Part I

Governing and practising creativity

2 Creative spaces and the art of urban living

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Introduction

This chapter offers a critical perspective on the instrumental use of arts and creative practices for the purposes of urban regeneration, in contrast to vernacular and everyday culture and exchange. Opening with the dialectical perspectives of Raymond Williams ('community culture') and Richard Florida ('creative class'), the move from community arts to social inclusion, and from cultural to creative industries is charted in the context of British urban and cultural policy regimes. Within this discussion, challenges to vernacular creative practices and places are presented, with examples of how culture is treated in flagship developments. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the forms of resistance by artists and others to the commodification of the everyday and the perils of co-optation by the regeneration process.

> [Richard] Florida treats the Toronto Arts scene as a souvenir … he doesn't get it
>
> (Anon, Ottawa, 28 April 2008)

> [W]hen Marxists say we are living in a dying culture, and that the masses are ignorant, I have to ask them … where on earth they have lived. A dying culture and ignorant masses are not what I have known and see.
>
> (Raymond Williams: 1958b)

These two observations could be said to be a world, if not at least an era, apart. Richard Florida, proponent of the 'creative class' (2002), in his latest incarnation at the University of Toronto, and the late Raymond Williams, author of the seminal *Culture and Society* and *Culture is Ordinary*. Williams had been a champion of vernacular, working-class or at least non-elitist cultural expression and experience, but one that was not bound simply by tradition or custom. He thought that introducing change and exposure to new practices over time was a route to cultural development. This incremental, transformative, inclusive approach is in contrast to the imposition of *grands projets* or schemes, and the promotion of the high arts to those with lower 'cultural capital' which have been an enduring feature of instrumental state arts policy and, latterly, arts and social inclusion interventions.

Florida's notion of a 'creative occupation class', on the other hand, claims a relationship between a particular cultural milieu – by no means limited to or even necessarily including artists and creative industry workers – who are not place bound, but, like flexible capital, are footloose and able to be tempted to (re)locate and congregate to cities and areas that provide certain conditions. These include café culture, cycle paths, night-time economies and a creative buzz that together engender clustering of living, working, consuming and inward investment – property, human and financial capital. This creative ecology is thought to underpin the innovation synergies and spillovers most associated with the archetypes of the Silicon Valley and other university-technology powerhouses of Boston (MIT, Harvard), Cambridge (Silicon Fen), Berlin (Eagle Yard), and the exemplars in city regeneration areas of Barcelona (@22), Helsinki (Arabiaranta), London (City Fringe) – to name a few (Evans, 2009).

What these and their emulators have in common is a 'fast policy transfer' tendency (Peck, 2005), many featuring long-term regeneration and redevelopment projects which have been the subject of planning blight and local resistance. Breaking the impasse over these sites and quarters has been justified by using universal rationales – national and global – with a particular effect on local and community culture in terms of the areas and neighbourhoods within which these new creative spaces are being developed. The *creative* class (and underlying innovation-knowledge-science city mantra) is crowding out the *community* (working or ordinary, implicitly 'non-creative') class. This particular form of gentrification is not particularly novel, in view of the now established systemic regeneration effects from property and public realm schemes, and the shift from use value to exchange value of urban space. However, what is different here is that culture and creativity and their spatial and place-making dimensions are being used in arguments in support of the social and community cohesion impacts of the arts *as well as* the more overtly economic development objectives pursued in creative cluster and class policies. Both sets of policies look to produce forms of distinction in particular places within which creativity is to be established. The idea that a creative cluster and 'class' group could be located in a green-field site and housed in a new business park, as with other industries, would be anathema. For the vernacular is an essential backdrop and condition for the new creative quarter, at least to begin with.

This conflation and competition for creative and cultural space is, however, a far cry from the roots of arts and community development practice, which today leaves vernacular and community culture at the margin and faced with joining the creative industries or urban regeneration regimes in pursuing economic or social, rather than cultural, aims. As Garnham also observed, 'there is likely to be a lack of fit, if not direct opposition between policies designed to support [arts/cultural] "excellence" and policies designed to combat social exclusion; the stress of access fits very uneasily with that strand in creative-industry thinking which wishes to reject a hierarchical division of cultural forms and practices' (2001: 458).

