



PARTICIPANTS IN THE ST DENIS SEMINAR, 29 MARCH 2023

‘Co-creation and Inclusion’

Seminar on music and social inclusion,
St Denis, France, 28-30 March 2023



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'CO-CREATION AND INCLUSION' SEMINAR REPORT

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1 EJN SEMINARS ON SOCIAL INCLUSION

1.1 BACKGROUND

As society recovers from the effects of the pandemic and the economic challenges provoked by Russia's war in Ukraine, the question of social inclusion only grows in importance. Europe Jazz Network (EJN) has continued to promote the practice to its members through annual activities and sharing knowledge of successful projects.

EJN began a new programme to support this work with a seminar in Barcelona on 25 March 2022. A second seminar was held in St Denis (France) on 28 and 29 March 2023, in partnership with Banlieues Bleues, with a particular focus on co-creation—the practice of involving non-professional artists directly in artistic creation, rather than as audiences. A third and final seminar will be held in Lisbon in March 2024, contributing to the drafting of a handbook of examples and recommendations for jazz promoters seeking to integrate social inclusion projects in their work.

1.2 THE ST DENIS SEMINAR

The second annual meeting was held in St Denis, just outside Paris city centre on 28 and 29 March 2023, in partnership with Banlieues Bleues. The first of these dates coincided with street protests and strike action in France, which caused delays and prevented some French participants from attending on the second day of the seminar.

The focus of the second seminar was on co-creation, the practice of professional artists working on an equal basis with non-professional artists to create new art together. This is different from what professionals create because it invites new voices, sensibilities and issues. The practice is old but it has a new urgency at a time of cultural, technological and social change. But since co-creation involves sharing the power of cultural creation it brings risks of inequality and exploitation.

- What kind of artistic creation is offered, to whom and on what terms?
- What ethical and artistic responsibilities do professional artists have when they invite others to join them on a stage?
- How should we think about the results or assess its quality?

The seminar was jointly promoted with Banlieues Bleues and explored these themes through case studies, including the recently completed opera co-creation project, *Traction*, which was funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Research Programme.

2 THE SEMINAR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The seminar was held in the Council Chamber of the Mairie of St Denis, a room whose formality presented some obstacles. There were about 30 participants, in addition to the speakers and EJN staff. This was about the maximum that could be accommodated without breakout groups and the decision was taken to keep everyone together with the room laid out in a broad oval so that everyone could see each other. The participants were mostly producers, and mostly experienced in their field, though not necessarily in projects intended to diversify audiences and support social inclusion. They represented organisations from across Europe.

2.2 CO-CREATION IN A PORTUGUESE PRISON, PAULO LAMEIRO

The seminar began at 3pm on Tuesday 28 March, and the first afternoon focused on the experience of the Traction project in Paulo Lameiro and François Matarasso had been partners. The project had involved the co-creation of three new operas—at the Liceu Opera House in Barcelona, in a Virtual Reality format in Ireland, and in a youth prison in Leiria, Portugal. Paulo began the session by presenting the opera in the prison, which was the latest phase of a long commitment by SAMP, the music school of which he was the director. The Traction opera was different because it was the first time that the inmates were involved in the co-creation of a new opera, rather than performing Mozart as in the past.

The project involved three composers and librettist, working with the experienced musicians and educators of SAMP and, as the production developed, other professional artists including the Gulbenkian Orchestra, which performed in the four performances in June 2022. It was developed during the Covid pandemic, which presented many difficulties, but work continued except when there was an outbreak of Covid in the prison. In fact, it was the only activity to continue uninterrupted in a Portuguese prison at the time. Over the three years there were over 180 co-creation sessions, involving more than 100 inmates, guards, other prison staff and relatives of the detainees. In the final performances, there were 28 inmates (14 on stage and 14 performing via video link from another part of the prison) and about 20 relatives who took part.

The work was very well received and has attracted the support of the Ministers of Justice and Culture. However, Paulo was clear about the many tensions and risks involved. There are important successes, in terms of young people establishing productive lives after release, but there have also been former inmates who have been killed outside the prison. He

also stressed the long-term nature of the work and the specific context of being in a small city that is also his own home. The SAMP team spend a lot of time socialising with guards to ensure that they felt appreciated and included in the project. The success of the project depends on a deep understanding of the context, situation and needs of the different individuals and groups involved.

