

to an inclusive arts festival in Barcelona and now plan to tour this version in small festivals, both nationally and internationally.

Adapting its work for a different audience has been a learning experience for the organisation. It allowed them to understand the value of starting a dialogue with their target audience at the beginning of the creative process. The resulting production has opened up their work to new audiences, festivals and venues. It has also given them access to new types of grants and increased visibility. For the Company, this experiment has reinforced its artistic voice and shown that new audiences, other languages and other formats can be part of the Company's work.

ASSEMBLING: VALUE IN ARTS ORGANISATIONS

"The notion of value is important for arts organisations"

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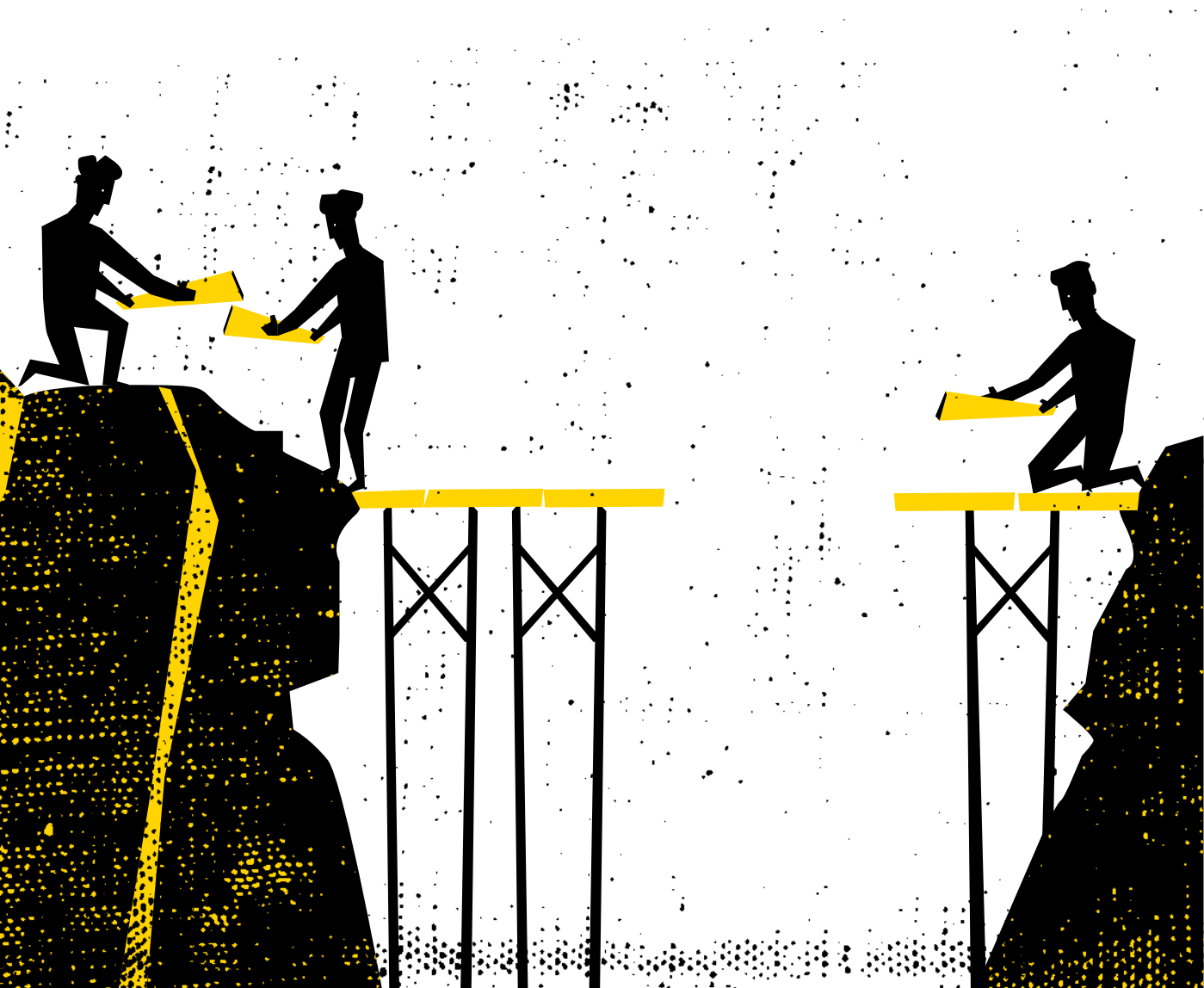
This chapter looks at value in arts organisations as a space of agitation, negotiation, and contestation. Arts organisations are in turn presented as sites where different values – and what is known as 'valuation regimes' or 'orders of worth' (Boltanski & Thevenot, 2006) – are constantly played out. The argument is that, rather than a weakness, this 'assembling' might be a key to sustainability in arts organisations and a source of social relevance. Indeed, the suggestion is that the conflict, coexistence and negotiation of different valuing orders in individual organisations is productive in a number of ways: it allows arts and cultural organisations to reflect on their sense of organisational identity; it aids organisational sustainability; it may also be conducive to driving innovation. However, the benefits of 'assembling' do not stop at the organisational level. This essay argues that, looking from a broader perspective, the balancing of different kinds of value and ways of valuing is socially valuable and, indeed, it is yet another reason why the arts and culture matter from the point of view of society at large.

