

**THREE MILLION STORIES:
UNDERSTANDING THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF AMERICA'S
ARTS GRADUATES**

March 7-9, 2013
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee

Organized by:

Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy at Vanderbilt
in cooperation with
Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)
Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

OVERVIEW

THREE MILLION STORIES: UNDERSTANDING THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF AMERICA'S ARTS GRADUATES

In March 2013, over 250 people—arts deans, professors, researchers, artists, policy makers, funders, political advocates, and others—gathered at Vanderbilt University for the conference, “Three Million Stories: Understanding the Lives and Careers of America’s Arts Graduate.” Convened under the auspices of the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy in cooperation with the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) and the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, the symposium drew stakeholders and field leaders across many arts disciplines and functions—united by their sustained engagement with issues surrounding the training and career paths of artists. The Surdna Foundation provided leadership funding for the convening, as a component of its overall support of SNAAP.

Building upon cutting-edge research—much of it emerging from SNAAP as well as other sources—participants investigated such questions as: Where do artists work and how do they make a living? Is their training relevant? What do arts graduates, and those who train them, need to know about future trends in the artistic and creative labor market? What do we need to know to better serve students from less privileged backgrounds? What are the critical issues policy-makers and educational leaders must address to ensure the relevance and vitality of arts degrees, programs and schools in the future?

The meeting was fueled by a sense of urgency: the creative marketplace is undergoing rapid transformation, institutions of higher learner are facing escalating accountability standards, and issues of equity and access continue to plague the field. Within this context, meeting participants probed issues ranging from curricular reform to institutional transformation—along the way covering such themes as the social life of the artist, mission and marketplace, the artist’s “tool-kit” for a changing world, and the equity and access imperative. As one participant took note, “We are in the middle of a Renaissance. Arts programs that jump on the bandwagon today and help shape this new Renaissance will be the ones that thrive....”

What follows is a documentary summary of the meeting. Additional information about the conference, the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project and the Curb Center can be found by consulting:

SNAAP Web site: <http://snaap.indiana.edu/> (includes conference web site)

Curb Center Web site: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/curbcenter/>

PRELUDE

On the evening before the conference formally got underway, participants fittingly had the opportunity to engage with art. An esteemed team of Nashville-based hit singer-songwriters—Tom Douglas, Leslie Satcher, and Allen Shamblin—presented a traditional, Nashville-style “in the round” performance. Curb Center director Jay Clayton, founding director Bill Ivey and manager of the historic Blue Bird Café, Ericka Wollam-Nichols shared opening reflections. This intimate performance wove together hit songs with the writers’ reflections of their own trajectories, highlighting themes of sacrifice, persistence, luck and the value of relationships and community for nurturing, sustaining and advancing artistic careers.

DAY ONE

WELCOME: Steven J. Tepper

Associate Director, Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and Associate Professor of Sociology, Vanderbilt University; and Research Director, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)

Everything you’ve learned in school as “obvious” becomes less and less obvious. There are no absolute continuums. There are no surfaces. There are no straight lines.”—Buckminster Fuller

From “Elf” to “Fairy” Economy. Steven Tepper set the stage for the conference by providing an overview of key economic and social trends that increasingly shape the ways artists—as well as workers in all sectors—will need to organize their professional lives in the future. The marketplace is changing (from stable to contingent); pathways to “success” are less and less linear (25% of 18 to 44 year-olds have held more than 15 jobs in their lifetime); and worker mobility is on the rise (75% of recently-surveyed college graduates report that they are moving to a city without a job). Overall, we are moving from what Tepper characterized as an “Elf” economy to a “Fairy” economy.

The “Elf” economy (think Santa and his workshop of well-disciplined helpers) is organizationally-based and stable, with a clearly-defined division of labor. In contrast, in a “Fairy” economy, highly mobile workers necessarily flit from one opportunity to the next, working for whomever needs them, and doing whatever job is necessary. Non-traditional careers, organized around project-based work will be the new reality—and it is one that shifts many burdens (from health insurance to retirement savings) from employer to worker. (An estimated one-third of the 2013 workforce is already comprised of these contingent, or freelance workers.) Artists—often self-employed and entrepreneurial—may be better positioned than many workers for the changes that lie ahead, but educators still need to help students navigate this new reality, guiding them to develop an “appetite for ‘delicious ambiguity’.”

Other Financial Trends: Tepper identified a number of additional economic trends that will likely have impact on the creative marketplace:

- *Skills Mismatch and Labor Shortage:* 52% of U.S. small businesses find it difficult to find the employees they need
- *Aging Workforce:* in 2020 there will be 11 million more workers over the age of 54
- *Underemployment:* 18% of the workforce is underemployed and 54% of B.A. holders under 25 are jobless or underemployed

Taken together, these trends suggest that “quality of life will become more important as quantity of work declines”—a shift that creates a potential niche for creative workers. Tepper additionally pointed to emerging research that establishes important links between creativity and resilience (creative people are more likely to be socially tolerant, less ideologically rigid and dogmatic, less authoritarian, and more accepting of ambiguity); he urged those assembled to study and mine this data as they advocate for the value of arts training.

SNAAP Data: Tepper shared SNAAP research that illuminates and confirms these trends. Data emerging from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (which has surveyed over 85,000 individuals with arts degrees over five years) reveal that artists already know how to put together flexible careers and function within the “Elf” economy (63% percent of SNAAP respondents report being self-employed at some point; 57% of SNAAP respondents who currently work as artists hold at least two jobs concurrently; and 71% of arts graduates who are not professional artists continue to pursue their art).

Concluding his remarks, and before introducing Mary Schmidt Campbell, Tepper urged those assembled to consider, given these changing economic realities: “Is there more we can do? What do our arts graduates now need as they go out into the world?”

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Mary Schmidt Campbell

Dean, New York University Tisch School of the Arts

*“We cannot relinquish who we are and what we do as we explore collateral uses of arts training.”
—Mary Schmidt Campbell*

The Changing Notion of the Artist: Mary Schmidt Campbell began her keynote by sharing a story she first heard when she became Dean of Tisch School of the Arts in 1991; it entailed the bohemian life of Greenwich Village at the turn of the 20th century. A group of artists, including Marcel Duchamp and John Sloan, broke into the doorway of the Washington Square Arch; ascended the steps; drank, ate and shot off toy pop guns, while proclaiming their succession as the “Free and Independent Republic of Washington Square.” It was a moment of rebellion and free-spiritedness—and two decades ago the story played well with NYU parents, as they relished the possibility that their young artists-in-training would encounter like-minded free spirits and be guided in challenging the status quo. Today, she suggested, the tale would be heard as a quaint anecdote from a distant time; the succession manifesto would not be alluring. Given the escalating costs of a college education, parents now carefully weigh the value of an arts degree against the crushing debt it may engender. Society’s idea of the artist is changing, she affirmed, with important implications for arts education leaders.

