

I would like to thank;

1. The national arts Council of South Africa,
2. The international Federation of arts councils and culture agencies,
3. The Ministry of arts and culture in South Africa for their vision and foresight to be such gracious hosts
4. All the partners and sponsors who have worked with these two organizations to make this fourth world Summit on arts and culture a reality, and
5. A special thank you to the program director Mr. Mike Van Graan for remembering me from our first meeting in Brussels some six months ago and thus having the nerve and courage to risk exposing my own brand of madness and passion to such an esteemed audience.

***And so the question is can the arts market promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue?***

Now this is a very interesting and complex question that I hope will provoke fruitful discussions. It is not a new question but before I get into the meat of my discussion I thought it was important for me to define the critical components of the question so that we can all be clear on what has motivated me in the preparation of this discourse.

Firstly, the arts market. I define the arts market as ***anything and everything, that is; all those mechanisms that go into the commercial exploitation of the intellectual property of the creative industries.*** And of course these mechanisms fall mainly into the two classes that make a market; the buyer and seller. So we must look at not just the creative or producer/seller side but we must also look at the psychology of the consumer/buyer side.

Secondly, there is this curious word; promote. I will simply define promote *as all those processes that help or encourage to exist or flourish.*

Thirdly, we have two phrases; cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. The first, cultural diversity, I will define as *the coexistence of different ethnic, gender, racial, and socioeconomic groups within one social unit.* The second, intercultural dialogue, I will define as *a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange between individuals, groups and organizations with different cultural backgrounds or world views.* Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of different perspectives and practices.

And so with these broad definitions in mind I would like to rephrase the initial question within this context;

Can those mechanisms that go into the commercial exploitation of the intellectual property of the creative industries, be used to facilitate a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange between individuals groups and organizations with different cultural backgrounds or world views so that the coexistence of different ethnic, gender, racial and socioeconomic groups be encouraged to exist and flourish within one global social unit. Sounds like I'm just made things more complicated right? Well, not really. The reason for this definition is that I felt this fundamental question needed life. And so words like commercial, coexistence, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, flourish, respectful, exploitation, intellectual property and facilitate gives the question this life. And the answer is yes.

At first I thought it best to approach the justification of this answer, yes, by researching a bunch of statistics and presenting you with the

empirical data that I know most of us need to truly believe in things. But then I thought it best to answer this question with the real-life experience that's closest to home. You see, Jamaica, reggae music and Rastafari culture is the perfect example of the answer yes.

To examine this example; first just a brief bit of history. Rastafari has its origins in the late 19th and early 20th century and was born out of what was a growing movement of Afrocentrism and Black Nationalism that was nourished by the teachings of Marcus Garvey and others such as Leonard Howell. However, as late as the 1970s Rastafari was still seen as a subversive religion in Jamaica practiced by persons that were perceived to be outcasts and antisocial. In fact, a good portion of Jamaican society still feels this way about the religion. It was not until the 1960s and early 1970s that a man named Chris Blackwell, having seen the genius in a young musician named Robert Nesta Marley, that the philosophies, teachings and culture Rastafari began to take on the world stage.

Today, Rastafari is practiced in many countries throughout the world; from Brazil to Botswana, from China to Chile and estimates of its following range from two to six million. This from humble origins that saw a following of just a few hundred in Jamaica alone less than a half-century ago. And today in Jamaican society, Rastafari has gone mainstream producing everything from the winning contestant in the Miss Jamaica Universe beauty pageant to the creation of products such as a Rasta popsicles. Additionally, it is estimated that the reggae music industry in Jamaica contributes approximately 4% to the nation's GDP and about 2 ½% of its workforce indicating that this employment subsector operates at a higher rate of productivity than average.

