



## Systemic Engagement of the Arts and Culture: A New Framework for Integral Transformative Strategies

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### Abstract

*In response to the new socio-economic conditions and the planetary momentum for change induced by our multifaceted crises, humanity needs to synthesize its knowledge and synergize its action into a coherent and coordinated global movement and new leadership. Toward a new paradigm of human development aligning global societies with planetary systems, sustainability needs to be practiced as an art of systems change, engaging all the creative capacities of the arts and the mobilizing powers of culture. The paper addresses how to engage the impact of the arts and culture for integral societal transformation. It puts forward 'the systemic engagement of the arts' as a new working framework which encompasses multitudes of practices and methodologies not previously correlated and scaled. Recognizing the arts as a social knowledge system, the paper argues that they are vital to the formal SDGs implementation and a pathway to a new social architecture. The future will arise from the quality of our being and quality of human decision. The paper outlines a set of key integral strategies with demonstrative examples to show how the arts can be engaged as a holistic system with threefold impact that is deeply transformative, broadly adopted, and with long-wave socio-cultural shifts. Addressing the dehumanising forces of our crisis through the empathetic powers of the arts, systemic engagement of the arts and culture opens a way forward to a more humane future and the possibility for humanity's multifaceted accomplishment.*

### 1. The State of Affairs and the New Awareness

New awareness is rising in the world—awareness of shared vulnerabilities, precariousness of our socio-economic structures, and untenability of conventional governance and leadership. Faced with planetary challenges, humanity is seeking a new expression of values by which we need to survive and hope to thrive on an extraordinary scale. Our collective intelligence has already risen to an unprecedented agreement on humanity's priorities in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—a commitment of the global civil society to a new set of standards for the betterment of the universal human condition.

The implementation and realization of these global standards are now framed by the new context and exacerbated condition that emerged with the outbreak of the COVID-19

virus.\* The pandemic throws into the sharpest relief the question of sustainability—What does sustainability mean in a fragile, profoundly uncertain, unequal, and suffering world? The very meaning of sustainability is brought into question under the convergence of these added and intensified pressures. It is running the risk of becoming belated and rendered irrelevant at the very moment of its formal consensus on these global social priorities and new standards. Systems change is therefore the path to sustainability and into any potential human thriving. Therefore, for sustainability to be meaningful, it needs to be practiced as an art and it needs to engage the arts as integral transformative strategies for systems change.

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It is through arts and cultural participation that we are sensitized to such shared needs and vulnerabilities.† Diverse aesthetic representation and self-representation are needed for sense-making and sensibility-sharing to connect and convene humankind empathetically for collective action for systems change. The arts and culture have the capacity to make sense out of struggle and to transform the meaning of its consequences and implications. We argue that they are, indeed, the vital component and factor to the formal SDGs implementation framework.‡

The 2020 global pandemic heightens this poignant pondering of human struggle in the year that was building up to collective action on climate change and SDGs. Global focus and finances are siphoned now toward stopping the spread of the virus and sustaining the global economy. In the process, it is the very unsustainability of the existing socio-economic

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\* It seems that the SDGs should be reviewed and revised in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic for the sudden and drastic way it changed the world. It is apparent that health should be integrated at all levels. No nation can stay in isolation and deal with the pandemic on its own. International organisational structures and agreements are essential for implementation of the SDGs program but are not truly planetary in instruments and methods to address the necessary challenges.

† Pervading culture dominated by the mainstream media tends to anesthetize us by the information overload, spectacles of threat and terror, and consumerist distractions.

‡ By their integral and transformative capacities, the arts and culture need to be consciously engaged for social transformation with intention, direction, organization and support. Their essential role has already been recognized by the UN for the realization of the SDGs. The reports on the state of their realization post 2015 ratification and adoption reveal the neglect and underutilization of the arts and culture for that mission and predict their urgent and increasing importance in achieving the goals. Presented at the 2019 UN SDG Summit, the Report by The Culture 2030 Goal Campaign, “Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda,” underlines key messages on the role that culture is playing and need to play in the implementation of the SDGs. The report takes stock of the first four years of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, from the perspective of culture. It provides an analysis of the presence of culture and associated concepts in the annual progress reviews for the SDGs, focusing on the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) submitted by State Parties to the UN for the High Level Political Forums (HLPFs) in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Expounding on the essential role of culture as the enabler and driver of development, the Report states: “We believe, indeed, that further awareness-raising must be done in order to convince all relevant actors that culture is essential for the achievement of all Goals. The Implementation Decade (2020-2030) is about to begin. We are convinced that an explicit presence of culture in the ‘action and delivery’ efforts to achieve the SDGs is more essential than ever.” Former UNESCO DG Irina Bokova described culture as the right ‘software’ needed for the ‘hardware’—i.e. infrastructure planning, mobility, water and energy supply—to work for more sustainable and just cities, and offered ‘alliances’ within the UN system, between the international and municipal level, between cities, with civil society and the private sector. Current UNESCO DG, Audrey Azoulay, reaffirms: “None of the major challenges facing the world today can be met by any one country on its own without relying on the fundamental pillars of science, education and culture. Thus, UNESCO can and must fully participate in a world order based on multilateralism and humanist values.” (UNESCO Report: Culture for the 2030 Agenda).

systems and the skewed values and priorities it perpetuates that has been revealed. No less than a new social, economic and political design will suffice. Dysfunctional worldview, socio-economic injustices, inequities, and psycho-social disorder on which the current socio-economic system is based are not only compounding the problems but actively generating more intractable issues. Propulsion of such a value system is unsound and destructive. The arts are the deepest, most perceptive means to read what is embodied and embedded in the larger social order. Therefore, it is of profound importance and for critical impact that we engage the arts to embody, embed and cultivate new values—they are the way to re-imagine and re-enact a finer social order.

We know that true wealth is in developing people and true well-being in the building of human relations. Inspired leadership is needed for a new socio-economic model based on values that regenerate our resources, restore our relationships and communities, revitalize our spirit and re-dignify our humanity. Such social transformation is underway and we cannot afford to miss this wave of opportunity. The arts and culture can issue the call to action in this historical moment for a momentous collective breakthrough—rising to higher values for a global movement for fairness, peace, sustainable fulfilment of human needs and the creative expression of human spirit.

The global pandemic is pressing nations to come together into a planetary society to work simultaneously on both ends of collective action—to rescue and salvage the current state of affairs and to uplift the collective state of being to see the viability of a sustainable future. On the one end, we are pressed to act immediately to stop the spread of the virus, alleviate human suffering, and continue economic flows. And on the other end, we are called to design new ways to impact positively human wellbeing, up level and scale out human welfare, inspire and direct qualitative human progress. We will demonstrate that in such a strenuous double-bind, the arts are a holistic system for enabling humanity's multifaceted accomplishment.

Responding to the new socio-economic conditions and the planetary momentum for change induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, humanity needs to synthesize its knowledge and synergize its action into a coherent and coordinated global movement and new leadership. To address the psycho-social, cultural, economic and political impact of the pandemic that has made the world stop but gave the planet a moment to breathe, social leadership is needed to take us to the new paradigm of human development aligned with natural laws and planetary boundaries. Sustainability can no longer be practiced as damage control. Its facets—economic prosperity, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship—need to become creative outlets for human potential and collective ingenuity. Sustainability needs to be practiced as an art of systems change, engaging all the creative capacities of the arts and with the motivating and mobilizing powers of culture.

