CURATORIAL PRACTICE IN ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS IN ORGANIZATIONS: INSIGHTS FROM SWEDISH PRACTITIONERS

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Abstract

In this paper we discuss the role of the facilitator of artistic and design interventions in companies. We regard design interventions and artistic interventions as similar activities; they are both related to the companies' innovation work and they both rely upon an artistic framework in their work process. Our focus is on the "facilitator role" and how it is performed in three different organizations that produce/mediate artistic interventions. The facilitator tries to bridge the gap between differences in what is taken-for-granted by companies and artists, respectively. However, the role of the facilitator is vague, and differs considerably between organizations. For a fresh perspective on the facilitator role we contrast it with the role of the curator. This role is far from homogeneous, but is well developed both practically and theoretically. We propose that such a comparison would be beneficial for the artist, the facilitator, and the organizations involved.

Keywords: Artistic interventions in organizations; Curator; Facilitator

Introduction

Recently, we have been intrigued by connections that researchers interested in artistic interventions in organizations – when people, processes or products from the world of the arts enter business or non-profit organizations (Berthoin Antal, 2009) – have made with curatorial practice. For example, Woodilla (2011) suggests that for art (essential for being human), design (necessary to create context), and organization (entailing relationships) to interact in a synergistic manner, a number of roles are necessary including that of a curator, who "establishes, clarifies, is mindful of whole, does not provide content or create context." Likewise, Haselwanter (2013) proposes that with artistic interventions for business development, there exists the need for an independent curator (midway between the business manager, the arts manager and the design manager) who can "capitalise the position between business management, arts management and design management and has the freedom to consolidate management, employees, artists, designers and design thinkers at the right moment and to the right extent." In a third example, Grzelec (2014) analyzes responses from a survey of 64 producers of artistic interventions, and concludes that "the work of producers (can be) compared to three familiar activities: consulting, curating, and mediating" and concludes that it is a combination of the three.

Our interest is in the efforts of the individuals, called facilitators, who coordinate particular interventions, and who maintain direct contact with company management, artists, and employees engaged in the process. The role of the facilitator is unclear, yet metaphorically it is similar to that

of the contemporary curator. Therefore we seek help from the curating discussion to clarify the role. In this paper we first present our theoretical perspective followed by the methods and empirical study. Then we examine similarities between a curator and a facilitator, and finally we discuss changes that the facilitator and his/her organization can make by regarding their role through the lens of the curator.

Theoretical Perspectives

Our work is informed by two areas, curating and artistic interventions, which we consider in turn. We briefly review the etymology of the work *curating*, and then follow its discourse in the work of contemporary curatorial practice. The discourse of artistic interventions in organizations originates in broader discussions of artistic interventions in the art, management, and practice areas.

Curating

"Curator" from an etymological perspective. The Oxford English Dictionary (Simpson, Weiner & Oxford University Press, 1989; Oxford University Press, 2000) traces the etymology of *curator, curating* from Latin *cuare*, meaning to care for, referring to the "cure of souls" (earliest known use 1362) or guardianship of those legally unfit to look after themselves (1413), and subsequently manager or overseer (1632) or one with the power to elect university professors (1691). In these early citations the role of the curator was that of a supervisor, in a controlling relationship with those cared for. The earliest known use related to the art-world was in 1667, as the officer in charge of a museum, galley of art, library, or the like: a keeper or custodian.

The verb *to curate* is traced to US usage, as in, to act as a curator of a museum, exhibits, and the like, or to look after and preserve (earliest use 1934). In extended use (added online in 2011), *to curate* means to select the performers or performances to be included in a festival, album, or programme; also, to select, organize and present (content) on a web site (earliest use 1982). *Curating* (noun), formed by the verb *curate* with suffix *-ing*, was first noted in 1906 and referred to the supervision of a museum, gallery or the like by a curator; the work of storing and preserving exhibits.

The history of curating practice. Meanings associated with curator have been diverse; during the twentieth century the role centered on the presentation of objects in museum exhibitions, then expanded during the twenty-first to include more than art objects and presentations in venues other than museums. Some lament as inappropriate its current everyday use in referring to organizing a pop festival or culling items from a department store for a fashion display (cf., Morton, 2011), while others see such uses of the word as following the trend of less pedigreed professions to adopt the vernacular of more prestigious ones, or a metaphorical use to allude to creative insight (Williams, 2009). We do not pursue such usage, instead we consider curatorial practice related to artistic endeavors. We are encouraged by the aim of the new *Journal of Curatorial Studies* to engage "questions of the curatorial – whether stemming from the art world or other domains of contemporary culture" (Drobnick & Fisher, 2012).

