

Förnyelse av kulturinstitutioner
Stiftelsen framtidens kultur

The Renewal of Cultural Institutions

Summary of three seminars and eight debate papers

Foreword

During 1999, the Foundation Culture of the Future's (Stiftelsen framtidens kultur) Programme for the Renewal of Cultural Institutions arranged three major seminars. The first of these was held in Gothenburg on 15-16 March 1999, and concerned "Buildings". The second took place in Visby on 17-18 May 1999, and the title was "What are artists good for?" The third seminar was held in Umeå on 20-21 September 1999, on the theme "Pursuing the audience". In connection with the seminars, a number of debate papers were prepared.

This material contains a brief summary of the seminars and debate papers.

Work on the Programme for the Renewal of Cultural Institutions continues in 2000, under the leadership of project manager Maria Fridh and project secretary Rikard Hoogland.

Contents

THREE SEMINARS ON THE RENEWAL OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Buildings – Gothenburg, 15-16 March, 1999	4
What are artists good for? – Visby, 17-18 May, 1999	9
Pursuing the audience – Umeå, 20-21 September, 1999	15

SUMMARY OF EIGHT DEBATE PAPERS

Institutional theatre as an "art company" – Barbro Smeds	24
Is cultural policy merely history – or is the history of cultural policy its future? – Björn Linell	28
Art and usefulness – Anders Kreuger	29
The cultural institution and its principals – Johan Sanne	30
Theatre, an ensemble art – Ragnar Lyth	31
Bibliotekscentrum (Library Centre) – Arne Brodin and Rebecka Tarschys	32
Who are the future consumers of culture? – Jan Gradwall	33
Ten interviews – Anton Hagwall	34

Three seminars on the renewal of cultural institutions

Buildings – Gothenburg 15-16 March, 1999

Buildings are the most tangible manifestation of a cultural institution, from the national romantic palaces of the 19th century, to the post-modernist 20th century concert halls on the waterfront. But the palaces seem to echo with increasing emptiness and uncertainty about what they are to convey. Marketing and rent costs are growing, while the core activities dwindle to a peripheral position. The museums are being Disneyfied, as their collections become obscured by an ever thickening layer of dust. The occupational categories of the cultural institutions are being professionalised ad absurdum, at the expense of the staff who are losing the sense of having common objectives.

Clients are increasing their demands on the institutions. Should they be for the benefit of all, or should they develop their special qualities? Dare they, and can they, confront an audience with more and more diverse interests and backgrounds? Could the cultural institutions transform into arenas where the democratic dialogue can be pursued?

These questions were discussed at the seminar. Participants included:

Peder Alton architectural critic at Dagens Nyheter; *Catharina Gabrielsson*, architect; *Barbro Smeds*, dramatist; *Henrik Berggren*, historian at Södertörn University College; *Björn Linnell*, editor of Moderna Tider; *Lina Ekdahl* writer; *Anders Clason*, cultural director, City of Gothenburg; *Marita Jonsson*, research director; *Isabella Nilsson*, Bo01; *Folke Edwards*, museum director of Kulturprojekt Röda Sten; *Tjia Torpe*, MD of enter; *Niklas Rydén*, journalist at Presens; *Birgitta Ulfsson*, actress; *Claes Caldenby*, architect, Chalmers University; *Sven Eric Isacson* Director of the Museion project at Gothenburg University, *Dan Grettve*, Creative Director of Futurniture; *Konrad Tollmar*, research director, CID, Royal Institute of Technology; *Nils Ringertz*, professor, Nobel Foundation; *Svante Lindqvist*, director of the Nobel Museum; *Tuomo Haapala*, composer; *Anna Lalic*, museum staff member, Mustang; *Monica Sundin*, museum staff member, Mustang; *Ozan Sunar*, director of Södra Teatern; *Anders Kreuger*, director of the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art (NIFCA). Moderator: *Ulrika Knutson*.

—

Henrik Berggren initiated the discussion by referring to the building we were in – the nation. He claimed that nations were created by people and were therefore incredibly strong, but that this did not imply that nationhood has a natural value or that it is eternal. On the contrary, it is forever changing, with continuous shifts and redefinitions.

Berggren emphasised three aspects of “genuine” Swedishness:

Consensus. Our heritage of consensus and uniformity prepare us badly for handling value conflicts and pluralism. This uniformity is owing to the lack of religious pluralism in Sweden. However, Berggren pointed out that the uniformity has also probably promoted equality.

Pragmatism. Together with concepts such as matter-of-factness, reason and moderation, pragmatism came to be a crucial ideological feature of the Social Democratic movement during the 20th century.

“Little-Swedishness”. A concept corresponding to “little-Swedishness” is left-wing nationalism, which, as opposed to right-wing nationalism, focuses on the future. Sweden’s future grandeur did not depend on a military restitution of the old imperialist dreams, but on the creation of a modern, democratic industrial nation.

Berggren stated that “little-Swedishness” is largely a vision of a uniform national state, and he asked if this view of Sweden would be compatible with our own identity in the future.

Peder Alton stated in his discourse “The Serious Museum” that the concept of the museum and its physical form is the same today as in the early 19th century, during the great architectural expansion of museums. The building is still the centre and custodian of the museum concept.

However, the old museums are facing major problems. Old, traditional museums are heavy to administer and difficult to use for modern museum activities. The architecture influences the museum’s programmes and greatly influences what activities are undertaken and how they are defined. If we associate a particular museum activity with the building itself, this means that its character, appearance and maintenance influence the way the museum is perceived.

A few new museums exemplified this, for instance Moderna Museet in Stockholm and Kiasma in Helsinki. Peder Alton claimed that the choice of architect was crucial, and that this almost certainly influences the activities. The new museums serve not only as traditional “memory-banks” but have also come to play a part in the reconstruction of the European city, especially cities that have been severely affected by industrial closures, etc. Alton mentioned the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao as an example.

Major investments are being made in new architecture and new art museums, but with only a vague idea of how they should be used. One could almost suspect that architecture itself is the objective. Art, culture and activities are secondary to this, Alton concluded.

Catharina Gabrielsson asked whether museums should be collective vessels for facts and information, and stated that the task of museums must adapt to changes in reality. If we reflect on today’s infinite amount of facts, museums can obviously no longer house all this information.

Gabrielsson said that the exact choice of materials should be in the hands of the museums of the future: What is worth knowing? Another important aspect is the concrete, authentic experience of standing in a room and experiencing this particular choice, which could give new meaning to the building.

The problem is that Sweden lacks ideologies with regard to museum buildings. Buildings are commissioned without a clear vision of future activities – the important thing is to be *seen* to be investing. However, the role of the museum is to be precise and highly advanced in a certain place, a certain space, and in what is displayed. In this perspective, museums will remain an important building task – perhaps the most important, since they incarnate architecture as a manifestation of value, and a kind of social manifestation – a cultural self-esteem on a societal level which is conveyed to the individual, Catharina Gabrielsson concluded.

Barbro Smeds based herself on her text “Institutional theatre as an artistic company” (see separate summary). This text centred on the role of the theatre in the future, in view of today’s potential, leaders and ideas, and she enlarges on her own experiences as a theatre director.

—

This was followed by a discussion on the **cultural climate in Gothenburg**, in which moderator Ulrika Knutsson asked why Gothenburg in particular has had so many cultural crises, what structures cause these crises and how the city nevertheless succeeds with so much, e.g. the film festival and the book fair.

Anders Clason, head of culture in Gothenburg, claimed that Gothenburg has an unusually large number of municipal cultural institutions. Only Stockholm has more institutions, and these are state-run. This has financial repercussions. Niklas Rydén agreed and added that Gothenburg’s institutions have the ambitions of a capital city, without the corresponding public funding.

The mass media were mentioned as an example of structures that are missing. Coverage is low or non-existent for events taking place outside the Stockholm region. Another factor that was mentioned was Gothenburgers' lack of cultural self-esteem. In Stockholm every little theatre group thinks in international terms, whereas in Gothenburg only the Gothenburg audiences count.

—

The debate was followed by four short talks on the future role of the building, to exemplify a few scenarios for the role and purpose of museums in the future.

Dan Grettve spoke about “more or less virtual buildings”. He said that although buildings are good, it is important that exhibition producers formulate the objectives and strategy of their exhibition before deciding where to locate it. It would be a privilege if there were an institution that was not dependent on a building, which could acknowledge the possibility of exhibiting in different buildings.

Regarding the relationship between IT and museum activities, software has previously been incomprehensible and badly designed, but this is improving. Moreover, a new generation of creators, artists, museum curators, nostalgics, aesthetes, teachers and filmmakers are emerging with new concepts for creating, documenting and collecting, exhibiting and preserving – concepts that do not necessarily require expensive new buildings, Grettve concluded.

