



Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

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PREFACE

This thesis paper is presented with the goal of completing the master's program of Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. It has also presented many more opportunities beyond its academic aims. By undertaking an international masters program I have gained the unique opportunity of dedicating one year of my life to a topic that I am truly passionate about. Being able to take the time to learn as much as possible about arts and culture is not something one can do very often. Therefore, this experience has opened up my mind not only to broad and fascinating topic of open collaboration, but greater perception of how important it is to pursue one's curiosity. For me, staying in the comfort of Toronto, surrounded by family and friends and in a secure position as an advertising executive, would have never allowed me to open up my way of thinking about what is possible. Art and culture has always been something I have been passionate about, but not until this degree and the time I took to dedicate to this paper, did I realize that this is something I can build my life around. For this opportunity, I am extremely thankful. I have been able to explore open collaboration from many different perspectives, I have met fascinating people who have changed my way of thinking, and I have been able to form a foundation for a career in the arts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who greatly contributed to my research. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Diane Ragsdale. Her knowledge, flexibility and unique perspective were inspiring and motivating and have shaped my perception of the arts. I would also like to thank Diane for believing in me enough to put me in touch with some prominent and accomplished arts professionals, whom I had the great opportunity of interviewing for my research. I would also like to take the time to thank Victoria Littler, who was a great help in connecting me with extremely helpful museum professionals in Toronto. Furthermore, I am truly thankful to all interviewees that took the time from their busy schedules to speak with me, openly and candidly. Without them this research would have not been possible. The results of these interviews have been transcribed and are available in the researcher's archive. Finally, I would also like to thank my second reader, Marilena Vecco for her continued support throughout the year.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to explore the concept of open collaboration in the context of the visual arts field. The paper focuses on understanding if open collaboration manifests itself in fine arts museums in North America, and if so, how it is structured and motivated. Furthermore, an understanding is developed for how organizations and stakeholders are affected by the practice of open collaboration. The paper addresses these topics by studying, through the qualitative case study approach, two major fine arts museums in North America and how they approach collaboration within the organization. The data source is comprised of exploratory and in-depth interviews with twelve practicing arts professionals from major arts institutions. Interviews are supplemented with a comprehensive document review from the museums used in the case studies.

Results suggest that the open-source paradigm has affected the way collaboration is perceived in the visual arts field. Museums are more so inclined than in previous years to undertake instances of collaboration and are driven by five major motivations to do so. The motivational factors behind open collaboration in the context of museums are: a desire to remain relevant in the age of online participatory culture; adapting to a shifting museum value proposition model; a desire to proactively evaluate museum practices; a drive to create a common good; and a practical need for resources and sustainability. Moreover, it emerges that the main effect of undertaking instances of open collaboration is that its practice influences other ways of operating or relating at the organization. However, limited empirical evidence is found to understand how the public is affected, since audiences were not included in the study sample and no concrete success measures were implemented by museums in order to understand the benefits of open collaboration on audiences. This presents a limitation in the study and an area for future research.

Since open collaboration is a new phenomenon in academic research, limited empirical studies have been done to describe its structure. For this reason, this paper applies the open innovation model to open collaboration, in order to identify the main characteristics and understand how they function in the context of museums. By illustrating two cases of closed and open collaboration in fine art museums, this paper fills a gap in academic research by creating an understanding for how different structures of collaboration are manifested in cultural institutions and what motivations are behind them. Furthermore, managerial implications are presented for implementing open collaboration within the context of a fine art museum.

KEYWORDS

Collective Creativity, Open Innovation, Open Collaboration, Museums, Motivation, Audience Engagement

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

What does it mean for a museum to exist in a world dominated by participatory culture? With mission statements that often include objectives like: “to engage and address challenging issues and themes relevant to our times” (Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art [MOCCA], 2013), “to examine the questions that shape and inspire us as individuals, cultures, and communities” (Walker Art Center [Walker], 2013) and “to ignite shared experiences and unexpected connections” (Santa Cruz Museum, 2013), museums are looking inward at how their strategies and structures support the communities they serve. In order to be a place central to contemporary community life, museums strive to engage their audiences with culture in a meaningful and relevant way. The notion of relevance is also changing in the context of the digital age. Mass technological dependency and the interconnectivity of web 2.0 create new possibilities for the way people connect, interact and organize themselves around their interests. So how does this affect museum mandates to engage communities and ignite unique experiences with cultural content? While museums are concentrating on becoming thriving community centres, audiences are looking elsewhere for cultural engagement. Over the last two decades museum attendance has decreased in Canada (Hill Strategies Research, 2003) and the United States (National Endowment for the Arts, 2008). Audiences are attending museums less and instead engaging in more informal cultural experiences like: concerts, festivals and live openings. They are also more than ever sharing their experiences with each other, both online and offline. The participatory culture of today is therefore challenging traditional museum systems and getting arts professionals to consider how they can reconnect with audiences and provide a valuable experience in the context of the current participatory world.

Online tools and communities have empowered audiences to challenge the status quo in many industries and become the drivers of innovation. The era of open-source technology has changed the way individuals organize themselves around knowledge (Budhathoki & Haythornthwaite, 2012). Audiences are no longer seen as passive,

awaiting the next idea to be pushed down to them; instead they actively seek out chances to participate with the issues they care about. Based on values of transparency, participation and collaboration, open-source ideologies have become a disruptive force in many disciplines like technology, government and education. Museums are taking notice that a fundamental shift is occurring and are beginning to investigate how open models can manifest within the context of the institution. The traditional museum model is closed in structure, where curators hold proprietary knowledge and are responsible for disseminating expert opinions in the field. Museums contend they provide civic value by educating audiences on how to understand and engage with culture. Yet more often than not, this position is being challenged and is considerably less relevant given the current way audiences engage with culture both online and offline. For many museums this has created a desire to work more collaboratively, raising questions like: what types of platforms can support open models in the context of the museum? How will museum systems change by adopting an open philosophy? Who are the stakeholders that will participate? And who are the ultimate beneficiaries? Therefore, the goal of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of open collaboration and how, if at all, it manifests itself within the context of a fine arts museum. If so, the study will strive to understand how museums are adopting practices of open collaboration, and how its practice affects the organization and stakeholders involved.

1.2. Research Focus and Relevance

The introduction raises questions about how fine arts museums are approaching collaboration in light of the changing cultural landscape influenced by online participatory culture. Therefore, the central research questions to this study are:

RQ1: How is open collaboration structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums?

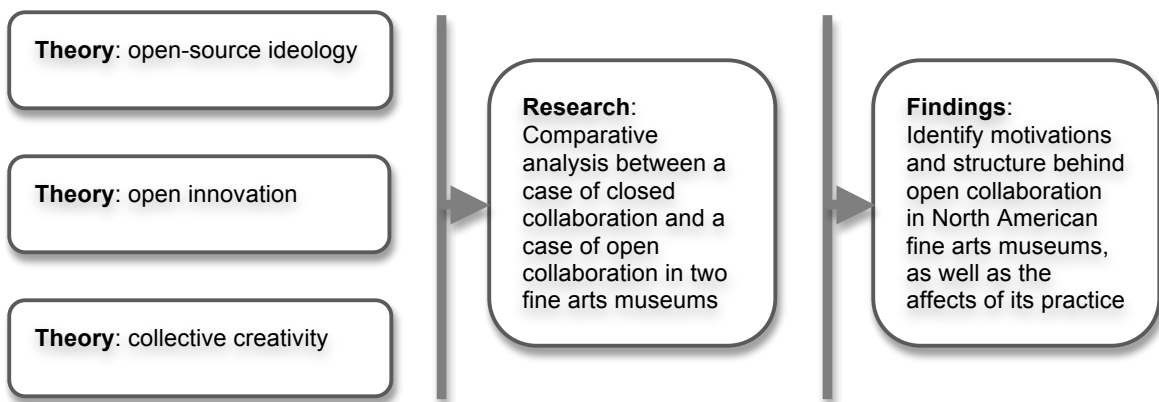
RQ2: How does its practice affect the actors involved as well as the public?

By answering these questions this study will form practical knowledge around how to implement enhanced collaborative initiatives and incorporate open structures in

traditionally closed museum models. Collaboration in museums has increased dramatically in recent years and has become an important strategic element for connecting with audiences. However it is still largely under-researched in the academic field. While many studies explain the importance and proliferation of these processes, few try to understand what types of motivations are behind them and under which structures they occur within museums. This study will therefore extend the understanding of open collaboration - mapping characteristics, motivations, challenges and implications in order to illustrate their complex social and organizational structures. Through this investigation, implications for arts institutions will be derived and recommendations will be made.

1.3. Methodological Approach

The main research questions are studied through the case study approach, focusing on cases of closed and open collaboration in two fine arts museums in Canada and the United States. The methodological approach to this study relies primarily on qualitative field research and a comprehensive document analysis. First, a series of exploratory interviews reveal a context for how collaboration is currently perceived in the visual arts field. From there two cases are selected for comparative analysis. The data collected is set against the context of previous research on open collaboration in order to provide a theoretical framework for the study. The chart below summarizes the methodological approach to this study.



1.4. Structure of the Study

This study is structured in chapters presenting the key components of research. First, a comprehensive Literature Review is offered, analyzing the academic research conducted to date on collaborations in museums. Since limited research on open collaboration exists, related literature on open-source, open innovation and collective creativity is included. This is followed by the Research Design chapter of the study, identifying key criteria for case selection and the approach to data collection. Based on the criteria presented in the Literature Review and the methodological approach, three cases are selected and presented in the Case Study section of the report. The goal in analyzing each case is to fully understand the features of open collaboration and the motivational factors behind adopting its practice within the organization. From these cases important similarities, differences and implications are determined and outlined, presented in the Discussion section of the paper, along with relevant recommendations and avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the concept of ‘open collaboration’ in fine art museums and to gain a holistic understanding of the motivations and structures behind it. However, since open collaboration in museums is a relatively new phenomenon, limited empirical research has been done to date. For this reason surrounding studies of open-source movements, theory on the commons, open innovation models and collective creativity and will be referenced. The chapter will conclude with an overview of how collaboration is currently approached within museums, followed by case studies in the subsequent chapter to specifically examine instances of open collaboration within the context of fine art museums. By reviewing the existing literature and empirical research on collaboration, a context will be established for the purpose of identifying the forms of relationships that exist in contemporary visual arts practice and exhibition.

First, a clear definition of collaboration is required from which more open structures are derived. Collaboration is a widely used concept in many disciplines – from business management to social science. Collaboration within the context of the visual arts focuses on instances of conscious partnerships that take place between diverse stakeholders, such as: artists, curators, institutions or those outside of the visual arts field. According to Westley and Vredenburg (1989), collaboration is defined as:

A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible (Westley & Vredenburg in Wood & Gray, 1991).

This definition suggests collaboration as a problem-solving process between multiple individuals who exchange knowledge beyond which they currently hold, in order to contribute to a common goal. Furthermore, what this definition suggests is that the process is open-ended in nature, where outcomes are undefined and shaped throughout the process. In this instance, collaboration can therefore be used as overarching concept

to terms like: interaction, collective action, participation, and co-operation (Lind, 2009) that also describe open-ended processes of group exchange. Now that a definition for collaboration has been established, and since the purpose of this research is to specifically examine more ‘open’ forms of collaboration, the following section will investigate the influence of the open-source paradigm on the way individuals organize themselves around information and problems. Open-source here is defined by “provocation to thought”, a “social contract . . . and an invitation to join the network of those who adhere to it” (Raymond in O’Reilly, 2003). Open-source in this definition goes beyond the act of working together through an open-ended process, as described in the definition for collaboration. It is a form of social invitation to participate in a network around a shared concept or idea.

2.2. The Open-Source Paradigm

Significant factors have contributed to the rise of open-source movements in technology industries and business administration. The so-called new ‘knowledge’ economy has situated the importance of creativity and knowledge as a key driver of value in many industries. This section will explore key factors found in open-source movements, setting up the open-source paradigm shift that has heavily influenced the way collaboration is perceived and undertaken. This will create a foundation for understanding the motivations behind open collaboration and the characteristics that support it, explored later in the study.

2.2.1. The New ‘Knowledge’ Economy

Towards the end of the 20th century several factors began to erode closed models for innovation and knowledge management. The most important of these factors was the increase in knowledge worker’s mobility, making it hard for organizations to have full control of their proprietary information and ideas (Chesbrough, 2003). This indicates a change in the way knowledge is handled for progress and the way organizations are structured around information. In this rapidly changing environment, the importance of

knowledge has become fundamental to post-industrial society and considered to be a primary economic resource (Druker, 1993). This is opposite to traditional resources of production and labor, and unlike these resources, knowledge is intangible and resides within individuals (Fong, 2002). Organizations that are able to create, harness and disseminate new knowledge are able to remain competitive in this economy (Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005). The challenge for organizations to continuously create new knowledge is great; therefore many are turning to collaboration as a method of approaching innovation. Thus, information exchange through group dynamics and their application to innovation are of increasing importance to the ways individuals organize themselves around problems today. The complexity of problems brought on by evolving market conditions often require solutions that combine diverse knowledge from different backgrounds and perspectives (Bissola & Imperatori, 2011), positioning collaboration as strategic approach to new knowledge creation and problem solving.

The knowledge economy combined with mass-accessibility to communication positions collaboration as a way to harness diverse knowledge and create solutions to constraints facing the visual arts sector today. In light of the unstable global economy, the sector in North America is facing funding limitations and tighter constraints under which to achieve innovation in production and presentation of the arts. In this sense, innovation refers to the tangible application of ideas into products or intangible services (Frants, Harmaakproi, Parjanen, 2010). There is a wide consensus among scholars and managers that competitive advantage stems from the capacity to create new knowledge within a continuous pursuit of learning (Boschma, 2005). Cultural producers are relying on innovation as a way to compete, with evidence pointing to creative industries having higher rates of innovation (Potts in Hearn, Roodhouse & Blakey, 2011). While innovation is at the cornerstone of competitive advantage among creative industries, museums can often lag behind the mandate to innovate. However, competition for audience attention, donor support and outside pressure to involve non-traditional experts, presents an opportunity for museums to access diverse bases of knowledge, increasing their resources and capacity to innovate. Those strategically situated within an openly collaborative network can expand their innovative capabilities up to a threshold, gaining

access to diverse ideas that can collectively inspire fresh thinking (Uzzi & Spiro, 2005). In light of such challenges, collaboration becomes of increasing strategic importance to meet organizational mandates and audience demand.

2.2.2. Open-Source Paradigm

As collaboration becomes a significant way to harnessing knowledge for innovation and creativity, the focus of this study is to understand how more ‘open’ forms of collaboration are taking shape within the context of contemporary society. During the last two decades there has appeared an interest in a relatively new way for humans to organize themselves around certain tasks made possible by new technological tools (Budhathoki & Haythornthwaite, 2012; Forte & Lampe, 2013). Technological factors as well as modern social, political and economic events have influenced a shift towards more ‘open’ forms of contemporary working methods such as collaboration (Chesbrough, 2003). A significant change in perception on the way society views a particular issue is categorized as a paradigm shift, defined as: “a generally accepted understanding of how select assumptions, conditions, values, interests and processes are interrelated: what goals are desired and feasible; and what outcomes are expected” (Cherbo & Wyszomirski, 2000). A paradigm shift therefore reinforces the fact that the external environment has heavy influence over the practices and concepts widely adopted in organizations. Such a significant shift in perception has arguably taken place around the open-source movement of the 1990’s (Forte & Lampe, 2013), marking the beginning of trading ownership and authority for the open exchange of information and concepts. In purest form, it has been adopted into the software development industry in innovations like Linux and Wikipedia, where participation is voluntary but collective efforts achieve a common purpose.

The open-source paradigm does not adhere to a clear definition, but describes a robust shift in innovation and the way software is produced from rights-free source code. This ideology has impacted the “field of scientific and economic inquiry” with “impact on such factors as standards and their effect on commoditization, system architecture and network effects, and the development practices associated with software as a service”

(O'Reilly, 2003). The paradigm assumes that quality is created through exchanges of information and mass-collaboration (Neus & Scherf, 2005). The notion of open content and open-source have initiated an academic discourse on how individuals can find opportunities to self-organize and collaborate in order to reach innovative results in the knowledge economy. While this emerging paradigm certainly indicates a shift in perceptions around open innovation and open management, it is also one of the most debated topics by management scholars (West and Gallagher, 2006). Undeniably the open-source paradigm has heavily influenced organization patterns, however limited research has been conducted to academically define its significance beyond technology-based applications. The open-source paradigm is thus significant to this thesis because the characteristics of open exchange and shared production seen in open-source communities offer a framework for the way museums can undertake open forms of collaboration with other members of the visual arts sector and external audiences, in order to create a common good.

2.3. The Commons

The academic field of the commons is varied and complex. What a cultural commons really means remains an area of debate. In order to present theories on the commons in a way that will be useful in understanding a commons in the context of a fine art museum, an understanding is built from the multi-dimensionality of the concept and the main characteristics of what makes up a commons.

