

Art and Culture on the agenda of our European and national politicians

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The European Union must support, throughout its territory, the existence and development of artistic creation. It guarantees equal access of all citizens to this artistic creation.

The European Union must recognize the eminent place of artists and authors within society for what they contribute through creation, interpretation, exhibition and distribution of works - not only in artistic but also in cultural educational activities - to the enrichment and valorization of artistic and cultural heritage.

Artists, along with all professionals in public and private structures of creation, production, distribution, support of creation, artistic education, public awareness-building and popular education participate in the dynamism of creation both nationally and internationally, as well as in local development and the access of the broadest public to creative works. Together, they contribute to economic development and employment.

The European Union must protect the diversity of cultural expression, which brings with it creativity, values and meaning. It must promote exchanges and interactions between cultures, in particular through artistic cooperation. It guarantees the freedom of each of us in the choice of our cultural practices and artistic methods of expression.

The European Union must support the development and sustainability of a legal, social and economic environment that is appropriate to the specific characteristics of artistic activities.

A. On the utility of art

For the past 20 years or so, the most liberal managerial approaches have recognized that the essential driver of human activity is the search for meaning. A worker cannot be mobilized effectively and in the long-term unless he or she has embraced the meaning of his or her work. A balanced human life cannot settle for the satisfaction only of its primary needs (survive, drink, eat). The individual cannot be content with the “prosaic”. It needs to develop itself in a rich symbolic environment, where its food is dignity, music, songs, sports, dances, readings, philosophy, spirituality, love and free time spent accomplishing a great personal desire. This need to take the “poetic” into account as an existential priority finds meaning in the creation of a European project for the citizens of the 28 countries of the Union.

This is even truer today than a few years ago. We can see that all of the political and economic organizations in our society are evolving rapidly. In 20 years, 50% of today’s jobs will have disappeared and been replaced by another organization. Globalization and the increasing openness of our societies give rise to cultural, ideological, social and economic tensions. This results in an extremely complex situation.

To bind our societies together to confront these changes, two paths appear to be possible: The easiest solution is that of denying complexity, of defining human groups according to simple criteria that generally unite them one against the other. This easy solution has the disadvantage of only very partially binding a society together, as it remains divided in homogeneous but antagonistic groups. The path that adheres the most to the values of our democratic European societies is one that makes it possible to embrace the tensions, contradictions, diversity and complexity of our societies. It is also the most demanding path for individuals, who must be capable of constantly rethinking the society in which they live and its mechanisms.

1. Art, culture and education create meaning : art offers the means for expressing and understanding the self, various problems and their attempts at resolution. The artist is constantly questioning his or her relationship with the world. The artist addresses the imagination, plays with processes, and conveys questions instead of ready-made knowledge.

2. Art offers an individual the possibility of questioning his or her vision, codes and action. Art therefore helps individuals develop free will and the necessary flexibility to understand the complexity of the current world, by providing the constructive, individual or collective experience of otherness, be it intellectual, cultural, etc.

3. Art is a tool for emancipating individuals and founding a democratic society. Art struggle against uniformity of thought, displaces certainty and does not fear the questioning of the required schemas. It creates the ability to integrate difference. The artist takes the risk of delivering his or her point of view and critical and visionary viewpoint to the world. The artist thus promotes the decompartmentalization of individual thought.

4. Culture is the intellectual, moral, emotional, and imaginary connection between men that has transcended national boundaries and made it possible for societies to create exchanges. Cultural cooperation helps establish stable and lasting relationships between territories, preserving them from unsurmountable tensions.

5. Last but not least, art and culture make us feel good. They are a rare source of free pleasure.

B. Cultural policy viewed as a transversal policy of community development, from the local to the global level

Cultural policy is a tool for the development of communities. It must be included in dialogue with all areas of public activity and private initiatives. However, the place given to culture during budgetary decisions and the definition of public action priorities is minor or inexistent.

The result of this is public programs that hardly refer to it at all, or even not at all if we take for example the latest operational programs of the cohesion policy of the European Union.

Possible responses:

1. Art and culture have the ability to nourish a global PROJECT of territorial public policy. If we consider the development of territorial strategy (starting with the creation of the project), from the standpoint of the development of the well-being of the population, and a better harmonization between the necessity/obligations and needs, culture meets a fundamental need.

