

City of Brno and the Jiří Mahen Library

CULTURE AS A SHARED LANGUAGE

Reflections as an expat and cultural worker



NON-NEGOTIABLES

Culture is not necessarily shared purely through its existence.

- Sharing occurs when people can access it, shape it, and recognize themselves within it.
- "Who gets to help define the room?"





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BALLET BUBBLE

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NEW CREATIVITY

During COVID in Munich, my relationship to the ballet world shifted. I began looking outward toward other cultural communities

REFLECTING ON THIS SHIFT

- ★ Focusing on music/community radio.
- ★ Radio 80000 as an example of best practice.
- ★ Searching to find a similar platform in the Czech Republic.
- ★ Finding my community?
- ★ Creating this community?

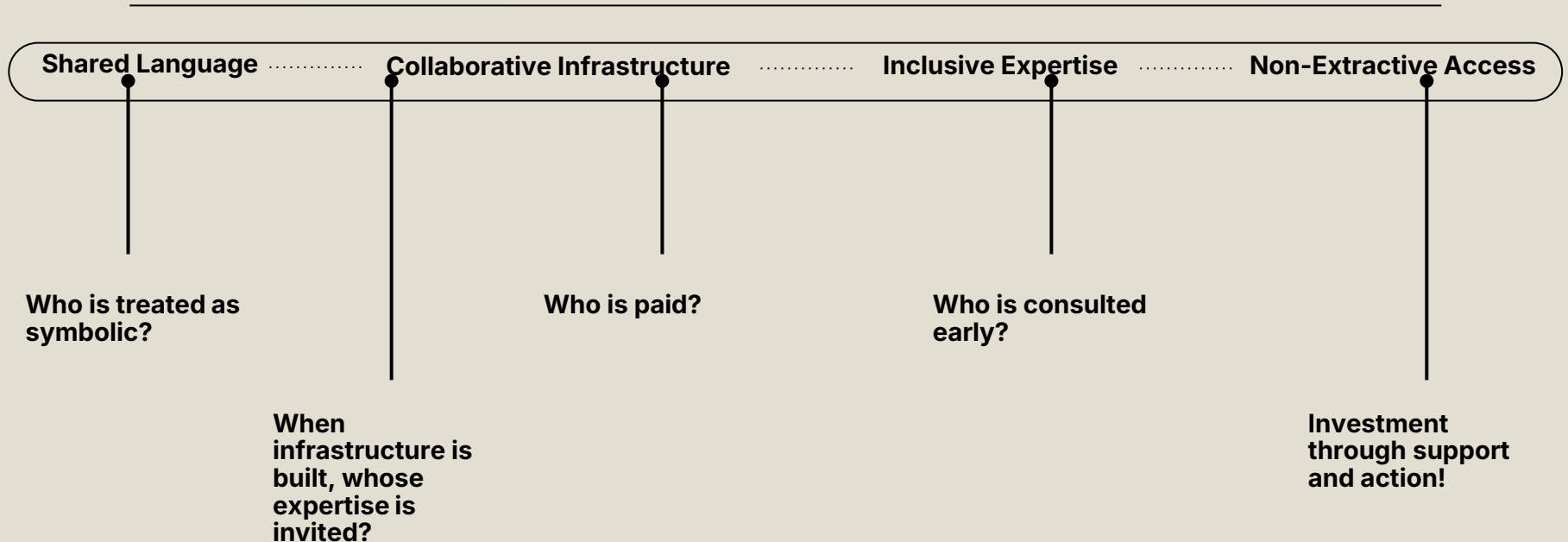
- ★ Finding Brno with a strong foundation, huge amount of talent, and many driven individuals.
- ★ Reflections on the international scene.
- ★ Missing visible collaborative infrastructure connecting international, alternative, and minority communities.

"Communal megaphone"

a place where artistic communities could meet, speak, collaborate, and be heard.

This has begun to change because of local actors, cultural organizers, and municipal work.

But the question is: **HOW IS THAT CHANGE BEING BUILT?**



WHY ME?
WHY BRNO?

