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20 Years of European Arts
Education

AUTUMN
CONFERENCE
2016

**REFLECTIVE
PRACTICE:
EVALUATION
IN ARTS
EDUCATION**

Debate and Exchange Day
30 November 2016

Opéra national de Paris

ACADÉMIE
OPÉRA
NATIONAL
DE PARIS

 **TOTAL**
CORPORATE
FOUNDATION

OVERVIEW

The 20th anniversary of **RESEO**, the **European Network for Opera, Music and Dance Education**, provided an ideal opportunity to take stock of the arts education sector and its developments. The network's 2016 Autumn conference took place in Paris from 28-30 November, focusing on evaluation with the aim of analysing the achievements, breakthroughs and challenges encountered by the sector over the last twenty years. The Opéra national de Paris, a RESEO founding member, hosted the event and contributed largely to its organisation.

Support from the Fondation Total enabled the conference to be organised on a larger scale than usual. The **Professional Practice Days** on 28-29 November were attended mainly by RESEO members. The **Debate and Exchange Day** of 30 November was free of charge and open to the wider public, with three sessions, respectively entitled «**Arts Education and Schools: Impact on Young People**»; «**Arts Education and the Individual: Artistic Practice and Personal Development**» and «**Creative Learning for All: Arts Education Projects and Local Communities**» enabling an in-depth analysis of the conference theme.



OPENING SESSION

The discussions began with an introduction to their theme by **Myriam Mazouzi**, Director of the Académie de l'Opéra national de Paris; **Lucy Perry**, chair of RESEO; **Catherine Ferrant**, Managing Director of the Fondation Total and Vice President of corporate philanthropy and **Michel Magnier**, Director of the European Commission DG Culture and Creativity. The speakers strongly emphasised the importance of the topic at hand.

Whilst Michel Magnier described the appropriate context for evaluation, which in European policies implies rigorous objectives and methodology, Myriam Mazouzi warned against evaluation procedures that aim only to measure efficiency: the direct and indirect impact of an encounter between a child or young person and an artist, work, place or practice cannot, she stated, easily be measured given its intangible nature. This factor does however not lessen the importance of arts education or the need to reflect upon its evaluation. Catherine Ferrant, Managing Director of the Total Foundation, stated that while funders need guarantees of the quality of the projects they have chosen to support, evaluation is necessary and must be rooted in a trustful dialogue. A funder's role is to support innovation and this also implies innovation in evaluation.



ARTS EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS: IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Alain Kerlan (France), philosopher and professor emeritus at **Université Lyon 2 Lumières** and widely-recognised arts education specialist, **Dominique Laudet (France)**, co-manager of the "**Dix Mois d'École et d'Opéra**" programme and **Philippe Coulangeon (France)**, research director at **CNRS**, **Stéphanie Touré (France)**, Head of musical actions and public relations, **Banlieues bleues festival (France)**, **Rita Elena Cosentino (Spain)**, Head of education at **Teatro Real de Madrid**.



"How can we define evaluation?" was one of the first questions to arise during the **Arts Education and Schools: Impact on Young People** panel. This multilayered term encompasses several different concepts and methods: legitimate use of funds invested by public authorities or private patrons, fulfilment of objectives and social aims set out by project proponents and authenticity of a project's educational dimension.

Alain Kerlan introduced both the session and the day's discussions by stating that "Man is as much *homo aestheticus* as *homo economicus*: evaluation of arts education cannot therefore question its intrinsic legitimacy". In Kerlan's view, evaluation must be detached from both the romanticisation that attributes extraordinary virtues to artistic experience and the instrumentalisation that measures arts education only in terms of its impact on areas outside the arts. The latter approach wrongly assumes that arts education aimed at youth must have objective, irrefutable and non-artistic benefits in order to be relevant.

