

Strengthening Work at the Nexus of Arts, Culture and Peacebuilding

A Working Session Convened by

Search for Common Ground

The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University

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Executive Summary

On November 8, 2011, Search for Common Ground, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University and the Alliance for Peacebuilding convened a gathering at the United States Institute of Peace to explore how work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding could be strengthened. Seventeen people attended with ties to academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and national and international organizations in both the arts/culture and peace sectors. This report summarizes the conversation and highlights action steps for strengthening work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding.

Introduction

Arts-based approaches to the transformation of conflict in recent years have gained increased attention and prominence from a range of disciplines. There are ever increasing numbers of individuals and civil society organizations engaging the arts for the positive transformation of societal conflict.

Individual artists, cultural groups and peacebuilders working in zones of violent conflict have engaged the arts in peacebuilding for centuries. Search for Common Ground, the largest peacebuilding organization in the world, frequently engages the arts in many of its programs. These methods include participatory theatre, as well as comic books, radio and television.

Artists in every medium – visual arts, theatre, music, dance, literary arts, film, etc. – are supporting communities in campaigns of non-violent resistance to abuses of power, and creating opportunities for building bridges across differences, addressing legacies of past violence, and imagining a new future. In the past decade, such arts-based approaches to the transformation of conflict have begun to gain critical attention from scholars and policy-makers from a range of disciplines. The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University, for example, recently completed a major research project into the contributions of theatre and ritual to conflict transformation, and the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University teaches courses focusing on the nexus of arts and building peace.

Intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) International Theatre Institute, government agencies, such as the U.S. Department of State, philanthropic organizations and academic programs have played important roles in connecting the range of actors conducting work at this nexus (for more elaboration on this trend, see the Concept Note which formed the basis for these initial discussions in Appendix One).

Yet despite these recent positive developments, very few peacebuilding or arts initiatives are resourced at a level that maximizes the potential impact of the initiative and sustains long-term relationships. There are few resources to support the documentation, knowledge-generation, ethical inquiry and training that would strengthen work in this area. In light of these realities, Search for Common Ground, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University and the Alliance for Peacebuilding

convened¹ seventeen leaders working at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding on November 8th at the United States Institute of Peace (for more on the attendees, see Appendix Two) in order to collectively and strategically envision the best steps forward² for strengthening work in arts, culture and peace.³ This report summarizes the conversation and highlights action steps for strengthened work in the nexus of arts, culture and peace. It first examines the context in which the conversation took place, key assumptions underpinning the conversation, discussion topics, and finally a range of action-steps meant to support strengthened work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace.

It should be noted, however, that this conversation took place primarily amongst U.S.-based participants and did not include funders of such work. While it will be critical to expand the conversation to include funders and participants from the Global South as the conversation moves forward, it was not logistically possible to do so for the initial conversation. *The Conveners are determined to expand the conversation in 2012.*

Background on Arts, Culture and Peacebuilding

The conversation was based on four key assumptions. First, art and cultural work can be crafted to make unique and significant contributions to peacebuilding, conflict transformation, community development and social justice. It is beyond the scope of the report to explore these contributions in-depth.⁴

Second, the nexus of peacebuilding and arts/culture is growing and is poised to gain legitimacy as an effective mechanism of social change. Academic programs in peace and conflict resolution increasingly incorporate arts and cultural perspectives in their curricula. The Conveners hypothesize that, as a result, some graduates are better prepared to engage the arts and culture in peacebuilding interventions than others. There is, therefore, a need to not only support ‘mature’ arts-based peacebuilding interventions, but also to build field-wide capacities in such work. Government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, academic programs, and philanthropic organizations are also increasingly making and facilitating connections between arts/culture and peacebuilding.

Third, there are already many arts and peacebuilding initiatives in zones of violent conflict and oppression, and that there is a role for the international community to play in supporting and strengthening such work. Much of this work is impressive for its aesthetic quality and its socio-political efficacy. Overall, however, the quality of the work varies greatly and on some occasions even exacerbates violence. Initiatives at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding could be strengthened

¹ With assistance from Jessica Berns and Kimberly King.