Konrad Tollmar presented some projects from the research group *Smarta ting-studion* (Smart things studio), a joint venture between Interaktiva Institutet, a recently founded national research centre, and the CID research centre at the Royal Institute of Technology. Among other phenomena, they have studied the effects of the introduction of computers in the home. How has this affected everyday life? What will be improved, and what will deteriorate?

Nils Ringertz presented the Electronic Nobel Museum (ENM), which has existed since 1994. The ENM had 2-3 million visitors in 1998; virtually every country in the world was represented, with most visits from the USA, Western Europe and Japan.

The advantage of an electronic museum is that it is global and accessible every day of the year around the clock. With an electronic museum you can supply more in-depth information than with other types of exhibitions, since there are no limitations. It is flexible, can provide search and link options, and is very cost-effective.

Svante Lindqvist has been head of the Nobel Museum since 1998. The museum is currently being created. He said he noted an obsession with the building itself, rather than with the contents, which surprised him since the most exciting aspect is the actual concept – the purpose of the museum.

It will be long before there is a permanent Nobel Museum. Lindqvist saw the advantages of an ambulating exhibition activity, and of designing several exhibitions over a longer period, so there is time to formulate activities before they are fixed in an architectural setting.

Marita Jonson shared her experiences as project manager for *Sesam* – a rescue plan to save and open the cultural heritage secreted in archives and museums. The project started three years ago and was recently concluded. It started when the Riksdag allocated 235 million kronor to museums, to be used to deal with their hoards of items needing restoration. The objectives were as follows:

- To rescue collections. Better storage, supervision, care, cleaning.
- To make collections available by ensuring that all items are registered, preferably digitally, and accessible to the public.
- To change attitudes to the collections among museum staff and the public.

The main emphasis of Sesam was to muster strength, and the funding was a one-off contribution from the government making it possible to accomplish what had previously been impossible. It was necessary to reach all the way, which also entailed a change in technology for the museums. Co-operation was the key word, since co-operation saves time, money and staff, as well as providing opportunities for discussions about selecting, collecting, depositing and shedding unwanted items.

Results vary strongly – the smaller museums were the most successful. Storage has improved. Awareness has increased about how collections are managed. However, Marita Jonson was uncertain whether Sesam had succeeded in changing the attitude to collections, and she was also doubtful as to whether the museums had defined objectives for the future use of their collections.

Anna Lalic and **Monica Fundin** accounted for “Within the doors of Sesam” – an evaluation from the perspective of staff employed on project basis. The evaluation is based on study visits and on a questionnaire. Some of the results were:

- Sesam has provided proper employment for 300-400 people. Many of these feel that their professional role has developed through new knowledge and experience.
- Sesam has increased the accessibility of museums. Out of the museums included in the report, as many as 90 per cent have embarked on digitalisation.
- There are problems with computers, e.g. with regard to competence and software.
- 48 per cent of staff employed in projects noted no improvement in attitudes within the museums.
- Sesam would have needed to be more thoroughly integrated. Many project staff felt excluded.

Monica Fundin claimed that the museum sector is conservative; it takes long to assimilate new ideas and changes. The museums are often hierarchically directed and rely too heavily on labour market policy measures; some museums would not survive without Swedish labour market policy programmes such as ALU, API.

—

This was followed by **Tjia Torpe's** presentation of her experiences from working for eight years as a Social Democratic cultural politician. One of her conclusions was that the majority of funds are tied up as fixed costs – very little remains for activities. The remaining resources are subject to bartering between politicians responsible for different areas, and it can be difficult to defend the position of culture when set against healthcare, childcare, etc. The result is a discussion about utility – how will the activity benefit the city?

Culture should be a question of human liberation; people have a right to stand up proud. Unfortunately, that argument has disappeared from Social Democratic cultural debates, Tjia Torpe concluded.

A debate about **The Mission** ensued, in which participants agreed with Tjia Torpe that the reasons why art and culture are important, why it should be allowed to cost money, and why it should be publicly funded, are rarely discussed.

The political and artistic objectives easily collide with each other. Amateurism is encouraged, because politicians see the benefit of people feeling involved after an exhibition and “doing something” themselves. This enables politicians to justify the existence of the art museum, etc.

The politicians' mission with regard to institutions is impossible to fulfil if the institutions have the actual mission but not the funds to realise it. The politicians are bluffing, but so are the institutions when they claim to be willing to perform the mission. Another bluff is when cultural workers/institutions adapt their activities to current political priorities that are often based on outdated dogmas about what is “important”.

—

The day ended with a debate on **Museums of the Future** and how we should utilise existing cultural institutions. Although they may appear obsolete, surely they can be used partly in new ways – with another relationship to their city and surroundings.

How should we proceed to build a new cultural institution? Does, for instance, the World Culture Museum in Gothenburg represent something new, or is it simply yet another museum?

In the discussion it emerged that it is not the museum itself, but what happens around it, that matters. The World Culture Museum should work with the approach that the exhibition is outside. Perhaps a more apt name would be “Arena for the Cultures of the World” – to put western culture in a wider context?

There will always be a need to look back in an archive over the past, but these archives can be made more exciting and stimulating by creating collisions between past and present. Many museums will survive, but new forms are needed.

What are artists good for? – Visby, 17-18 May, 1999

Does the artist generate more interest than the artwork? Is it really the artist's task to find new creative processes for industry and science? Does everyone have to become an artist, or does art training provide knowledge that could enhance many areas other than those which are purely artistic? Are we educating too many artists?

Are we turning away from contemporary art and instead looking for beauty and goodness that everyone can embrace? Can contemporary art serve as a basis for international dialogue? Will future art training be a collaborative network school that removes the boundaries between the different art disciplines, or a convent school that maintains traditions and the sovereignty of the arts? What new educational demands will emerge?

These questions were discussed during the seminar. Participants included:

Ingela Lind, art critic at Dagens Nyheter; *Staffan Ericson*, media researcher, Södertörn University College; *Marita Jonsson*, research director; *Marianne Lindberg DeGeer*, artist; *Sven David Sandström*, composer; *Martin Sjöberg*, artist; *Ulla Rydbeck*, director of special projects, Swedish National Concert Institute; *Annika Öhrner*, Principal of Valand School of Fine Arts; *Joseph Backstein*, curator; *Oleg Kulik*, artist; *Boel Höjeberg*, head of department at the University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre; *Gertrud Sandqvist*, rector, College of Art in Malmö; *Örjan Ringbom*, director of studies at Konstskolan Gotland; *Eva Mozard*, teacher, Konstskolan Gotland; *Johan Scott*, professor, University College of Fine Arts; *Margaretha Åsberg*, professor, University College of Dance; *Ingvar Sjöberg*, artist, Interaktiva Institutet, Royal Institute of Technology; *Sven-Olof Wallenstein*, associate professor, College of Photography and Film, Valand School of Fine Arts; *Hans Hedberg*, professor, Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design; *Emma Stenström*, researcher, Stockholm School of Economics; *Ludvig Rasmusson*, freelance journalist; *Thorbjörn Andersson*, landscape architect; *Carl Henrik Svenstedt*, creative director, Skiften Malmö University College; *Figge Holmberg*, lighting designer; *Tarzan Wågstam*, lighting designer; *Eva Persson*, exhibition producer, Campus Norrköping; *Camilla Lundberg*, programme director, Music Department, Sveriges Television. Moderator: *Ulrika Knutson*.

—

Ingela Lind initiated discussions on the theme “The institution as a happening and knowledge as a reptile – an American case study”. Ingela Lind is international adviser to an international studio programme within P.S.1 in New York. Among other issues, she discussed the skills that artists need and to a high degree already possess: the ability to improvise, openness to new situations, social talent, language (both artistic and verbal), theory (even if the amount is arguable), flexibility, humour and self-irony.

A shift in paradigm is currently taking place, and the image is growing more important. This is probably due to the explosive development of visual media. In the USA there is a controversial university subject, Visual Culture, which deals with how people respond to visual media and interact with images. Lind claims that it is a question of shifting the emphasis – instead of regarding the image as text, the text is seen as an image.

It is good that the Swedish art scene is represented in international programmes. To work in another place for a longer period is valuable, because one gains new perspectives on oneself and one's Swedishness, Ingela Lind concluded.

Torbjörn Andersson discussed landscape gardening and said that it is a bearer of the Arts and Crafts heritage from the English turn of the century – fine art and crafts hand in hand. He claimed that the art of gardening and landscaping is democratic and has deep popular roots. It has no sender and therefore evades elitism.

Landscape gardening can provide a deeply spiritual image of a region and its culture. If the artist is not too meddlesome, the landscape or garden becomes great art that does not shout or contort itself, but provides many-faceted sensory experiences – an art that does not “dazzle, humiliate or exclude anyone” Andersson concluded, quoting the artist Ragnar Sandberg.