Our very capacity to respond to and our capacity to make sense out of the crisis depends on our shift in consciousness and on our creativity to emerge as more evolved. Humanity is facing a wave of unprecedented challenges that can be met only by rising to the higher ground of consciousness, compassion and cooperation. We do not lack knowledge—we experience loss of knowledge where there is lack of integration and collaboration. We have divorced

knowledge from consciousness—the refined and empathetic awareness that we are all vitally interconnected in the greater web of life. Transforming our worldview and recognising that social structures and the economy are just an expression of our participation in life are vital. The way we have been engaging in economic relationships has ended up depleting our soil, soul and society. Such a worldview engendered by an imbalanced hyper-rationality, devoid of empathetic awareness is the very thinking that excludes and marginalizes the arts—one of the most powerful systems we have for transforming our world.

## 2. The State of Being and the New Development

Our consciousness determines our perspectives, our values and the actions that influence how we engage in the world. New perspectives accelerate the progress toward a new paradigm for human development. New perspectives arise from the non-material capital—the arts, culture and humanities as the creative commons and collective means of sense-making, value creation and visioning.

What does it take to connect existing best practices and convene communities of change—to synthesize knowledge and synergize action—to replenish and regenerate all our domains and commons? What does it take to accelerate and scale out these practices into a full-fledged global movement for social transformation?

For an integral development, what is needed is **systemic engagement of arts for systems change**. Systemically engaged arts can accelerate and scale out best cultural practices to activate global movement for transformation with a threefold purpose:

- Development of new processes of social learning
- Activation of global social leadership
- The building of a new social architecture.

We outline a set of key integral strategies that the arts and culture offer towards that purpose:

- Correlation and integration of domains of human activity for acceleration of development;
- Collaboration among broad-scale stakeholders for adoption of the new social standards;
- Development of a culture of creativity and contribution for human evolution.

## 3. An Empathetic Revolution

We are gaining momentum toward a quantum leap in the quality of human decision. Our survival and flourishing hinge upon our shared awareness and our coming together to form a finer Human Being. The brilliance of the 7+ billion humans as imaginal cells that need to be communicating, sharing and collaborating with sympathetic vibrations for the collective intelligence to be switched on. The empathetic revolution brings forth immediate

mobilization for a momentous breakthrough opening up the qualitative influx of social power to enable the accessibility and affordances\* for systems change.

For this higher level of transformative synergy, we need social architects, social artists, integrators and harmonizers, empathetic investors, culture makers, artistic healers and world builders. They expand human capacities and build more humane ones, stimulating the compassionate genius of collective intelligence.†

New kinds of leadership are needed at all levels of human association and activity for an empathetic revolution. Examples of the engagement of the arts at critical historical junctures have demonstrated ways in which the arts can catalyse social forces for dramatic change. The 1969 festival of Woodstock and the 1985 worldwide Live Aid concerts demonstrate the threefold impact of the arts to create change which is a) deeply transformative, b) broadly adopted and c) enabling long wave socio-cultural shifts.

#### 4. Woodstock Rock Festival 1969

The Woodstock Rock Festival was a pivotal cultural event with profound impact not only on the US but on the international socio-cultural stage. Titled as “An Aquarian Exposition: 3 Days of Peace and Music,” the festival lasted 4 days and brought together more than 400,000 people. It marked popular music history and became the catalytic moment for the counterculture generation. Demonstrating the mobilizing power of pop music and transforming the entire domain of music production, the festival was sourced in the idealism of the youth that countered the violence and political recklessness of the Cold-War era and stood up for peace, human community and unity.

Immediately following the event, *Time* magazine captured the sense of the deep and long wave impact of the Woodstock festival: “The baffling history of mankind is full of obvious turning points and significant events: battles won, treaties signed, rulers elected or disposed, and now seemingly, planets conquered. Equally important are the great groundswells of popular movements that affect the minds and values of a generation or more, not all of which can be neatly tied to a time or place. Looking back upon the America of the '60s, future historians may well search for the meaning of one such movement. It drew the public's notice on the days and nights of Aug. 15 through 17, 1969, on the 600-acre farm of Max Yasgur in Bethel, N.Y.”

The festival initiated a cultural shift that still reverberates in international cultural memory. The influence of the arts and the mass media on cultural expression was recognized when the entire US nation and the world witnessed the great masses of youth coming together into a movement with radical political aspirations. Political structures fretted over this power and businesses recognized economic opportunity and quickly started capitalizing on it. This commercialization of the movement certainly undermined its anti-materialist origins but could not take away the idealism that shifted the values of the times and inspired generations.

\* Anneloes Smitsman speaks about the engagement and increase of interconnections and interreflections as the key affordances which enable systems change. See: Anneloes Smitsman, *Into the Heart of Systems Change*. PhD Dissertation (Maastricht University: 2019)

† Such compassionate genius is necessary to steer Artificial Intelligence ethically and infuse it with conscientious inter-thinking for integral planetary wellbeing.

## 5. Live Aid 1985

The worldwide rock concert, Live Aid, was launched on July 13, 1985 at Wembley Stadium in London and at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia, where Joan Baez famously proclaimed to the audience “This is your Woodstock and it’s long overdue!” Produced as the global charity event to raise funds for the relief of the famine in Ethiopia, it was envisioned and started as an ongoing music-based fundraising initiative. Between the UK and the US events, the audience numbered over 160,000 participants. Organized in just 10 weeks, the 16 hour long super concert gathered the most renowned artists in music and was globally linked by satellite becoming the largest television broadcasts ever. With global technological support, it drew an audience of 1.9 billion across 150 nations mobilizing compassion and the collective will to contribute \$127 million and inspired nations to donate their surplus grain to end the immediate hunger crisis in Africa. Concerts inspired by the initiative were held on the same day in multiple arenas around the world and, significantly, in countries such as Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Canada, Japan, Australia, West Germany and others.

Live Aid took place within the socio-economic context of the 1980s known for the significant shift toward neoliberalism, deregulation of markets and industries, and gradual dismantling of public structures. In the face of the culture of exploitation and prioritizing profit over human wellbeing, the Live Aid initiative appealed to the public for empathy and giving to alleviate another’s suffering. Commenting on the socio-economic atmosphere of the times and the strategy for mobilizing social leadership, Bob Geldof, the co-founder of Live Aid, said: “We took an issue that was nowhere on the political agenda and, through the lingua franca of the planet—which is not English but rock ‘n’ roll—we were able to address the intellectual absurdity and the moral repulsion of people dying of want in a world of surplus.” Because of Live Aid, humanitarian concern took centre stage in the media and the economic and foreign policy and rock stars were influencing the policies of world leaders.

With such massive empathetic effect and socio-political impact, Live Aid prefigured and set the stage for the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The initiative continued with its work over the coming decades generating multiple movements based on its core strategy of engaging artists and musicians and mobilizing fans to gather around humanitarian causes.\*

Today, we find the world still operating from a cold war, colonialist thinking paradigm. The need for initiatives like Woodstock and Live Aid is even greater with the intensifications of global pressures and aggressive dismantling of multilateralism. What is needed is a revival of multilateralism redefined beyond the nation-state limits and situated within the planetary context—we need planetary multilateralism within which all life forms are stakeholders. In that context, the stakeholders come from a much broader base of representation and partnership in power. Moreover, what is needed is the right balance between individual, community, national and international leadership. Granted the current crisis of trust, we

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\* In 2005, Geldof organized another series of massive concerts scheduling them purposefully before the G8 summit in order to pressurize G8 countries to address issues of extreme poverty around the world. The organizers titled the concert initiative Live 8 in direct response to the power alliance and as its humanitarian, people-powered counterpoint. This time, Geldof’s slogan was “We don’t want your money, we want your voice.” Live 8 had an estimated 3 billion people watching 1,000 musicians perform in 11 shows broadcast on 182 television networks and by 2,000 radio stations. In the wake of this powerfully coordinated demonstration of social leadership, the G8 cancelled the debt of 18 of the world’s poorest nations and doubled annual aid to Africa.

need to stop politicising leadership and instead look at good leadership at all levels that has humanity, equity, and peacebuilding at its core.