In what follows, three sets of cases illustrate the complex relationships between cultural policies and economic cultural developments, and vernacular cultural practices. The first examples represent efforts to provide cultural venues as sites

for social inclusion, in the wake of recent policies to combat exclusion. The second group of cases foreground how the role of culture has been used in aiming for community cohesion within a context of urban growth and the consequent government 'Sustainable Communities' strategy. The third set of cases document how efforts to promote ethnic arts spaces (and by extension, multiculturalism) have become entangled with the broader shift from cultural to creative industries, as encapsulated in the 'creative city' agenda. In all three sets of cases, emphasis is on flagship developments that are perceived to meet the goals of urban regeneration, but which fall short in providing everyday cultural spaces that address the needs of the local populations in which they are situated.

From community arts to social inclusion

The foundations of community arts practices in the 1970s coincided with the first wave of major youth and structural unemployment, and urban regeneration policy and programme responses in the UK and in Western Europe generally (Evans and Foord, 2000). These practices had some resonance with Williams's democratising community culture in that they were largely place bound, with identified 'communities' engaged (or not) in experimental and compensatory arts activities (Kelly, 1984). Sites included arts and media centres, youth and community centres and housing estates. Arts in education, community radio, artist studios in industrial buildings and *agitprop* theatre were notable cultural responses to the effects of social change during this era. Arts centres themselves have had a particular relationship with the vernacular since they have predominantly been housed in second- and third-hand buildings – from churches, drill halls, factories, to town halls, with over 50 per cent of urban centres located in buildings that were over 100 years old (Hutchison and Forrester, 1987). In 1969, there were 180 projects claiming to be *arts labs*, and from a survey conducted in 1970 there were over 60 designated (i.e. professional) arts centres (Evans, 2001: 90). In a 1986 survey, over 250 arts centres were reported by the Arts Council, but in 1996 only 129 were listed and by 2006 a much-reduced 98 arts centres were included in the latest survey (limited to funded, 'legitimised' centres), with only 64 per cent of these actually calling themselves an 'arts centre' (ACE, 2006). The extent and distribution of community arts centres is therefore understated in official reviews, not least those associated with faith, migrant (e.g. Caribbean, Chinese, Polish 'cultural' centres) and special interest (e.g. art form) groups. The foundation of many arts centres and community arts facilities draws as much from local action as from 'planning', with most established as the result of action by local residents or an arts or community organisation (e.g. school, college) to establish a facility, as well as local authorities seeking to improve local provision or, more recently, to 'regenerate' an area (ACE, 2006).

From the early 1980s the community arts movement and associated socio-cultural rationales fell foul of *dirigiste* arts policy – led by 'economic importance' and 'urban renaissance' imperatives – and consequent funding regimes (Hewison, 1995; Pick, 1991), as well as the associated liberalisation of leisure and consumption spaces. It was not really until New Labour's readoption of

social inclusion policies that arts and inclusion and 'access' again became a cultural policy imperative. The concept of 'social exclusion' 'had emanated from the brutal housing estates of the Parisian suburbs, to be adopted by the European Union, then the UK government through a newly-formed Social Exclusion Unit (SEU). This included policy reviews of the Arts and Exclusion at community and neighbourhood level' (Shaw, 1999). Subsequent interventions, in large part to compensate for the neglect of community and youth cultural activity and resources, included Creative Partnerships (Arts in Schools/Youth programmes) and a decade (1995–2005) of lottery-fuelled capital reinvestment in the cultural infrastructure (arts, heritage, sports), primarily existing arts buildings and organisations (Evans, 1998; 2004).