—

Under the heading “Can we educate artists?” art education was discussed.

Gertrud Sandqvist started by stating that there is a vision of the artist as a growing, vegetating genius. This vision is shared by the audience, artists, sometimes by critics, often by collectors and gallerists, in Northern Europe – and particularly in Scandinavia. A society that perceives itself as being rational needs this vision, where the artist represents the irrational.

However, this view of the artist is entirely at odds with reality. The concept of genius excludes the artist from being a part of society. And modern society wants to keep artists outside the system – there are strong forces maintaining this order – since a genius is not responsible, because a genius has inspiration, and if the artist is not responsible, then it is not necessary to provide the artist with decent living conditions.

We will probably be experiencing conflicts between young artists – who have another approach to their profession, who perhaps already work internationally during their training and who relate differently to their role as artists – and all the more or less overt expectations on what an artist should be. We need a thorough debate about the content of art college education, Sandqvist concluded.

A lively debate followed, between artists and representatives of art colleges and the audience.

Johan Scott stated that the purpose of art education is to give the students skills in their art form as well as self-knowledge. **Annika Öhrner** agreed, but added that the university colleges of art should not educate artists. Instead, it is the artists who get themselves educated.

Gertrud Sandqvist said that it is important to discuss *how* we educate. Perhaps the university colleges are not keeping up with the changes in the role of the artist.

What role of the artist? **Channa Bankier** asked, and added that it was a question of people doing *different* things, exploring *different* states of mind. Aesthetic theory is heavily shackled by the need to find *one* correct art and *one* correct artist role. The colleges should be arenas for different people and different genres. Today there is only a mass of parallel genres that **compete against each other, all wanting to be the right one, true and contemporary, Bankier said.**

The content of art education was also discussed. Annika Öhrner claimed that students should achieve a deeper understanding of their artistic work. Young people need to gain experience from the creative process and understand the artistic media they have chosen. Above all, they need to learn to take the artistic consequences of their work in every aspect. A university education must provide both practical and theoretical knowledge.

The danger of art colleges being too vast was discussed, and it was agreed that the danger lies in too much conformity.

Oleg Kulik said that a model artist and a modern educational system are mutually exclusive. Art education should teach an artist how to *fight* the system. There is no career for an artist – save perhaps a downward career.

Finally, the criteria for good art and the importance of marketing were discussed. Johan Scott said that the most important and difficult part of being an artist is to produce works that are visible and get exposure. The most important, and also the most difficult, thing is to produce art.

The next section dealt with whether too many artists are being educated, and **Ludvig Rasmusson** began with a somewhat provocative talk on the theme “We don’t need education!”

Rasmusson claimed that a citizens’ commission should be appointed to investigate Sweden’s cultural life. There is a rampant myth that culture cannot be valued in exact terms. This may be true, but a certain evaluation is possible. However, lack of insight, unwillingness to scrutinise holy myths and a lack of competition make it more convenient to hide behind this myth.

There ought to be a proportion of autodidacts even in an educated society, people who come from the outside and revitalise. However, the Swedish art scene is so hermetically closed that autodidactic artists do not stand a chance.

Rasmusson also contrasted the number of people who are educated in an area, with the opportunities to earn a living. He claimed that we educate far too many artists, and that it is irresponsible to create this “artist proletariat”.

He also discussed the gap between science/technology and humanities/arts, and said that this gap is excessively wide and that the fault lies with the cultural side, for remaining ignorant.

Ludvig Rasmusson’s talk was followed by a panel discussion, where protests were voiced against the claim that too many artists are being educated. Art education is beneficial and necessary, but the question is what it should comprise. Foundation courses were mentioned, and Eva Lange said that the role of schools is to educate, not to prepare. Örjan Ringbom, among others, agreed and added that the purpose cannot be to create artists – that artists are the bi-product.

With regard to the job market for artists, Per Bengtsson from AF Kultur och Media (job centre for the arts and media) in Stockholm said that there are around 900 job-seeking artists in Stockholm. Some 2/3 of these receive some form of unemployment benefit, indicating that they have had other occupations.

The seminar also concluded that the interest in aesthetic education at all levels is increasing. Young people are applying for courses in aesthetic subjects.

Specialist training and cross-boundary meetings were discussed under the heading “Aesthetics in practice – is there scope for specialised education?”

Eva Persson summarised “Kultur, Samhälle, Mediegestaltning” (Culture, Society, Media Interpretation) – an interdisciplinary programme at Campus Norrköping. The programme takes 60 students and is the first in Sweden to offer this type of course.

Emma Stenström at the Stockholm School of Economics summarised various cross-boundary projects within the school’s agenda, for instance the courses “Economics in Culture and Media”, and “Leadership in Fiction”. The intention is to use means of expression from the arts to generate a discussion on human values, morale, ethics, power mechanisms, etc. According to Stenström, the social climate improves if business leaders have more general knowledge, and there is a growing interest in the business sector to introduce a cultural dimension, for instance in management training.

The meeting between different disciplines in the arts was also discussed, as for instance when students from Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts & Design are trained in lighting techniques etc., which they can use when arranging exhibitions in the future.

—

The next segment started with two reflections on the Russian art scene, by Joseph Backstein and Oleg Kulik.

Russia does not have a functioning system, not even for art education. **Joseph Backstein** said that Russia is aesthetically segregated. On the one hand, the lack of a new system encourages experiments and avant-garde, and on the other, the traditional art education from the 1930s, when Stalin put a stop to all avant-garde experiments, remains.

Russia is isolated from the international art scene, and it is hard to become included in that world. The most obvious advantage for visual artists is that they have a common language that can be understood everywhere, that bridges national boundaries. However, visual artists are the most conservative artists – allied with the powers in authority, and clever at manipulating with power and money.

One thing that has made a great impact on Russian art is an initiative involving museum directors from the entire country. Some 40 people attended the first event and now co-operate by inviting each other to seminars, conferences, etc. However, there is a shortage of funding.

Oleg Kulik has organised exhibitions for many years. He said that Russian artists operate in a unique context. On the one hand, we have the values of the international art scene – a liberal and tolerant attitude to experiments and exhibitions. On the other, the artist exists physically in a totally non-liberal environment. Artists do not have to love this context, but they have to understand it and work in it, Kulik ended.

—

The next item on the agenda was “Mutually rewarding? – campus, interdisciplinary sciences and cross-boundary educational programmes”.

Margaretha Åsberg presented her thoughts concerning CKHS – the centre for colleges of art in Stockholm. The concept grew out of the plans to create a campus for art education in Stockholm, and CKHS should be regarded as a centre for exchange of ideas and knowledge, and for communication as a basis for socially oriented development of art education. The intention is that CKHS should complement, not replace, the existing colleges.

CKHS is to be funded by government allocations with contributions from each respective college, from foundations and funds, and possibly also from IT companies and other interested parties.

—

A **panel discussion** ensued, about a campus for art education in Stockholm. Five out of the seven colleges of art are favourable to a campus on certain conditions, one being that it incorporates aesthetic research.

Ulla Rydbeck considered it extremely important that students learn more about each other's areas, since they will be co-operating in working life. Artists have a lack of knowledge about other art forms – and this could be bridged by learning more about one another during the years at college.

Some projects were presented:

- Malmö University College – “Art and Communication” where artistic work is undertaken using technological and scientific criteria and staff.
- Södertörn University College – “Contemporary Aesthetics” which involves linking the humanities with research training and general knowledge courses in philosophy, media studies, history and literature.
- Valand School of Fine Arts – a pilot course about art and research, in which participants examine the possibility of having some form of higher educational level within the field of art.

The advantages and disadvantages of a campus were intensely discussed. Some participants were apprehensive that it would result in a form of artist ghetto, whereas others considered that a campus would be a stimulating and educational environment where many different artists and art forms have the opportunity to enrich each other.

Moreover, it was discussed whether it is even possible to perform research in the field of art applying the accepted concepts of research. One participant claimed that art knowledge is in demand in other scientific disciplines. In order to be an equal co-operation partner to traditional academic disciplines, it is necessary to define a method and model for art research.

—

The discussion on research was extended by **Marita Jonsson**, under the heading “Post-graduate and Master studies”. Marita Jonsson has put forth a proposal for an interdisciplinary post-graduate course in art. The course would comprise 40 points (e.g. two terms) and could be incorporated in the future research training programme. The proposal has been linked to the University College on Gotland.

This post-graduate course is intended to consist of two lines – one theoretical and one practical – with some 16 students in each line. The courses are aimed at artists, designers, actors, film-makers, musicians, dancers, multi-media experts and others. Applicants should have a university degree in arts or corresponding competence, and at least one year’s practical experience. People who have studied art theory and journalism, specialising in practical execution, could possibly also qualify.