THE EXPAT PHENOMENON:

Expat nomads (in the cultural sector)
3 years here, 3 years there, expanding CV, and
working up a ladder



DANIEL THE EXPAT

- ★ Language helped
- ★ International experience helped
- ★ Moving across countries, sectors, and cultural scenes helped
- ★ Motivation from competing in larger markets also helped

ACCESS WITHOUT EXTRACTION

- ★ Considering both the role of the expat and the role of the city within a symbiotic relationship
- ★ Sharing resources and expertise to further the cultural sector in Brno
- ★ Understanding that maybe we don't understand
- ★ Checking our egos at the door

Or else....

We risk losing all of the expertise and common knowledge shared in communities from around the world

INCLUSION MUST NOT BE EXTRACTIVE

Short-term cultural mapping can become extractive when it asks outsiders to interpret communities without deep accountability.

Yaniya Lee, PhD.

"Black Art Study: Methods and Methodologies for a Black Studies Approach to Canadian Art History"

How Canada Forgot Its Black Artists
Light Grows The Tree
Group Theory
The Women Running the Show
Jan Wade: Soul Power
Anique Jordan Tilts the Museum on Its Axis
Tactics and Strategies of Racialized Artists
Unrequited Love: June Clark's Reconfigurations
Telling Stories: Tau Lewis
Sandra Brewster: Token | Contemporary
Ongoing
Anxious Territory: The Politics of Neutral
Citizenship in Canadian Art Criticism
Living Under Surveillance: Kapwani Kiwanga
The Irretrievable Moment: Jim Adams
Expanding Access: Michelle Jacques
Kapwani Kiwanga Gets Personal
Performing Change: Natalie Wood
A Somatic Seeing: Dionne Brand's Theory
The Freedom of Existing on the Edge
Always Being Moved
blackness, a picture of Grace
Subject of Care: Photography and
Representational Justice
Glitch and Figure: The Videos of Buseje Bailey
and ariella tai
Why I Write /towards relation

Yaniya Lee
Selected Writing on Black Canadian Art

"Black Canadian art history requires a different way of teaching, a different kind of approach to art writing and criticism, a different way of doing archival research and a different way of organizing information and recognizing knowledge."

"I undermine national art historical discourses that place black art either into a single narrative, or outside the nation."



TOWARDS THE FUTURE

It is necessary to create accessible models that pay knowledge forward -> Programming can no longer remain completely exclusive to infrastructure

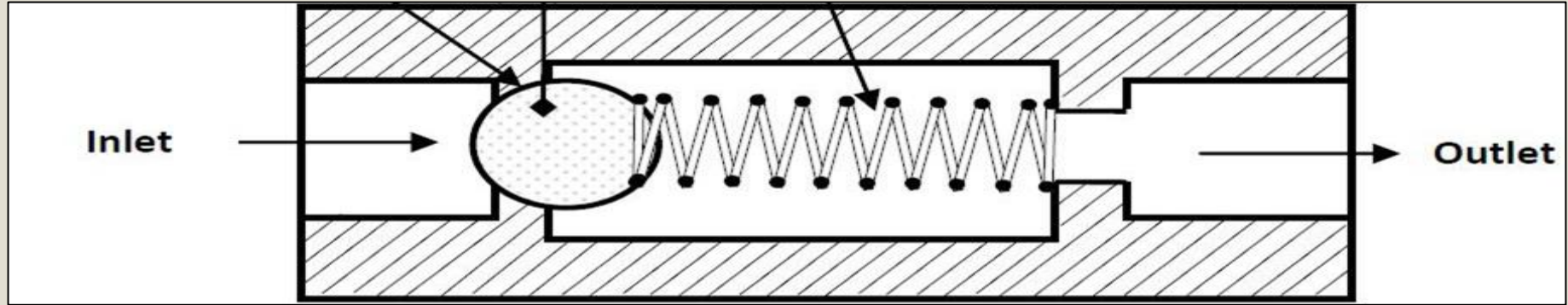
What now? When a project finishes, where do we take the progress? Where does this knowledge lead to?

- ★ **Building infrastructure without allowing extraction**
- ★ **Supporting hubs that can nurture collective programming and ongoing projects**
- ★ **Learning from the lived experiences from a diversity of viewpoints**
- ★ **Empowering the younger generations to get involved with this conversation**

THE CHECK VALVE EQUATION

Minimal (low barrier) contributions still lead to collective future/growth
+

Inclusion without extraction



Contribution should flow easily into the cultural ecosystem, but extraction should be blocked by care, credit, and continuity

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THANKS !