2. Viewing art and culture as a policy of cooperation among and between communities rather than of attractiveness. Culture is undeniably a factor in territorial attractiveness, but it is first and foremost a factor in community cooperation and the sharing of resources, as it is made up of multiple experiences (esthetic, emotional, intellectual, social, educational, festive, economic, etc.). Consequently, it produces direct and indirect effects of very diverse natures that cannot be divided into segments. This vitality provides all development policies with a common good that belongs to no one, but that benefits everyone. If it is viewed cooperatively, it becomes an invaluable treasure.

3. To join communities together is to connect with the world: to position ourselves, to anchor deep roots of knowledge and mutual recognition is proof of curiosity about others. Art and culture give the possibility of viewing and defining living areas and communities as mental spaces. Culture brings together the “here and now” and the “somewhere else” and affirms that they belong to a common geography and are not isolated.

4. Art and culture make it possible to think of space and time, and therefore territoriality, by questioning and creating codes, which are common symbolic goods. They propose reasonable sharing by bringing communities together (parties, theatres, museums, festivals). They make it possible to feel that we form a society, according to several complementary and indivisible modalities (folklore, heritage, creation). In addition, art and culture build relationships between, the rural and the urban – integrated territorial development.

5. Culture as an indicator of the socio-economic performance dynamic: the most dynamic communities are also those that have invested the most in culture. Culture makes it possible to help cities and regions attract investments, creative talents and cultural tourism. Culture can even open the door to better management and success in other areas, such as sports, particularly the ones more cherished by the populations. Shows, festivals and events create jobs and income that

are mainly the result of tourism. They contribute to the visibility and vitality of communities on the local, national and international level. A community that invests in a cultural facility is more dynamic than comparable living spaces that do not. "Initiative taking" in the cultural field is without a doubt one of the components of a socio-economic performance dynamic.

C. Culture: a public policy related to research, education and technological innovation for a new “ecolonomy”/ecology

Culture has many things in common with other sectors of activity, the purpose of which is human development, but these similarities have hardly been exploited and are rarely mentioned. Even the cultural value of the arts and heritage – we mean the aesthetic, spiritual, social, symbolic, historical and authenticity qualities of the work done by artists, past and present – is just now starting to be measured in scientific ways, for instance, in the United Kingdom, in the studies on cultural value funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council.

The result of this is a fight or isolated fights to assert the importance of these fields of human activity that are absolutely necessary for the flourishing of a constantly changing globalized society confronted with major challenges (ecological, technological and democratic).

Possible response: For a "European way of life"

Today, the technological, scientific and artistic ferment is as remarkable as the one that was created in the 19th century by a true alliance between scientists, artists and industrial actors. We in Europe, with our artists, scientists and industrial actors, should invent a way to create and spread the great narratives of the 21st century - as the USA did in the twentieth century with Hollywood that spread the narrative of the American way of life.

For European policies that affirm and promote the articulation and meeting of artistic creation, scientific research, technological innovation and education for the maintenance of the democratic area, to face the planetary challenges of climate change, the change in mindsets with regard to the environment and with regard to common goods (water, earth, air, living things). Cultural policy should be a relatively strong policy capable of entering into dialogue with other fields, without losing its essence.

1. Art, culture and education: The link between culture and education is a consubstantial link. Educating is transmitting knowledge, social codes and an ability to think independently. Art and education therefore do not have to invent intersecting points, as they are the two parent experiences of human learning. The artistic experience is educative in and of itself, as it builds meaning and develops independent thought.

2. Art, science and technology: The alliance between artists, scientists and industrial actors creates the mental projections and representations of individuals. Technologies are not neutral: each people uses them in its own way and expresses them with different aspirations. There are as many approaches as cultures, multiplying the scope of methods of use and societal narratives, in connection with the cultural changes brought about by digital media, new communication tools, networks, new economic exchanges and the birth of new industrial monopolies.

- *The relationship with new technologies*: The relationship with technology has not been considered to any great extent, and only recently has a new philosophy of technology started to develop. The convergence of new NBIC technologies – Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Information technology, Cognitive science – puts the “traditional” approaches back in play. Beyond that, certain visions of technology (transhumanism) lead to a questioning of our

democratic and humanistic constructions. We must create a secular approach to the relationship to culture.

