

## Catalyse Manifesto 2014

### Reinventing a creative European urban space

*“At its deepest level, the crisis is a crisis of values. This means that a deeper cultural exploration of the causes of the crisis – and the possibilities arising from the crisis – is also the key to finding a way out. If we’re running out of ideas and creative ways to counter the crisis, then we should go to the place most concerned with visionary, new ideas: the cultural field and the arts. We should turn to culture to examine and reflect on the crisis, and to ponder that most important question: What now?”* Manifesto by Team Culture 2012<sup>1</sup>

*“The European area is the only place in the world where identity is not a cult, but a query. (...) It seems that European intellectuals do not mobilize enough for Europe. We have been able to do so for external issues (...) but we are not committed enough to analyze and rebuild the European culture”* Julia Kristeva, La Croix, 2013, May 17.

**The future role of culture depends on how it can contribute to innovation.** *“At the crossroads between arts, business and technology, cultural and creative sectors are in a strategic position to trigger spillovers in other industries.”* By the *spillover effect*, the European Commission, since 2012<sup>2</sup>, refers to the social diversity of cultural effects, which explicitly drives to transdisciplinary action: *“Policies must therefore be designed to support all forms of innovation, not only technological innovation.”*<sup>3</sup>

**The European Commission’s spillover ambition has been taken into account by the Catalyse network\*** (Forum d’Avignon, Forum d’Avignon-Ruhr and Forum d’Avignon-Bilbao), **both as an invitation to reconsider the role of culture and creativity with their potential for cross-border activities in a wider social context, and to understand and use its transnational function as catalyst for innovation for European cities.** Therefore, the Catalyse project launched through its partners research<sup>4</sup> and international meetings, “on all territorial levels and involving – when appropriate – all relevant public and private stakeholders” to take measures, e.g. to “encourage and facilitate the setting up of platforms, networks and clusters between all public and private stakeholders that are relevant for CCS.”<sup>5</sup> Catalyse partners believe that the cooperation between the economy, industry, education, tourism, innovation, urban and regional development and territorial planning should be strengthened, even if examples as Bilbao, Essen, Avignon, Metz, Lens prove how culture can turn urban spaces into creative cities.

**The future role of culture and the creative industries depends on how it can contribute to innovation.** The Catalyse network believes that they are ways to reinvest culture in urban space when everything seems gloomy, in times of nourished individual and collective skepticism, to involve and bring citizens and politicians together, when societal and community structures seem organized to resist to change.

<sup>1</sup> Manifesto by Team Culture 2012, a group of experts, called into existence this year by the Danish Minister of Culture, Uffe Elbæk, under Danish EU Council Presidency.

<sup>2</sup> Communication from the EU Commission of 26 September 2012 “Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU”.

<sup>3</sup> This idea promoted by the Innovation Union, by the programme *Creative Europe*, and by the EU Communication “Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU”, is one of the dominating topics of the *Agenda Europe 2020*, which also spills over, so to speak, into European cultural policies.

<sup>4</sup> *Culture is the key: Research, interaction, Forum, Innovation*, ecce for the Forum Ruhr 2013, *Culture, the spirit of Atlas*, Louvre Alliance for the Forum d’Avignon 2013

<sup>5</sup> EU Commission of 26 September 2012

**Culture can breathe in the city to meet the complexity of personal demands and cultural changes.** Money is not the only issue; it is often the political leadership which is lacking. Practical successes (Ruhr, Bilbao, Metz, Lille...) show that culture can help us out of the economic crisis in terms of territorial attractiveness and social cohesion. The studies<sup>6</sup> show that culture is an immaterial initiator for new social processes and structures that lead to progress, also but not only in economic and material forms. Catalyse utilizes this form of structural long-lasting change to push investments in culture to better European cities.

**The question “What does culture have to do differently?” has to do with the creativity and innovation practiced by artists, which of course have always have – and wanted to have – an effect beyond the arts.** Long imposed in a dominant way, the relationship between cultural institutions and the “public” has been, in recent years, upheavals due mainly to changes in cultural consumption practices. The “public” today is made up of many individuals with plural identities, who take many and varied activities and make choices in the abundance of cultural offerings. The contemporary viewer claims more his own place and his right to speak in a personal relationship with cultural institutions – instead of being an anonymous part of the “public”. So it is not only the individual artist acting different, but change is inevitable for the public culture institutions like museums and theatres – if they want to continue being a driving force for culture in the new user-driven public emerging in today’s digital world.