Martin Sjöberg shared his experiences from the Whitney Museum of American Art – Independent Study Program, which is a post-graduate art course in New York. He has previously studied at the University College of Fine Art in Stockholm.

The course at Whitney has existed for 25 years. Students are given studios and also have to attend a half-day seminar twice a week. – some of the best lecturers in the world within their respective fields participate in these seminars fairly frequently. Rather than being a one-way lecture situation, these are intense discussions at an advanced level.

Sjöberg said that Whitney provides a form of ethic training, a traditional educational ideal. The degree of co-operation was perhaps not that high, but there was a kind of co-existence.

Sven-Olov Wallenstein has been commissioned by Gothenburg University to ruminate freely on the issue of art and research. He does not believe that research should be used in an attempt to improve the status of art colleges; their status is already satisfactory. Instead, we should look at how a research level could contribute – a more advanced level of reflection on contemporary art, which does not exist in the institutions today. Art theory has failed in that respect; very few doctorates concern themselves with contemporary art. There is no living dialogue with the art scene.

Wallenstein said that there is a trend within art today that would render a dialogue on philosophical and other grounds more interesting. Aesthetic theory must be formulated in close contact with the practice of art.

Theory that bears no relation to practice can be hazardous. It could be discussed whether the word research is correct or not, but some kind of forum for advanced reflection about art is needed.

Pursuing the Audience

Umeå, 20-21 September, 1999

Are the cultural institutions addressing an audience that no longer exists? What is the make-up of today's audience and how should it best be encountered and challenged? Are today's audiences moving in two opposite directions, towards a young, increasingly specialised audience, and an audience in quest of experience packages, where cultural events are simply one component? How are cultural institutions coping with this change in audiences?

Is the audience more interested in performing than in consuming culture? Dare cultural institutions work *with* their audiences instead of just *for* them? Does mass-media coverage of culture make audiences more "stupid" than they are?

Many cultural institutions were formed when cultural policy focused on popular education and a democratic distribution of culture. But where is today's popular education taking place – in cultural institutions, study circles or festivals?

These issues were discussed at the seminar. Participants included:

Björn Linnell, editor, Moderna Tider; *Carl Rudbeck*, editor, Smedjan; *Kurt Stern*, ABF Stockholm; *Ulrika Kärnborg*, journalist; *Chris Torch*, director, Intercult; *Maria Blom*, director; *Johan Berggren*, journalist; *Ulrica Johansson*, museum director, Skellefteå Museum; *Gunnar Lagerman*, Hultsfred Festival; *Carina Reich*, artist, the Millennium Project; *Bogdan Szyber*, artist, the Millennium Project; *Henrik Hansson*, INDACOP; *Karin Hjelmér*, Helsingborgs Museum; *Xavier Douroux*, mediator, Le Consortium, Dijon; *Conny Ång*, head librarian, Norrköping City Library; *Göran Dahlberg*, editor, Glänta; *Lotta Gröning-Degerlund*, editor-in-chief, NSD; *Jan-Erik Lundström*, Director, Bildmuseet; *Dan Grettve*, Creative Director, Futurniture; *Magnus Bäckström*, Director of Gävle Concert Hall; *Carl Hegemann*, dramatist, Volksbühne Berlin; *David Neuman*, director of Magasin 3; *Måns Wränge*, Professor, Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts & Design; *Hans Hedberg*, Professor, Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts & Design; *Bitte Wallin*, Project Manager, Framtidstro (Future Visions); *Maria Lind*, curator, Moderna Museet; *Piia Laita*, Communications Manager, Kiasma; *Jessica Gedin*, publisher, Tivoli Norstedt; *Ulrika Knutson*, editor, Månadsjournalen; *Tony Zoulias*, DJ. Moderator: *Mårten Arndtzén*.

The seminar started with a discussion on the subject of "Popular education, the market and culture", in which **Björn Linnell** stated that it is a question of power, social systems and class division – regardless of whether the theme is cultural policy, educational policy, audiences or creating art.

He quoted Esaias Tegnér, who has said that it is cynical to educate people for something they can never become. According to Tegnér, the liberal press contaminated the minds of the lower classes with the feeling of not being able to fulfil expectations that were generated and not followed through.

Tegnér's argument is still relevant today. When we say that people should educate themselves in life-long learning, what is it we want to teach them – life-long learning, or life-long anguish?

Linnell accounted for three contemporary American approaches:

- We have something that is being threatened by something else. Therefore we must crush the threat, so we can keep what we have.
- That which is, is threatening. Therefore we must crush it, in order to build our own identities. The right to a theatre in Västerbotten is important to the Västerbotten identity – regardless of what is going on in Stockholm.

- It is important to go beyond one's own limits in order to see oneself. It is important that Stockholmers go to the theatre in places outside Stockholm, in order to get a perspective on Stockholm – a Socratic approach.

Carl Rudbeck talked about culture and the market and reckoned that good-quality culture sells – there is no need to chase the audience if the product is good. The best culture has never been as available and as inexpensive as it is today, partly thanks to the global market, where there is a commercial audience even for narrow and exclusive products.

Not long ago, good culture was reserved for the upper class. However, the market has promoted technical innovations that enable a democratic spreading of culture. We have only seen the beginning of the IT revolution, the Internet is only 2,000 days old. And already the audience is so big, and artists' opportunities to reach it so diverse, that the risk of an undiscovered genius dying without being published is non-existent.

Everyone should be able to choose freely what culture s/he wants. Culture is like a staircase, where you start with popular and simple forms and gradually develop a more discerning taste. But even lovers of fine culture sometimes desire popular, lightweight culture.

The state can, and should, ensure that schools maintain good standards. Schools lay the foundations and provide the tools for being able to absorb culture – even narrow and demanding culture. If the school system is good, we will also have an audience for culture, Rudbeck concluded.

Kurt Stern discussed popular education and claimed that it is certainly a political issue. The conservatives and neo-liberals want to withdraw funding, while other parties see a value in the concept of education. The core of popular education is that people come together of their own free will, to learn more together with others, on their own terms.

ABF Stockholm operates an extensive lecture programme based on the conviction that the political and public dialogue must take place *throughout* society.

—

The next segment was on the theme “What are today's audiences like?”

Ulrika Kärnborg discerned the following tendencies:

- The pattern with regard to interest in culture and consumption among young people stabilises at a higher age. It takes longer for people to find out who they are, before they start subscribing to a newspaper, or decide if they are more interested in pop music than in reading novels. More people try more things.
- The 1990s produced greater divisions between people. High youth unemployment resulted in young people not having their own flats, not being able to afford newspaper subscriptions and hardly being able to afford to consume culture in any form.

On the other hand, more people attend higher education, and interest in aesthetics and humanities is enormous.

It appears that the forms of culture metamorphose as society undergoes fundamental technical change, for instance as with the IT society. Some artforms survive, while others do not. Kärnborg asked herself how the theatre should go about maintaining the character of a meeting-place for the citizens. She also noted that despite the strong interest in film, film gets a relatively small proportion of the government's allocation to culture, and she asked whether this was justifiable.

Kärnborg considered a government policy on culture to be absolutely necessary, and that policies are needed to create a cultural climate. If there is no cultural climate – a sort of sounding-board for culture, there will be no audience. On the same grounds, education in humanities is also necessary.

Maria Lind stated that a museum is the sum of its activities. She represents Moderna Museet Projekt, which operates partly within Moderna Museet and partly on locations around Stockholm. As an example, she mentioned a project in the business lounge of the central train station.

To what degree can art be part of the public environment? Maria Lind made comparisons with the ventures during the Cultural Capital Year 1998, and said that these had failed to a large extent because they had become artistic campaigns. The artists had not related to the environments they operated in, which is absolutely necessary.

Maria Lind also dealt with the current art pedagogy, and said that it is important to develop models and tools for relating to art when it is within and outside the walls of an institution. It should address both those who are already interested in art, and also uninitiated groups.

As art moves away from the institutions and communicates in different ways with the audience, we need to ask ourselves if we need the institutions. Could art communicate directly with the audience instead? Have the institutions become superfluous? Maria Lind answers no to her own question. The institutions are needed as collective memories in the form of collections, and as platforms for more investigative art, among other things.

Chris Torch said that the dialogue with the audience must be resumed. This dialogue should be continuous, not from the stage to the stalls, but in a more circular way. Unless we recreate this circle we will no longer have common values.

Many people are absent from the audience – for instance teenagers, immigrants and middle-aged working-class men. Why aren't they represented? According to Chris Torch, this is neither an ethnic or age-related question – it is primarily a class issue. Large numbers of people do not recognise themselves in the culture on offer.

The biggest problem is that we have painted ourselves into a corner thanks to our buildings. The question now is not what we should offer, but how we can fill the house. But if the building does not serve any real purpose, it should be closed down. It is superfluous.