Woodstock and Live Aid are exemplary of the capacities of the arts to initiate an empathetic revolution and generate social leadership. For someone else's hunger to prompt and inspire artists to start social movements is revolutionary and demonstrates the profound empathy that moved the massive participatory events and collective performances of compassion. These are not dead letters on a page and historical examples for mere enumeration and demarcation of historical eras. These are living social processes that illustrate the long wave effects and the strategies of an ongoing transformation—a living history and evolving human story.\*

The arts have proven time and again through both social sciences and health related sciences, in multiple disciplines as well as in powerful case studies, their ability to generate impact. It is now time for us to understand not only how to generate impact through the arts but also how to cultivate the art of impact. How we continue this living history in today's evolutionary context depends on our conscious understanding of how to engage these artistic and scientific principles and processes. When principles and processes are consciously applied, we can connect the historical dots and synthesize historical lessons as a way of generating new social knowledge which can be applied, multiplied and accelerated in the broadest manner.

In these examples from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we see the arts and culture as catalysts for revolutionary and long wave social processes capable of accelerating and scaling out best practices for a global empathetic revolution. The 21<sup>st</sup> century brings a trifecta of pressures: environmental emergency, economic distress, and the activation of social unrest. With the acceleration of uncertainties and pressures comes the opportunities for the amplification of cultural sharing. We need to go to the higher ground of creativity and consciousness—with the rising of the challenges, we need to rise to the higher principles of the consciousness of unity, collaboration, and interdependencies. Woodstock initiated a transformation that has been developing over the span of 50 years. With new social technologies, the arts can be harnessed to accomplish a similar if not greater transformation in a matter of a few years.† With the arts, technology and social innovation converging, we have the means and potential to radically accelerate qualitative transformation.

## 6. Art as an Impact Interface and Integrative Social Field

The arts are an impact interface that enable the integration and harmonization of sectoral approaches and strategies. Artistic practices embody the deepest communication and characteristics of social groups.<sup>1</sup> Music as a social phenomenon and the diversity of its performance practices have been studied by anthropologists, ethnomusicologists and sociologists, illuminating music as a social language that embodies the deepest qualities,

\* These are cultural processes happening in communities, city streets, festivals around the world. We are currently not connecting to them and so remain unaware of their impact and their capacity for scaling. We would benefit from connecting to and interconnecting their energies and movements to better engage and understand ongoing social processes.

† Global youth environmental movements started by Greta Thunberg, Swedish environmental activist, demonstrate the speed and magnitude of social leadership that can be built in a matter of months by the effective use of social platforms and digital technologies.

values and beliefs of social groups and articulates their ideology and identity.\* Influential socio-political studies, such as *Music and the Global Order* by Martin Stokes, demonstrate the critical links and interconnections between music and political power. The arts are a composite and robust interface of the key traits and qualities that are embedded in their larger social order. As such, they allow us to trace these encoded qualities of social systems and build into them new meanings.

The arts are an integrative social field because of their ability to engage whole brain activity<sup>†</sup> as well as intimate forms of social communication. They correlate and coordinate the microcosm of the individual with the social and environmental macrocosm. The arts play a key role in the development of integral human capacities as well as unique forms of social learning. The arts as whole brain activities engage the development of integral human capacities; they demonstrate a collective means of sense-making and evolutionary potential.<sup>‡</sup>

Anthropological approaches understand both the arts and health as social phenomena. New fields such as Medical Ethnomusicology have combined qualitative and quantitative and context-based approaches for understanding the health benefits of music and the arts as well as their meaning in social context.<sup>§</sup> More widely, the arts have integral capacities for consultative social processes, social critiques, engaging integral human faculties, which can enable us to imagine and reimagine strategies for systems change. The arts expand the social field increasing participation through correlating aesthetic and political self-representation.

The arts as an impact interface and integrative social field occur through understanding **the arts as a social knowledge system**. We cannot engage the arts systemically unless we understand them as a social knowledge system.<sup>¶</sup> By understanding them as such, we understand a) the forms of knowledge they create, b) how those forms of knowledge are transmitted and cultivated, and c) the socio-systemic processes through which this takes place. By socio-systemic we mean the core relationship of the arts to societal structures and societal norms. Grasping the above, we can systemically engage the arts for the re-invention of our societal norms and structures.

\* Key contributions for diverse modes of performance include Thomas Turino, who identifies modes of performance, goals of performance and key aspects of musical communication as a way of understanding both Eastern and Western performance modalities. Also, Tia DeNora's excellent sociological work demonstrates how music in everyday life (DeNora 2000) shapes social settings and socio-behavioural practices. Long standing sociological studies such as 'How Musical is Man' (Blacking 1974) and Musicking (Small 1998) demonstrate the innately human aspect of artistic processes.

† The nature of music and arts as a whole brain activity and the ability of arts to engage integral cognitive capacities are key for understanding its unique ability to engage integrative social processes. Cognitive and neurological aspects of music have been studied by leading brain scientists, psychologists and psychiatrists such as Oliver Sacks, Daniel Levitin and John Sloboda to name a few, all of whom demonstrate music as a whole brain activity. Scientists such as Michael Thaut have developed methods such as Neurologic Music Therapy, accessed January 27, 2020, <https://nmtacademy.co/> (see for the use of music in addressing and rehabilitating neurodegenerative conditions.) Development of arts-based therapies for trauma because art re-routes communication when trauma damages Broca's area of the brain which controls language, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.trauma-informedpractice.com/>

‡ Some scholars have even gone further to argue that music itself has evolutionary origins. In terms of archaeological evidence demonstrating the cognitive evolution of the human brain, Dr. Stephen Mithen has presented an excellent account. Mithen speculated that in the early human-like species, elaborate communication system was more musical than modern languages. Neanderthal communication was also manipulative, multi-modal and musical. Mithen argues that music and musical languages played a key role in human evolution.

§ Scholastic studies such as (Horoden 2000) and (Gouk 2000) have encapsulated a wide pallet of traditions across the globe outlining Healing rituals in cultural context. It is evidenced that arts practices deeply interlock with health, wellbeing as well as social structures, spaces and practices of healing and communal wellbeing. Other major fields include Ethnomusicology and Medical Ethnomusicology of artistic practices of healing to their effects in contexts and on larger social orders.

¶ Unfortunately, arts have been chronically perceived and accordingly valued as decorative, pass time or mark of prestige. Without the critical shift in perspective on arts as a knowledge system, we run the risk of underestimating and underutilizing their transformative power.

