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FALL 2013

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Students are helping leaders and presenters re-think

PARTICIPATION,
LOCATION

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DISSEMINATION

of the arts on campus.

By
Charlotte Albright

► HERE'S A CRUCIAL MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION FOR COLLEGE ARTS PRESENTERS.

What do students want to see and hear at a campus concert?

- classical music
- hip hop
- spoken word performances
- their friends

THE ANSWER, says Alan Brown, is all of the above. And more. A leading researcher for the arts consulting group WolfBrown, Brown co-authored the new study *Engaging Next Generation Audiences: A Study of College Student Preferences Towards Music and the Performing Arts*. He

says many young people arrive on campus having already picked up a guitar — or a trombone. So their attitude toward performance is active, not passive.

"They've been making music in high-school, in choir, or band, or orchestra, and so to arrive at college and be asked to sit down and shut up and don't move and applaud at the right time is a big leap," Brown says.

So should recent high school graduates be forced to make that leap all the time? Or are there other equally interesting leaps that will increase student engagement in the arts?

That's where research comes in, says Scott Stoner, director of programs and resources at the Association of Performing Arts Presenters. But to be relevant to presenters, it has to be research by students, not just about them.

ZACH INGBRESEN/HOPKINS CENTER FOR THE ARTS/DARTMOUTH COLLEGE



“If you are getting after what it is that’s going to engage students in the arts for the rest of their lives, you’ve got to begin by engaging them in this kind research and taking a hard look at what’s going to motivate and incentivize their engagement in the arts,” Stoner says.

The WolfBrown study, commissioned by the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is unusual because it is student-driven, says Stoner. In addition to conducting his own research, Alan Brown trained student arts presenters to ask each other about what would lure them to a performance — instead of, say, to a pub crawl or a football game.

He and his young researchers from eight Major University Presenter campuses presented their preliminary findings in June at a symposium hosted by the Hop. The eight MUP consortium members made PowerPoint presentations based on data from focus groups, interviews and programming experiments.

What they discovered didn’t really surprise Brown, but it did confirm his suspicions about what makes these students different from their parents. For one thing, Brown, says, millennials like to have a hand — literally — in their own entertainment. His favorite example?

Check out the mall.

“You know...where children go into the Build-A-Bear store and they design their own teddy bear,” he says. “Well, young people are accustomed to designing their own experiences.”

Brown shared a few theories over lunch before the symposium’s first session.

He talked about “social fulfillment.” Like many adults, college students are more likely to attend arts events if they reap

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social rewards. It’s ideally a time to see friends and maybe even meet performers.

Social fulfillment was also in high gear at the symposium itself. The eight student researchers and others from their universities relished the chance to meet and exchange notes on what audience-building strategies worked at their campuses and what fell flat.

Each project was designed to test the assumptions underlying the WolfBrown report. For example, if social fulfillment was what students at the University of Kansas wanted, then Hillary Berry, president of the Lied Center Student Association, would give it to them. Berry planned two extra events around a performance by jazz violinist Regina Carter.

The audience was invited to meet the musician and also network with local employers.

But only three students showed up for those free perks.

Hard lesson learned? Publicize earlier and involve groups, such as fraternities, to create more of a social media buzz. And, Berry says, serve trendy free food. Not just punch and cookies.

“So if we had a budget to provide pizza and soda or sushi and tea or something like that, and we could market that, I think that that would have been an even bigger incentive. There just wasn’t an incentive for students to come,” Berry laments.

It didn’t help that the social networking add-ons happened to fall on a balmy Friday night, when students wanted to dig out their flip-flops and head outside. But Berry isn’t discouraged. She’s using what she learned to plan more effectively for the future.

Other college presenters had larger budgets. Rheme Sloan is from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where most student tickets are now half price. He says attendance was especially good at a student choral and dance performance of Darius Milhaud’s *Oresteia of Aeschylus* — perhaps because all the performers in six ensembles and the chorus were given marketing tool kits and expected to promote the event.