Would all of this have happened if a white man born in England and raised in Jamaica had not taken a box of Bob Marley 45s to the streets of Brixton selling them out of the trunk of his car? And more importantly does this mean that in order to achieve this success, this promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue through the arts market, every society needs to produce a Bob Marley? Well, the answer is yes and no. Yes because surely Bob Marley would not have risen to the levels of popularity that he achieved had he not been a truly remarkable once in a lifetime artist. There is no substitute for brilliance. No, because brilliant or not, Bob Marley would not have risen to those levels had he not been exposed to the mechanism of the market; whether through the efforts of Chris Blackwell or someone else.

And here's another little word; exposed. Here again I will define exposed as ***to make known, disclose, or reveal***. And this to me is the key to the answer; yes. The example of Bob Marley, reggae music and Rastafari proves this. However, this example demonstrates the affirmative to the extreme. Other developing countries do not have to have such a wildly successful story for the arts market to successfully promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. There simply needs to be a steady, consistent program of international exposure for the creative output of these countries in order for dialogue and diversity to take place. The market will take care of itself.

The question has been asked, "what if the arts market does not want art that facilitates intercultural dialogue?" In answering this question, I propose the two Cs; conviction and cohesion. I believe I have been able to successfully demonstrate that the arts market can promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. And of course, we only need look at

the influence of Hollywood in hip-hop to see how the United States has managed to impose its cultural diversity on the rest of the world. We, the custodians of culture and the creative industries must have the conviction to implement programs and education aimed at exposing the wide range of global cultural offerings to each other. And this process must be cohesive. That is, we must all be operating under the same rules aimed at achieving the same objectives. I believe that before we throw this task to the market mechanism we must begin this process of exposure through our educational systems. That is, begin the process of exposure with our youngest minds before their values, attitudes and tastes are formed hard and fast by their own indigenous environments.

But what am I referring to specifically? Well, to be truthful I am not an education expert. But I am talking about carving out a portion of each arts education curriculum to be devoted specifically to exposure to diverse cultures. If the average student worldwide passes through 10 years of education before graduating from the secondary school level, and each year devotes two full weeks of study to the arts of two different cultures, that's 20 cultures of exposure by the time a child leaves high school. This kind of exposure would then be supplemented by programs at the government level that encourages and facilitates the importation of diverse groups from other countries and societies that tour their countries again providing critical exposure for artists and creative industries practitioners. This facilitation may take many forms including direct financial assistance as well as lenient tax policies that will allow practitioners to retain the maximum amount of fees they receive for their performances. This increase in competitiveness, will

also act as an incentive for local promoters to take the risk of bringing these diverse cultural offerings into their countries.

Am I advocating the suppression of the arts market of developed countries? No but this kind of induced exposure is particularly critical to the creative producers of developing countries. Because even though the market would take care of itself the truth is the market is not a level playing field. According to the international Federation of the phonographic industry, 95% of the total value of worldwide recorded music industry sales was generated by 30 countries with the top five; United States, Japan, United Kingdom, France and Germany accounting for over 60% of total worldwide recorded music industry sales. These developed nations with long histories of colonization as well as deeply entrenched global media institutions enjoy a level of exposure and export of their cultures that developing nations can hardly match. For example, as a child growing up in Jamaica, my history lessons were replete with stories of English kings and queens, Spanish conquistadors and fierce battles fought between the two in their quest for the conquest of the West. These stories were filled with images of European fashion (albeit rather ancient by today's standards), architecture, customs, laws and values. At parties I went to as a teenager, it was customary for the DJs to play music in sets of three genres; love songs (slow dance music by the likes of The Temptations, The Stylistics, The Chiliters etc.), disco and reggae. How many Americans, Europeans, South Americans or Africans for that matter grew up learning of the Caribs, The Arawaks or the Maroons? It may sound like I am saying that in fact it is arts education and not the arts market that is what is needed to facilitate cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. Not so. However, arts education is necessary to

lay a foundation; to get the party started as it were. But it is the arts market that will keep us dancing all night long.

Clearly, these are simple suggestions and even if implemented will certainly not be the be-all and end-all for this process of the arts market facilitating cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. However, it's a start. And with a collective global conviction executed through a standardized cohesive approach, over time with fine-tuning a natural improvements Jamaica's answer; yes can become the global standard.