Lessons Learned: In this period of flux, arts schools have a great deal to teach us, Schmidt Campbell believes, and shared four key lessons from her own experience:

- **The Fundamental Value of Arts Schools:** Arts schools provide a unique place in the culture where students can take risks, make mistakes, and incubate opportunity; they offer the opportunity for a student to have “an unmediated relationship with his or her work”—unfettered by the commercial landscape, allowing a connection with their art and their deepest individual self. For one time in life, one is provided time and space to “ignore politicians, policy makers and patrons.” Students leave with competencies and a healthy sense of “justifiable self confidence” (as opposed to delusional self confidence). There are many ways to use an arts

degree, but “we cannot relinquish who we are and what we do as we explore collateral uses of arts training.”

- ***The Future is Not a Simple Extrapolation of the Present:*** Schmidt Campbell urged institutional leaders to “make room for surprises.” Twenty years ago, for example, New York City was considered a wasteland for film. Industry insiders urged students to go elsewhere to learn the trade; few forecasted the boom of film and high technology in New York City that was to come, nor the City’s “iron will to renew.” We often miss the boat completely, she said, and must constantly take into account that artists, as outsiders, see things differently.
- ***Exit Strategies:*** Many schools now have bridge programs, internships and mentorships to help students transition from the world of study to the world of work, but educators must be more imaginative and forward-looking as they ready students for careers. Creative students are inventing jobs that did not exist when they matriculated (from media director of a political campaign to inventor of niche, web-based businesses). “There’s an aspect of arts training that encourages an entrepreneurial spirit,” she noted. “How can we be more intentional about some of the collateral advantages and outcomes without diminishing the core?”
- ***There is No Single Way to Cultivate Stellar Pedagogy:*** Departments at Tisch differ in their approach to structure and content, but certain “core values” persist across disciplinary approaches: belief in the value of play, improvisation, risk-taking, mistakes and collaboration. She further noted that “collaboration” is more than “cooperative reciprocity”; when authentically pursued, it demands that students “fully inhabit difference” and allow themselves to be challenged by those differences. “Institutions need to cultivate trust, honesty and openness, as much as specific skills.”

Societal Changes: Concluding her remarks, Mary Schmidt Campbell drew attention to two key societal changes that merit focused field consideration:

- ***Demographic Shifts,*** which will challenge institutions to consider: How will this influence expressive vocabularies, the body and performance traditions that we teach, and our understanding of narrative?
- ***Economic Gaps,*** which will challenge institutions to lower the barriers to talent and excellence, or risk squandering all that they seek to accomplish.

Access barriers exist on both sides. For students, there are access barriers related to the logistics of auditions, cultural barriers surrounding leaving home, and financial considerations. From the institutional side, there are “assumptions that blind us to the raw talent that is right in front of us”; financial aid policies that penalize transfer students; and lack of readiness on the part of teachers to fully inhabit difference in the classroom and embrace cultural traditions different from their own.

In closing, Schmidt Campbell re-conjured the image of breaking into Washington Square Arch—not with a cap gun, like the artistic rebels of a century past, but with a firm commitment to responsive institutional transformation.

PLENARY SESSION 1: THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

“Artists bring us: beauty, humor, insight, political critique, innovation and tools for social change.”
—from Bill Ivey’s *Right to an Expressive Life*

Plenary Focus: How are creative jobs changing? Where are the growth areas or the jobs of the future and where are we going to see declines? How are occupations changing in the arts? What do schools and graduates need to know about future trends in the artistic and creative labor market?

Moderator: **Jennifer Cole**, Executive Director, Metro Nashville Arts Commission

Speakers:

Elizabeth Currid-Hakett, Associate Professor, Sol Price School of Public Policy, University of Southern California

James Heartfield, British journalist and Director of Audacity.org

Ann Markusen, Director, Project on Regional and Industrial Economics, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota

Building on Steven Tepper’s introductory remarks, panelists during the first plenary session looked at issues of the creative economy from three different vantage points: British journalist James Heartfield delved into issues of gentrification and the coopting of the avant-garde, using developments in 1980s London as a springboard for analysis; Ann Markusen synthesized data from a number of local and regional studies to provide a detailed portrait of creative economy trends; while Elizabeth Currid-Hakett drew upon the example of Andy Warhol to explore the role of social capital in building artistic careers and reputations.

Gentrification, Cultural Positioning, and Urban Revitalization: In a scenario that echoes what happened in several U.S. cities, James Heartfield described the “Hoxton Effect”—a culturally-led urban revitalization effort that transformed London, and in turn its art scene, starting in the 1980s. Artists who had long lived on the periphery of the city, away from the economic center, began to move into poor areas abutting the financial district. Over time, rents escalated and artists were pushed out. Concurrently, what began as an oppositional artistic movement found itself increasingly celebrated by the media. Outrage was embraced (a prime example being the Saatchi Collection’s *Sensations* exhibit). The Design Council became a vehicle for talking about Britain in new ways: Britain was dubbed the “design workshop of the world” (supplanting appellations that once invoked its strength as a military and industrial powerhouse). With varying levels of success, other cities embraced the arts as a regenerative economic force, although that moment has passed as new austerity measures take hold. When oppositional art is embraced by the mainstream, what does this say about the evolving social role of the artist? Does this have implications for those charged with preparing artists for careers?

What We Know about Artists and How We Know it: Drawing upon a variety of data sources (including SNAAP, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and her own regional studies of the artistic workforce in Minnesota and California), economist Ann Markusen stressed the following key themes about the artistic workforce:

- ***Artists are entrepreneurial:*** They have high self-employment rates and are likely to work on contract. For, example, 2002 national employment data show that 68% of writers and 50% of visual artists are self-employed; a 2008 study of the California creative workforce showed that of 77,000 artists and performers, 59,500 reported being self-employed.

- **Artists work across industries, including both the cultural and service sectors.** For example, 2010 SNAAP data show that 62% of arts graduates who work in fields outside the arts say their arts training was valuable for current work.
- **Artists work across sectors, including commercial, nonprofit, public, community.** For example, a 2002 study showed that for artists in Los Angeles, 40% are self-employed, 6% percent work for nonprofits, and 54% work for the private sector—with similar breakdowns for other surveyed California cities; 51 % of surveyed respondents derived more than 65% of their income from the commercial sector.
- **Artists work everywhere,** with higher shares of resident artists in large metro areas, central cities, and inner ring suburbs, but migration patterns shift and are often tied to life-cycle stages. For example, in Minnesota there is a large out-migration of artists between 16-24 and 25-34, but the pattern reverses in the 35-44 range. SNAAP data show that there is a tendency for artists to remain in the community where they trained for the first five years following graduation.
- **Arts graduates report high levels of satisfaction with their work, whether they pursue careers within or outside the arts.** For example, 2011 SNAAP data show satisfaction rates of 92% for arts graduates working in the arts and 83% satisfaction for those whose major job is not the arts.
- **Arts graduates show high levels of community arts engagement** in terms of arts attendance, donations and volunteering.

