



TELL US A STORY

Help CAE to build a repository of stories about the social impact of culture

Title of the project: CORNERS - Turning Europe inside out

Please describe your action/project

CORNERS is a platform for artists and audiences, designed and driven by cultural organizations at the edges of Europe. It creates opportunities for artists and researchers to collaborate internationally on multidisciplinary artistic and cultural projects.

CORNERS interconnects outer regions of Europe. It brings into center areas that are outside of political, cultural and economical mainstems, focusing on remote regions and small towns. It draws connections between them through research and artistic works. This is the basis of inter-locality as a way of operating. For us, it means looking closely to the specificity of each micro-territory, regardless of official borders and divisions.

CORNERS can be found in and between remote areas such as North of Sweden, Sàpmi Land, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania, east of Poland, west of Ukraine, Lithuania, Kaliningrad Russia, Basque country, Northern Ireland, North-East England and South of Italy.

Our goal is to meet local audiences, organizations, and active citizens, to connect with them and jointly bring those places into the center of European cultural map. And this is how we turn Europe inside out.



More than 50 artists and researchers have met through CORNERS. More than 30 organisations and institutions have worked as partners and collaborators on the project.

Tell us something more about your project/activity:

Content: International collaboration of artists and cultural organizations, artistic research and development, art production and presentation, audience development.

Duration:

Ongoing from 2011.

Location:

Corners of Europe: Sweden, Norway, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Kalinigrad Russa, Ukraine, Poland, Italy (Puglia), Basque Country, England, Northern Ireland.

Field/discipline:

Interdisciplinary contemporary art, performance, participatory art, writing, art in digital sphere, dance, film/video, photography.

Tell us something about who did it:

The project is conceived and carried out by 11 core partners which are:

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland - the lead development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland.

City Culture Institute (Instytut Kultury Miejskiej) - a municipal cultural institution in Gdansk (Poland).

DOKUFEST, The International Documentary and Short Film Festival - the largest film event in Kosovo.

San Sebastian / Donostia - European Capital of Culture in 2016.

Drugo More - a non-profit organization focused on production, promotion, research, education and the dissemination of information in the field of culture based in Rijeka, Croatia.

Exodos Ljubljana - a non-profit, independent production centre organizing Exodos, International Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts, based in Slovenia.



Intercult - a production and resource unit focused on culture, ideas and the arts, based in Stockholm.

ISIS Arts - a visual and media arts organisation running an international programme of commissions, residencies and events, based in Newcastle.

POGON - Zagreb based organization supporting local independent cultural organizations and artists, their programs in diverse contemporary arts and cultural disciplines as well as their youth activities

Fund B92 / Cultural centre REX - a place for contemporary, socially engaged art and analytical cultural practice.

The Teatro Pubblico Pugliese consortium - a public body made up of local authorities of the Puglia region.

Associate Partners in some parts of Corners are and were:

Theatre in the - a work studio in Bradford situated on the University of Bradford Campus.

The Ulster Bank Belfast International Arts Festival - an annual arts festival held in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Umeå - European Capital of Cultural 2014

Also, the following artists and researchers are involved in Corners:

Ana Frank (Ljubljana)
Asier Zabaleta (Donostia-San Sebastián)
Beatriz Churruca (Navarra)
Bojan Mucko (Zagreb)
Borja Ruiz (Donostia / San Sebastián)
Christian Cherene (Barcelona / Belfast)
Davor Sanvincenti (Poreč)
Deirdre Cartmill (Belfast)
Elvin Flamingo (Jarosław Czarnecki) (Gdańsk)
Fredrik Oskarsson (Umeå)
Gianfranco Mirizzi (Rijeka)
Helena Wikström (Umeå)
Hrvoslava Brkušić (Zagreb)
Ida Hansson (Umeå)
Ivan Marušić Klif (Zagreb)