Research and conclusions drawn from Kerlan's own involvement in various arts education schemes confirm the effects of arts education on personal development, self-confidence, communication skills, the ability to plan ahead and perception of adults as role models. These effects are undoubtedly tied to the central role given to the subjectivation process. Kerlan states that it is difficult to identify all effects on pupils but notes several school-related results, including improved classroom atmosphere and mutual respect, increased independence, greater learning skills and ability to work together, while taking into account individual degrees of participation. Kerlan advocated for moving beyond evaluation aimed only at youths (the target group he himself specialises in) in order to examine the wider effects on all concerned, including parents, teachers, local areas and cultural institutions themselves.

He concludes with two points:

- Evaluation must be systemic and aim to monitor the development of connections between involved parties
- Evaluation of arts education must give priority to measuring effects that are specifically related to art.

In conclusion Kerlan stresses the need to distinguish effects on an individual from economic/social results and impact of arts education projects. The evaluation of arts education must be consistent with its purpose. An artistic relationship with one's environment and aesthetic conduct are, according to Kerlan, a constitutive dimension of our humanity. Artistic effects must therefore be evaluated first and foremost.

In answer to the question "Does art help children grow?" **Dominique Laudet** stated that the "**Dix Mois d'École et d'Opéra**" programme, ongoing for the last 25 years, helps foster children's self-confidence, self-discovery, communication skills and ability to plan ahead. The programme gives young people a shared experience with peers and adults, improves classroom atmosphere and fosters learning. It has effects on all parties involved, including teachers, opera professionals and parents.

In addition to a long-term evaluation process with participating teachers and young people, monitoring social/civic skills, impact on academic achievement, personal development and sensitivity to art, Myriam Mazouzi of the Académie de l'Opéra national de Paris has commissioned scientific research on the impact of "Dix Mois d'École et d'Opéra". This extensive study was entrusted to **Philippe Coulangeon**, research director at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) and teacher at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences-Po). It aims to scientifically identify long-term effects on young persons' academic careers and personal development.

It is based on a significant amount of data collected between 2003 and 2013 and the ongoing monitoring of youths throughout the project using a mirror group method. The research combines extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis with results expected in 2018. The Fondation Total contributes to its funding.

The **Banlieues Bleues** festival has been active in the Parisian suburb of Seine Saint Denis for the last 25 years and carries out an annual qualitative evaluation of its activities, primarily aimed at its funders. **Stéphanie Touré** identified difficulties in determining subjective effects of education activities and is currently considering implementing a qualitative evaluation process. She stressed the complexity of measuring a programme's effects on young people with self-expression issues. In turn, the education department of the **Teatro Real de Madrid** carries out evaluation work aimed primarily at adapting their activities to the needs and requests of the teachers involved.



ARTS EDUCATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL: ARTISTIC PRACTICE AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pierre Moorkens (Belgium), of the Institut de Neuro-cognitivism, Fayçal Karoui (France), conductor and Frédéric Morando (France), Delegate artistic director of the Orchestre de Pau Pays de Béarn and the project “El Camino” in Pau , Yukiyo Sugiyama (Japan), project director at Ueno Gakuen University and the project « Unlearning Music », Matt Peacock (UK), Artistic Director of « Streetwise Opera ».

Pierre Moorkens began panel discussions by stating that reality is defined by complexity, interdependence and individuation. He discussed some key ideas about the brain, distinguishing the automatic brain, that of past acquisitions and reflexes, and the adaptive brain, linked to intuition, anticipation and learning. Developing individuals’ taste for learning and creativity involves switching from automatic mode to adaptive mode, for which it is necessary to create a feeling of calm by removing sources of stress. Arts education is particularly effective in fostering calm in young people.



Fayçal Karoui presented the “**El Camino**” symphony orchestra initiative with children from popular neighborhoods in the southwest France town of Pau. The project is aimed both at creating an artistic experience and fostering the personal development of beneficiaries. It has been monitored since its very beginnings by a scientific committee encompassing a broad range of expertise which constantly observes activities and recommends improvements. This committee is internal rather than external to the project and participates actively in guiding its development. Fayçal Karoui and **Frédéric Morando** consider that the initiative challenges established beliefs and is interesting in the way it transforms relations between adults, especially professional musicians, and children. Neither wishes to use the word “evaluation”, preferring to speak of a process of observation, participation, “walking together” and moving forward in terms of self-esteem and self-confidence.