ARTS ORGANISATIONS AND VALUE(S)

The notion of value is important for arts organisations. Arts and cultural organisations produce value. Their outcomes – be they aesthetic, artistic, social, economic, environmental, etc - are valued. Another way of putting this point is to say that these organisations make a difference from the point of view of their audiences, employees, stakeholders, funders, investors, and society at large¹. Furthermore, arts and cultural organisations are also underpinned by value. People who work for and with these organisations have specific value orientations, principles and beliefs.² These are often, but not always, expressed in those organisations' mission and vision statements; sometimes directly - sometimes with a twist – they are reflected in their organisational cultures. Lastly, arts and cultural organisations react and shape external value relations. Individual notions of value and organisational conceptions are juxtaposed with broader ideas of what is valuable, for instance, the value of the cultural sector at

¹ It is worth noting here that we speak of multiple stakeholders and, thus, different valuing relations.

² There is a tendency to assume uniformity with respect to the motivational values in arts organisations but, something we have observed in the context of Creative Lenses is that, practitioners, managers and fundraisers working in the arts can think of value differently. In other words, depending on the job people do, they may have different views and perceptions of values within individual organisations.



large as it is conceived and articulated in the macro-social terms at the level of cultural policy.³

Dealing with the complexities of different kinds of value and devising process and narratives to keep them together without ripping organisations apart, is the bread and butter of working in the arts. As we will see in what follows, these values have to be balanced as they are not easily mutually translatable, nor can they be reduced unproblematically into more simple denominators. What all this means in practical terms is that, in order to survive, arts organisations have to perform multiple balancing acts. They have to weigh their audience's perceptions of value against what their employees consider valuable and to reconcile the expectations of the funders and policymakers with their organisational values. At the same time, they have to negotiate the values of artistic autonomy versus those of populism and to manage the demand to be financially sustainable versus the desire to critique certain economic structures and create social change. On top of this, they have to work within the constraints dictated by the funders, policymakers, and the public at large and to assimilate whatever norms and ways of behaving make the organisation more legitimate, both externally and internally. In short, the totality of value in any arts organisation is not a seamless whole, but rather it is a stitched up assembled construct, one could say.