The new social-cum-cultural policy imperative has also given rise to the development of new facilities in new locations. In contrast to the reuse of industrial buildings for artists, designer-makers and performing and media arts spaces that are commonly found in the post-industrial city of today (Hutton, 2008), new-build cultural facilities have had mixed success and reception. Some have failed within a year or two of opening – Sheffield's National Museum of Pop Music (now the local Student Union centre), the National Centre for Visual Arts Cardiff, Bradford's National Faith Centre, Life Force (a £5m attraction which received 62 visitors in its opening week) – while others struggle to complete and operate such as The Public 'digital media centre', West Bromwich. The original development organisation for this centre, Jubilee Arts, had been forced into administration as cost over-runs (from £40m to £62m) undermined this overly-complex facility, with no clear artistic function. Still, the regional Arts Council claimed that the centre had 'already made a tremendous contribution to transforming West Bromwich, helping to kick-start other long-term regeneration projects that will bring economic, cultural and community benefits to the area' (Luton, 2008). When the digital gallery had to be closed as the computerised exhibits failed, the Arts Council withdrew its outstanding funding less than a year later, leaving the centre's future uncertain.

The local perspective on The Public, below, encapsulates the difficulty faced in developing new arts facilities and 'edutainment', in an area poorly served by mainstream amenities. But clearly the local community has not been engaged or considered in such a top-down, star architecture-driven venture:

> the public is a complete waste of money! Sandwell and Black Country needs better schools, cinemas, theatres, swimming baths, ice rinks etc not a £52million white elephant! I have 2 children aged 12, 9 they rather spend £20 at the cinema watching the latest pixar film which has more artistic merit than all of you clowns who run, and said yes to the doomed project in the first place.
>
> (*Building Design*, 13 June 2008)

Ironically, the supermarket chain Tesco has submitted a joint planning application next to The Public for a mixed-use retail and office development, with cafés/restaurants and leisure facilities – with a local primary school and police station

due to relocate to this site. Perhaps the prosaic will be more popular than the prophets of the new media digital experience.

On the other hand, higher-profile art museum conversions such as Tate Modern on London's South Bank and regional galleries such as the Ikon, Birmingham and the Baltic, Gateshead, have survived, more or less successfully – although heavily reliant upon public subsidy. But while the institutional and national cultural centres and events retain a residual value and importance, despite in many cases their declining popularity and narrow class base (Bunting et al. 2008), it is the everyday lived cultural practices and experiences that signify, to borrow Willis's phrase, 'common culture'. As Willis argued:

> the new temples of High Art ... may enjoy some corporate popularity, but as a public spectacle not private passion, as places to be seen rather than to be in. The prestige flagships are in reality no more than aesthetic ironclads heaving against the growing swell of Common Culture. Let's follow the swell.
>
> (1991: 13)

Willis also suggests, less reactively, that some of these mainstream cultural institutions should also be focal points and facilitate partnerships and collaborations with local arts and cultural activities and networks. For example, the development of local libraries and museums through more animated and accessible forms of interpretation; arts in the community, health and education; and the use of interactive technology, could be seen to offer a bridge between the sterile high and popular culture dialectic, and he suggests a more cultural democratic approach, again echoing Williams:

> The recent successes of certain museums and art galleries in appealing to a wide range of people and communicating with new audiences, and the continuing success of many libraries in providing an ever wider range of symbolic materials, rest not upon extending an old idea to new people, but on allowing new people and their informal meanings and communications to colonise ... the institutions
>
> (Willis: 12)

Community venues such as arts centres also serve a dual purpose, including a social role as informal meeting place – not always reflected in audience/user figures: 'around half of all users visit for social reasons, independent of their attendance at, or participation in, arts activity. For most, this social use is occasional, but a core of around 13% of attenders use their arts centre for social purposes on a frequent basis' (ACE, 2006: 49). Conversely, venues such as pubs have played host to regular theatre, comedy and music performance – folk clubs, Sunday jazz, pub rock – including resident companies and early 'arts labs' (Schouvaloff, 1970). In this sense, users adapt and adopt informal cultural spaces and communal venues according to their social and collective needs, not those of curators or arts policy makers. Lefebvre recognised the tension in the term 'user', which had something vague – and vaguely suspect – about it. '"User of what?"

one tends to wonder. The user's space is lived not represented' (or conceived) (1991a: 362).

