

Ack sent 27/2/07

18

Matthews B (Barry)

From: Stuart MacDonald [s.w.macdonald@rgu.ac.uk]
Sent: 26 February 2007 16:20
To: Matthews B (Barry)
Subject: Re: FAO Barry Matthews; Response from SCOPACS



Response to Draft
Culture bill...

This email has been received from an external party and
has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

Barry

Attached is a word doc so should open OK; please get back to me if no.

Stuart

On 26/2/07 15:46, "Barry.Matthews@scotland.gsi.gov.uk"
<Barry.Matthews@scotland.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:

> Stuart

>
> Thank you very much for your response. Unfortunately I can't open the
> attachment. Grateful if you could resend with the attachment in Word
> as it should work with that.

>
> Thanks

>
> Barry Matthews
> Scottish Executive
> Cultural Policy

>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Stuart MacDonald [mailto:s.w.macdonald@rgu.ac.uk]
> Sent: 26 February 2007 12:10
> To: Cultural Bill Consultation; Reid, Seona; Georgina Follett; Ian
> Howard
> Subject: FAO Barry Matthews; Response from SCOPACS

>
> *****

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> Please find attached response to the Draft Culture Bill from SOCPACS -
> on behalf of the heads of the Scottish Art schools.

>
> I have not enclosed Annex C as I cannot enter information on
> downloaded electronic copy. However, I am happy for our response to be
> used as indicated. However, if you wish me to send a hard copy of
> Annex C by post please let me know.

>
> Stuart MacDonald

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DRAFT CULTURE (SCOTLAND) BILL

Response to the above Consultation on behalf of Standing Committee of Principals of Art Colleges, Scotland (SCOPACS): Prof. Georgina Follett, Dean, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, University of Dundee; Prof. Ian Howard, Principal, Edinburgh College of Art; Prof. Seona Reid, Director, Glasgow School of Art; and Prof. Stuart MacDonald, Head, Gray's School of Art, The Robert Gordon University.

This response relates to consultations questions 1, 5, 6 and 7.

Local Cultural Entitlements

The draft Bill aims to encourage local authorities to develop "local cultural entitlements" as part of cultural planning. The aim is laudable: who could disagree with the aspiration to enhance local cultural provision for the benefit of local people. The means proposed to achieve it, however, is deeply flawed for a number of reasons:

- The very concept of cultural entitlement is dangerously reductionist. A cultural entitlement is "a type of cultural activity or service that authorities will seek to make available to each person in their area who wishes to access them". The driver, therefore, easily translates into a requirement to reach the largest number of people with an activity or service. The emphasis on mass engagement risks a cultural provision which ignores minority interests and which drives costs and quality down in pursuit of volume.
- The cultural activity or service, which the local authority will provide is intended to be "in response to the wishes of local people". Of course, the views of local people about arts provision are important but two factors have been ignored
 - Firstly, there is no reference in the Bill or in any of the documentation to the aspirations, vision or views of the artist, the people who actually produce, facilitate, co-ordinate or present the cultural activity or service. Their views seem not to matter.
 - Secondly, the arts do not flourish - have never flourished in - a demand led environment and yet this is what seems to be being proposed: that artists and cultural providers will respond directly to the wishes of local people. This is a complete misunderstanding of the dynamic of arts production where the vision, insight, motivation and values of the artists involved must be core if anything of

quality is to be produced and provided. This is not to say that artists produce work without thought of or reference to the audience but it is not the one-way street the Executive is proposing; that way lies cultural sterility.

- The Bill also requires local authorities to "have regard" to guidance on cultural planning which the Scottish Executive will issue: the draft of that guidance talks about the local authority having to demonstrate how cultural services are being used across a range of policy objectives e.g. tackling anti social behaviour, improving mental and physical health and building safer communities. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that the arts do have a role to play in transforming lives and communities, it is this instrumental value of the arts which now seems to dominate the political agenda. It appears that the intrinsic value of the arts - their ability to inspire, to question, to provide insights, to give a sense of self and the world, to provoke - is no longer sufficient justification. This is not only sad it is dangerous and risk undermining.

Creative Scotland

The Culture Strategy proposed the establishment of a single national cultural development body to be called Creative Scotland and the Bill is the means of doing so.

The concept of a single cultural development body is understood and supported but we have significant concerns with its remit.

