

### 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Network of Sociology of Art



The Research Network of Sociology of Art attached to the Association of European Sociology, in collaboration with the University of Arts in Helsinki and the Center for Cultural Policies CUPORE organized the XI Intermediate Conference (Online) on “Social Effects of Art”, during 9 – March 12, 2021, with a pre-conference for doctoral students in the field.

The conference places an important emphasis on social function and its effects on art. Today, many sociologists address this issue, because both governments and other art funders want to know if their investments produce both social effects and income. Sociologists of art can monitor, can make certain schemes for enhancing cultural and artistic activities, and can propose solutions in terms of cultural policies. At the same time, social and participatory practices have become popular in art, providing an attractive topic for sociological research. These practices have become important in the community, becoming active in the social and health sectors. More and more social science practitioners are working on interdisciplinary projects in order to address societal problems using art as one of the main means.

At this point it is vital for researchers in the social sciences and art to reconsider their role: are they neutral researchers whose work can benefit all stakeholders, are they involved in promoting art or passively assisting the instrumentalization of art, knowingly or not? How effective are the data provided by art sociologists for the implementation of good and sustainable cultural policies. What approaches would we apply if we could freely choose how to study the societal significance of art? These were the main questions that the organizers and participants, the speakers of the present scientific event, tried to answer.

The Scientific Committee included: Anna Lisa Tota, Constance DeVereaux, Olga Kolokytha, Christopher Mathieu, Aleksandra Nenko, Dafne Muntanyola Saura, Valerie Visanich and Sari Karttunen. The lecturers from the University of Art in Helsinki were - Kai Lehikoinen, Director of CERADA and Riikka Haapalainen, from the University of Aalto.

The pre-conference of March 8, 2021 was organized within the ArtsEqual Research Initiative 2015-2021 project, coordinated by Uniarts Helsinki. The talks began with a presentation of the idea of strategic research oriented towards formulations of a public policy in art, said Professor Kai Lehikoinen from Uniarts Helsinki. A dialogue followed on the examples provided by the ArtsEqual Center, as follows: Pauli Rautiainen (Kalevi Sorsa Foundation): “Cultural Rights Perspective”, Alexis Kallio (Griffith University, Australia): “Basic Arts Education, Equality and the Sami Communities”. In the ArtsEqual and Activism section participated: Jussi Lehtonen (Finnish National Theater) with the

communication: “Artist-Researcher as an Activist – Promoting the Status of Immigrant Artists”, Anu Koskinen (Uniarts Helsinki) with the Communication “Artist-Researcher Promoting Prison Theater”, Tuula Jääskeläinen (Uniarts Helsinki) with the Communication “Workshops against Hate Speech”. On the subject of “Research Communications & Societal Interaction”, Heta Muurinen from Uniarts Helsinki added.

On the first day of the Conference, the opening speech was given by Kaarlo Hildén, Rector, and University of the Arts Helsinki. A few words of welcome addressed to the participants were also said by the mayor of Helsinki – Jan Vapaavuori. This was followed by a presentation by researcher Laura Beloff, on the topic: “Art & Science – Socially-engaged?” and a speech by organizer Kai Lehikoinen, director, CERADA, University of the Arts Helsinki, & Sari Karttunen, coordinator, ESA Research Network for the Sociology of the Arts. Contributing to the pleasant atmosphere of the conference are the recital Duo Ali Saad and Sanna Salmenkallio, which presents explores European and Arab cultures, where oriental abundance meets Nordic minimalism. Their musical program includes notes from Arabic folklore and pop influences with new arrangements – Dreaming of Joy.

On March 9, 2021, it began with a dialogue on “Art as a social and political act”, continued with debates on “Arts and cultural policies”, “Artworks and actions in public spaces”, “Transversal expertises, crossover collaborations”, “Art, capabilities and wellbeing”, “Artistic knowledge – artistic research”, “Artistic processes, material practices and engagement approaches”, “Participatory art projects for social transformation”, “Sociology of literature”, “Societal impacts and sustainability of festivals”, “Corporeal Sociology – Acknowledging class background through corporeal research”. An important contribution was made by Eduardo de la Fuente by supporting a paper on “Attuned to texture: Place Intelligence and the sociology art”. Coordinated by Christopher Mathieu with Susanne Janssen and Arturo Rodríguez Morató, the section on “Future Horizon Europe Projects” brought to the fore the new funding for Innovative Research on the European Cultural Heritage and the Cultural and Creative Industries. Several researchers shared their experience as coordinators of Horizon 2020 projects.

The third day of the conference proposed debates on “Cultural consumption and visitor practices” – the section where I presented “Identity Communication, Cultural Memory and the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century’s Architecture in Craiova city and Bucharest, Romania”. Other topics addressed were: “Critical interventions in urban spaces and rural areas”, “Efforts to improve the accessibility of music education in Finnish music schools”, “Street art and collective memory”, “Presentation and mediation of contemporary art”. The conference presented by Stephen Duncombe & Steve Lambert – Making Art Work, crowned the dialogues of the day.

The conference continued with a jazz recital performed by Sir Garrison from the University of the Arts Helsinki Sibelius Academy jazz students, Sami Leponiemi (saxophone), Nathan Francis (bass) and Okko Saastamoinen (percussion).

The conference was a success, researchers – sociologists of art are already looking to future well-organized actions and events.

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