While much community arts and cultural activity and facilities have been incremental and, to a certain extent, developed organically, the scale of major development projects and population growth together challenge traditional cultural planning and community development approaches (Evans and Foord, 2008). Social inclusion objectives in this scenario have been subsumed into wider sustainable development and communities meta-themes.

Creating cultural opportunities in sustainable communities?

The latest incarnation of state concern for community culture can be seen through the rationales underlying the UK government's Sustainable Communities strategy (ODPM, 2003). In this case, culture is attached to the government's sustainable development, 'quality of life' and economic growth goals, particularly around population and housing expansion in and around major areas such as the Thames Gateway and Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) regions. This has required planning for new and extended settlements at a scale not witnessed since the 1960s and earlier post-war new town developments – with a target of 3 million new dwellings. What these new and changing communities might look like – how their cultural and social aspirations and needs might be reflected in amenities, services and the design of spaces – are therefore questions that have not been posed in living memory and practice, certainly not in a society that is no longer homogeneous or static but which is 'mixed' (socially, tenure-wise, culturally) – with considerable mobility and churn, and both inward and internal migration.

What vernacular actually means in this dynamic context and how arts and culture – and heritage legacies – might be reflected in the urban ecologies that are emerging, is also not clear. This is particularly the case where the community does not yet exist *in situ*, for instance in new urban villages, but also where densifying populations comprise incumbent and new lifestyles and vernaculars, some of which will have originated elsewhere. This is played out in the everyday, for example, through school curricula and extra-curricular activities, celebrations and hol(y)days; through high streets, food, fashion, music and through the use and reuse of buildings and public spaces.

From new town to growth region

The challenges of planning for culture in a context of growth can be illustrated in the case of Milton Keynes (MK), the iconic planned, post-war new town, and in the development of its civic theatre. While no regional arts planning exercise was undertaken for this new town, the potential for a large theatre was highlighted in the development blueprint in the 1970s. In 1985 the MK Development Corporation reported that the creation of a live performance space would be highly desirable and, following a successful bid for National Lottery funding, an award of £20m was made towards the £30m cost of a theatre and gallery. In 1999 the theatre opened: in the words of the Council, 'in addition to bringing a variety

of performances to the city, Milton Keynes Theatre provides a focus for the city's already thriving cultural life'.

From another perspective, however, this traditional theatre is felt to lack a certain spirit. In response to an audience question, 'what would you do to make MK a place where arts were a contemporary and necessary experience?', the theatre director Sir Peter Hall said: 'build a smaller theatre for a start'. The present theatre is a dehumanising space. It's well attended because, presumably, there is nothing else that gives you the beginnings of that kind of experience, but it's not a congenial theatre (Hall and Hall, 2006). His namesake the academic planner added,

> I think MK is difficult precisely because it is so completely new. MK central is the most totally created, planned space that we have in this country … but I think the problem with MK is that it has been too successful. So it does not have any derelict spaces
>
> (Ibid., 2006)

The distinction between (artistic) content, the flagship facility and the importance of 'place' – cultural and symbolic – is apparent from these observations. The idea that building a new theatre is necessarily the right type of provision or the complete answer to local cultural provision is obviously questionable (Evans, 2005), particularly given the realities of funding a venue reliant on touring shows and with no in-house production resource. A 'thriving cultural life' may not be the impression that either residents or visitors would have of this 'city'. The Theatres Trust – the national Advisory Body – also makes the point that a town that already has a lyric theatre within 30 minutes' drive is unlikely to need another, but there might well be demand for an arts centre or other small cultural facilities. A strong connectivity with cultural facilities and spaces to learn and exchange demands a local catchment, with the neighbourhood level – including schools, community centres, churches, parks – providing the most regular and highest rates of participation in arts, crafts and group activity (Evans, 2001), underlying the 'power of the everyday' (Lefebvre, 1991b).