2.3.1. General Theories on The Commons

The commons essentially describes a set of resources that belong to all humanity and that can be collectively managed for the benefit of everyone. The notion of the commons can be traced back to as early as the Greek civilization and based in Aristotle's concept of *koinonia politika*, translating to "civil society" (Lohmann, 1992). According to scholars on ancient Greece like M. I. Finlay (1974) this concept involved five principals: free and uncoerced participation; common (or shared) purpose; common holdings;

participation involving *philia* (a sense of mutuality); and social relations characterized by *dikiaon* (fairness or justice) (Lohmann, 1992). These five dimensions describe the social nature of relating within the framework of the commons, later applied to many disciplines, concepts and structures. Furthermore, the concept of the commons describes a sense of collective ownership or ‘non-ownership’ since resources are shared and non-exclusive to any individual or organization, defined as common-property resources (Berkes et al. in Feeny, Berkes, McCay, & Acheson, 1990). Such common-property can include natural resources like oceans and public parks, or socially created structures like libraries or public spaces. In the case of natural resources, the commons has led to a theory on the Tragedy of the Commons. Garrett Hardin's essay described the idea that resources held in common can be subject to massive degradation (Hardin, 1968). This happens when not one person takes ownership over a common resource, and therefore that resource lacks maintenance and consequently causing mass environmental degradation. Some economists took this to mean that private ownership is more effective to governance of shared resources. However, this view has been challenged by empirical research pointing to collective management as an effective tool in the protection of common wealth (Bankler & Nizzenbaum, 2004).

2.3.2. The Commons in the Digital Age

As previously described the open-source paradigm has heavily influenced the way we look at self-organized communities and collectively produced goods. The accessibility of technological tools and the principal of shared knowledge creation behind open-source have changed the way the commons is perceived. Michael Edson is currently at the forefront of trying to understand what the commons really means in the context of the digital age. As the Web and New Media Strategist at the Smithsonian Institution he is working on defining thirteen principals that encompass the characteristics of a digital commons. The Smithsonian is seen as the forerunner in the way information is catalogued and organized for the common use of citizens. His work on the defining principals behind the notion of the commons adds a contemporary dimension to the classic theories. The following is a list of the thirteen principles for a commons present in

the digital era: *Federated*, brings things together that would otherwise be separate; is *Designed for the public*; is *Findable*; is *Sharable*, resources and knowledge are put together so that they can be used and shared; is *Reusable*, meaning that shared resources can be used again for new works; is *Free* to access; is *Bulk Download-able*, large amounts of data can be accessed at any given point in time without special permission; is *Machine Readable*; is in *High Resolution*, resources are of high quality and are not unreasonably restricted; *Collaboration without Control*, meaning any types of collaborative work can be undertaken without permission of lawyers or contracts; takes advantage of *Network Effects*, gains quality as more people participate; exists in the *Public Domain*; and is formed on *Trust* (Edson, 2010).

Although rooted in the digital sphere, the characteristics listed by Edson illustrate a greater understanding for what the commons means in contemporary, digital society. As described in the open-source paradigm, values of transparency and openness become of particular importance to the way individuals organize themselves around mass information. Particularly interesting to this research is the characteristic described as *Collaboration without Control*. This can be easily inferred to the notion of open collaboration, where limited restrictions are placed on what types of information is shared and in which forms or structures. The commons therefore becomes a platform for the free exchange of information, with the aim of creating shared knowledge, a common good, or public space for the benefit of everyone.

2.4. Open Collaboration

Now that a framework has been established based on the open-source paradigm and the commons, the following section will investigate differences between closed and open forms of collaboration. However, no specific models for open collaboration exist in academic research, therefore the open and closed models for innovation presented by Chesbrough (2003) will be heavily referenced, and from which an open collaboration model will be inferred and later applied in the case study analysis.

2.4.1. From Closed to Open Innovation Models

The open-source paradigm indicates new ways of approaching innovation, moving away from traditional to more open and collaborative models. In the *closed innovation model* organizations developed highly secretive R&D departments responsible for creating incremental innovations in a controlled setting as a way to compete within the market (Chesbrough, 2003). Traditional *closed innovation models* are therefore defined by the following philosophy: “successful innovation requires control” (Chesbrough, 2003; Aitikainen, Makipaa & Ahonen, 2010). What this means is that organizations generate their own ideas, which they exclusively develop, distribute and service into the wider market (Chesbrough, 2003). Closed models also call for a fierce guarding and control of intellectual property (Chesbrough, 2003), which is the primary value resource for the organization to leverage within the greater market. On the other side of the spectrum, the *open innovation model* is based on an environment with plentiful knowledge where organizations are able to benefit from “external as well as internal ideas by developing outside as well as in-house pathways to the market” (Chesbrough, 2003). In other words, organizations are able to deploy their internal ideas through channels outside of their organization, and vice versa, in order to create value for their organization. While the *open innovation model* is heavily explored in business practice, limited attention has been paid to identifying the exact process by which open innovation models operate and only several instances of evidence are available (Chiaroni, Chiesa & Frattini, 2011). While limited in academic literature, the practical implications outlined by the *open innovation model* are vast for businesses in both for-profit and non-for-profit sectors like the arts. A significant implication is the way individuals organize themselves and interact in the process of exchanging knowledge and ideas, namely the process of open collaboration.

2.4.2. Definition of Open Collaboration

With open-source movements gaining wide popularity with a multitude of applications, the ideas and methods on which it is based are spreading to many other

industries including the arts. One of the main implications of the open-source paradigm on knowledge management is the notion of ‘open’ collaboration. Open collaboration describes instances of collaboration that: “(a) supports the collective production of an artifact (b) through a technologically mediated collaboration platform (c) that presents a low barrier to entry and exit and (d) supports the emergence of persistent but malleable social structures” (Forte & Lampe, 2013). While this definition is still closely tied to technologically supported platforms, some scholars have chosen to leave out references to technology altogether, and in preparation for the upcoming International Symposium for Open Collaboration the term was defined as: “Collaboration that is egalitarian (everyone can join, no principled or artificial barriers to participation exist), meritocratic (decisions and status are merit-based rather than imposed) and self-organizing (processes adapt to people rather than people adapt to pre-defined processes)” (Wikisym, 2013). In this definition four dimensions are listed in order to describe a particular collaboration as ‘open’. However Forte & Lompe’s (2013) findings indicate that not all openly collaborative projects will include strong examples of all four dimensions, rather they range along a spectrum from very open to essentially closed (Forte & Lampe, 2013). In other words some collaborative projects exist that are very ‘open’, hitting on many of the open attributes, while others may be more closed in nature but still present within the same organization.

2.4.3. Describing the Open Collaboration Model

When applying the *open innovation model* offered by Chesbrough to open collaboration, the main implication is that organizations are often no longer closely guarding their intellectual property, but instead gain value from external knowledge. Another important implication is the notion of creating a shared artifact produced through collaboration. When examining shared artifacts scholars are typically focused on product quality and completeness (Budhathoki & Haythornthwaite, 2012; Halfaker, Geigerm Morgan & Riedl, 2013; Forte & Lampe, 2013). Originality is a less explored attribute and in the instance of the arts, becomes of particular importance since artistic production relies heavily on the originality. Luther and Bruckman (2008) investigated open

collaborative processes in online animation and found that the primary goal is the production of highly original works. While based in the online environment, this indicates that the open collaboration model strives to produce a product that is not only one of quality but also highly original. This is illustrated in the case of the gaming industry, where a mix of professional developers and volunteer testers work together to provide extensive feedback, creating a high quality and original product together. This example forces out closed models of expert-driven innovation, opting for open models that facilitate in the shared production of an original product.

Once a product is completed the open collaboration model also influences how it is distributed to audiences. Forte & Lampe (2013) describe the curatorial process of a completed artifact where participants discuss content to be included in the final collection, as well as provide feedback to co-created content. In the case of technology-based open collaboration, the open philosophy is described as one that: “invites feedback from everyone, regardless of official status or formal training, and frequent releases of interim versions to encourage testing, feedback, and quick evolution and solutions” (Neus & Scherf, 2005). This positions participants as the authors and distributors of the final product, characteristic of the *open innovation model* discussed earlier. When applying the open philosophy to offline situations, it can manifest itself in a trial and error mentality, where the first version of the collaborative instance does not strive for perfection but instead is adjusted and improved as learning is gained throughout the process. While many benefits exist in an openly collaborative approach to content generation, some scholars have indicated that sourcing ideas from the public and co-creation’s ability to provide producers with low cost opportunities for content raise issues of exploitation and ownership within the context of creative industries (Cove, Dalli & Zwick, 2011). However, this may be less of an issue within the museum sector since content exists within the public domain and the content co-created between the institution and the public is not necessarily exploited for economic gains.

2.4.4. Participation in Open Collaboration

Beyond the act of co-creation, there are varying degrees in which individuals participate in collaboration. One of the consistent findings in open collaboration is that participation is unequal (Forte & Lampe, 2013). What this means is that there is a range in the forms of participation, from simple consumption to contribution to content creation. However, each participant has the potential to move up or down the rungs of the participation ladder (Preece & Shneiderman, 2009). Drawing from “social technographic” research by Forrester Research, Nina Simon investigates different levels of participation that can be expected from audiences in her book *The Participatory Museum*. Simon identifies six categories for participation: *Creators* (24%) who produce content; *Critics* (37%) who submit reviews and rate content; *Collectors* (21%) who organize and aggregate content; *Joiners* (51%) who maintain accounts on social networking sites; *Spectators* (73%) who consume content and *Inactives* (18%) who don’t visit social sites at all (Simon, 2010). This research is drawn from online usage data and the total does not sum up to a hundred percent since some users belong to more than one category of participation. While rooted in digital channels, these profiles for participation can aid in the understanding of how individuals contribute to both online and offline situations, providing clues as to what can be expected from an individual given the invitation to participate. Budhathoki and Haythoenthwaite (2012) support this notion with the idea of *lightweight* to *heavyweight* involvement in open collaboration communities. In *lightweight* participation individuals undertake simple and independent tasks, while a central authority determines the kinds of contribution to be made and towards what purpose. In *heavyweight* participation attention is paid to interactions in the context of community (Budhathoki & Haythoenthwaite, 2012) building on relationships and social structures.

Open collaboration and open-source communities work towards a shared social structure, beyond simple forms of participation for the sake of some sort of action. In open relationships, contributors build together a type of social dialogue where actions build on top of the actions of others to create a common good. During the open

collaborative process, social structures emerge among participants over the course of the relationship; these structures and collective goals are maintained and strengthened over time (Forte & Lampe, 2013). During the exchange process and consistent flow of communication, social structures evolve as needed. What this means is that a certain form of social framework is created between stakeholders that informs the way collaboration is structured and the form of participation expected from stakeholders. This can build trust and social capital. Social capital is defined as “social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity” based on three components: moral obligations and norms, social values and social networks (Putnam, 2004). Networked relationships therefore build value for participants that can become the foundation for successful collaborations in the future. Social capital creates ‘bonds’ or ‘bridges’ between individuals, which are important for the exchange of knowledge during the collaborative process.

2.4.5. Traditional vs. Open-Source Approach to Collaboration

With the major characteristics of the open innovation models defined and forms of participation outlined, differences between traditional approaches to collaboration are contrasted with those of open-source influence. The chart below referenced from Neus & Scherf (2005) outlines the main differences between traditional and open approaches to collaborative creation. Some attributes are self-explanatory however others might need further explanation. *Brooks’ Law* for example indicates that only a small, select number of individuals are able to collaborate together in order to create a high-quality product. This is quite contrary to *Linus’ Law* which indicates that solutions for highly complex problems are best solved by distributing tasks over a larger population, resulting in quality through mass collaboration (Neus & Scherf, 2005). This describes the fundamental difference between the two models of collaboration – one calling for a limited number of *expert* contributors, the other calling for a diverse *network* of *peers* with highly diversified capabilities. The end product or shared artifact created through an open collaborative model is one from a “bottom-up” approach, reliant on a non-static, organic process. Furthermore, instances of open collaboration often rely on a series of *improvements* and *evolutions* as new knowledge is gained, adjusting the end product

rather than aiming for *perfection* from the on-set of production. Interim learning becomes of significant importance in the open-source approach to collaboration. The open-source paradigm has therefore changed the way collaboration is perceived in society, where the end result is achieved through an open-ended process of knowledge exchange between networks and communities.

Table I – Traditional versus Open-Source Approach

Traditional Approach	Open-Source Approach
Brooks' Law	Linus' Law
Hierarchy	Network
Experts	Peers
Teams	Communities
Cathedral	Bazaar
Perfection	Improvement
Constriction	Evolutions

Source: Opening Minds: Cultural change with the introduction of open-source collaboration methods. Neus, A., Scherf, P. (2005)

The *open innovation model*, open collaboration definition and model, along with the graph presented here describe the main attributes and characteristics of open collaboration. These are based around the idea of networked communities of peers, working together to create a shared product, rooted in an evolutionary process that allows for improvement as new learning is gained. This model will be later applied to the case study approach in order to identify open versus closed forms of collaboration. However, before specific case studies are presented, a greater understanding is required of how collaboration is currently approached in the visual arts and how artistic practices have transformed from lone authorship to collective achievements.

2.5. The Arts and Collective Creativity

The following section will investigate how collaboration can increase creativity through group interaction. While creativity is central to the knowledge economy, it is also indisputably fundamental to the visual arts sector. The characteristic of originality was explored earlier; now the chapter will focus on how creativity is stimulated through interaction, helping to better illustrate the process of open collaboration and its benefit to an organization.

2.5.1. Creativity through Interaction

When referring to creativity in the instance of this study, the definition relates to the production of new and appropriate ideas within the context of any discipline (Amabile, 1997). Traditional research on the creative process focused on individual capabilities. Since about the 1980's a shift in research has begun to examine the collective interaction in the process of creativity. Scholarly research in psychology, cognitive science and organizational management describes a shift away from the internal processes of creativity to an analysis of how cognition is spread among individuals and resources through group dynamics (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Empirical research of group creativity has indicated that most significant creations are typically a result of group collaboration (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009). The influential system approach developed by Csikszentmihalyi states that creativity emerged from an individual situated within a context of interaction and combinations of prior knowledge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). This line of thinking positions interactivity at the center of creative development since the interactions between individuals throughout the process of knowledge exchange is where new creative ideas are formulated. Furthermore, the strength of new ideas can come from interactions of individuals with diverse knowledge, coming from different backgrounds and domains (Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006). This can create unique combinations of knowledge that a single individual is unable to do on her own. In this line of thought inter-disciplinary diversity becomes a catalyst for creativity. Stakeholder groups with drastically different knowledge can increase the chances of unique combinations to come together, inducing the creative process.

2.5.2. Collective Creativity

Creative achievements in business and industry typically arise from individuals collectively solving unique challenges they could not solve alone (Frants et al., 2010). *Collective Creativity* describes the phenomenon where ideas emerge from the minds of individuals when interacting with the knowledge held by others (Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006). Creative insights come about when individuals build on past experiences and swap

information, sparking creative ideas within a group dynamic. Hardgon & Bechkey (2006) introduce a model for this process that consists of four types of social interactions: *help-seeking*, *help-giving*, *reflective reframing* and *reinforcing*. These interrelated activities trigger moments of collective creativity among group interactions. *Help-seeking* describes instances of individuals seeking out the help of others in order to solve challenges, enabling collective creativity to occur. On the other hand, *help-giving* describes the interaction between those who ask for help and those who give help, willing to exchange ideas and information for a common goal. *Reflective reframing* when individuals make sense of the information that was exchanged or created. This can mean that group members need to reflect back on the collaborative instance and ensure that the appropriate questions were asked and the right information was exchanged. Finally, *reinforcing* supports help-seeking, help-giving and reflective reframing by reinforcing the value and meaning of the interaction. While this model describes how the collective creativity process occurs, it does not provide conditions under which this model will be successful. What can be further inferred from the research is that participants need to be fully present in the practice, which is alluded to in the reflective reframing phase of the process when the exchange is re-considered. Therefore, if participants are distant and do not actively contribute knowledge or ideas, the collective creativity process can fail and will not yield creative solutions.

By diverse individuals coming together instances of collective creativity offer the potential of new knowledge co-creation through interaction. The outcomes of this process are unpredictable and can take many different forms because the potential strength of a creative solution relies on “domain-relevant skills of multiple participants” (Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006). Therefore, diversity in knowledge has a greater chance of yielding creative solutions since different perspectives and experiences are shared, their unique combinations offer an unpredictable outcome. This process is described as collaborative emergence, when no one member partaking in a collaborative group understands or knows the outcome of the collaborative session (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009). Similar to the open-ended factor present in the definition of collaboration at the beginning of this chapter, collaborative emergence illustrates the spontaneous or unpredictable nature of

the process. What this implies is that when groups of individuals come together, “the interactions between individuals are more substantial sources of creativity than the individual mental processes of one of the participating members” (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009), illustrating the strength of collective creativity versus an individually creative process. The following section will explore the shift from individual artistic production to artistic movements. This shift in artistic practices will illustrate how creative achievement is strengthened in a group setting, consequently demonstrating the potential for open collaboration in the field of the visual arts.

2.5.3. From Artist Genius to Artistic Movements

Historically the meaning of art was attached to the art object rather than created between the artist and the audience. Since the 1960s this view has been in a constant shift towards collective and participatory movements (Bishop, 2006; Nollert, 2005; Wright, 2004). As described by critic and curator Claire Bishop:

Art is not embodied in an object but lies in the encounter between the art and the audience, and among the audience themselves. Art is not simply the result of self-expression by the artists of a preconceived idea but the result of communication with the audience and other partners in the process. The artist’s role is not just to proclaim but to listen, interpret, incorporate ideas and adjust (Bishop, 2006).