² In support of this meeting, Brandeis University implemented a survey through the Peace and Collaborative Development Network on perceptions of the state-of-the-art of the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding. The results of this survey are attached in Appendix Three.

³ Attendees were selected in order to enhance the vibrancy and range of this initial conversation. The Conveners intend to expand this sampling over the next year.

⁴ Numerous scholars and practitioners have highlighted both the artistic nature of peacebuilding itself (see John Paul Ledearch’s *The Moral Imagination*), as well as the efficacy of arts and culture in contributing to peace and social justice (see Cynthia Cohen et al’s *Acting Together on the World Stage* series).

by processes and structures generally associated with field-building such as, opportunities to share learning and best practices; articulation of shared standards and understandings of excellence and effectiveness; strengthened documentation and increased critical self-reflection; and, mechanisms to protect those who put themselves at risk doing such work.

Finally, the Conveners assume that very few initiatives at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding are resourced at a level that is sustainable, conducive to the building of long-term relationships nor supportive of practitioners identifying and engaging in best practices.

Cumulatively, these four assumptions provide a snapshot of the state-of-the-*art*, as well as indicate a range of approaches which may be adopted for field-building and strengthening work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding.

In preparation for the November gathering, Brandeis University conducted a survey of educators, practitioners, policy-makers and funders interested in the arts/peacebuilding nexus. Responses indicated strong support for the allocation of resources to support cultural work and arts-based approaches to conflict transformation. Respondents prioritized the following resources: funding; technical assistance to strengthen organizations; training opportunities in conflict regions; opportunities for international exchange; cultivation of leaders; and gatherings to facilitate exchange. The preliminary report can be found in Appendix 3.

The Discussion

Is the Nexus a 'Field'?

One of the first issues to be raised in the discussion was whether or not work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding could indeed be considered a 'field.' Naming the nexus a 'field' does provide a degree of legitimacy to that type of work, as one discussant from a conflict zone pointed out; it also provides greater access to a range of resources. Naming the nexus a field, on the other hand, results in a delineation of those types of work which may include some forms of work while excluding others. Generally, however, the sense was that the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding does indeed constitute a field.

Mapping the Field

Arts-based approaches to conflict transformation are very diverse, and one of the challenges in documentation is to embrace the diffuse nature of these practices. Towards this end, discussants suggested a mapping of the 'field': who, individually and institutionally, is doing this type of work? What types of work do arts-based approaches to conflict transformation include? How open are other civil society organizations, including funders, to such approaches? Mapping the field may also open further space for practitioner-academic collaboration, addressed in the following section, as well as better inform students of the possibilities of seeking employment in this field.

It is also important to understand what is meant by work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace. No single definition of work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace is currently acceptable because these practices are so diffuse in both content and the underlying approaches and philosophies. It is therefore essential to understand how work at this nexus is manifested, which professional disciplines have informed that practice, and to what effects. In practice, this might appear as collaborative research opportunities, such as the practitioner-academic collaborative which produced *Acting Together*⁵, or a mentorship system for up and coming practitioners facilitated through a global network of artist-peacebuilders. This might also manifest itself as an investigation into the underlying philosophies, perspectives and worldviews which inform work in this area—a mapping of philosophies.

Documenting Work

Throughout the discussion, the importance of documenting successful arts-based socially transformative initiatives was stressed. Documentation was seen as essential both for enhancing effectiveness and for strengthening the legitimacy of arts-based approaches (i.e., to move away from intuitive decisions to articulation of theories of change and documentation of how particular approaches produce changes at individual, relational, communal and inter-communal levels.) The work of the *Acting Together* project at Brandeis University specifically was hailed as a milestone in this direction, but participants recognized that more needs to be done. Examples of such work include the rigorous assessment of the strengths and limitations of various approaches, as well as investigation of the underlying theories of change in such approaches.