This suggests that the planning and provision of cultural amenities and facilities driven by development opportunities and an inappropriate use of 'place-making' can neglect community and cultural needs, and the imperatives of both accessibility and public choice. In the ongoing national survey of cultural participation by the UK culture ministry, *Taking Part* (DCMS, 2007), the key barriers to participation in arts and cultural activity were found to be not only 'access' – location/transport, cost/entry price – but also the relevance ('subjects I am interested in') and quality of cultural activity and events on offer. In short, community and more vernacular culture that reflects the experience and interest of local audiences and participants. Current sentiments suggest that this is an issue in this growth region. Residents in the town of Wellingborough, Northants in the MKSM growth region, when asked how they felt about opportunities for participation in local decision making mostly disagreed that they had an influence on decisions affecting the local area: access to facilities was a problem (public transport) and between 30

per cent and 48 per cent said they had *never* visited their museums, theatres and concerts halls, while those who did went infrequently (Wellingborough Borough Council, 2007). Satisfaction with theatres, museums and galleries was also lowest in the neighbouring districts, in contrast with more ubiquitous amenities such as libraries and parks and open spaces.

'We're all creative – *now*?'

The cases highlighted above illustrate the instrumentalisation of culture in social and sustainable development policies. However, the recent shift from a focus on 'cultural' to 'creative' industries within UK policy discourse and a corresponding emphasis on the economic value of such activities also has implications for what kinds of cultural activities and spaces are valued. Pratt (2005) notes that this shift reflects a political project that can be traced back to the late 1990s, when centrist 'New Labour' sought to disassociate itself from the left-leaning 'Old Labour' and its support of cultural industries (GLC, 1985). The shift is also linked with the increasing focus on 'information' and 'knowledge' as bases of competitive advantage (Evans, 2009). In 1998, a government-instituted task force on creative industries defined such creative industries as 'activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS, 1998: 3), foregrounding the significance of the economic – relative to cultural – aspects and valuation.

Gibson and Klocker (2004) argue that beyond the role creativity can play as a generator of economic activity, another concern of contemporary policies is how creative industries can distinguish or brand places, thereby contributing to urban and regional economic development. Indeed, following the 'creative city' princi-ples advanced by Charles Landry (2000) and by Landry and Bianchini (1995), a number of national and local policy makers have sought to identify the cultural assets that could distinguish a given place and promote those assets that could simultaneously add value economically and reinforce ethical values. In practice, however, this strategy has tended to privilege certain 'creative' activities and a consumption-oriented approach to arts and cultural development and fuelled a copycat creative city movement (Evans, 2009).

Hidden art and rich mix

The application of this broader policy orientation within the UK can be exemplified in the growing popularity of ethnic arts and the development of branded 'multi-cultural' spaces. Within amateur arts activity, this subsector figures prominently today. Table 2.1 presents the findings of a survey of amateur and voluntary arts participation. The scale of engagement includes 50,000 organised groups repre-sented by nearly 6 million members and 3.5 million further volunteers taking part in over 700,000 events attended by 158 million during the year. While amateur dramatics and music are the most popular, 'multi-art', including ethnic and new art forms, makes up the largest and most active group.

Table 2.1 Amateur and voluntary arts, 2006/7 (DCMS, 2008)

Art form	No. of groups	No. of members 000s	No. of extras/ helpers 000s	No. of performance/ events	No. of attendances 000s
Craft	840	28	13	3,000	924
Dance	3,040	128	12	57,000	10,906
Festivals	940	328	395	12,000	3,481
Literature	760	17	11	4,000	191
Media	820	62	12	21,000	1,563
Music	11,220	1,642	643	160,000	39,325
Theatre	5,380	1,113	687	92,000	21,166
visual arts	1,810	265	52	8,000	1,289
Multi-art	24,330	2,339	1,692	353,000	79,789
Total	49,140	5,922	3,517	710,000	158,634

Most creative practice and 'making', such as crafts, amateur and youth art, is still undertaken in vernacular (or everyday) settings, including ethnic and community culture, and in interstitial spaces. From the skateboarders and young graffiti artists outside the concourses and undercrofts of the arts complexes of the South Bank, London and MACBA, Barcelona, to the 2+ million ballroom dancers that meet regularly in local halls and clubs, even before the advent of TV's *Strictly Come Dancing* (and presumably one reason for its audience success, attracting 9 million viewers each week).