Models of collaboration, collective creativity and artistic movements have consequently become more prolific in artistic production and distribution within the last three decades. The individualism of the stand-alone artist genius and the bank vault institutions responsible for creating and exhibiting the visual arts has diminished, giving rise to the collective virtues of shared meaning and exchange of knowledge between artists, arts organizations and the public (Kisza, 2013). While collaboration in the visual arts is not a new process, the academic opinion on how artistic innovation is accomplished is shifting to a more collective perspective. The traditional view of the artist as a lone genius responsible for artistic innovation is being challenged by research indicating interaction as a major driver behind creativity within the visual arts. When conducting scholarly research on the impact of artistic movements on the creative output of painters, Accominotti (2009) finds that artistic innovation often occurs within a movement rather

than an individual process of conceptual or experimental innovation as previously identified by Galenson (2001). While Galenson focused on individual career achievements of artistic creativity and innovation, Accominotti contends that innovation is a collective process and points out that, “instead of being the implementation of ideas shaped in the mind of lonesome creators, it would have to be seen as the outcome of a collective process made of interactions – collaboration, mutual support, emulation – between artists within movements” (Accominotti, 2009). This positions collaboration as fundamental to artistic achievement and innovation in contemporary art practices, similar to theories of creativity through interaction presented earlier by Csikszentmihalyi and the theory of collective creativity by Hardgon & Bechkey.

As illustrated by Accominotti’s study, collaboration in artistic production is not a new concept and its historical practice can be traced through the decades. Collaboration in the visual arts is often a form of self-organization based around similar beliefs, goals and values, as well as around the practical like sharing of resources or for financial backing purposes. The first forms of collaboration in the arts are traced back to the Nazarenes in Rome from 1810-1830 who were discontent with the artistic education available at the time and wanted to bring German influenced art into Italy (Nollert, 2005). The idea of rebellion against the status quo was fundamental to many artistic movements that followed. Artists part of the Impressionist movement, unable to exhibit their work within traditional academy exhibitions of the time, formed a self-defined group in order to re-define artistic production at the time (Caves, 2000; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). While self-organized groups have been present throughout history, the conceptual art of the 1960’s brought on a surging interest in artistic production through collective facility. According to many art critics and scholars the notion of shared-meaning between artists and audiences found in the conceptual art of the 1960’s was crucial in the transition from Modernism into Postmodernism (Lind, 2009). The postmodern artist groups of the 1990’s utilized working methods found in collaboration and collective action to explore new ways of responding to the mass exchanges of communication happening at the time (Bourriaud, 1998). While such works explored alternative ways of creating and receiving art, they also met fierce criticism deeming the interactions to be superficial and the

concept of co-authorship to be inaccurate (Wright, 2004). Successful or not, such practices like interactive art, relational aesthetics, dialogical and context art attempted to re-define the way artistic production was approached through collective ideologies (Lind, 2009). While these practices introduced new ways of thinking about artistic production, collaboration was mostly limited to artist/viewer relationships.

2.6. Collaboration and Museums

The notion of collectivism and movements in artistic production shows a long history of collaboration among artists. The traditional perception that artistic innovation is created in the mind of an artist genius has been dispelled, pointing to the importance of collaboration. While artists have been collaborating for sometime, museums have traditionally used closed models for innovation and collaboration. However, due to limited and shrinking public subsidies available, collaboration has become an important element in the strategic plans of museums. The following section will explore empirical studies on museum's position towards collaboration, the surging interest in collaboration amongst the non-profit sector, and barriers to collaboration in traditional museum models.

2.6.1. Forms of Museum Collaboration

A heightened interest in collaboration has taken place in the for-profit world since about the 1980's when technology became more accessible to the global mass market (Neus & Scherf, 2005). The for-profit world is typically quicker to adopt new technologies and practices than the non-profit world, so collaboration in museums has only become a topic of interest in the last decade or so (Lehn, Heath & Hindmarsh, 2001). Museums have an increasing need to compete for visitor attention and prove their relevance to society at large. Collaboration has provided an opportunity to do this, making it an important element on a museum's strategic plan. Recent examples collaboration between museums and other institutions or with audiences are getting increased attention in the media, as museums attempt to be more open in practice. The

Brooklyn Museum has recently asked the public to nominate artists for their next exhibition through voting by digitally checking-in at artist studios; the Guggenheim utilized Google for an open-call on YouTube videos sourced from the public; the Flickr Commons was created as a way for museums to share their photographic collections between each other. These examples indicate an increased interest in collaborative projects as museums re-evaluate digital tools available and think of new ways for connecting. Furthermore, these are also examples of 'open' collaboration since the opportunities to get involved are open to anyone, and external voices are invited and combined with the expert opinion of museum curators. In other words, good ideas can come from anywhere, not only from the upper levels of management within the institution. While quite radical to the sector, these examples show a significant departure from traditional models of collaboration since museums typically undertake more traditional structures for collaboration driven by practical needs.

The standard form of collaboration in museum systems is the loan model for artwork collections or traveling exhibitions (Arnold- Forster and Davies, 1998). Other typical structures for collaboration within museums include: internal work groups, external partnerships with non-profit organizations that have a similar mission statement, and partnerships with for-profit businesses. In the case of collaboration between museums and for-profit businesses, museums can receive aid in resources or awareness in the market, while businesses can leverage a positive public relations opportunity (Wymer and Samu, 2003). Beyond aid in resources, there are many other benefits to collaborating within the non-profit sector. The main driver for collaboration is the ability for museums to share resources, experience and knowledge (Arnold-Forster & Davies, 1998). Wireman (1997) found other benefits specific to the museum sector: increasing visitors and revenue, fulfilling educational and research aims more effectively, expanding exhibitions and collections, improving public relations, raising funding and gaining expertise. Although many clear benefits exist, undertaking collaborative projects can be difficult to execute and be met with resistance in the museums sector. Therefore, museums are traditionally closed organizations. However as the landscape of the cultural sector shifts, museums are forced to consider collaboration as a way to meet resource or

innovation needs. The following section will investigate the traditional position of museums on collaboration and create an understanding for why there is resistance within the field.

2.6.2. Closed Models Typical of Museums

During the process of analyzing the ways museums approach collaboration, Chesbrough's models for closed and open innovation can be inferred. The *closed innovation model* is most characteristic of North American museums. The model stresses the importance of proprietary knowledge as the most valuable resource, gathering the best and brightest staff members within institutions. This means that a select number of individuals determine a position for the museum, which guides the operations and strategies throughout. This is typically the case within larger institutions that run along hierarchical structures and where the curator's creative vision is of utmost importance. Based on internal ideas and the collections of art works inside the institution, a *closed innovation model* indicates a control of intellectual property (Chesbrough, 2003). This is highly characteristic of museums that leverage their object-based intellectual property as their competitive advantage and their value proposition to their audiences. In this case, models for collaboration are typically closed, relying on internal best practices and classic models for exhibition. When applying selection system theory by Wijnberg (1995), museums are an important driver in *expert selection*. Expert selection takes place when "special evaluative capacity is attributed to a relatively small group of selectors who are not members of the group in which the selection process takes place" (Wijnberg, 1995). This is particularly true in the case of museums, as the selection of artworks based on the curatorial vision of the museum curators creates signifiers of quality to the general field. This process of expert-driven certification is highly characteristic of closed models.

On the other side of the spectrum, an *open innovation model* stresses external networks and communities that come together around similar goals in order to create value for audiences (Chesbrough, 2003), both inside and outside of the organization. In the case of fine arts museums such opportunities can include: strategic partnerships based

on mutual benefits, loan agreements on proprietary artistic collections, shared and open-data analysis of information from the same sector, etc. Exchanging information within networks and creating value outside of the internal channels create opportunities for increased audience engagement. Museums are feeling increasing pressure to become places for social and public interaction, forcing museums to become more open in their practice. *Open models* call for collaboration and participation to create meaningful connections with audiences and break down barriers in closed museum systems. *Open models* also call for transparency in information, both internally and externally. Information infrastructures provide opportunities for open data sharing across museums departments, and between institutions (Marty, 1999). Since there isn't a strong desire to hold proprietary knowledge within institutional walls in *models of open innovation*, the sharing of information can strengthen museum networks and provide opportunities for open collaboration. Leveraging technological tools within open models can help connect individuals within tnetworks and aid in collaboration. Tools like Google Hangouts, YouTube or Twitter can make the museum more open and accessible to the general field and public.

2.6.3. Challenges to Traditional Models by Online Technologies

The influences of open-source applications, accessibility to information, and the collective 'wisdom of the crowd' found online are challenging traditional *closed models* within the arts (Adelaar, 2006; Surowiecki, 2004). While the open-source paradigm is heavily situated within digital technologies, its influential ideologies reach deep into the psyche of audiences and arts managers. Online communities allow audiences the ability to access critical information in order to create preferences for cultural products, reducing the need for expert influencers (Arora & Vermeulen, 2012). Crowd-wisdom is therefore seen as the new guide to constructing and evaluating knowledge. Audiences have the ability to make their cultural preferences known through the channels of digital media that can have great impact on the future success of a cultural good (Arora & Vermeulen, 2012). This type of peer-selection system challenges the authority offered by traditional institutional models of expert-driven certification. Furthermore, Arora & Vermeulen

(2012) offer the notion that with the introduction of widely accessible online technologies the barriers are lowered for non-traditional intermediaries and experts to enter the art market. The surge of external voices are challenging the traditional position of institutions as the sole-holders of expert information and therefore calling for more transparency in information, more open approaches to exhibiting the arts, and more participation inclusive of their external voice.

2.6.4. Barriers to Collaboration under Traditional Approaches

The most significant reason for resistance to open forms of collaboration is the museums' role as the evaluator of quality in the arts (Velthuis, 2003). The perceived value of such institutions lies in their authority in knowledge for which types of works and artists are commendable of exhibition and promotion. Besides their role of reviewing artworks and positioning them within a historical or critical context, museums exhibit works that they choose as culturally and historically important from a large pool of produced artwork thus acting as gatekeepers and creating a source of demand on the art market (Velthuis, 2003). Furthermore, cultural goods are considered to be experience or credence goods (Nelson, 1970) where audiences can only realize their preference once the good has been consumed. According to Levy-Garboua and Montmarguette (2003) a consumer's preferences for an experience good depends on their prior exposure to similar goods. This implies that audiences may not yet have cultivated their taste for cultural goods if they have not been previously exposed. The role of the museum therefore becomes a crucial one in society, where the curators decide the types of cultural goods to expose to the public, consequently creating a preference for this type of good. In short, the uncertainty of cultural goods calls for expert sources to help determine the quality of a product (Nelson, 1970; Caves, 2000), and in this case the museum acts as a certifier in the visual arts. Such a position of expert-driven authority creates resistance to collaboration with external voices outside of the museum walls. As the value created by a museum is to indicate quality through what is exhibited, it can become troublesome to draw on external, and often non-traditional opinions.

Another reason for resistance to open models often stems from the organizational culture (Neus & Scherf, 2005; Chiaroni et al., 2011). An institution-wide adoption of open models requires the organization to alter their boundaries allowing external influences to penetrate the creation process (Chiaroni et al., 2011). Changes of such boundaries are often effective in breaking down hierarchical relationships that often stunt creativity. Breaking down traditional structures and introducing more openness in an organization, can be met with resistance from people whose status depends on a lack of being open, acting as gatekeepers to privileged information (Neus & Scherf, 2005). Therefore, a museum able to implement open models needs to adopt a culture of openness in every part of the organization. If this is the case, open initiatives are supported from upper as well as lower levels of the organization (Chiaroni et al., 2011). It is also important to understand that some boundaries are necessary to achieve healthy organizational functionality. Negative effects can be created when audience feedback begins to infringe on the original artistic integrity of the cultural product at stake. A careful balance needs to be reached between market-oriented audience outreach and the internal artistic mission undertaken by the overall organization. Such situations can cause managerial issues between departments like marketing and curatorial, which hold different objectives. However, if an overall culture of openness is applied, business leaders can find opportunities to build upon unique organizational practices through organic approaches to co-creation, rather than textbook prescribed business solutions often inappropriate for cultural organizations (Bilton, 2007). Naturally resistance can be present as organizational practices and cultures shift to more open. Organizations that are designed for flexibility are better equipped to deal with audience demand and external pressure to opening up the museum.

2.7. In Conclusion

The literature review presented in this chapter provides a theoretical framework for understanding open collaboration within the context of fine art museums in North America. An understanding has been formed for the influence of open-source ideology on the way individuals connect and handle information in the time of web 2.0.

Collaboration and collective creativity are increasingly being used as a way to handle new-knowledge creation and deal with the demands of the changing cultural landscape. Museums are re-evaluating traditional closed models for innovation as external pressure mounts for transparency, participation and openness in museum systems and outreach strategies. Since open collaboration is a new phenomenon, limited research has been done to date on how it takes shape within the museum and visual arts sector. This research is specifically attempting to make a contribution to the academic field by examining whether examples of open collaboration can be found in museums and, if so, how it is structured and motivated, as well as its influence on the organization and its stakeholders. For the purpose of studying this new phenomenon, the central research question is: how is open collaboration structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums? And how does its practice affect the actors involved as well as the public? This will be investigated through the case study approach presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Research Approach

In the previous chapters the central research question was established, set against the context of a theoretical framework drawn from existing academic literature. The type of research question central to this study” “how open collaboration is structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums? And how does its practice affect the actors involved as well as the public?” indicates a tendency to employ qualitative research methods. The qualitative research design used here is cross-sectional, examining data from three cases collected at a single point in time (Bryman, 2005). The case study is beneficial for research questions aimed at producing in-depth understanding of social or organizational processes (Hartley in Cassell & Symon, 2004; Bryman, 2005) through the analysis of complex data situated within a social context. The goal of this study is to contribute to theory and understanding of open collaboration through investigating how it manifests within the context of fine arts museums. Therefore, the case study approach can she light on the “context and processes that illuminate the theoretical issues being studied” (Cassell & Symon, 2004). Through analysis of three case studies at hand, comparative connections can be made between theory and practice to identify major themes, pointing to patterns of association between related variables.

In this chapter the methodology for research will be illustrated, providing a description of the research strategy employed in this study. First, the sampling process will be outlined for selecting the research population and case study participants. This will be followed by the methodology for data collection and focus of interviews. The chapter will conclude with methods for data analysis and the strategy for validating research findings.

3.2. Selection of Site and Participants

As the nature of research is qualitative, this study employed snowball and purposeful sampling to identify cases focused on major fine art museums in the United States and Canada. Initially the snowball sampling method was utilized where the researcher identified several museums that seemed to employ collaborative approaches to exhibiting and promoting the arts relevant to the research topic. From these museums a small group of members were contacted for initial exploratory and unstructured interviews lasting about 30 minutes through Skype or face-to-face communication. This initial exploratory phase of research allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of how collaboration is approached at their organization, get recommendations on further interview contacts, themes for discussion and the types of interview questions to be used during semi-structured interviewing. From the exploratory phase three cases were identified for analysis: the first case presents findings from the exploratory interviews, giving an overview of the typical approach to open collaboration in the visual arts field, the following two outline cases of closed and open structures of collaboration.

The three cases were identified through a purposeful sampling method, which is most appropriate for the reason that no accessible or feasible sampling frame for the population was available to the researcher. The difficulty of creating a sample frame for collaborative organizations in the visual arts sector meant that a non-probability approach was the only feasible one (Bryman, 2005). The purposeful sampling method allowed the researcher to gain access to a wide range of individuals relevant to the research topic so various perspectives and experiences could be included for comparative analysis. Targeted participants were staff members of major fine arts museums involved in exhibiting the arts. Their position titles included: Executive Director, Managing Director, Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice, Chief Exhibitions Manager, Assistant Curator, Assistant Vice President of Visitor Experience and Audience Insight, Assistance Vice President of Marketing, Senior Exhibitions Manager and Exhibitions Project Manager. Participants were selected based on their perceived involvement with collaborative activities allowing insight into how each organization operates and undertakes collaborative projects. The broad range of position titles selected for semi-

structured interviews allowed for different perspectives regarding the research question and an inclusive overview of the concepts involved. The interviews were conducted during the month of May 2013 and data was analyzed in June of the same year.

3.3. Data Collection Methodology

Complex phenomena are best described using several data collection methods (Cassell & Symon, 2004). In the case of this research data collection methods included: a comprehensive literature review, document collection, web-based research, a series of unstructured exploratory interviews, and in-depth semi-structured interviews. The research was initiated through the collection of literature relating to open-source movements and open collaboration. While open collaboration is a relatively new concept with a limited amount of source literature, the search was expanded to include keywords such as “open source”, “open innovation models”, “the commons” and “collective creativity”. Articles were mainly drawn from digital databases containing peer-reviewed academic journal literature, provided through the Erasmus University library. Once an extensive literature review was conducted in order to operationalize the concept of open collaboration, unstructured exploratory interviews were scheduled, from which potential cases exemplifying these concepts were gathered for further analysis.

