



KATHREPTIS

ATHENS, ART FACTORY
NOVEMBER 20, 2015

**HOW ENGAGED PEOPLE
IN CULTURE AND
CITIZENSHIP
CAN COME TOGETHER TO ENHANCE
THE LIFE
OF THOSE LIVING IN THE CITY?**

TO ANSWER
TO THE MAIN QUESTION
OF KATHRÉPTIS

100 PARTICIPANTS FROM ATHENS AND ABROAD
WORKED TOGETHER FOR ONE FULL DAY

YES

COLLABORATION PROCESS
SMALL AND LARGE **GROUPS**
ANSWER(S) AT THE END

NO

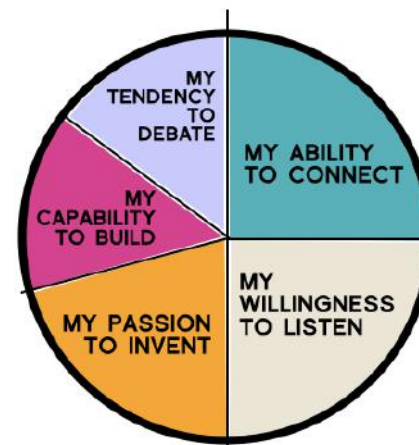
SPEAKERS
LONG LECTURES

TO BE PART OF A PROCESS
WHERE COMMON POSSIBILITIES
ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN INDIVIDUAL ONES



WHAT DO I BRING TO KATHRÉPTIS?

THROUGH A DIFFERENT COLOR, EVERYONE SHARED HER/HIS INITIAL FEELING



a note to those who read this document

THIS IS NOT A REPORT AS YOU WOULD EXPECT IT.
IT CONTAINS ELABORATED ELEMENTS EMERGED
FROM THE DISCUSSIONS IN LARGE AND SMALL GROUPS.
IT IS MEANLY MEANT TO BE A COLLECTION
OF COLLECTIVE
THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS.
YOU MIGHT FIND MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS,
AND THIS IS WHY WE BELIEVE WE NEED TO EMBRACE A JOURNEY
THAT TAKES US TO THE RIGHT QUESTIONS BEFORE ENGAGING
IN FINDING (NEW?) ANSWERS.

we hope the reader will find inspiration in it

WHY KATHRÉPTIS?

Europe is going through turbulent times.
Athens represents the frontline of the current challenges.
The intention of Kathréptis is to come together and ignite
a discussion on the basis for a necessary
human shift in cities.

How can we conceive a city in such a shifting moment?

It is now the time to put together voices
and renew the sense and role of culture.

Culture should create greater values and contribute
to a shared adventure.

Conditions are changing, so should our activities.

These activities should include a much stronger vision and
strategy of how civil society and local governments should
act together, in a long-term sustainable perspective.

Kathréptis, anyhow, is not simply a common journey:
it is the collection of our own individual journeys, that we
must embrace with audacity and consciousness.

Even though for much of this meeting the work is
collective, we will from time to time be asking ourselves to
pause, and to focus back on our own particular journey,
our own particular questions.

Moreover, we have invited three ‘mirror’ participants to
make some kind of personal intervention that they feel
connects with our questions.

They were not asked to prepare anything too detailed or
lengthy, but to make an individual contribution that
expresses something of what they feel or understand about
the question, something that may further open up our own
questions and discussions. We have not invited them to
present or defend a position, or promote their own work,
but to offer some thoughts or share some experiences that
are important to us all.



LUCA BERGAMO, Secretary General | Culture Action Europe



TONY BUCKBY, Director | British Council, Greece



IVOR DAVIES, Independent adviser in international cultural policy



JORDI PASCUAL, Coordinator | Agenda 21 for Culture - UCLG





SESSION ONE

WHAT IS THE CULTURAL LIFE OF A CITY?

PART ONE • OPEN UP THE QUESTION(S)

Participants were divided into small groups of 5 people each and were asked to share and connect their own initial questions, looking for (common) patterns.



SESSION ONE

WHAT IS THE CULTURAL LIFE OF A CITY?

PART TWO • MIRRORING TIME WITH FRANÇOIS MATARASSO

“Where” is the city today?
What if it is a metaphorical space
we occupy?
How do we engage with it?
How to engage, empower
and motivate citizens?
How not to compromise on
a single vision for it?
How to overcome the existing power
relations that still regulate us?
Now that - especially in some places -
cultural policies seems to be over and
citizens self-regulate themselves in an
organic way, how we can move ahead to
defend culture as a human right?
What are the models of actions?