The history and theory of curating is intertwined with the actions of exemplary curators, frequently recorded through interviews (cf., Obrist, 2013; Thea, 2009), and linked to the rise of new art genres such as impressionism and dada that did not have a place in official art exhibitions, the development of the gallery, and permanent collections in museums displayed as temporary exhibitions. Each curator brings his or her own perspective, background, and experience to the work, but contemporary curating involves letting the art itself be the center of

attention, with the curator remaining in the background. Graham and Cook (2010) focus on curating new media art (digital, interactive, connected), but note that their description of the curatorial process also applies to the wider cultural context of new forms of contemporary art. They redefine curating any art that may be "process oriented, time-based or live, networked or connected, conceptual or participative" (p.284) as a set of behaviors, and conclude that "the only way to best know how to curate – to produce, present, disseminate, distribute, know, explain, or historicize – a work of art is to know its characteristic and its behaviors, rather than imposing a theory on the art." (p.304) Thus curating is always unique to the artistic process or product at hand.

The bonds between curator and artist. During a recent seminar, Genre Creates Ghetto: Curating in a Post-Genre World (2014) attended by one of the authors (Woodilla), speakers emphasized the bonds that exist between curator and artist. From the artists' perspective, the curator is in service to the artist, and needs to respond to the question, 'What is artistry?' However, pushing boundaries is the responsibility of artist *and* curator. From the curator's perspective, the relationship with the artist is key: while the artist achieves the vision, the curator deals with underlying conditions and protects the artist from executive decisions/questions from the institution. The soul of the creative idea comes from artist, and the curator must ensure that the idea can last as long as it needs to. Lately, some curators and artists work so closely together that the boundaries between the two seem to be almost dissolved.

Artistic Interventions

Artistic interventions encompass all activities where artists engage with the world outside the art sphere for purposes that sometimes focus on mutual development but mostly focus on societal or organizational benefits. These engagements frequently, but not necessarily, occur outside the artists' usual venues of studio, museum, gallery, theatre, and the like. Interactions may occur in the public arena or community, or as in our interest, in public, private, or non-profit organizational contexts. An artistic intervention is an experience, either through direct involvement with an artist or artistic process, or by viewing and reflecting on a piece of art. The focus is not on the art form itself, but on the process of engagement and subsequent outcomes at the individual, group, organizational, or societal level. The discourse of artistic interventions draws from the arts, management, and practice.

Artistic interventions as a pure artistic act with the aim to influence the broader society are frequently labeled as "socially engaged art practice" or "community-based art", although there are other labels used to describe the interactive process outside of the artist's normal domain. Artistic interventions in organizations (AIO) – our concern in this paper – most often focus on what is good for the organization. An artistic intervention in an organization, therefore, could often, but not always, be considered as "applied art". When studied by management researchers, which is most commonly the case, it becomes part of a broader discourse of Art & Management. In the following we begin by discussing socially engaged arts before turning to artistic interventions in organizations, and finally discuss artistic interventions within the broader framework of Art & Management.

Socially engaged arts. From an art and art history perspective, bringing people or processes from the world of the arts into the community is an example of *socially engaged art practice,* where artists choose to engage with timely issues by expanding their practice beyond the safe confines of the studio and into the complexity of the public sphere. Kester (2013) describes two

assumptions underlying this move: one in the theoretical description of art, located in the discourses of the 1980s, which assumed that the viewer lacks the critical awareness of the artist who in turn can awaken the viewer and provide inspiration and guidance. The other assumption is located the traditions of *community-based art*, which developed primarily in the United States and the United Kingdom during the 1960s and 70s. Here the artist uses the experience of art making to enhance the self-esteem of the poor or working class (pp.xv-xvi). For example, the British Artists' Placement Group (AGP), dating from 1966, sought to find work for artists by placing them within an industrial complex of production, thus allowing the artist to act as a vector for change (Hudek, 2012).