Concluding her presentation, Markusen called on the field to better communicate its growing knowledge about artists to the larger world. *The Artist Data User Guide* (Markusen and Schrock) offers practical guidelines for data dissemination. The website of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas at Austin demonstrates how SNAAP data can be used effectively for communication with parents, students and other stakeholders (<http://www.utexas.edu/finearts/about/mission-vision/alumni-snapshot>).

The Warhol Economy: How Art Works: Elizabeth Currid-Halkett’s presentation examined the critical role of artistic social life in advancing careers, using Andy Warhol as an exemplar of the role of personality and charisma in navigating the arts marketplace. Her research reveals that artists express a need and a desire to be surrounded by peers, have access to critics, and benefit from the serendipity of running into people who can advance careers. Artists use their social lives for career mobilization, with the social scene offering the perpetual possibility of advancement. They will make economic sacrifices for this perceived career benefit. Networking is deemed to be of utmost important and includes access to job opportunities and access to gatekeepers. Artists themselves often take on the role of gatekeeper as they move up the success ladder. Concluding her presentation, Currid-Halkett asserted that “artists and not institutions drive creativity” and therefore should be the focus of support.

Discussion: Questions raised following the presentations included: How does the concept of spatial proximity connect to the increasing use of virtual space for artistic networking and transactions? Do issues of place-related serendipity matter less as careers advance? How does hustling figure into success? Do you have to be inauthentic to advance your career if you are temperamentally an introvert?

PLENARY #2: SKILLS, SKILLS, SKILLS

“The more we can be explicit about what we mean by imagination and creativity, in terms of imaginative thinking tools and other relevant skills and behaviors...the more we can purposefully transfer that value to the pursuit of knowledge in other fields.” --Michelle Root-Bernstein

Plenary Focus: *What are the social and managerial skills and competencies developed through an arts education and required in creative careers? How can creative work be understood from the perspective*

of a set of “teachable” skills? What challenges do arts schools and other institutions face in developing and imparting these skills to students?

Moderator: George D. Kuh, Indiana University Chancellor’s Professor Emeritus and SNAAP Senior Advisor

Speakers:

Elizabeth Long Lingo, Director, Curb Programs in Creative Enterprise and Public Leadership and Vanderbilt’s Creative Campus Initiative

Michele Root-Bernstein, Kennedy Center Teaching Artist and Co-Author of *Sparks of Genius: From the Annals of Ordinary and Everyday Creativity*

Keith Sawyer, Associate Professor of Education, Adjunct Professor of Psychology, Affiliated Professor in Philosophy, Neuroscience, and Psychology, Washington University in St. Louis, Author of *Group Genius*

Facilitating Creativity: To get at the roots of whether creativity can be taught and how, Keith Sawyer has studied creativity in many contexts—jazz bands, improvisational theatre troupes, and the classrooms of a leading arts school. From on-site observations and extensive interviews with instructors, he has concluded that creativity is best facilitated when students work in open-ended environments, in groups, while mastering basic skills. STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), especially engineering, have been working on the challenges of fostering creativity for more than two decades and there are parallels in to be drawn between STEM fields and the arts. Both must grapple with the “teaching paradox”—i.e., the tension between creating a structured environment that still leaves room for improvisational learning.

Research on the studio model of instruction, based on in depth observation and interviews at two art and design schools, reveals that its key components include:

1) *identify a good problem or design challenge*, 2) *help students learn in an active way*, 3) *foster effective collaboration*, and 4) *support the creation of shared artifacts and engage in effective critique*.

Carefully designed projects are key and the melding of open-ended assignments with constraints is also essential, as constraints reduce the number of variables and force students into discomfort. They learn to fail early. As one professor remarked: “I throw them into deep water and wait with the boat.”

Negotiating Collective Creativity: Drawing upon her research into Nashville’s music scene, Elizabeth Long Lingo examined the critical role of the producer. “There’s increasing talk about the entrepreneurship component of an arts degree,” she said, “but more and more young artists-in-training will need skills in negotiating ‘collective creativity’”—which aligns closely with the producer’s role. The central function of the producer is to harness creative contributions where there is a lack of formal authority. This necessitates the ability to elicit contributions; get people on board; winnow, edit and integrate contributions; and maintain investment. In managing ambiguity, producers must address such questions as: What constitutes success and quality? Whose claim over expertise gives them the right to control decisions? How should the creative process unfold?

To help students build their capacity to negotiate collective creativity, educators can develop learning experiences that help cultivate relevant expertise:

- *Ambiguity and Out-of-Comfort Zone*. Assignments can be designed to help students better understand what they know and don’t know and how to navigate in the face of uncertainty.
- *Expressive Agility*, which can be fostered through improvisatory exercises and visual thinking.
- *Negotiate Expertise and Dependencies*, which requires skills in empathetic listening, eliciting different goals and interests, integrative problem solving, and pivoting.
- *Navigate Implementation*, which necessitates an understanding of power dynamics and skills in coalition building.

Tools for Thinking: Michele Root-Bernstein presented findings from research undertaken collaboratively with Robert Root-Bernstein. As outlined in their book, *Sparks of Genius*, 13 skills can be identified that represent what creators say about how they think and create. These skills and processes cut across disciplines and are “intuitive, sensual, universal and teachable.” They include: *1) observing, 2) imaging, 3) abstracting, 4) recognizing patterns, 5) analogizing, 6) body thinking, 7) empathizing, 8) modeling, 9) playing, 10) transforming, 11) forming patterns, 12) synthesizing, 13) dimensional thinking.*

As the field becomes more intentional and explicit about these skills, it becomes possible to address the disconnect between pedagogic theory and practice and drive educational reform. Root-Bernstein shared examples of ways this is already happening—from advocacy publications (such as the Hawaii Arts Alliance’s “Arts as Tools for Thinking”) to calls for more arts-infused approaches to engineering instruction.

Root-Bernstein concluded with a discussion of “Worldplay”—a complex form of pretend play that involves the creation of an imaginary world. It’s a common pastime among children, but also often drives the creative work of artists and inventors. C.S. Lewis, Desmond Morris, and Claus Oldenburg are among those who purposefully and explicitly tied pretend scenarios from early childhood play to their adult creative work. Educational workshops that have been developed based upon the concept of “Worldplay” have been shown to result in changes in student affect, effort, engagement and classroom culture. “Complex play,” said Root-Bernstein, “can stimulate intrinsic motivation that drives deep learning.”