- *The explosion of knowledge about the brain and all the neurosciences* that make it possible to understand man, the interactions between men and our relationship to the environment anew. Education, transmission and the place of the spectator must be considered as this new knowledge emerges.

- The new approaches to human sciences are interdisciplinary, hands-on and conscious of the need to understand technology. The taking into consideration of these three fields gives rise to new approaches that build an “ecology of attention”, making it possible to connect the artistic sector with the challenges between a very local approach and a macro and global approach.

3. Art, culture and ecology: many human sciences are called upon in the approaches surrounding the ecology of attention, and there is a double point of articulation between the NBICs and the ecology of attention: the neurosciences and art.

4. Art, culture and research: Article 13 of the Charter of Fundamental rights – Freedom of the arts and sciences – Art and scientific research shall be free of constraint. Academic research shall be respected. (...) Culture, like research, is a common good that is alive and that therefore must be maintained, enriched and developed.

5. Art, culture and health: with this new knowledge, in particular the neurosciences, which allow us to understand the functioning of our brain, we could also develop the way we live together and its impact on the way we view history and the way we build our imaginations.

As the study of the Arts Council in the UK on the value of arts states, research has evidenced that a higher frequency of engagement with arts and culture is generally associated with a higher level of subjective wellbeing.

Engagement in structured arts and culture improves the cognitive abilities of children and young people.

A number of studies have reported findings of applied arts and cultural interventions and measured their positive impact on specific health conditions which include dementia, depression and Parkinson’s disease.

6. Art, culture and social policy: culture has a key role to play with regard to social cohesion: participation in cultural activities is an essential activity that makes it possible for individuals and communities to define and develop their own identity, communicate, distinguish themselves from others and engage in a relationship of symbolic exchange. It allows isolated or marginalized people to acquire skills and self-confidence. It is therefore a powerful creator of social connectedness, as it freely explores all the sources of this. Its benefits are almost always indirect, and this transitive, non-frontal effect makes it possible to approach the absorption of inequalities through the individual and collective appropriation of its complex effects via an emotional bias.

D. Culture: a public policy that reaffirms its social and economic dimensions

Either cultural policy is considered to be a secondary and costly expense, or culture is only valued if it is a liberal economic sector of activity. To defend itself against its uselessness, the actors of art and culture use economic arguments that could be turned against them. When the economic argument is insufficient, that of social utility is put forth (culture at the service of social cohesion) at the expense of the creative argument. The result of this is an incoherency in reasoning that is not based on the true arguments of economic and social richness of artistic and cultural activity.

1. Art and culture as fields of social innovation at work. Culture and creation are essential resources for social innovation on the European level: innovation in cultural contents and artistic productions through cooperation. Social economies, using creativity to imagine, produce, execute and evaluate innovative solutions to social problems by inventing products and new, specific and effective systems that are related to their own situations.

2. Art and culture as a model of transition from an industrial economy to a plural economy. Art and culture promote the transition towards a development model of a public economy of reciprocity and the sharing of wealth, taking into account the plurality of economies (traditional markets, research/development, social and solidarity economy) and making it possible to work to more generally redefine the economy of cultural actors that needs to articulate these different plans; an economy that is respectful of the social and territorial resource and participating in the redefinition of the relationship to wealth and societal well-being.

The cultural sector for the most part falls under the associative domain and is part of an informal economy that does not appear directly in statistical studies. An entire swath of the activity of the sector therefore escapes the scope of studies, as it does not have a directly measurable economic impact.

The fusion of the Media and Culture programs within a the single Creative Europe program brings very different realities together and places them in competition with each other: creative industries and the media, for which the impact in terms of jobs, economic growth and profitability are direct, and the live performance and artistic creation sectors, the economic impact of which is measured indirectly. In an evaluation of projects based on the criteria of direct profitability and of performance measured in the short-term, cultural activities not related to the creative industry are at a disadvantage.

3. Art and culture: economically virtuous subsidies that bring in more than they cost. Culture is an excellent vector of growth, creating economic benefits that are infinitely greater than the investments mobilized. Art is at the center of social and economic life, an entirely separate sector of activity that costs nothing but still yields a profit. An investment in the freedom of creation generates significant activity in a doubly profitably form: cultural enrichment and elevation of the standard of living.