For art historians, as Kester (2013, p.9-10) explains, theorizing the art genre is important. Hence, socially engaged art, or 'new genre of public art' has been referred to as *littoral art (Hunter and Larner)*, to evoke the hybrid or in-between nature of the practices; *conversational art (Bhabha)*, and *dialogue-based public art (Finkelpearl)*. Kester uses *dialogic aesthetic*, claiming, "the work of art can be viewed as a kind of conversation – a locus of different meanings, interpretations, and points of view. … Dialogic projects unfold through a process of performative interaction" (p.10). Similarly, Thompson (2010) writes of 'participatory art' that requires the action of the viewer in order to complete the work (p.21). Our preference is for *relational aesthetic*, used by Bourriaud (2002) to describe "a set of artistic practices which take their practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than independent and private space" (p.113). This underpinning of communication and exchange expresses the foundation of an artistic intervention.

Sand and Atenzia (www.playingthespace.wordpress.com) use *artistic intervention* to describe when artists, architects, musicians, dancers and researchers explore the rhythms and resonance of an urban setting, thereby turning it into a playground and creating new situations and awareness of urban qualities, limits, forces and meanings. Sand (personal communication, May 2014) explains that "konstnärliga interventioner" (artistic interventions) have become increasingly common in Scandinavia since the 1980s.

Underlying many socially engaged art projects is a series of provocative assumptions about the relationship between art and the broader social and political world, and about the kinds of knowledge the aesthetic experience is capable of producing. Clear intentions to challenge power underlie many socially engaged art projects (Kester, 2013; Lacy, 20010; Thompson, 2012). Artistic interventions in organizations continue this intention with the motivation to change working conditions, although organizational decision-makers may espouse purposes of adding value to economic outcomes.

Artistic interventions in organizations. Many current researchers of artistic interventions in organizations place its inception in corporate art collections (cf., Jacobson 1994, 1996), or in Xerox PARC, when co-located engineers and artists influenced each other's work (Harris, 1999), although, as Gavan (2013) explains, artists have been collaborating with organizations throughout the twentieth century. Darso (2004), in what many consider to be the first comprehensive study of artists working in business settings (*sic*) as catalysts for change, identifies four possibilities for Arts-in-Business: (1) Business uses the arts for decoration; (2) Business uses the arts for entertainment; (3) Business applies the arts for training or individual or organizational development, and (4) Business integrates the arts in strategic processes (p.14). Our general interest is in the latter two uses. We take Berthoin Antal's (2009) definition of *artistic interventions in organizations* as bringing people, processes/practices or products from the world

of the arts into organizations, while recognizing alternate definitions exist. One is Schiuma's (2011) *Arts-Business Initiatives,* or business interactions with the arts can be used to enhance value-creation capacity and boost business performance, and another is Barry and Meisiek's (2010) conception of *workarts*, primarily an art collection, artist-led intervention or artistic experimentation that directs attention away from immediate work concerns and towards alternate ways of seeing and making sense of the situation at hand.

Accounts of successful artistic intervention in organizations have been published as case studies in professional journals, (e.g., special issues of *Strategic Management Journal,* 2005, 2010), highlighting various intervention contexts and benefits for management. Books written for practitioners by professors from the Harvard Business School link creativity to jazz 'jamming' (Kao, 1996), and explain artists' processes for the benefit of knowledge workers (Austin & Devin, 2003). Academic journals include more critical examination of the practice and links to concepts or organizational development and change (cf., Abbott, Kersten, & Lampe, 2006; Beyes & Steyaert, 2011; Berthoin Antal 2013; Berthoin Antal & Strauss, 2014; Berthoin Antal, Taylor & Ladkin, 2013; Styhre & Eriksson, 2008), while Gilmore and Warren (2007) surface underlying power dynamics that are seldom addressed. Again, these publications feature diverse examples of artistic interventions in organizations, based primarily on qualitative research of interventions established through intermediary organizations, as we describe below.

Broader perspective of art and management. A clear connection between art and management is in *arts management,* as the application of management functions and processes to the facilitation of the production or the performing or visual arts and the presentation of the artists' work to audiences (Chong, 2010, p.5). These processes, and related concerns about the role of the arts administrator are beyond the scope of our interest, which lies in direct engagement of artists with members of organizations.