Finally, Chris Torch asked why everyone is so frightened of targeted audience initiatives. It is not a matter of defining people on grounds of ethnic background, age, etc., but as the world is complex, we need to divide it so that we know to whom we are talking. Why not ask the audience what they want? We need to involve the audience in the work process, in the planning of repertoire, in the thinking, in the designing of our buildings and theatres. Open the channels.

—

The section on “Packaged experience” incorporated a few short reflections around marketing and giving the audience “what the audience wants”.

Dan Grettve demonstrated a simple model for working with cultural activities. In his opinion, we should treat the activity like a restaurant, with regard to a few basic criteria:

- The content – is the food good? If so, the guests will probably come. If the location is good, so much the better.
- The owner – an important person to keep your eyes on.

- The audience – who are they?

Altogether, this forms a concept. If the parts harmonise, there is a chance that the activity will be a success.

Dan Grettve related a campaign for IKEA in preparation for the housing exhibition H99. He discussed the ideas behind the campaign, the outlines, slogans, media contacts, etc. It was simply a question of getting the audience curious and making them feel welcome.

Jessica Gedin said that in her publishing company she has not considered the audience, only herself, when deciding what the books should look like, what they should be about, etc.

In general, publishers think too much about what people want, that middle-aged women are the upholders of culture, and that they prefer a certain type of literature, that there is a “dead” generation of readers between 20 and 35 years. None of this is true.

Gunnar Lagerman works on the Hultsfred Festival – an audience magnet that attracted some 43,000 people over five days in 1998. He said that the audience is the top priority, because without it the Festival would not exist. 90 per cent of financing for the Hultsfred Festival comes from entrance fees, and the average audience age is 19.

A recent survey shows that visitors get information about the Festival mainly from the Internet and the Festival’s home page. The proportion of first-time visitors was 40 per cent, and 80 per cent were favourable to returning next year.

Göran Dahlberg represents a cultural magazine, which, in addition to publishing the magazine, runs a philosophy bar at the Atalante theatre in Gothenburg. They “package” philosophy and political visions with beer and wine, and so far the success has far overreached their expectations.

They have also arranged seminars together with the Gothenburg Film Festival, and these have also drawn satisfactory audiences.

—

After these short introductory talks, a panel discussion ensued on the theme of packaged experience. Moderator Mårten Arndtzén asked whether the panel believed they were involved in popular education.

Gunnar Lagerman and Göran Dahlberg agreed, and Jessica Gedin agreed, if popular education meant being passionate about what one did and believing that someone else would benefit from one’s activities.

The matter of networks was also discussed. Jessica Gedin said that networks are the dream of every small enterpriser, and her own wish was for some form of distribution network. The Hultsfred Festival does not have a Swedish network but is included in an international network that collaborates with regard to royalties to artists, etc.

Björn Linnell said that much of what was being said felt “old-fashioned”, in the sense that it was routine and safe. Jessica Gedin publishes books, something that has been done for years. Dan Grettve works with advertising, Hultsfred is like the old popular outdoor dances, albeit at a higher level, and Göran Dahlberg’s activities resemble the old book café in Lund. Linnell said that although that was fine, he added that these activities proceed slowly and heavily.

Jan Lindahl said that the institution as an organisation – tax-financed, with democratic transparency and regulated by municipal legislation and labour laws – is something altogether different than the activities

represented by the panel. However, the institution needs a burning pathos, just as the independent cultural worker needs it. If the pathos is missing, the institution dies.

Mårten Arndtzén concluded by stating that festival culture is sometimes perceived as a threat. However, he continued, perhaps the festivals should make their entrance into the institutions. Gunnar Lagerman countered by saying that the institutions should join in the festivals instead!

—

The next item on the agenda was **Carl Hegemann**, who accounted for Christoph Schlingensief's work at the Volksbühne theatre in Berlin. Hegemann started by claiming that the problems regarding art and conveying art to the audience were the same in Germany as in Sweden. Moreover, the two primary ways of solving the problems seem to coincide – more education for more people, combined with marketing and packaging. The problem is that there is uncertainty nowadays about where the educational criteria should be found, and with regard to marketing there is a credibility problem.

Hegemann believed that fixed buildings for the theatre are an advantage, but that more activities apart from drama should take place there. He went so far as to say that theatre is only theatre when it is not only theatre.

Volksbühne has a large young audience. The average age has been 20-21 years over the past few years. It has now risen somewhat, since the established theatre-going audience can no longer be blind to this phenomenon. The young audience probably found the theatre because it is a meeting-place in addition to being a theatre. They can always go there, to its bars and restaurants and rock concert venues. There are seminars, parties, lectures and all kinds of meetings.

Carl Hegemann recounted Christoph Schlingensief's project *Chance 2000* at Volksbühne, which was performed in the campaign for the general election in 1998. This was an attempt to form a party with Schlingensief as the chancellor candidate. When the election campaign started, it was still unclear whether the election campaign play was part of party-founding, or the party-founding was part of the play. On the day of the election, there was still uncertainty as to whether it was a play or a political party.

—

Xavier Douroux spoke on the subject of "Art and Society". The talk was divided into two parts – *The Moral Maze* and "Art & Societé".

Douroux started by saying that the audience in general is not particularly important to him, but that the onlooker, each part of the audience, is essential. He regards each onlooker as a member of society and, more importantly, an active member.

The Moral Maze: The project started when artists Gillick and Parreno invited ten artists to come to Dijon, without projects or works. Each day, for a week, they requested one person to talk about their field of work or knowledge – for example, an economist, people from a new technological company involved in trying to predict future development, or a British astronaut. Each day, the artists had discussions with these people, and at the end of the week they were to decide on the content of the actual exhibition, which resulted in a form of resume of what had taken place during the week. The exhibition resulted in an organisation that the audience can join. This organisation currently runs magazines, a film company and several projects relating to architecture and urbanisation.

Douroux said that this type of project is important, since it is based on the exhibition and forms the basis for new contacts between artists and audiences. When we talk about audiences, we have to find out what they

want. It does not suffice to think of those who do not turn up. We have to think of those who do come, and try to make them active in the creative process.

Art & Société: For eight years now, “Art & Société” has participated in the programme “New Assignments”, in which people can get assistance from an artist in solving pragmatic or symbolic problems. Fondation France helps with funding, for instance by paying one person who is to try to understand people’s requirements. This person, who is Douroux, then chooses a suitable artist who pursues the dialogue.

At present, some 30 projects are in progress. Douroux related one specific project with 10 laundry-houses, in Bourgogne, where artists and local inhabitants together restored and worked on these buildings as works of art with a value for the future.

Xavier Douroux concluded by stating that the problem for contemporary art is that it relates to production. We produce exhibitions, produce works of art, produce films – when the important thing is what we do with all these products afterwards, that is, post-production. Art is not simply a question of consumption, about getting an audience. If a work of art is important, it can change behaviours and relationships within society.

Douroux said that art has to exist in relation to the individuals, the onlookers, from the very beginning of the process. We have to include them. Not everyone – that would be impossible – but a few. They could be people from our own municipality, people who visit exhibitions of contemporary art, but they could also be people from deepest Bourgogne.

David Neuman introduced the section “The New Building” by asking what is important when it comes to art exhibitions. Is it to support the artist? Is it the visitors? Is it media interest? Is it the preferential right of interpretation? Is it the curators? Is it the size of the building or museum? Is it the dimensions of the artwork?

The underlying responsibility is highly complex when creating exhibitions. Why is the exhibition being produced? And for whom? In practically every instance it is about wanting a dialogue or communication, where the audience is the virgin. Unfortunately, the media measure artistic success in visitor numbers, and consequently, failure is equal to low visitor numbers. The result is that masses of energy are spent on manifesting oneself as an important institution with an important exhibition. Some institutions forget their actual mission, in their attempts to be the first to justify their existence to themselves and to the society they exist in.

Piia Laita followed with a presentation of the art museum Kiasma in Helsinki, and told how they work to attract new audiences. Originally, the main focus was on launching Kiasma as a modern cultural centre, a meeting-point for those who create, see and experience. They have had unbelievably high visitor numbers, but now the emphasis is on getting visitors to return.

Bitte Wallin ended the section by posing the question, “What is wrong with the old audience,” since everyone keeps talking about getting new ones. Instead, institutions should learn marketing and how to care for the audiences they have. It is a question of deciding whom they want to reach and to keep a high level of quality in their activities.

Marketing is a professional competence, a specialist occupation, equal in importance to that of the blacksmith, engineer or film director. In the encounter between the marketer and the artist something takes place and the marketer’s task is to convey what the artist is trying to say.

Måns Wrangé and **Hans Hedberg** related the project “Public Service”, a joint project between Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and Moderna Museet, of which the theme is the relationship to the audience. The project is to lead to an exhibition in October 1999.