Once three cases were identified for analysis, a process of thorough data collection was initiated including a series of semi-structured interviews. The method of semi-structured interviewing is intuitive to qualitative research design as it allows for in-depth investigation of the research themes as well as the freedom to modify initial avenues of inquiry once research has commenced (Bryman, 2005). While quite flexible in design, the semi-structured interview follows a clear schedule outlined in the interview guide, where possible questions are articulated along with fairly specific themes to be discussed (Appendix A). This structural basis for the interviews is important to multiple-case study research which requires some sort of composition for case comparability in the coding and analysis phase of research (Bryman, 2005). Each of the interviews lasted around one hour in time and was initiated through a recruitment email outlining the

purpose of the interview and the avenue of intended research. After each of the interviews took place a fact sheet was recorded for reference including the name, institution, position and the interview context. The interview itself was recorded through digital recording mechanisms and transcribed in English. Notes were kept during the interview in the case of any technological issues or malfunctions.

In addition to being interviewed, the interviewees supported the researcher by assisting in the collection of informative documents to further aid in the understanding of the structures and motivations behind open collaboration at each respective museum studied. For each of the case studies, a process of collecting information through web-based research methods was conducted to provide an ‘overview’ of the organization. Relevant documents and information were gathered and downloaded from the organization’s website in order provide an insight into how collaboration is approached. These documents included organizational mission statements, program schedules and calendars, organizational structure documents and annual reports. All data was analyzed in May and June of 2013 along with the semi-structured interviews. All the documents and information collected through the interview and data collection process allowed for a clear understanding of how open collaboration is structured and motivated in each of the three cases analyzed.

3.4. Focus of Interviews

While open collaboration is a relatively new concept to the academic field, the literature review provided insight into the changing economy and the influence of the open-source paradigm, the importance of creativity in a collective setting, how collaboration is traditionally approach in the visual arts, and differences between closed and open models for innovation and collaboration. However, how open collaboration manifests itself in fine arts museums is still undefined. Therefore a series of interview questions were designed to address this gap in literature and connect theory to practice in the context of fine arts museums. It is important to note that the interviews took on a natural conversational approach, allowing the interviewee to speak to specific

experiences and shape the focus of the interview based on their backgrounds and contributions to the field. Based on the theories outlined in the literature review, the following themes were explored during the semi-structured interviews:

Open vs. Closed Models

The literature review showed the differences between closed and open models for innovation (Chesbrough, 2003), this was inferred to a model for open collaboration with major differences between the two models outlined (Neus & Scherf, 2005). An interview topic will focus on investigating if open or closed models of collaboration are more prevalent in practice within fine arts institutions. Another focus of the topic will be to determine whether anything has changed in the way collaboration is perceived, and if so, what the causes for such philosophical changes are. These questions will contribute to an understanding if the open-source paradigm has manifested itself in tangible ways within the context of fine arts museums. Furthermore, questions are designed to determine to what degree organizations are connecting what they are doing to open collaboration versus traditional forms of collaboration or partnerships.

Motivation behind Collaboration

As creativity and innovation are fundamental to the knowledge economy (Boschma, 2005; Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005), individuals are organizing themselves in new ways around creative problems (Purser & Montuori, 1995; Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006). While this is true for most industries, it may manifest itself in unique ways in fine art museums given traditional expert-centric models, in turn affecting motivational drivers behind collaboration. The results of the theoretical framework revealed several motivational factors to collaboration: knowledge exchange between diverse stakeholders, increased ability to innovate and ability to problem solve (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006), however most of these motivational factors pertain to the general practice of collaboration, not to arts organizations specifically. Therefore, an interview topic will try to understand the main motivational drivers behind collaboration within the context of fine art museums, distinguishing between practical and philosophical drivers.

Structure for Collaboration

Given that knowledge exchange is fundamental to the open collaboration process (Neus & Scherf, 2005), an interview topic will strive to understand how information is exchanged between stakeholders in the context of fine art museums. This will lead to an understanding of the types of structures for collaboration that exist within museums, ranging from project-based collaboration to a systematic adoption of the collaborative approach within the organization. Furthermore, knowing that a range exists from closed to open structures for collaboration within one organization (Forte & Lampe, 2013), this topic will attempt to identify why some areas within the organization are more open in structure than others.

Authority

Non-traditional experts and crowd-wisdom are challenging the position of museums as authoritative bodies of knowledge and evaluators of quality in the arts (Adelaar, 2006; Surowiecki, 2004). Furthermore, Wijnberg (1995) revealed that as paradigms shift, so do the selection systems responsible for evaluating the visual arts. An interview topic will focus on understanding the changing notion of authority in fine art museums, as non-expert voices enter the field and increase pressure for museums to open up to public discourse. In the case that institutions are in fact opening up, questions are designed to determine how museum relevance is re-evaluated as external voices are included.

Resistance to Collaboration

The literature review revealed that the major factor behind resistance to adopting openly collaborative models is organizational culture (Chiaroni et al., 2011; Neus & Scherf, 2013). Therefore, an interview topic will strive to understand the extent of influence that culture has on the success of open collaboration within the context of fine art museums. The questions under this topic are designed to understand the pragmatic barriers and challenges that exist between the desire to adopt open collaboration at the institution, and the practice of undertaking instances of open collaboration.

Affects of Collaborative Practices

Once motivations and structures behind open collaboration in fine art museums are identified, an interview topic will investigate the affects of its practice on the institution and stakeholders involved. Putnam (2004) argues that social capital is formed between stakeholders taking part in a collaborative network. Edson (2004) maintains that a commons can be established when undertaking collective efforts to create a common good. An interview topic will therefore investigate how these concepts are applied into practice and which stakeholders are involved in the process. An understanding will be created for how collaborative projects or instances inform other practices at the institution and how participatory tactics affect the audiences involved.

3.5. Expected Findings and Hypothesis

Adelaar (2006) argues the crowd-wisdom of online communities is eroding traditional structures within arts organizations. Furthermore, Budhathoki and Haythornthwaite (2012) present the argument that open-source movements affect the ways humans connect around issues, and the way they participate or contribute to the communities they are part of. When considering these factors, the open-source paradigm has influenced organizations as well as individuals and their perception of collaboration. In this context, the researcher expects find that the open-source paradigm has penetrated fine art museums in some capacity, and that there is a sense for the need of transparency and openness in museum operations. However, since organizational cultures and structures are often difficult to change (Chironi et al., 2011), it is expected that fine arts institutions are finding it difficult to implement fully open models for innovation and collaboration, falling back on traditional models of top-down expert-driven authority of curators and directors. Furthermore, since collaboration is not a new concept, the researcher expects to find in majority examples of closed structures for collaboration, such as internal collaboration or institutional partnerships. Some more open forms of collaboration may be present but are not the typical way fine arts museums approach audience engagement and artistic exhibition. Finally, since it is quite apparent that funding models for artistic organizations are changing and that institutions are feeling

pressure to engage audiences from public funding bodies, it is expected that instances of collaboration can be undertaken for practical reasons like funding opportunities, organizational restructuring or governmental mandates.

3.6. Coding and Analysis Procedure

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the approach of grounded theory was used with the aim of closely connecting theory and research data. The iterative approach indicates that data collection and analysis happen throughout the research process (Bryman, 2005), ensuring that the main themes and concepts are covered based on the context of the theoretical framework. The collected data was analyzed and coded using open-ended, thematic coding for the identification in patterns between interview topics, consistently compared against related theories and concepts. In the beginning phase of the analysis process, the *open coding* method was used to identify general concepts, later to be further grouped into categories (Bryman, 2005). What this meant is a line-by-line coding process that revealed general concepts like: “changing view of engagement”, “changing models” or “paradigm shifts” as identified in the example of an explanatory schema below and the coding chart (Appendix B). Later in the process *axial coding* was used in order to make connections between the concepts found during *open coding* and put them together to form general themes. Following in the above example, the concepts listed fell under the theme of “changing value proposition”. Finally, the method of *selective coding* was used to identify the overarching core categories, forming a relationship between the key themes. In the case of the presented example the overarching category is “motivation behind open collaboration”. The key themes and categories identified during the exploratory and semi-structured interviews strive to answer the main research question, and the final results of the coding process are presented in the Discussion chapter.

Example – Explanatory Schema for Motivation behind Open Collaboration

Research Question: how open collaboration is structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums?

Motivation Behind Open Collaboration

Changing value proposition of the museum

 Changing perception on what constitutes engagement with culture

 Changing models for engagement and exhibition design

 Paradigm shift from an object-centric focus to a visitor-centric focus

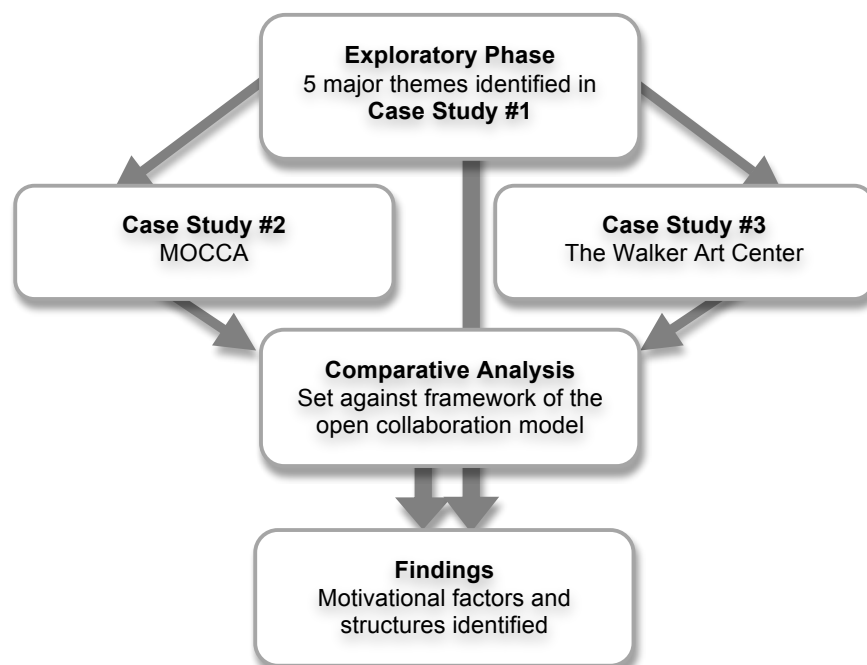
3.7. Strategy for Validating Findings

In order to establish credibility of the study the researched employed the data triangulation method. Case study research approached through several methods can serve to triangulate data and theory (Bryman, 2005). The diverse methods for this study included: a literature review, document collection, web-based research, a series of unstructured exploratory interviews, and in-depth semi-structured interviews, looking for comparative connections between data and theory. Concerns of external validity and generalization are not as fundamental to qualitative research as they are to quantitative research, since the goal is to provide in-depth analysis of a few specific cases rather than infer conclusions for the general population (Bryman, 2005). While data gathered from purposeful sampling methods doesn't produce generalized findings, it can provide a platform for future research and create links with existing findings (Bryman, 2005). Therefore, the data was collected with an effort to investigate theory in practice as well as provide direction for future research in a relatively new and upcoming academic field.

CHAPTER 4 CASE STUDIES

4.1. Introduction

The following chapter presents the results derived from the empirical research conducted through exploratory and semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis, set against the context of the theoretical framework presented in the earlier chapter. A total of twelve interviews were conducted from which one context case and two specific museum case studies were selected. The in-depth institutional case studies profile the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada, and the Walker Art Center in the United States. The first case will provide context and overview of how collaboration is currently perceived by fine art museums, based on the exploratory interviews. This is followed by the two institutional case studies illustrating different approaches to collaboration: the first, a case of an incremental approach to being open, typical of the how museums are beginning to perceive collaboration; the second, a case of radical approach to openness and collaborating with audiences, ahead of the overall visual arts field. The chart below visually represents how the study was structured in order to arrive at the findings, based on both the context and in-depth case studies.



4.2. The Case of the Current Position Towards Collaboration

Towards an understanding of the importance of open collaboration

Based on the exploratory phase of research, a context case is first presented to form an understanding of the current position towards collaboration among fine art museums in Canada and North America. During the eight exploratory interviews used to formulate this case, similar information began to emerge, giving the researcher confidence that the main and most relevant concepts have been captured. Therefore, this case is organized into five major themes that can build a context for the way open collaboration is currently perceived and the drivers behind it. Before presenting the main themes, a brief introduction of Nina Simon, Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum is presented. Simon was one of the most notable interviewees in the exploratory phase of research, and has influenced many of the arts managers interviewed there after. She is a leading thinker and practitioner in the open museum movement and therefore, pertains greatly to this research study.

4.2.1. Nina Simon and the Participatory Museum

Nina Simon is the leading figure in the school of thought on opening up museums. She is an advocate for the open movement and has applied concepts of participation, collaboration and transparency to museums in her position as consultant and director. Simon joined the Santa Cruz Museum as Executive Director in 2010 during a period of crisis amidst financial troubles and low attendance. In order to combat these issues, a new strategic focus called for the museum to become a “thriving and central gathering place” (Santa Cruz Museum, 2010). Through her efforts the museum has become one of transparency and openness, undertaking many radical and controversial approaches to participation with audiences. Under Simon’s leadership, museum exhibitions are now designed with an open invitation and support tools for effective participation from the public. Her strategies position museum objects as “social objects”, around which conversations happen if the right strategies are deployed. Through ‘social objects’ the museum becomes a gathering place where the public can connect with each

other, gaining a context for exhibitions through interaction. In her book the *Participatory Museum*, Simon provides a practical guide for how museums can appropriately implement open collaboration and participation with audiences. Through this work, Simon has become one of the most respected arts professionals in the field, and has ended the financial and attendance troubles at the Santa Cruz Museum. By having the opportunity to interview Simon, the researcher was able to gain a context for how collaboration is perceived in the field and under which circumstances museums feel it is important to include external voices in their practice.

4.2.2. Five Key Themes in North American Museums

Changing notion of Cultural Engagement

One of the main concepts appearing repeatedly during the exploratory phase of research was the changing notion of cultural engagement. Arts professionals are reconsidering what it means for a museum to engage their visitors with cultural content. Cheryl Blackman explains this focus as Assistant Vice President of Visitor Experience & Audience Insight at the Royal Ontario Museum, “we were moving towards an awareness that the context by which museums operate was changing. One of the opportunities was to build a visitor experience and better engage with our public” (Blackman, 2013). There appears to be a renewed interest in museums as community centers for education and public gathering. Traditional museum systems based on purely curatorial-based exhibition design are being put into question. This is evident in the heightened focus on visitor experience and the design of different contexts for engaging audiences with cultural content. Museums are increasingly interested in initiatives such as: live-art events, social gatherings, art talks and co-created content with artists, that build new forms of participation and meaning between the museum and their audiences. Rather than looking to traditional experts, they are opening up to various experts to build engaging experiences for the public. Kelly McKinley, Executive Director of Education and Public Programming at the Art Gallery of Ontario explains:

The notion of a curatorial-led exhibition practice has shifted significantly in the field, and in our museum. Instead it is the notion of a group of experts (content experts, visitor engagement experts, design experts) coming together to think about best ways to bring ideas to life for the public. This is really the way of the future” (McKinley, 2013)

In the case of the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum this came in the form of First Thursdays and Fridays, social events that are co-created with community groups to provide a fresh context for engaging the 18-30 target segment in a unique way (Comerford, 2013). Activities like this are thought to create a different and more relevant context for viewing art, creating a meaningful relationship between the museum and their audiences.

Relevance to Society

Along with the changing notion of engagement, it is apparent that museums are attempting to re-define their role in society. With increased competition for audience time and attention, museums are strategically positioning themselves as places of relevance to communities and trying to “catch audiences in their everyday” (Davies, 2013). Studies have found that visitors are feeling that museums are less relevant to their everyday lives (Simon, 2011) and that there are many other ways for engaging with culture beyond attending the physical space of a museum (McKinley, 2013). Arts professionals are looking at “what it means to exist in a world where relevance is the question. It is about the idea that we need to serve customers and visitors in a way that inspires them to become infinity partners in the museum” (Blackman, 2013). Furthermore, governmental and funding mandates call for museums to demonstrate direct impact on their communities, influencing public outreach programming that considers factors beyond attendance numbers. There is a sense that qualitative measures beyond attendance numbers are required to fully demonstrate public engagement. Such measures can include: number of community based projects, feedback from the public, number of partnerships with community groups etc. However, no industry standard form of success measurement has been established and rarely are openly collaborative projects measured. The overall sense is that traditional museum systems need “to evolve to remain relevant” (Alvarez, 2013) and better serve their audiences. Collaboration is seen as an opportunity

to achieve this, as stressed by Cheryl Blackman, “participation in museums is not a fad. It is a reality of survival” (Blackman, 2013).