Moreover, in the extreme of 'fringe' cultural display and exchange, locations are also more often to be found on the edge of the city, such as raves in warehouses or fields, which commonly attract audiences from a 50-mile radius, and weekly community markets – selling crafts, antiques, food, clothes and household goods – as in ethnic quarters and in second- and third-world cities, under the shadow of motorway flyovers and football stadia. Dance, music and entertainment acts intermingle with these markets, which regularly draw participants from a wide area of the city and surrounding regions. Cohen argues that 'the most prominent examples of cultural fusion in the arts do not come from global centres but rather from the world's periphery; they represent primarily an attempt at localization of global stylistic trends – the fusion of Western artistic styles or forms with local third or fourth-world cultural elements' (1999: 45). For Werbner (1999), the exchange goes both ways, where migrants from the 'periphery' bring and develop a knowledge and openness to other cultures that creates new hybrid opportunities *within* the metropolitan core. Writing about the British Pakistani community, she argues that this cultural group has engaged in a complex traffic of objects-persons-places-sentiments which has altered the perceptions of 'Britishness' and enabled the creation of a British Pakistani culture (Evans and Foord, 2004).

A new and prescribed attempt to capture the multicultural city in physical form and place – and recognising its absence and marginal position in the past – is seen in two cultural facilities in East London, the Rich Mix Centre and the Institute of International Visual Arts (INIVA). Located in the city fringe area of the borough of Tower Hamlets, which contains several of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK, and host to past and recent diasporas from Europe and Asia, these new-build arts centres on former industrial sites aim to be a focal point for local communities, a meeting place for entertainment and cultural education. They also seek to challenge and strive for creative excellence over a range of art forms – working towards a new understanding of British culture. What is being deliberately understated here is the multicultural basis for these ventures, which is manifested, in the case of Rich Mix, in its multi-screen cinema dominated by mainstream Hollywood and occasional Bollywood films, and as home to music training agency Asian Dub Foundation; and in the case of INIVA, visual art/ photography exhibitions of work by 'artists from different cultural backgrounds'. Their location (and funding mix) seeks to play a major role in the regeneration of an area that had already been subjected to office and residential gentrification and development. A visitor to these multicultural arts centres would be surprised by the white faces of the majority of staff – attracting the 'right' skills to operate these facilities from the local community has apparently proved to be difficult. Evidence of ethnic youth and community cultures from these multicultural neighbourhoods is largely absent in their designated arts centres.

These optimistic cultural developments were based on *creative city* principles (Landry, 2000), focusing almost exclusively on creative industries and related retail, hospitality (e.g. curry and balti houses, wine bars, designer retail and galleries), visitor attractions and street markets. Their strained evolution and creation is also indicative of their ambiguous place, situated between mainstream cultural institutions, local regeneration and new cultural practice – but fitting none of these comfortably. At the same time, their multicultural residential neighbourhoods have been neglected by this consumption-led approach, creating a spatial divide with social programmes which promoted training in new media and patronising capacity building, but which ignored the local meaning and memory of place and the cultural knowledge, aspirations and skills of local residents (Evans and Foord, 2004). The rich-mix promise has been reduced to a commodified landscape of street retail and entertainment – a consumption opportunity for adjoining office workers, weekenders and the new urban professional (Shaw, 2007).

Resistance and exclusion

As development encroaches, the vernacular comes face to face with the global, whether masquerading as state or as private interest. While these grand projects and regeneration schemes radically alter the city landscape and locus of mass leisure consumption, they arguably still have less resonance with the everyday places and practices in the residential areas and prosaic functions of the city. Locations that are increasingly reflected in artists' representations now include suburbia, everyday spaces, objects, people, and the artist-as-subject and autobiographer.

