands out as a project that lays bear the questionable ethos of the urban beautification of Colombo, layered on top of violence, forced eviction and exclusion.[61]

TRAUMA HEALING

13: Kolkata Sanved, Kolkatta, India. Healing the trauma of sex trafficking through dance.
Excerpted and adapted from a paper by Sydney Skov

The red light district Sonagachi in Kolkata, India is one of the largest in Asia, despite the fact that prostitution is illegal in the country. While many of the thousands of sex workers in Sonagachi were not trafficked into prostitution, sex trafficking and its accompanying violence against women remains an issue in the city. Kolkata Sanved is an organization that combines Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) and traditional Indian forms of dance "as an alternative approach to counselling, psychosocial rehabilitation, expression, and empowerment for victims of human trafficking and violence." It serves to prevent further victimization, at least for the women directly involved.

Founder Sohini Chakraborty, a dancer, choreographer, and sociologist, lived for six years in this community of victims in a shelter home to develop the model that became Kolkata Sanved. The work of the organization is based on the idea that through dance, victims of sex trafficking and violence can re-engage their bodies as sources of pleasure and expression to work through this trauma. Dance is applicable to this kind of healing because while the injury of sex trafficking is so embodied, the core of dance is movement, and it engages the body in a way that is disciplined, pleasing, and respectful. People who have been physically violated can regain their bodies and expression of their bodies through movement.

By incorporating traditional Indian dance into DMT, Kolkata Sanved is able to resonate highly with its students. This can be a successful strategy of healing through dance because of the way that aesthetics write themselves onto us, especially the art forms we hear and know early on. Traditional Indian dance in this context offers the dancers in Kolkata Sanved the connection to one's people and a deep expression of one's cultural self. This is a unique aspect of the arts.

As students of Kolkata Sanved move through the two-year training program to become DMT instructors, they develop the capacities to become workshop leaders and facilitators for new groups of women. This professional capacity-building enables them to earn livelihoods as facilitators, artists, and activists, and also creates networks of women trained in this profession who can teach it to others.[62]

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[61] Notes: **https://smritidaniel.wordpress.com/2013/08/15/chandraguptha-thenuwara-space-to-protes**t
[62] For more on Kolkata Sanved, visit: http://www.kolkatasanved.org/