Ivana Ivković (Zagreb)
Ixone Ormaetxe (Bilbao)
Jacek Dominiczak (Gdansk)
Joseba Irazoki (Bera (Navarre))
Juan Aizpitarte (Donostia-San Sebastián)
Julie Myers (London)
Kajsa Sandström (Stockholm)
Kateryna Radchenko (Odessa)
Lalya Gaye (Newcastle)
Lars Göran Karlsson (Umeå)
Laurence McKeown (Belfast)
Lena Stenberg (Kiruna)
Lucyna Kolendo (Gdańsk)
Maciej Salamon (Gdańsk)
Maria Anastassiou (London)
Michael Hanna (Belfast)
Miha Horvat (Maribor)
Mila Pavićević (Zagreb)
Milijana Babić (Rijeka)
Miloš Tomić (Belgrade)
Nedyalko Delchev (Sofia)
Nils Personne (Stockholm)
Oskar Östergren (Tärnaby)
Paula McFetridge (Belfast)
Phil Hession (Belfast)
Primož Bezjak (Ljubljana)
Riccardo Spagnulo (Bari)
Saadia Hussain (Stockholm)
Sergiy Petlyuk (Lviv)
SIMKA - Simon Häggblom and Karin Lind (Stockholm)
Simon Farid (Gateshead)
Siniša Labrović (Zagreb)
ŠKART Dragan Protic & Djordje Balmazovic (Belgrade)
Tonya McMullan (Belfast)
Una Bauer (Zagreb)
Valeria Simone (Ruvo di Puglia)

Tell us something about the people who in your view received the most significant impact: who were they? How many of them?



On one side - those would be artists and researchers who got the opportunity and time to connect and collaborate with their colleagues from other parts of Europe. Artists and researchers were involved in the series of Xpeditions visiting outer regions of Europe, meeting cultural organizations, local artists and groups, gathering their stories, and trying to re-tell them in other parts of the continent through artistic works. The period of research and development allowed them to create interdisciplinary art works that are and will be presented both in the places that inspired its creation and in some other corners of Europe.

On the other hand - most of the works that CORNERS artists conceived and that were produced within the project involve participation of the local audience. For now we received only partial feedback, but our impression is that the participants are gaining valuable experience in collaboration (and co-creation) with artists, learning new skills and expressing their opinions through art.

Was the impact planned from the start?

Yes, the plan of the project from the very beginning was to facilitate international collaboration of artists and the production and presentation of arts; as well as developing and nurturing close relations with the audiences.

In order to reach wider audience, and to extend lives of Corners works, we developed Corners Live - specially designed digital platform with presentations of works, 24/7 broadcast of Radio Corners and a place where our audience can connect with the artists and each others. The full impact of Corners Live is yet to be seen.

Tell us something about the context: recent history, social, economic and cultural features

The project started as a collaboration of 6 organisations interested in artistic research in outer regions of Europe. Each partner in the project invited artists from their local contexts to join. Through the years more partners as well as artists and researchers joined. We have been designing processes that enable artistic production based on collaboration, encounters with unknown territories, communication and co-creation. Artistic projects developed through CORNERS reflect cultural richness and diversity in Europe.

Corners has been working on connecting artists from different backgrounds - geographical, social, political and professional - and of different disciplines - photography, video, sound, writing, new technologies, dance, theatre, performance, music... Whether young and emerging or experienced and established, artists are chosen according to specific principles - not only their artistic excellence, but moreover their capability to collaborate, their ability to design protocols for engaging people into their



work and their capacity to communicate interculturally. Researchers (sociologists, academics, architects...) sometimes join together, bringing their expertise in the process of exploration, production and communication.

The research happened through the format of the Xpedition - the series of 8 two-weeks-long journeys through the north of Sweden and Norway; Azerbaijan and Georgia; countries of ex Yugoslavia and Albania; Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and Kalningrad; Basque country; Northern Ireland; South of Italy; and North-East of England. That is where artists and researchers met. They were traveling together, exploring remote regions, meeting people and organizations. They were learning about local culture and life, searching for narratives that surround people and places, and challenging existing stereotypes. From this experience the ideas for artistic projects evolved, grew, developed...

From rich experience of participating at Xpeditions, two or more artists and researchers jointly propose artistic works that are co-produced by two or more partners. They form a group and meet at a Basecamp where they develop their idea and shape it into more elaborate artworks. They test their concepts and start to work with audiences.

CORNERS works are developed across borders of artistic disciplines and have strong cross-cultural dimensions. The task is to communicate with different audiences and communities at the edges of Europe. Stories collected in one corner of Europe are prepared to be retold in another. They use cultural and social diversity to develop fresh artistic values.

Artistic projects are different in each place they visit - they are site-related. Artists designed protocols that are allowing audiences in a specific place to co-create the work, and that enable intensive communication with the site they occupy. Unlike site specific, site-related works can be presented in many spaces, but with the audiences' and participants' inputs they get related to the specific site.