Academic interest in artistic interventions in organizations has two underpinning discourse streams within management studies. One is the metaphorical conceptualization of the 'art of management', or how managers or organizational members are engaging with the arts through art-perceiving or art making. Barry (1996) employs a qualitative inquiry methodology based in symbolic constructivism by using drawing, sculpture, photographs, dramatization, and other art-forms to challenge managers to express and then analyze their organizational environment, and hence come to quite different views and greater understanding of their situation. More traditional use of metaphors, when symbols are transferred from a source domain to a target domain includes Vail's (1998) conceptualization of *Management as a performing art*, while Hatch's (1998, 1999) exercises using jazz musicians and practices, and Nancy Adler's (2006) essay calling for artistic processes to be used in management and leadership, are often quoted as examples within the academic literature. Most often this discourse places concepts from each discipline adjacent to each other, thereby coming to greater understanding of managerial practice or organizational theory (see also Hatch & Yanow, 2008).

A second related discourse is that of aesthetics of organizations that originated in the 1990s with important early contributions by Strati (1992, 1996, 1999), Linstead & Hopfl (2000), and Guillet de Montoux (2004). In general, these scholars theorized organizing using an aesthetic lens, considering the senses -- feelings, touch, smells, sights and sounds -- rather than discussing interventions. However, with the 2006 decision by the executive board of the Academy of Management to terminate the Art and Management Interest Group "due to difficulties in evaluating work in this area" (Watkins, King & Linstead, 2006), the journal *Organizational*

Aesthetics (http://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/oa/) has become the critical center for work focusing in general on art and management (c.f., www.artofmanagement.org) and aesthetics of organizational life, including artistic interventions (c.f., Berthoin-Antal, 2012; Bozic & Olsson, 2013; Schein, 2013).

The practice of artistic interventions in organizations. During the 21ˢᵗ century, the growth of artistic interventions in organizations has been dominated by the presence of intermediary organizations, specifically by Tillt (www.tillt.se/in-english/) in Sweden, and Arts & Business in the United Kingdom (www.artsandbusiness.bitc.org.uk), although other similar, but smaller, organizations exist, primarily in Europe. The work of these organizations is documented through expert reports, prepared in response to funding entities, notably the EU, but also state and local government agencies. These reports provide descriptions of artistic interventions, intermediary organizations established to facilitate the process, and an "evaluation" of results achieved, bearing in mind that the report's unstated mission is to justify the funding and prepare the ground for future applications. While every artistic intervention is unique, taken together, the expert reports provide a general depiction of the process. None provide details of an actual intervention, but these can be found in researchers' ethnographic accounts, for example, the case studies in Brattström (2012) and Jahnke (2013).

As reported by Knell (2004), interactions between the arts and business became common in the early years of the 21ˢᵗ century, when UK managers seeking a more creative emphasis in their organizations engaged in "creativity training" (Sandel, 2004), later referred to arts-business training or intervention. Company decision-makers tended to engage in an interaction on the recommendation of a member of their professional network, recognizing that the arts offered new tools and techniques to change the way organizations behave, think and act, and to influence the behaviors and effectiveness of the UK workforce. However, most interventions were of short duration, with outcomes at the individual level (e.g., communication, writing, presentation skills). Less frequent were longer and more risky interventions with the promise of organization wide change and transformation (e.g., addressing cultural or business critical issues, acting as triggers for reflection, dialogue and new understanding), with the Catalyst program at Unilever the prime example of success. Meisiek and Barry (2014) conjecture that the most widely used early forms of interventions were theatre techniques that use active audience participation or improv allow organization members to test their ideas and face the unknown (cf., Clark & Mangham, 2004; Gibb, 2004; Meisiek & Barry, 2007; Mirvis, 2005). By 2011, a wider range of intervention purposes and outcomes was reported from European practice, encompassing influences on innovation, organizational change, and societal interests, as well as some reciprocal development for the artists involved (Berthoin Antal, Inlesia & Almondoz, 2011).

Artistic interventions in organizations have three major participant roles: artists, organizations, and a mediator, generally a producer/intermediary organization who establishes and monitors the process. No one artform has monopoly on impact for arts-based training and development (Stockhill, 2009). The background of individual artists often combines a formal education and practice in an artform, with other experiences relating to education, business, academia, or a special cause. They rely on an open process, value collaboration and teamwork, and have good listening and observation skills (Ingelia & Almandoz, 2009). Client organizations of all sizes come from a variety of areas with a balance between private, public, and non-profit organizations (Grzelec & Prata, 2013). Producers (also called intermediaries, matchmakers or brokers) on average work with many client organizations, having as their main goals to develop the

organizations and contribute to society. They obtain funding, match artists and organizations on the basis of their own experience and knowledge, provide process support by establishing a focused framework for the artistic intervention, monitor progress, address problems that arise, and communicate outcomes within the organization, to funding entities, and to the broader society (Grzelec & Prata, 2013; Ingelisa & Almandoz, 2009).