4. Art as a “system” in a production chain of healthy values at the service of human development. Each of the elements in the chain communicates, interconnects and mutually reinforces. The main components of this chain of values are: teaching/training, creation (involving creative process and risk taking), production, distribution and documentation/media, to make a critical

and informed analysis available to the general public. For this chain of values to be able to flourish and benefit society, we must ensure joint and continuous development and safeguard all of the components of the chain, making sure that there is an equitable social and economic status for artists and artistic workers, and that a system that aims to obtain the same rights and responsibilities is implemented with the same treatment in each Member State of the Union and in other countries that collaborate with the Union and its Member States.

E. Reminder for Europe and for all the collectivities regarding compliance with legal texts that refer to cultural policy but that are not applied

Today's European institutions are extremely timid when it comes to the development of a European cultural policy and with regard to the influence that they could have on the artistic and cultural policies of Member States.

The Lisbon strategy for the 2010-2020 period completely overlooked cultural challenges and support of creation. The ensuing operational programs for the 2014-2020 period are the result of this cultural void. The Creative Europe program itself only considers culture from the point of view of the structuration of an economic sector, without taking into account the challenges unique to artistic creation and its inclusion at the heart of contemporary European societies.

1. There are legal arguments that allow the EU to take this minimalist approach:

- The principle of subsidiarity included in the European treaties is, in the interpretation that is made of it today, an obstacle to the flourishing of an independent EU policy. If it is difficult to create an ambitious European cultural policy, it is not only because there is a lack of desire on the level of the European institutions. It is also because the States do not share well in this field. This can be seen in the action plan of the Council of European Ministers of Culture, who would rather maintain control over their national cultural policies than legitimize a concerted action on the EU level.

- The rules of the single market and in particular those regarding public, State funding theoretically put policies that support creation (production) in a delicate position.

2. But at the same time, strong legal arguments force the European Union to handle the issue of culture:

- Article 167, Treaty of Lisbon, UE, 2009 (Ex Article 128, Treaty of Rome, 1957, Ex Article 151, Treaty of Maastricht, UE, 1992) sets forth that the EU must intervene in the cultural domain in ways complementary to those of the Member States, including the support of creation.

This fundamental article also sets forth that the EU must take cultural aspects into account in all of its actions and in all of the policies that it implements.

- The Charter of Fundamental Rights, which has a normative value for the EU, requires Europe to commit to the defense of fundamental rights, which include the freedom of expression and creation, the preservation of cultural diversity and the well-being of citizens for growth and employment. Taking only the example of cultural diversity, today, cultural diversity must be supported through public intervention from the local level to the European level. The strength of cultural industries, the logic of the Internet giants who tend to concentrate cultural practices

around the least common denominator, must be counterbalanced by ambitious public policies that support more economically fragile creative movements and expressions. This is the essential challenge when we speak of cultural diversity today. The UE, in view of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by which it is bound, must do its share in the construction of these ambitious cultural policies.

- Agenda 21 For Culture, Barcelona, 7-8 May 2004 is also an EU commitment

Other texts clearly show that the European institutions are aware of their own timidity in the field of cultural policy and of the contradiction that exists with the requirements of the fundamental texts of the EU:

- The Resolution of the Council concerning the place of culture in the construction of the European Union dated 21 January 2002 asks the Commission to commit more clearly to the implementation of a European cultural policy and to take cultural aspects into account in all of the Union's policies. It is a serious reminder that should certainly be repeated today.

- The Communication from the European Commission regarding a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World, Brussels, 10 May 2007 and the Conclusions of the Council in the Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010 – Brussels, 16 November 2007.

- The Report to the European Council by the Reflection Group on the Future of the EU 2030 (2010), states that the EU is more than a common market, it is also a Union of values based on a shared understanding of its history, its day-to-day realities and its future. And we believe the arts are decisive to promote the appropriation of meanings, complexity and otherness. Thus decisive to prevent the return of the brutality of the past

These texts primarily demonstrate that following the Resolution of the Council of 2002, the Commission had to justify itself concerning the application of Article 167 of the Treaty of Lisbon with regard to the affirmation of the double obligation of setting up a European cultural policy and taking into account the cultural dimension in all of the Union's policies.