VALUES, BUSINESS MODELS AND ORGANISATIONAL NORMS

Value in organisations is a topic fraught with complexity, even if we look outside the arts and culture sector. The discussion of value has taken many forms in the tradition of management and organisational studies. People have variously spoken of value chains (Porter, 1985); value logic (Fielt, 2014); value architecture (Li, 2018); value proposition (Xiang & Yin, 2013) or indeed, business models which have been defined in terms of how an organisation *creates, delivers* and *captures* value (e.g. Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). It is interesting to observe in this context the appeal to structuring devices such as 'logic', 'architecture' and 'models'. Could this be suggestive of an anxiety to stabilise and control the flow of value in organisational structures? This suspicion is in some way supported by what we know about how organisations behave in relation to value. For instance, one 'strange' phenomenon registered is the 'decoupling' of the values encoded in the organisational systems and structures from those manifested in the informal organisational culture, which can give rise to 'symbolic' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and 'shadow' (Stacey, 1993) organisational structures. Effectively, organisations are able to play a game of deception and self-deception because of 'double-value' standards. Indeed, the emergent field of critical management studies abounds in examples of how organisations become arenas where stated organisational values, managerial goals and personal aspirations coexist and clash, calling for different coping strategies - be it cynicism (Fleming & Spicer, 2003) or criticism (Messner et al, 2008). What the traditions of critical management studies and neo-institutional analysis tell us is that values, value relations, organisational norms and practices come to interact and compete in any single organisation, and this has profound effects on how this organisation behaves.

³ In the policy context we often hear about the contribution that arts and culture make to economic growth, regional tourism, local regeneration, etc. These value registers may or may not correspond to the ideas of those working in arts and cultural organisations who have their own conceptions of what makes their work worthwhile.

These complexities are particularly pronounced in relation to arts and cultural organisations which, in a phrase of Chris Bilton, are subject to 'management by values', more so than 'management by objectives'. This underscores the importance of core values in relation to organisational strategies and highlights the mission-driven orientation in the sector. Indeed, while we should be cautious about over-generalising with respect to the shared denominators and commonalities across the cultural sector (e.g. Garnham, 2005) - it is generally true that work in the arts is typified by strong value orientation. In particular, arts and cultural sector organisations and workers have 'non-economic commitments to aesthetics, artistic autonomy and self-actualisation, personal and social well-being, family, kinship and community and radical politics' (Banks, 2015:41). This holds across different types of organisations: new media (Kennedy, 2012), television (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011), arts and craft (Luckman, 2012) and film (Vail and Hollands, 2012), to name just some.

Of course, the arts and cultural organisations are not free from the problems of double standards identified in the opening paragraph of this section. Indeed, some commentators have drawn attention to the importance of an internalised 'mythic' identity for creative enterprises and cultural organisations. For instance, Poettschacher shows that even if arts organisations are managed just like any other commercial business, the romantic values attached to being an artist/craftsman can still be shown as performatively important from the point of view of the organisational identity (Poettschacher, 2005). While any simple binary opposition between economic and artistic values is difficult to substantiate, (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007) arts and cultural organisations are sites where these tensions are pronounced. The assembled character of value is apparent in arts organisations.

WHAT IS ASSEMBLAGE?

A concept originating in the writings of Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze & Guattari, 1984, 1988), assemblage is simply a gathering of different elements in 'an identifiable terrain of action and debate' (Li, 2007: 266). It is an arrangement where entities - human subject and non-human actors (e.g., materials and buildings, technologies and techniques, procedures and processes) - come to be configured together for some time, in a specific space. Through this spatial and temporary confinement, they come to define each other through mutual relations. In this case, the terrain is delineated in terms of specific arts organisations; the elements that come together as part of this assemblage are: those making decisions in arts organisations (artists, employees, etc); and those making decisions about arts organisations (governments, funders, audiences, etc); and the context where both of these groups are embedded (institutions and actual buildings, technologies and materials, history and tradition, etc).