It was suggested that documentation of work taking place within the context of peacebuilding organizations could be conducted either as external research during and after project implementation and/or by strengthened rigor of reflection on the part of implementers during planning, monitoring and evaluation stages. Work undertaken outside of this context—for instance by artist-based and community-based artists or by cultural workers engaging with traditional expressive forms—may need to be documented in other ways, such as through partnerships with universities and other research organizations.

In many instances, artists are doing excellent work that contributes to more just and less violent communities and to enhanced capacities that are required for living peacefully in pluralistic societies – but they remain outside of peacebuilding discourses, organizations, funding streams and documentation requirements. If the field is to benefit from their experience, resources will need to be invested in the documentation of their practice, both by ‘learning partners’ and by artists themselves. As with any reflection/documentation process, the greatest learning emerges from processes in which practitioners are safe enough to reflect on the limitations and dilemmas as well as the successes of their work.

⁵ For more, see Cynthia Cohen, Roberto Gutiérrez Varea, Polly Walker [eds.], *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict, Volume I: Resistance and Reconciliation in Regions of Violence* (New York: New Village Press, 2011).

Research and Dissemination

There are several international networks which might be leveraged for strengthening arts-based approaches to conflict transformation. Perhaps foremost among these is the Art and Peace Commission of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA). IPRA could facilitate greater connection between scholars and a range of practitioners of cultural and arts-based approaches to conflict transformation. In line with the larger trend in peacebuilding of enhancing the evidence base for documentation, the Art and Peace Commission could call for conference presentations that describe, analyze and critique the theories of change informing such approaches.

Just as critical as the rigorous documentation of and/or research on of arts-based approaches to peacebuilding is strategic dissemination of case studies, analyses and findings. The Alliance for Peacebuilding, as the premier peacebuilding network organization, in conjunction with the Peace and Collaborative Development Network⁶, with over 22,000 members, are well poised to distribute such work. The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University also publishes an e-newsletter to reaches international audiences, and Theatre Without Borders maintains a Theatre and Peacebuilding portal on their website. The Learning Portal for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Peacebuilding⁷, an online community of practice and comprehensive resource, will also act as a repository of knowledge for arts and cultural-based peacebuilding work.

Creating a Global Network

There are artists throughout the world who are actively working to transform conflict in their communities, and much of this work could be strengthened by a global network of resources. Discussants suggested that a global network of sorts is needed, in the long-term, to sustain work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding. Such a network would further legitimize the field, and bring wider perspectives and worldviews into conversations with each other. It is important to note here that this action-point developed from an observation that those convened at the meeting were primarily representatives of US-based institutions and/or Global North institutions, and that the discussion should involve a greater diversity of actors to ensure that future actions will take into account the needs of communities and organizations from other parts of the world, specifically the Global South.

While still very much in the phase of conception, this network would need to be accessible to most, and therefore hosted (either with regional horizontal hubs or central hierarchy) in a location with easy visa access. A global network would ultimately strengthen work in the aforementioned key issues (i.e. mainstreaming arts, documenting work, research and dissemination) and, critically, provide a network of support and mentorship for work in this area.

⁶ For more see <http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/>.

⁷ For more see <http://www.dmeformpeace.org/>.

Emerging Vision

Collectively, the aforementioned elements constitute a vision for an infrastructure that would support the maturation of work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding. Central to the vision are three elements: a global network of scholars and practitioners in both the art and peacebuilding working in this field, an annual global symposium other gathering for people working in this nexus, as well as regular regional gatherings to further support work at this nexus, exchange knowledge, offer support, establish mentorship opportunities, etc.

