



Grantmakers in the Arts
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Culture Influencing Community Change

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Beyond "Art": A Community Perspective

There are powerful lessons to be learned from considering the full ecology of art within the life of a community, lessons that derive from art as a human and community process, not simply as a product. This panel shares experiences derived from long-term community engagement in cultural life. What kind of art does the community value? What is the role of the amateur? Is the private grantmaking community missing the boat on potentially powerful investments that don't meet the traditional guidelines? Who are the natural but surprising community advocates for the arts and why do they care? Is the debate over "good art" vs. "social work" just a funder-driven distinction? Do we have to stop using the word "art" to realize its full potential?

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Panelists: Penelope McPhee
The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Mark Valentine
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Urban Bush Women

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Pennekamp: I'm Peter Pennekamp. I'm going to talk briefly to set a context, then we're going to ask people what things you want to make sure that we cover. Then Jawole is going to open up, and we're going to work through each one, giving a short presentation, and then open up for discussion. There'll be lots of room for people to get involved. This is all about participation, and we're going to practice it with your help.

When I came here last night and checked into the room, I was overwhelmed by this sort of musty, nineteenth-century smell and immediately flashed back to about twenty-five years ago and the Columbia Hotel in Ashland, Oregon. I went up there to see a variety of plays. They had a remarkable production of *A Comedy of Errors* that got reproduced a number of times. I was there with someone I was very much in love with. It was so incredible, the whole experience. We went back that winter and walked through Lithia Park in a snowstorm. Snow was coming down, there were swans in the ponds in the park, and snow ducks flying out of the water and up into the trees through the snowstorm, through the little lights that were gleaming through the storm, and then we'd go back to the Columbia Hotel and that incredible smell of things that are very old.

Then I find myself twenty-five years later in love with the same person once again, and the links between the experience of being in the hotel, of swans and the wood ducks flying through the snow, the *Comedy of Errors*, and this incredible production that got me there and became part of the experience, to me, is the story. It's about people's lives, and that in fact, outside of those of us who live in the arts, no one experiences it that way. People experience what they do on the way to the theater, in the park; the most magical moments are those in which everything combines to make a whole.

I think as a country of professionals and niche marketers, we've been prosperous by breaking up people's experience. It's true in all fields; that's the way our country works. That's why we dominate the world in some ways, and it's why some of the world is fighting back.

People live their lives in neighborhoods, in their communities, and it's made up of all of the different pieces of their lives, never any one part. The act of being a person in America, or in the world today, is an act of recombination, of taking all of those things

that pull us apart, pull our experience apart, and putting it back together.

The arts are a co-equal part of that. There's a wonderful anthropologist, Edward T. Hall – I'm sure some of you have read his work – who talks about the development of institutions, and how prior to an institution being developed, there are a thousand options, a thousand ways to develop that institution, to think about its mission and how it will get its work done. The day after it was created, it was all inevitable. The day after it was created, everything had to be that way, it couldn't have been changed. It's that way a hundred years down the line. We're not very good at perceiving the options in the world around us. As a species, that's not our strength.

There's been interesting work coming out of other fields that touch on the arts. Public health, after a huge amount of trying to change people's behavior, starting with tobacco, discovered that you couldn't change people's health – and this is a quote from a researcher at Harvard – "unless a community owns the process, outcomes do not occur that you want." That said, there are a lot of political ways to talk about it, and there are lots of ways to frame it, but the truth is, from every piece of public health research, if the community doesn't own an outcome, the outcomes simply aren't as good.

Within the economy, how a community perceives its future is the greatest determinant of what that future is. If the greatest asset is actually the perception, it's actually in the realm of feelings that economies are developed, not predominately in the area of gross national product or which industry is driving it. We think the realm of the arts is the realm of perception and feeling, and yet there is no reason to think that we would be any more or any less working within both the advantages and the things that hold us, without movement within our culture.

When we talked about the notion of "Beyond 'Art': Community Perspective," it's not in any way to say that art's not important, but that art outside of the context of everyday life, art within a consumption model, which is really almost all of what the professional arts world lives in, rather than a participation model, is what makes art not as important as I think all of us would like it to be in the country. There's no reason for that, there's no reason it couldn't be. So with that introduction, Jawole?

Zollar: From the very beginning of the formation of Urban Bush Women, it has been important to have a community vision, although we didn't think of it that way as a dance company. That's not the way we thought about how we functioned.

We just knew that when we were out on tour, we needed to try to find people who looked like us to be in the theater, and often they weren't. So we would go out of our way to do workshops at different places or to figure out, well where can you get really good peach cobblers? So we would meet people there. Then we would find the people who we wanted to be in the theater. Then someone said, "Oh, that's community outreach." I was, like, "Oh, really?" For us, it was just important to make that connection.

As we've progressed over the years, we've found it's important to make that connection not only with people who look like us, but people who are there in the audience, and there in the community that may not necessarily understand what it is that we do, or maybe really want to understand and really want to connect with us.

We've also found that dance has created a barrier, often, for people to come and experience dancing. Yet when we open up dancing beyond the spirit, we find the classes are full. Concert dance has, I think, unlike some other forms, maybe had less respect for the amateur, less respect for the person who just loves to dance and loves to feel the sense of dancing, and has created a real hierarchy and barrier.

What I want the dancers to understand when they're teaching workshops is that everyone should feel good about the dancing experience. You're not trying to make them professional dancers. If you can open up the experience in that way, then I think people will come.

When we did our summer institute in Tallahassee, we were really surprised at how much they came. We had a hundred fifty people showing up for classes, and these were just community dance workshops. We had capacity problems in the space, and so we ended up going out on the lawn. But we found that people really wanted to dance, and they wanted to participate in a dancing experience. Once they knew they would feel safe within that experience, then people came.

That was such an affirming and life-changing experience, to see so many people come. I thought, we open

up these classes to the community, we do all this work, and maybe we'll get ten or fifteen people that'll come, and they'll mostly be dancers. But that wasn't the case at all.

As dance really opens itself up, then the act of dancing and the link between the act of dancing and going to see concert dance in different settings will also increase.

When I did a keynote for Chamber Music America a few years ago, I was telling the panel about this, and the person who was introducing me asked the participants there, "How many of you are amateur musicians?" Probably about half raised their hand. Then he said, "How many of you are professional?" Maybe about the other half raised their hand. I was just stunned, because I couldn't imagine being at a dance conference where that question would be asked. I couldn't imagine that the amateur would even be honored or appreciated or welcomed, and I thought, boy, dance has really got a lot of work to do!

I've never experienced anything like that, and it opened up for me to start thinking about the possibilities of working in the community. Getting past that barrier of the amateur, the non-professional in dance, and making that person feel welcome to the dancing experience. There is definitely a link between that and their ability to support and to invest in a creative experience with a dance company, whether it's on stage or whether it's an activity.