To say that arts organisations are settings where multiple orders of worth coexist highlights a different aspect of what it means for value, as framed by those organisations, to be assembled. Once again, originating in French theory, orders of worth are simply different ways people justify their accounts of what is valuable in any given situation. In an organisational setting, this could, for instance, amount to appealing to the need to pursue managerial targets, rather than, say, to focus exclusively on artistic goals. Orders of worth are thus different ways of coordinating action and offer us frames to understand behaviours. Orders of worth could perhaps be thought of in terms of principles explain-

ing our commitment to certain values.⁴

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT ASSEMBLING?

Why think of value in arts organisations in terms of assemblages and orders of worth? To start, this brings to light the complexity and the complicated nature of the value proposition delivered by arts organisations. Why is this a good thing? It advances our understanding of cultural value (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016). Cultural value is used here to mean the value of the outcomes of art organisations, the effects and impacts of the arts and culture. This allows us to talk about a range of valuable effects, be they social, artistic or economic. Moreover, by not treating value as a static assertion and something fixed, the assemblage framework sheds light on the relationships that give rise to values in the first place. This shift - moving the emphasis towards the processes and practices of valuation - offers a way of rethinking 'the relations between power, politics and space' from a more processual, socio-material perspective (McFarlane, 2011:376). It offers a way of understanding how values become valued in the first place (Dewey, 1939; Muniesa, 2012) and what actors - human and non-human - are at play.

A related point to this one is that taking the assemblage approach effectively eradicates the illusion that cultural value is just 'in the head'. Rather than being determined exclusively by what people think, conceptions of cultural value are shaped as much by the material environment in which the valuation processes are embedded. This allows us to understand how policy frameworks, individual choices and organisational structures all come to interact to collectively shape the notion of value. Indeed, what the assemblage approach alerts us to is that value negotiations do not happen in a vacuum. Arts organisations are embedded in specific times and places, as are their employees, audiences and 'paymasters'. Value decisions have explicit motivations and covert drivers; agency in arts organisations is shaped by an array of social institutions and norms, technologies and material circumstances, structures with global influence and infrastructures with national scope. Arts organisations conform to and contest the 'macro' articulations of cultural value. As the next section demonstrates, assembling is also significant from the point of view of the 'practitioners of cultural value' and can be harnessed to the advantage of arts organisations.

HARNESSING ASSEMBLAGE TO ONE'S ADVANTAGE?

We know from organisational ecologists that diversity is conducive from the point of adaptability and sustainability. But what happens when diversity occurs within one organisational frame - 'when different organisational principles coexist in an active rivalry within the firm?' (Girard & Stark, 2002). In other words, are there any benefits from cultivating diverse orders of worth within individual organisations and is there a point to promoting dynamic interactions rather than just parallel coexistence between them?

4 Understanding the assumptions behind the orders of worth is useful to make sense of the recent developments in management studies in relation to the so-called 'compromise-bearing objects' such as CSR reports and triple bottom lines (which integrate social, environmental and economical values) in many corporate organisations. Significantly, unlike the orders of worth, these compromise devices are designed to pre-empt possible conflict situations.