The arts present and create different forms of knowledge and, hence, carry different forms of power\*—the kind of powers that humanize and transform. Changing knowledge and engaging diverse forms of knowledge lead to changing hierarchies of societal narratives and norms, which are critical for systems change.† For it to be transformative, a systemic engagement of the arts focuses on expanding a system’s capacity to include and encourage a multitude of perspectives, expressions and social processes. Rather than a fixed, propagated narrative,‡ it engages multiple narratives and social groups for the development of a co-created and continually evolving body of knowledge. Through this expansive holding capacity, a systemic engagement of the arts seeks to re-order knowledge and experience for the alignment of social and natural systems.

A systemic engagement of the arts for systems change is based on an artistic expression of sustainable values. As a social knowledge system, arts are engaged for positive impact, human development, social transformation and planetary wellbeing. We address the fragile nature of the world through our re-inventing and re-imagining of it. We humanize sustainability through the arts by developing integral human capacities for socio-ecological awareness and actions. Such arts-and-culture-informed actions rely on integral transformative strategies of correlation, collaboration and contribution for acceleration and scaling out of social transformation.

No single institution, nation-state or ideology can implement systems change, because a single ideology creates a hierarchy which disacknowledges and suppresses diverse forms of knowledge and contributions. The implementation of a systemic engagement of the arts is integral and is about qualitative progress. In order for qualitative progress to take place, we need a system robust and dynamic enough to handle diverse forms of knowledge and gamuts of human experience. Systemic engagement of the arts seeks to enhance the capacities of every individual to become an inspired and incentivised contributor to society, whose resilience and prosperity depends on its members.§

## 7. Integral Transformative Strategies

To **ACCELERATE** systems change we need to **CORRELATE** between

A) Inner technologies of transformation & collective capacities, B) Empowering aesthetic & political self-representation, and C) Balancing local & global cultural geographies and economies. By correlating these domains of human activity and association, we organise artistic processes in a way that multiplies their effects and, therefore, accelerates action on key systemic points in order to engage a process of systems change.

\* The relationship between knowledge and power has been well documented by key social scientists such as Michael Foucault, Paulo Freire and Pierre Bourdieu.

† All institutions come with their institutional logic and narrative. Changing institutional structures goes hand in hand with changes in knowledge production and changes in narratives. Stories shape society’s beliefs. Institutions structure relationships.

‡ This is the essential difference between propaganda as a social agenda, which is singular, exclusive, and it puts down other perspectives. By having a ‘holding capacity’ we mean formats that invite multitudes of perspectives and representations and are pluralistic. One should look to have an ever-evolving body of knowledge and continually expanding a system and a society’s ‘holding capacity’.

§ This is a completely different society of contributors rather than what we currently have as a society of consumers.

### **A) Inner Technologies of Transformation & Collective Capacities**

Arts-based methods enable different forms of inner transformation which correspond to the development of different forms of external collective capacities. Furthermore, the social intimacy of artistic performances have the ability to catalyse diverse forms of collective agency.

#### **Guided Imagery and Music: The Crimea example**

Gary David and Angela Micley utilise Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) for dialogue and reconciliation where “conventional verbal and cognitively oriented approaches simply fail”.<sup>2</sup> They work with social groups who have ‘fixed contradictory positions, backed by heavy emotional blocks and historical baggage which scupper attempts at genuine dialogue’.<sup>3</sup> During the Crimea conflict, they utilised GIM for an ‘authentic restorative process’. With their guided imagery and music method they transformed group emotional tensions, social divides and historical baggage into a flowing movement work called ‘Collective Vulnerabilities’.<sup>4</sup> Significantly reducing violent responses and civil unrest, they argue for further use of the arts for collective non-violent conflict resolutions, which can enable long wave restorative results.

#### **Reconciliation Theatre: Recovering national stability after civil war and genocide**

Following Rwanda’s civil war and genocide that saw the systemic oppression of the Tutsi population with over 800,000 dead and the collapse of economic institutions, Rwanda’s government began its National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) with the eventual goal of reunifying the country’s citizens. A crucial part of this effort was Reconciliation Theatre.<sup>5</sup>

In Reconciliation Theatre, victims act out their losses, how their suffering came to pass and their experience of suffering. Murderers act out how they became murderers, as well as their experience of violence. Victims and perpetrators then perform together, witness each other’s suffering and engage in a cathartic theatrical process. Through Reconciliation Theatre, Rwanda was able to resolve significantly the divides of their civil war, restore families and communities associated with the genocide and regain stability of their population.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Generative Somatics: Somatic Transformation and Social Justice**

Generative Somatics is an integrative approach which utilises somatic awareness, somatic bodywork and somatic practices to create lasting change.\* As outlined in their methods, “Somatics with a social analysis understands the need for deep personal transformation, aligned with liberatory community/collective practices, connected to transformative systemic change. They are inextricable and support each other.”†

Generative somatics includes 5 embodied skills of Commitment, Connection, Coordination, Collective Action, and Conflict as Generative. Not only do their somatic practices bring personal healing but also turn participants into leaders who take the transformation of their

\* Generative Somatics the Approach, Generative Somatics Personal and Social Transformation, accessed September 25, 2020, <http://www.somaticsandtrauma.org/approach.html>

† Generative Somatics Our Strategy, Generative Somatics Personal and Social Transformation, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://generativesomatics.org/our-strategy/>

abuse/trauma into addressing the societal structures which created the conditions for such phenomenon. Through engaging somatic processes whilst also mapping ‘Sites of Shaping and change’ the participants see the root causes of their trauma in societal narratives and structures. Their process of somatic transformation becomes intricately linked to a passion and purpose for systemic social justice. Generative Somatics represents the capacity of inner transformation through movement and body work to generate social justice leadership and collective systemic action.

### ***B) Empowering Aesthetic & Political Self-Representation***

Aesthetics are closely tied to politics because symbolic forms and their social contexts are intimately tied to structures of power. To expand the capacity of individuals and social groups for free and creative expression of their identity and experience opens up a greater democratic space for them as self-representing political subjects and empowered social agents.

#### **Teatro del Sotano<sup>7</sup>**

Teatro del Sotano was created by the actress and theatre director Ana O’Callaghan in Barcelona, Spain. The Teatro enacts, explores and expresses immigrant stories, settlement and displacement struggles and migration histories. It acts as a healing space for sharing stories otherwise unrecognized and unsupported in society. It enables self-recognition of minoritized histories and empowerment for migrants all over the world.

This form of theatre increases the participants’ ability to peacefully settle and better integrate into their host country and be a positive contributor to their society. Furthermore, it enables them to carry their own histories and identities with more dignity and enact more authentic representation through a newly empowered self-awareness. Teatro del Sotano provides a socio-cultural arena in which migrants’ identities and experiences are validated and their subjectivity and social agency is aesthetically rebuilt.

#### **Florida Modern Day Slavery Museum**

Farm work in the United States presents the worst combination of sub-poverty wages, dangerous, backbreaking working conditions, and lack of fundamental labour protections. In this context of structural poverty and powerlessness, extreme forms of abuse such as forced labour are able to take root and continue. Such cases of abuse are reflective of the impunity and exploitation that are rampant throughout the agricultural sector. In other words, modern-day slavery neither takes place in a vacuum nor is it an inevitable feature of our food system. To highlight these abuses and to identify their causes and solutions, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a community-based farmworker organization, decided to create the Florida Modern-Day Slavery Museum in 2010.