A global network of artist-peacebuilders will enable individuals and organizations conducting work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace to share best and emerging practices and results, as well as collaboratively address challenges that confront the field as a whole. It will be critical for such a network to fulfill the functions outlined above, specifically documentation of work, research, and strategic dissemination of results. The network might, for example, encourage its academic-practitioner members to investigate specific aspects of work at this nexus. It might also develop a framework for monitoring artist-based work at this nexus. This type of work may be initiated, for example, at regional hubs and then shared with the community at the global symposium.

Despite this vision, however, more concrete steps must be taken towards the establishment of such a network. Critical amongst these is the need for a secretariat, either at the global level or distributed throughout regional secretariats, and the funding necessary to support that function. An essential task of this network would be to link local groups to regional secretariats, which are then connected globally in either a vertical or horizontal power-relationship.

Complementing the artist-peacebuilder network will be a yearly global conference for people working in this nexus to share their latest works and news, as well as network and revitalize each other's spirits through communion. The conference will also provide space for reflection and sharing of learning amongst peers. Coupled with the conference might also be workshops and trainings, such as monitoring and evaluation frameworks for artist-based works, or workshops relating to the design and implementation of a specific form of work such as televised drama or community-based participatory theatre.

It should be reiterated that this conversation reflected primarily Global North and non-conflict embedded perspectives. The vision laid out in this document is therefore a reflection of those perspectives and in no way should be seen as fully comprehensive nor 'laid in stone.' We, the Conveners, welcome your thoughts and suggestions on how work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace can be further strengthened, as well as your reflections on the preliminary findings of the survey in Appendix 3.

Next Steps

We, the Conveners of this working session, suggest that collaboration must take center stage in efforts to further strengthen work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding. This working session was an excellent start, but there is still much to be done.

The following points are put forth, not to achieve specific pre-determined outcomes, but rather to encourage creative and strategic thinking by the community, to build energy and momentum for further work in arts-based approaches to peacebuilding, as well as its mainstreaming and legitimization. Some include specific tasks participants have committed themselves to, while others are humble suggestions on how the field may be strengthened. The Conveners respectfully urge you, the reader, to engage yourself with these interconnected initiatives by either contacting the individual responsible for the effort directly, or by contacting the Conveners.

Convenings

- Continue the present conversation with colleagues from other parts of the world, possibly in conjunction with the 2012 IPRA Arts and Peace Commission Conference in Japan;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Cynthia Cohen or Jonathan White.

- Continue the present conversation with funders to elicit their individual and organizational perspectives on funding work at the nexus of arts, culture and peace;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Cynthia Cohen or Jonathan White.

- Formation of an “Arts and Conflict Interest Group” at the Alliance for Peacebuilding to encourage the continued engagement with the arts in peace work, and act as a hub for the dissemination of arts-based work documentation;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Jonathan White.

Education, Training and Public Awareness

- Utilize the *Acting Together* project to mobilize communities, both professional and civic, into conversation on the role of arts in building peace;

This is an ongoing project of Cynthia Cohen and Brandeis University, Theatre Without Borders, ReCAST, Inc. and others. For information about the Acting Together project, please see the Acting Together website at <http://www.actingtogether.org/>.

To acquire the *Acting Together* anthology, documentary and toolkit, please contact New Village Press at <http://www.newvillagepress.net/>.

For more information on training, contact one of the following: David Diamond at Theatre Without Borders, Cynthia Cohen at Brandeis University, Polly Walker at Juniata College, or Mary Ann Hunter at the University of Tasmania.

- The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University will continue to use their e-newsletter as a distribution mechanism for the latest news, events and resources at this nexus.

To be added to the e-newsletter distribution list or suggest an article, please email, please contact Naoe Suzuki.

- Theatre without Borders is an informal, volunteer, virtual community that shares information and builds connections between individuals and institutions interested in international theatre exchange. This work will continue.

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact David Diamond.

- Gather and centralize syllabi of arts and peacebuilding courses in US colleges and universities;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Mame Hunt.