There are some studies pointing to an affirmative answer. For instance, Patriotta, Gond and Schultz (2011) show how a company responsible for a nuclear accident used the strategy of simultaneously appealing to multiple orders of worth in order to manage the situation of reputational crisis. Admittedly, this is a case of a company trading in unusual goods. From a more mundane perspective, Chantal Mailhot and Ann Langley show how business schools can successfully use potentially competing systems of valuation when commercialising knowledge and how this might provide an answer to the challenges of transferring knowledge from academia to practice more broadly. Specifically, they show how sustainable solutions can be achieved by creating frameworks where opposing value registers are kept in a state of precarious balance (Mailhot & Langley, 2017). Perhaps a most sustained reflection on the benefits of assembling within organisations comes from David Stark's reflection on 'heterarchy' in organisations (Stark, 2009; Girard & Stark, 2002). Heterarchy is a term to describe an organisational form which - rather than diffusing possible conflicts and dissolving the complexities of valuation orders - actively encourages coexistence and interaction between different valuation regimes. It is a form of management where the relations of power between different organisational structures remain fluid, and thus, no fixed hierarchies can be set. Stark's work is underpinned by the recognition that routine engagement with multiple value registers is the bread and butter for most organisations. His key question is how this might be turned into a source of strength and specifically, how this might be used to deal with situations of radical uncertainty which are characteristic of many contemporary markets. In his case studies of different organisations coping with rapid change - a Wall Street investment bank whose premises were destroyed on 9/11, a new-media startup in New York dealing with the Internet bubble and a machine-tool company in Hungary after the fall of communism - Stark looks ethnographically at how these companies managed to sustain themselves (Stark, 2009). He finds in each case that embracing the structural heterarchy and thus harnessing the potential of balancing different valuation orders - made these organisations more self-reflexive (aware of their assumptions and attentive to the way they operate). This in turn not only made it possible for them to deal with market uncertainty but was also a major driver of innovation. Admittedly, these are trail-blazing studies rather than accepted dogmas in management and yet, it might be worth asking whether these could be pointing to what innovation in the business models in the arts sector may look like.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS, OR WHY ASSEMBLING MATTERS

This is just a sketch and yet, what it hopefully reveals is the potential of using the assemblage framework in relation to cultural value in arts organisations. Indeed, the next step might be to work closely with arts and cultural organisations to understand better how the different orders of worth are played out in this context. No doubt, this would be a fascinating undertaking. As already hinted, value is in the DNA of the sector and because some genuinely multi-vocal articulations of cultural value do actually occur⁵ - cultural organisations seem an ideal site to observe, and possibly, harvest the benefits of 'assembling'.

As sketched above, some claim that assembling is beneficial to individual organisations, in terms of

5 The conflict of valuing registers is allowed to resurface in arts organisations, rather than being suppressed and managed, as is the case in the corporate sector relying on the compromise-bearing devices such as CSR and triple-bottom-line approaches.

an improved ability to deal with risk, and thus, better sustainability. There are some intimations that nurturing different regimes of value across heterarchical structures may pay off in terms of enhanced creativity and innovation outputs. Admittedly, more research is needed to verify or disconfirm this. There are other incentives to pursue this agenda. As briefly noted, empirical investigation into how the complexities of value are played out in specific organisations will improve our theories and methodologies in relation to cultural value, thereby leaving us better equipped to understand and capture the value produced by the sector. This is as important to academics as it is to practitioners - for the latter, the inherited conceptions of cultural value shape their everyday reality.⁶ It is also possible to appreciate the benefit of assembling if we look at the level of society at large. It might be that, in virtue of allowing different orders of worth to coexist and interact, arts and cultural organisations create opportunities to reimagine the social. What does it mean? In a nutshell, even though the geopolitical situation has changed dramatically over the last 5 years⁷, we are still living in the world where the encroachment of market principles upon most of the domains of human activity is the norm (Sandel, 2012) and where competition and competitiveness are the organising principle of the market as well as society (Davies, 2014). It could be that by allowing artistic, spiritual, social, environmental and economic values side by side without insisting on reducing them to one single register – arts organisations are subverting the current status quo where nearly everything boils down to financial returns. In this sense, by taking the stitched-up and assembled value to the heart of their operations – arts and cultural organisations are showing that alternative arrangements are possible and are delivering social value. Paradoxically, it might be that by ‘living’ with the multiplicity of values and orders of worth – while foregrounding the realities of the current situation - arts and cultural organisations are ‘envisioning real utopias’ (Wright, 2010), and thus, delivering on the romantic promise to make society better.

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6 For instance, the specific way that the policy discourse narrates cultural value through the prism of innovation and business models was something that impacted the participants of the Creative Lenses project.

7 The outcome of the last US election and the 2016 referendum in the UK can be taken to show that people no longer make decisions based on economic considerations alone – rather, they are driven by cultural identity and tribal motivations, even though this leaves them more economically disadvantaged.

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