“We also did a student experience blog where we invited students to write and submit photos and videos about the documenting of the process and putting the piece together. This was then shared across social media,” Sloan reports.

That’s Brown’s “Build-A-Bear” template in action: students performing, marketing for themselves and marketing to each other.

Sloan’s successful project hits a number of other targets suggested by the study. It pulls back the curtain, letting students see how art is put together before they even attend the event. Feeling more comfortable and more educated about classical music and art are key, researchers say, to building younger audiences. And since the baby boomers are disappearing from the box office, it’s crucial to get their kids and grandkids through the door.

But even the door is changing. Some campuses are taking bold steps to the great outdoors. Through Facebook, email and posters, the University of Washington’s World Series recruited a student engagement team from the research focus groups. They helped plan events likely to attract younger audiences. But there was nothing juvenile about the roster itself, which included La Catrina String Quartet, Julliard String Quartet and pianist Khatia Buniatishvili. Sadly, Brown’s research focus groups put chamber ensembles pretty low on their favorites list. Many, it seems, like symphonic music better. Yet the UW student engagement team reeled in audiences for the quartets and pianist.

How?

“They were free evening events,” UW’s Sonja Myklebust explains. “We marketed them through Facebook and posters.” Most importantly, they talked the artists into performing in residence halls and mingling with students.

That’s social networking for you. Who wouldn’t want to tweet about meeting a world-class performer?

The student engagement team also helped launch what Myklebust calls “alternative programming.” It included the Trey McIntyre Project, the dance company known for showing up unexpectedly in unlikely places. Those impromptu



dance parties are called SpUrbans — Spontaneous Urban Performances.

“In conjunction with the dance department, the Trey McIntyre Project was here for a few days before their main hall event and they did a master class where they taught the dance students how to do flash mobs — the SpUrbans — with them,” Myklebust says.

Flash mobs? Dorm concerts? Twitter? Discount tickets? Free food? What’s not to like? Well, of course there’s that nagging issue of balancing the budget. And another chal-

“There’s a really interesting conversation about excellence going on here. Presenters are historically so oriented to the public presentation and on the review of that presentation. So opening themselves up more to process and more to the co-created event, more to participatory environment, is something that the people in this room are open to.”

lenge: keeping baby boomers happy while attracting their grandchildren. It’s a balancing act worthy of the Cirque du Soleil. But the foundation behind all this research thinks that tightrope needs to be walked.

“There’s a really interesting conversation about excellence going on here,” says Susan Fader, program officer for the performing arts at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

“Presenters are historically so oriented to the public presentation and on the review of that presentation. So opening themselves up more to process and more to the co-created event, more to participatory environment, is something that the people in this room are open to. They are progressive. But it won’t be easy to implement because they are professionals charged with running their business of presenting. And the notion of creating access runs contrary to building earned revenue, which means that there have to be new models for making this process-oriented work.”

Those new models, symposium organizers say, can’t come solely from presenters. Artists and audiences have to get in on the act. And if college communities, not just campuses, start to coalesce in new ways around arts events, Stoner sees a bright future, even for classical music.

“Presenters need to be at the table as key stakeholders in re-invigorating community life,” Stoner says. “And that means engaging young people.”

The young people at this meeting spent two days coming up with what they called action plans for the future. One of those plans could be coming to a campus near you in the next few years. So check your Twitter account, put on your dancing shoes, help yourself to free snacks and, in case there might be a flash mob, bring an umbrella. **WVA**