Examples include the self-conscious work of Grayson Perry, Sarah Lucas and Cindy Sherman, and in the opening up of studios and workplaces through 'Hidden Art' to the public and vice versa during, for instance, Open House and Open Studios annual tours. As well as celebrating the 'ordinary' (*sic*), this also represents an internalisation of cultural expression and a narcissistic tendency of the contemporary artist and a lack of engagement with the political (and community). This engagement has in some respects shifted to the arena of environmental and social justice movements, rather than the influence of the avant-garde and bohemian radicalism of the past (Wilson, 2003).

> The DiY Culture [*sic*] of squats, anti-roads protests and Reclaim the Streets actions is, among other things, a direct assertion of new cultural possibilities – and a way of living in which culture, art, pleasure would play a central part.
> (Edwards, 1999: 2)

Site-based resistance movements are also active in mega-projects such as PobleNou, Barcelona (Kriznik, 2004) and elsewhere, with artist and community intervention in the regeneration process in their own backyards. For example in Sheffield, West Yorkshire, artists have been directly engaged in the process of redevelopment of the city – in gentrifying Devonshire Quarter ('DQ'). Andy Hewitt and Gail Jordan are site-based installation artists with a studio overlooking Devonshire Green near Sheffield city centre. Two projects were commissioned and undertaken by this team, both focused on the DQ area: Outside Artspace (2001–2) and *I Fail to Agree* (Hewitt and Jordan, 2003).

In Outside Artspace the artists worked with the city planning department to help develop a vision 'to reinforce the identity of the area and improve land use, transport, urban design, the local economy, housing mix, sustainable living, quality of the environment and community safety' (Hewitt and Jordan, 2003: 26). This area has been associated with youth activity and small businesses serving this market (skateboarding, record shops and cafés) and a growing university student body, due to the development of new halls of residences (Evans and Foord, 2006). During this process West One, a large-scale, eight-storey apartment development was under construction overlooking the only large green space in the city centre. The artists visited the West One showroom to discuss their vision for the development. They said that the council planned to build a bandstand, create a pleasant safe area with CCTV – an image directed at the 'exclusive' apartment market, with the green as a 'front garden' feature for new residents, rather than a as community, social and public space. The artists' proposals arising from community consultations included a venue for art projects, exhibitions, film, performance, music events – as part of an annual programme – and youth facilities, including a skateboard park. These proposals were received by the Council and contact with them then stopped – the recommendations were not taken up. Five years later, in the master planning consultation exercise, 'concern was expressed that the Green skate park was not shown on the (new) plans and they had heard that it was being got rid of' (EDAW, 2007). Forms of dialogue and engagement proved to be merely cosmetic in this case, a familiar exercise in co-optation.

Resistance is not confined to local artists, but local communities express their anger at the so-called culture-led regeneration process and housing renewal, through community newspapers such as the *Salford Star*. The city of Salford – 'poor cousin' to its Manchester neighbour – hosts Salford Quays, a 1980s redevelopment and central government-inspired (and funded) urban regeneration zone, now hosting the Lowry Arts Centre and Imperial War Museum of the North, and soon-to-be-relocated BBC studios at a new Mediacity UK development adjoining Salford University campus (Christophers, 2008). This new cultural quarter is served by an extension to the Manchester Metro Light Rail – does not go to Salford town centre and to where most local people actually live, including young people who have little or no ownership of the arts complex, from which, not surprisingly, they feel excluded.

In 2006, six local lads ('hoodies') from an East Salford estate were asked by the *Salford Star* to visit the centre to see the Lowry painting exhibition (depicting local factory workers and 'working class people off similar estates'). On a wet Sunday afternoon they entered the building, went up the escalator to the exhibition and walked past the information desk, into the gallery. They were stopped within two minutes of entering this 'free' venue and refused entry. Security was called, but no reasons were given for this by the staff. A another visitor at the time commented: 'basically they were local lads coming in to look at the pictures because they were bored stiff and they were denied access to a facility which we've been told is open to everyone'

Responses in contemporary street 'art' – from the transformation of simple tagging and graffiti to the 'signature' work of Banksy and Christo – represent another approach to the perversion and conversion of mainstream culture, but also the cult of the artist-personality and their marketing and promotion. For instance, the graffiti crew that covered the New York subway trains and led to the mayor's zero tolerance in the 1970s/80s has now gone 'legit', working for advertising firms and department stores in Manhattan on large-scale shop displays and billboard art (Evans, 2007).