Our work has continually been to further our community vision, now that we know what to call it, and to constantly expand our knowledge base of how to enter into partnerships.

The thing that amazes me as we do this often comes from the response from presenters. We just did a performance at the International Festival of Art and Ideas in New Haven, Connecticut, and it was very successful. We were six weeks working with the Dixwell community, which is a community adjacent to Yale. At the end of it, the director – and it's quoted in the newspaper – said, "Well, you know, sometimes you do residencies for all the good reasons, but you don't often expect great art to come out of it." And I thought, "Well, that is a problem." I was really happy that he said that, and he was brave enough to say that, but I think that is a perception that if it's community-engaged art, then it will be lesser. It will be somehow made to not really engage the artistic ways of thinking to the full capacity – that if you do

it for a community base, you somehow just have to lessen it.

I thought back to my early training with an organization called Affiliate Artists, which was just a wonderful organization. One of the things that they helped you to understand and trained you in is that it didn't matter how abstract your work was, how experimental, how out there it was, if you could find the entry point for the audience, they would come with you. They would open up and come into that experience. We would go out and do these solo performances in factories at their lunch hours – they educated us on how to find that entry point for those people to enter into the experience. That really stayed with me.

So it stayed with me in the community vision of making work. You can be as postmodern deconstructionist as you want to be, as long as you find that entry point. I have always found that the community will come with you.

If nothing else comes out of this panel, I'm hoping that people will understand that the art experience can be really, really profound. Just as you have the range of possibilities in creating work, sometimes the works are excellent, sometimes they're mediocre, sometimes they're bad. Any artist goes through that kind of oscillation. Artists who work in community will also do excellent work, and sometimes it'll be mediocre, and sometimes you'll just miss the mark. It does not mean if you miss the mark in a project, that community art is necessarily this dumber creature.

I have really not found a situation where people would not go with me, as long as I found that entry point, as long as I could understand something about their lives. In opening up my life, we found this place of coming together.

That's what I do, and I think there are a lot of artists out there that are doing that. They're fighting against the same stereotype that the director of the festival had. He felt like he was doing it for all the right social reasons, but he didn't expect wonderful art to come out of it. We have to expect that wonderful art *will* and *has* and will continue to come out of those community-engaged experiences. Thank you.

Pennekamp: Most everyone in the arts world of funding talks about how they wish they had colleagues elsewhere in their institution that were as interested in what they were doing and understood

the arts. That's come up in a lot of different conferences. That's why we asked Mark Valentine. Mark is in charge of cross-cutting programs at Packard. He comes out of the environmental movement, environmental funding, but really understands in many different ways, why working with the arts is important. We thought people would appreciate the chance to hear from someone who's not within the arts, and not from that background.

Valentine: Thank you. I have to admit I feel an odd sense of *déjà vu* and displacement at the same time. I was in this room about a year ago as the co-chair of the Environmental Grantmakers meeting. Now I'm back in a very different context. One of the sessions I attended in this room was actually a session that was co-sponsored between EGA and GIA, on the role of art in the context of environmental advocacy, and it was a fascinating session.

As Peter said, I am the director of cross-cutting initiatives at the Packard Foundation. It's a new position. I don't think it has many parallels in other institutions, and there may be very good reasons for that. It's not necessarily the easiest of terrain to navigate.

I thought I'd speak a little bit about it, and talk a little bit about how I've attempted to incorporate art and culture into the work I'm doing at the Foundation. I'm very pleased also to see my colleagues from the arts program at the Foundation, including the arts director, Nancy Glaze, who's a GIA board member, lurking in the back. In case I make a misstatement, feel free to throw something, as long as your aim's pretty true. Don't hit Penny.

The Foundation is about forty years old, and I think the architecture, if you will, of the Foundation is fairly typical in terms of different discipline-based programs. You can call them silos, you can call them whatever you like. You can call them smokestacks. They conform to the architecture that I think most academia operates under, as well as government.

The breadth of our programming is quite extraordinary, from family planning and reproductive health in refugee camps in Sudan and Afghanistan, to working in the local four-county area on after-school art programs. It's a very diverse array of programming. We work in about twenty different countries, different countries chosen for different reasons based on different program dynamics. The list of programs includes population, environment, art, children and

family community. We have an organizational effectiveness program, and we have a science program. We all have, as I would phrase it, different creation myths behind each. They have different rationales for their existence. The way we're structured as a board, each program has its own committee, and so there's a certain amount of gravitational pull around each one of those spheres of influence. In between all of that is the Cross-Cutting Initiatives Program, a small asteroid in an elliptical orbit around some of those larger planets.

Historically at Packard, there's been a strong attempt in the last three or four years – the modern era of the foundation if you will – to entice different programs to cooperate. The way we managed that in times past was to create a dedicated pot of money, and if two programs or more were interested in accessing it, and they had something that was relevant to their program, as long as two program officers could put their thumbprints against the lock, the vault would open, and you could reach in and procure the cash.

Amongst the most entrepreneurial users of that device turned out to be the arts staff and me. At that time, I was in the conservation program. I exited that program as the deputy director, having helped build it over the last four years, and during that time, I was always looking for different ways to partner with different programs in the arts staff. I was the most entrepreneurial in terms of looking for opportunities to link their work to the work of the other programs.

To some degree, that conversation came to a head at the last board meeting, where we had a conversation with several of our board members about art and culture in the context of the other programs. Within this community, art as an end and art as a means and art for community and art in the world of the amateur, these are emotional, theological conversations. I have to admit, I understand some of them, but I don't have the deep emotional religious resonance that it has with you. So if I misuse terms or if I offend anybody's sensibilities, you can talk to Nancy, and she'll relay the approbation later.

It was a very interesting conversation to take to our board, because we talked about the role that Ansel Adams' photographs played in livening people's interest in the Sierra Nevada and Yosemite. We talked about how, in a current context, we actually make grants right now to support theater groups in

Ethiopia, to look at issues related to AIDS, reproductive health, and so forth.

One of Nancy's lessons to me is that anybody can recognize bad art. Don't support bad art for a good cause. We've been working very hard to build standards into this type of grantmaking. It's somewhat new for us, but it's been interesting for us to do a scan of all of our programs.

We brought in one of my former program officers in the Conservation Program to talk about art and culture in the context of conservation in the Pacific Northwest. Peter knows this terrain fairly well. Looking at the holistic approach one takes to communities in the Pacific Northwest, where conservation of the place, and conservation of the culture, and conservation of the community are all of a piece. You don't slice them out the way we do in our particular culture. We had one of our program officers who deals with Nigeria talk about the role of music in the context of Nigerian society, and in building social movements.