2.3 CO-CREATION PRINCIPLES, FRANÇOIS MATARASSO

The legacy of Traction includes a website www.co-art.eu which presents all three operas, and a rich body of resources including videos of performances and interviews, open-source software used in the co-creation process, programmes and other guidance materials. One key document is a book about [Co-Creating Opera: Guidance from the Traction Project](#), which describes the process and the thinking behind it. It is available free from the website. The book sets out seven principles of co-creation, or ideas against which to test practice, and remind people of the values on which good co-creation depends. François Matarasso, who was the main writer of the book, outlined these principles:

AWARE	because a conscious, informed understanding of people, context and actions is the foundation of good co-creation
EQUAL	because each participant has the same right to contribute to co-creation
AMBITIOUS	because everyone deserves to benefit from the best process, artistic work and human outcomes
HONEST	because integrity is the foundation of trust, learning and empowerment
RESPONSIVE	because complex situations require flexibility to meet changing needs and opportunities
PATIENT	because relationships, learning and growth all take the time they take
HOPEFUL	because hope in uncertainty enables us to work towards the outcomes we want

This presentation was followed by a general discussion, in which EJM members and other participants responded to the experiences that had been presented and shared some of their own experiences of co-creation and social inclusion projects.

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF CO-CREATION, FRANÇOIS MATARASSO

The following day began with a presentation about the importance of co-creation to prepare for the case studies that would occupy the rest of the day. François Matarasso began by reminding participants that co-creation could be understood as the creation of art by professional and non-professional artists, and that this necessarily involved a sharing of power. He then introduced the concept of a spectrum of co-creation, developed in the

context of Traction, which placed projects where professionals were in total control at one end and those where non-professionals were in control at the other end. Co-creation sits somewhere between these poles, but projects can move along the spectrum, for instance because the non-professional artists gain more confidence to express their opinions. He suggested that most cultural inclusion projects were close to the professional control end of the spectrum, since they were developed by professional artists who then invited other people to participate in a frame that was already defined.

He then considered a range of problems with these inclusion projects. From a political perspective, they tended to reinforce social and economic distinctions in culture, since they generally had an intention of doing some good to the participants (though they might not be aware of it). That in itself raised several ethical problems for the artists who were supposed to achieve those goals, the most obvious being their right to determine what change someone else needs and to try to bring it about. Finally, there are artistic problems because even if it were acceptable for politicians to direct artists to create social change in the people they work with, it is impossible. Artists can never control how their work is received or what effect it has on people, as the artistic and financial disaster of the 2019 film *Cats* amply demonstrates.

He went on to consider alternative justifications for including people in co-creation work, citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states in Article 27.i, that "Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts." He touched on democratic and social justice arguments before explaining that the Traction project had adapted the Capabilities Approach of Amartya Sen and others as the framework for its co-creation work. He cited the work of Martha Nussbaum in this context:

Capabilities are the answers to the question, 'What is this person able to do and to be?' They are not just abilities residing inside a person but also the freedoms or opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social, and economic environment

Martha Nussbaum, Creating Capabilities (2011)

These ideas are still evolving and he was careful to explain that they were not a definitive answer to the questions raised but perhaps a direction to be explored.

2.5 ACTIONS MUSICALES OF BANLIEUES BLEUES, XAVIER LEMETTRE

Xavier Lemettre briefly introduced the history of Banlieues Bleues, founded in 1983 by several municipalities in Seine Saint Denis as an independent organisation to bring great artists to perform outside the city centre. The spring Festival is a high point of the year, but the organisation, which has 15 staff and an annual budget of €2.2 million, is active in programming throughout the year, both in its own venue (La Dynamo) and in municipal concert halls. In the 1990s, an important new strand was added to the work in the Actions Musicales (a

name inspired by a scene in *Weekend* by Jean-Luc Godard). The music has been jazz, but not only jazz: it had to be an inclusive. It drew also on the oral practices common in black music and today, half of the programme is not strictly jazz at all. The Actions Musicales aim to connect French and international artists with new audiences and participants in range of musical activities. They have been successful, and popular, and seminar participants would be able to see the latest of these initiatives, 'La tribu éphémère', at the end of the day.

2.6 UNION CHAPEL, MICHAEL CHANDLER

Michael Chandler is the first Chief Executive of Union Chapel, an organisation that combines being a major London venue, especially for folk music, a charity supporting homeless and other vulnerable people in the local community, a participatory arts centre and a church. It relies principally on income from concerts and has hosted artists such as Elton John and Amy Winehouse as well as being a venue for the London Jazz Festival. Support for local people includes a running a drop-in service three times a week, offering food, advice and training. They have an employment programme using their own catering facilities, and more than 50% of staff have lived experience of homelessness.