Financing artistic interventions can be a difficult task, and producer organizations seek support from a variety of sources, including fees from client organizations, public subsidies (from all levels of government and different policy departments or institutions), and private funding. There is a general balance among the various forms of funding, with the EU grants being a prominent contributor. Some producers receive annual or ongoing funding, while others are funded on a project basis (Vondracek, 2013)

Barry & Meisiek (2004) describe five critical stages during an intervention, using data from NyX alliances when 20 artists were paired with 20 companies for 20 days. First was forming the challenge for the intervention, as the statement or goal that guided the process, developed by the company and Alliance staff. It was best to have concrete, practical challenges, but at the same time they needed to be deliberately experimental and playful with the means used to achieve them. Second was matching the artist's capabilities to the organizational context, generally accomplished with the help of the Alliance staff involved. The artist's discipline and stature in the art world was not important, but artistic competence could play a significant role in creating desirable outcomes. Building and maintaining trust during the intervention was another challenge, since an "Arts/Business Divide" existed, whereby managers expected artists to have some sort of "magic thinking' frame. In the most successful alliances attention moved from the artist as an oddity/provocateur and towards a shared problem and a shared language – typically a joint accomplishment. At the same time, the artists maintained their artistic integrity throughout and gained respect for their artistically-centered insights and methods.

The fourth critical stage of an intervention was the problem framing and search modes used by artists and companies. Artists promoted a 'search mode' rather than the implementation of a solution, and would get company members to look for different things and to look differently. The artists presented themselves as strangers and subsequently employees would confide in them and would agree to outlandish suggestions. The fifth challenge was contextualization of the 'art-work', the general degree to which the company and its problems were represented through the output of the intervention, which shaped the intervention style. Mainly, but not always, this was achieved through the artists' design of the intervention, strongly influenced by how well the problem of the innovation alliance was represented and by personal investment or involvement by managers in the process. Other factors included working in the company premises rather than offsite, using smaller rather than larger workgroups, and by celebration ceremonies around the completion of the intervention.

Two approaches to documenting the values added through an intervention are found in the reports. Quantitative methods traditionally used in organizations are inadequate and frustrating for artists involved, yet numerical measures are important to funding entities. (Knell, 2004). Berthoin Antal (2009) concluded that no theory existed that explained the complex phenomenon of artistic interventions and the often indirect ways they affect organizations, and recommended that researchers develop an innovative and customized "toolkit" with appropriate indicators, and that stakeholders should be willing to share their knowledge and expertise. From case studies of arts-based initiatives in the UK, those providing significant organizational value are those that

can balance and combine impacts on different categories of benefits. Schiuma (2009) developed an Arts-Value-Matrix for purposes of ascertaining the potential impact on people and organizations from a particular form of interaction between an artform, such as a painting hung on the wall, a concert in the workplace, collaborative art-making, and so on. While Schiuma's intent is to enable the organization's decision-makers engage an appropriate artform for the desired purpose, we caution that many intangibles exist during implementation, and the desired/expected result cannot be guaranteed.

A wide variety of values–added or impacts have been documented (though not explicitly as evaluations) in the collaboration Creative Clash (www.creativeclash.eu) in Europe. These include a positive experience for participants, even though their initial impressions may have been confusion and skepticism, spillover effects gained by individuals and groups to the organization level, evidence of contributions to strategic and operational factors, new ways of seeing and doing, opening spaces of possibility for creativity and innovation. Responsibility for nurturing these impacts after the end of the intervention lies with managers and employees (Berthoin Antal & Strauss, 2013).