It was a very interesting conversation for our board to hear, because I believe they tend to take a somewhat more traditional approach to the arts based on institutions, disciplines, practices, and audiences, rather than really looking at the whole community. We've talked about locally looking at the arts component of the larger vision of what we do in our own backyard, the four counties that surround the Foundation, and linking it to a holistic vision of what the future might look like in Monterey County.

I had a meeting recently with all the program officers at my institution that work in Monterey County. In this corner, I had agricultural conservation easements, and in this corner I had arts as a new approach to economic development in the county. Over here, I had transitional housing for the homeless. Over here, I had transportation, and so forth. They had no idea what was going on in the county with respect to one another. We began to have a conversation about how all these pieces might come together.

From my perspective, it's about knitting. That's what cross-cutting is about. Selective knitting. It's not about expansive *kumbaya* moments where everybody practices guitar around the campfire. That'll get me out of there in a real hurry. It is about finding places on the landscape, and I think in my own approach to the work, it is about finding places where programs are active concurrently, but in a disaggre-

gated context, and bringing them together. My own bias is that art and culture are a significant part of that conversation. They're woven into the very heart of that community. As you envision what the future might look like, I think it's essential that it be engaged.

I don't know how difficult it is for you to work with your colleagues in other disciplines within your respective institutions. It's a conversation that we're still experimenting with, and it's difficult to get people to broaden their peripheral vision when they've been tasked to deliver very specific deliverables by very specific deadlines. But it's been a very interesting conversation for us to participate in. It's part of the conversation that we're having.

I am the non-arts grantmaker arts grantmaker, in that some of the grants that we have made together include supporting a new regional magazine in the Bay Area that looks at literature, art, and environment. We've also jointly co-sponsored photographic exhibits; a look at the Sierras and also at the Bay. I have a proposal in right now from a group working on climate change in the Pacific Northwest, where they want to pair kids from lower-income neighborhoods with artists to look at how one creates art that accurately captures changing life in the context of climate change. It might be too hare-brained, but it was an interesting idea.

So there are some interesting things that are coming from this conversation, and to me it's about putting art in a different kind of context, rather than the rarified pigeonhole in which it sometimes gets placed. So we'll leave it at that.

Pennekamp: And Penny. The Knight Foundation, as you know, has been one of the most prominent, traditional funders of mainstream arts until fairly recently. Penny's going a whole different direction with it. It seemed like a good time to talk about that.

McPhee: Well Mark, I just want to say to you, be careful what you wish for. Knight Foundation started with a cross-cutting interdisciplinary program that had a pot of money that if two different programs could access it, they could have it. Now we are some other thing completely, having eliminated all of our former programs and really created a culture, we hope, that is all about looking at communities in a holistic, systemic way and seeing how the pieces

interact together. Have we gotten there yet? No. But we'll talk more about that later.

I just want to say a few words, and we'll come back to what Knight Foundation's doing along those lines, if there are questions about it. But I wanted to pick up on what all of my colleagues have said, and say a few special words to my friends here in this community of Grantmakers in the Arts.

We've all thought a lot about what community is since September 11th. We've thought about it, both at the very smallest scale, our families and the people closest to us. And we've thought about it in the very largest context of where we fit in the global community and what it means to be an American in this world.

One of the things that Jawole said about her work and bringing people to the space was about feeling safe. I think that's what community is about. It's about the place where you feel safe.

So coming here last night after not being at GIA for a number of years was a wonderful reunion for me. This is a place where I have always felt safe to express ideas that maybe weren't popular, and to be both provoked and provocative. I want to do a little bit of that provoking this morning, and also be provoked by you, and hope that we can begin a conversation.

I know that all of you have probably had the same experience at your foundations since September 11th that we had at Knight Foundation. From nonprofits in general, and arts organizations in particular, there are two very distinct voices coming to the foundation.

One voice is those artists and arts organizations saying, "What can we do for our community?" And the other voice is those groups saying, "What should the community do for us?" It leads directly to this question that we've all been struggling with about relevance, and about the arts as part of community, and about what the arts really mean to community and what they do for community.

We've experienced in the last couple of months the real power of art to bring us together; to help us understand something that's not understandable; to ignite our imaginations about solutions. At the same time, we were facing some struggling organizations that haven't found their role in being relevant to their communities and yet have great expectations about what the communities need to do to preserve them.

It's a question that we're going to have to deal with as grantmakers.

We in south Florida struggled with the very same question after Hurricane Andrew and had the very same kinds of responses. And I'll tell you an interesting story. Hurricane Andrew was in 1992, almost ten years ago. I remember distinctly two groups who came to Knight Foundation. One was a very new emerging children's museum. They were in a storefront at that time. I think the storefront was wiped away with the hurricane. I don't remember exactly what happened to their facility, but the facility was not meaningful anyway. What they learned after that experience was that they didn't need a facility. What they needed was to be out in the community working with children, and they did that in all kinds of meaningful ways. They are now about to open a wonderful, brand new, huge, expensive facility because the work led them there, not because it led the work.

The other organization that I remember equally powerfully was a theater company, a major theater company in the community, that called the president of Knight Foundation. The executive director of the theater company was in Aspen at the time of the hurricane. He called the president of Knight Foundation and said, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God! The sky is falling and we need help!" The theater hadn't been affected by the hurricane, physically affected, but he was anticipating that there were going to be very real problems with subscription losses and single-ticket buyer losses and donation losses. All true, but his approach to the Foundation wasn't about, "What can we do for our community?" It was about, "What can Knight Foundation do to make sure we come out of this whole?" That theater company is about to close.

After ten years, you can see what those attitudes have meant to the support and relevance of those organizations in our community. I think the same distinctions will come after September 11th, and that's what we need to be helping arts organizations and artists figure out, how they contribute, because they have a huge contribution to make.

It brings me to a metaphor that I'm going to experiment with on this group, because this is a family in which I feel safe. Maybe you'll give me permission to experiment with my "art-as-spinach" metaphor.

My "art-as-spinach" metaphor is that arts organizations, the traditional ones that we funded as grant-

makers over time, and foundations, have had the attitude that what we produce is good for you, and you need to eat it whether you like it or not. Not only that, but you actually need to eat it in its purest form. We're not going to let you have a spinach soufflé, and we're certainly not going to let you have chicken Florentine, because that, after all, is Pops, not Mahler. We won't even accept the fact that you might eat frozen spinach every night at home, because we want you to eat fresh spinach in the venue of our choice at the time when we're giving you the fresh spinach.

We've been doing a lot of thinking about this presentation of the arts at Knight Foundation and, as many of you know, we've invested a lot in thinking about, for example, how symphony orchestras relate to their communities. What is their relevance, and what is their power, and what do they mean to communities? When are they spinach, and when are they something other than spinach?