The Covid pandemic caused a major crisis that nearly saw the organisation close when money from concerts stopped overnight. But local needs were growing, so the staff changed direction and turned a space into a food bank. Union Chapel operated outside and was one of few services to stay open, rather than go remote or online. The change has also led to more co-created work with the community, including training young people in legislative theatre: they presented a play for local councillors and staff, which has led to the town hall agreeing new commitments for homelessness and mental health support. Also New Voices, for young musicians. Now they are represented on Union chapel management. At the same time, they innovated in music presentation, becoming the first UK venue to host ticketed live streaming with Laura Marling and building an online audience of 1.1 million people in 2020. They also promoted events around Climate Change and Black Lives Matter events.

The new direction Union Chapel is taking is important for three reasons.

- Need: the numbers using the drop-in service have grown from 30 people a day before the pandemic to between 60 and 90 people a day now.
- Responsibility: Union Chapel has resources, history and stage to give marginalised people a platform that can amplify their and influence local social policy
- Opportunity: they are getting new, bigger and more diverse audiences, because they have changed programming with artists who represent the local community. That has brought more supporters, including charitable trusts and foundations, raising £700,000 in 2020 when they thought they would have to close.

It is not easy to balance, as needs rise and funding falls, and they have not been able to move as fast as they wished. But they are committed to the long term change of direction

towards being a venue that is itself the result of co-creation, not only with the professional artists who work there but with the community they serve.

2.7 THE MESSENGERS, SIGRÚN SÆVARSDÓTTIR-GRIFFITHS

Sigrún Sævarsdóttir-Griffiths is a jazz musician and part-time teacher at Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. She began her presentation by affirming her belief in the transformative power of music, and spoke about two projects that illustrate that in co-creation. She founded The Messengers in October 2012 bringing together students at the Guildhall School with people who had experienced homelessness. It is not necessary to have musical skill or knowledge to join the group, which works entirely through co-creation. All the music they play is developed in rehearsal: the only rule is that nothing can be brought in from outside the group. The band performs regularly, including at prestigious venues like Jazz Café and the Barbican and it has recorded with Luaka Bop.

The second project is called Kordia Samfonia and was established in Reykjavik in 2021. It is a 35-piece band, of music students and people in recovery from a range of crises. Some of them have been musicians but at least six members of the band never held an instrument before. Again, all the music is co-created and they played their first hour long performance, based on nine days work, just three months after their creation. That was recorded as their debut album and the concert was nominated as an Icelandic event of the year. Both bands use the same method, meeting for short intensive blocks of time, two or three times a year for three or four days, The composition process is a mix of whole band jamming, collective improvisation, smaller group commissions, sectionals responding to particular need. Sigrún's leadership role combines hands-on moments, where she is responding to the material the group has given her, hands off but at the opposite end people go out of the room, and periods of negotiation. Crucially, everyone knows that they have the right to suggest ideas: it's an open space for input.

She spoke also about the sensitivities of collaboration: for instance, new students think they know how to make music and need to learn that co-creation is a different process. People also needs to consider when and how to offer creative input to the group. In Iceland, they have created a traineeship scheme with three mentees, all in recovery from trauma. They have group mentoring, individual sessions, a leadership training weekend, and paid opportunities to work. All three people report feeling feel more confidence and having a more positive view of the future; they are taking practical steps to support their development, and have improved mental health.

2.8 LE VAISSEAU MÈRE, T.I.E.

T.I.E (Take It Easy) is a Senegalese French artist who spoke about two community residencies she has undertaken with Banlieues Bleues. The first was a ten week project with women at the Maison d'Arrêt de Fresnes, one of the largest prisons in the region. She worked with

a small group of women, with the aim of building their sense of confidence and autonomy, drawing on experiences of women and power from her own background. There were two sessions of two hours or more every week, which T.I.E. delivered with other artists that she had confidence in. They wrote letters about suffering which they could share or keep private, as well as work on body consciousness, before finally taking portraits of the women wearing hare masks. There was some conflict and the project was suspended for a time, but resolutions were found and it was completed with a musical performance for other inmates and the director. For T.I.E. it was a very powerful experience and she felt a loss when the project was over.

Le Vaisseau Mère, the other project about which she spoke, culminated in an interactive performance in the cultural Centre of, La Courneuve as part of the 2022 Banlieues Bleues Festival. She worked with five community groups of men and women aged between 14 and 60, including people with learning disabilities young dancers and performers to question the notion of gender as a construct. There were six workshops in sound creation, poetry and music, theatre, singing, dance and movement. Everyone took part in the visual creation workshop, based on augmented photographs and video projection. The final performance was very well received.