- The International Theatre Institute and the UNESCO Chair in Theatre and Cultures of Civilizations of the International Theatre Institute (UNESCO Chair – ITI) will be informed of key points of this analysis and discussion, with the ultimate aim of involving UNESCO and the International Theatre Institute in this work to globally strengthen the nexus of arts, culture and peace;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Jeffrey Sichel.

Documentation and Evaluation

- Evaluate arts-based social change projects with rigor and distribute the findings amongst the community;

This is an ongoing effort of Search for Common Ground, particularly regarding its work in media for social change, employing mixed research methods. To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Jonathan White.

- The Learning Portal for DM&E for Peacebuilding (<http://www.dmeformpeace.org>) will act as a repository for knowledge concerning the design, monitoring and evaluation of arts and cultural-based peacebuilding practices;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Jonathan White.

- Test the resources and frameworks of the Acting Together Project as approaches to planning, documenting and assessing arts and peacebuilding initiatives.

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Cynthia Cohen or Mary Ann Hunter.

Research Tasks

- Produce a bibliography of plays in traditional English and European literature focusing on conflict and drama;

To involve yourself in this effort, please contact Mame Hunt.

- Survey NGOs and funders on the use of and attitudes towards the use of arts-based approaches to peacebuilding;
- Map work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding as part of a graduate or Ph.D. research project;
- Conduct research into the theories of change which underlie arts-based approaches to peace, and promote inter-disciplinary fertilization;
- Conduct research into the mainstreaming and maturation of professional fields of practice to guide the development of work at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding;
- Research best practices and/or best utilizations of artistic approaches to peacebuilding;
- Document the ways in which arts-based approaches, philosophies and theories of change manifest in non-arts-based peacebuilding initiatives.

Contact Information

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Mary Ann Hunter, University of Tasmania	MaryAnn.Hunter@utas.edu.au
Jeffrey Sichel, Permanent Delegate of the UNESCO Chair-ITI	unescochair.iti.usa@gmail.com
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Polly Walker, Juniata College	returningwolves@hotmail.com
Jonathan White, Search for Common Ground	jwhite@sfcg.org
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Appendix One

Concept Note

Toward an Infrastructure for Strengthening Work at the Nexus of Peacebuilding and the Arts

concept note for a working session

convened by Search for Common Ground, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University, and Alliance for Peacebuilding

Tuesday, November 8, 2011, U.S. Institute of Peace

2301 Constitution Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20037

This concept note provides a framework for conversation among people who recognize the substantial contributions of the arts and culture to peacebuilding efforts, and who are interested in thinking together about how work at the nexus of peacebuilding, arts, and culture could be strengthened in sustainable ways. The impetus for this working session comes from recognition of a need to better support, through field-wide, institutional and collaborative initiatives, activities at the nexus of peacebuilding, arts and culture. This working session aims to initiate a wider conversation within and between the fields of peacebuilding and arts/culture on what such support might be implemented and how.

As Conveners, we have begun the title for this session with the words ‘Toward an Infrastructure...’ because we wish to focus attention on strengthening collaborations and partnerships, and developing structures not just for particular initiatives, but for the development of the field as a whole.

[Search for Common Ground \(SFCG\)](#) recognizes the role of arts and culture in peacebuilding and the need to engage such approaches. Indeed, SFCG engages the arts and culture in the vast majority of its country programs. SFCG seeks to strengthen the peace community’s capacity to successfully advocate, implement, and evaluate the range of approaches at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts in order to increase effectiveness and thus impact.

[The Peacebuilding and the Arts program at Brandeis University](#) has just completed the research phase of six-year collaboration with [Theatre Without Borders](#) entitled [Acting Together on the World Stage](#). In 2011, the project is disseminating an anthology, a documentary, and a toolkit of resources. A key finding of this work is the need for platforms for articulation and exchange of knowledge, for reflection on questions of ethics and efficacy, support for artist/peacebuilders from the developing world to participate in international conference and exchanges, and for the cultivation of leadership for this field.