One of the common features of the sketches for the exhibition is a resistance to the educational attitude of Swedish cultural policy – an attitude which, to put it somewhat pointedly, incorporates the belief that the ideal art audience does not actually want art but is nevertheless coerced or lured into interacting with it in various ways.

Måns Wrangé commented that it has previously been difficult to discuss a conscious approach to the audience. The attitude was that the artist would compromise his/her art by discussing things like materials and contexts with the audience. Wrangé believed that this may have grown out of the fact that the artist is not dependent on the audience but on the “four Cs”: colleagues, critics, curators and collectors. As opposed to creators in other artistic fields, visual artists do not have to consider the audience. However, this situation is changing. Nowadays, interaction and audience awareness are being discussed, which is good.

Under the heading “We do it at twelve o’clock”, **Bogdan Szyber** and **Carina Reich** discussed their Millennium Project, in which eleven towns perform a certain activity every day at noon, starting on 1 January 1999 and ending on New Year’s Eve.

Initially, Szyber and Reich wanted to create these city rituals themselves, but when they travelled around to prepare the project, it emerged that people all over Sweden felt a need to do something themselves in their town. For Szyber and Reich it became a matter of creating a context, rather than making their mark, and this involved questioning their own roles as artists many times in the course of the project.

Szyber said that a change is taking place in art and the opinions about what can be regarded as art. First, art moved away from the white wall and onto the floor, with installations. When the cube became too crowded, art became site specific. Now art is increasingly “I do something together with other people”.

The section on “The audience as participants” started with a lively presentation by **Conny Äng**. He claimed that “Everything is possible – as long as there is a will!” The Norrköping City Library is open 75 hours per week. Visitor numbers have risen from 800,000 to 1,500,000 in seven years, and book loans have doubled.

Libraries have every opportunity to serve as meeting-places if they are kept accessible. There are, in reality, no rules, which means that libraries have an enormous freedom – but also a great responsibility – to make the library available, and to assist people in using it. Äng mentioned IT, which he called a democratic revolution. At the Norrköping City Library teenagers sit chatting at the computers – they are practising their ability to express themselves, which is actually a democratic right.

Institutions must ask themselves certain questions: What is our orientation? What is our purpose? What is our mission? What are we concentrating on?

The answers to these questions should lead to an activity that is both open and welcoming!

Ulrika Johansson spoke from a museum perspective and said that audience participation is about the knowledge that is generated when the visitor becomes involved in his/her own learning process. Learning is an active process based on the individual’s own experiences. She stated that the audience must be allowed to influence historical representations and contexts. The museum audience is a heterogeneous group that could be a great asset to museums.

One means of reaching out to the audience is to create meeting-places outside the museum. Research could be one such channel into society, exhibition warehouses another. There should also be scope for fact-finding with technical aids, and opportunities for more in-depth studies in separate rooms.

Ulrika Johansson concluded by stating that museums need to be receptive to people's need to take their own initiatives. It is through interaction between amateurs and professionals that we can reach a more actively participating audience.

—

The seminar was concluded with a debate on the subject "How the media influence culture".

Johan Berggren started by declaring that the mass media hold the greatest power and set the agenda. The media decide the opinions of society – the norms and the forms. Therefore, the cultural sector needs to get to know "the big enemy".

Culture journalists can be reached through general news reporters. The latter look for the spectacular and the new, to confirm the myth of a society in constant development. Berggren's radical advice was to do something spectacular, but merely as make-up, to "lure" general reporters to come. Then the culture journalists will come too, purely out of curiosity.

Jan-Erik Lundström stated that the seminar had defined interest in art as a sort of unchanging, genetically pre-programmed, interest structure that some of us have from birth. He, on the other hand, viewed cultural policy as an instrument to achieve change. *Every* person is potentially interested in art.

He added that he had noticed that the art audience is a broad and many-faceted audience that seems to make rather exact choices.

Tony Zoulias claimed that journalists are cowards and dare not write about non-commercial art, since money is the ruling factor. The media have a responsibility to open doors further down the corridor and discover something new. Instead, the media are extremely uncritical with regard to art. There is no curiosity, no urge to find something new – instead everyone peeks at everyone else.

However, if what you do is good, and if you are enthusiastic, the audience will show up sooner or later anyway – with or without the assistance of the media, Zoulias argued.

Jan Svenungsson shared his experiences from a project in Norrköping, in which he himself participated in erecting his artwork (a chimney placed in the water). He was involved in the practical work and was available to answer questions from the public and media.

He argued that it is not important to be 100 per cent sure of being able to smash any possible contrary opinion. The important thing is to be there, to make oneself responsible and welcome arguments with a genuine willingness to discuss the criticism that someone might have against the project. It is a matter of respecting the receiver, Svenungsson alleged.

—

These contributions were followed by a concluding discussion.

Ulrika Knutsson agreed with Tony Zoulias that the media rarely cover the new. However, how can culture journalists write about the new music culture in a meaningful way? It is hard to find a language to describe artistic experiences to people outside one's own group. It is not impossible, but difficult.

Tony Zoulias maintained that there is only one way: newspapers need to convey to their readers, and teach them about, new types of cultural expression. The culture pages are frightening because they use a language that 95 per cent of the population does not understand! The media must be more daring, and journalists must dare fight their editors-in-chief, according to Zoulias.

Ana L Valdés observed that it is very Swedish to equate the public debate with the culture pages of the newspapers. It is hard to find any other country where the newspapers have been as normative, and this is a problem. We should return to the days of popular education, where the dialogue was carried out in other fora.

Summary of seven debate papers

Institutional theatre as an “art company” –

by Barbro Smeds

Barbro Smeds wants to determine the position of the institutional theatre, both in relation to the building and to the rest of the world. What is happening within the theatres, what are they doing, what are they thinking? What values, either overt or hidden, govern the work? Wherein lies the elusive resistance to change?

Institutional theatre has entered a period of “corporisation”. Organisation is being reviewed and restructured. When it emerges that deficits are growing and funding is being cut back, a consultant is brought in to perform a quick analysis and propose changes. New executive positions at intermediary level are introduced, and old intermediary executive and producer jobs are removed – all with the purpose of “reducing decision-making within the organisation” and achieving a more horizontal organisation.

Opinions differ on whether or not this is effective. Barbro Smeds alleges that the consultants usually don't know anything at all about the theatre work, thus leading to a lack of consideration for the artistic work. The actual core of the theatre, what is done and how it is done, repertory work and the production process, development of competence and products, are left untouched and muddle on the same as before.

Barbro Smeds also deals with segmentation, in the sense that theatre activities tend to increasingly divide the audience into different categories. There is a danger in doing this, since the survival of dramatic art depends on interaction with the audience. Drama is by nature characterised by opposition, and a heterogeneous audience is essential to generating the dynamic side of the play.

Historically, theatre performances were a meeting-place for groups that would otherwise not have mixed. Naturally, a play for young people is aimed at young people, and so on – but problems arise when we start categorising audiences too meticulously.

Barbro Smeds claims that the theatre institution environment is characterised by four phenomena:

- *Collectivity.* A theatre performance is a collective artwork with many participants who are all interdependent in order to achieve the product. This is good, but it generates special dependency relationships. Moreover, together with hierarchy it constitutes a powerful obstacle to reorganisation.
- *Professionalism.* Theatre occupations are associated with great professional pride and the system builds on everyone mastering their trade. A high level of professionalism means that the collective work runs smoothly. It gives a sense of security in which participants feel they can be tolerant, informal and efficient. However, it can also engender low tolerance to others outside the theatre and lead to lack of flexibility and niggardliness – a distribution of work that “forbids” people from tampering with other people's areas.
- *Hierarchy.* The hierarchy within the theatre is obvious, with the director at the top, followed by actors and then support staff such as technicians and others. Actors sometimes experience that they have “been forgotten” in all the reorganisations, and that they have been outrun by other categories.
- *Ethics.* There is a strong ethical tradition within the theatre, consisting of several written and unwritten rules about work morale. The ethics fill two purposes – firstly to raise the status of the profession by emphasising the serious aspect, and secondly to maintain order in the theatre organisation and provide stricter management to the work behind the scenes.

The stage is a sacred place. All activities are subordinate to what happens on the stage. Order, discipline, silence and concentration should be maintained everywhere, out of consideration for the common event. To disturb someone, to put oneself forward or demand too much time and space for oneself, are against the rules. The demand for concentration also applies to the audience, who must not disturb the event by coughing, fidgeting, etc. However, a diminishing audience is willing to submit to these demands. Does the theatre care? And what consequences will this have?