2.9 OSTRAKINDA ET 'LA TRIBU ÉPHÉMÈRE'

Ostrakinda are a three-piece group, who perform jazz improvisation: Olivier Lété (electric bass), Aymeric Avice (trumpet) and Toma Gouband (percussions). 'La Tribu Éphémère' is a project with three parts, undertaken with Banlieues Bleues over three years in different towns of Seine Saint Denis. The project in 2022 included several groups from Tremblay en France, including children, elders, adults with disabilities and others. There were a total of 125 participants, predominantly female, 97 women, of whom 53 performed on stage. Artists worked to make three large tapestries with kids and seniors on the theme of the forest. The involvement of facilitators from the social centres was crucial. Many things were unpredictable, but it began to be very lively. Two classes began to build their own monochord guitars, and these were taken forward into the final year.

The third project was in Bobigny, where the musicians and Banlieues Bleues have led 30 sessions with school students and adults in different social entities. As with all stages of the project, they have had to overcome many obstacles and communication is a central issue. The performance itself is a very important moment, the climax of the work. The artists want it to be very strong, so there and there can be some tension in the period leading up to it as a result because the non-professionals are not familiar with such demands. The performance took place at the Salle Pablo Neruda and was attended by many of the families of the participants. The artists performed the foundations of the music, and everyone improvised around that. At the end of the evening, there was evident pride among the performers and their families at what had been achieved.

The seminar ended with a short meeting with Olivier Lété and the visual artist who had worked with him on the project so that some of the participants who were able to stay to hear their perspective on what they had done. He explained that they had done work 8-10 workshops with each group, using guitar and percussion. They began with a simple game of percussion and slowly they created something. Everybody did more or less the same thing, like a choir, but with choice to vary about their own contribution. It was the mass of the sound that was important to Olivier. The groups were separate, each one working with an artist, and only came together in the last three days. For the team behind the artists, it was a lot of work but the final performance exceeded their expectations.

The seminar participants expressed their appreciation of the quality of the previous night's performance and congratulated the artists and Banlieues Bleues on the achievement.

3 APPENDIX

3.1 SPEAKERS

Michael Chandler

Michael Chandler is currently the CEO of [Union Chapel](#), the world-famous London venue which also operates a homeless project and growing community/social justice programmes co-created with the local community. He is also founder of ASC Agency, supporting arts organisations to do more around arts for social change and community cocreation; and will shortly be the CEO of [Groundswell](#), which cocreates programmes with people with experience of homelessness, amplifying their voices to change policy. Michael started out as a DJ, music producer and film-maker before working in homeless and community organisations combining arts and social justice. Michael was Acting CEO/Director of Social Change at homeless theatre company [Cardboard Citizens](#), which used Forum Theatre to change lives and policy; and founded the charity [WAYout Arts](#) in Sierra Leone, empowering street youth through music, poetry, film and media projects.

Paulo Lameiro

A Portuguese musicologist, educator and communicator from Leiria. After a brief career as a Baritone, with solo performances at the São Carlos National Theatre in Lisbon, he dedicated himself to teaching and took on the administration of several music schools, including the Conservatório Nacional de Lisboa (Lisbon National Conservatory) and the SAMP arts school in the village of Pousos. It's from this village, where he was born, that he has been developing, since 1992, projects of artistic production and education for early childhood. More recently, he became involved in artistic practices with the community, with projects such as making opera Prison, projects with elders, and work with Roma communities. He was a founding member the Scientific Council of the Institute of Ethnomusicology at Universidade Nova de Lisboa and published articles in several journals. In 2018 he assumed the executive coordination of Rede Cultura, having been the responsible for the application of Leiria for European Capital of Culture 2027.

Sigrún Sævarsdóttir-Griffiths

Sigrún Sævarsdóttir-Griffiths is a musician, educator and music leader, working within higher education, artistic and community contexts, across the UK, Europe, the US and Asia. For 12 years, Sigrun was Course Leader of the Masters in Leadership Programme at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she continues to lecture and lead artistic work. Sigrun is founder and artistic director of MetamorPhonics, an award winning Community Interest Company, establishing performing and recording musical bands in collaboration with higher education institutions, occupation rehabilitation centres and homeless charities

in London, Leicester, Los Angeles and Iceland. Sigrun is passionate about enabling music making and access to the arts as an essential, unifying element of life, in every community.