[The Alliance for Peacebuilding](#) is a coalition of diverse organizations and professionals working together to build sustainable peace and security worldwide. [Members](#) of AfP are directly engaged in applied

conflict prevention and resolution, providing negotiation and mediation services, training negotiators, facilitating communication to break down barriers, and helping find solutions to the issues and pressures that otherwise drive groups and nations to achieve their objectives through violent force. Members also conduct research and provide evaluation and education.

Assumptions

1. Art and cultural work can be crafted to make unique and significant contributions to peacebuilding, conflict transformation, community development, and social justice.
2. The growing field of peacebuilding and the arts is poised to gain legitimacy:
 - Academic programs in peace and conflict resolution increasingly incorporate arts and cultural perspectives in their curricula. We hypothesize that, as a result, some graduates are better prepared to engage the arts and culture in peacebuilding initiatives.
 - Government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic organizations and academic programs are making connections between peacebuilding and arts/culture. Recent examples include:
 - The U.S. Department of State is committing resources to [international arts exchange](#) and to [cultural diplomacy](#) by inviting artists from other countries to meet with artist communities in the US. It also works to increase opportunities for artists to engage with communities in regions around the world.
 - [Grantmakers in the Arts](#), a major organization of US-based funders, now convenes a [task group of funders of arts and social justice](#).
 - [Search for Common Ground](#) engages the arts in the majority of its programs throughout the world.
 - [The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University](#) focuses on the distinctive contributions of culture and the arts to the transformation of conflict.
 - [The Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University](#) also incorporates arts and cultural perspectives in its Masters level Conflict Transformation program and its Summer Peacebuilding Institute.
 - [The International Peace Research Association](#), since 2006, hosts an [Arts and Peace Commission](#), which offers a platform for international exchange at IPRA's biannual conferences.
 - [The United States Institute for Peace](#) recently has granted significant funds for arts-based initiatives, including, for instance, a major grant to [Bond Street Theatre](#) for work in Afghanistan.

3. There are many arts and peacebuilding initiatives in zones of violent conflict and oppression. Much of the work is impressive for its aesthetic quality and its socio-political effectiveness, but overall, this work varies greatly in its quality. On some occasion it even exacerbates violence. Initiatives at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts could be strengthened by processes and structures generally associated with field- building, such as:
 - Opportunities to share learning about what works, what doesn't, and why
 - Articulation of shared standards, understandings of excellence and effectiveness
 - Opportunities for documentation and critical self-reflection Journals, publications, conferences
 - Mechanisms for protection of those who put themselves at risk doing this work
4. Currently, very few peacebuilding/arts initiatives are resourced at a level that is sustainable and that allows practitioners to build relationships over time and to engage in best practice.

Questions for discussion:

- What would an adequate infrastructure for supporting peacebuilding/arts initiatives look like? What functions would it include? Where might these various functions be housed? What are the short and long-term milestones to be considered for the maturation of this field?
- Where could resources be generated to support this infrastructure?
- For work at the intersection of peacebuilding/arts to be sustainable and meaningful, what are some of the challenges that would need to be addressed within the arts and culture field? From within the peace and justice fields? And between the two large and multi-faceted fields?
- What education and training opportunities are already available to people who seek to work in this area? And what new opportunities should be created?
- What are the best ways to generate and circulate knowledge emerging from practice in this area?
- What role should evaluation and assessment play in initiatives at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts? On what standards should evaluations be based? Can frameworks and criteria be developed that honor standards of excellence embraced by both the arts and by peacebuilding?
- Who else should be brought into the conversation?
- What could people here do to advance this project?