Barbro Smeds also discusses the artistic occupations within the theatre and claims that distinctions are getting fuzzier, as young people are ever less inclined to limit themselves to the absolute definitions of the various artistic occupations. Barbro Smeds's criteria for a professional actor are that s/he:

- masters his/her means of expression – voice, body, etc.
- can use his/her experience and personal characteristics to portray fictive characters
- is in contact with and conscious of his/her creative impulses
- is well-acquainted with the work processes and methods of the theatre
- has learned to repeat an occurrence
- can maintain a stage presence from one moment to the next

The best means of succeeding is through education. The theatre colleges provide the basic skills and turn students into “theatre people” – not just actors. The difference is that theatre people know the actual theatre skills.

Smeds claims that the institutions for the time being guarantee the professional standards, but the question is what happens when institutions are forced to cut costs.

Barbro Smeds also accounts for the central artistic work processes – preparation, rehearsals and performance. Preparations are made by the director, who co-operates mainly with the set designer and costume designer. A two-month preparation period is often included in the director's contract. Paradoxically, actors rarely participate in the preparations – they are expected to have read the play, that's all.

The rehearsals are the very heart. During rehearsals, the actor is on the one hand very tightly governed by a highly regulated process, and on the other, extremely independent in his/her striving to find the character of the part. Rehearsals usually take around ten weeks. The time for rehearsals is increasing, and Sweden has extremely long rehearsal periods compared to other countries. The cause, and the effect it will have, is unknown to Barbro Smeds, but she says that there is more scope to make variations according to the nature of the project. She adds that all changes that aim to allow more people and more elements into the process also require more time.

Opinions always vary about performances when they are staged – audience reactions, actors' reactions, etc. – but a performance is rarely modified. There are many reasons for this, the main one being that it is simply necessary to mark an ending-point for the artistic project. The painter does not continue adding to the paintings after the exhibition has opened.

With regard to choosing the repertoire, Barbro Smeds comes to the following conclusions:

- Too much responsibility lies on the artistic director. There are no forms and methods for ensuring wider agreement or disseminating ideas.
- The task of finding an interesting repertoire is outlined in too general terms.
- The proportion of artists in the management is usually low. Discussions about decisions revolve excessively around practical issues.
- Formulating artistic objectives is difficult. Finding a profile feels artificial, but without a profile there can be no guidelines.

- There is no development work.
- Marketing is usually not a part of the work on the repertoire.
- Dialogue with the audience is totally absent.

She suggests the following actions:

- Acknowledge and define all aspects of the repertoire work and determine who should perform it and on what terms.
- Build up strong contact networks with external groups.
- Create more “problem-solving bodies” that have a more open approach.
- Allow time and space for the work.
- Devote great attention to defining objectives and strategies.
- Initiate a crucial, unbiased development process.

Smeds also discusses the concept of quality. What exactly is artistic quality and who defines it? She avers that few funding bodies dare enter into a serious discussion about quality. For the institution, the most obvious criterion is that everything is done professionally. However, the criteria for quality are rarely discussed within the theatre, there is simply a tacit agreement.

Smeds concludes by discussing organisation, leadership and personnel and product development within the institutional theatre. She asks whether the theatre is a project-oriented organisation, since each performance is a project in itself. Against this speaks the fact that theatres often have a hierarchical structure, with a strong director and very little independence.

The network organisation is a model that is highly compatible with theatre work. Network companies focus on informal contacts, marketing, equality, empowerment at the frontline, learning integrated with work, alliances with external parties, etc. Smeds says that the theatre stands to win in every way by developing in this direction.

With regard to leadership, Smeds says that more theatres are implementing joint leadership, by freeing the theatre director from administrative tasks. Folkoperan is a successful example of this. In other theatres, however, there have been problems, largely because the leaders come from different worlds, representing different leadership styles. The relationship develops into a power-struggle in a playing field that is defined differently by each combatant.

Smeds notes that new varieties are emerging within more and more theatres, and that it is necessary to work consciously both with leadership, processes and work organisation.

As regards personnel and product development, Smeds says that the need for personal development for actors, both technically and artistically, is both unlimited and very neglected.

As for product development, the theatre has infinite opportunities to incorporate elements from other art disciplines. Moreover, the work process on the stage could commence from an angle other than the text, for instance, a lighting concept. The initiative could come from the actors, the set designer, or even the audience. However, Smeds points out that this requires:

- different work processes
- greater flexibility in the use of time – a re-evaluation of the production plan
- new relationships between participants
- consciously working on role creating techniques
- a redefinition of occupational categories

Smeds notes the following tendencies within product development:

- Packaged experiences. In Germany a gigantic establishment, incorporating hotels, restaurants and theatres, has been developed. Consumers buy a package that includes travel.
- The equilibristic – e.g. Riverdance.
- The real – performances in between art and reality, e.g. Lars Norén's 7:3.
- Theatre that crosses boundaries.

Smeds ends her paper by referring to Rolf Jensen, director of the Institute for Future Studies in Copenhagen, who says that we are moving towards a “dream society” where story-telling and the narrative become increasingly important. Sociologists, too, describe an aestheticisation of everyday life, and Smeds says that certain things become more important under these circumstances:

- The integrity of art. Art cannot be used for just anything, especially not for selling things. Art is useful in many ways – it develops our ability to perceive, reflect and form opinions, it improves our ability to understand the paradoxical and to think intuitively. However, these qualities cannot be produced on demand or steered, since they occur afterwards. Art must continue to be allowed to cast itself into unknown territory.
- The greatest asset and importance of the theatre lies in having a standpoint. Work is performed on the basis of values, statements are made about humanity and life, and there is a will to stand for these statements. Theatre is not simply creativity in general, it is creative on a philosophical level. This is one of its most crucial features and it must be protected. To sum up: theatre is humanism.

People working in the theatre are driven by a great deal of disinterestedness, passion, seriousness and dedication. But the theatre must continuously welcome and utilise more aspects of new developments in society, new knowledge, reality and ideas, Smeds concludes.

Is cultural policy merely history – or is the history of cultural policy its future? – Björn Linnell

Björn Linnell states that to understand the potential of future cultural policy one needs to know how it developed historically and the political values on which it is based.

The guiding principles of cultural policy were formulated in the 1940s. They entailed that it was the responsibility of the state to guarantee decent living conditions for cultural workers, to enable them to create artworks beyond market pressures, and to ensure that the products of cultural workers reached the people. These basic values have largely guided cultural policy.

Today, however, Sweden's cultural policy is based on money. It deals with how much should be distributed and for what. Culture is everyone's concern, regardless of how we define it, but cultural policy has merely been a willingness to use a limited proportion of public funds to achieve political objectives. And the purpose of cultural policy has been self-evident – to guarantee culture/art the money that the commercial forces are unable or unwilling to contribute. The basic premise is that art and culture are beneficial, and that the obstacles to creating art and reaching audiences are the problem.

However, there has been a notion that it is possible to differentiate between good non-commercial culture, and the products of the bad commercialised cultural industry. Basically, everyone appears to have agreed that culture can only be created if the conditions required for creating it are guaranteed through (public) funding.

National cultural policy has had two main purposes – to preserve and to prevent. However, a chasm has now opened between the purposes of cultural policy and the scope of the concepts. Nowadays, the guiding principles are “contact, community and creative activities”, making cultural policy an overall political objective. The boundaries between professional creative activities and private creativity are getting fuzzier. Through the back door, this way of thinking will eventually erode the boundaries between commercial and non-commercial culture.

The greater part of the cultural budget is allocated to preserving and maintaining cultural policy institutions. For many years, these allocations were defended with the argument that the institutions would not survive on their own. It was not a question of whether the state *should* be involved, but how much the state could *bear*. The size of resources determined the size of allocations.

From being a maintainer of values that already existed but were threatened by lack of funding, a contemporary cultural policy should be limited and value-based. But what are the cultural values that should be protected by the public sector today?

Björn Linnell ends by asking which values are shared by politicians and citizens when formulating cultural policy. National identity? More art by and for everyone? He claims that the obvious thing to do would be to study cultural policy discussions and practices in other countries. A reasonable amount of international overview could only serve to consolidate knowledge about the uniquely Swedish characteristics.

Art and usefulness – Anders Kreuger

Anders Kreuger shares some of his thoughts on the subject “art is useful”.

The arts are part of a social context. They occupy a larger or smaller number of citizens and have larger or smaller audiences. On the one hand, they can be described as “societies within society” – insular, specialised, professional circles with their own hierarchies, value scales, historical traditions and international contacts. On the other hand, the arts are at the service of the entire society as open, general, universal interfaces for experiences with considerable social and political potential.

The arts are also social phenomena, since they depend on the attention and economic resources of society for their existence and development. Whether this support from society is public or private is less important – the arts can never remain uninfluenced by the structures that provide financing and audiences for the artistic activity.

The instrumentalisation of culture is a common trait in all Nordic cultural policies. Usefulness is, and remains, one of the most crucial justifications, but there seems to be little conviction that the arts could be useful to society in themselves. Instead, attempts are made to use the arts as tools to solve problems in areas of society where this usefulness is easier to define both in political and economic terms.