T.I.E. (Take It Easy)

I imagined a performance/concert that could combine singing, music, dance, and video projections, about the identity and gender issues, with people from the territories of the biggest department of the north of Paris. Where, the population has a difficult access to art and culture, and, faces a lot of discrimination based on their cultural origins. Therefore I associated multidisciplinary feminine artists from my collective Les Femmes Sauvages to do so. This is how the proposal for musical actions on the territory, discussed with the crew of la Dynamo for this residency, were transformed into an ambitious collaborative creation that would approach, through the eyes and stories of the participants, the theme of the feminine and the masculine. *Le Vaisseau Mère*, the title of this interactive show, took place in Houdremont, La Courneuve Cultural Centre as part of the 39th edition of the Banlieues Bleues Festival. A partnership with the cultural Centre Houdremont of la Courneuve, enabled us to identify and involve in the creative process five groups from the social field, made up of men and women of different generations from 14 to 60 years old, in their diversity (adults with mental handicap, young krump dancers, young comedians...) They were invited to question the notion of gender as a construct, through the various artistic workshops offered by « les femmes sauvages », under my artistic direction. There were six workshops, from sound creation from objects, poetry and music, theatre, quantum singing, dance and movement. The visual creation workshop, based on augmented photographs and video projection was transversal to all the groups (60 persons) and constituted one of the common threads of the final performance.

François Matarasso

François Matarasso has worked in community arts since 1981 as an artist, writer, researcher, teacher and policy-maker. His 1997 report, ‘Use or Ornament?’, established influential concepts in cultural policy and evaluation. Between 2011 and 2015 he produced a series of books on undervalued areas of cultural life under the collective title ‘Regular Marvels’. His latest book ‘A Restless Art – How participation won and why it matters’, was published in 2019. He has worked in about 40 countries and held honorary professorships in the UK and Australia. He was a partner in [Traction](#) (2020-22) which researched how technology can support social inclusion through opera co-creation.

3.2 SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Ade Monterreal	Clasijazz	Spain
Alex Green	Serious Events / EFG London Jazz Festival	UK
Alexandria Carr	B:Music	UK
Ángel Luis Vicente Rodríguez	PJE Plataforma Jazz España	Spain
Bogdan Vaida	FAPTE Association	Romania
Cagil Ozdemir	Bozcaada Jazz Festival	Turkey

Candela Carrera Argibay	Taller de Músics / JAZZ I AM	Spain
Carlos Martins	Festa do Jazz	Portugal
Cleo Janse	Ha Concerts	Belgium
Cristina Fina	Puglia sounds - Consorzio Teatro Pubblico Pugliese	Italy
Daniel Ryciak	Silesian Jazz Club Music Association	Poland
Davide Grosso	IMC International Music Council	Italy
Emanuele Meschini	NovaraJazz	Italy
Ernst Wiggo Sandbakk	Trondheim Jazzfestival	Norway
Filippo d'Urzo	Empoli Jazz Festival	Italy
Gaëlle Audouard	Banlieues Bleues	France
Hanna Etzold	Womex/Piranha Arts	Germany
Ingrid Dyrnes Svendsen	Østnorsk Jazzsenter	Norway
Ingun Sand	Østnorsk Jazzsenter	Norway
Iselin Isungset	Nasjonalt jazzscene	Norway
Itamar Bernstein	Synthesizer	Israel
Kari-Grete Jacobsen	Østnorsk Jazzsenter	Norway
Khalid Laaouam	Østnorsk Jazzsenter	Norway
Klim Gaikalov	Ha Concerts	Belgium
Martyna van Nieuwland	Katowice Miasto Ogrodów	Poland
Mattias Laga	Ha Concerts	Belgium
Meda Corovei	FAPTE Association	Romania
Mehdi Marechal	Ha Concerts	Belgium
Nigel Slee	Jazz North	UK
Pasquale Mirra	Musician/Playground	Italy
Paulo Lameiro	speaker	Portugal
Qlaez Wennberg	Göteborg Artist Center (GAC)	Sweden
Roger Lygre Solvang	Bergen Jazzforum	Norway
Sandra Marschutz	Banlieues Bleues	France
Siri Kvambe	Østnorsk Jazzsenter	Norway
Wim Wabbes	Ha Concerts	Belgium
Xavier Lemette	Banlieues Bleues	France
François Matarasso	Speaker/Moderator/Reporter	France
Francesca Cerretani	EJN	Italy
Giambattista Tofoni	EJN	Italy