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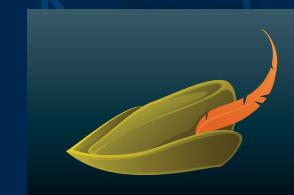
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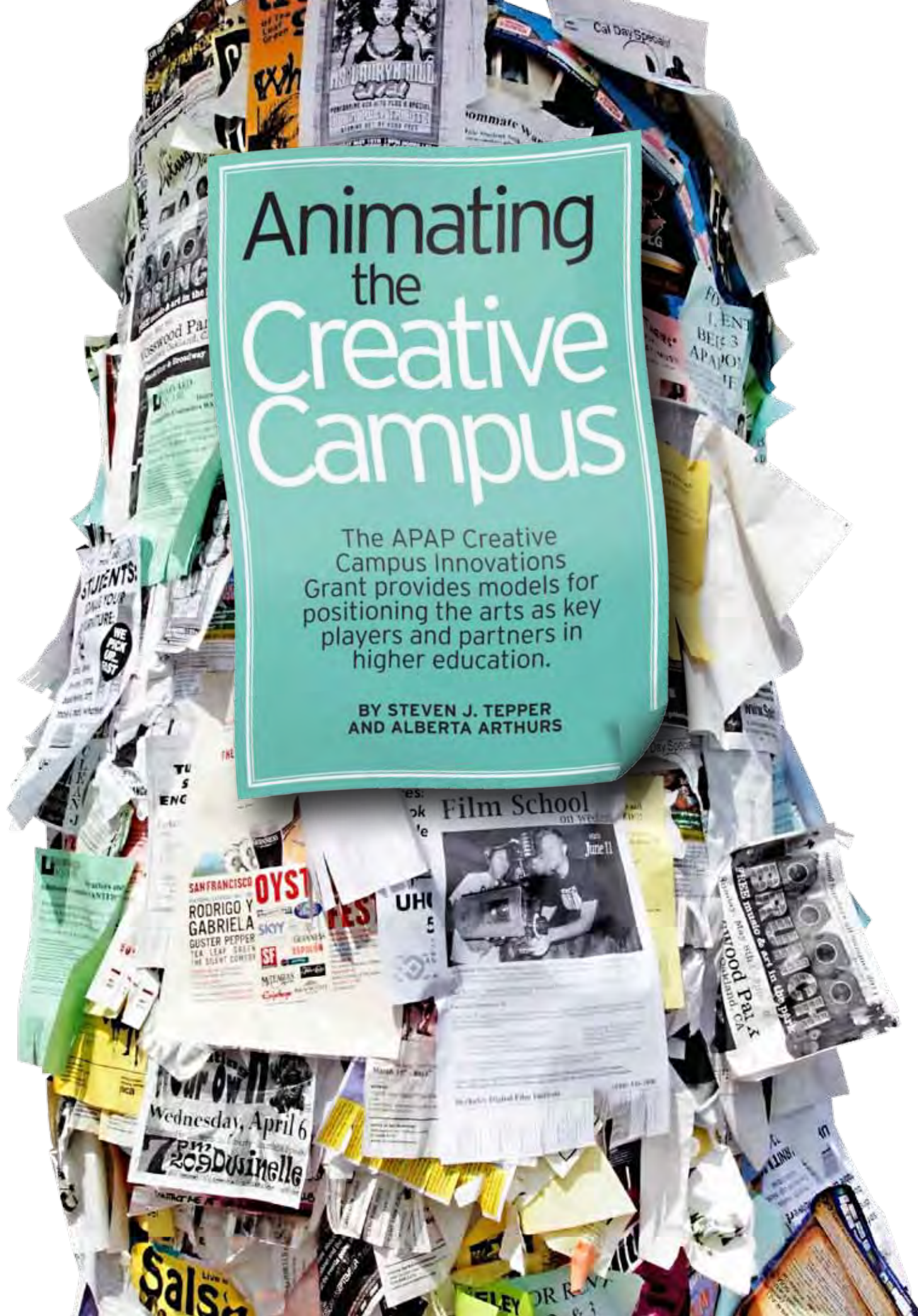
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In 2007, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters embarked on a journey, with the support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, to explore the potential of the “creative campus” concept to deepen learning and interdisciplinary collaboration through the arts. The following report is meant to serve as a case statement of what we have learned from innovative projects at 14 campuses across the U.S. We especially hope this document and the digital resources that can be found at APAP365.org will be an incentive for APAP members and their colleagues to initiate dialogues with presidents, provosts and other campus and community leaders – to imagine how together they can leverage existing and potential arts assets to enhance reflective learning and engagement that should be the heart of 21st century education.