It's relevant in this conversation today for us to think about how we live our lives, and that the demarcations we've made as funders, and in some respects, demarcations that we've forced our grantees to make, aren't the way people live their lives.

We often hear of the example, and I think it's a good one, about church being the center of community for many African-Americans. In church they participate in many kinds – and all of us do, in our own places of worship – many kinds of activities, religious, social, civic, artistic, cultural. Many kinds. But no distinctions are made. It's part of the whole fabric of the experience. It's not the expectation that you have to buy a ticket and go to the concert hall and have this small sliver of your life differentiated from the rest of your life. How we then bring that kind of meaning and social interaction and quality, if you will, to that process is a really important one.

One of the things that in our technological snafu we had hoped to bring to you today was a very small fragment of a documentary that is running on PBS stations now, many of you may have seen it, called *Continental Harmony*. And *Continental Harmony* was a project created by the American Composers Forum for the millennium that put composers in communities in all fifty states of the nation. Actually, there ended up being about fifty-six collaborations because I think a couple of states did so well that they couldn't be turned down, so they got two.

This project, which was funded in part by Knight Foundation, and part by the NEA, and I think there were some other funders as well, put composers in communities and empowered communities to really work together to create. There were no guidelines, there were no restrictions. The communities chose the composer that was going to come and work with them.

Knight Foundation then decided, Wow, this probably needs to be documented, and we made the grant to Twin Cities Public Television to document *Continental Harmony*. Then that documentary is what we'd hoped to bring a sliver of to you today. It's probably just as well that we didn't, because it's very hard to take a little piece out of an hour-long documentary.

But I commend it to you, because these projects were, to me, the living proof that what Jawole tells us is absolutely true. That being a part of a community-based arts project has nothing whatsoever to do with quality. That quality comes from somewhere else, and it can be good, it can be bad, it can be mediocre, no matter how many artists or collaborators are involved in it. Because there was an entry point for each of these activities, the community was brought along, in some cases, to some remarkably postmodern activities, but that had relevance, had resonance, moved communities to action. In one case it brought together two diverse ethnic communities who lived literally on opposite sides of the track and hadn't had any correspondence for a century. So those are the things that I hope we'll now have an opportunity to talk together about.

Pennekamp: I just watched *Continental Harmony* the other night, and I thought it really describes everything. Because one of the problems we have in thinking about community is we over-romanticize what community means.

Bernice Johnson Reagan, Tomás Ybarra Frausto, and Lawrence Levine at one point were talking about what community means, and what they said was that every community is defined by being heterogeneous as well as being homogenous. It is as defined by its disagreements as well as its agreements, and every member is a member of multiple communities, which is the geometry, the complexity of it, and once you've thought about it, you realize that you'd better ignore it.

One of the things I saw in *Continental Harmony* was that when you put really good artists, in this case composers, with the community on the terms of both the creator's abilities and the assets within the community, what comes out of it is fabulous art. Some of these experiences had a hundred percent of the whole town involved. Madison County, Mississippi had never done anything together culturally before, and ended up doing a postmodern piece working with a very postmodern New York composer. What comes out of it are the first actual intermingling of both the art and the conversation within the community.

It's phenomenal stuff. But it's also very significant art. You listen to it, and you go, "Wow, this is really good stuff. Yeah, this is good stuff!" On all levels it works.

I'm going to go out on a limb, and I'm going out on a limb because Rebecca Lowry and Sandra Lowry are here. Can you two stand up quickly? Then I'll tell you why I'm out on a limb. Rebecca runs the Native Performance Fund, and Sandra's on the staff of the Seventh Generation Fund. The reason I'm going out on a limb is because Amos Tripp was going to be here to talk about what's happened at United Indian Health Services. And Amos told me I should talk about it.

The reason I'm out on a limb is Sandra is the sister of the chair of the board of the organization I'm talking about. I normally don't believe in talking about organizations of color as a white guy, so you throw something at me if I get it wrong.

The reason I think United Indian Health Services is important is, when Alcatraz happened, and people started really looking at issues of Indian culture and equity and all the political issues involved in sovereignty, in California, one of the first issues that arose was Indian health, which in California was worse than any other state in the country. The effort was to force American Indians to not exist through a whole legal structure that was tied to the Gold Rush, and making sure people didn't have land that might become valuable.

There was that first beginning about health. In Humboldt County this little office opened, it was one little storefront. At the same time, the same people who were doing it started looking at the cultural issues. There were elders alive who had still learned the cultural traditions, regalia, making the sacred dances and songs from people who had been there

before the first white people showed up. You had younger people learning from that intermediary generation, so there was only one drop in that sequence of passing culture, which meant that the culture was very much alive still. There were people that were still doing the sacred dances. They had never been stopped; there was no interruption. It was down to not very many elders anymore.

So the people started looking at health, started looking at culture as part of how people could become strong at the end of this horrendous, horrendous period of subjugation and cultural genocide and actual genocide.

Over the years, as the health services grew and the culture grew, the first dances in the '60s had about twenty people there, and now there are over two thousand every year. There's year-round preparation. The regalia-making is phenomenal. There's a whole generation of artists who are now nationally and internationally known who have grown out of working in the tradition and working in painting and various art forms that have all grown out of the same development.

They have a health center that's out in the woods. You really can't see it. It was built by volunteers with scrap materials, and it looks like the Winchester Mystery House. It's an amazing sort of conglomeration.

They realized it was time they could actually develop something new. They wanted to be downtown, because they feel powerful now, powerful in their own culture, powerful in their ability to communicate. United Indian Health Service has become nationally known, but totally invisible in its local communities. So they worked with an architect who understood some of the architectural principles and came up with the design that you have to see to believe. I invite, on their behalf, everyone to come out and look at it. Before it was built, I told them that, "What are you going to do when you start getting two-hundred thousand visitors a year?" And everyone's mouth fell open. It's already beginning to happen. But at the beginning, at the center is nature, as a peace park. It looks like the high mountains. It's all granite, there's a stream flowing through it. It's all built in a longhouse design. You'd have to see it to believe it. It's just phenomenal. The whole place is a work of art.

You come in and the opening isn't a reception area; it's actually the meeting room. There's a Brian Tripp mural being put in, but it's all going to be about culture and interaction. Then you go into the area where the waiting rooms are, and it's full of amazing art, thanks to grants from the Ford Foundation, Humboldt Area Foundation, and donations within the local community.

They've now opened a \$19 million health center. It's on forty acres of wetlands. They resurrected the old river that went through it to deal with the environmental degradation that had gone on since it had been Indian lands, and every aspect of the thing builds on every other aspect. It's nine tribes working together. They've been in the Amazon helping tribes there develop diabetes programs, because according to Brazil, there is no diabetes problem in the Amazon. UIHS sent down all the testing kits. It turns out, well, guess what? There is diabetes among indigenous people in the Amazon. So in the opening ceremony, we had people from Brazil with sacred arrows for the health of the center.