**The creative economy is a leading driver for social, economic, cultural and urban changes in our societies, locally, nationally and continentally. Its stakeholders might be digital innovators by themselves and / or represent new cultural forms like gaming or street art. But they also might be themselves driven to change and forced to search new business and culture models – just because of the digital shift like in the music, film or book industries.**

**I - Creative economy is the early bird of future societies –as the arts were and still are an avant-garde in social change.** Among the numerous perspectives sketched during the international meetings of the Forum d’Avignon, Forum d’Avignon-Ruhr and Forum d’Avignon-Bilbao – the Catalyse network calls up to the following priorities to strengthen the cultural diversity and the local economic development:

- 1. To fight citizen scepticism about culture and change.** *“Today, we value cities as spaces of social learning, underlines Bernd Fesel, senior advisor at ecce and Forum d’Avignon-Ruhr, rather than tourist places.” “The commitment on the European ‘cultural exception’ has sense only if it favours the financing of the creation and the strengthening of the social cohesion”* Laure Kaltenbach, managing director of the Forum d’Avignon, justifies. In the words of Iñaki Azkuna, Mayor of Bilbao, *“A culture of openness and curiosity, adopting an ethos which values debate, critical thinking and learning is essential to establish a collective “thinking brain” for a city able to monitor the best initiatives of the world and trying to go beyond them”*
- 2. Culture as a catalyser of cities and creative territories’ energy :** *“Today, we concentrate on the strategy and the strengthening of development processes - before funding single projects and the return on investment”* Bernd Fesel, ecce and FA Ruhr, states. According to Iñaki Azkuna, *“Cities with the right strategic focus, the skill of concentrating on the long-term future-oriented perspectives will be able to excel in spite of global dynamics”.*
- 3. Finally, the importance of being earnest. Collecting reliable cultural personal data constitutes an essential investment upstream to any relevant development policy of a creative economy;** researches has to strengthen the evaluation of ‘the cultural footprint’ (i.e. the positive correlation between culture and local development), and the capacities of the culture to transform the creativity into sustainable prosperity for the urban populations.

<sup>6</sup> See the [25 Forum d’Avignon studies](#): Kurt Salmon, Tera Consultant, EY, Bain&Company, L’Atelier BNP Paribas, Louvre Alliance and specifically on [Cultural territorial attractiveness and social cohesion](#).

## II - Catalyse network proposals for Creative cities driven by culture are catalytic, replicable and scalable, flexible and relatively easy to implement. Back to the heart of all cultural actions: make culture accessible to act more, at a closer level.

1. **Respect the public realm.** “*The public is me!*” illustrates this requirement to meet the expectations of a public citizen and refers to the need for exchange and dialogue. It aims to set up appropriate tools to capture these new audiences in a support and transmission process promoting cultural education;
2. **Flexible to be in contact with citizens.** Instead of inflexible cultural institutions, too administrative, devouring credit for their operations, cultural action must remain in contact with the craft of citizens and their life rhythms – and not the administrations’ ones;
3. **To mobilize, think in motion; never do the same thing, to be constantly renewed.** This should not prevent it from being pragmatic and concrete. An important dynamic is encapsulated in efforts that will drive citizens out of their comfortable coach if expected actions change from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the humorous to the serious....thanks to collaborative workshops, shared performances, artistic interventions...;
4. **Network to create a ripple effect,** with a trigger. Once in motion, even temporarily, there is always something, it moves, advances, and fits. To invoke the need to create long in advance the visions, expectations, but also to make the local population react;
5. **To develop empty ‘plug & play’ spaces or the importance of land for transient and steady performance.** By spending or pre-empting space for designers, government or private owners, their emergence can be facilitated. Too often, mayors think in architecture, security and heritage terms, rather than in malleability, movement and cooperation ones. We must dedicate places equipped with standards – but empty – to allow creators to invest them for short periods. The role of public institutions is to give impetus to liberate space and ease its use;
6. **From ‘like’ to ‘share’.** We become men and women living many identities, local, social, digital, participatory ... and creative. At the creative and societal level, we need to know how to emerge, lead and feed a collaborative intelligence that provides the ability to balance companies and institutions more effectively by finding a compromise between the co-creation at the bottom and the top political regulation. This participatory and collaborative dynamic is a relationship based on the balance of powers in a social flow, favoring exchange, sharing, solidarity and empathy;
7. **Values-driven development** whereby personal interest can be combined with the public good. Current infrastructure developments such as schools or universities, hospitals or museums should be conceived within a future perspective, as centers for curiosity and imagination in order to look, feel and operate differently. There is a profound yearning, especially among people related to culture, creativity and art, to be creative and innovative for the world.