FRANCOIS MATARASSO, Honorary Professor | Robert Gordon UniveRsity (United Kingdom)

SESSION ONE

WHAT IS THE CULTURAL LIFE OF A CITY?

PART THREE • DEVELOP THE QUESTION(S) →

After listening to François' point of view, expand, reinforce, challenge your questions and the "playground" that they create.

*You might agree, you might not agree with what you hear, but make sure you o redefine the question(s) that you, as a group, would ask yourself **to better understand and develop the cultural life of a city.***

What makes a city a city?

What's the identity of those who shape the cultural life of the city?
 How does culture project from the individual level to the city life?
 Is knowledge/non formal learning/education a part of the cultural life of the city? Can it affect it?
 What us the connection between the personal and the social life in a city?
 How do social characteristics affect the cultural life in a city?
 How to find a connection between culture and citizens' daily life?

How do we empower/engage citizens in cultural production and planning?

How can citizens influence a government concerning cultural policies?
 How can we create a medium that will allow interaction between communities and institution both within and outside the city?
 How do culture, politics and power relate?
 What are the resources? Shall they be transparent? Shall we acknowledge all funding resources?
 Can culture build the Parliament of Dreams out of exhaustion?

How can we engage diverse groups into the heart of culture?

How do people out of the circle of art can be approached/ interested in contemporary art/culture?
 How could somebody create art with a "different" group of people?
 How diversity within the city can become a key factor for communities to be more aware, educated, proactive?
 How can we motivate diverse teams in action and prototyping?
 How to find a common language/place/dream with someone you have "fear" of?
 How does the respect of culture diversity leads to a community?

How may culture solve the tensions between citizens and create a community?

Does culture actually create a link between people?
 How can the different players co-operate in harmony and respect?
 What is the LIFE of the city? Is Athens a city in peace?
 How does culture contribute to partnerships vs cooperations vs individualism?



SESSION TWO

IN WHICH WAYS IS THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY OF A CITY PART OF CIVIL SOCIETY?

PART ONE • EXPLORING CIVIL SOCIETY

Participants were divided into small groups of 5 people each and were asked to discuss how to define civil society and understand how it works as a bigger force than the cultural community.



SESSION TWO

IN WHICH WAYS IS THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY OF A CITY PART OF CIVIL SOCIETY?

PART TWO • MIRRORING TIME WITH STELLA DUFFY

We, as the people of culture, should develop a new language and a new way of working. We should allow many others to express themselves artistically.

Our leading question should be:
how do we build social patterns?
What kind of actors are we in society?
What kind of role do we have?

What is our duty?
How to make our contribution clear to the rest of civil society?

Cultural actors should be catalysts,
should be vessels.

How can artists take responsibility?

How to keep the fun?

What is our ultimate aim?

And where does all this artistic and cultural collective “intelligence” go, for example in cities?



STELLA DUFFY, Founder | Fun Palaces

SESSION TWO

IN WHICH WAYS IS THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY OF A CITY PART OF CIVIL SOCIETY?

PART THREE • WHAT CAN TWIST AND RESHAPE THIS RELATIONSHIP?

- Trigger people's curiosity
- Let people interact physically
- Offer people freedom to express and responsibilities to take
 - Cultural actors could be the spark that leads a movement
- Develop new ways or models of engagement and empowerment by inventing new tools and new approaches to deal with balances, equality, action...
- Develop new forms of communication with the rest of civil society by prioritizing communities
 - Allow flexibility in artistic/cultural co-creation
 - Enlarge accessibility to artistic creations
- Cultural community could give (new) meanings to the civil society at large, by being part of it
 - Create institutions and links that connect and give space/role to each other
 - Build networks of unexpected alliances
- Transparency, honesty, acknowledgment of where we are right now
 - Share the role of education and sharing
- Come together to be conscious of new needs of citizens at large
- Allow the state and the administration to step out of the social problem by developing a (new) civil society
 - Be aware of the tension between individual and community understanding of active citizenship
 - Create more experiences that promote and glue citizens around a "civil society" cause



SESSION THREE

WHAT IS Y(OUR) ATHENS LOOKING FOR?

PART ONE • MIRRORING TIME WITH MARC VILLARUBIAS

Participants were asked to collectively re-build the map of Athens using their “collective” intelligence, at large. Moving beyond the cultural and artistic sector.



MARC VILLARUBIAS, Head of Cultural Co-operation, Department of Cultural Affairs | City of Lyon (France)



SESSION THREE

WHAT IS Y(OUR) ATHENS LOOKING FOR?