Influence of Technology

One of the major drivers bringing about an increased interest in audience engagement is the mass-adoption of technology. There is a general sense that technology has shifted the landscape, consequently increasing pressure for museums to engage with audiences in meaningful ways. “The assumption in the time of Web 2.0. is that knowledge is participatory, democratic and that there should be room for other voices in the creation of meaning” (McKinley, 2013). The notion of participation online and the “democracy of content brought on by open-source technology” (Rudell, 2013) has challenged traditional expert-driven models within museums. The notion of a customized experience creates opportunities for increased engagement and has influenced the way arts professional design exhibits and public programming. Furthermore, there is a sense that the ease of online connectivity, found in projects like Google Art or Artsy, are challenging museums to make a strong case for visitors to attend the physical space of their gallery. Francisco Alvarez, former Managing Director of the Institute for Contemporary Culture at the Royal Ontario Museum argues, “institutions are trying to preserve the value of the real in the face of the ease of the digital” (Alvarez, 2013). Therefore, there is a sense that programming has to be innovative enough that it entices participation and attendance.

A Desire to be More Open

There is a general perception is that open collaboration is becoming increasingly important and is fundamental to the shifting value proposition of museums. "I think that certainly there is an understanding that there is a desire for more open collaboration" (Simon, 2013). Interviewees recognize opening up the museum through way of open collaboration as a positive strategy, yielding many opportunities. Instances of open collaboration can present opportunities for: creating a context around exhibitions, increased and more meaningful engagement with partners and audiences, projects that allow the collective building of community around the museum, etc. This calls for a new

model of collaboration that goes beyond the simple exchange of resources seen traditionally in institutions, and instead focuses on building aggregated knowledge that would not happen independently:

Thinking about partnership, as not necessarily about the exchange of resources and expertise, but more about how in combination you can achieve greater reach and scale that you wouldn't otherwise on your own. It is about aggregating knowledge and capacity (McKinley, 2013).

However, it is apparent that many fine arts museums are still undertaking traditionally closed models for collaboration based on classic partnerships, loan arrangements and exchange of resources. While there is a desire and acknowledgement present, concrete examples of large-scale open collaboration are seldom found in large, hierarchical fine art museums.

A Difference between History and Fine Art Museums

Finally, while it is clear that participation and open collaboration are important topics, the exploratory phase of research found a difference in the way history or science museums approach collaboration from fine art museums.

The change to participation is much slower on the art museum side and my limited impression is that it is also much slower on the performing arts side. Anywhere that you have very strong creative producer who is in an environment that encourages the single vision of the artist approach, its problematic (Simon, 2013).

There is a sense among professionals that participatory strategies and forms of open collaboration with the public are better suited for community-based museums, where the curatorial vision is not infringed upon. There is also a sense that the adoption of openly collaborative strategies is “happening more boldly or quickly in history or science museums, most certainly in local or regional museums, less so in the big fine art museums” (McKinley, 2013), met with less internal resistance from staff and management. Some participatory tactics have also been criticized for compromising the integrity of an exhibition, and therefore not suitable in fine art museums. In this sense,

fine art museums are holding on to closed structures of collaboration and expert-driven authority more so than other types of museums.

4.2.3. The Current Perception towards Collaboration

The themes found during the exploratory phase of research indicate a climate supportive of open collaboration and an appetite for it amongst arts professionals. Museums are questioning traditional models and attempting to redefine their relevance in society. The democratization of knowledge online and the increased pressure from funding bodies and audiences, are calling for participatory, community-based practices. However, concrete large-scale examples of how museums are sustainably employing openly collaborative models are rare. Most open initiatives are project-based with finite goals and timelines or based on digital engagement tools. Many fine art museums have yet to adopt an open philosophy holistically throughout the institution. Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement amongst professionals that audience and visitor engagement is very important, however there is a resistance to participatory tactics with audiences. Therefore, there is a sense that audience participation and co-creation of content is the most radical form of open collaboration, often met with criticism from the field. It is clear that fine art museums are slower to adopt such practices, and more commonly rely on traditional participation and collaboration models. Overall, there is a strong interest in open collaboration and an acknowledgement that it can present opportunities for museums to better engage their audiences with cultural content.

4.3. The Case of the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art

A model of partnership for mutual benefit and resources

The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art is located in Toronto, Canada and is focused on exhibiting, collecting, and promoting innovative Canadian as well as international art. MOCCA's mandate speaks to promoting works and artists that "engage and address challenging issues and themes relevant to our times" (MOCCA, 2013). The museum's mandate therefore requires access to wide range of important contemporary

work. For this reason *NGC@MOCCA* was formed in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada located in Ottawa, Canada. The three-year partnership was created around the *NGC@* satellite institution model initiated by the National Gallery, with its first installment taking place at the Art Gallery of Alberta. The goal of the partnership is for “two institutions to co-organize and present a series of exclusive exhibitions at MOCCA drawn from the NGC's extensive Contemporary Art collection” (*NGC@MOCCA*, 2013). The National Gallery of Canada boasts the biggest acquisition budget in Canada, housing a total of 40,000 Canadian and international art works. Attendance for the museum totaled 346,890 visitors for the year 2011/13 (Adams, 2012) but it is important to note that attendance levels are far lower than that of the ROM and AGO in Toronto. The museum defines its mission and strength in the: “collection of art, especially Canadian art, and its accessibility to the public across the country” (National Gallery of Canada [NGC], 2013). One of the values adopted by the National Gallery is that of collaboration: “the Gallery collaborates with the network of art museums in all regions of Canada and abroad, and with its partners in the Government of Canada” (NGC, 2013). This type of collaborative outreach and governmental mandate to become an international museum is the basis for the *NGC@MOCCA* partnership, and the case pertaining to this study.

4.3.1. Motivation and Approach to Collaboration

While strongly acknowledging open collaboration as an important variable in the changing cultural landscape, The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art grapples with the issue of relevance. Traditionally the relevance of a museum to society is the value it provides through exhibiting important contemporary works for the public (Velthuis, 2003) and in turn cultivating their tastes and preferences (Levy-Garboua & Montmarguette, 2003). Furthermore, since the value of cultural goods are difficult to assess and “there are no objective criteria on which the valuation and valorization process takes place”, audiences are dependent on the expertise of museums to determine the quality and value of an artwork (Arora & Vermeylen, 2012). The museum’s value therefore lies within the expertise and authoritative voice and its ability to evaluate

quality in the arts, pushing information out to its audiences. Yves Theoret, Managing Director of MOCCA, reflects that “there still remains a role for these institutions to have this voice of authority to make statements about what is good art and what is not good art and what warrants further research” (Theoret, 2013). This points to a largely closed model for innovation fostered at the MOCCA since expertise comes from inside the institution, relying on the authority of the curator to provide value to audiences. However, as the value proposition of the museum changes to more audience-centric, MOCCA is opening up its model for innovation and collaboration, while “still clinging to the authority of the curatorial voice” (Theoret, 2013).

The notion of the museums has always been pretty much object-driven. Now it is moving away from object-driven to visitor-driven. It is not “what can the object tell us but what does the audience want to know from this object”. It’s a complete shift of paradigm however we can’t make the mistake of going all the way from one end to the other (Theoret, 2013).

This indicates a spectrum of activity characteristic of varying degrees of openness at the museum (Forte & Lampe, 2013); some of its practices are developed against closed models, while others are beginning to open up to external influences as necessary and deemed appropriate by the institution, an example of this being the *NGC@MOCCA* partnership. While drawing from external curatorial and administrative perspective, it is important to note that collaboration at the MOCCA is only open to those within the visual arts field and not yet external audiences or non-traditional experts.

The shifting value proposition and the move away from an object-centric curatorial perspective illustrates some of the realities of today’s cultural landscape. Competition for funding and resources is another important factor influencing collaboration at MOCCA. The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art is in a unique position due to its location within Toronto as well as its relatively small size, only employing around 8 staff members at any point in time. Located in a major metropolis, Toronto being the fifth biggest city in North America, MOCCA is faced with competition from other major museums in the city, such as: The Art Gallery of Ontario, The Powerplant Contemporary Art Gallery and The Royal Ontario Museum. Acknowledging

this allows the museum to be open to various partnerships around similar engagement goals and institutional mandates, working together to face the challenges of scarce resources and audience attention:

It is clear to me that the need for collaboration is driven by the sheer reality of 21st century non-profit organization with limited resources available. You have to think of new models in the way you can fund the operation but there are also opportunities for new ways you can deliver on your programming (Theoret, 2013).

While instigated through a need for resources, collaboration can also point to new models for engagement. Being a small organization with a big mandate, to engage the public with contemporary issues, MOCCA looks to collaboration and partnership as a way to deliver on its mission. While the museum's small size results in a lack of both financial and human resources to undertake major collaborative projects alone, its size also allows it to foster a culture of flexibility and adaptability, fundamental to successfully adopting open models for collaboration (Neus & Scherf, 2005). This makes MOCCA attractive to larger organizations looking to collaborate with a smaller and more nimble organization to deliver on its programming objectives.

Given that new models for engagement are emerging, "a complete overhaul is taking place of the way institutions operate and talk about culture and engagement" (Theoret, 2013), consequently shaking up traditional models:

The issue around opening up to new voices is connected to the discussion around resources. But it seems that the way to resolve and address both the issues of resources and relevance, is by bringing them together and re-thinking the traditional models. This can mean partnerships and collaboration; this can also mean mergers and strategic alliances and ways to attempt things that would have never been done before (Theoret, 2013)

What this means for MOCCA is a collaborative model largely based on partnerships, focused on remaining relevant and the need for resources, while addressing the open-source paradigm and the need to open up the institution to outside perspectives. However, Theoret points out the "partnerships are a way towards the future that we are seeing, and are MOCCA's way to address the issue in the short term, but I still don't think it is the

final answer towards what is going on right now” (Theoret, 2013). This alludes to the fact that this is an interim strategy for coping with the future, while acknowledging a lack of readiness to fully open up the museum. This is further apparent when Theoret reflects on his current perspective on open collaboration:

My sense is that maybe we are not there yet, the pressure is not intense enough or strong enough to force us to make these things work, we can probably all cruise along for a few more years because none of us need to put their life on the line to do this. I think the day will come, sooner rather than later, where there won't be a choice (Theoret, 2013).

This is strongly evident of an environment that has not yet fully felt the pressure of the open-source paradigm in order to get ahead of traditional museum practices and become fully receptive to open collaboration. Major parts of the institution are still largely closed, however an understanding for the future exists and certain project-based initiatives are allowing MOCCA to open up parts of their organization.

4.3.2. Structure and Model for NGC@MOCCA

As the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art approaches collaboration as a way to cope with the realities posed by the open-source paradigm, the *NGC@MOCCA* partnership is based on mutually beneficial, practical and philosophical factors between the two organizations. The goal of the project to co-create exhibitions is quite basic in nature but solves two very important issues for both the organizations. The National Gallery has a national mandate that dictates visibility and reach to communities across Canada; MOCCA provides a space and audience to achieve this in Toronto. On the other hand, MOCCA benefits from the resources provided by NGC, gaining access into an extensive collection that the museum would typically not be able to show at their location (Sadler, 2013). This type of problem solving is fundamental to the collective creativity process, allowing diverse stakeholders to come together around an issue and come up with innovative solutions (Hargadon & Becky, 2006). The *NGC@MOCCA* partnership is structured based on a simple satellite model, which allows the two organizations to work together while still maintaining individual identities:

I think in partnering everyone still wants to preserve their own identity but comes together around a project so the structure is project-based. As opposed to strategic alliances or fully embedding the way in which you operate together (Theoret, 2013).

While MOCCA retains their individual identity, they benefit from collaborating with a large-scale institution full of resources, valuable intellectual property and human capital capacity. Another important factor in the open innovation model presented earlier, is the opening up of intellectual property and finding ways to gain value outside of the organization's proprietary channels (Chesbrough, 2003). This is evident in the way NGC allows MOCCA into their collection and exhibiting it at a different location, creating value for NGC while sharing co-authorship of an external exhibition.

Co-authorship is central to the satellite partnership model between the National Gallery and MOCCA. Curators from MOCCA and the National Gallery work together to find pieces in National Galleries' collection and exhibit them in the 'project' space at MOCCA; complimentary to the main exhibition on show. Other instances allow artists that are on show in the main space of MOCCA to curate complimentary shows in the project space from the collection of the National Gallery. MOCCA therefore employs an open-ended curatorial process allowing the artist free creative and curatorial reign of the collection, opening itself up to many possibilities. An example of this is:

When Lois Jacob was invited to come in and curate he went historical on us. So that is something we had to be open to. He was responding to showing some influences he had on his work that are at the collection of the National Gallery. So he had a voice or point of view that we would not of necessarily considered because we curate more contemporary art so when Lois came in we had to think about it. The fact that we had to bring in an external voice to open up that stream was very insightful to us. Now I think we are much more open to the idea of looking beyond of what you would expect to find (Theoret, 2013).

This illustrates an instance when being open during an isolated project with a finite goal and timeline, influences the overall approach to open collaboration at the museum.

Learning from one specific project can shift the perspective of the overall approach at the museum, characteristic of the open innovation model (Chesbrough, 2003). Furthermore, this type of open-ended curatorial process was an entry point for MOCCA to push beyond the simple satellite model. In the perspective of the museum, their partnership

became much more meaningful and engaged, involving extensive visits to each of the institutions, sharing of information and transparency in practice.

4.3.3. Limitations and Resistance

Resistance to openly collaborative projects between external curators, institutions, artists and the public is mainly encountered when breaking down the traditional authoritative voice and boundaries held by artistic institutions. The same authoritative position that these museums have held for the last 150 years is being challenged by the open-source paradigm and evident in the way institutions resist opening up their doors to the external voices. "When you start taking the authority away from the curators, who have held it for 150 years, when you kind of chip away at it and then introduce new voices there is a bit of resistance" (Theoret, 2013). Therefore, boundaries and entrenched behaviors become a barrier, but testing such boundaries can yield interesting opportunities, often when working within specific constraints (Hargadon & Bechky, 2006). Other factors that can cause resistance to being open:

- Engrained cultures holding traditional ideas and inflexibility for change
- Hierarchical structures impeding creativity and new approaches to collaboration
- Self-preservation of board members and supports who are looking to keep traditional structures in the organization
- Institutional size and lack of resources, capacity and time to dedicate to novel perspectives and research

Another interesting limitation to the partnership between NGC and MOCCA is a misalignment of perspectives on the partnership. While MOCCA members believe the partnership to be 'beyond the model of the satellite' and much more meaningful in nature, NGC views the partnership like any other that it has based on an outreach model, as pointed out by Christine Sadler, Chief of Exhibitions Management at NGC, "we use the same processes for work and treat every satellite institution the same, even though Yves may not agree with this" (Sadler, 2013). This can lead to miscommunication and limited opportunities in the partnership, where one side can be focused on progress while

the other looks to preserve an already-tested model. Overcoming such limitations and resistance can lead to a more holistic approach to being open.

4.5. The Case of the Walker Art Center

A model adopting the open philosophy and co-creation with audiences

Located in Minneapolis, MI in the United States, the museum is focused on collecting, creating, presenting and conserving works of visual art, taking a global and multidisciplinary approach to their practices. The museum describes itself as “a catalyst for the creative expression of artists and the active engagement of audiences” (Walker, 2013). The Walker Art Center is one of the five most-visited contemporary art museums in the USA and receives more than 600,000 visitors per year (Walker, 2013). While the center hosts an indoor gallery, theater and cinema, it also boasts an exterior sculpture garden and grassy-fielded area. It is this grassy area that hosts the *Open Field* project pertaining to the case study at hand. *Open Field* is a three-year experimental initiative launched in 2010 that invites the community to come together to explore, create and interact on the museum's exterior field. The programming is both seeded by the Walker Art Center as well as extends an invitation to community members to create and host their own events on the museum grounds. *Open Field* strives to create together, along with the audience, a new type of public gathering place set against the framework of “the commons”. The Walker Art Center describes the notion of the commons as “a resource shared by a group of people and a process by which the goods (materials or intellectual) are held and managed collectively” (Open Field, 2013). While admitting it to be both utopian in nature and challenging in practice, through this framework the museum works to create programming with the public, rather than push it out to them from within the closed-off walls of the institution. This type of initiative therefore attempts to investigate the boundaries and tensions found between the inside and outside of the institution, drawing attention to the types of engagement an institution is able to instigate with the public. The project was made possible by sponsorship from Optum and funding support from the Margaret and Angus Wurtele Family Foundation, in order to aid with programming and administration of the program.

While being open and free is fundamental to *Open Field*, certain rules and guidelines are in place focused around protecting the spirit of the project, the people involved and the environment it is set in. Beyond this, anything is possible and the public is encouraged to submit project ideas through the *Open Field* website and participate how they see fit. In companion to projects imagined and executed by the public, the Walker itself seeds certain programs in order to demonstrate the type of participation possible out in the field. Such programming includes a Drawing Club where professional and non-professional artists interact and create together, the Kitchen Lab designed with artists, students and the general public working together to create a mobile kitchen unit supporting social interaction and civic engagement, and a Cat Video Festival asking members to enjoy videos collectively rather than alone as typical of internet videos. This range in programming is further supported by artist residency programming where the resident artists at the Walker Art Center fulfill a mandate to execute a project with the public and do so out in the field. Community theater projects, performance art projects, spontaneous instances of creation are all typical of artistic production out in the field. It is important to mention that *Open Field* investigates the relationship between the professional and amateur in artistic creation, it does not strive to garner participation for the sake of participation, it strives to explore new modes of artistic production and how this can be fostered out in the field, beyond museum walls and the traditional models of engagement. Through this *Open Field*, “acquired a distinctive sense of place through acts of negotiation, interaction, and exchange, bringing meaning to its tagline: Open Field is what we make together” (Open Field, 2013). The project has evolved through its three years of existence and has now entered a year of hiatus, resuming once more in the year 2014 for its final installment.