Artistic Interventions in Organizations Produced by Tillt

We take artistic interventions in organizations produced by Tillt as our primary example. Tillt's roots date back to the early 19th century, when it was founded within the democratic political movement, Skådebanan, with the aim of providing "culture for the people". The organization's strategy has changed considerably during its existence, and in the last 10 years it has moved from being part of a political movement into an independent non-profit company. According to the website:

> *TILLT is a producer of ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS in organisations. An artistic intervention is established when an organisation enters into a COLLABORATION with an artist, such as an actor/director/playwright, visual artist/ painter/ photographer, dancer/ choreographer, writer/poet, composer/musician or a conceptual artist. The aim of such a collaboration is to CROSS-FERTILIZE the competences of the two worlds: the world of the arts and the world of the organisation. The work of TILLT is focused in two directions; on the one side TILLT focuses on processes of human growth and ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – artistic competence as a tool to stimulate creativity, innovation, human development, and more. On the other side, TILLT works for increasing the field of work for artists where new art can be born and NEW ARTISTIC METHODS can be developed.*

The current organization, developed since 2003 under the entrepreneurship of Pia Areblad, has become the world's largest producer of artistic interventions. They have produced hundreds of different interventions, with more than 80 lasting a year or more. In 2013, TILLT had 16 full-time employees under the CEO and Areblad as Strategist and Lecturer. There were two business support positions (business manager and accountant), one marketer, seven people responsible for acquiring new projects and coordinating them, and four process leaders (whom we call facilitators). Almost 70 artists from different disciplines have completed the formal application process and are available to be employed part time (see www.tillt.se/konstnarer-artister).

Our interest is in the efforts of the individuals who coordinate or facilitate particular interventions, maintaining direct contact with company management, artists, and employees engaged in the process. The role of the facilitator is unclear, yet metaphorically it is similar to that of the contemporary curator. Therefore we seek help from the curating discussion to clarify the

role. Below we present our method, followed by highlights from our empirical work. Afterwards we discuss similarities between a curator and a facilitator, and then turn to the benefit obtained by the facilitator and his/her organization can obtain from regarding their role through the lens of the curator.

Method

Our investigation of the roles of the facilitator artistic intervention in organizations centers on qualitative interviews with facilitators from three Swedish intermediary organizations, primarily TILLT (www.tillt.se/in-english/), but also, for comparison purposes, SVID (www.svid.se/en) and SKISS (www.cinergy.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=14)

- From TILLT we interviewed facilitator/process leader Roger Sarjanen, who has been active for more than 10 years and responsible for much of the development of the process, and Marie Mebius-Schröder and and Nina Kjällqvist, who are also facilitaors at Tillt. In addition one of the authors (Johansson Sköldberg) has conducted extensive ethnographic research on the Tillt organization (Johansson-Sköldberg, 2014).
- SVID (Swedish Industrial Design Foundation) was founded in 1989 to disseminate knowledge about design as a force for development and as a competitive tool. SVID primarily works with designers who have an artistic foundation in their education, but we knew from previous joint research projects that they use a similar facilitation process. We contacted Marie Loft for an interview about her role as facilitator in earlier joint projects with Business & Design Lab (www.bdl.gu.se) where we were concerned with the "fuzzy front end" of the innovation process (see Jahnke, 2013). Although SVID works mainly with designers, we consider the process to be very similar with that of an artistic intervention since designers have arts-based methods at the core of their education (Johansson Sköldberg & Woodilla, 2013)
- SKISS is not a separate company but a two-year project. This was our choice for a second comparison to TILLT, since only SVID and TILLT are established organizations for artistic interventions in Sweden. We interviewed the project leader for SKISS, Eva Månsson, and one of the artists, Malin Lobell, who was later employed as assistant project leader.

Interviews with the representatives of each organization were conducted in English in December 2013 and lasted between two and three hours. Apart from a few questions prepared in advance we followed Hopf's (2004) recommendations for focused interviews. We later brought Sarjanen (TILLT) and Loft (SVID) together to allow them to discuss and discover differences and similarities in their ways of handling the process. The interviews were transcribed and indexed for themes that were then used to structure our storyline and generate quotes. Our method was mainly inductive, but with some abductive elements. A paper describing the facilitation process in narrative form using quotations from the interviews will be presented at the DMI Academic Design Management Conference in London in September 2014 (Johansson-Sköldberg & Woodilla, 2014)

For our understanding of curatorial work we use material from notes taken by Woodilla during a two-day seminar on *Curating in a post genre world* organized by Matthew Mclendon of the Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida (Genre creates ghetto, 2014)), workshop participation and conversations with Monica Sand (www.playingthespace.wordpress.com). These experiences,

though short, gave us insights in the curatorial situation and complemented our literature research.

