Hit the North: Academic Workshop
Notes
13 September 2006
#devoculture

General Discussion
How to engage better with North East of England?

Session 1: Local News
- Leeds can't be Manchester
- New approach to cultural policy making using a cultural strategy that everyone writes
- Quality control in oppositional to scale
- Leeds has strong ties to the geography of place in the identity is Yorkshire
- Problem of viewing historical cultural identity for contemporary culture (mono-white vs now)
- Tension between rival universities within university – academic vs practice, Russell Group vs everyone else – lack of cooperation leads lack of voice to policy makers/City Council – revision power dynamics of partnerships
- Activities vs physical buildings – what drives urban development
- Public consolation meetings MIF did around building plans for Factory and lack of impact with policy
- Enlightened Despotism = Manchester policy making (Oakley)
- Manchester sees its audience as OUTSIDE Manchester – trades on local identity but doesn't cultivate local capacities
- Tension between Manchester vs surrounding/Greater Manchester – rebalancing
- Universities need to rebalance their target audience away from Manchester city centre
- Brexit means reorientation from Europe towards China (e.g. MIF)
- Also problem of artists not necessarily wanting to be regional audiences vs international audiences – strategies to retain local talent seems to be collaboration between international artist and local artist (MIF)
- Leeds developing European Capital of Culture and links to other European cities (Barcelona) – even if can't get funding because of Brexit will pursue something else – big focus on developing identity as European city
- Manchester big focus on building and support health and well-being agenda (artist as social worker – you are either international artist or community artist)
- Liverpool has centered devolution around economy and enhancing docks (more efficient transport links including as port) – consumptive model – autonomous arts scene at moment
- Concern of economic segregation through unregulated residential development (lack of affordable housing development) result in social problems – reinforce boundary lines – difficult argument to see movement on with developers who are more focused on immediate economic benefit (is city council or anyone challenging this other than practitioners)

- Need discussion in arts departments about what their role is as advocates and connected to what community – strong connections at MMU around cooperative models and community-focused working (social well-being agenda)
- Need change culture within university – glass ceiling – top table has own agenda that isn't always connected up with faculty

General Discussion and Report Back
- Select key agents at geographic levels who have influence over strategy and development over other consortium – Role of key individuals
- Boundaries of discussion – geographic north, rural spaces, series of cities (e.g. the North vs network of cities
- Democratic strategies in place/dif models of democracy (e.g. the great importance of key individual/personalities make policy formation and decision making less democratic in practice?)
- Is the way policy process is enacted and performed actually different when narrative of democracy is different?
- Delivery of public services and policy-making influence by digital industries (i.e. open data, smart cities)
- Geographies and scales of devolution (what is the shire?)
- Evidence based policy making – type of data collected, needs of local authorities met through existing methods and sets
- Influence of change in government (i.e. Cameron to May, Brexit)
- What is up with all the industrial metaphors?
- How does allegiance with particular geography identity influence cultural production? (e.g. 'made in…')
- Localness devalued against mobility
- Scale and policy interventions – what needs support, does it necessarily mean if you support local artist you develop their capacity
- Art market operates not always through logic replicated in policy
- Cultural recognition and its relationship with cultural identity
- If devolution is about transferring power and decision making, who is that power being transferred to? Models of democracy
- Community of interest vs community of geography – historical def of community or contemporary
- Is the redevelopment and regeneration and devolution that different based on geography? How is it different? Are any of the issues that are particular to North – is something being done dif or is it all the same issues in Bristol or Brixton?
- Buildings – issues container and content?

SESSION 2: Epistemologies
- Social Network Analysis (e.g. Turning Point)
- ANT
- Bring together diverse disciplinary approach to answer questions (not necessarily unique question but unique people answering them)
- Comparative (whether across the North, set of cities)

- Develop new approach – design approach (i.e. charrette, set of workshops – not prescriptive – space of imaginaries
- Challenge vs observing (policy analysis as historical rather than instrumental, a dif approach than impact agenda)
- Political science approach
- Ethnography
- Aesthetics of devolution – is there a unique practice or display that is developing or exists?
- Practice based research
- How do we think about comparison?

Outputs
- New Directions in Cultural Policy (Anna Upchurch) Palgrave McMillan
- Palgrave Pivots – 25-50K – focus is on current events and issues as time to publication quicker