Discussion: Discussion topics included how risk-taking can be cultivated in the face of concerns about grading, practical considerations in designing classroom experiences that balance structure and improvisation, and leadership and power-positioning (do you have to be on top to be a change-agent?).

LUNCHTIME: Interview of Comedian Lewis Black by Lyricist and Playwright Willie Reale

In an entertaining, highly revealing and humorous interlude during lunch, playwright and lyricist Willie Reale interviewed comedian Lewis Black. Lewis Black’s peripatetic journey towards a successful career as a stand-up comic well illustrated the notion, earlier introduced by Steven Tepper, that 21st century careers will unfold in non-linear ways. Black had early ambitions to be a critic, attended a leading graduate school for playwriting (which he described as his “Vietnam,” so undermining and unsupportive was the training), worked as a bartender, produced one-act plays in New York City’s Hells Kitchen for many years, and overall, was ill-treated and underpaid as a playwright, before serendipitously finding his way into a bar that offered him a well-paying job doing stand-up. “I walked into a room of people who didn’t know me, and accepted me.” Some of the best teachers of his generation, said Black, developed their pedagogic chops by willful counter-example—determined to provide a more supportive environment than the undermining “be-like-me-or-else” approach they too often encountered. As to advice for those coming through the ranks, he cautioned not to burn bridges (a lesson he’s had to learn and relearn) and don’t live financially like the next big break is right around the corner.

PLENARY SESSION 3: INEQUALITY IN ARTISTIC TRAINING AND CAREERS

“Our moral imperative (to address inequality) is anchored in stories of our own courageous mobility, or the stories of someone we love or who has loved us.” -- Kyle Wedberg

Plenary Focus: Significant inequalities persist in the art world. What barriers exist for particular subsets of students and graduates? What do we need to know about these sources of inequality to better serve students from diverse backgrounds?

*Moderator: **Jonah Rabinowitz**, Executive Director, W.O. Smith Community Music School, Nashville*

Speakers:

***H. Rafael Chacón**, Professor, Art History and Criticism, University of Montana*

***Myla Churchill Barrett**, Artist and Educator*

***Frida Kahlo**, Founding Member, Guerrilla Girls*

***Kyle Wedberg**, President and CEO, New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (NOCCA)*

Issues of inequality in artistic training were explored from multiple vantage points: gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Re-inventing the “F-word”: Dressed in a huge guerilla mask that concealed her identity, “Frida Kahlo” of the Guerilla Girls traced how this feminist collective, established in the 1980s, has used subversive behavior, humor, hard facts, and theatricality to call attention to power imbalances in the arts world and the long-time exclusion of women by mainstream art institutions. Fresh out of college, the group’s founding members decided to ridicule and shame a system that did not take the artistic work of women seriously. They put up posters in the middle of the night that told the truth about their status with simple statistics. They parodied art journals; exposed the “double whammy” faced by artists of color; undertook “weenie counts” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (85% of nudes are female; less than 5% of the artists in the Modern section are women); mounted a campaign about tokenism (“Ten Top Signs You’re A Token”); and produced scandal sheets—“Horror on the National Mall” (99% of artists at the National Gallery of Art and 95% at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden are white).

Describing the Guerilla Girls as “professional complainers, not policy makers,” who do so with humor and ingenuity, she shared key tenets of the “Guerilla Girls Guide to Behaving Badly,” applicable, she said, to any change strategy.

- **Be A Loser.** Get beyond the mentality that only a few can triumph at the expense of others. Don’t waste time chasing after the same few carrots; seek out a world of artistic collaboration rather than embracing a star system where winner takes all.
- **Be Crazy.** Don’t preach to the choir. Try to change people’s minds in unconventional ways. Humor allows you to fly under the radar.
- **Be Anonymous.** This allows for a focus on issues, rather than individual personalities. The mystery of who the Guerilla Girls might be has helped draw attention to the cause.
- **Be An Outsider.** Seek out subtext, the unfair and the overlooked. Empower people to “jam the culture” of the institutions where they work.
- **Just Do One Thing.** Bit by bit efforts add up; don’t be paralyzed by the need to get it right every time. Stick flyers into books in museum stores. Post stickers on fashion magazines. Small actions accumulate.
- **Don’t Make Only Expensive Art.** Consider making art that can be owned by everyone, not just wealthy collectors who exercise control over the marketplace.

- *Give Museums Some Tough Love*. Point out ethical breaches—wealthy collectors who become trustees (with the power to revalidate their investments); white power; cookie-cutter collections of expensive art; cultural bias.
- *Don't Teach An Art History That is Corrupted*. Write your own.
- *Complain, Complain, Complain*. Be creative. Hit people with facts and humor.
- *Use the "F" Word*. Feminism doesn't get the respect it deserves

Education as the Great Equalizer: Kyle Wedberg began his presentation by posing a series of questions to those assembled, requesting that they rise or sit after each one, as an indicator of its applicability to their lives: Did someone in your youth expose you to the arts? Did you graduate from a four-year college? Did your family own a car? Were you without debt when you graduated college? Did your *grandparents* work in manual labor or the service industry? Did your *parents* work in manual labor or the service industry? Have *you* worked in manual labor or the service industry?

The rise and fall of bodies provided a telling socioeconomic snapshot of the room, past and present, with an underlying subtext of generational upward mobility for many. “First generation uses fists, so the second generation can use hands to build, so the third generation can use minds to lead and create,” said Wedberg, paraphrasing John Adams. But this trajectory, whereby the manual labor of one generation frees the next to use its mind, seems more and more elusive. Statistics indicate that out of 100 freshman who will enter high school, fewer than 27 will gain a college degree in 6 years (and fewer than 19 in Louisiana). Generational wealth compounds the problem: the median household net worth for white families is \$113,149 and \$5,677 for black families; at the same time, average costs for college are \$70,000 for public institutions and \$140,000 for private institutions.

“Why should we care?” Wedberg rhetorically asked, and answered with a quote by Horace Mann, “Education is the great equalizer; the balance wheel of the social machinery.” There is a moral imperative to act and there are many things arts students will need, beyond financial resources, to pursue higher education, including: validation (especially if they are not receiving it at home); opportunity (to build their resumes before application and matriculation); resources; and follow up. “High schools cannot have graduation as the finish line,” he said, “and “colleges can't have acceptance as the finish line either.”

In closing, Wedberg suggested that educators must “rock the boat”: “We sit in some impressive boats. Do not forget to rock the boat,” he said. “Do it for two reasons: show those who come after you how to do it – they're in the water and you need to get them in the boat. They also need to know what to do with the boat once they get in.”