Highlights of the Intervention Process from Interviews with Facilitators.

As a partial governmental organization, Tillt receives some funding for its administrative overhead from EU and other grants, while the main funding for an intervention comes from the company buying the intervention. Once Tillt's strategist or marketer obtained a contract, Sarjanen met with the company decision makers to ascertain the problem or challenge they wished to address and to understand the company culture. He then selected an artist from the list maintained by Tillt: here the artist's discipline mattered less than his or her competency at working in the situation. Sarjanen prepared the artist for the engagement and then worked with the artist and members of the company to build trust between them. At the end of this month-long period, the group developed a problem statement to be addressed in the subsequent workshops. These were held on a regular basis, with the facilitator keeping his distance, stepping in only to address "people problems". At the end of the engagement, the company and the artist were asked by the facilitator to develop a plan for future using the "tools learned" in the future and the facilitator encouraged having a celebration of some kind to mark the end of the intervention.

The interventions under SVID were established as part of a PhD research project. Funding came from VINNOVA, The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation, (www.vinnova.se/en/) and covered the researcher full-time for four years, and the facilitator's salary and expenses for half time during a year and a half, although the research project lasted longer so she worked for a much longer time. Loft, the facilitator, selected companies in consultation with the Researcher, and later, after talking with company decision-makers, selected a suitable designer for the intervention. Workshops began immediately, but in some instances there was confusion about the process that was much more open-ended than the designers' usual engagement with companies for design development. Loft therefore spent considerable time in consultation with the researcher and working directly with the designer and intervention team to ensure a good process. If the process was still unattainable, the designer left and Loft brought in a new one. At a certain point the company started paying for the designer's time (the research grant only covered a portion), and the intervention continued until completion. Loft and the Researcher wrote a final report.

The SKISS project was established and funded by the government. Månsson, the project coordinator, was engaged by the steering committee, and she in turn recruited artists who were interested in participating and set up a University program for them covering organizational dynamics and employee health issues. As part of this, the artists visited workplaces (mainly non-profits and governmental organizations), and subsequently found their own placement. The artists worked in pairs and supported each other when problems arose. At the end of the engagement, the artists left the organizations and university researchers who had been following the interventions wrote closing reports. Månsson was not directly involved during the placement and intervention period.

Interpretation

Facilitators, similar to curators, each had their individual process. We also noticed that there were a number of similarities between the curating process and the facilitator process. Below we present a comparison between the two:

Comparing the Facilitation Process with Curating

The relation to the artist. Good relationships are important for successful projects, but the way these relations are established differs between the two roles.

- The facilitator has foremost in mind the company's problem or challenge that is the focus of the intervention, and the artist is instrumental to achieving success. The company and its challenge come first and then the artist is selected. The quality of the artist's work is relatively less important than his or her competencies for guiding participants in an open process as they confront their problem or challenge. The artist works directly with company members throughout the intervention period.
- The curator positions him or herself to the artist's world: the artist and the quality of the art are most important and are selected first. The artist is known through the artwork, and while they may be present at the exhibition's opening reception, the audience seldom knows them personally.

Time devoted to the project. Each project occupies a different amount of time, but there are differences in the way the time is allotted.

- The facilitator is employed by an intermediary organization such as Tillt, which in turn acquires funding for interventions from a variety of sources, including fees paid by the participating organization, government unemployment or cultural enhancement funds, or research funds. The facilitator manages several interventions simultaneously, each for its entire duration, such that he or she devotes time to between 4-8 intervention projects/year.
- The curator may be institutionally based full-time or as an adjunct employed regularly, or freelance working on a particular exhibition. Generally exhibitions are mounted in series, implying that the curator's time is 100% in preparing the exhibition, while conceptualizing or working in the early stages of the next exhibition as soon as the first one opens.

Preparatory work. Both the facilitator and the curator have considerable preparatory work before the opening of the exhibition or the beginning of the intervention.

- The facilitator meets with company decision-makers to develop the challenge, and separately with the artist to ensure that they understand the company culture and practices. The facilitator takes an active role in activities to build trust between the employees and the artist.
- Most of the curator's work occurs before the exhibition opens: he or she selects the artwork(s) or commission new ones, prepares the site, and writes essays or a catalog to accompany the exhibition. Marketing the exhibition to the potential audience occurs in the latter stages of preparation, whereas for an artistic intervention, marketing the process itself occurs in the pre-stage, in order to find a company willing to buy the activity.
- Both the facilitator and the curator develop strong relationships with the artist.