But the center itself – every piece builds on every other piece. There is no separation between environment, culture, art, and health, in any aspect of what's happening there. We had someone from New York, a public health officer, come out and say that in his thirty years of studying the notions of holistic health, this is the first time he'd seen anyone put it into practice.

The question that always comes up is, why here? It's not about the place, it's about a community. There are some specific things that happened there.

One, people understood right from the beginning that physical health and environmental health and cultural health were all the same thing. That was buried deep within the culture itself, there was no actual separation. There is no traditional word for "art."

Secondly, people went off and got Ph.D.s and became attorneys, and a remarkable number of people from this community are going to college every year now. But then they came back and kept working, so you find that the people thirty years later who first came up with the dream were the people who are still working on it now.

By the way, the board, I think with one exception, are all women. There are now something like three

generations. There will be a grandmother, a mother, and a daughter all on the board. They're all users of the facility. You realize that these were the people, that only people who had died along the way were not there to see the opening. And that they were remembered. In fact, one of the really wonderful leaders right from the beginning had died recently, and so they didn't do the dances, out of respect for the people who had recently passed on.

There is a sense of inward respect, and the sense of knowledge about obstacles, and the role of culture and art within that. If you walk through that facility, if you talk to the people, art is absolutely co-equal with health. There is absolutely no question about its role within the community, within the center, and within everything they're doing. It's turning into one of the most beautiful cultural centers around, as people wait to have their feet worked on, or to go to the pharmacy.

That notion that the separation, where we can put the separation back together, is what we've all been talking about here. In fact, art gets better, the power increases, communities get more involved, and ultimately I would say audiences increase. By always running down the path of a commodity model, if we only sold better, or had better messages, if we only told people, "Gee, if you go to the theater tonight, you'll see swans swimming in the lake. You'll see wood ducks flying up through the light into the trees."

Well, actually, that only happens if that experience happens in their life. You know, you can't recreate that through marketing. You can't impose in a meaningful way the way people are supposed to experience something unless they're actually experiencing it that way. I think the power of taking art back into a community setting...the notion that in fact you're willing to invest in the community's own process – which by the way I think is small money. One of the other things is that you can have huge impact for very little. The communities will create the context for art in ways that we really lost in the nineteenth century.

It's amazing, watching *Continental Harmony*, and I know everyone here has read Lawrence Levine's book, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*. Right? If you haven't, you need to go out and read it. Because what you see in *Continental Harmony* is a virtually unbroken continuance of what Larry talked about in the nineteenth century. The notion that we need to be passive in our

engagement, rather than assuming that the engagement is the thing, then the outcome will be all sorts of good art. Actually, it's truer to the period we call the Classical. It's truer to what Mozart experienced than what we've superimposed at this point.

So rather than just ramble on, Sandra and Rebecca, do you need to throw anything at me? Did I get it wildly wrong?

Lowry: You did fine.

Pennekamp: Okay, great! It's hard being Amos. By the way, Amos had just opened the building, and he didn't really want to fly. He was supposed to be on this panel. But I didn't really want to fly, either, and they still lost my luggage. So let's open it up. Go for it.

Audience: I just asked Penny to give us a couple of minutes on what Knight is actually doing.

McPhee: Okay, I'll try to be as brief as I can. Having gone through a strategic planning process, the Knight Foundation came out, staff and board, recognizing two primary places where we thought we could have impact.

One was in our journalism program, because our founders were journalists. The other was that we have an in-perpetuity relationship with twenty-six communities. We decided that the way we could have the most impact was to deepen our relationship with those communities, which meant looking not through the silos of an arts and culture program, an education program, a social services program, but rather through the lens of community.

We are working very hard to roll out, and it's very time consuming, labor-intensive – and ask me five years from now whether it has worked – community-based and outcomes-based process. We are asking communities to work with us to tell us what outcomes they would like Knight Foundation to achieve in their community over the next five or so years. We've been accustomed to thinking in one- to three-year grants. Now we are gradually moving to thinking in three- to five-year grants, but I hope we'll be thinking in ten-year commitments to organizations and to outcomes.

So the community then goes through a facilitated process and comes back and says, "This is what we

hope Knight Foundation will spend its resources on in our community over the next five or so years." Our staff is now organized as community-based program officers. Instead of having an arts program officer, we have a Long Beach program officer. We have a resource team at the foundation who maintains content expertise, but they're a resource that our program officers in the communities draw on. We don't have an arts and culture program anymore.

Heidi Rettig, who I hope is here, is our new Content Specialist in Arts and Culture and Civic Engagement. So she'll be working in research, program planning, and program evaluation with the local community liaisons.

So what does that mean for the arts? Well, it's very interesting as the process rolls out. In some communities – and a good example is Grand Forks, North Dakota – one of the specific outcomes that they wanted to work on was strengthening arts organizations. It was a very specific arts-related outcome, and that was because they really feel that's part of having a vibrant community. They have some arts organizations that they're very proud of, but they know they need sustainability. That was one of the outcomes.

In Fort Wayne, Indiana, one of the outcomes was to work on broader access to the arts. It was much more about engagement. But again, a specific arts-related outcome.

In other communities, and Long Beach, California, is a good example, the community decided that they wanted to focus on a single outcome: school readiness. Early childhood development and school readiness in a single ZIP code. Can you imagine, ten years working on one ZIP code on one outcome, how exciting that is?

What it means for Knight Foundation is, it doesn't matter who the partners are. It doesn't matter what kind of organizations they are. They might be hospitals, they might be arts organizations. They might be schools. They might be daycare centers. But if they can help us achieve the outcomes of school readiness that we are looking to achieve, then they are potential partners for us. It doesn't mean that they have to behave differently. It doesn't mean that an arts organization has to become a social service provider. It means that they have to be able to demonstrate that they have something to offer in the development of children and early childhood. That's not a far reach; all of us know that.

The other thing that we're trying to do, and in some ways this is the hardest, is to create what we're calling community investment plans, that look at the outcomes we're trying to address and say, "What kinds of opportunities do we have to do that? How much risk are we willing to take? And how do we define risk?" Our board said, going in, that they want us to both nurture promising, tested activities, and experiment with new and innovative activities.

One of the things to be able to do that is, you actually have to do the research to find out what's promising and what's been tested. We're investing a lot in scanning the various fields where our communities tell us they want to work. Like early childhood, we've done a lot of work with an organization called Child Trends, to look at activities that have been demonstrated through experimental design to show outcomes for children. That's the lowest-risk kind of activity. Then all of your risk is with implementation, but you know the idea is solid. All the way down to "best bets," which are activities that theory tells us ought to have good outcomes for children, but there has never been an experimental design to prove it. So we have to either create the experimental design, or be willing to live with the risk of not really knowing in the end whether the outcomes were the result of our programs.