–Scott Stoner, APAP Director of Programs and Resources

Every leader in higher education wants to walk out in front of parents, students, alumni and members of the broader community and say, “Look what can happen at a place like this.” Arts-driven collaborations on campus offer inspiring examples of such high-impact, mind-expanding undertakings. Presidents, provosts and deans should initiate conversations on their campuses about deploying artistic assets to advance institutional missions — specifically to deepen learning, spur innovation, build community and commitment and demonstrate the unique value of a 21st-century education organized around face-to-face collaborative discovery. The time has come to take the lessons from the Association of Performing Arts Presenter Creative Campus Innovations Grant experiment and apply them broadly to higher education.

Ten years ago, university leaders gathered at Arden House for the 104th American Assembly meeting to discuss the connection between higher education and the arts. Since that meeting, sustained conversation, experimentation and research have demonstrated the significant contributions the arts make to campus life and learning. Funders including the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Teagle Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Ford Foundation have supported national research, conferences and programmatic experiments. Last year, a consortium of 23 research universities pledged \$80,000 to establish a formal national network to support the integration of artists and arts practice throughout American research universities. And individual campuses have created task forces to elevate and integrate the arts and creativity across campus. Ongoing research demonstrates that arts-based inquiry deepens learning and student engagement. Moreover, the accumulated evidence reveals that the arts on campus can drive innovation, create an environment that supports risk taking and help prepare students for a workforce that demands creative skills.

In this short paper, we extend these arguments to focus specifically on the value of integrating the arts across campus through richly layered, interdisciplinary, collaborative explorations. Drawing on the experiences of three institutions

that received Creative Campus Innovations Grants, we argue that the arts are an underused resource that can foster a more collaborative and inter-connected campus. These arts-based, interdisciplinary exchanges produce deeper learning, energize faculty and students and develop a distinctive local brand and identity for campuses seeking to differentiate themselves in a crowded marketplace. Importantly, deploying artistic resources more strategically across the university provides campus leaders with an effective tool to achieve powerful and visible results with relatively little new investment.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

In a hyper-competitive environment, higher education leaders seek to foster performance-driven cultures, adopting the latest principles and practices of a managerial economy. Universities have embraced proven management practices based on centralization, efficiency, cost controls, revenue diversification, outsourcing, enrollment management, marketing and branding and specialization. Many major research universities have the added challenges of managing academic medical centers and hospitals during a time of dramatic change in health care. In such an environment, the benefits of art-based inquiry and collaboration may fail to show up in the everyday balance sheet of an institution. These benefits are what economists call “intangible assets” and include such factors as an organization’s reputation and ability to innovate, employee loyalty and pride, and high-quality relationships both within and outside of the institution.

New research suggests that universities, as with corporations, must also pay more attention to their “intangible assets.” For example, according to researchers at Northwestern University, a university’s intangible assets — what they refer to as “educational good will” — ultimately make a difference in yield rate for admitted students when competing with other equally ranked institutions. This finding echoes what urban scholars have found in assessing the “competitiveness of cities” — a city’s creativity, buzz and sense of inclusion are critical for attracting the talent necessary for economic growth. While we can only speculate about what creates this “good will” on

college campuses, we know the arts are a critical part of the equation.

In particular, the innovations grant model funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (described below) shows the unique role the arts can play in fostering a culture for creative, interdisciplinary collaborations. Such collaboration, according to Brandeis University business professor Robert Thomas, is perhaps the most important intangible or invisible asset of a business or institution. It is worth quoting Thomas at length.

The most important invisible ability is the ability to collaborate. After all, it's the willingness on the part of people to work together to solve problems when they could just as easily pass them along to someone else that forms the core of most things we call collaboration. It's decisions that someone makes to share an idea or to spend the extra hour helping out — not the regulation or contract that requires it — that usually means the difference between “good enough” and “outstanding.”