Interpreting the artist´s work. The time-frame and manner in which the artist's work is interpreted to others is different for the two roles.

- For the facilitator interpretation is an ongoing process, as he or she stays alert for interpersonal conflict that may arise, keeps the decision-makers informed, and provides ongoing support to the artist as needed. The facilitator may organize seminars for those involved in artistic interventions in different organizations to share experiences and realize that others may have similar concerns. At the conclusion of the intervention, the facilitator encourages participants to organize some sort of event or celebration to mark the fact that the

artist will no longer be involved and they must continue to use the tools and methods learned on their own. The facilitator is seldom involved in writing a formal report for the company.

- For the curator interpretation is part of the preparatory work to ensure that the exhibition will appeal to the target audience. If the artist and artworks selected, arrangement of the work in the chosen exhibition site, explanatory essays onsite, and catalog with scholarly interpretation are all appealing and promoted through appropriate marketing, then the exhibition will bring fee-paying patrons to the museum, or purchasers to the gallery, and subsequently the artist will become better-known.

Potential Differences in the Facilitator's Role

If the facilitator's role was more like that of a curator, we suggest that facilitation work would be different in ways that follow from a analysis of the work of the three facilitators from a curating perspective:

The facilitator's relation with the artist would change. If the art and the artist's work were considered more seriously, this, rather than artistic methods would be the primary focus for the selection of an artist, although the artist would (still) need to have competencies to work with organizational members. If company decision-makers and employees adopted a relational perspective on art (Bourriaud, 2002), both parties in the communication processes of the artistic intervention would have equal importance, and artistic development would be as important as organizational development. As a result:

- The artist would have a stronger position within the intermediary organization
- The choice of artist would be made on criteria different from those currently used, and the process would probably be different.

SKISS provides an example of interventions that were somewhat similar to the above model. In SKISS there was primarily one facilitator/project manager, aided by one artist as an assistant, who arranged funding, recruited artists and smoothed relations with companies. The artists worked in pairs, arranging their own placements and acting as their own facilitators during the intervention process. Afterwards the artists spoke of personal (artistic) development through the engagement.

A lingering question for further research is how would the company's "problem" be addressed?

The facilitator's background/training in an art discipline would be necessary. The facilitator would need a more serious background in contemporary art practice or art history. Currently most facilitators say they have worked as an artist or art educator in the past, but we found no further indication of this in our interviews. Alternatively, professional curators could work in the facilitation role within an organizational setting.

An important question that needs consideration is how would facilitator/curator gain access/trust of company decision-makers and employees?

Arguments for funding the intervention would change. The argument for financial support would differ somewhat, using both the artist's point of view and organizational development concepts. Governmental or foundation funding may become easier if the intervention is motivated from both cultural and profitability aspects.

A question that arises for further research: Would an ongoing, single-purpose intermediary organization such as Tillt still be feasible? How would it be different? Currently Tillt spends

considerable resources (time and talent) 'marketing' the artistic intervention process to bring it to the attention of company decision-makers who then 'buy' an intervention. As a result, a considerable portion of funding supports Tillt's administrative overhead.

Conclusion and reflections

In this paper we have developed an argument for regarding the facilitation of an artistic intervention by a member of an intermediary organization as similar to curating. Our empirical material comes from research in three Swedish contexts where interviews with facilitators revealed their various processes in working with artists, organization decision-makers, and employees. These three strategies were quite different from each other in a number of ways; however, they could all gain from a comparison with the curator role, which is more conceptually developed and more clearly related to art and artistic processes. We therefore suggest that there is a potential for development of the facilitating role in artistic interventions, when viewed through the lens of curating. Also, this curating lens could contribute by being an umbrella for the different strategies, bringing them to a more theoretical level and thereby making them a formal part of the process and more clearly visible to companies who may be interested in engaging in an artistic intervention.

We also suggest that the theoretical perspective of relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 2002) could be a useful tool for development of relations within a company. However, the relational aesthetics perspective would need to be interpreted using organizational language to make it accessible for managers. Here caution would be needed so as not to reduce the concepts to bland statements without conceptual roots. We therefore look forward to more empirical and experimental research in the area of artistic interventions and relational aesthetics.

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