**III - Change is possible – even in the austerity context – only if ambitions and concrete actions are embodied in an integrative manner on a local basis as well as at a European scale. The Catalyse network urges European politics to address the role of culture as a strategic necessity for the future of Europe and proposes in particular:**

1. **Charismatic figures, representative of their own national culture, who embody the project of a culture for Europe, beyond the project 2020, should be chosen every three years** with the mission to advise the European Commissioners for culture on how to bridge the gap between European policy and European cultures across and outside Europe. In brief, who would be the new Kundera, Kiefer or Semprun, for culture and creativity?
2. **Public and collective symbols should be created**, i.e. a “train for culture in Europe” or transient and travelling show cases of best practices that could connect regions and cities and their citizens in a CATALYTIC change driven by culture and creativity;
3. **Open government methods should be introduced in European cities, supervised by a European civil society network, to make legal frameworks on local levels for "change-ready" and thus “investment-ready” cities for culture and creativity – be it investment in creative ideas or in private funds.** All too often novelties are still considered as disturbance of daily, neglecting that change is inevitable;
4. **Finally, simple but necessary, icons of the European culture, chosen through an electronic vote by Europeans citizens should be made appear on everyday life** symbols such as European bills and stamps, for example: the couples Mitterrand-Kohl, De Gaulle-Adenauer, Shakespeare, Lady Ada Lovelace, Bach, Marlène Dietrich, Anne Franck, Beethoven, Pina Bausch, Goethe, Mozart, Richter, Pessoa, Léonard de Vinci, Cecilia Bartoli, Isabella Rossellini, Puccini, Marco Polo, Cervantes, Montserrat Figueras, Joan Miro, Luis Buñuel, Picasso, Molière, Albert Camus, Victor Hugo, Monet, Marie Curie, Coco Chanel, Nikki de Saint-Phalle, Jean-Paul II, Lech Walesa, Stefan Zweig, Gustav Klimt, Fritz Lang, František Kupka, Franz Kafka, Antonín Dvořák, France Prešeren, Jože Plečnik, Ivo Andrić, Elie Wiesel, Christo, Hans Christian Andersen, George Bernard Shaw, ...

**Regarding its economic and social positive stakes, the European cultural and creative investment must be placed at the heart of the European elections debates. Let’s rock the Europe of culture!**

**\* What is the Catalyse project?**

This European project on cultural investment in cities is conducted in 2013-2014 by three partners: The think tank [Forum d’Avignon](#)– France, the [Forum d’Avignon Bilbao](#)/ Metropoli-30 / Bilbao, Spain and the [Forum d’Avignon Ruhr](#) / european centre for creative economy ( ecce ), Dortmund, Germany. Thanks to an EU-funding and based on the strong proven result the joint mission and message is: Culture & creativity activates territories attractiveness.

**Catalyse network** successful cooperation confirms the appropriateness of this format mixing culture, economy and creative cities, leading to the next step: **expanding from cross-sector to cross-country**. Bilbao Metropoli 30, is a perfect match to our European collaboration, as the city of Bilbao has become an emblem of what urban and economic renewal through multiple means of culture and creative investments. Catalyse is therefore a result on an already existing and successful experience which justifies the willingness of the partners to **develop a more ambitious cross-European cooperation project**.

**Through these goals, this cooperation project is meeting three specific objectives of the EU Culture Programme:** to support the trans-national mobility of people working in the cultural sector, to encourage the trans-national circulation of artistic and cultural works and products and to encourage intercultural dialogue.