The Florida Modern Day Slavery Museum was a Public Art Intervention—a method that can be described as an artwork installed in public space that provokes thought and challenges power. The Museum is an example of transforming social concepts and engaging collective agency to counter societal violence. By using actual historical artifacts, the museum presented

an irrefutable indictment of the status quo that was able to pierce this veil and open people's minds to dialogue and possibility of collective action.\*

### ***C) Balancing Local & Global Cultural Geographies and Economies***

The arts and culture are connected to their larger social contexts, institutions and institutional incentives. Following are examples that highlight the contributions of local communities to global systemic movements for diversifying globalisation.

#### **Music as Social Dialogues for New Sensitivities: An Example from South Africa<sup>8</sup>**

For the South African revolutionary, anti-apartheid activist and artist, Steve Biko, songs and rhythms “are responsible for the restoration of our faith in ourselves and offer a hope in the direction we are taking from here.”<sup>9</sup>

Music was a tool for black South Africans to learn about the identity of their white oppressors because music is the medium that could reach people immediately. Through music, they are able to engage in each other's realities as well as recognize their shared past. Musicologist Anne-Marie Gray points out that “Historical facts alone cannot supply the necessary insight into group identity as dates fix people's lives in cycles of victory and defeats while overlooking the details of suffering, setbacks and successes of ordinary people.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, music became a bridge between the war-torn past and a new future.

The culmination of this musically-based social learning process was the production of the South Africa Love Workshop Concerts. In this concert series, white and black South Africans were learning to bridge their differences through musical fusions. Gray showcases the powerful influence of music in resolving polarised societies and its vital role in social integration.

#### **Gezi Park Iftar<sup>†</sup>**

In 2013, an anti-capitalist protest was sparked in opposition to an urban development plan of Istanbul's Gezi Park. The protest took place during the holy month of Ramadan when many were fasting. The authorities tried to break up the protest which included both Muslims and Seculars. The crowd saw the crackdown as an attempt to break the protesters' unity. The Muslim protesters, whose fast was due to break at sunset, invited all to a mass public feast for Iftar, the evening meal with which Muslims break their daily fast during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Gezi Park Iftar is an example of critical multiculturalism being utilised for non-violent protest. By engaging local knowledge and meaningful cultural practice such as Iftar they mobilized masses. The Beautiful Rising report describes the success of Gezi Park Iftar, ‘there were floods of people arriving, each with a simple dish celebrating the commonality of their struggle against capitalism...the peaceful steadfastness of the crowd forced the police

\* Modern Day Slavery Museum, Beautiful Rising, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://beautifulrising.org/tool/modern-day-slavery-museum>

† Gezi Park Iftar, Beautiful Rising, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://beautifulrising.org/tool/gezi-park-iftar>

to pull back...the spirit of unity and communion was transformative for participants, and it proved that the people can unite regardless of their differences’.\*

Gezi Park became a symbol of solidarity and determination in the face of capitalism.† Through a meaningful cultural practice such as Iftar, a statement was made on new values to counter divisive, exploitative dynamics of rampant capitalism by encouraging a culture of gifting and sharing, hospitality and compassion.

For **ADOPTION** and **SCALING OUT**, we need **INTEGRAL COOPERATION** through

A) Integral Artistic Cooperation for structural change, B) Repurposing and transforming institutions C) Activating collective intelligence for changing social landscapes D) Convening best practices and new processes of social learning.

### ***A) Integral Artistic Cooperation for Structural Change***

#### **Rock Against Racism & the Decline of the National Front**

Rock Against Racism (RAR) catalysed the accomplishment of political goals and initiated long wave cultural change. RAR was founded by activists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The formation of their profile coincided in late 1977 with the formation of the Anti-Nazi League (ANL). The period of RAR’s expansion coincided with the decline of the National Front. Max Farrar (2004:229) describes RAR and ANL as “One of the major social movements of the 1970s and 1980s—part art and part political organisation.”

RAR’s ‘creative vanguard’ with ANL providing the organisational knowledge and resources resulting in the “explosion all over the country of RAR reggae/punk gigs, where dreadlocked blacks and safety-pinned whites enthusiastically shared the same space for the first time and effectively dispelled both Nazi regalia and Nazis from the movement.”<sup>11</sup>

RAR’s music was the initiator for long-term cultural movements. They were the precursors to Big Flame, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh & Linton Kwesi Johnson who fused cultural activity with political commitment. RAR catalysed the accomplishment of the political goals of the SWP and ANL and the cultural shift which played a key role in the decline of the National Front.

#### **A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness—The Film that Changed Laws in Pakistan**

“A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness” was a documentary film about ‘honour killings’ in Pakistan. Based on the true story of Saba Qaiser who was shot by her father and uncle and thrown into a river, as punishment for having eloped with a man she loved. Saba survived and was the protagonist of the film.

*A Girl in the River* won an Oscar and, more importantly, it brought about powerful social change through the power of storytelling. Before Saba’s story, many Pakistani lawmakers had never heard a personal account of a survivor of honour killings. After seeing the film

\* Gezi Park Iftar, Beautiful Rising, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://beautifulrising.org/tool/gezi-park-iftar>

† Gezi Park Iftar, Beautiful Rising, accessed September 25, 2020 <https://beautifulrising.org/tool/gezi-park-iftar>

Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took a stance to tighten laws around honour killings. New laws were passed soon after in Pakistan's parliament which now makes it much harder for perpetrators of honour killings to walk free.

The World Economic Forum recognises the impact of *A Girl in the River* and says "Global leaders in business and politics are increasingly aware of this and are investing in art as a way of engaging with communities, improving lives and boosting economic growth."\* The WEF notes that "social battles are not separate from economic progress but go hand in hand with it. Creativity and individual freedom can generate new opportunities. For such change to happen around the world, leaders in the arts, politics and business must work together."†

## ***B) Repurposing and Transforming Institutions***

### **El Sistema‡**

El Sistema incorporates children and teenagers in vulnerable situations or extreme poverty into a new National System of Children and Youth Orchestras. Unlike the average youth orchestra, El Sistema's mission is fundamentally social: "Abreu's conviction that the experience of immersive, ambitious and joyful music making together can help young people develop not only musical mastery but also self-esteem, mutual respect and cooperative skills, qualities that can change their lives and the lives of their families and communities."§ El Sistema creates, equips, develops, supervises and assesses regional orchestras and choirs.

The teachers at El Sistema understand the importance of supporting children's musical, cognitive, social and creative development. El Sistema's impact includes "musical excellence, social and emotional development, raised aspirations, academic attainment and community engagement which are being documented in a growing body of formal evaluation and research."¶

El Sistema has had a positive social impact on over 400,000 children in Venezuela enabling them to transcend their circumstances and become empowered and productive citizens. Its model of working has inspired similar programs which serve an estimated 1 million children in over 60 countries. El Sistema is an example of successfully repurposing artistic institutions with a social purpose and social function to empower and transform communities.