There is a lot of measuring risk along the way, and figuring out where you want to be in each community. A lot of that depends on what the outcomes are the communities decided to seek, because some are more measurable than others. Some are more likely to be affected by Knight Foundation. Some, we're going to be a minor spark in a much bigger picture, and we have to recognize that. So lots of issues to manage.

The key is the community helping to tell us what it is that our money can best do. In some communities, we're the biggest foundation, the biggest player. In some communities, we're just another source of revenue. There's no way in Philadelphia that Knight Foundation is going to change the community by what it does. So a lot is deciding on what the appropriate niche is for our foundation. It's risky, and it's certainly much too early to give you any feedback as to whether it's realistic.

Audience: When you say the community is telling you, who is really telling you?

McPhee: That's a very good question. There's no way to do this ideally, because the community is diverse, as we know. We're approaching it in three different ways.

First is that we have done, in all of our twenty-six communities, a community indicators project, which is broad public opinion surveys of the whole community – that means five hundred people representing the community – combined with administrative data about that community. We've not only asked people what they think the biggest problems are in the community, but we have administrative data to tell us what the dropout rate is, and what the teen pregnancy rate is, and what the infant mortality rates are, et cetera. That's one way of gaining knowledge about what the community thinks its assets are, and what they think their needs are.

We've then done lots of focus groups, community-wide focus groups. Those are always hard, you never can dig as deep as you want to dig, because each focus group reminds you of other players who ought to be involved in the conversation.

We've established committees that are Knight Foundation advisory committees, who help us sort through what we're learning and make recommendations to the foundation. So it's a three-tiered process.

Pennekamp: One thing I would say is that rural communities still have the beauty of being manageable. Often neighborhoods, too, where neighborhoods still exist in urban areas, so it's actually easier to see what the outcomes are.

By the way, just to give credit for where a lot of this work comes from, the talk about more participatory models goes back quite a ways. The first person I heard try to really articulate it was John Kreidler. He used to be a member of the board of GIA when he was at the San Francisco Foundation. Then I think Lila Wallace started carrying the water on this quite a few years ago. At the time, I remember at some of these conferences people saying, "Oh, it's just like throwing money out of airplanes." I think what Lila was able to do over time was identify where work was happening and be able to document it and create those forums. Now more and more people are seeing that there are alternative ways to do the work that is often simply more powerful. Even if all you're after is a better bottom line, you end up with a better bottom line, so why not?

It's exciting to me at this point to be part of a panel at a conference where so many people are talking about work like this, because certainly five, six years ago, that would have been impossible. It was still fairly heretical. So there has been progress made.

But in a small community, I think in terms of engaging something called "the community" you have to know what your principles are. It's never wide open. When we started our work, the principle was, we really wanted to make sure that it was an equitable table. It wasn't based on who had power. We made a decision right off the bat that power had no relationship to community outcome or artistic outcome. We invited people in community organizations that were very inventive, not the ones that saw themselves as powerful.

So for example, the Arts Council thought they should be at the center of it. We almost didn't invite them, and then at the last minute decided they probably should be there. They walked into a room that was fairly hostile, which was a surprise to them, because they thought they were the center of everything.

Over the period of all of this, it was a year of very intensive planning that involved interviewing a hundred thirty artists, community surveys, focus groups. The group that was meeting as the steering committee was American Indian, it was Portuguese, people working in their community, it was a very different group based on what they were contributing to the community. The Arts Council in the end asked them to come in and be their advisory steering committee. Within a year, they became the bulk of their board.

Then there was a period where there were the old board members who really believed in power and high art, and the "right sort of people." Then there were all these new people who'd gotten involved, who thought that was a bunch of bunk, and it was about everyone getting involved. The head of the Arts Council, who was the oldest power broker of the arts in the county, and thought if it was the way the San Francisco Symphony did it, it was right, over time could see how the new people on the board were the ones who were actually making the institution thrive, and the old people were throttling it. So over time, she started to shift, and she was more powerful than we could deal with. She started to shift her point of view and move the old power brokers off the board, to the point where today the board is completely dominated by an entirely new ethic. It

took five years to get there, but now the Arts Council is the center of all sorts of stuff happening in the community. It's inclusive, that other organizations are on their board.

Our notion was, why do you do diversity? Diversity is there not because there's anything romantic about it, but because it's smarter. I was interviewed for a book that's being written about why diversify boards. I said, well, they're just smarter boards. I mean, why would anyone choose to have a board that was narrow and all represented one point of view? You know, that's just dumb!

Audience: I was going to follow up on what you were saying, because I did want to talk about power. There are both differences of power in the community, as you were just recognizing, and in Kentucky, you might have coal owners, coal miners, and environmentalists, and you can invite them all to the table. They might come up with something they can work together on, but they might not. So you have those power differentials.

When you talk about artists in the community, the other power is the funder. How do you negotiate your power as a funder for what groups you're working with in the community, and what groups will have access to funders? What groups will be able to shape the agendas, and what groups are so submerged in the power structure that they might not even be able to shape that agenda?

Zollar: I can only speak from the experience of being the artist that's in the community and having dealt with that double-edged sword of an agenda being handed to you and trying to make that work. It's a complicated thing, because sometimes I've seen that agenda being handed and being able to move some things. Other times, you start to become really crafty about how to work around it, or how to go over, under, all sorts of ways.

In our work, it is often easier to work in a smaller community or a more defined community or a smaller city. We do try to do the working with community organizers, an advisory council, a group of people who start to become defined as the leadership, not as who has defined the leadership, but the people who, in going to different small places, they say, "Oh, you need to talk to So-and-so So-and-so, because they're doing this work. And this person over here is doing this work over here."

The leaders become defined in a different kind of way. I separate that from the powerbrokers, because they're two different kinds of energies. They're both very much needed, because you need the access of the wealth and the support that the powerbrokers can bring to the table. That's sometimes a mistake we make, not including that. At the same time, the leadership within that community, the trusted leadership, is the really important key that's going to make the project move forward. It's a delicate dance.

McPhee: Can I add? This is really a fundamental question for us, and certainly in the way Knight Foundation is trying to work now, it is at the heart of everything we do. We talk constantly about partnerships, that we want to be a partner foundation, that we want to work with nonprofits, but the scale is clearly tilted. No matter how much we go into these communities and talk with people and say, "We want you to tell us what the agenda should be, we're not telling you," they say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, but tell us how we get the money." You know? "Yeah, yeah, yeah, but what do we have to do to get the money?"

