

Nov. 8 2017

Summary



Capturing the themes, speakers, and next steps
from the ART**POWER** conversation.

arts & business exchange

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ARTS & BUSINESS EXCHANGE

The arts & business exchange (abx) is a program of Business / Arts, which brings together outstanding artsScene volunteers, emerging arts leaders, innovators, and young professionals from across the country to discuss best practices and underlying issues that face the arts and culture sector in Canada. We provide opportunities to connect this next generation to otherwise less accessible new networks to forge new relationships and access cross-sectoral mentorship opportunities.

BUSINESS / ARTS

Business / Arts is Canada's only national charitable association of business members who support the arts. We are constantly witness to the wonderful things that can be achieved when business partners with the arts and culture. artsScene is our nationwide network of up-and-coming business and arts leaders across the country, driven by the volunteer leadership of committed business and arts leaders.

WHO ARE WE?

THIS YEAR

abx 2017 brought together 200 of Canada's emerging arts & business leaders for a one-day conference to collectively address the challenges facing artists today as they navigate a new digital world, engage diverse audiences and work with government and business leaders to build community through the arts. The conference was held on November 8th, 2017 at the Globe and Mail Centre in Toronto in partnership with RBC, Vukets Family Foundation, Ryerson University, Canadian Film Centre, The Globe and Mail, and Igloo Vision.

The focus of the day's conversations were inspired by topics that are being explored in Culture Track Canada; a new research study that Business / Arts has been conducting over the course of 2017-2018. The research studies the changing behaviours, trends and expectations of the cultural consumer today.

Emerging themes from the study on cultural expectations include:

ENGAGING DIVERSE AUDIENCES

Who are diverse audiences and how do we engage them? How much do our institutional policies, spaces, programs and practices define who will be engaged?

ARTS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

How can new digital tools expand our reach and enrich audience engagement? What is the next breakthrough?

DESIGNING THE IDEAL CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

How are audiences defining and engaging in cultural experience? What is the role of cultural institutions in defining cultural experiences?

The conference space featured a VR dome, and an interactive "digital playground" to highlight new ways in which the arts are evolving with technology, and to introduce new avenues for our attendees to explore. Specialized masterclass sessions were designed to coach and mentor these next generation leaders in areas of skill development requested by conference participants. Each masterclass provided skill and capacity building opportunities, led by our expert panelists.

The program was structured to guide conference participants through the progression of self, community, nation, to better understand the implications of each, while exploring the recurring Culture Track themes. This year's speakers differed in areas of expertise, but all shared the experience of overcoming challenges. The day taught us that every struggle we overcome is a triumph, each making us more resilient than the last. The struggles we overcome also define us, helping us better relate with one another and strengthen our ties to our surroundings.

ARTPOWER

Business / Arts is undergoing many strategic advancements, chief among them, is creating a program to cultivate the next generation of Canada's leaders. We regularly convene and facilitate conversations with board chairs, executive directors, and artistic directors, however, these conversations often exclude the engagement and understanding of young professionals. The arts & business exchange was an idea that developed over the course of a year to respond to this divide.

We held meetings with young professionals from across Canada with the intention to better understand the Canadian arts ecosystem from the lens of younger generations. The same issues kept coming up during these conversations: the current arts and business sectors lack efficient collaboration with young professionals; our priorities are not being addressed in arts programming and engagement initiatives; we are moving and adapting to changes faster than the sector is; young professionals require meaning and social impact prioritizing current affairs, civic engagement, consciousness and global well-being, politics, diversity, and social justice.

The feedback gathered inspired the program, **ARTPOWER**, to explore the intricate relationship between the arts and the power of thoughtful leadership. This enhanced a better understanding of how collaboration is a key practice for young professionals and entrepreneurs. The three key content pillars were self, community, nation. They represented topics at the centre of some of the most pertinent leadership conversations across our contemporary society and helped orient each of the themes throughout the day. **Self** focused on how the unique struggles individuals face help define that person as an individual, and how by doing so, the role each person plays in the larger community becomes apparent; **Community** focused on how unique individuals bring forward their authentic selves to collaborate and create together; **Nation** focused on inviting individuals to reset their imagination and build a new set of knowledge, tools, and empathy to drive national change.