### **Nada Brahma\*\*—Systems change for the Music Industry**

Addressing the current challenges and setbacks of the music industry whilst armed with deep knowledge of cognitive, social and sonic/acoustic aspects of music; Nada Brahma is

\* How Artists Can Lead Dramatic Social Change, World Economic Forum, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/how-can-artists-lead-dramatic-social-change/>

† How Artists Can Lead Dramatic Social Change, World Economic Forum, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/how-can-artists-lead-dramatic-social-change/>

‡ Venezuela's National System of Children and Youth Orchestras, UNESCO Diversity of Cultural Expressions, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/venezuelas-national-system>

§ El Sistema in Venezuela, Sistema Global: Friends of El Sistema Worldwide, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://sistemaglobal.org/about/el-sistema-venezuela/>

¶ El Sistema in Venezuela, Sistema Global: Friends of El Sistema Worldwide, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://sistemaglobal.org/about/el-sistema-venezuela/>

\*\* Nada Brahma, Nada Brahma Ltd., accessed September 25, 2020, [www.nadadigital.com](http://www.nadadigital.com)

out on a mission to bring about systemic change to the music industry. They are pioneering ‘Musical Nutrition’ in order to create a business model designed to unlock the benefits of music. Just as the FDA released nutrition labels for the food industry in the 1990s which transformed the food industry enabling it to create new businesses from diets, nutrition plans and even superfoods, Nada Brahma has created Musical Nutrition which they believe will enable new revenue streams for the music industry based on engaging and distributing music according to different types of benefit. They provide Record Labels and music Publishers with data on how and why people are listening to music and in what ways they are benefiting. This data enables Labels and Publishers to distribute existing music and have new music created according to areas of benefit and needs of listeners. They also provide specialist music services to healthcare and wellbeing companies to increase treatment effectiveness, provide patient insights and address social determinants of health. Dedicated to unlocking the benefits of music, they are bridging the gaps between the music and health/wellbeing industries and building a music and health cross-industry model.

This is revolutionary systems change for the music industry based on changing systemic incentives. The current systemic incentives of the music industry are based on the productization of music—music as a mere object that is sold, bought and distributed, with little to no knowledge incorporated on what the benefits of music are and how they operate and hence no means to institutionalise the unlocking of the benefits of music.

### ***C) Activating Collective Intelligence for Changing Social Landscapes***

#### **The Inside Out Project\***

On March 2, 2011, JR won the TED prize at the TED Conference in Long Beach, California, and called for the creation of a global participatory art project with the potential to change the world.

Since its founding, The INSIDE OUT Project has flourished in France and now over 260,000 people have participated in 129 countries. It is now ranked as one of the world’s biggest participatory art projects.

JR calls participants to “Stand up for what you care about by participating in a global art project. Together we’ll turn the world inside out.”† INSIDE OUT is a global platform for people to share their untold stories and transform messages of personal identity into works of public art.

INSIDE OUT makes the invisible or unknown stories and values of everyday people visible. Through unseen expressions, experiences and values being brought to life, the accepted boundaries and assumptions of social landscapes are challenged and changed. The project humanizes the cityscapes and landscapes of conflict by superimposing a human face and human story onto alienating sites.

\* Inside Out: The People’s Art Project, accessed September 25, 2020, <http://www.insideoutproject.net/en>

† Inside Out: The People’s Art Project, About the Inside Out Project, accessed September 25, 2020, <http://www.insideoutproject.net/en/about>

## **D) Convening Best Practices and New Processes of Social Learning**

### **Beautiful Trouble\***

Beautiful Trouble created an artistic toolbox for revolution. Their new initiative ‘Beautiful Rising’<sup>†</sup> showcases arts-based initiatives from the Global South. Their comprehensive index of the arts-based initiatives identifies key tactics, principles, theories, stories and methodologies for effectively engaging arts in activism, development and social change.

Providing this comprehensive index and tool box as well as training to individuals and organisations, Beautiful Rising enables the flourishing of collective intelligence as well as the convening of best practices in the arts-based activism through an accessible participatory digital platform.

### **The Culture Hacking Method: The Rules Collective‡**

The Rules Collective was an activist collective which focused on addressing the root causes of inequality, poverty, and ecological breakdown through narrative interventions.<sup>§</sup> They worked with social movements, journalists, think tanks, independent researchers to engage collective intelligence to amplify alternatives and to midwife post-capitalist realities.

The Collective came to a consensus on two core insights, firstly that power rests in the ability to control language and secondly that humans make sense of their world through stories; the stories we tell shape the way we see the world and guide our responses to the problems we face. The Rules collective concluded that the best way to change the world is to change the language and stories at the heart of our cultures.

The Culture Hacking method emerged from the narrative and cultural interventions of The Rules Collective<sup>¶</sup> combined with the collective intelligence of their allies for 8 years in the context of them working in a changing world that had seen uprisings and protests from Palestine to Standing Rock, to Wallmapu, to YoSoy132.

The Culture Hacking method is a process in which we intervene and change dominant culture narratives through questioning, analysis (discourse analysis, network analysis, content analysis), de-codification, recodification and creative intervention.<sup>12</sup>

**With INTEGRAL COOPERATION, we are developing NEW CULTURES OF CREATIVITY AND CONTRIBUTION which consist of**

A) Developing new cultural codes B) Systemic engagement of social artistry C) The causal link between the arts, culture and development.

\* Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://beautifultrouble.org/>

† Beautiful Rising, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://beautifulrising.org/>

‡ The Rules, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://therules.org/>

§ The Rules, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://therules.org/>

¶ The Rules, Culture Hacking, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://therules.org/culture-hacking/>

## ***A) Developing New Cultural Codes***

### **Fundación Mi Sangre\***

Fundación Mi Sangre, based in Medellín, Colombia, is a social organization, co-founded by the artist Juanes and the social entrepreneur Catalina Cock in 2006. Fundación Mi Sangre seeks to activate ecosystems and build capabilities that enable new generations to lead the construction of a culture of peace in Colombia.

They develop life skills, leadership, and social entrepreneurship in childhood and youth, as well as support the social transformation initiatives of participants and weave networks and ecosystems of initiatives that better enable participation and augmentation of voices for peaceful initiatives. Using art and music as a tool, they have created a network of more than 5,000 young leaders in Colombia dedicated to non-violence and peaceful social transformations.

### **Fundación TAAP†**

The TAAP Foundation was founded by Visual artist Carlos Eduardo Meneses. Based in Colombia they now also operate in 14 countries across Latin America and Europe.

Their methodology includes elements of neuroscience, art, pedagogy, communication for development, and learning through play, that they have combined and applied to break the patterns of violence in communities, generating changes in individuals, families, schools, and the communities.

Since 2010, TAAP Foundation has impacted more than 2.5 million people, including more than 300 young people that were previously at risk to become part of gangs, who then changed their arms and criminal practices for careers in the arts sector as photographers, designers, and writers.

## ***B) Systemic Engagement of Social Artistry***

### **One World: Together at Home**

One World: Together at Home was a live streamed benefit concert organised by Global Citizen and curated by pop star Lady Gaga, in support of the World Health Organization (WHO) and its COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund. The event was intended to promote the practice of social distancing while staying together at home during the pandemic.

Aired on April 19, 2020, the concert was an eight-hour online special and featured performances from global music stars at home as they self-isolated during the virus outbreak. Actors, political leaders and media celebrities joined and shared messages of concern and support. The broadcast drew donations from corporate sponsors and the greater public.

The concert organized shortly after the current President of the US withdrew its funding for the WHO took on a sense of a political stand as people came together to fund the universal cause the US government failed to do.

\* La Fundacion, Fundacion Mi Sangre, accessed August 20, 2020, <http://fundacionmisangre.org/la-fundacion/>

† Taller de Aprendizaje Para Las Artes Y El Pensamiento, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://fundaciontaap.com/>

Following up on Twitter with her fans and participants in the special concert, Lady Gaga called the event a global moment of kindness. The messages of the performing artists reinforced the importance of the general public to show up together and for each other at times when the governing institutions are lacking the proper direction and strategy to address shared human distress. The unique and effective way of showing support and contributing is through arts and cultural events that alleviate human suffering, elevate human spirit and provide a sense of human unity and community.