The “**Unlearning Music**” programme developed by Ueno Gakuen University Research Center for Music and Culture in Japan was presented by its project director, **Yukiyo Sugiyama**. Designed with culture management professionals and young artists in mind, the programme aims to “deconstruct” primary conditioning in order to foster a more personal and reflective approach to music, in other words “unlearn” and then “relearn”. In the long-term, young professional artists broaden their artistic practice in order to become active members of society. The process is gradual, sometimes met with resistance and not easy to assess.



Matt Peacock presented **Streetwise Opera**, an opera outreach programme aimed at homeless adults in Great Britain with the objective of rehabilitating them at both a social and personal level. Art creates bridges, Peacock explained, which improve participants’ wellbeing and social inclusion. These effects are central to the project’s evaluation, which involves participants, social workers and workshop leaders. Peacock analyses the programme’s outcomes with ten parameters

defined according to three criteria (that which is realistic, useful and useable) and classified according to short, medium and long-term effects. These include: creative skills, self-confidence, relational capacity, enjoyment of life, sense of belonging, optimism about the future, social skills and sense of belonging. The method continuously measures inputs and improvement of initial parameters, and maps evolutions on a scale of 1 to 5. The evaluation is carried out for funders, for project proponents and project teams. Two full-time staff are assigned to project evaluation and management. Matt Peacock stressed the absolute necessity of clarifying evaluation objectives, working within a structured and methodological framework and implementing a regular monitoring process, in this case a weekly assessment in addition to a mapping of developments every six months.

In response to questions from the floor speakers defined their goals as fostering creativity, sense of commitment and independence in beneficiaries. The session demonstrated that the artistic tools used tend to combine both artistic and social aims, while artistic experience itself contains, as Alain Kerlan stated at the outset, the potential for personal development, sense of security and social inclusion for young people and adults alike.



CREATIVE LEARNING FOR ALL: ARTS EDUCATION PROJECTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Annabel Jackson (UK), evaluation consultant, Catherine Milliken (Germany) on her projects in Japan after the Tsunami, Andra East (UK), Choral Projects Manager at London Symphony Orchestra and Emmanuelle Taurines (France) on the Monster in the Maze project (Aix-en-Provence – Berlin – London), Agnès de Jacquelot (France), Head of Young Audiences on the “L’Opéra pour moi aussi” programme implemented by the Académie de l’Opéra de Paris.

Annabel Jackson opened the session by stating that evaluation implies action and decision-making. Hers is a rigorous method of analysis that does not shy away from difficult questions, based on twenty-one steps aiming to pin down the methods used and adjust them if needed with a recommendations, communication and dissemination stage to conclude the process. A highly effective tool for cultural practitioners wishing to implement a thorough evaluation process.

Jackson’s keynote was followed by the composer **Catherine Milliken**’s account of two successive initiatives carried out in the north of Japan following the earthquake. Milliken engaged locals in a co-creation process based on their personal and collective needs with unique outcomes. She stressed her need to listen, take a step back and share her findings.



Evaluation carried out as part of the **Monster in the Maze** project, presented by **Andra East**, sought to deduce whether and to what extent the project had fulfilled its objectives, appealed to participating institutions' usual audiences, involved local communities and created lasting impact as well as contributing to building the project as a collaboration between three partners.

Emmanuelle Taurine, head of the Aix-en-Provence Festival education department, stated that adjustments, often based on intuition, were constantly made to the large-scale project and that various evaluation procedures were implemented during and after its completion. These included internal and external questionnaires and voiced and written feedback voluntarily provided by participants, staff and audiences.

When we speak of projects that are "open to all", Taurine asked, who is the "all" in question? In the case of the project The Monster in the Maze "all" refers, rather unusually, to amateurs. Taurine advocated for evaluation work which measures the real impact of initiatives on the lives of communities. She questions the nature of the dynamics between institutions and communities, speaking of the need to take time to adjust and work in depth with beneficiaries in order to grasp the scope of these projects and go beyond it. The context of a long-term artistic process must be examined in order to open up new avenues for future evaluation work.