We need to look within ourselves and to one another. Once we uncover what drives our passion for the arts, we can focus our energy on helping the arts grow stronger and ensure its accessibility for years to come. The questions that we will ask in 2018 are: how can we build resilient communities? How do the arts play a role in this?

Raji Aujla

Creative Director, Business / Arts



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Illustrator, Maria Qamar and activist, Jesse Thistle book-ended the day, each sharing an inspiring story of triumph despite facing significant obstacles in their careers due to the poorly structured communities they were a part of. Jesse was raised in an underserved community and Maria struggled to find one of her own. Both were forced to examine themselves as a starting point to build their thriving communities.

MARIA QAMAR aka @hatecopy
Artist X Illustrator

JESSE THISTLE
Ph.D. Student X York University



“What is this? Have I lived it? Is it true? Is it genuine?”

MARIA QAMAR

Artist X
Instagrammer X
Illustrator X

CHANGE AGENT

GIST

Maria used obstacles in her professional life as an opportunity to understand her self-identity. The implementation of her personal values into her practice led her to create authentic pop-art based illustrations, which resonated not only with herself, but with her 125,000+ social media followers.

TAKEAWAYS

- You have to define your own success metrics first - what does success mean to you?
- Understanding who you are and what is important to you will help you design your life.
- Even if you're not entirely happy with where you are and what you're doing, you always have the arts available as an outlet for expressing yourself and as a platform to connect with like-minded individuals.
- Our struggles and what we have overcome defines us as individuals.



“We’re at a time of truth telling. There’s going to be so much more opportunity in the next years that will give us an opportunity to move forward in Canada.”

JESSE THISTLE

PhD Student X
York University

A FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

GIST

Jesse’s closing keynote outlined the trauma faced by Indigenous communities, and how he coped with, then overcame tragedy in his own life. His presentation illustrated the reality of what happens when communities and support systems are destroyed and the effect it has on the lives of those involved. After laying this foundation, Jesse shifted his focus to his journey of overcoming these immense struggles and how he was able to turn those tragedies into triumph.

TAKEAWAYS

- Changing policy allows for growth.
- Find fearlessness and use it to be resilient and overcome struggles experienced.
- Archives, research, arts and culture are all forums of therapeutic relief.



GIST

Philanthropist Karlee Vukets facilitated and offered her insight during a roundtable discussion that married the idea of self-identity with community, demonstrating exactly how an individual can fit in when contributing philanthropically to an arts community

A millennial's involvement in philanthropy is based on three main facets; donating time, money, and expertise. Involvement in philanthropy offers an invaluable mentorship opportunity for this next generation to learn from more experienced philanthropists and also the opportunity for young leaders to become more active within arts communities.

TAKEAWAYS

- In order to make a fulfilling contribution to the arts, you need to volunteer within causes that are meaningful to you. Find a way to connect with people and organizations within your area of interest.
- Millennials should collaborate with established philanthropists to learn how to contribute in impactful ways and to exchange unique generational perspectives on the arts.
- Assess whether your board is providing consistent and meaningful support. Board input provides value to both the organization and board members, so if value is not being provided for your organization, it's likely not being provided for the board members either.
- Action towards diversifying boards and ensuring inclusive practices respectful to communities across the country are integral to this cohort.