It's a very, very hard conversation, and I am persuaded that the only thing that's going to solve it for us is going to be time and trust. As you work in a community for a long time with a long-term agenda, not today's project, tomorrow's project, and the next day's project, because their history with us is a one-year grant, a two-year grant, and then it's starting all over and, how do we get the money the next time?

I'm praying that if we're there and truly listening, and truly behaving the way we are talking, that that trust will develop and the equality in the partnership will be about a joint setting of the agenda, a mutual understanding of what has to be done, a mutual understanding of who has the capacity to do it. Knowing that Knight Foundation's money is really a very small piece of the equation of getting to the outcomes that we're mutually trying to get to. That's our contribution, but in the context of the outcome, it's actually a pretty narrow contribution. It's less important than a lot of other players' contributions. But I don't know. I mean, I think we're a long way from being there.

Audience: Mark, I'd like to ask you a question, and others. It's another sense of power. It's not just the individuals, but also an assumption of what is the most powerful rationale to approach any issue.

I've worked with environmental groups where science was the king, it was the power. And if you came with any other rationale, it didn't hold weight, and sometimes was characterized as *kumbaya*, art was. And I've been in other circles where economics was the power, not just the people. I'm just wondering how you're dealing with those different hierarchical methods of coming to conclusion and making change in your grants?

Valentine: I've had experience with those same people, and in the environmental community there's a real challenge with the emphasis on earnest sanctimony sometimes, in terms of, if we all understood the velocity at which the sky was falling, we'd get out of the way.

The approach that I've taken to cross-cutting grant-making at the Foundation is to ground it in places, and remove it from the abstract, and not talk about the issues as much as talk about the place. The peculiarities of the foundation that I alluded to earlier are that there are three geographies where we've got more than one program active. Actually, we've got four programs, four to six: the four counties, which are the counties closest to our physical location in Northern California, but also the Philippines and Mexico. We've begun to look at the outcomes, and it is quite resonant with what Penny's described, the outcomes that we're after in those places. To move past what we're allowed to do based on the discipline, and look at the disciplines based on the tools that we have. And then just look at the toolbox, and decide what tools we can deploy most effectively.

So it was an interesting challenge to talk to our board about supporting art and theater in Nigeria and Ethiopia, because we don't have an art program in Ethiopia. We'd have to talk about art and culture as a tool. We don't have an environmental program in Ethiopia either, but if you want to work on family planning and reproductive health and you want to avoid a major refugee crisis in the highlands of Ethiopia, you'd better darned well get a handle on alternative range land management and agricultural practices, which is an environmental issue.

It's been an interesting conversation about moving past the disciplines and the benchmarks associated with them, and just looking at the whole foundation, its human resources and its financial resources, its networks as well as its program officers and their budgets, as tools that we can use. And to talk about

the outcomes. What do you want to see happen? And how broad is that outcome? For us, it's been an interesting conversation.

In Ethiopia, is success when the demographics get to a certain point? Or is success sustainable development in Ethiopia in its broader context? This forces us to have some interesting conversations.

With respect to my colleagues in the environmental community, you can't say that we're winning so far. There is more receptivity, although the sanctimony comes very easily, and I don't know if this is true in the arts community, but it is in the environmental community. There are lots of conferences where funders invite other funders to hear what they have been doing, and it's an exercise where everybody's fishing and nobody wants to be hooked. Because everybody's looking to leverage everybody else away from what they're doing already, and it's just a habit that we fall into so easily.

People are looking for different ideas about how you motivate and reach people, and we're talking about societal transformation. If anything, art is a transformative experience.

Right now, in the program that I am helping to shape, people are coming to us. I'm not throwing the Foundation's weight around. I think the issues that were raised earlier are generic to philanthropy. I just participated in a program officer training for some of our more recent staff, and I did a skit with a colleague from the Population Program about the environmental funder who meets the small, little coastal protection group and in the process of twenty minutes of conversation transforms him into a global media giant with aspirations to be on VH1 nightly, and understanding all of the intricacies working in twenty different cultures around the world, only to receive them two months later to ask them how the organizational assessment had gone, and why they were so hare brained as to think they could expand so rapidly with so limited resources and so little background in working on diverse cultures. It was quite a hit with my colleagues. And yes, I did play the program officer.

I think these are generic questions, and it's so easy to skew the conversation. It definitely falls under the heading of, never a bad joke, never a bad meal, and you are the smartest person in the room every time. You have to be careful as to how you throw your weight around.

Right now, I'm attracting people who don't fit categories. So I don't have that problem. I have the people going, "You look like you might be willing to talk to me about this, because I can't figure out which of the doors in the rat maze I'm supposed to go through, and this one has a question mark on it, so maybe we can talk a little." It's been an interesting series of conversations as a consequence.

Audience: I'm with Alternate ROOTS, which is the Regional Organization of Theaters and Artists South, and ROOTS has been doing much of this grassroots-based work for twenty-five years. I'm interested in the safeguards and ethics that foundation program officers and visionaries are putting into place to assure that the grassroots people, who often initiate this work, continue to get credit for it, continue to be involved in the process, and continue to feed it.

One of the things that I'm finding in work that we're doing in Lexington is that many of the powerbrokers end up being that middle level where the foundation officers completely get it; we're having this conversation about art and community change here. The artists certainly get it, because they're doing it. But where you find the big blockage is in the local arts councils, and the folks who are very invested in going to the symphony first quickly co-opt what the grassroots artists are doing to fit the funders' guidelines that have come from this higher impulse. So what's the ethical obligation there?

Valentine: Who wants to try that one? Time for audience participation.

McPhee: I'll take a shot at it, and I would like to hear some thoughts from the rest of the group, because I think it's something that we all struggle with.

I think one of the ways to think about this and, again, we're in such early stages that we haven't even made any grants like this yet, but I see grants not to individual organizations, but to collaboratives and groups of organizations. I think the way this process has to work is that part of the power that we do have, and we all know we have it, is to be able to bring people together to work together, and that rather than the funnel of the money always being through those organizations that you're talking about, that the funnel really has to be through different routes to a collaborative kind of process.

I'd love to hear some thoughts about how to do that, because we've all had experience, I think, with collaborations, where the money still went to the big player because that was the safe fiscal agent for the foundation, and the other players felt like second-class citizens. So how to get around that is a really important question.

Audience: I'm from the National Endowment for the Arts, and I'm going to follow up on what Lisa was asking, because I was thinking about it in a slightly different way. I started to feel that Penny, you and Peter outlined different strategies.

Peter's was looking at one where you take an organization that works in the way you are resonating with. This is a group and the way they work is already in this integrated way. You take that, and you look at that model, and you build on it and you see, how can you support this, how can you make it more successful?

What you've outlined seemed to be more like an internal shift of thinking where the community does its business the way it normally does, but you have changed the way you look at it. You have changed your outcomes, and instead of them being silo-ed in their different areas, you look at your outcomes more holistically. So you're looking at your community more holistically rather than in the boxes.