PART TWO • WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM "CULTURE" AS A FEATURE OF YOUR CITY IN YEARS TO COME?
WHAT PART DO CULTURAL CREATORS AND MAKERS HAVE A "DUTY" TO PLAY IN THIS?

Participants were divided into small groups of 5 people each and were asked to discuss and answer the questions above.



SESSION THREE

WHAT IS Y(OUR) ATHENS LOOKING FOR?

PART THREE • FINAL REFLECTIONS

At the end of this process, there is a feeling of a shared endeavour.

We belong to the same “domain”.

Culture is about relationships: we should keep exchanging.

We need to create the right “space” to share genuine reflections, as it happened today.

It’s an unnecessary drama being scared of being political.

We need to keep sharing to influence our strategies and actions.

How to develop our activities in a way that it can be a Kathréptis for the whole Europe?





THREADS



KATHREPTIS

our duty is to be open
to the "first touch";

can engagement + participation
be QUIET +
REFLECTIVE?

duty to help the flow or exchange

DUTIES for
CULTURAL CREATORS

HAS TO DO MUCH
WITH BEHAVIOUR

- ① CULTURE (EVENTS, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES)
SHOULD SET/EXPERIMENT NEW RULES/BEHAVIOUR
- ② CULTURE SHOULD FACE/TALK MORE ABOUT REAL PROBLEMS

PARTICIPATION
- CO-WORKING

BREAK STEREOTYPES
social

NEW
LOCAL
IDENTITY

Beauty!!
duty: handle
precarity
with
perseverance?

But Artists can/do choose to act for the
wider benefit of the city (particularly
if it's also for
their benefit)

cultural dimension
always exist
(sometimes hidden
not naive...)



STAYING FLUID AS FAR AS POSSIBLE

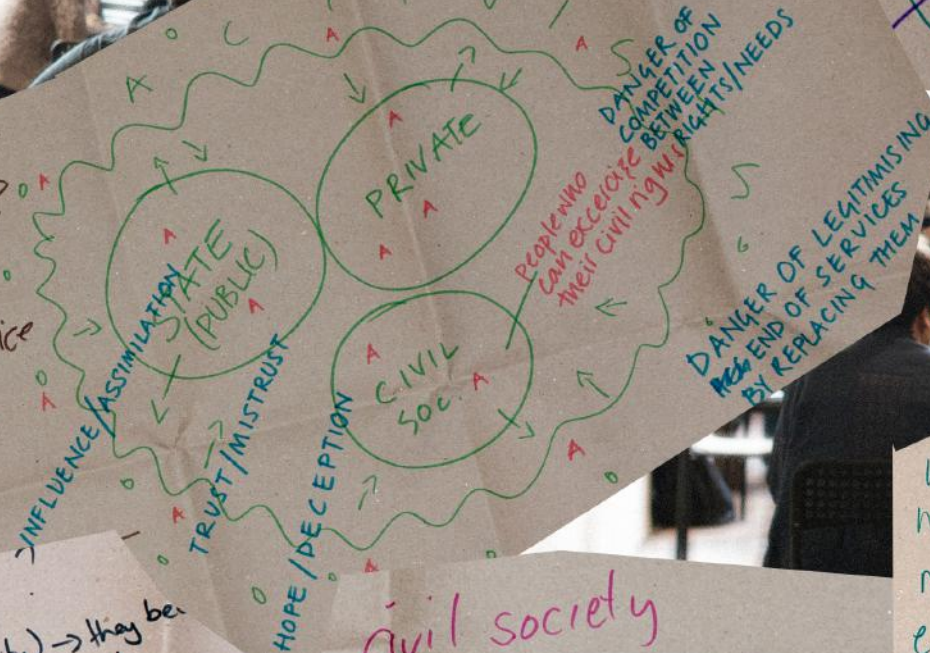
POLITICAL BUT
NOT ARTISAN
"LASTING"

What do activists want?

- their civil rights
- change of policy/practice
- no relationship with the other sectors

Civil society is ...