So the question is: What are the most critical intangible assets in your company? What are you doing to cultivate them? Who is responsible for managing the invisible that creates the intangibles?

For universities to thrive, faculty members must do more than simply publish in their disciplines or show up to teach an allotted number of courses; students must go beyond getting good grades and accumulating credits towards graduation; and alumni must be compelled to give back and to serve. Members of the university community are asked to be part of both a “transactional university” that exchanges goods and services and a “transformative university” that changes lives. Collaborations made possible through the arts can produce these critical intangible assets that turn a campus, in Thomas' words, from “good enough” to “outstanding.”

MODELS OF COLLABORATION

The value of arts-based interdisciplinary exchange was explored through the Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program. APAP, with a grant of \$3.5 million from the Doris Duke Charitable Trusts, created the Innovations Grants to seed inventive, interdisciplinary programs that brought together artists with a range of community and campus-based partners in order to stimulate arts-based inquiry and elevate the role of the arts in academic life. Over a six-year period, 14 campus-based performing arts presenters received grants, all of which involved one or more artist-in-residence.

Outcomes from these grants demonstrate that arts-

Members of the university community are asked to be part of both a “transactional university” that exchanges goods and services and a “transformative university” that changes lives.

based interdisciplinary explorations generate critical intangible assets, including an environment for collaboration, deep student engagement and what former Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor describes as “an ecology for innovation.” Importantly, the grant program demonstrated that those who are responsible for presenting performing and visual arts to their campuses are willing and able to take responsibility for managing these essential and vital creative collaborations. These arts leaders wake up every day with the explicit mandate to work across

disciplines and to engage the community in creative and non-routine collaboration. There are few other positions on campus with this mandate, and with support, encouragement and vision from university presidents, provosts and deans, these leaders can extend, amplify and integrate their work in ways that, as former Chancellor Holden Thorp from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill remarked in an interview, “create something that is bigger than the sum of its parts.”

Several national reports have documented and evaluated the 14 Creative Campus programs. Below we highlight three projects that showcase models for effective collaboration.

HIGH-IMPACT CENTRALITY

1 One powerful form of collaboration involves what might be termed the “hub and spokes” approach, in which arts-based programming focuses on a common theme coordinated by a central entity with activities unfolding across campus with diverse partners. The Carpenter Center for Performing Arts at California State University, Long Beach used this model when bringing musicians, performance artists, journalists, choreographers, authors, critics, filmmakers and attorneys to campus to engage students and the community in debates about works of art and expression that have been banned, blacklisted or boycotted. The B-Word Project embedded artistic presentations from dance, theater, music, film and murals in history, philosophy, human development and English classes; it involved the Center for First Amendment Studies and the University Art Museum as well as multiple student groups on campus; and it took place in improvised public spaces. By the end of the initiative, virtually every member of the university community knew about the B-Word Project. The thousands who participated reported high levels of engagement and learning, and the interdisciplinary steering committee for the project became a permanent committee with the mandate of matching faculty and departments

with touring artists scheduled to appear each year as part of the performing arts season. The B-Word Project is an example of a “high impact” collaboration: With relatively modest additional resources, the university organized a season of guest artists and lectures and connected them with dozens of departments and organizations to create a powerful, 18-month happening around an important contemporary issue.