Repeating the strategy of Live Aid in a new, cyber context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, *One World: Together at Home* managed to raise \$127m in a matter of hours. In the critical moment when the pandemic exacerbates the already distressing global conditions, nations and their governments are hard pressed to swiftly reinvent their social, business and governance routines. While vulnerabilities and uncertainties intensify, the general public rises and organizes through arts and culture showing indomitable strength and resilience against all odds. In times of crisis, *Together at Home* demonstrated that the move can result in arts generating empathy even more and in the greater democratization of creativity and contribution.

### ***C) The Causal Link Between the Arts, Culture and Development***

#### **Culture-Hidden Development<sup>13</sup>**

The universal ‘one size fits all’ approach of the Development sector failed to take into account complex local cultural specifics. It was identified that one of the reasons development was failing to make a greater impact and achieve the development goals was because of its inability to adequately understand and deal with culture. It became apparent that cultural assessments now needed to become an integral part of project planning in Development. Funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), this was a study to track and map the role of culture in development. It consisted of 350 examples in 40 countries over a 2-year period. The report argued that the invisibility of culture within development policy created a vicious cycle and therefore put forward better monitoring and evaluation as well as improved analysis of impact of cultural projects on development objectives as well as analysis of development activities on cultural issues.<sup>14</sup> The research also warned that, without adequate background thinking or evaluation, current trends in using cultural methods for behaviour change and communications programmes ran the risk of using the culture of poor and marginalised communities manipulatively, and of opening up agencies to risk through a failure to adequately monitor work in the field.<sup>15</sup>

The research put forward a method and set of best practices for correcting ‘cultural invisibility’ in development and enabling tools for understanding how to better understand and engage with culture for greater impact and effectiveness. The method brought forward consisted of 3 main courses of action:

1. *Thinking Culturally* — The study mapped key relationships between culture and some of the primary development agendas for social development, economic growth, poverty, rights, education and communications. At each site, questions are engaged to challenge mainstream development thinking and propose ways to think more culturally.

2. *Making Culture Visible* — By engaging methods for making culture more visible ‘Hidden Developments’ were identified—the local forms of knowledge connected to forms of capabilities that were outside of the lens of ‘development’ and hence ‘hidden’ and not acknowledged by development work nor utilised in development projects. Methods and frameworks were put forward for how to make culture more visible and hence increase the ability of development projects to work effectively with culture for local lead change on global development goals.
3. *Working Culturally* — The study put forward practical ways of building culture into development policy thinking, as well as key questions and working methods for engaging with culture in program delivery.<sup>16</sup>

It is a more nuanced mission and critique to deconstruct the notion of development and reveal the failing and the overpowering effect of the concept of ‘progress’ when it is implemented as one-sided knowledge delivery. By making culture visible we enable diverse forms of contributions. By understanding how to work with these ‘Hidden Developments’ we can enable multiple forms of ‘progress’ for holistic growth, greater effectiveness, deeper participation for practicing sustainability as systems change.

## 8. Implementing the Systemic Engagement of the Arts for Systems Change

The value and impact of the arts have been made clear in multiple disciplines and case studies ranging from utilising the arts for health-related outcomes, to radical social change, to conflict resolution and peacekeeping. However, in our current state, we do not have the structure to unlock the full potential of the arts. Consequently, we do not have the capacity to emerge or transition to a new human story and a more evolved society.

Systemically engaging the arts means we need to:

1. Shift mindsets and values, engage inner transformations, activate collective intelligence and cultivate new cultures;
2. Engage structural change, transform existing institutions and increase socio-political impact, which contribute to planetary frameworks for sustainability practiced as an art of systems change.

As the key strategy in the new process of social learning and leadership, systemic engagement of the arts and culture is expressed in the commitment of the global society at all levels to support, engage and implement the transformative strategies of the arts and culture throughout and across all domains of human activity, association, development and policy. Here are some of the ways such commitment manifests across sectors.

- **Education, Welfare and Wellbeing** — Beyond intellectual and analytical intelligence, the arts as whole brain activities engage sensory, imaginative, intuitive, transcendental, consultative, and creative learning. Education would engage an empowered process of profound humanization through valuing of the human being in its holistic potentialities.

It cultivates creative learning and develops creativity, applying the arts as science and engaging science as a mental art. Such education starts from early childhood learning as well as adult re-learning and engages whole person development, nurturing integral faculties and multiple intelligences. Systemic engagement of the arts would inform and shape all aspects of an educational system from the space where the learning takes place, to pedagogy, to the way schools are run, organized and connected to their social context.

The use of the arts in health and wellbeing has been long documented historically<sup>17</sup> as well as widely recognised today.\* The systemic engagement of the arts in health and wellbeing would engage the personal stories of illness, as well as mind-body and cathartic processes which value the expression of personal and social experience. It would ask for wellbeing to be as well rounded as possible, engaging both allopathic and complementary modalities which can honour the multidimensional aspects of a person's healing process. It would seek qualitative progress of a person's being as well as quantitative measurements. Acting systemically could also engage creative applications for addressing the social determinants of health.<sup>18</sup>

- **Science and Technology** — Engagement of the arts in this domain would be for the humanizing of technological advances, infusing technology with ethical principles. It would seek to reemphasise human development and refocus technology as tools for human development, social learning and constructive problem-solving. The design and purpose of science and technology would integrate the arts and be guided by their socio-cultural implications.
- **Information and Media** — Transforming the domain of information and media would entail a) utilising integral language which engages greater coherence of knowledge through multiple narratives, resolving disjuncture between perspectives and enabling social learning rather than social divides; b) spreading constructive and life-supporting messages; c) developing individual and collective capacities as well as nurturing finer individual and collective expressions and aspirations. It would work to replace marketing with a more humane qualitative processes which could still enable demographic information but in a context which takes into account the wider social impact and processes.
- **Economy, Finance and Employment** — The recognized forms of capital—natural, human, financial, material and intellectual—are the building blocks of infrastructures. While they are the key resources and enactors of change, it is the non-material forms of capital—social, cultural, experiential, spiritual—that are the essential energizers and drivers of progress and the essential components of superstructures. Investing private and public capital into the arts and culture through a socio-systemic interface of impact and holistic development domain enables innovative employment generator, and method for humanity's evolution.

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\* National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/>

- **Peace, Security and Disarmament** — The necessary expansion of the notion of security from national to human security through the arts and culture would involve cultivating and promoting intercommunal, interregional, multinational and global artistic collaboration as a proven way of culture sharing, conflict resolution and peace-building. Focusing on universal, life-supporting messages from local to global levels by producing multimedia and multi-cultural events, exhibitions and projects would be one of the efficient ways to spread the message and mobilize the will.
- **Energy, Ecology and Climate** — Through the arts, we can quickly disseminate the environmental message on nature as our commons and on our responsibility to generations after us as stewards of the commons, steering away from the culture of exploitation and consumerism toward the culture of contribution and creativity.
- **Governance, Democracy, Human Rights** — For revision and transformation of regulations and norms in the domains of policy making, socio-economic justice and human rights, engaging the arts as a knowledge system means the challenging and changing institutional norms goes hand in hand.
- **New Story and New Social Architecture** — For the building of a new social system, the arts are most effective for the creation and dissemination of the new global cultural meme for co-creating a new planetary story which can sit at the heart of a new planetary system.