In his text, Kreuger identifies a few arguments for the usefulness of art within different areas of society and politics. The areas where he identifies strong links are art and children (educational policy), art and youths (labour market policy, social policy, educational policy), art and immigrants (integration policy), art and provinces (regional policy), art and life quality (health policy), art and national prestige (foreign policy) and art and communication (formation of public opinion). He also discusses the connections between art and identity and art and improving society.

This way of exploiting the argument of usefulness within areas other than art itself does not lead to any deeper understanding of the nature or possible function of art. Information processing, discussion, formation of public opinion and other communication activities are, of course, important to cultural life, but they should be regarded as supporting functions rather than as ends in themselves. The various methods of linking art with general political problems in the hope that this will solve social problems are more precarious than beneficial – both for the arts that become politicised and watered-down, and for society as a whole which risks losing a vital source of inspiration.

Society should strive to refine and develop artistic creativity, not channel it and stipulate conditions for it. The fact that the arts constitute creative fields should in itself be sufficient proof of their usefulness. Creativeness in itself should be perceived as having a positive value, Kreuger claims.

The Cultural Institution and its principals

Johan Sanne

In his text, Johan Sanne reports on a survey of eight county cultural institutions – two regional music institutions, three regional theatres and three museums. The purpose of the survey was to derive a picture of the relationship between the institutions, their boards and their principals. He specifically talked to representatives of the board, the institution management and the cultural secretariat of the principals.

According to Johan Sanne, the picture is multi-faceted and complex. The principals that occur in various constellations are the county councils, regional associations, local councils, organisations and the state. An institution can have from none up to three of these principals. The state is undeniably a very important contributor to the cultural institutions, and Sanne finds that state funding is a crucial condition for the very existence of the institutions.

Johan Sanne looks at how the activities are organised and find that most institutions are foundations. The principals have chosen this form to facilitate activities; the independence of the foundation was to guarantee artistic freedom and make things easier with regard to sponsorship etc., since the foundation's finances were separate from those of the county council. However, today foundations are an outmoded organisational form and many organisations are consequently being restructured.

There is also a change in the level at which the cultural institutions are administered by the principal. Several institutions have been transferred from cultural officers and cultural committees to management level. The reason is not always clear even to those who are most directly concerned.

With regard to the link between the institution and the board of directors, seven of the institutions have politically appointed board members. Many institution directors would prefer that more board members represented fields of competence that the institutions could benefit from. However, Sanne notes, hardly any party political divisions are discerned in the way the boards operate.

Sanne also discusses the issue of fulfilling objectives – how do the principals find out which objectives are attained? It emerges that this information is usually conveyed via personal contacts between the management, the board and politicians.

Theatre, an ensemble art – Ragnar Lyth

Ragnar Lyth claims that Swedish theatre is not in good health, and that the theatre has long suffered from “civil-servant disease”. The number of administrators has risen sharply over the past 25 years, while the number of employed artists has dropped. Gradually, the artistic centre of the theatre has eroded and been replaced by technical and financial planning committees.

The theatre craft has transformed into factory production, and the theatre organisation no longer exists to support dramatic art. The civil-servant disease is endangering the very life-nerve of the theatre.

Lyth says that the solution for dramatic art is the ensemble. He presents a proposal for a regeneration of Swedish institutional theatres, which involves trying the ideas of ensemble theatre in one of the institutional theatres over a limited period. By collecting all the optimum conditions to encourage artistic regeneration under the roof of one single theatre, this could then serve as a model for the development of institutional theatre in the future.

The conditions in the proposal are as follows:

- All artistic personnel in the project are employed on the same terms as regards time – say, three years. Other personnel could be employed for other contract periods without hazarding the ensemble concept.
- At least one director, one set designer, one costume designer, one sound designer, one composer, and one dramaturgist should be tied to the project. These (or equivalent) artistic leadership functions must be included in the ensemble for it to be possible to test the creative interaction to the full.
- The leader of the theatre project should be one or more artistically dynamic theatre people who want to pursue serious, regenerating theatre, and who have the ability to attract good actors, directors, set designers and other stage artists to their theatre.
- The economic terms should be individual and negotiable, but they should adhere to current agreements for professional theatre employees.
- No one should leave or be told to leave the ensemble before the expiry of the three-year period.
- Sufficient economic resources should be guaranteed to enable the ensemble to work as a potential active theatre.

Artistic ensemble theatre has, of course, been tried in other countries, and even in Sweden (e.g. Unga Klara). However, no one has so far tried the combination of a consistent ensemble set-up, with equally long contracts for all artists, high professional standards and the qualified resources of the institutional theatre with regard to technology and knowledge, combined with audiences and economic potential, Lyth concludes.

Bibliotekscentrum

Arne Brodin and Rebecka Tarschys

On 8 February 1999, the local council of Gotland decided to merge the city library with the university library in Visby. The issue provoked a debate already when the proposal was made in the autumn of 1997, and in this paper Arne Brodin and Rebecka Tarschys discuss the public opinions that were formed around this issue.

The issue of creating a new library in Visby has been discussed since the 1960s, and the idea behind the merger was that the city library and the university library could share a building within the growing university in the harbour area. A Library Centre – which would be the new cultural meeting-place – would be created.

The opposition to moving the city library mainly concerned the distance to the harbour and the lack of public transport. However, the library users were also concerned that they would lose influence over their library. The thought of the people's library being placed so far from the people was offensive, as 80 per cent of the students at the university come from mainland Sweden – not from Gotland. One of the arguments in favour of a merger is that both library cultures will have to meet eventually anyway, not just in Visby, but throughout the country.

The discussion has been heated and many people have been involved in the debate, as this paper by Arne Brodin and Rebecka Tarschys demonstrates.

One of the conclusions that can be drawn is that the discussion is apparently based on a fear of merging two library cultures, of which the public libraries were originally intended to cater for the needs of individuals, while the university library is intended for collectives with planned courses, as Jan Larsson, head of planning, puts it.

Who are the future consumers of culture?

Jan Gradwall

In his paper, Jan Gradwall discussed what defines culture, and he comes to the conclusion that the answer is perpetually changing. New generations mean changed or renewed perspectives on culture. That which is considered to be culture in 1999 is different from what was signified in 1949. So what cultural phenomena will be altered and refined over the next few decades? What cultural phenomena will today's young people – the future consumers of culture – bring forward and give priority to? And what culture will they decline?

If, when we speak of culture in 1999, we mean the traditional and old-fashioned definition of culture as serious culture or highbrow culture, then young people show a weak interest. Moreover, their interest is declining steadily, so that it is even justified to say that it is alarmingly weak. If we instead apply a broader perspective on culture, we would note that interest in culture among young people in 1999 is probably greater than every, according to Gradwall.

We are in an era of cultural watershed. This is not a coincidence, but is due to the major changes in society and the even greater changes yet to come. We have progressed from a welfare state to an information society. We are moving into an era where we work in new ways, consume media in new ways, find information in new ways and probably also consume culture in new ways.

Gradwall claims that cultural class differences are being created now, parallel with differences in income and social class. The degree to which a young Swede is interested in culture depends on where s/he was born (suburban council flat versus garden suburb) and what parents s/he has.

Jan Gradwall draws the following conclusions:

- Different kinds of cultural grants can be used to stimulate the audiences that are already dedicated cultural consumers. However, this does not reach the growing group that does not utilise the cultural events offered by the institutions.
- Class identity and social background largely determine what kind of culture young people take an interest in when they become adults. Everything suggests that these class differences will be even greater in the future.
- Consequently, it is not possible to isolate cultural policy from general social policies, at least not if we regard culture as being for everyone and not just for a cultural elite.

Ten interviews – Anton Hagwall

Anton Hagwall has performed ten in-depth interviews about culture and the value of culture. The common denominator for all interviewees is that they are young, but they differ with regard to cultural habits, social class, cultural background, etc.

In the interviews, the cultural differences that Jan Gradwall discusses in his paper stand out clearly. The interviewees' interest in and dedication to culture is greatly influenced by whether their parents have taken them to the theatre, the opera, etc. Some of them perceive culture as being bureaucratic and stiff, others see it as playful and creative. Some visit the Royal Opera, while others have never been there. Many of them consider film to be a form of culture that suits them, they go to the pictures and see films on TV.

One striking feature is that the overall majority, regardless of cultural habits, consider culture to be important and that a society should provide good culture. They are prepared to pay for culture even if they do not utilise it. A few quotes:

“It portrays our society and how we are. It provides a comparison with history. It gives us guidelines for moral behaviour.”

“Culture is important. It is like being a part of society when you take part in cultural activities. It is like you get a good picture of the current situation.”

“A country without culture would be boring and grey. Culture nurtures the human soul. It is important that people have opportunities to express themselves in culture, not just to be an onlooker.”