Art and Institutional Ideology: Rafael Chacón, a native of Cuba, provided a case study of the ways institutions must look beyond issues of admissions and stated access policies if they are truly to grapple with access and equity. In Montana, Native Americans comprise approximately 6.7% of the population, have the highest poverty rate in the state and experience very high unemployment rates. Only 3% of Native Americans attend the University of Montana; of those, only 0.3% study art and architecture. Since 1972, a constitutional amendment has affirmed the state's commitment to the cultural integrity of native peoples, but not until 1999 was any funding committed for its implementation. “We have a lot of work to do,” said Chacón. “We must hear this community.”

The community was indeed heard from, albeit in unanticipated ways, when an Art and Engineering class at the University of Montana decided to mount its large-scale “Building Rome in a Day” project smack in the middle of the Rotunda of the Native American Studies Department building. The space seemed physically apt, but little forethought was given to the possible symbolic resonance of mounting an exhibit

that paid homage to western culture in a space that more typically housed drumming circles and other expressions of Native American culture. Overnight there appeared a stealth “re-conquering of Rome”: teepees appeared side-by-side with the Colosseum; a peace pipe was planted at Athena’s side; the Circus Maximus became a tourist site. Western history was comically and subversively reversed. “The community we ignore has so much to give,” said Chacón . “We must hear this message.” In the end, the exhibit—and its subversive “reinstallation”—became a focus point of community conversation about empire, conquest, and Indian pride in the face of eradication. As they are guided to think about form and function, students must also be encouraged to engage with challenging issues of cultural context.

Art and the Enterprising Artist: The session concluded on a note of optimism, as Myla Churchill Barrett—a self described “fairy” (see Steven Tepper’s opening remarks) and “hustler” (see discussion of the “Warhol Economy” from Plenary 1)—chronicled her career path as an African-American performer and educator, and graduate of the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. “I don’t believe in limitations,” she asserted, chronicling numerous situations when people told her things couldn’t be done, but she would not take no for an answer. She learned that you have to craftily work the exceptions until you are in a position of power to change the rules, but her struggles and triumphs have made clear to her that educators must imbue young artists-in-training with business smarts if they’re to flourish in the marketplace. “The business of show must be an integral part of the curriculum. If we want graduates to be empowered, we have to give them the business sense to take on the powers that be. And not just with a single class... To be competitive you have to have more than craft and talent. We have to help students find alternative ways to produce work. There is no yellow brick road. We must help students blaze their own path.”

Discussion: Follow-up topics included the benefits and downsides of arts departments with an ethnically-specific focus; ways to revisit and revise the canon in service of a more inclusive curriculum; the contrasting recruitment trajectories of athletes versus artists; and changing notions of community.

“DEEP DIVE” SESSIONS

A module of five break-out sessions provided opportunities for attendees to explore conference themes in greater depth (with sessions repeating on Day 2 so participants had opportunity to attend multiple sessions). Two of the sessions probed ways arts schools are grappling with issues of career training and marketplace readiness, while three of the sessions offered opportunities to examine more closely issues related to research and data. Topics and speakers are listed below. Summaries of these sessions can be found at the conclusion of this document in Appendix A.

Curriculum Innovations:

Ray Allen, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Maryland Institute College of Art
Samuel Hoi, President, Otis College of Art and Design
Jack Risley, Ruth Head Centennial Professor and Chair of Department of Art and Art History, College of Fine Arts, University of Texas at Austin

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Jean Cook, Director of Programs, Future of Music Coalition
Danielle Lindemann, Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Vanderbilt University and SNAAP
Bonnie Nichols, Research Analyst, National Endowment for the Arts

DAY TWO

PLENARY SESSION 4: HOW FAR CAN YOU STRETCH A TUBE OF PAINT? THE ARTS DEGREE FOR NON-ARTISTS

*“Compared with the typical scientist, Nobel laureates are 17 times more likely to be visual artists.”
—Robert Root-Bernstein*

Focus: Is arts training relevant for doctors, lawyers, business managers, engineers? How? What do graduates working in these other domains say about their arts school education? How should our arts training institutions think about and educate students who do not intend to be artists?

Moderator: Robert J. Singer, MD FACS (Neurovascular Surgeon, Vanderbilt University Medical Center); President, Waterstone Musical Instruments, Nashville

Speakers:

Neil Alper and Gregory Wassall, Department of Economics, Northeastern University

Bonnie Brescia, Founding Principal, BBK Worldwide, Boston

Robert Root-Bernstein, Professor of Physiology, Michigan State University; Co-author of *Sparks of Genius: From the Annals of Ordinary and Everyday Creativity*

Akilah Williams, Communications Officer, Crown Family Philanthropies, Chicago

Good News and Not-So-Good News: A presentation by Neal Alper and Gregory Wassall about job compensation as it relates to college majors revealed some clear benefits to an arts degree, but also raised some disturbing question about its value for those who pursue careers outside the arts. Alper and Wassall have been working to unravel some mysteries of what happens to people who train in the arts—career-wise and salary-wise—by examining data from the American Community Survey (which supplements the US Census long form). In 2009, for the first time, the survey included a question about college majors, which has opened up the possibility of correlating income and job data with field of study. Amalgamating data from 2009, 2010 and 2011 to achieve a more reliable sample, their analysis revealed:

- *Going to college has clear economic benefits.* College graduates earn more than twice as much as high school graduates—\$70,059 versus \$28,837—and those with a post-graduate degree earn about one-third more than those with a bachelor's. This gap has increased over the last decade

and since college grads tend to marry college grads this further drives economic inequality. Those with a bachelor's degree are half as likely to be unemployed as those without a four-year degree.

- *The alignment between obtaining an arts degree in a specific discipline and landing employment in that sector varies across arts disciplines and overall is not strong.* The least likely to work in their major field are drama and theater majors, while the most likely are architecture and commercial/graphic arts majors.
- *In most cases, specific arts training improves overall job market outcomes (drama is the exception).*

However:

- *As measured by average income, arts majors are not as successful as peers in other sectors* (highest average salaries within the arts sector were reported among architects and the those that work in communications).
- *Having an arts major has a significant negative effect on every non-arts occupation, as measured by average salary.* This finding, disconcerting and counter-intuitive for many who work in the arts, raises questions about curriculum, career path, and policy issues. It also suggests the need for follow-up research to clarify what other variables may come into play.

Arts and Sciences: The deep interplay between artistic practice and scientific innovation emerged vividly from Robert Root-Bernstein's presentation. Statistics show that Nobel Prize winners in science are more likely engaged in the arts than their scientific peers who are not arts-inclined; 80% of surveyed scientists recommend arts studies for young scientists-in-training.