3. In light of these arguments, it is possible to desire that the principle of subsidiarity with regard to cultural policy be considered from a standpoint that allows us to do justice to the requirement of the UE's commitment to an ambitious cultural policy

In view of the EU's obligation to build an ambitious cultural policy in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity with national policies, we can desire that culture truly becomes a shared and mandatory policy of the EU and Member States. Subsidiarity would then no longer be understood in a simplistic way, like the passive respect of the competencies of each party (States – European Union), but rather as a requirement of complementarity, of bringing the policies developed by the different territorial levels in harmony with each other. In our view, subsidiarity should be understood and defended as long as it does not mean timidity or priority given to national or local levels, but rather a joining of forces, a combination of projects and an interconnection of questions. Europe must recognize the essential place of the artist and nourish its political project with a cultural project.

Legally, there is room for the EU to consider subsidiarity in this positive and operational way. The UE can and must take hold of culture as a true operational field within its political, economic and social action. Art and culture must be among Europe's priorities. It is time for it to come out of its "cultural reserve" in the name of the respect of the identity of each of the Member States and make it so culture can become a powerful vector in the European construction.

On this basis, EU institutions must formulate clear policies within the regulatory framework, which result in the implementation of financing (cohesion policy, etc.). This must be done without maneuvering superficially or simply instrumentalizing the arts, but rather by helping to reinforce and maintain a Europe of committed people, put differently, a people that has the skills to be constructively "self-critical", analytical and therefore capable of approaching our shared problems and challenges, both globally and locally, with creativity. More today than ever before, the clear retreat of cultural policies in most Member States makes the commitment of the European Union necessary in the cultural domain, in the name of subsidiarity.

F. Ambitions that can be desired for a European cultural policy (in the current state of the treaties)

- *That the EU act as a guarantor of fundamental rights. As a fundamental right, the freedom of creation only exists if its affirmation results in the implementation of conditions that make it possible for creation to flourish.*

- *That the EU ensure the development of ambitious cultural policies of Member States (for example, in the agreements signed with each State in application of the future 20-30 strategy); in all of its policies (cohesion policy as well as the Common Agricultural Policy), that the EU take on the role of recognized pillar of culture in the European construction (in the treaties of the Union, in Agenda 21 for Culture);*

- *That the perspective of the specific cultural policy implemented by the EU should not be primarily economic or oriented to the structuration of an economic sector. The diversity of European cultural actors does not necessarily make it possible for them to consider large-scale cooperation projects or the creation of platforms. What should be developed in agreement with the treaties is the contribution of citizens of the Union to the flourishing of culture as well as the cooperation between States, and between the various actors, regardless of the scale of the cooperation. Otherwise, the actors who are the most fragile economically will continue to be excluded from policies implemented by the Union. The theoretical uselessness of art must be assumed on the basis of the positive externalities that it is observed (and measured) to have on the blossoming of an open and creative democratic society.*

- *The EU must develop a humanist vision of techniques for an alliance between artists, scientists, industrial actors and educators: a policy that promotes old and new professions in order to meet the planetary challenges of climate change, the change in mindsets with regard to the environment and with regard to common goods (water, earth, air, living things) and in the sharing of riches and of new knowledge. In the 21st century, culture will be artistic, scientific and technical.*

- *That the EU encourage the circulation of works and their creators. Europe must create a European legal framework favorable to the development of artistic and cultural activities and to the mobility of artists. As it recognizes the supreme value of culture, we expect the European Commission to use its force for proposals to help reduce legal, fiscal and social obstacles to the circulation of artists and cultural professionals.*

- *We ask that the resolution of the European Parliament of 1999, which recommends the improvement of the social status of artists by drawing inspiration from the most protective legislation, be applied. The Commission could encourage Member States to look into the legal, fiscal and social situation of artists and cultural workers during this period of radical changes – in the East as well as the West – and to preserve and encourage any initiative intended to provide creators with the means to make a living in this sector of activity in the best possible way.*

- *We also recall that the freedom of creation only exists if its affirmation results in the implementation of conditions that make it possible for creation to flourish. Defining conditions*

for the compensation of authors and performers in our digital era is therefore a necessary condition for the freedom of creation to flourish.

Therefore, it is not just about a short, isolated paragraph in the 20-30 strategy that mentions culture, but rather an affirmation by the European Union of the urgent necessity of making culture a priority. The more dynamic and alive it is, the more it will irrigate related policies with which it is in constant dialogue.