4.5.1. The Walker’s Approach to Open Collaboration

In the case of *Open Field* it is important to understand how the Walker Art Center views and approaches open forms of collaboration, be it with the public like in the case of *Open Field*, or in other internal forms or partnerships. In order for an organization to holistically adopt a model of open collaboration, the process needs to be enabled through

top management promoting the transition into an open model of innovation (Chiaroni et al., 2011). An implementation through leadership is also the case at the Walker Art Center. The museum director, Olga Viso, guides the organizational perspective on collaboration by initiating a process of self-reflection, calling on staff to investigate different possibilities of coming together around projects:

Under new leadership at the Walker, our director was looking at more collaboration so she was driving this idea of coming together as thinkers outside of the programming that we do (Steinwald, 2013).

This suggests a form of self-reflection that is part the Walker's identity, promoting a culture of openness to new practices and structures for collaboration. Culture therefore becomes a crucial factor in this case, as the act of self-reflection and evaluation is crucial to the adoption of an open model, and according to Neus & Scherf (2005) culture is a catalyst for this type of shift in beliefs (Neus & Scherf, 2005).

Beyond the ask by Viso, the Walker adheres to a history and responsibility to "get ahead of their practice" (Steinwald, 2013) and proactively investigates how changing artistic practices are challenging traditional museum practices like exhibition design, conservation, cataloguing and audience engagement. For this reason the Interdisciplinary Work Group was formed by members of different departments looking to identify gaps in organizational practices that have become out of date and no longer relevant. This process is illustrated by the Interdisciplinary Work Group's realization that "we always said we were interdisciplinary at the Walker but when we actually looked at our practice we aren't very interdisciplinary" (Steinwald, 2013). Such gaps in perception and functionality create areas of interest and attention for the work group, garnering further research and investigation. In such cases that gaps in perception exist, organizations can draw on external sources of knowledge in order to evaluate their practices as seen in the *open innovation model* mentioned earlier (Chesbrough, 2003). Following this model, the group invited external artists, practitioners and experts to speak about the way interdisciplinary practices are approached in their experience. Leveraging external perspectives to inform internal practices at the Walker, illustrates the organizations belief

that good ideas can come from anywhere including outside of it, characteristic of *open innovation models*. Based on the process of self-reflection, the IWG will provide recommendations at a later date, however it will be interesting to see the type of impact a small isolated group will have on the institutional practices at large.

Another place in which the open philosophy is reflected at the Walker Art Center is in the institution's website. The Walker website has recently been overhauled with the concept of open very central to its core design. Inspired by the openness of online behaviours, members of the organization started:

Looking at the impact of participatory culture, crowd-sourcing and all that was having an effect on culture at large, and started to figure out what would be the best ways to bring that into the institution (Schultz, 2013).

One way for the Walker to do this was to re-position their website as a content provider rather than event website. Being open online has changed audience preferences and challenged traditional 'closed' models within the arts (Adelaar, 2006) making the Walker aware that in order to remain relevant they needed to become an "online community center" (Steinwald, 2013). This meant being comfortable bringing in outside content, posting entire artistic performances online and even publishing proprietary books virtually for free, along with hardcopies for sale in the museum gift shop. One such publication fully available online is the book *Open Field: Conversations on the Commons*, outlining the experiences out in the field during the projects existence. According to the website the book was fully published "in the spirit of public exchange" (Walker, 2013), indicating a holistic approach to being open and acting collectively, both online and offline. What is interesting however, is that the comfort with participatory culture that prompted the website to become a content platform, is still not completely aligned with what is taking place inside the institution. As pointed out by Michele Steinwald, Assistant Curator of Performing Art, commenting on the Walker's website:

In some ways we are being that community center online that we aren't quite in the building. It's almost the first step to being completely open. It all came from the same place but in some ways that online architecture was more malleable more quickly than changing internal practices inside the institution (Steinwald, 2013).

What this indicates is a certain degree of entrenched habits that exist, presenting a certain resistance to fully opening up to the influences of the open-source paradigm. However modeling open collaboration in a digital context first can be a way for large-scale institutions to shift their logic and adopt open ideologies elsewhere in the organization. Large-scale organizations do not change easily. Online technologies are much more flexible and can more easily test the boundaries of large museums, applying the learning to other practices.

4.5.2. Motivations behind Open Field

The *Open Field* project came out of a culture of self-reflection and evaluation of practices that are inscribed into the Walker's organizational identity, supported by a number of parallel factors. During the time that *Open Field* was being conceived the Walker Arts Center was in the process of questioning the type of engagement that cultural institutions deem as valuable. Sarah Schultz, Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice, the main driver behind *Open Field* pointed out "what constitutes cultural engagement and how institutions foster that is changing" (Schultz, 2012). With this perspective, staff at the Walker began to initiate a process of investigating boundaries that exist around audience engagement with culture. The value proposition of museums was shifting from object-based to visitor-based and in line with the Walker's responsibility to get ahead of traditional practices, the project set out to challenge "the notion of the museum as the primary author of artistic content and cultural experience. It also resists the idea that creativity is an individual pursuit belonging primarily to the artist" (Open Field, 2013). With this notion in mind, *Open Field* set out to blur the lines between what happened inside and outside of the institution, giving a sense of experimentation to the project, free of the prescribed behaviours of what cultural engagement means inside an institution. Sarah Schultz reflects on this opportunity:

I think what we realized was that this was an opportunity to experiment with not only different ways of engaging the community but different ways of producing content and bringing people together" (Schultz, 2013)

This sense of experimentation gave the *Open Field* as sort of permission to open up to all possibilities of engagement outside and more importantly allowed for the possibility of failure, rarely found inside the excellence-driven institutional walls, built on best practices and authority. This permission to fail and experimental approach created a platform for public engagement out on the field open to all possibilities of participation.

4.5.3. Structuring Open Field for Public Engagement

As previously mentioned, given the fact that the Walker has a history of being a “town square or community center” (Schultz, 2013), the staff was faced with the task of structuring the field for open engagement. The project was:

Grounded in the belief that creative agency is a requirement for sustaining a vital public and civic sphere, it nurtures the free exchange of ideas, experimentation, and serendipitous interactions (Walker, 2013).

While a strong ideology, mission and goals existed, the Walker was still largely unsure how to implement this into practice. Timing, energy, desire and funding seemed to align internally, so the Walker Art Center prescribed to the open model and drew on external expertise to decide how to structure the project. To support the project, *Open Field* drew on consultants like Nina Simon introduced earlier in the chapter, and Steve Deets, President and Artistic Director of Northern Lights, a media-based arts agency focused on forging connections between citizens and their environments. Along with consultants a group of about 30 local architects, designers, artists and cultural producers came together in order to think about how to structure *Open Field* for success. As indicated in theory on collective creativity, the act of problem solving is strengthened by diverse knowledge and experiences, coming together to form new ideas (Hargadon & Becky, 2006). In this case, the process of problem solving indicated an opportunity for the Walker to draw on external expertise, strengthening their capabilities to produce a successful interdisciplinary project. Based on these open conversations the Walker decided on a strategy of *tools, rules, meeting and seeding*, which were put in place in order to guide public engagement and demonstrate the type of participation possible out on the field. An

opportunity was also presented for members of the public to submit their own programming through the Open Field website. This began a process of trial and error of pushing out programming, events and concepts to see what will work with the public and how they will engage. Keeping in line with open-source principles, the Walker decided to revise strategies as they went along, putting out interim versions and listening to audiences in order to make decisions for future versions of the events.

The goal of the deployed engagement strategies was to instigate participation around the framework of the Commons. What this meant is that the goal was not simply to gain participation from the public, but to create a true common and shared space of collective value out in the field.

This wasn't about audience development; it wasn't about participation to participate. It was about participating in making a public space together and under the kind of framework of a Commons (Schultz, 2013)

Theories on the commons indicate a set of resources that are collectively managed for the benefit of all. In the case of *Open Field* the co-created programming can be seen as a shared resource and the social space that is created over that programming in the commons platform that can be managed for the benefit of the participants. Creating a sense of community through interaction and meaningful exchange can recall the five principals of a commons, presented earlier. These include: free participation, as all members of the community are invited to contribute; a common purpose, to engage with each other over the context of art; common holdings, *Open Field* is what is created together; participation involving a sense of mutuality, all must be present in the practice for activities to be successful; and social relations characterized by justice, according to the code of conduct that is established. Although *Open Field* may not embody all five principals in every instance, it is clearly structured against a framework of a commons. Furthermore, the characteristics of a digital commons presented by Michael Edson earlier in the study, also informed *Open Field* activates. Edson was invited to speak at the launch of the program and characteristics like designed for the public, collaboration without control and existing in the public domain were all clearly present.

Despite strategies for programming, attendance in the first edition of *Open Field* was unpredictable, some nights only garnering about 25 attendants (Schultz, 2013). The major realization was that not all audiences wanted to create something out in the field; many just wanted to attend programming that was already organized by the museum. The important learning is that Creators hold a small portion of the participatory profile pie explained in the literature review chapter, and that there are many different levels of interaction that a museum can hope to instigate through programming. In the case of *Open Field* inviting resident artists to create a platform for participation through their artistic production was crucial in creating meaningful engagement between professional artists and the public, central to the goal of the project. Around these types of activities all participants needed to contribute to the ability of being open, with a level of spontaneous creation as described by Schultz:

One runs into things unexpectedly or strangers interact and ideas merge, there is a kind of convergence as well as from that an emergence of something new (Schultz, 2013)

This pointed to a notion that participating members needed to be present for one another in order for meaningful engagement to occur, allowing for a shared idea or product to emerge (Forte & Lampe, 2013), and building that together.

4.5.4. Resistance and Challenges for Open Field

As previously described, *Open Field* set out to explore the boundaries between the inside and outside of the institution and the engagement possible inside of each. On one hand this created opportunities for new types of engagement, and on the other resulted in resistance. Due to the very open nature of *Open Field*, both audiences and staff at the Walker were confused about the project during its first year in production. The open-ended process differed substantially from the prescribed behaviours found inside the institution and therefore confusing to some. Not until the third year did the project dispel skepticism from artists, Walker staff and the community. Another challenge was the misconception that the project was created for audience development purposes, rather than creating a shared ‘space’ based on the framework of the Commons. Therefore, there

was concern about attendance and if those coming to *Open Field* will then be inclined to go inside of the museum. As the value proposition of the museum shifts, entrenched habits often do not and bias still exists, as pointed out by Schultz:

That somehow the ultimate goal is to get you to go inside the gallery and that the real experience of the institution is standing in front of a piece of art on the wall. Until you have done that you haven't actually had an engagement with the institution (Schultz, 2013)

This illustrates the deeply authoritative curatorial voice held by the institution, where the value exists in evaluating quality in the arts and pushing that out to the audiences rather than engaging them in creating value together. This points to another challenge for *Open Field* as the same type of resistance to the authoritative curatorial voice created an almost re-inscription of it during the process of attempting to curate *Open Field* programming. At first there was resistance to the vulnerability of opening up to all possibilities and failure which led to the curating of programming that the Walker envisioned as 'appropriate' for the field, going against the very goal of the Commons framework and being completely open to all possibilities of engagement.

4.5.5. Implications for the Walker Art Center

As *Open Field* attempted to investigate the boundaries between the inside and the outside of the institution a natural dialogue between both emerged (Open Field, 2013). This dialogue pointed to the tension between the two, prompting staff and audiences to think about culture in different ways. Amidst the open-source paradigm shift, different forms of engagement have come to light and the tension of institutional value has created a possibility for types of participation at the Walker Art Center. An example of this was the *50/50: Audience and Experts Curate the Paper Collection* in 2011, exploring institutional boundaries. Audiences had the opportunity to curate half of the exhibition by means of voting, while traditional curators did the rest. The works were then presented along two adjacent walls inside the museum. The exhibition presented the curatorial practice as a joint exercise, contrary to traditional museum systems. This is an example of

how the events that transpired outside began to influence other ways of relating and operating inside the institution:

The idea of what openness is, or this initiation or permission or sense of possibility that these participatory practices afford us, can find their ways into the gallery experience in sometimes much more subtle and important ways (Schultz, 2013).

The very notion of being open creates possibilities for new types of engagement that perhaps may not be as over as the type of engagement taking place during *Open Field*.

An example of this can be things like:

- Softening language and engaging audiences in more empathetic ways in a set of ideas or concepts
- Listening for interesting external voices and being flexible enough to invite them inside when they are discovered
- Bridging the amateur and the professional in projects inside of the building like the *50/50 Exhibition*

Interestingly, these types of implications are closely aligned to open collaboration models and further build on the Walker's desire to be more open with their practice.

4.6. Summary of Findings

When comparing the two fine art museums a reference to the definition of 'open collaboration' can help define the specific forms of collaboration taking place in each case. It can also help determine to which degree each can be characterized as 'open'. The Wikisym definition presented in the earlier chapter is most appropriate since both cases undertake real-world collaboration rather than online forms. Based on offline properties, open collaboration is defined as: "collaboration that is **egalitarian, meritocratic and self-organizing**" (Wikisym, 2013). The cases of MOCCA and the Walker Art Center are compared and contrasted in the section below, set against the definition of open collaboration presented here. Results are summarized in *Table II*.

Open collaboration is a process that is **egalitarian**, with limited or no barriers to participation, allowing anyone to get involved in the process. In the case of *NGC@MOCCA*, many barriers exist to participation and only those selected by expert-driven committees may be permitted to collaborate. Collaboration in this context involves a principle partnership between two defined institutions that exchange intellectual or physical resources. In the case that an external curator or artist may be involved in the process, he or she is selected by one of the institutions and approved by the other. Furthermore, when selecting works from the National Galleries' collection all loans need to be approved, as pointed out by Exhibitions Manager, Christine Sadler: "once a selection is made by the MOCCA, it has to be approved by our curatorial staff" (Sadler, 2013). In the case of *Open Field*, collaboration is based on an open platform for participation where any member of the amateur or professional community is invited to participate. There are limited barriers to submitting a program idea, however a committee within the institution vets programming and only the selected concepts are formally installed. Based on a framework of the commons, anyone can participate in the programming selected as well as create informal activities within the context of *Open Field*. It is also important to note that during the first year of existence, attendance was limited since the community did not understand how to participate. Only once strategies demonstrating engagement resonated with the community and a socialization process took place, were they able to openly collaborate with limited barriers to participation.

Another element of open collaboration, **meritocratic** involves a process of determining decisions and status on merit alone rather than pre-defined or imposed structures. In the case of *NGC@MOCCA*, participation is based on pre-defined structures and roles of eligibility. In order to contribute to the collaboration one must be invited based on reputation or certification, or be an internal staff member of the museum. Only through this structure is collaboration initiated between stakeholders. Furthermore, all decisions are controlled by a central authority that determines how collaboration is structured and for what outcomes. In the case of *Open Field*, decisions and status are determined through a group process, re-affirmed through attendance and participation. Those who volunteer themselves to contribute programming are then responsible for its

execution, inherently placing themselves in a leadership position through the consensus and support of the group. There is no single authoritative party that determines the type of participation necessary to collaborate as part of the initiative. Instead this is an open-ended process where the group determines the type of social platform that is created through interaction. Decisions and status in the context of *Open Field*, including the programming selection process, are therefore based on merit and group consensus.

The final characteristic of open collaboration is a **self-organizing** process. Flexible in nature, the process is adapted to the participants and not pre-defined by an authoritative position. In the case of *NGC@MOCCA*, the partnership is structured and defined against the traditional satellite model of exchange for mutual benefit. The MOCCA provides a space and the National Gallery provides a collection, fulfilling the specific needs of both institutions through a pre-determined structure for collaboration. Although MOCCA attempts to chip away at this structure by introducing new types of participants and programming, the National Gallery largely abides to the traditional satellite model and treats all museums within its roster in the same manner. In the case of *Open Field*, the participants who contribute programming or are present at the activities determine the type of structure for collaboration. Based on the motto, “Open Field is what we make together”, the initiative adopts self-organized processes of experimentation dependant on the contributors involved. However, during the defining phase of the process by which *Open Field* was to operate, it was discovered that certain tactics or strategies were “re-inscribing the kind of curatorial authority of an institution” (Schultz, 2013) and had to be abandoned. This led to the consensus that a completely open platform was needed in order for open collaboration to take place.

Table II – Comparative Chart of Case Study Characteristics

	Open Collaboration is...		
	Egalitarian (Everyone can join, no principled or artificial barriers to participation exist)	Meritocratic (Decisions and status are merit-based rather than imposed)	Self-organizing (Processes adapt to people rather than people adapt to pre-defined processes)
MOCCA	No	No	No
The Walker Art Center	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Based on the International Symposium for Open Collaboration’s definition of Open Collaboration (Wikisym, 2013).