Root-Bernstein cited numerous examples of scientists being spurred toward new discoveries through artistic work. (Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin while collecting colored microbes for his painting palette; Alexis Carrel, Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology, learned intricate stitching required for surgical innovation from the lace-makers of Lyon; Louis de Broglie's violin playing suggested the harmonics of electrons.) Conversely, artists often make discoveries through their work that have enormous scientific impact. (Painter Abbott Thayer discovered camouflage and its principles; composer Leopold Mannes and Leopold Godowsky invented Kodachrome film; Composer Lejaren A. Hiller invented the first artificial intelligence and expert systems program, Sculptor Patricia Billings invented Geobond, a novel construction material.)

Additionally, a rich body of qualitative research points to the premium scientists place on artistic practice. For example, as one noted MIT scientist observed: "The richest aspects of any large and complicated system arise from factors that cannot be measured easily, if at all. For these, the artist's approach, uncertain though it inevitably is, seems to find and convey more meaning."

Voices from the Marketplace: Closing out the plenary session, two panelists—each graduating with an arts degree but now working in the business world—affirmed the value of their artist training in the business sector. Bonnie Brescia, Founding Principal of BBK Worldwide, loves being asked, "Where did you get your medical training?" Though she founded and spearheads a global company involved in patient recruitment for clinical trials, her undergraduate degree is in poetry from Emerson College. Many of her staff members, including three high-ranking executives, likewise trained in the arts and many continue to live "shadow lives" (a rock musician/accountant, songwriter/training director, painter/project manager, screenwriter/computer analyst, textile artist/auditor). "Employers prefer artists," she affirmed. "They tell stories, communicate a message, appeal viscerally, think in non-linear ways, embrace perspectives, and challenge the status quo." In the service industry, she said, the capacity for non-linear thinking—often well cultivated within arts training—is now a basic job requirement.

More and more, arts-related skills infuse the business world, suggested Akilah Williams, a design

graduate of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Illinois Institute of Technology's Institute of Design, and alumna of Marwen, the Chicago after-school arts program, as she outlined the day-to-day job requirements and challenges associated with being a communications officer at a family foundation. Visual thinking infuses every aspect of her job—from helping stakeholders conceptualize problems that need to be solved, to cultivating buy-in for new approaches, to executing communication solutions in the form of website design and other new media. She likened the job of being a communications officer to being a “translator,” further noting “to design you have to understand and to understand you have to empathize; although I am not working in design, I’m using tangible arts-related skills.”

Discussion: In the discussion that followed, questions focused on the “negative premium” that an arts degree sometimes confers (as outlined by Alper and Wassall). A variety of follow-up research questions were proposed (including the possible “negative premium” that might exist in other sectors, ways to measure career success that move beyond compensation, and the potential role of discrimination). Other topics included barriers to cross-disciplinary study, and whether arts advocacy efforts should be rooted in the utilitarian or instrumental value of the arts.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Sally Gaskill, Director, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)

Steven J. Tepper, Associate Director, Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and Associate Professor of Sociology, Vanderbilt University; and SNAAP Research Director.

Towards “3 Millions Stories”: Until recently, the stories of the estimated 3 million people who have received arts degrees in this country have been largely untold. But our understanding of these stories—not just anecdotally, but also in terms of hard data—is rapidly changing. While the conference was not exclusively about SNAAP findings, it was conceived as a national reporting out of and culmination for the 2008 leadership grant from the Surdna Foundation to launch this major national research effort.

In the first two national administrations of the SNAAP survey (2011 and 2012), a total of 137 North American institutions participated and nearly 70,000 “stories” have been collected in these last two years. With the participation of arts schools nationwide, SNAAP plans to grow the database, as well as to refine the questions it asks so as to best serve the field. “We know what the survey respondents say they learned in school and what they wish they had learned, what skills they learned through their arts training and what skills they use in the workplace, and much about their career obstacles and opportunities,” said Sally Gaskill, Director of SNAAP. “But there is so much more to learn.” Some of that learning must come from the field: How are institutions using SNAAP data? What tools and data do practitioners need from SNAAP to best advance their work? Gaskill closed by recognizing the members of the SNAAP National Advisory Board in attendance: Antonia Contro, Sarah Cunningham, Douglas Dempster, Ken Fischer (Chair), Barbara Hauptman, Samuel Hoi, Ann Markusen, Stephanie Perrin, Susan Petry, and Robert Sirota. Finally, she acknowledged the visionary contributions of the Surdna Foundation board and staff in launching SNAAP, paying special tribute to Ellen B. Rudolph, former Director of Surdna’s Thriving Cultures Program who conceived SNAAP and guided it into existence.

Themes Made Visible: Closing out the conference, Steven Tepper provided a powerful and evocative visual synthesis of the rich and complex dialogue that had unfolded over the past two days, by way of a 10-minute slide show that identified key themes, recapitulated especially provocative quotes and observations, and posed questions that naturally grew out of the dialogues. The presentation was set to the music of *I Can’t Make You Love Me*, by Bonnie Raitt, written by Alan Shamblin (one of the Thursday evening performers) and Mike Reid. Tepper recapitulated the key themes as follows:

- Artistic Identity and Self Reflection
- The Social Life of the Artist
- Project-Based Careers in a Contingent Economy
- Tensions and Conflicts Facing Arts Schools
- Critical Tools in an Artist's Toolkit
- Reducing Barriers and Facing Shortcomings
- The Arts and Enterprise
- The Artist as Change Agent

Like any useful and inspiring conference, the meeting posed more questions than it answered. Taken collectively, these questions provide a provocative template for the ways educators must mobilize to address the training and career needs of 21st century artists.

TOWARDS A 21st CENTURY SCHOOL

- How well do schools provide the space, encouragement, trust, openness and critical feedback to help students forge a “thick” artistic identity? Can this be assessed?
- Can schools realistically do anything to support the social life of artists? Or is this one of the intangibles that is beyond the institution's reach?
- How do we balance skills-driven instruction with open-ended, risk-taking and tolerance for ambiguity?
- What can we teach now that will be relevant to our students 20 years from now? Will training always lag behind the fast-paced changes in the economy?
- In two decades Americans will be majority non-white. Are we prepared for the demographic changes in this country? Does our curriculum connect with enough diverse cultural traditions?
- What is “oppositional” art in an economy that has commodified “hip” and the “avant-garde”?
- How do we train students to be change agents? To negotiate creativity in public spaces? To have a core set of civic skills in addition to artistic skills?
- We train artists to challenge assumption. Are we, as faculty and leaders of training institutions, willing to challenge our own assumptions?
- How do we fit a career to the lifecycle? How does aging influence artistic careers?
- Are we ready for the barbarians at the gate who will demand that we prove our value?
- Has anyone created the 21st century school? What will it look like?