Appendix Two

List of Participants

1. **Linda Bishai**, Senior Program Officer, Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding, United States Institute of Peace
2. **Cynthia Cohen**, Director, Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, Brandeis University
3. **David Diamond**, Steering Committee Member, Theatre Without Borders
4. **Derek Goldman**, Artistic Director and Professor, Davis Performing Arts Center, Georgetown University
5. **Melanie Greenberg**, President, Alliance for Peacebuilding
6. **Mame Hunt**, Associate Artist and Dramaturg, Sundance Theatre Lab
7. **Kimberly King**, Member of the Board of Directors, Alliance for Peacebuilding
8. **Pennie Ojeda**, Director of International Activities, National Endowment for the Arts
9. **Paulette Moore**, Associate Professor of Visual and Communication Arts, Eastern Mennonite University
10. **Pauline Ross**, Founder, Derry Playhouse Theatre
11. **Lena Slachmuisjlder**, Chief Programming Officer, Search for Common Ground
12. **Ambassador Cynthia Schneider**, Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy, Georgetown University
13. **Jeffrey Sichel**, Permanent Delegate of the UNESCO Chair for the United States of America
14. **Nina Sughrue**, Senior Program Officer, Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding, United States Institute of Peace
15. **Daniel Terris**, Director, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, Brandeis University
16. **Jonathan White**, Learning Portal Content Manager, Search for Common Ground
17. **Craig Zelizer**, Associate Director, Conflict Resolution Program, Georgetown University

Appendix Three

Strengthening Work at the Nexus of the Arts and Peacebuilding Preliminary Report on Survey conducted October 25 - November 2, 2011

Prepared by Cynthia Cohen, Director, Program on Peacebuilding and the Arts
Brandeis University
December, 2011

Background

To gather input about priorities for strengthening work at the nexus of arts and peacebuilding, The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University conducted a survey. The online instrument was circulated to over 1500 individuals through our network, to the staff of Search for Common Ground, and was also posted on the Peace and Collaborative Development Network's website, potentially reaching over 22,000 people. Between October 25 and November 2, one hundred thirty-two (132) people completed the survey on-line. Brandeis masters student Marilana Rufo ran a basic report of responses and some cross-tabs of several questions; this preliminary report is drawn from her work.

Profile of Respondents

Primary professional field: Respondents indicated their primary professional field (arts/cultural work; peacebuilding or related field; or other); they were free to indicate more than one field. The pool of respondents are nearly equally divided between the two areas of work: 51.5% are artists and cultural workers; nearly 54% work in peacebuilding, and 25% indicated 'other,' identifying a number of related areas of work, including education, development, and youth advocacy.

Primary affiliation: Over half of the respondents are affiliated with educational institutions; nearly 40% work in community-based organizations; one-third work as freelancers and independent consultants. Smallest representation is from intergovernmental organizations (1.5%) and government agencies (5.4%). Among those who responded 'other' were a businessperson, advocates, a trade union member and several theatre artists.

Length of experience: Just over ten percent of the respondents had less than one year of experience working at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts; including this group, over 50% had ten years of experience or less. Approximately 45% of the pool have worked in the arts/peacebuilding or related field, with nearly one-quarter basing their responses on over 20 years of experience.

Roles: We invited people to indicate all roles that apply to them. 70% are educators; nearly 2/3 are practitioners; over 50% described themselves as activists. Approximately 30% are students or interns, and another 20% are evaluators. The pool of respondents include 15 policymakers and 9 funders; 13 artists, writers, or managers of cultural institutions; 6 researchers.

Geographic region: We neglected to ask people about the geographic region where they live and work. It is probably fair to assume that most respondents reside in the US. However, write-in responses did reveal respondents from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America.

Conceptualizing and prioritizing resources:

How do you conceptualize work at the nexus of arts, culture and conflict transformation? (check all that apply)

- As an emerging field: 57%
- As a field: 32%
- As a sub-field: 16% (including over ¼ of peacebuilders, but only 3% of artists)
- None of the above 10%
- Of those who wrote explanations, eleven see work at the nexus of arts, culture and conflict transformation or peacebuilding as a sub-field of peacebuilding or conflict transformation. There were two mentions of this work as a sub-field of the arts.
- A few respondents objected to referencing work at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts as 'a field.'

