

-ARTS

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From: lan
Sent: 05 April 2005 15:06
To: info
Subject: FW: Cultural Commission Newsletter and Consultation[Scanned]

-----Original Message-----

From: Morna Burdon [mailto:mornaburdon@blueyonder.co.uk]
Sent: 05 April 2005 14:59
To: Ian
Subject: Re: Cultural Commission Newsletter and Consultation[Scanned]

Hi - Thanks for sending me the info. Please put me on your mailing list. I realise I'm officialy too late to answer the questions, but I think you said to go ahead anyway. I haven't come across th 60 odd referred to, so am referring to the 20 I received, which are plenty to be going on with. For the record, I work throughout Scotland as a freelance director and theatre practitioner . I was at Theatre Workshop, Edinburgh, for 10 years, directing, acting, producing, heading up projects. 9 years freelance. I also write. I have worked with every group that you can label and maybe a few you can't. The labels include professional actors, musicians, dancers, theatre practitioners.

Answers to Public Consultation Phase Two: Pan-Sectoral (Whit?) Questions.

1. Opportunitites to express ourselves and our cultures should be nurtured from an early age, so that we become confident and literate

in such expression. Our need and ability to express ourselves is neither practical, a right, nor symbolic. They are part of being human. About being alive.

2. Perhaps, as the right to breath is enshrined by it being illegal to kill (except when the state wants you to!)

3. Well, since these phrases have appeared, I am intrigued at the notion that one set of human beings set out to include others in society.

The problem, of course, is the exclusion in the first place (and is that exclusion from - what- privilege?). It seems awfully decent of whoever it is to include the rest of "them" - in the main people with learning differences for example would have no such policies, as the concept of excluding people in job lots is not in their social lexicon. So, I think not so much inclusion, as reaching out and learning - perhaps even asking to be invited in.

4. Well , the cultural commission is a step in the right direction. Humble, respectful, humane "leadership" based on following as much as /more than leading ; understanding how much the people in power have to learn; listening , watching, accepting that the powerful know no better than the less powerful, they are just more used to hearing themselves speak.

5. Make sure that anyone who employs artists must include their names and contact details in any reports/public documents so they get due credit, and the possibility of future work.

Be more "normal". Come out from behind masks of formality and status and chinking wine glasses. Art/culture is no more fancy than well, than we make it. It is just an expression of being human, so a human/humane approach to art and artists would be good.

(Look at the scene in Billy Elliott where the dad is asked by the upper class panel at the dance school if he has any questions, and undo all of what led to that character being strangled with inability to express himself to these people - fowk like them don't usually answer questions put to them by

fowk like him, and he had nothing to fall back on -
undo that lot for us artists, and for culture, too.)
Find out how little artists survive on an do something to end the reality
that still means far too many who call themselves artists live with poverty as well as
insecurity. Help to lessen the shame of poverty, and
insecurity that goes with being an artist. Fine that we do all sorts of jobs
to keep us going between times, but help us all to come out about that - at
least amongst ourselves. But also give guidance on how much agencies should
pay us for our work.

Provide somewhere in places throughout Scotland where artists can get
together. A room with a couch, a kettle, 3 computers, a notice-board where
artist of all sorts can gather, talk to each other, use facilities, find out
about work. Social isolation is the bain of the lives of many artists, and
it need not be so.

All of this would help strengthen our voices. Really celebrate and support
folk trying things out - people of all ages trying out new
things/testing/extending themselves.

6. See all of the above. Do not be afraid of people because of class - it is
not an incapacity or a problem - but there is still a belief

that "they" need to be educated - maybe time for "we" to allow themselves
to be be taught - we really are all just human.

7. Set up combined/cross arts workshops/conferences/gathering places, and
don't charge so much that the freelance artists can't afford to come (e.g
£100 for an organisation, £50 for an individual is not reasonable/equitable
or practical, but it is not unusual)

8.Hmmm, I'd check the assumption behind the question.It suggests a premis
that "national" is good, and that "standards" need to be protected - by
whom? from what? Diversity, mistakes, explorations, successes, - this is
what life is, so why not that approach to art.

We need to trust that people want to strive for excellence - and will.
Mediocrity comes from everyone looking around first to check what is
acceptable, and then doing it. Human beings are much more exciting than
that!

9.Does it sound exciting? Then, how can we help make it possible?

10 & 11- I 'd need to think these through more fully than I have time for
just now.

12.Are audiences moved by the work? Breaking even?

13.Trust more. Do not have forms that reduce creativity and inspiration.

14. -

15."National standards" - see comments above. Who decides them?

16. Yes - make sure the criteria from 4. above are applied.

17. Sorry, I'm running out of steam.

18. Reflective of our nation - not sure what I think of this.

19.If they are to exist, fluidity would perhaps keep them alive.

20. A great deal of commitment to Scottish work and Scottish talent. Because
of our history, we would need to ensure much
investigation and experiment around the concept of Scottish. We also have an
opportunity to ensure that Scottish includes the women, the poor, the
disabled etc. centrally, from the start, because, if not, we will just have
to unpick it all again in the future, and also because we will be lying to
ourselves - again - about who we are and it is our jobs as artists to try
to tell the truth.As part of our journey, we should expose ourselves to -

especially- the indigenous art of other countries - if they have found out what that is, and especially if they have consciously tried to find their own voices as a people being careful to notice if the old are there and represented, the children, the rural people - them, their stories, their art. Not as part of an education programme but central to our cultural journey finding out, expressing and celebrating who we are, what our potential is, and how we can progress - as human beings who may or may not ultimately define ourselves by our nationhood.

Hope this

From: <Ian@culturalcommission.org.uk>
To: <mornaburdon@blueyonder.co.uk>
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2005 10:26 AM
Subject: Cultural Commission Newsletter and Consultation

Morna

Attached is the recent newsletter that has been issued by the Cultural Commission. Also attached is our consultation document that was issued in November 2004.

Ian

Ian Murdoch

Cultural Commission

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