I feel like something that philanthropy did half a dozen years ago was use the blunt instrument of partnership and bludgeoned the field with it, and just said, "Okay, we think it's a good idea for everybody to work together, so go out there and work together," and people went kicking and screaming. Some good things came out of that, and some damage was done, too.

I'm wondering if anybody is looking at those organizations that are so often in disenfranchised communities that don't have a lot of resources, so you get these community centers who are multifunctional and already work in this holistic way because they have to.

Is anybody looking at that, looking at those models, valuing that way of working, and saying, "Well, how can this be built on? Is there something that we can learn here from this way of working and support it?" Of course, not all CVOs were created equal. I'm not saying everybody knows how to do this well, but try

and look at some of that practice, and nurture it, and see what we can learn from looking at that.

Pennekamp: Claudine, do you want to answer that?

Audience: When we started funding community-based institutions, we looked at the successes we'd had in the past and looked at a profile of those organizations, not in a very scientific way. We came up with four questions that we asked to tell us whether or not an organization was community-based, because in response to the comments, as soon as the guidelines went out, huge institutions sent us very sophisticated proposals saying, "We just discovered that there were these poor people that live about six blocks away, and we're going to make them our community, and we're going to serve them." That wasn't exactly who our guidelines were geared towards, but they had very sophisticated means of getting the jargon out, they did the research, and we were getting a bunch of proposals – and I'm still getting them – that had all of the ills of the community listed in a very concise way, and then the same programs they'd always done that were going to be the interventions. We wanted to clear the field. For people who are persistent, we never did clear the field.

We came up with four questions. The first one was, we asked people to talk about their boards and their staffs. And we wanted to know what the community representation was. We tried not to be rigid about any of those questions, because we really wanted to hear how people were thinking about their community when they described their boards and their staffs. So that was question one.

Question two went at what kind of cultural citizen you are. We wanted to know, What kind of partnerships do you already engage in? Who do you work with? Who refers people to you? Who do you refer people to? In part, we asked that question because we knew of some community-based organizations that were overwhelmed, and they were doing social service as well as doing arts, and sometimes they weren't equipped for it and they were seeing real burnout. But we also knew of organizations that had formed partnerships so that their staffs weren't burning out. So we wanted to know who are your partners? Who do you work with in order to get your work done?

The third question we asked was, what's the nature of your conversations with your community? How do you talk to them? How do you hear from them? This was during a period when a lot of plays and a lot of exhibitions were not being understood by the public. We were saying to people, "So when they don't get it, what do you do? Do you say, y'all don't get it? Or did you say, come on in and we'll show you where this comes from? Do you do panel discussions? Do you do advisory groups? What's your response?" Again, we didn't have answers. We wanted to hear what that community was doing.

The last part was an issue that we had lots of arguments over, because we really didn't want to fund people who had discovered community-based work yesterday. We realized that sometimes a mid-level or large institution have hired people who are really good at this and really smart. We figured we wanted to know about the team that had to implement the work. Tell us about that team, and tell us about their experiences, so that we would know whether or not this was a team we had confidence in.

We learned a lot from the answers. We also learned a lot from the groups that refused to answer some of those questions. Some of them couldn't even answer the questions, like "What are you talking about, partners?" Or that their partners would be six other institutions of the same size, and maybe one other small organization. Again, the data was not empirical, but it really gave us a sense of how people were thinking about the work.

Pennekamp: Our interest actually comes from believing that if you take a look at why institutions get created and what their missions are, every institution thinks it's serving the community. If you take all the institutions together, and all their missions, and all their funding, and how they work, you end up with something that's totally cut up based on what funders expect, where the funding comes from, historical reasons. But very little of it has to do with how any given family living on the corner of 135th and Broadway actually leads their life. It's starting with community groups and backing up.

So in the arts work, you create again a very inclusive group, because we believe that's just smarter. If you create a meritocracy where the quality of people's participation and thinking can rise to the surface, our experience has been all communities have got that. As long as you take the structures out of the

way, there's a natural equality that happens without anything being imposed.

In terms of institutions, no matter who they are, we're not in the business of saying what anyone should do, but we're supporting what comes out of this community-based effort. If they want to get on board, fine; if they don't, fine. It's the degree to which they demonstrate it.

The farther away they are, like the Arts Council in our case, which was a long way from being able to demonstrate it, we actually went back to the group, with them sitting in the room, and said, "What's it going to take you to trust them to do this, if they think they should do it?" And people said, "Well, we don't trust them to do it." What came out of that was a negotiation where the community-based group became an oversight committee in the process, something that was embarrassing for the Arts Council, because they'd been in the discussion all the way along. They were sort of willing to swallow and accept it, and again over time, that changed the institution.

But we actually weren't aimed at the institution. We were really aimed at the way the artists and everyone who was working with arts perceived how art could develop in the community.

We've done the same thing in the economy. What we now have is, instead of a closed room set of economic development planning, it's very porous. It's very open. And that group now, several years later, has decided that one of the six basic industry clusters in the county is the arts. That came from the economic community. I'm not sure how I feel about that. I can argue that one in a variety of ways in terms of my own beliefs. But it is the evolution of people's understanding of art when it comes out of a lot of venues and everyone can participate.

I would say, overall, the arts have gotten better, the better institutions have gotten better, other institutions have come further along. But it's got to ride that crest of it coming up, not the crest of it coming down.

That raises all sorts of ethical questions for us as funders. One of the things that we do that's most clearly demonstrated is a lot of support of strategic planning and organizational evaluation.

Our staff gets involved in the intake, and then usually there are consultants involved. One of the questions

came up at a Grantmakers for Effective Organizations conference, where everyone in the room beat me up, because they said, "The ethical problem is that you're too close. And if you're too close, you can manipulate the outcomes, and you shouldn't do that." And I said, "Well, that assumes we have any proprietary right to any of the knowledge that comes out of it." And our assumption is that we have absolutely no rights to it. That this is information of the organization that, in writing, they are told is not our information. Not only do they not have to give it to us, they are expected not to give it to us. Because otherwise it breaks that sort of sanctity over the power.

I've had this discussion a number of times, and I've heard people saying it's unethical. What it always comes back to is, who owns the information? Invariably, someone says, "Well, what happens if they've been embezzling? Don't you have to know, because then you have to do something!" I said, "No, you don't. That's their business. We're not police forces. No one said we've got to bust people for embezzling, or that we need to know about that, or we can't separate that out."

In a lot of this work, you have to be willing to separate your power base and outcomes, and know that more often than not, the people who really know this stuff ain't us. If we're not involved, they're going to do better than we're ever going to do. We're just going to really, pardon me, fuck up the process. So on to the next person.

Last comments?

Thank you all.

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