- a territory (the team, the city) → they be 'civil' when they are organised
- engaged communities
- being a community (even for a short time) in RELATION TO territory/geography



civil society

can bring an imaginative concept of what it is to belong

NON CULTURAL GROUP

CULTURAL GROUP

RECEIVERS

Cyclical proximity

perceived intruding allow alternatives

POLIS vs CITY

we need a new embodiment/enhancement of this relation

SOCIALLY-AWARE URBAN PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

SOCIAL INCLUSION ECONOMY

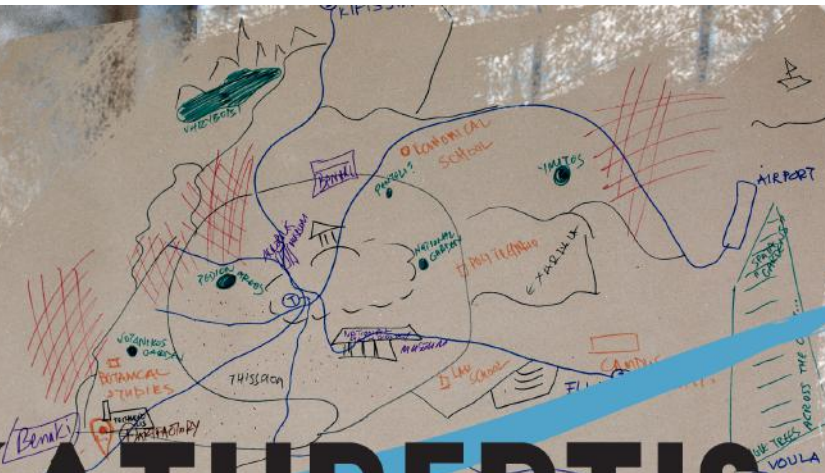
KATHREPTIS

CULTURE ACTION EUROPE IN COLLABORATION WITH AGENDA 21 FOR CULTURE - UCLG AND BRITISH COUNCIL

NEED TO LISTEN TO THE PUBLIC NEEDS

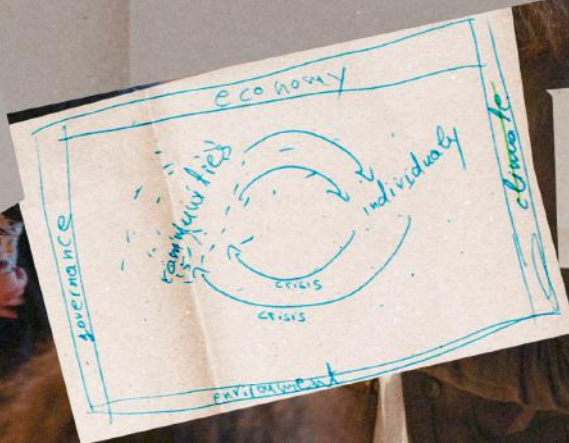
ASKING QUESTIONS
VS.
PROVIDING ANSWERS

KATHREPTIS



HOW CAN WE SUPPORT THE CULTURAL LIFE?
WHY? DOES ART HELP?
WHO?

IS ATHENS
A CITY IN
PEACE?



cultural decisions are
political decisions

meet half-way
TOP-DOWN
BOTTOM-UP
PLACE-MAKING

cultural advocacy
dissemination
political culture

CREATE IMPACT

a note about Kathréptis

Reacting to the challenging developments during last year's negotiations between the Greek government and the EU, Culture Action Europe (CAE) engaged in a process dedicated to understanding the situation in Greece for the cultural sector, and to enhancing trust and cooperation between local players. Greece was facing severe economic and social challenges, fragmentation in the cultural field, and a lack of cooperation along with strong competition between the different players.

Choosing Athens as an example, CAE's aim was to re-establish trust and foster dialogue between actors, and to reduce fragmentation and promote positive change in the city.

The process was developed through collaboration with the British Council, Greece and UCLG - Agenda 21 for Culture, and with the partnership of the city of Athens, in special collaboration with the Vice Mayor for Civic Engagement, Ms. Amalia Zepou, and her team.

It actively involved over 60 CAE members in the design of the process, and over 10 international cultural players that acted as "mirrors" (reflecting the local situation); among them were local cultural policy makers, coordinators of civic initiatives, researchers, and practitioners from different European cities.

The process culminated in a public event on 20 November, and a second event restricted to selected participants on 21 November 2015 (dates had been postponed from September due to the snap elections in Greece). The aim was to create a dialogue on equal footing, engaging the grassroots level and looking to engage all local players (and not only those usually put forward or volunteering).

A useful "mirror" (= Kathréptis in Greek) was used for reflecting on the local and national situation.

This implied the prolonged presence on the ground of a CAE staff member (4 months), scouting and meeting potential players in over 300 one-on-one conversations to understand the situation and build trust.

Throughout these months, approx. 20 collaborative working sessions developed with British Council, Greece brought together players to exchange and debate and to build momentum on the ground, by including external "mirrors".

Regular meetings with co-organisers and partners as well as an evaluation meeting ensured optimal coordination.