Corners works are gathered in different places across Europe, where artists and audiences inhabit unusual and public spaces, using partners' cities as their stages and playgrounds.

In each place we are searching for that what is specific in a certain locality, what forms its identity. The period of research and development allowed artists to detect common phenomenas in various places or certain groups they wish to work with, to connect them in broader story and to brought it back to those places that initially inspired them. In CORNERS events, we bring art to unconventional spaces, places where it does not happen regularly, where co-creating and practicing art changes the perspective on those environments. Our goal is to work outside the traditional spaces like theatars and galleries, and to reach out for diverse audiences.





Corners stories are told and re-told in Haninge, a small municipality near Stockholm; Belfast in Northern Ireland; Vranje in south Serbia near Kosovo and Macedonia border; Northumberland on the south-east of England; jointly in Zagreb, Rijeka and Ljubljana; San Sebastian in Basque Country; Gdansk in the north of Poland near the Kaliningrad Russia; and finally again in the south-east of England, in Middlesbrough.

Tell us what were your expected results and the actual ones

We set the goal to connect with and research outer regions of Europe; connect artists and create opportunities for their collaboration, production of new artistic works and its presentation; enable the participation of the audiences in Corners works - both on-site and on-line; and developing close relations with the audiences. Since the project is still in the implementation, some of the results are already visible, but its full scale will be clear towards the end of the project. For now, we visited more than 50 places (small and bigger towns and villages) in Europe, we have included around 60 artists in the project, produced 13 collaborative art-works, and three more are to be premiered in next months, presented our work in Corners events and showcases (Umea, Stockholm/Haninge, Ljubljana, Prizren, Bela crkva and Belfast) and individual Corners works in many other places, involved numerous participants in the co-creation of works with the artists. The continuation of the project will, we hope, bring new Corners stories around the continent, engage even more people in our works, and especially encourage our audience to connect with us and each others at our digital platform Corners Live.

Tell us something about the most relevant resource inputs of your project/action: human, financial, organization, time

In the core of Corners platforms stands collaboration - this is the collaboration between 11 partners from 9 countries who are jointly leading the project. Corners Partners range from state and local cultural institutions, consortiums, to non-governmental organizations from Sweden, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Kosovo, Spain, Italy, Croatia and Serbia. Their support to art and artists is also diverse - it ranges from financial and infrastructural support, across production, presentation and touring, to curating.

Responsibilities of the partners are divided through the partners: Intercult is responsible for the artistic development and financial administration of the project, ISIS Arts took care of the development of the digital platform - Corners Live, San Sebastian / Donostia is developing audience links and will take care of the evaluation of the project, Exodos is taking care of the logistics and Pogon is in charge of internal and external communication. Partners are also sharing the responsibilities of the co-production of artistic works and facilitation of artistic collaboration, in a way that each partner is a lead co-producer of two or more Corners works.



Although certain activities are primarily responsibility of individual partners, decisions and principals of work are jointly agreed on partners meetings.

The project received the grant from Creative Europe programme of European Union, and each partner is partially contributing to the implementation of the activities.

Tell us how you have attained the main change: challenges, innovation, obstacles, brilliant solutions, turning points, quantum leaps, etc.

One of the things we are particularly proud of is implementing the new method of art-production. As described in previous answers - we are allowing a lot of time for Corners artists to research topics of their interest, and to do so in various geographical areas. We are encouraging their collaboration, mixing of artistic disciplines and close collaboration with the audience. The design of the project encourages and enables the presentation of artistic works back in the locations that inspired their creation.

Tell us the main area of impact of your project, i.e. a permanent or long lasting change in attitudes, awareness, behavior, conditions, economic status, income, occupation, perception, practice, quality of life, self-esteem, skills, social relations, etc. and for whom.

With artists collaboration, production of art works, their presentation and connections with many local participants in outer regions of Europe, we are aiming to bring those places and topics that occupy them into the center of cultural map of Europe. Artistic works produced in the framework of Corners are dealing with different audiences or groups - children, prisoners, migrants, journalists, victims of violence, members of small neighborhoods... giving them voice through art and connecting those groups from different micro-localities across Europe. Connecting their stories is often strengthening them and offering them opportunities to express themselves in artistic media.

Which is the Big Idea behind your project/action?

Bringing Corners into the center.