KARLEE VUKETS
Executive Director X
Vukets Family Foundation

GIDEON ARTHURS
CEO X National Theatre School of Canada

H. ROGER GARLAND
Boardmember X Business for the Arts

DUANE GREEN
CEO X Franklin Templeton
Investments Canada

DIANE OBAM DALLAIRE
Chair X Southam Club



Sal Patel facilitated a panel discussion on how we can ensure the health and growth of arts communities, both physical and digital. We can see the role authentic self-identity plays within a community, but also how self-identity draws people to certain communities. Following this conversation, each panelist proceeded to host one of six in-depth masterclass sessions as an interactive opportunity for us to explore each concept further and pick the brains of our experts.

SAL PATEL
Lead, Digital Film Strategy **X**
Toronto International Film Festival

KATE CORNELL
Executive Director **X**
Canadian Dance Assembly

LOUIS-ETIENNE DUBOIS
Assistant Professor of Creative Industries
Management **X** Ryerson University

RAVI JAIN
Artistic Director **X** Why Not Theatre

HUMBLE THE POET
MC **X** Spoken Word Artist

JENNIFER LEE KOSS
Co-founder **X** Builder of Business

ALEN PALANDER
Creative Director **X** Photographer

MASTERCLASSES X



KATE CORNELL

Executive Director X
Canadian Dance Assembly

“What I can use is my privilege – those who are skeptical will still listen to me.”

GIST

Kate advocates for education, disruption, indigenization, restitution, and self-determination to be represented on all organizational committees as it relates to reconciliation. Participants were led through the process of reconciliation, highlighting what can be expected from this process, then reviewed **150 Acts of Reconciliation** to initiate reconciliation in our lives and organizations.

TAKEAWAYS

- Challenge the composition of your board and expect backlash when on the road to inclusion.
- Thinking equitably when it comes to board and staff creates credibility within an organization. Lived experience needs to lead the organization.
- Before initiating an act of reconciliation consider looking introspectively at your privilege.



LOUIS-ETIENNE DUBOIS

Assistant Professor of Creative Industries Management X
Ryerson University

“Before getting outputs, you need outcomes”

GIST

Louis-Etienne explored the power of design thinking on collectives and suggests practical implications on how to structure such activities in order to yield positive results. By focusing on the influences that take place during a co-design process, Louis determined that in order to have a process that is truly collaborative, there must be equality so the discussion can be open and collective.

TAKEAWAYS

- When collaborating focus on the larger picture, then have individuals determine how they connect and can contribute to that larger picture.
- The biggest value of co-design is the diversity present within the co-creators, drawing upon this can offer insightful contributions.
- Dividing outcomes into pillars ensures that there is always a result contributed.



RAVI JAIN

Artistic Director X
Why Not Theatre

“Who are we looking to, who are we calling leaders?”

GIST

Ravi challenged that collaboration can be affected by art, and that both are interdependent. He argues that collaboration creates communities and not only allows for organizations to support one another, but also allows for diversity in programming and featured artists. Ravi posed the question, “As an arts organization, what is your role if you have public funding?”, which led to the idea of generating new funding at the base of arts organizations or shifting funds to see more diversity in the organizations receiving funding.

TAKEAWAYS

- Ensuring diversity in not only the types of arts organizations we see, but also in the programming and artists commissioned by these organizations.
- Collaboration to serve as a catalyst for diversity and the creation of new inclusive ideas, but also collaboration through interdependent organizations for survivability of the arts.
- Accountability of arts organizations who have received funds to produce thoughtful programming.



HUMBLE THE POET

MC X
Spoken Word Artist X

“In order to impact the world around us, we have to change the world inside of us.”

GIST

Humble identified opportunities for self-reflection, allowing one to be present and honest with oneself and move through life with strong intention. He leveraged his experience within social media to create a judgement-free atmosphere in which the solution to audience member’s creative problems were crowdsourced from within the same room.

TAKEAWAYS

- Regrets have to do with things in the past, things that bring us anxiety are things to do with the future. Things that make us happy happen in the present, and truly, that’s all that we have.
- Problems often feel amplified because we think we’re the only one facing them. Knowing that others can also encounter similar challenges can help us cope.
- Saying yes versus saying no: How often are our decisions influenced by fear and how often are they influenced by love? Be bold, chase love, and say no to things that you tend to say yes to out of fear.