THE CADUCEUS ROD

2 A second model involves intense interdisciplinary collaboration around a common objective or theme. Like the caduceus rod that features two serpents wrapped around a single staff, Wesleyan University paired scientists with artists in intense curricular and co-curricular activities designed to address scientific, social and aesthetic issues surrounding climate change. Addressing global warming, a choreographer was paired with an earth scientist to produce a common freshman experience for incoming Wesleyan students that included readings, discussions and a culminating public performance involving 500 first-year students in a participatory dance work on Foss Hill, a campus landmark. Artists and scientists also teamed up to design course modules to explore important scientific and social questions relating to climate change. A professor of economics and environmental studies collaborated with a choreographer to explore alternative ways of communicating the risks of climate change through photographs and movement. An anthropologist and a printmaker worked together on a module that involved

documenting the lives of people who live near a local landfill site, and a theater director worked with a physics professor to help students examine how performance techniques could help them become better advocates for energy policies. In five years, 14 such course modules were offered. Pam Tatge, director of Wesleyan's Center for the Arts, remarked on the power of the collaborative pairings: “We not only taught scientific data, we gave students a heightened and embodied awareness of that science that led to deeper engagement and knowledge.”

SKUNK WORKS

3 A third model involves creating a cross-functional, interdisciplinary group within an organization characterized by a high degree of autonomy, unhampered by bureaucracy and tasked with working together to create a new or innovative product. Lockheed Martin's Advanced Development Program pioneered such a collaboration model — referred to as “skunk works” — that is widely used in business, engineering and technical fields. Montclair used this model to develop an innovative campus-wide course on creativity. Leadership at Montclair pulled together an interdisciplinary team and provided its members with space, time (24 months) and the mandate to work with artists to design and pilot a new, team-taught course. The “skunk works” team included a physicist, mathematician, philosopher, marketing professor as well as faculty from theater/dance and music education. Collaborating with three visiting artists (a choreographer, performance artist and theater producer) over



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the course of the two-year project grant, the faculty working group developed a curriculum aimed at helping students interrogate and deploy various aspects of the creative process and strengthen and engage their “creative muscle.” The faculty team piloted the course during Summer 2012, made revisions and offered a full-semester version in Spring 2013, with plans to eventually make the material from the “creative thinking” course available to all students at Montclair.

FOSTERING INTERDISCIPLINARITY, DEEP COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The arts are particularly effective partners when it comes to deep collaboration because they create what scholars call “trading zones” – spaces where people can exchange ideas and learn from one another without the same external pressures tied to extrinsic rewards and strict disciplinary practices. The arts contribute to these trading zones in unique ways. They build “play” and improvisation into the creative process, embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, use story and metaphor to produce mutual understanding and bridge cultural differences. Moreover, artists are often project-driven rather than discipline-driven, and process-oriented rather than product-oriented.

Evidence from the learning sciences indicates that arts-based inquiry and collaboration can foster deep, reflective learning and engagement. For example, the arts promote “af-

fective learning” by stirring passions and evoking emotional responses from students; they foster “epistemic curiosity” by helping students work through puzzles where the final solution is unknown; they embrace “doing” and help students learn through active participation and experience; and they provide a platform for students to engage in difficult conversations around political and moral issues. A recent Mellon Foundation-funded study of student engagement through the arts demonstrates that when engagement is participatory, socially relevant, paired with academic learning, process-driven and occurs in collaborative and creative spaces, it can lead to deep engagement, increased academic learning and higher levels of student satisfaction.

Holden Thorp, whose campus received one of the Creative Campus Innovations Grants, said in an interview that “arts integrated collaborative programs that are multi-layered and ‘fire on all cylinders’ allow our community to be part of something bigger than our individual disciplines, jobs and classes.” In fact, several college presidents interviewed for this essay discussed the idea that the arts can be catalysts for changing the campus culture. “The creative campus raises the energy level of a campus,” says Nancy Cantor. “It leads to risk-taking and innovative thinking. But it also creates engaged learning around multiple modalities.” Cantor also notes the “opt-out” and “opt-in” culture on campus and the

challenge of getting students and faculty to leave their silos and join in the social web of the campus. “Arts integration helps work against isolation and the hyper-individualistic and competitive world that leaves us stressed,” she says. “Instead, arts-infused programs and explorations can create imaginative spaces where people ‘opt in.’”