Based on the definition of open collaboration, it is evident that the case of *NGC@MOCCA* is one of closed collaboration. Adopting a pre-defined partnership model based on the intellectual property and artwork loans, typical of fine art museums (Arnold-Forster and Davies, 1998). Participation is controlled based on selection systems and outcomes for collaboration are defined by an authoritative position. However, MOCCA is moving towards a more open approach by testing the boundaries of the traditional satellite model adopted by the National Gallery. They are doing this by inviting non-traditional guest artists to curate supplementary shows, breaking down the barriers between high-brow and low-brow culture by co-creating projects with the Toronto International Film Festival and David Cronenburg, and attempting to forge sustainable working relationships between a large and small-scale museum. Therefore, this case illustrates a museum within a traditionally closed model, making an incremental move to being more open in instances of collaboration. This case can be illustrated with the metaphor of a 'home', where individuals are carefully invited inside the home and closely interact around a dinner table, where social and organizational processes are ingrained and the host acts as the main authoritative figure, determining the outcome of the evening.

In the case of the Walker Art Center and *Open Field*, a model for open collaboration is adopted. In this case open collaboration was manifest in the creation of an open platform for participation with an open call for the submission of ideas from the whole community. Boundaries are limited to participation and processes are undefined and self-organizing. Motivated by a desire to experiment against the context of a commons, *Open Field* invites audiences to create a social sphere through interaction against the context of a fine art institution. The case of *Open Field* can be illustrated with the metaphor of a 'town square'. A common gathering space where everyone from the community is welcome and where ownership is shared. It is also a place where citizens gather to make important decisions for the overall good of the community and where strangers can bump into each other and freely interact. Essentially no authoritative figure is present, however interaction takes place within the context of the city, which abides by

the rules of the government. This is similar to *Open Field* being a place of open interaction, within the context of the museum, led by curators and directors.

Table III – Comparative Chart of Approaches to Collaboration

NGC@MOCCA	Open Field
Partnership between two institutions	Collaboration with audiences
Goal of mutual resource exchange	Goal of creating a Commons
Invite only	Open call
Experts	Community
Home	Town Square

The above chart summarizes the main differences between the two cases and their approaches to collaboration. Comparing and contrasting the cases leads the researcher to the identifying the main motivations and structures behind open collaboration in the context of fine art museums, presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

5.1. Revisiting Research Questions and Purpose

The focus of this study was to identify the main motivational factors behind open collaboration and how it is structured in fine arts museums in North America. The concentration of the research was on conducting interviews with arts professionals involved in collaboration, resulting in three case studies demonstrating varying degrees of openness. This thesis paper was focused on answering the following research questions:

RQ1: How is open collaboration structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums?

RQ2: How does its practice affect the actors involved as well as the public?

Given the recentness of open-source movements and the impact of the knowledge economy, motivation is one of the key issues in understanding why museums undertake openly collaborative projects. Therefore, *RQ1* focuses on illustrating the motivational factors behind open collaboration as well as the different structures of collaboration that support each motivational factor identified during research. The objective of this study is to list the major motivational themes and describe potential factors of successful collaborative initiatives, recommending pathways to success. *RQ2* focuses on understanding the effects of openly collaborative projects on the actors involved in its practice, as well as the audiences of museums. *RQ2* is an expected succession from *RQ1* since in understanding the motivations and structures; an understanding is formed of the benefits and effects of open collaboration.

5.1.1. Motivations and Structures behind Open Collaboration

The results of the study revealed key motivational factors behind open collaboration based on the two museum case studies. The motivational themes below summarize the major findings of the case study research and answer the research question

RQ1: how open collaboration is structured and motivated in North American fine arts museums. A concise summary of the findings can be found in Appendix C. The five motivations behind open collaboration are:

Relevance in the Age of Online Participatory Culture

The research results identified the desire to remain relevant in the age of online participatory culture as a key *motivation* for open collaboration. The ease of accessibility to online technology and communities formulated around shared interest, have created a culture of participation online seldom recreated inside museums. The ability for audiences to be virtual content co-creators has increased their desire for customization of the content they consume. Motivated by a need to remain relevant, museums are turning to collaboration as one of the strategies for incorporating participatory online culture into museum systems. When audiences can actively participate with museums, they become places of community function.

Examples

"As a field we are recognizing the challenges of our audiences wanting to get more and more involved. They feel empowered to question the lines of authority" (Theoret, 2013)

"That whole sense of self and being 'open' online has changed our audience and our artists. We take part in these practices ourselves as individuals as well. Now it's bringing all these things together institutionally" (Steinwald, 2013)

The participatory culture found online demonstrates a democratization of knowledge, easily accessible through online channels and media. The open-source paradigm has influenced the way individuals organize themselves around knowledge (Budhathoki & Haythornthwaite, 2012). Audiences no longer feel certain knowledge belongs only to traditional experts, therefore shifting the selection system from expert-driven to peer-driven. In expert-selection there is only a small group responsible for the selection process, typically outside of the group they are selecting from. In peer-selection the whole group participates in selection from the general population (Wijberg, 2005). Therefore, audiences are pushing back on traditional expert-driven selection systems typically found in museums and advocating for non-traditional voices to be included in

museum systems. *Structures* for open collaboration supporting participatory culture and peer-selection systems are ones of co-creation, or process-based collaboration. In co-creation audiences take full participation in the co-development of content. An example of this would be the *50/50 Exhibition* presented earlier, where both experts and audiences select the artworks included in the exhibition. In product-based collaboration audiences are invited to contribute to the final product of an exhibition, customizing their experience with it and participating to some degree.

Shifting Model of Museum Value Propositions

The shifting value proposition of museums was identified as another key *motivational* factor behind open collaboration. The changing notion of what constitutes cultural engagement has eroded object-centric museum systems to a visitor-centric focus. Open collaboration and the values on which it is based present opportunities to better engage audiences with culture. When applying values of transparency, participation and collaboration, new strategies become apparent for how museums can demonstrate value to their audiences. Fine art museums now offer interpretive tools created by topical experts outside of the arts, co-created social events with community groups, and audience participatory tactics, that may not have been considered appropriate against the context of the previous value proposition.

Examples

“We are not about these objects, we are about the audiences whom we work with and whom we serve. We are going to start to look at how we will really focus on them”
(Simon on Open Field, 2013)

“We have the opportunity to experiment with not only different ways of engaging the community but different ways of producing content and bringing people together”
(Schultz, 2013)

The shifting value proposition of museums is a case of changing dominant logic within an organization, as well as the larger industry. Dominant logic predisposes an organization to a certain perspective, often informing the organizational structures and systems, consequently causing strategic issues (Battis & Prahalad, 1995). In the case of

museums, the dominant logic dictated an object-centric practice, expertly chosen by in-house curators. This logic caused individuals within the organization to dismiss opposing perspectives as irrelevant, impacting strategies for audience engagement. Typically a major change in the larger environment of an organization may begin to shift its dominant logic and when the change is big enough, the organization needs to adopt their practices significantly, arriving at a new dominant logic (Battis & Prahalad, 1995). In this case, a major environmental change was brought on by the open-source paradigm and the proliferation of participatory culture. This shift has forced organizations to consider a different perspective, pushing back on traditional boundaries and creating new strategies. The *structure* for open collaboration based on this motivational factor is collaboration around visitor experiences, namely audience participation in exhibition content and creating opportunities for new engagement contexts around ‘social objects’. Social objects are defined as “the engines of socially networked experiences and the content around which conversation happens” (Engeström in Simon, 2010). This, along with the new visitor-centric dominant logic, presents opportunities for open collaboration to draw on external voices in the creation of meaning around museum objects.

Proactive Self-evaluation of Practices

Another *motivational* factor is the desire to proactively self-evaluate curatorial and institutional practices. Along with the changing artistic practices to more conceptual or temporary in construction, museums are inclined to evaluate traditional systems in order to maintain a connection with the artists they exhibit. Therefore, it may be part of the organization’s mission to initiate a consistent process of ‘looking inward’ to determine the relevancy of museum practices. Different opportunities for open collaboration can come from a process of experimentation and self-evaluation. This is especially the case when inter-disciplinary practices in both artistic production and business administration are observed in external situations.

Examples

“It is part of the Walkers’ legacy and responsibility to be able to test out new institutional practices. Part of that is to get ahead of our own practice” (Steinwald, 2013)

“Artists were no longer being as definitive about their practices and we were finding that the artists we were interested in having as part of our residency program were causing us to pull together teams that weren’t natural to the way we were used to working” (Steinwald, 2013)

A process of self-evaluation is characteristic of the *open innovation model* presented by Chesbrough (2003). This model enforces organizations to look beyond their internal structures and gain value from external influence or knowledge. An organization may be well adapted in its practice, but changing practices outside of the organization may push internal development of new systems in order to adapt and survive in the new context. Furthermore, processes of self-evaluation must be part of the organizational culture and identity in order to be successful. In instances where only some of the members within the organization are questioning the norm, change is often unsuccessful (Tse & Mitchell, 2010). Therefore, if it is not part of the organizational culture and identity to question practices, it may be difficult for the organization to holistically adopt open collaboration. The potential *structures* for collaboration based on this motivational factor are inter-disciplinary or cross-boundary work groups. Such work groups can look beyond the status quo of institutional norms and processes, drawing from cross-boundary experience that may not come about within traditional team structures.

Creation of a Common Good

The process of creating a common good through interaction is another *motivational* factor for instances of open collaboration. When undertaking collaboration there is a collective desire to create something together or a common goal and interest in the exchange process. Museums are complex systems where individual behaviours of staff/artists/audiences interact in complex ways within the overall context of the organization and the external environment. Such a complex web of interaction promotes relationships, trust and new knowledge creation. Open collaboration therefore presents

opportunities for bringing together diverse stakeholders in varied situation, within the context of fine arts museum with the goal of creating a common good.

Examples

“One runs into things unexpectedly or strangers interact and ideas merge, there is a kind of convergence, as well as from that an emergence of something new” (Schultz, 2013)

“This wasn’t about audience development, it wasn’t about participation to participate. It was about participating in making a public space together under the framework of the commons” (Schultz, 2013)

The process of complex interaction between diverse stakeholders is an example of collective creativity. Collective creativity is the exchange of information between diverse stakeholders, coming together to solve problems that they may not be able to do on their own (Hardgon & Bechkey, 2006). In this instance, collective creativity can inform new perspectives, breaking out of the comfort zone and typical ways of looking at organizational practices or projects, in turn forming social capital. “Knowledge creation is characterized as a product and function of social capital that is critical to organizational development and effectiveness” (Amelia in Tse & Mitchell, 1998). Furthermore, the framework of the commons can be applied to creating a common structure or group of resources in the public sphere, for the good of everyone involved. The *structures* for collaboration are: the inclusion of external perspectives and voices in organizational initiatives or process-based collaboration. This can strengthen instances of collective creativity and social capital formation since heterogeneous knowledge is exchanged between diverse stakeholders, creating a shared artifact through the process.

Need for Resources and Sustainability

As competition increases for funding and attention, organizations are looking for mutually beneficial ways to collaborate in order to cope with the challenges of today’s cultural landscape. Therefore, the final *motivational* factor found through research is the practical need for resources in a time of limited funding and a struggle for sustainability. A lack in resources can challenge a museum to re-evaluate their models and strategies for collaboration. Therefore, open collaboration can provide an opportunity to exchange knowledge and resources for mutual benefit in new ways.

Example

“There is no question in my mind that there is going to be a streamlined approach and greater alignment between cross-disciplinary organizations, driven both by the need to stay relevant and be a sustainable organization” (Theoret, 2013)

As industry structures change significantly, managers find opportunities for sustainability in adapting traditional models to more open and collaborative ones. The need for resources can instigate this process, since instances of crisis often dislodge dominant logic within an organization (Battis & Prahalad, 1995). On the other hand, instances of available funding can initiate a period of experimentation where funding legitimizes instances of open collaboration. A *structure* for collaboration that focuses on the exchange of resources is a strategic partnership. Two institutions in the partnership model can retain individual identities but still work together to meet collective goals, aggregating each other’s knowledge and capacity.

5.1.2. Open Collaboration and its Affect

The results of the study reveal the affects of open collaboration on stakeholders involved in the practice. Due to the concentration of research on fine art museums, a clearer understanding of affects was formed within the context of organizations. Based on all the cases studied, the results show that the main affect of undertaking instances of open collaboration is the process of informing other ways of operating or relating at the museum. Since instances of open collaboration are typically project-based, the open models under which they are executed begin to influence the general thinking within the organization (Chiaroni et al., 2011). The new form of thinking is applied to other organizational systems, pushing against traditional boundaries or structures. This process of influence in turn creates new organizational learning (Battis & Prahalad, 1995). However, it is important to understand that this is a very timely process and only when enough time has been spent as part of an openly collaborative model, are perceptions altered towards traditional functions. This once again can affect the dominant logic of an

organization, where closed models are ‘unlearned’ and new open models influence museum systems moving forward. This was the case with *Open Field* since the experimentation that took place outside of the institution began to inform the way exhibitions were designed and interpreted inside the museum.

Examples

“The idea of what openness is, or this initiation or permission or sense of possibility that these participatory practices afford us, can find their ways into the gallery experience in sometimes much more subtle and important ways” (Schultz, 2013)

“Open Field is what we make together and I think this idea of working collectively is actually becoming a guiding principal for the work that we are doing in the whole department now” (Schultz, 2013)

“The fact that we had to bring in an external voice to open up a different stream of thought was very insightful to us. Now I think we are much more open to the idea of looking beyond of what is expected” (Theoret, 2013)

When examining how the practice of open collaboration affects the public there is limited empirical evidence present in the study. There is however a sense from the arts professionals interviewed that open collaboration has the positive effect of building a context for audience engagement with the arts. This can be illustrated against the framework of social capital formation and the building of relationships in networks. Social capital is formed between those part of a collaborative network, producing productive benefits (Putnam, 2004). This means that there are positive benefits to instances of open collaboration, building relationships and trust between stakeholders and strengthening the probability for success in future instances (Tse & Mitchell, 2010).

Examples

“We didn’t have the money to do formal evaluation but what we observed was people spending more time with the art objects and connecting them to their own lives because of the participatory components” (Simon, 2013)

“It is a slower process but it involves more engagement. There are real positives in terms of learning and the sense of pride of those involved. In terms of relationships and the bond you build when you create a product together” (Simon, 2013)

However it is important to note that even though arts professionals believe open collaboration to have positive affects on the public, little is done in the way of measuring the success of initiatives. Positive interaction with openly collaborative projects is typically observed by arts managers and classified through various qualitative methods like positive feedback or media attention. This presents a limitation to the study. While an acknowledgement is present for the need of open practices, concrete benefits for how it affects the public are not fully understood and can be an area for future research.

5.2. Reflecting on Successful Open Collaboration

When analyzing the three cases presented along with the motivational factors uncovered in the results, it becomes apparent that the Walker Art Center's position towards open collaboration is unique in the general field. The following is a discussion of the factors that make the Walker Art Center an exceptional case. This makes a contribution to the research by building on the current understanding of how fine art museums approach collaboration. Currently studies understand mostly practical reasons (Wireman, 1997), however when applying the definition of open collaboration to the case of the Walker Art Center, it becomes apparent that this is a distinct case of being open, demonstrating factors beyond the practical.

According to the results there are three major factors that make the case of the Walker Art Center exceptional in the general field. The factors are: *undergoing a distinct paradigm shift throughout the organization, adopting a unique museum value proposition and having a creative voice as an institution*. The first and most important is the museum adopting a distinct *paradigm shift* in how strategies and systems are approached in the organization. As explained by Schultz, “the idea of working collectively is actually becoming a guiding principal” for all activities at the institutions. The concept may have initiated slowly in isolated situations like *Open Field*, but an overall organizational learning process has taken place over a lengthy period of time and shifted the museum to a new dominant logic (Battis & Prahalad, 1995) based on the idea of ‘openness’. This is illustrated by: the redesign of Walker's website to a content platform, the types of

exhibitions the museum puts on, the interpretive tools inside the gallery, the interdisciplinary work group, and the artists invited to take part in the residency program. All strategies have to align with the principal of being open, and can be identified in any area of the institution. The concept of being ‘open’ has therefore been adopted as a holistic strategy and paradigm supported by both leadership and general staff.

Another important factor distinguishing the Walker from other museums is the adoption of a *non-traditional value proposition* for a museum complex. This is best illustrated with the *Open Field* case study as traditional museum systems are examined and a new way of engaging with audiences is identified. This in turn informs the practices inside of the museum as new strategies and tools are implemented based on the learning that took place during the initiative. In this case, the process of experimentation is part of the Walker’s identity, not a one-off initiative made possible through a funding opportunity, as observed in the general field. In this case the Walker is adopting the value proposition of becoming a ‘town square’ for its community, inviting participation in various programs and exhibitions and providing a platform for interaction. Finally, the *creative voice of the institution* is an important factor to the success of open collaboration. Nina Simon explains this “the ideal arts organization has the courage to have a unique creative voice, to use that to make programming decisions, to use that to make partnership decisions, and then to use that to create better stuff with the partners instead of just being a venue for those artistic voice” (Simon, 2013). Having a unique creative voice can support the visitor-centric value proposition of a museum and provide a context for audiences.