A social-cultural market has also developed through trade and fringe events (e.g. Designer's Block, London; Design Mai, Berlin) and interventions, as well as arts and creative activities in 'non-arts' venues. These include housing estates, hospitals, parks, and temporary use of spaces for raves, performance art, student shows, time-based installations and digital 'art', and cultural events offered by new communications technology. This perhaps comes closer to the democratisation first envisaged for the cultural industries that the market and new technology offered small producers and communities (GLC, 1985). However, these new creative spaces have a short shelf life, similar way to the way in which alternative and 'creative tourism' spaces fast become commodified and subjected to heritage valorisation (Evans, 2007), a process that Wilson also documents in earlier bohemian quarters (2003). A digital divide also persists, which undermines efforts to widen the distribution of much public edutainment, communication and knowledge – in the UK over 40 per cent of the population do not have broadband access, and of those that do, this is no guarantee of the skills and networks required to move beyond the benign e-mail and e-commerce to more creative applications. In the

Valley of Silicon, 'home' [*sic*] to Google, YouTube, Hewlett Packard et al., these hi-tech global operators based in city fringe industrial parks have little connection (or financial contribution) to their San Jose community – which includes a large Hispanic and Vietnamese resident population – or to the downtown cultural facilities (Evans, 2009). In California as a whole, Latino young people are half as likely to have computer access at home – 36 per cent compared with 77 per cent of US-born non-Latinos. The vernacular spaces of creativity for many communities and young people may therefore continue to rely on traditional places of exchange, including local streets and amenities, rather than on the amorphous possibilities of Web 2.0.

Conclusion

Lee, adapting Bourdieu, refers to the spatial sphere as a 'habitus of location'. He suggests that cities have enduring cultural orientations which exist and function relatively independently of their current populations or of the numerous social processes at any particular time: 'In this sense we can describe a city as having a certain cultural character … which clearly transcends the popular representations of the populations of certain cities, or that manifestly expressed by a city's public and private institutions' (1997: 132). The latter point is important in any consideration of cultural planning, since attempts by municipal and other political agencies to create or manipulate a city's cultural character are likely to fail, produce pastiche or superficial culture, and even drive out any inherent creative spirit that might exist in the first place.

Flexibility over cultural facilities may also require flexible design and informal spaces, as well as dedicated production and participatory facilities to accommodate local needs over the life cycle, particularly when communities are not yet established or embedded. This might, in turn, offer present and future residents 'the freedom to decide for themselves how they want to use each part, each space'. –As Hertzberger goes on to suggest: 'the measure of success is the way that spaces are used, the diversity of activities which they attract, and the opportunities they provide for creative reinterpretation' (1991: 170). This is important, if new and evolving communities (and artists) are to have some input into and ownership of the type and range of cultural amenities required to meet their particular creative aspirations and interests.

Creative spaces also do well to resist the attention of cultural policy makers where this is either instrumental or driven by art-form judgements and hierarchies, and also the perspective of cultural places as heritage 'assets' to be conserved, separate from everyday life. There is a clearly a case to be made for both valuing and protecting community culture and spaces of vernacular creativity against the twin effects of cultural commodification and gentrification – not least the type that uses culture as a regenerative tool (Evans, 2005). However, value systems that look to the economic impact of the arts and social impact (identifying contested and vague factors such as 'inclusion' and 'cohesion') measurements as the prime rationales for support miss the point. Externalities may of course arise, but their value lies in their cultural impact, not in being a conduit for crime reduction,

health improvement and economic development (Evans, 2005; Matarasso, 1999). An identification and enhancement of everyday cultural practices and their manifestation in formal and informal spaces should therefore remain the focus of contemporary creative space initiatives. In this way, vernacular creative spaces may be better placed to accommodate social dynamics and encompass continuity as well as change over time. As Williams observed, this is likely to be a *Long Revolution* (1961).