APPENDIX A: DEEP DIVE SESSIONS

Break-out Sessions provided opportunities for meeting participants to probe more deeply some of themes introduced during the plenary sessions. Session topics, speakers, and discussion highlights are summarized below:

Curriculum Innovations:

Ray Allen, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Maryland Institute College of Art

Samuel Hoi, President, Otis College of Art and Design

Jack Risley, Ruth Head Centennial Professor and Chair of Department of Art and Art History, College of Fine Arts, University of Texas at Austin

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Jennifer Lena, Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology, Barnard College; Associate Professor of Arts Administration, Teacher's College, Columbia University (July 1, 2013)

Hot Data and Cool Trends: SNAAP Research and Beyond

Jean Cook, Director of Programs, Future of Music Coalition

Danielle Lindemann, Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Vanderbilt University and SNAAP

Bonnie Nichols, Research Analyst, National Endowment for the Arts

Highlights: Curriculum Innovations Session

Three arts school leaders provided perspectives on introducing curriculum reform at their respective institutions: why they're engaged in it, what issues are most pertinent, what challenges are most difficult to surmount. Technological change, desire for more interdisciplinary approaches, interests in community-engaged work, relevance, marketability, and financial pressures and accountability considerations are all driving reform.

Jack Risley, who formerly taught at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, offered concrete tips on cultivating faculty interest and buy-in when trying to move an institution forward, including: establish that there is no alternative to a ground-up reinvention of the curriculum; make decisions as a group; remove all disciplinary nomenclature from the curriculum; and create elastic, permeable core courses. Another is to engage faculty in the process of looking at peer institutions to

enlarge their sense of possibility, enhance an imaginative sense of what is possible, and turn faculty into experts.

Samuel Hoi traced Otis's growing commitment to an engagement model of education, with an eye towards helping students thrive in an environment of complexity and ambiguity that will likely undergo continuing flux. The school's four-pronged educational pathway includes: Discover (values, personality), Prepare (co-curricular), Experience (on and off campus work, civic and professional), and Connect (opportunities, resources, people). Encouraging outcomes include an 88% employment rate for recent Otis graduates. "Schools have a choice to pro-actively evolve or be forced to have a revolution."

Ray Allen described a "humbling" two-year curriculum planning process that took place as part of MICA's long-range planning process. They looked at Content, Structure, and Organization—the latter being the most complex. The "educational challenges" section of their work was voluminous (discipline vs. interdisciplinary, academic vs. studio, matching new forms of delivery with content, internal and external school culture, international study and engagement). Given external accountability pressures, a growing challenge is containing costs without reducing quality: faculty/student ratios must increase and the credit hour continues as an obstacle to reform.

Highlights: Key Debates for Arts Schools

Three major issues were highlighted: equity and access (as manifest on the high-school level), the urgency of responding to technological advance, and accountability pressures.

Donn Harris noted that auditions for public arts high schools typically test for skills and experience, not talent or potential talent; students who lack financial resources for private study and after-school instruction are disadvantaged. Schools can respond by designing audition activities that bring out potential (teach a mini lesson and see how fast students pick up the material); by focusing on certain departments for entry points where advance training is not essential (technical theatre, arts management, digital media); creating mentorship and support systems; holding workshops on audition and portfolio preparation (although these tend to attract those who are already advantaged and have arts background and know-how); conducting after-school classes for specialized training to close the readiness gap; developing summer programs with scholarships; and seeking assistance from counselors and teachers in younger grades.

Martin Sweidel focused on the imperative to respond to technological change. The choice is innovation or extinction. Technology is advancing exponentially and institutions of higher learning tend to be resistant to change. Colleges need to "reboot the mission"—pulling back to core values as they move forward, experiment and innovate. This may involve greater emphasis on civic leadership and more attention to entrepreneurial skill, which will allow for adaptation over time. "If we want things to stay the same, a lot is going to have to change."

Douglas Dempster spoke about the "Monster in the Anxiety Closet"—the increasing conversation at the federal level about linking "affordability and value" in determining institutional eligibility to receive certain types of federal aid. Scorecards are being developed so students can evaluate where they can get the biggest bang for their buck. The "College Affordability and Transparency Center" (new website from Department of Education) lists the Net Cost of colleges; on the list of those with the highest net cost, half are arts schools. Conversation about Return on Investment (ROI) will bring greater discussion and scrutiny to arts schools. The College Scorecard will look at Cost, Graduation Rate, Loan Default Rate, Median Borrowing, and Employment (median incomes). For example, at the University of Texas at Austin, data show its fine arts students, upon graduation, have the highest borrowing rate (\$30,000). Florida may adjust tuition rates based on majors and marketplace considerations, with arts students

paying a higher rate of tuition. Institutions can respond by rethinking the uses of merit aid, refraining from denouncing ROI approaches (it's real and here to stay), controlling price and net cost to students, improving and tracking professional outcomes for students (SNAAP data sheds light on this), improving awareness of tangible and measurable contributions of the arts and artists (also informed by SNAAP data).

Highlights: Using SNAAP Data for Positive Change

This session provided an overview of SNAAP's origins, operations, and key ways in which institutions have used SNAAP data for positive change.

Sally Gaskill, Director of SNAAP initiated the session by discussing SNAAP basics— mission, leadership, funding sources, participants, survey topics, and logistics. Through generous funding from the Surdna Foundation, Indiana University's (IU) Center for Postsecondary Research partnered with Vanderbilt University's Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy to develop SNAAP. The team at IU primarily gathers data, administers the survey, and reports back to institutions with their data, while the team at Vanderbilt, headed by Steven Tepper, produces reports for the field based on aggregate SNAAP data. Participants are drawn from independent arts colleges, arts schools or departments within comprehensive colleges or universities, and arts high schools. Since the first national administration in 2011, a total of 128 institutions have participated with about 70,000 alumni responding.

SNAAP Research Analysts, Amber Lambert and Angie Miller, presented an overview of SNAAP resources including the annual SNAAP Aggregate Report, which contain frequencies for each survey item; the SNAAP 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports, which outline key findings from each year; SNAAP Special Report titled "Painting with Broader Strokes: Reassessing the Value of An Arts Degree"; the SNAAP DataBrief—a monthly digest of selected findings, institutional profiles, etc. emailed to subscribers; and the SnaapShot—a compelling interactive graphic display of SNAAP findings that can be found on the SNAAP website. The staff shared samples of how SNAAP findings have attracted national media coverage (Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, New York Times, Huffington Post, etc.) that can be used for advocacy.