- There is a lack of clarity about Creative Scotland's economic development role for the "creative industries". The only reference is descriptive and lacks any analysis of how this remit might be implemented. This is in contrast to the arts and cultural functions which are spelt out in more detail. There is also no comment on how the two distinct but related sectors might relate within the organisational framework. The lack of clarity appears to mask a lack of understanding of how the two sectors interconnect and without that understanding, the potential for Creative Scotland to become a leader in the development of its creative and cultural industries is unlikely to be realised.

Contemporary research by NESTA, *Creating Growth* (2006), and an even more recent study by the European Commission, *The Economy of Culture in Europe* (2006)* are useful in illuminating the context of the Draft Culture Bill. The Consultation Document defines the creative industries to include design, music,

publishing, literature, craft, designer fashion, film, computer games and TV and radio but neither explains how these relate to the wider arts and culture fields nor expounds the wider global context.

The new European study is useful in this regard; it defines the culture sector as “non-industrial sectors” producing non-reproducible goods and services that are consumed on the spot – exhibitions, concerts, festivals. This is the arts field – visual and performing arts as well as heritage. In the creative sector culture becomes a “creative” input in the production of non-cultural goods, largely through design – fashion, interior, games, and product. Thus, creativity becomes a source of innovation; this links with the Cox Review by HM Treasury of *Creativity in Business* (2005), which clearly underlines the connection between creativity, innovation and design. For the same reason NESTA has usefully produced this refined model of the creative industries:

- Creative service providers – design consultancies, architecture practices;
- Creative content producers – fashion designers, film, games companies;
- Creative experience providers – performers, opera, ballet;
- Creative originals producers – crafts people, visual artists, designer-makers.

All of this really matters to Scotland because in 2006 for the first time the Scottish Executive published data on Scotland’s Creative Industries showing that the Gross Added Value per employee in the sector as £69,000. It is a remarkable figure because £69K is twice the value of manufacturing and is catching up fast on the sector with the highest value, electronics. But despite the fantastic growth in the Creative Industries in Scotland, there are signs that they are under serious threat. In line with the rest of the UK, employment is falling due not least to increased international competition from the Far East. At the same time there is a lack of investment Scottish Enterprise as it moves from support for Creative Industries to “electronic markets”. All of this sounds warning bells, not just for the Creative Economy and anyone who wants Scotland to develop world-class creative enterprises, but also for the providers of our future talent - our art schools and universities.

- The second major concern, therefore, is the absence of any connections being made between the Culture Bill and the

creativity and skills which fuel the creative economy and the cultural sector.

There is an irreducible interconnection between the higher education of creative people, our creative capabilities and the success of our creative and cultural industries. More than 70,000 students are studying on creative courses in HE and FE in Scotland (proportionately more than the rest of the UK). This is in stark contrast to the lack of economic and infrastructural support that our graduates need once they enter the workforce. Here, the European study and the Cox Review converge neatly. Both want a greater emphasis on creativity and enterprise education from school through to professional levels. The recent Leitch Review of Skills also argues that investment in creative capabilities cannot be avoided.

Creative Scotland cannot do without the tertiary education sector. It needs it to develop talent; it needs its research and innovation, particularly its world-class design capability. This last is the connective tissue that aggregates value in the Creative and Cultural Sector. The establishment of a cultural development body spanning the cultural and creative industries sectors heralds a fresh approach. If the creative capacity of Scotland's Higher Education sector could be added to the mix then Scotland with its economies of scale, familial institutional relationships and cross-memberships could lead in making Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world.

- The third concern flows from the lack of clarity between the non industrial arts and cultural sector and the commercial creative industries in the proposed purpose and functions of Creative Scotland. It is clear that creative industries bring significant economic benefit to Scotland and should be supported to do so. The value of arts and cultural activities, however, is not, and should never be, primarily economic. The requirement that Creative Scotland should have a "general function of realising, as far as reasonably practicable to do so, the value and benefits (*in particular the economic value and benefits*) of the arts and culture" is to misunderstand the arts fundamentally. The arts provide intrinsic and cultural value and benefit: value, which is undermined by the instrumental approach increasingly and depressingly evident in Scottish Executive cultural policy.

Professor Stuart MacDonald on behalf of SCOPACS,
Head of Gray's School of Art,

The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.
16.01.07

*The EC study, *The Economy of Culture in Europe* can be found at the web link below:
<http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/economy_en.html>