Agnès de Jacquelot, head of Young Audiences at the Académie de l'Opéra national de Paris, described a unique project aimed at school dropouts aged around 13 in the Parisian suburb of Sarcelles. Constant evaluation of the project is integrated into project management and real-time development. De Jacquelot evoked the expectations and intentions specific to every workshop leader, school, beneficiary and artist as well as the city of Paris and the Opéra. The project is open to a very limited number of young people, who are given considerable attention and support from the Opéra and derive both surprise and pride from their creative practice. The Opéra gives priority to exchange and sharing with young people usually removed from so-called "classical" culture, but does not hesitate to confront them with the rigorous requirements of creative labour. This case study illustrates the wide variety of formats that can be employed by one cultural institution.





CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation of arts education projects is now firmly entrenched in cultural practice. While English-speaking countries were the first to commit to this kind of work, they have been joined in the meantime by other European countries. Cultural practitioners evaluate their activities in order to take action and makes decisions. A culture of evaluation enables progressive thinking and curiosity, thus avoiding conservatism.

Goals vary widely. For the Opéra national de Paris, these include monitoring extrinsic and intrinsic effects of artistic education on young people. The Teatro Real verifies satisfaction of target groups and making adjustments accordingly, while Banlieues bleues carries out evaluation work for the benefit of public or private funders.

Methods employed also vary considerably. Evaluation can be empirical or carried out within a scientific framework, small- or large-scale, quantitative, qualitative or both, implemented by internal teams or engage external help. Allotted budget resources are usually proportional to the size of the institution. Evaluation work makes use of a wide variety of tools including statistics, vocal or written feedback, photography and video. It can examine the extrinsic (most often) or intrinsic effects of art education.

Evaluation procedures are often carried out within a strict methodological framework, thus guaranteeing their effectiveness. While some terms still need to be clarified, most practitioners distinguish between effects, outcomes, and impact.

The aim of evaluation should not be to legitimise arts education projects, but to measure their specific effects. Myriam Mazouzi however stressed that artistic experience contains an unquantifiable subjective dimension. Arts education is yet to be universally recognised and many continue to challenge its educational and personal relevance. In this context, Alain Kerlan considers evaluation to be more of a problem than a solution.

RESEO's Debate and Exchange Day demonstrated that **current evaluation tools, while varied, are increasingly able to define the intrinsic (artistic) and extrinsic (results and socio-economic) effects of arts education:** a strong incentive for culture and education specialists, public authorities and funders to pursue their development.

RESEO's 2016 Autumn conference **Reflective Practice : Evaluation in Arts Education** took place at the Opéra national de Paris on 28 – 30 November 2016. An exceptional event for an exceptional occasion: 2016 marked the 20th anniversary of RESEO's founding. How to best reflect 20 years' worth of arts education from all over Europe and the world?

The Opéra national de Paris as a founding member and valued long-term partner was an obvious choice to host the event. In order to open up the conference to the largest possible number, it was decided to give the Conference an exceptional modular format. The Professional Practice Days (28 – 29 November) offered arts education professionals in-depth presentations, key studies, practical workshops, round tables and opportunities to connect, followed by a Debate and Exchange Day (30 November) free of charge and open to all thanks to the support of the **Total Foundation**.

ABOUT RESEO

For over 15 years, RESEO has been the unique European network for education, participation and creative learning in opera and dance.

From large opera organisations to small companies, our members are driven by the desire to widen access, awaken curiosity, and create a connection with opera and dance for everyone!

Spread across 21 countries in Europe and beyond, RESEO's members form a diverse yet coherent network, experimenting with new concepts, sharing ideas, learning and working together. The network supports them in their overarching aim to firmly anchor opera into their local contexts and enhance their communities' sense of ownership.

This publication was authored by Sabine de Ville and translated by Roshnara Corby. To discover further RESEO publications please visit <http://www.reseo.org/projects/research-and-publications>

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