Importantly, all three Creative Campus projects produced what sociologist George Ritzer calls “enchaining the everyday life of the campus.” Such enchantment is achieved by engaging faculty, students and staff in non-routine, unpredictable and often inefficient creative explorations. These are exactly the types of collaborations that Robert Thomas argues are critical intangibles that benefit an organization’s bottom line. They create a sense of distinctiveness, the innovative milieu that attracts the best and brightest and encourages them to go beyond narrow requirements as faculty and students and to give their time and energies to make their universities, in Thorp’s words, “larger than the sum of their parts.” These projects produce what some call the “ecstatic possibilities of the local,” the sense that “only in a place like this” could such extraordinary and creative collaborations take place.

CALL TO ACTION

University leaders should initiate conversations on their campuses to examine how artistic resources can be better deployed. Harvard, Princeton, Vanderbilt, Mt. Holyoke, Davidson, the University of Michigan, Texas A&M and the University of Minnesota are examples of schools that have created task forces and committees in recent years. This is not the first time campuses have rediscovered the power of an asset that has, perhaps, been under-valued in the past. In fact, during the past 30 years, higher education leaders have converted two other critical assets into key drivers of the 21st-century creative campus.

The first key driver is the dramatic growth of technology transfer offices. In contrast to earlier times, universities now routinely optimize the value of their intellectual property, leading to research partnerships and investments that benefit faculty, spur innovation and raise money for the central coffers of the university.

Our second example involves academic libraries. With the rise of online resources in the past few decades, many academic research libraries became less visible in the daily lives of faculty and students. Across the country, campus-wide task forces have been charged with reinventing the library and making it a vital resource for advancing institutional goals. Today, libraries have become spaces for collaboration, laboratories for research, frontiers for digital scholarship in the humanities and partners in developing curricula. Libraries have developed mobile apps, video walls, project-oriented workspaces and media labs.



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Both of these examples serve as useful models as leaders in higher education consider the value of the arts on campus and re-imagine them as key assets for collaboration, innovation, engagement and learning.

At the 2004 American Assembly meeting, participants agreed that universities and colleges are likely the single greatest patrons of the arts in the U.S. The total annual budgets and capital assets combined of university-based performing arts centers, museums and art departments — including faculty salaries, commissions, artists-in-residence, public art and student scholarships — likely surpasses \$5 billion. In a time of scarce resources, universities must optimize that collective investment to advance the mission of their institutions or risk losing out to those who do.

John Vaughn, executive vice president at the Association of American Universities, predicts that universities will follow the example of American cities when it comes to recognizing the arts as a key asset. “Ten years ago, mayors across the country viewed arts institutions and artists as amenities and symbols of achievement and status,” he says. “Today, mayors see the arts as essential for economic development, strengthening schools, improving quality of life, addressing issues of sustainability and attracting and retaining talented creative class workers.”

As with city leaders, university leaders must create inter-

disciplinary teams to investigate how the arts can be better leveraged and integrated on campus. Such taskforces and committees should take up four challenges. Universities must:

- Map cultural assets to understand all sources of investment in the arts on campus and to locate all supplies of creative talent.
- Look beyond the arts and identify curricular opportunities, academic centers and programs, curious faculty and co-curricular opportunities that would benefit from closer collaboration with artists and existing cultural assets.
- Create a “pilot” creative campus year in which they seek out non-routine ways of connecting and integrating the arts across campus.
- Evaluate and assess these pilots and determine a sustainable model going forward.

CONCLUSION

Ambitious, arts-integrated, collaborative projects — such as the APAP Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program — demonstrate the power of university effectiveness in bringing together scholars, students and artists in face-to-face creative teams. The time has come to take the lessons from this experiment and apply them broadly across higher education. In an era when universities are asked to do more with less,

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Mad River Theater Works- *John Henry ~ Wings of Courage ~ Freedom Bound*
Michael Cooper- *Masked Marvels and Wondertales*
Red Grammer

Kaki King appears in collaboration with the Windish Agency. Nellie McKay appears in collaboration with Monterey International. Pablo Ziegler appears in collaboration with Bernstein Artists.

*New to Baylin Artists Management

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