Examples of how to use SNAAP data for improvement included sharing data on campus through assessment briefs, donor and alumni outreach, recruitment brochures, strategic planning, and advocacy. For example, the Institutional Research offices of Miami University of Ohio and Purdue University shared findings of their SNAAP data on campus websites. Virginia Commonwealth University strategically released its SNAAP data to important campus stakeholders—deans, department chairs, faculty and campus leadership—on a deliberate timeline. The University of Texas at Austin, Herron School of Art + Design, and Kent State University focused on alumni/donor outreach and recruitment through newsletters, visually appealing web sites, etc.

Of particular interest to session participants was the discussion of using SNAAP data for curricular assessment and change. For example, the survey asks respondents to measure the extent to which 16 skills and competencies are important to their current work and how well each one was acquired at the respondent's institution. A comparison of these items can identify strengths and potential areas of improvement. A participant from VCU Arts shared that SNAAP data provided the rationale for developing a creative entrepreneurship minor, which will be piloted this fall and rolled out the following year.

Highlights: Presenting Research Findings on the Arts

This deep-dive session covered a range of research topics: internships, social capital and the careers of jazz musicians, regionalization of the film industry and findings from SNAAP.

Alexandre Frenette discussed how internships function as a challenging intermediary step for individuals attempting to launch careers, using one of the major hosts of unpaid labor—the music industry—as a case study. Based on participant observation and interview data (derived from 57 interviews with interns, employers, and college personnel), Frenette reported that ambiguity plays a large role in how internships are interpreted and defined by interns and employers. Frenette discussed what interns do, why companies host interns (inexpensive labor is a major motivator) and characteristics and constraints of internships (low status, presumed incompetence, and temporary/conditional nature of the work). While there are success stories of interns building their employability as they serve as a source of flexible labor (for example, Kevin Liles, a 1991 unpaid intern at Def Jam rose to president in 1991), there are also many examples of exploitation (as evidenced by recent intern lawsuits against Charlie Rose, Elite Model Management, Hearst Corporation, and Fox Entertainment Group). Overall, aspirants may encounter very different opportunities in their internships, which may or may not be congruent with their hopes, expectations, and career aspirations.

Timothy Dowd reported on research undertaken in collaboration with Diogo L. Pinheiro (with draws upon data available through the Survey of Jazz Musicians 2001). Previous studies show that social capital matters for the careers of creative workers—leading to jobs and bolstered income, and that social connections play an especially important role for freelance and “un-credentialed” creative work. Dowd identified some of the resources and skills that facilitate the accumulation of social capital possessed by jazz musicians (including education, formal music training, genre generalism, marketing and internet usage). Among other things, the research finds that jazz musicians who are able to play many different genres of music (“genre generalism”) have more extensive ties with other musicians (higher levels of social capital). The research also found that the jazz field is marked by inequality. Those jazz musicians who have more formal training, better incomes, and live in New York City tend to also have better and more extensive social ties and connections. Privilege in this art field, as in many others, seems to reinforce itself and accumulate over time.

Pacey Foster’s presentation looked at “creative clusters” and the rise of “Hollywood East.” The research makes use of a multi-method case study on the film and television industry in Massachusetts between 2000 and 2010, with a focus on its project network and regional labor dynamics. By comparing macro employment data with more nuanced project network data and firm-level vendor data, the research shows that film projects in Massachusetts benefit local labor markets and they often help spur local “creative clusters,” attracting new creative talent to a region and affording local artists and artisans and opportunity to transfer their skills and talents from one sector to the film sector. Overall, there is a need to combine industry and project network-level data to understand regional dynamics.

Jennifer C. Lena discussed findings surrounding a “dissonance group” that emerged in the analysis of 2010 SNAAP data undertaken by Lena and Danielle Lindermann. A sizable group of arts graduates who reported that they currently worked in the arts neglected to identify themselves as “professional artists” on the 2010 survey. Only a fraction of these responses could be attributed to respondent error, or to their work in the “border disciplines” of design and education. Members of the group did not share any demographic attributes; the only factor that correlated with group membership was if respondents had earned an advanced degree. Conversely, those who *didn’t* fall into this group were more likely to have parents or close relatives who were artists, more likely to have gone to arts-focused schools (instead of arts programs within larger institutions), and were more likely to spend the majority of their work time in arts-related jobs.

The data analysis suggests that people who did arts work, but refrained from calling themselves professional artists, tended to be less deeply embedded in artistic networks. In contrast, their more embedded peers—doing essentially the same kinds of jobs—tended to see themselves as professional

artists. They had their identities as creative people reinforced by their daily relationships with other creative individuals. Clarifying the relationship between doing arts work and seeing oneself as a professional artist has implications for social scientists (who need valid measures of these categories) and policy makers. Our ability to address the resource needs of creative workers will be limited if we continue to rely on balkanizing language.

Highlights: Hot Data and Cool Trends: SNAAP Research and Beyond

Three scholars who are doing cutting-edge work using the results from the SNAAP survey and other data on artistic careers discussed some of their most unexpected findings.

Danielle Lindemann, a postdoctoral research scholar at Vanderbilt University and a member of the SNAAP research team, presented findings based on the responses of 33,801 arts alumni from 66 institutions (8 arts high schools and 58 postsecondary institutions) to the 2011 SNAAP survey. One surprising finding involved the relationship between work, income, and satisfaction: artists who earn the most money are not necessarily the most satisfied in their careers. For instance, those spending the majority of their work time as dancers or choreographers were the *least* likely of all artists to have earned over \$50,000 in 2010 but the *most* likely to indicate that they were satisfied (“very” or “somewhat”) with their jobs.

Bonnie Nichols, a Research Analyst at the National Endowment for the Arts, presented data on artists from the U.S. Census. The talk included information on topics such as the geographical dispersal of artists in the United States, percentage of musicians as a share of the labor force, the gendered and racial composition of musicians in major U.S. cities, and musicians’ distances between their residence and workplaces, as well as other key topics. (For instance, about 1/3 of people in the United States who identify as artists live in California and New York; however, adjusting for the size of a state’s labor market, Tennessee has the highest percentage of artists.)

A presentation by Jean Cook, Director of Programs at the Future of Music Coalition, provided an analysis of income data for musicians. The Future of Music Coalition focuses on three program areas: research, education, and advocacy. Its Artist Revenue Streams project examines 42 different sources through which artists receive funds; these fall into the broader categories of composing income, performance income, recording income, and background income. A wealth of data was presenting concerning these revenue streams. (For instance, jazz musicians appear to have lower effective hourly wages than other musicians.)

Discussion addressed the following key questions: Why do individuals go into the arts even when they might know the financial risks? (Suggestions included that we perhaps have a culture of risk-taking or that many early career stage artists do not fully know or understand the risks.) Who is an artist? (For instance, some people who predominantly teach the arts think about themselves as artists, though some surveys would not classify them as artists.) How can we realistically calculate income when much revenue for artists (particularly musicians) is off the books?