“Be experimental at all cost”



JENNIFER LEE
KOSS

Co-founder X
Builder of Business, BRIKA

GIST

Jennifer invited individuals looking to build their own business to examining the market needs for their products in terms of value provided. To build a community, a business must understand what problems they are solving and whether the solution is for instant gratification or for a long-term benefit.

TAKEAWAYS

- Consider storytelling in your marketing. Put a face to your product, build a dialogue with your customer base, engage in ‘deep storytelling’.
- People still want personalized, ‘high touch’ experiences--this will not go out of style.

“You do not need a fancy camera with a big lens to take a good photograph. You can do it with whatever is in your pocket right now.”



ALLEN PALANDER

Creative Director X
Photographer X
Instagrammer X

GIST

Alen proposed that photographers looking to build a community of supporters should ask themselves the following questions to understand their approach to taking and sharing their images:

What is identity?
What is brand identity?

In explaining the process of creating, branding, and sharing his photography, Alen boiled his practice down to what he calls the “5 Brand Identities for Creatives”; perspective, storytelling, quality, consistency, and exposure. By focusing on these five identities, Alen has used his Instagram portfolio to attract top-tier clients such as Mercedes-Benz, Nike, Air Canada, Canon, and more.

TAKEAWAYS

- The focus on light and the composition will do more to create an engaging photograph than the investment in fancy equipment.
- Photography comes down to using your subjects and composition to tell an engaging story which fits into your overall narrative.
- Your followers are your friends. You can learn and be inspired from them while teaching and inspiring.

THE PLAYGROUND X

AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

The arts business exchange was a day aimed at bringing together emerging arts and business leaders from across Canada in a highly-interactive, inspirational environment to share ideas and develop new relationships. We wanted the physical space of the conference to reflect those same values, seen through the VR demonstration by Igloo Vision, which immersed participants into a 360 degree surrounding of animated art.

The playground provided by Spin - Jeux & Activations allowed for our participants to be present in a childhood-inspired space that encouraged them to interact and collaborate with one another in a fun and engaging way.

Powered by





Community builder Mitchell Cohen and digital strategist Ana Serrano highlighted the importance in taking ownership of your role in the communities you are a part of. They provided examples of how to best leverage the human and organizational resources available to enable these communities to thrive.

MITCHELL COHEN

President **X** The Daniels Corporation

ANA SERRANO

Chief Digital Officer **X** Canadian Film Centre

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CASE STUDIES X





“We invited people from the neighbourhood to get involved. Working with artists has to be at the heart of everything we do.”

MITCHELL COHEN

President X The Daniels Corporation

GIST

City builder and artist, Mitchell shared his experiences in approaching community building projects with a focus on two things: forming partnerships, and engaging the neighbourhoods impacted. From his first project, Mitchell understood that he had a responsibility, leveraged the power of his position in his neighbourhood to work with the community, then looked outside the community itself to find a partnership with the government that could make the project a success. This carried over to more recent projects such as the TIFF Bell lightbox, which Mitchell described as “an incredible confluence of the not-for-profit sector and private sector coming together to say ‘we can do this’.”

TAKEAWAYS

- By embracing the community in the most active positive way that you can around the world of arts, arts and artists can become a part of what you do, part of how you think.
- Listen. Think about connectivity & empowerment in what you do to bring people together.
- When pitching a partnership, tell the story of how you plan to engage the community and how your partnering organization can get involved.
- Have the conversation about how business can be a platform for social change.



“Can we fight to be the most innovative city in the world AS WELL as being the most moral one?”