When considering the allocation of peacebuilding resources, how should investing in initiatives that incorporate arts and culture be prioritized in relation to other approaches to conflict work (such as training in mediation, negotiation or conflict resolution skills, for instance)? Initiatives at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding should be:

- Less important: 5%
- As important: 70%
- More important 25%

When considering the allocation of resources to support the arts and cultural work, how should investing in peace and justice initiatives be ranked in relation to other priorities (such as the stability of major cultural institutions, the cultivation of new works that might or might not address social issues, skill development and technical training, for instance)? Initiatives at the nexus of arts, culture and peacebuilding should be:

- Less important: 11.4%
- A important: 65.2%
- More impotant: 23.5%

Ranking of types of resources to strengthen the field:

On a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being the most important, and 1 being least important, which of the following resources do you think would most strengthen work at the nexus of peacebuilding, the arts, and cultural work?

Overall ranking, highest to lowest. These priorities were generally consistent across fields and length of experience working at the nexus of peacebuilding and the arts.

4.51 Funding

4.30 Technical assistance to strengthen organizations

4.28 Training opportunities in conflict regions

4.24 Opportunities for international exchange

4.19 Cultivation of leaders

4.16 Gatherings to facilitate exchange

3.92 More accessible documentation of peacebuilding/arts initiatives

3.91 Virtual resource centers

3.83 Internship programs

3.82 More thorough documentation and assessment

3.69 Articulation of shared ethical principles

3.66 Articulation of shared definitions of concepts

3.54 Assessment tools and protocols

3.42 MA programs or concentrations within them

3.25 Newsletters

3.21 PhD programs or concentrations within them

3.21 Certificate programs for practitioners

2.95 Refereed journals

Other resources mentioned as write-in responses (partial list)

- Outreach/Advocacy/Public Information to those skeptical or confused
- Lobbying initiatives disseminated as ‘guidance’ to local authorities
- Network of companies and organizations

- Exchange of scholars and practitioners
- Gender perspective
- Religious figures
- Training programs linking academic institutes in US, Australia and Europe with local people in a conflict region
- Hubs in various regions in the world
- Critical discussion on support for arts/culture workers for peace and oppressor/aggressor states
- Resources that are sustainable or lead to sustainability
- Consortium of organizations
- Opportunities for dialogue with other non-arts workers: NGO's, social workers, healthcare workers, educators, etc.
- Funding for 'cultural ambassadors' from emerging countries
- Professional global network of culture and conflict specialists able to advise IGO's, share resources, and collaborate on project design.
- Development of departments in foundations to support this work exclusively
- Networks and connections to popular media
- Communications strategy
- Technical support and resource material in local languages
- Useable website for interaction among global artist-activists and between them and teacher/mentors

Preliminary discussion:

It is interesting to note that over 130 people invested time in responding to the survey over a period of a week. Respondents were nearly equally divided between those who identify primarily as artists/cultural workers and those who identify primarily as peacebuilders – and interesting that there were not strong differences in the patterns of responses from people in these two large fields. It is also significant, I believe, that such large percentages of respondents, almost 90%, see work in this area as either a 'field' or an 'emerging field.' Also, people from both fields would prioritize resources for work in this area. (Of course this survey was not conducted through a random sample, so it is not surprising that those who chose to respond would also support committing resources to this field.)

The ranking of resources might prove useful as we move forward to strengthen work at the nexus of peacebuilding, arts and culture. A careful review of this ranking, disaggregating by professional field and years of experience, etc., might offer additional insights. It is interesting to note, however, that while among this group of respondents degree-granting academic programs were given much lower priority than efforts to strengthen work in the field, there is significant interest in the cultivation of leaders for the field.

If the survey is administered again, information about the geographic location of respondents' work and home base should be elicited. We should proactively seek responses from conflict regions.

Much more analysis needs to be done to extract useful insights from this survey, especially from the written responses to questions. We are seeking partners to work on this analysis over the next 3 – 6 months.