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*“Integral transformative strategies enable us to implement a systemic engagement of the arts as a live, living social-knowledge system and engage methods which can re-order our social knowledge and transform our institutions within a planetary framework rather than national agenda unequipped to address the interconnected nature of our global challenges.”*

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How does a cultural meme change? What is the language of change? For a change which seeks to humanise, to reinvent ourselves and our world from one which divides and dehumanises to one which humanises and lives in line with planetary ecosystems rather than national boundaries, what is needed is the systemic engagement of the arts. As a symbolic language, the arts have the capacity to unify on a broader scale and permeate the social fabric the fastest. Just like language, information, or money, its symbolic power lies in its ethereal essence that can be exchanged and spread quickly with most transformative impact. The arts, however, humanize the value of the other symbolic powers such as information and money. Not only do the arts have their symbolic power but have the power to transform other symbolic forms. That is why it has the capacity to multiply and accelerate both their impact and the overall social transformation.

We cannot tell a new story with the same language of predominantly quantitative, commodified and divisive methods of development. Systemically engaging the arts provides us with a new language because it is a living language embedded with new and renewing values. While other symbols quantify values, the arts express the qualitative development of our values and generate new ones. A society that invests in the arts gets renewed holistically.

The arts embody an empowering paradox. They are not of the additive or linear order. Just like finer qualities and values of trust, love, and wisdom, art is governed by a paradoxical principle by which it multiplies by division—it exponentially grows by sharing. It is in this very principle that its transformative power lies. It is a system of a different order which rests on values of a different order. Understanding and consciously applying its qualities can engender a values revolution and social transformation.

We need qualitatively finer properties to meet the challenges, recognize the opportunities and enact the change at the higher level of order. Toward that order, the future leadership and the future of leadership is the one who understands the value of the arts, invests in them, promotes them, supports them and consciously applies them. This is the strategy for the long-term qualitative change for exponential development.

By understanding the arts as a social knowledge system, we can create frameworks and build new architectures which focus on developing a co-created body of knowledge rather than a fixed, propagated narrative. Integral transformative strategies enable us to implement a systemic engagement of the arts as a live, living social-knowledge system and engage methods which can re-order our social knowledge and transform our institutions within a planetary framework rather than national agenda unequipped to address the interconnected nature of our global challenges.

Correlation, cooperation and contribution are at the core of an integral framework. One which a) enables us to unlock and engage with the transformative powers of the arts and culture; b) enables us to multiply, accelerate and scale out their impact; and c) works to harmonise planetary ecosystems and global societies.

## **9. A Values Revolution**

The above integral strategies result in a values revolution. Generating new value and value shifts through such a revolution sourced in empathy reconnects, rethinks and refines practices of education, economy, finance, governance, security, health and wellbeing. The transformation of our value system stems from the mutually reproductive and reinforcing loop of our beliefs as cultural currency; language as symbolic currency; and money as financial currency.

Dominator systems have been properly described as societies that are either preparing for war or recovering from war. Such societies elevate the values of destruction and violence over values of nurturing and peace. We have only to look at what the USA spends on what it identifies as defence to see where its values lie, since the amount of money a society spends on something is a measure of its worth in that society. The amount spent on weapons every

minute could feed two thousand malnourished children for a year, while the price of one military tank could provide classrooms for thirty thousand students.\*

By choosing to invest in the arts, we are choosing to invest in the human being. We are saying that we value our inner worlds, inner guidance, and the holistic nature of our beings. A systemic engagement of the arts seeks the aligning of social and natural systems. It makes intersectionality and institutional incentives explicit. It prioritises the systemic, integral wellbeing of both humanity and the planet. It explicitly states its values and works in context through communities of practice to cultivate these values and grow them through embodied communication.†

## 10. Transformative Ecosystem – New Social Architecture

An empathetic revolution, as a movement of shared social sentiment, initiates a values revolution—the expression of that movement through the shift in consciousness, culture and capital; creating an autopoietic, transformative ecosystem. The arts set the autopoietic process in motion; as an integral language, they initiate and sustain the transformative process that is the generator of systems change. The lifelines of a ‘transformative ecosystem’ emerge from its purpose of regeneration, vision and values born of empathetic awareness. It chooses its evolution and, hence, does not evolve by mere necessity but by conscious choice. It is transformative because of how it grows and where it focuses its life force, by transforming the dysfunctional parts and growing/regenerating through integral strategies.

Characteristics of a transformative ecosystem are:

- Re-architecting and conscious re-designing—new ways of organising life and society through integral strategies;
- Addressing dysfunctions and regenerating for the aligning of social and natural systems;
- Self-generating and self-illuminating system of inter-awareness.‡

As an integral language initiating a transformational ecosystem, the arts transcend the dualistic nature of cognition with which we order our reality, transmuting suffering and conflict into new intelligences and engaging processes of re-ordering. This is the creative means by which the new paradigm of human development is generated and designed. Thus, the systemic engagement of the arts results in its threefold purpose and impact of

1. **Developing New Processes of Social Learning**—collective learning process continually evolving through multidirectional exchange of knowledge and feedback;
2. **Activating Global Social Leadership**—evolving collective forms of self-organization beyond current systemic boundaries for new forms of social order;

\* Data from Oxfam America, accessed September 6, 2020, <https://www.oxfam.org/en>

† Prioritizing human wellbeing and evolution have been demonstrated in different indices of progress such as the index of human happiness in the progressive development orientation of countries such as Bhutan and different economics such as the notion of ‘self-actualizing economy’ promoted by the Millennium Project.

‡ The fine distinction here is that such a system is autopoietic without being autistic, without replicating the malaise of the individualistic societies, but rather developing and self-regenerating through finer awareness of vital interdependencies.

3. **Building New Social Architectures**—re-ordering of relationships, communications, values exchange, and knowledge creation and transmission in a system of better harmonized natural and cultural environments.

## 11. Arts for the Future and the Future of Arts

The Arts and culture are essential nourishment of the human spirit to survive and create new meaning. As such, they are vital for survival, for which the human spirit needs to be sustained and uplifted to persevere through evolutionary processes. The future will arise from the quality of our being and quality of human decision, born from our capacity to respond and make sense out of our crisis and our creative resilience to regenerate our society and reinvent the future. The systemic engagement of the arts is the language and means for this process of systems change,\* regeneration and pathway into the future. The arts will develop the new imaginings with vital contributions to the quality of life and quality of being, generating it and sustaining it. There is no future without them.

With growing technological advances, the arts will have ever increasing role and value† for human development and aligning of social and natural systems. Through a systemic engagement of the arts we can protect socio-cultural diversity whilst promoting universal values, thus humanely diversifying globalization.

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\* Systems change initiated through an empathetic revolution manifests as a values revolution and engages the practice of sustainable values implemented through a new social architecture. The current international structures mandated with the realization of the SDGs need to mobilize global social leadership and planetary consciousness. They need to create the conditions for the systemic engagement of the arts by integral policies, funding, promotion and upholding the framework of an arts based transformative practice.

† According to The Millennium Project on Arts, Media, Entertainment from 2011; ‘arts, media and entertainment have a huge influence on the future. Not only can these powerful tools of transformation inform and influence humanity’s understanding of itself, they can also aid in the evolutionary process of a more evolved future by creating better visions of a more humane future, socially beneficial creative projects and stories.’

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