



Engaging Data: Arts and Culture Research in the Digital Age

The 2012 Symposium of the Western States Arts Federation
Los Angeles, California | April 12-14, 2012

Symposium Description:

Today, in all fields, technology is massively increasing both the volume and variety of data available for research. One result is that the cultural field is experiencing a steady stream of both applied and scholarly data. A new challenge created by this invigorated research activity is the need to better understand the quality of the methodologies used in such research, as well as the adequacy of the research results for use in the field.

Some of the issues considered in this forum are: How do arts advocates, policy makers, participants, and patrons make the most of these data? What new empirical or theoretical insights can researchers gain through the integration and analysis of previously disconnected data sets? If there are common themes emerging from this research, how are we to connect them? And what types of previously unasked questions are provoked by this new data environment?

This symposium brings together experts on arts and cultural data to discuss innovative ways for managing, analyzing, and using data. Because this is an international phenomenon, participants will address both US and international issues around this topic.

Agenda

Thursday, April 12, 2012

4:00 p.m.

Registration

Foyer, Omni Hotel

6:15 p.m.

Cocktail Reception and Opening Remarks

Grand Café Restaurant/Patio, Omni Hotel

Welcome to California

- Malissa Shriver, Chair, California Arts Council
- Craig Watson, Executive Director, California Arts Council

Welcome to Los Angeles

- Laura Zucker, Executive Director, Los Angeles County Arts Commission

7:00 p.m.

Dinner

Bradbury Room, Omni Hotel

7:30 p.m.

Introduction

Bradbury Room, Omni Hotel

- Anthony Radich, Executive Director, WESTAF

Journalism in the Age of Data

Segments of Geoff McGhee's online documentary on data visualization for journalistic storytelling will be presented. The session will feature ways to effectively communicate with data by fusing traditional narrative practices with data-display technologies.

Presenters:

- Geoff McGhee, Creative Director for Media and Communications, Bill Lane Center for the American West, Stanford University

8:30 p.m.

Questions and Discussion

9:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Friday, April 13, 2012

7:00 a.m.

Breakfast

Bradbury Room, Omni Hotel

7:45 a.m.

Meet to Change Venue

Omni Hotel Lobby

Walk as a group to the Los Angeles Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue. Meetings will be held on the fifth floor of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

8:00 a.m.

Opening Remarks, Symposium Ground Rules

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Music Center

Co-Facilitators:

- Larry Meeker, former Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank, Kansas City, Missouri
- Lori Pfingst, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington Budget and Policy Center

8:15 a.m.

Arts and Culture Data: Challenges of the Past, Present, and Future

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Arts and culture research has recently grown dramatically in size, scope, and sophistication. A summary of the historic path of the field will be presented and critiqued. In this session, an overview of important data trends in arts and culture research will be provided.

Presenters:

- Steven Tepper, Associate Director, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and Professor of Sociology, Vanderbilt University
- Margaret Wyszomirski, Professor of Art Education and Public Policy, John Glenn School of Public Affairs, The Ohio State University

Discussion

9:00 a.m.

Assessing Value: Lessons from the Arts and Social Sciences

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

In this session, the economic, social, and cultural value of the arts are considered. Scholars will present case studies, consider the application of theory, and consider the efficacy of research methodologies in their discussion of the challenges of assessing the impact and value of arts and culture.

Presenters:

- Fred Wherry, Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan and Faculty Fellow, Yale Center for Cultural Sociology
- Henrik Hagtvedt, Professor of Marketing, Carroll School of Management, Boston College
- Jon Christensen, Executive Director, Bill Lane Center for the American West, Stanford University

9:45 a.m.

Discussion

- Steven Tepper, Associate Director, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and Professor of Sociology, Vanderbilt University
- Betsy Donald, Professor of geography at Queen's University, and Visiting Scholar, Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

10:15 a.m.

Research and Cultural Policy in the European Union: the Case of the Culture-Based Development Model

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

The European Union is substantially invested in research and policy efforts aimed at the advancement of the EU's creative economy. A new model is presented in this session that estimates the effects of culture on community development. The model is grounded in economic and sociological theories of culture and guided by established econometric techniques.

Presenter:

- Annie Tubadji, Economist and Advisor, European Union Structural Funds, Dextera Consulting

Respondents:

- Joaquin Herranz, Jr., Professor of Public Affairs, Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington
- Margaret Wyzomirski, Professor of Public Policy, Arts Policy and Administration Program and Department of Art Education, The Ohio State University

Discussion

11:15 a.m.