ANA SERRANO

Chief Digital Officer X Canadian Film Centre

GIST

Ana contemplated the role consciousness plays in designing the evolution of the information society. She espoused, we can only get ahead of the exponential growth of technology if we first gain better insight about ourselves, rather than leave that in the hands of the algorithms. We have to pay attention to who we are, how we work, what consciousness means, and what the self means, as much as we focus on building on the technology society. Serrano’s research is dedicated to understanding big data; how it is captured, being used, and what are the repercussions of consumer apathy over ownership.

TAKEAWAYS

- Transform the attention economy into an “intention” economy. Creators should drive their requirements and desires rather than the system predicting what our desires are.
- We have to ensure our current reality is established before we try to replicate it digitally. We should instead use this new (digital) platform to explore what we don’t already know about ourselves, and to explore consciousness.
- We have to move from this notion of privacy, to the notion of digital human rights.



CHALLENGE YOUR BELIEFS

Change begins at an individual level. To create a climate that promotes growth within the arts, we first need to understand our values to determine where we can contribute to allow for growth in our communities. It is our responsibility to lead a prosperous arts sector.

ALIGN YOUR VALUES WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Determine your interests and passion, then get involved. Every individual has an original point of view and something unique that they can offer to the arts through involvement in volunteerism. However, at the same time collaboration needs to be productive; we need to remember to focus on the larger picture and what we need to do in order to make sure diversity is present within the larger picture.

DIVERSIFY YOUR THOUGHTS AND ACTION

Implementing changes in policy right now is what will help us make the changes we want to see in the arts. Arts and culture have the power to change infrastructure through socio economic impact; we need to confirm that there is diverse representation through connected communities ensuring that all voices are heard during times of transition.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

THANKS TO

STEERING COMMITTEE

Raji Aujla
Scott Darling
Mo Dhaliwal
Alistair Henning
Benjamin Jain
Sal Patel
Anthony Petroulakis
Alicia Rose
Bronwyn Shortly
Karlee Vukets

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Claire Hefferon Payne
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Arya Tran
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Sean Lee
Sally Lee
Tammy Lee

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Brad Lepp
Owais Lightwala
Shannon Litzenberger
Danika Lochhead
Michael Lockhart
Anna Lytvynova
Brenda MacIntyre
Natasha MacLellan
Kenji Maeda
David Maggs
Caroline Mangosing
Yvette Marcek
Jackie Marculescu
Gurbani Marwah
Kulin Matchhar
Tara Mazurk
Kathleen McDonald
Dan McKinnon
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Astrum Nanji
Alexander Neef
Aqua Nibii Waawaaskone
Tara Noelle
Diane Obam Dallaire
Craig Offman
Ananya Ohri
Mercedes Pacho
Alen Palander
Sal Patel
Oliver Pauk
Stephanie Payne
Christine Pellerin
Christopher Pemberton
Anthony Petroulakis
Alexa Polenz
Samyuktha Punthambekar
Maria Qamar
Mazi Raz
Melanie Reiffenstein
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Max Rubino
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Mia Torr
Danish Vahidy
Karlee Vukets
Breana Walker
Elynn Wareham
Tim Whalley
Jessica Whitford
Warren Wilansky
Michelle Yao
Michelle Yeung

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Thank you to our forward-thinking sponsors for enabling this incredible group of leaders to connect, challenge, and contribute to a thriving arts sector.

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ABX 2018

Next year’s arts & business exchange will share the stage with, and discuss the release of the Culture Track Canada results; a new study Business/Arts has commissioned on the cultural consumer in Canada that will provide an unparalleled opportunity to understand what Canadian audiences want and need. Culture Track is a cultural innovation engine, dedicated to addressing the most pressing challenges facing the worlds of culture and creativity through research, education, dialogue, and action. Our goal in this conversation is to empower the next generation of arts and business leaders with the data results of this research so delegates have tangible information, action steps, and understanding that they can apply to their respective positions and organizations.

NEXT YEAR

Business / Arts

133 Richmond Street West, Unit 202 - Toronto