The Cultural Data Project: Insights from the Research Trenches

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

With over a third of the states participating in or expressing interest in adopting the Cultural Data Project, this source is rapidly becoming a primary data source for the nonprofit arts and cultural sector. Drawing from her work on California's Arts and Cultural Ecology from the James Irvine Foundation (2011) Anne Gadwa Nicodemus offers a researcher's perspective into the merits and shortcomings of the Cultural Data Project.

Presenter:

- Ann Gadwa Nicodemus, Principal, Metris Arts Consulting

Respondent:

- Steven Tepper, Associate Director, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and Professor of Sociology, Vanderbilt University

Discussion

Noon

Lunch

Salon C, Fifth Floor, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

1:45 p.m.

Economic Impact Studies from the Viewpoint of a Non-Arts Economist

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Economic impact studies are ubiquitous in the arts and culture field, despite their frequently cited shortcomings. This session addresses how weaknesses in predominant arts economic impact methodologies are corrected by the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) method. The SAM input/output model is presented as being appropriate for reliably assessing the economic impact of the arts.

Presenter:

- Hank Robison, Co-Founder and Senior Economist at Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc.

Respondents:

- Joaquin Herranz, Jr., Professor of Public Affairs, Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington
- Matthew Barry, Director of Data and Information Initiatives, Piton Foundation

2:25 p.m.

Discussion

2:50 p.m.

New Techniques for Engaging with Data

Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

A hybrid of scientific research, fine arts, computer science, and design, data visualization is an emerging field of great relevance to the arts. Recent efforts by artists, researchers, scientists, and others to visually represent data and to make data available to broader audiences using technology are discussed.

Presenters:

- Matthew Barry, Director of Data and Information Initiatives, Piton Foundation
- Eric Rodenbeck, Founder, CEO, and Creative Director, Stamen Design and Technology (San Francisco)
- Katy Harris, Designer, Fathom Information Design (Boston)

Respondents:

- Geoff McGhee, Creative Director for Media and Communications, Bill Lane Center for the American West, Stanford University
- Jordan Wirfs-Brock, Journalist and Data Designer, Piton Foundation

3:30 p.m.

Discussion

4:00 p.m.

International Approaches to the Creative Economy

Salon C, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Research on the creative economy outside of the United States is robust and rigorous. This session concentrates on international creative economy studies.

Presenters:

- Betsy Donald, Professor of Geography at Queen's University and Visiting Scholar, Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- Dimitris Drakopoulos, Founding Partner, DEXTERA Consulting
- Larisa Mann, DJ and Legal Anthropologist, Doctoral Candidate, Law School Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program, University of California-Berkeley

Respondents:

- Fred Wherry, Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan and Faculty Fellow, Yale Center for Cultural Sociology
- Eric Rodenbeck, Founder, CEO, and Creative Director, Stamen Design and Technology (San Francisco)

- 4:40 p.m. **Discussion**
- 5:00 p.m. **Summary Thoughts**
- 5:30 p.m. **Adjourn**
- 5:45 p.m. **Cocktail Reception**
Salon C, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
- 6:45 p.m. **Dinner**
On your own

Saturday, April 14, 2012

Meetings will again be held on the fifth floor of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at the Los Angeles Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue.

- 8:00 a.m. **Working Breakfast**
Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
- 8:15 a.m. **Closing Remarks**
Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Scholarship and Practice: Views from Both Sides

Concluding remarks are presented to connect themes in the symposium to existing practical and theoretical challenges for arts and culture researchers, policy-makers, and participants in art and culture.

Presenters:

- Laura Zucker, Executive Director, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and Director of Arts Management Program, Claremont Graduate University
- Joaquin Herranz, Jr., Professor of Public Affairs, Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington

Discussion

- 9:00 a.m. **Final Remarks from Participants**
- 9:30 a.m. **Conclusion of the Symposium**
- 9:45 a.m. **Creative Vitality Index™ Workshop**
Salon B, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

During this session, current users of the CVI™, symposium participants and guests who wish to remain will be presented with an overview of emerging research activities at WESTAF, including CVI™ innovations. Following that, participants will engage in a workshop that features ways to best use CVI™ data, create communities around CVI™ data and research, and ways to support creative economy development using data.

Presenter and Facilitator:

- Bryce Merrill, Senior Associate Director, WESTAF

- Noon **Adjourn**