5.2.1. Barriers to Open Collaboration

Based on the research three barriers have been identified that can inhibit successful instances of open collaboration at a fine arts museum. The following section provides a discussion of the three major barriers: *funding and legitimacy*, *stakeholder socialization and entrenched habits*. The first barrier to open collaboration based on the research is a lack of *funding and legitimacy* for the initiative. As discussed previously no

standard success measures exist for openly collaborative projects therefore no concrete benefits have been identified or proliferated through the field. So while an acknowledgement exists that open collaboration is an important strategy, there may be limited legitimacy for such initiatives among museum professionals. In the case where limited funding is available it may go towards projects with proven success benchmarks. On the other hand, when funding becomes available a process of experimentation can take place. This can propel forward and legitimize practices of open collaboration, but won't necessarily result in success if the initiative is not holistically supported by the organization. There is still a high level of resistance in the field to participatory and collaborative initiative, until a great an industry-wide understanding is formed for the benefits of such projects, funding may not affect the legitimization of open collaboration.

Another major barrier to successful open collaboration is the *lack of socialization of the involved stakeholders*. Since openly collaborative initiatives are not typically common as part of the museum context, stakeholders may not be aware of how to participate. A new strategy for engagement needs to be properly communicated throughout the organization and an appropriate invitation extended to contributors. Open collaboration is often part of a new paradigm, which sets new expectations and norms. Therefore, when an institution adopts this new paradigm, audiences may not understand the new platform. When an organization changes focus the need to be to either engage new audiences or bring existing ones through the change process (Simon, 2013). This involves a period of socialization, which is often a barrier to successful open collaboration. The final barrier identified through research is the entrenched habits of an institution that can stifle open collaboration. Even if a desire or acknowledgement is there, if being open isn't part of the organizational identity, it will be difficult to take the leap to a fully open organization. As previously discussed a culture of flexibility and experimentation needs to support successful exploration of open collaboration. Even in the case that funders are demanding collaboration to be part of the initiative, if being open is not part of an organization identity, an openly collaborative initiative may prove fruitless. Based on the three barriers presenter here, the following section provides practical recommendations for institutions undertaking open collaboration.

5.2.2. Recommendations

Through exploring and reflecting on the cases of MOCCA and the Walker Art Center, the researcher was able to gain an understanding of the open collaborative process within the context of the open-source paradigm. According to the data collected several strategies become apparent for open collaboration initiatives to be successful in the environment of fine arts museums. Based on the research question and the analysis of empirical data collected, several recommendations are presented to museum professionals looking to structure an affective initiative open to collaboration and participation.

1. Ensure that participation is appropriate and necessary in the first place

Participation for the sake of participation should not be the goal for any collaborative initiative. Participatory tactics should only be utilized in support of a specific initiative. Asking questions like: what voices are missing from the exhibit, and how can they be incorporated appropriately? can lead to a stronger experience and a better overall product. An effective and appropriate engagement strategy should be based around the bigger goals of education and outreach that the institution already has in place, employing participatory tactics as a tool that can help institutions meet those goals. Therefore, appropriate instances of open collaboration are based on the identity and philosophical position of the institution, building a context for the works on show and providing support for exhibitions, not distracting from them.

2. Embed the invitation to collaborate into the process

When creating a shared artifact through collaboration, it is important to embed the invitation to collaborate from the very start of the initiative. What this means is that an organization that employs collaboration in the whole process – from strategic planning to execution and evaluation, can create a truly co-developed project based on collective values at every phase of the process. The open process has potential to open up to bigger circles of participants when it is based on values of transparency, participation and

collaboration. It also has a greater chance for success because participating members feel empowered to contribute and accountable for the end result. Often a process that involves engagement and collaboration can be slower but there are real benefits behind the relationship that is created when co-developing a product or project together.

3. Map out different possibilities for engagement, design against them

Given that a spectrum exists for various degrees of engagement, the organization designing a participatory or openly collaborative initiative needs to plan for different forms of engagement, appropriate for everyone from creators to spectators. An institution should be realistic in what to expect from participants and design the exhibition or initiative against the range of possible outcomes. “You have to be a reasonable about how long you are expecting someone to participate with you, what kind of experience or investment are you expecting them to make, are you expecting to make in them and then designing based on that” (Simon, 2013). Without a clear plan for engagement, the initiative can lack in participation due to unrealistic goals, engagement models and asks from the audience or stakeholders.

4. Invitation has to suit the experience

A stand-alone platform created for participation, does not mean contributors know how to participate. The myth of “if you build it, they will come” does not hold up when proper strategies for engagement aren’t present. When designing effective strategies for engagement it is important to remember not to expect others to understand the opportunities on offer. Therefore strategies of seeding, modeling, providing appropriate tools, can stimulate participation among contributors who might have been confused with the ask for participation in the first place. It is also important to note that strategy of trial and error might be necessary in order to find strategies that are effective practice as in the case of the Walker, “I would love to say let’s have an engagement strategy of tools, rules, meeting and seeding but that actually just happened by throwing a lot of things out on the field, a lot of different strategies out. Trying everything we could think of to see what

would stick" (Schultz, 2013). This illustrates willingness to try different strategies for engagement and learning from the types of experiences and interaction that transpire.

5. Adjust programming as new possibilities are explored and boundaries are crossed

As different programming and strategies are put in place they often test the boundaries of what is possible and traditionally appropriate for engagement at an institution. Naturally as this type of programming is executed boundaries are tested and pushed, resulting in the breakdown of resistance and building up of comfort for these types of engagement strategies. "I think it is a matter of testing what your limits are, understanding what they are and then pushing against them" (Schultz, 2013). Once boundaries are identified and pushed, inevitable learning takes place and this is where programming can be adjusted to encompass the growth that has taken place. In-line with open-source principals, interim versions of programming are encouraged so issues can be caught and a new version can be put into place as soon as possible that is more effective than the previous installment (Neus & Scherf, 2005). While engagement programming can prove to have a steep learning curve for everyone at the organization in the beginning, lessons taken from early attempts can vastly improve future programming. Such lessons can also become guiding principals for other types of activities across various departments at the institution. Building flexibility into the practice of the institution is another important factor. If the institution is prepared to examine new possibilities for engagement, they need to be flexible enough to adopt and take advantage of the right opportunities when they present themselves.

6. Allow for the possibility of failure and to be vulnerable in the practice

When undertaking open-ended processes and projects within an institutional context, a certain level of vulnerability needs to exist among curatorial and administrative staff for interesting results in collaboration to take place. This can be initially be quite difficult to achieve since institutions often reply on best practices of what has worked in the past as well as rooted in a history based on excellence. These parameters however can limit

creativity in collaborative efforts, being vulnerable can therefore become a catalyst for innovation. The possibility of failure can also be difficult to accept but as in any open-ended situation failure can take place. "A lot of people talk about failure now as a seed to creativity, how do you let yourself publically fail, especially as an institution with a tradition of excellence" (Steinwald, 2013). It is important to remember that failing in certain situations when attempting something new can be an isolated situation and does not need to be an 'epic failure' throughout the whole organization, but a way to test boundaries and learn new ways for engagement.

7. Be present and transparent in actions

The idea of being present is fundamental to the concept of open collaboration. In order for open collaboration to be successful all stakeholders must be present in order to share and exchange ideas, allowing for new combinations to take shape through interaction. Even if a platform for engagement is present with supporting strategies in place, if contributors are not present in the practice, no meaningful exchange will take place. "It was really what people brought and what people did and the fact that people showed up, we have to be present for one another. If we participate in a democracy, if we participate in culture and if we participate in life we have to show up" (Schultz, 2013). Furthermore, transparency in practice is also fundamental to being open. Sharing information that in the past was proprietary can open up new avenues for creativity and create a basis for collaboration since all stakeholders hold the same information and are equal partners in exchange.

5.3. Study Strengths and Limitations

Upon completion of the research study several strengths and weaknesses have become apparent. It is important to once again note that the study was conducted through qualitative methods, where a variety of research methods were employed based on a purposeful sample available to the researcher. Furthermore, due to the qualitative nature of the study generalization is not possible and the results do not attempt to portray an

absolute model, but attempt to shed light on the complex social and organizational processes involved in open collaboration.

5.3.1. Study Strengths

The research sample used in the study reaches both Canada and the United States and targets a diverse range of museum professionals at major artistic institutions. The varying range of executive and non-executive titles interviewed for the study allowed for a comprehensive look at the main concepts, providing a wide range of perspectives from within the organization. The majority of the major artistic institutions in Canada have been approached for interview, therefore providing a comprehensive overview of the Canadian cultural landscape and its approach to open collaboration. Furthermore, the most important actors and pioneers for open collaboration in the United States have been interviewed, allowing for a cross-reference of realities as well as best-in-class perspectives for case study analysis and benchmarking. Additionally, the number of interviews conducted is an asset to the study. A total of 12 interviews allowed the researcher to gain knowledge of the main themes and concepts behind open collaboration. Once a certain number of interviews were reached, similar concepts began to emerge; giving the researcher confidence that the appropriate amount of interviews have been conducted and the main themes have been captured for analysis. Furthermore, the in-depth interview and case study approach can be considered a strength of the study, aiding the researcher in understanding and connecting complex social and organization processes and structures that other study formats may have not captured.

5.3.2. Study Limitations

A limitation of the study is that the empirical data collected was only based on three cases with limited participants from each organization. While research was supported by a number of exploratory interviews, it is possible that if a large sample was employed new themes and concepts could emerge. Furthermore, the interviewees approached for research were only those who work in major artistic institutions in

Canada and the United States. Since the research question looked to investigate the impact of open collaboration practices on all stakeholders, including audiences, interviewing museum audiences could provide a different perspective on how collaboration is perceived by the participating public. As previously mentioned, openly collaborative practices have little in the way of success measures. This presents a limitation in the study since there is no concrete understanding for how open collaboration effects involved stakeholders, there is only a general sense that engagement is increased.

Another limitation of the study is that it only examined fine arts institutions, leaving out all performing arts centers, which are also considered to be part of the visual arts. Performing arts institutions have a long history of community-based work, using collaboration to create performances. This could help researchers understand another structure for collaboration between creative directors and the public. Finally, since the study of open collaboration is a relatively new field and is multidisciplinary in nature, no concrete or specific theoretical framework exists for its analysis and study. Therefore many different avenues for research could be taken, yielding different results and perspectives on how open collaboration is structured and motivated in the fine art museums.

5.4. Areas for Future Research

Based on the research limitations and findings presented in the study, future avenues for research are outlined to further strengthen the understanding of open collaboration in the context of fine arts museums. One of the main limitations in the study is the inadequate understanding in how open collaboration affects audiences of museums. A future avenue for research should focus on interviewing audiences to gain a holistic perspective on the affects and provide empirical evidence of the benefits of open collaboration. This should be combined with an understanding of the types of success measures that organizations can implement when undertaking collaborative initiatives. To date, no concrete measures of success have been established in the museum sector.

Moreover arts professionals are consistently calling for a need to implement both qualitative and quantitative metrics to measuring the impact of their outreach initiatives. Due to limited budgets this has not yet been instigated in a significant way. Therefore, another future avenue for research can evaluate the types of success measures appropriate for measuring the impact of open collaboration, supplementing traditional quantitative metrics like attendance with qualitative attributes.

One of the findings presented in the study is the process of experimentation that can be initiated with the availability of funding. However, understanding is limited in exactly how funding motivates openly collaborative projects and how such projects can be become sustainable once funding is no longer available. A future avenue for research can build out the understanding for how organizations can implement strategies for sustainability from the on-set of the exploration process. Another finding coming out of the research is that the familiarity with new technological tools can support instances of open collaboration. An area of future research can strive to investigate the types of digital tools and platforms that support openly collaborative projects - inside the organization, between institutions and within the public domain. This can create practical implications for museums looking to aid and enhance instances of open collaboration.

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INTERVIEWEES

Francisco Alvarz
Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture
Royal Ontario Museum
Face-to-face interview
May 27, 2013

Cheryl Blackman
Assistant Vice President, Visitor Experience & Audience Insight
Royal Ontario Museum
Face-to-face interview
June 6, 2013

Laura Comerford
Project Manager, Exhibitions
Art Gallery of Ontario
Face-to-face interview
June 6, 2013

Andrew Davies
Executive Director and Co-Founder
No.9: Contemporary Art & the Environment
Face-to-face interview
May 14, 2013

Kelly McKinley
Executive Director, Education and Public Programming
Art Gallery of Ontario
Skype interview
July 10, 2013

Tracy Rudell
Head of Marketing
Royal Ontario Museum
Face-to-face interview
June 6, 2013

Christine Sadler
Chief of Exhibitions Management
National Gallery of Canada
Skype interview
May 22, 2013

Nina Simon
Executive Director
Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History
Skype interview
May 10, 2013

Sarah Schultz
Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice
Walker Art Center
Skype interview
June 4, 2013

Michele Steinwald
Assistance Curator, Performing Arts
Walker Art Center
Skype interview
May 17, 2013

Yves, Theoret
Managing Director
Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art
Face-to-face interview
May 14, 2013

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

“In the introductory email sent over to you in advance, I introduced the topic of open collaboration. I wonder if anything taking place at The Walker Arts Center comes to mind that might fit within open collaboration?”

Exploratory

1. Can you tell me more about X project – please describe the project, who the major collaborators involved were, and what the central goals of the project were?
2. Are there any other collaborative projects within the past few years that stand out in your mind because they were different, more involved, or unusual in some way?
3. Is there a sense at your institution, or even in the field generally, that collaborations are important; perhaps even that collaborating is better than not collaborating to undertake something? Is that different from, say, five years ago?

Motivation

1. Based on your experience at X, is collaboration about economic necessity? Or is it a philosophical choice? Or an aesthetic choice? Or something else? What motivates the various collaborations that your organization undertakes?
2. Based on your experiences, do you find the majority of collaborations are project-based? Or do you find that the overall strategic goals at your institution focus on collaboration?
3. Do you think it’s always beneficial to undertake collaborative projects, if possible? Are there downsides or limitations to collaborations?
4. When you think back to X project, did the participating members hold varying knowledge backgrounds? If so, were these used in order to help forge new and interesting directions for the project?

Structures

1. Can you describe how X project was put together? How were the partners identified and brought together? Is that a pretty typical process?
2. Does this process change when the internal departments of your institution collaborate versus when collaborating with external partners?
3. Is the process through which collaborations are undertaken typically well defined at your institution or is it adapted to each project or situation? Have you experienced instances of self-organization around a specific goal or project?
4. Are the relationships with partners generally sustained once collaborations end? Or do they tend to be sort of one-off in nature?
5. Are the roles of different partners generally defined in a collaborative process like the X project? If so, can you describe this process and comment on whether it is difficult or generally pretty easy to define individual and collective roles?
6. When collaborating on X project, did all partners share a common vision for the project? Or did you find that some had individualistic reasons to be involved?

7. What would you consider to be the main characteristics and outcomes of a successful collaboration?

Authorship

1. Can you think of an example of a project or exhibition that involved collaborating with audiences? How accessible was this project to the public and how was participation encouraged? Did the institution deem authorship of the completed product?
2. Based on your experiences, how does your institution proclaim the authorship of a particular project or exhibition when executed through collaboration? Is the authorship equally shared among all partners?
3. To what extent do you believe collaborative projects undertaken by your institution reflect the vision of the collaborative group?

Resistance

1. When looking back at X project, did you experience any level of resistance to the collaboration among members of your institution? If so, can you tell me how this was overcome?
2. Is resistance an ongoing issue or have members of the organization gotten onboard with collaborative approaches to project and exhibition creation?
3. Large institutions like yours traditionally run along hierarchical structures, have you experienced hierarchy yourself and how does that affect collaborative projects?

Final

1. Can you think of any other project or instance of collaboration outside of your institution that would fit within the open collaboration model? Do you think that we will be seeing more of these types of projects in the future?

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW FACT SHEET

Date:

Location & Method:

Length of Interview:

Recorded: Yes [] No []

Interviewee Profile

Name:

Organization:

Position:

Interview Context Description

Keywords	Notes

CLOSED AND OPEN COLLABORATION IN THE ARTS

Appendix B: Coding Table	
	Example
Value Proposition	“We are not about these objects, we are about the audiences whom we work with and whom we serve” (Simon, 2013)
Changing view of cultural engagement	
Object versus audience	
From artist genius' to collectives	
Paradigm shift	
Identity & Desire	“It is part of the Walkers’ legacy and responsibility to be able to test out new institutional practices” (Steinwald, 2013)
Desire	
Self-reflection	
Identity	
Institutional mandate	
Following artistic practice	
Experimentation	
Possibility	
Relevance	“We are recognizing the challenges of our audiences wanting to get more and more involved” (Theoret, 2013)
Audience demand	
Participatory culture	
Content co-creation	
Online behaviours	
Common Good	“ It was about participating in making a public space together under the framework of the commons” (Schultz, 2013)
Public space	
Platform	
Shared knowledge	
Practical	“There is going to be a streamlined approach and greater alignment between cross-disciplinary organizations, driven by the need to stay relevant and be sustainable” (Theoret, 2013)
Resources	
Exchange	
Restructuring	
Changing models	
Problem solving	
Affects	Example
Influence	“The idea of working collectively is actually becoming a guiding principal for the work that we are doing in the whole department now” (Schultz, 2013)
Informing other practice	
New learning	
Context	
Social Capital	“There are real positives... in terms of relationships and the bond you build when you create a product together” (Simon, 2013)
Relationship building	
Interaction	
Engagement	

APPENDIX C: MOTIVATION FOR OPEN COLLABORATION

Motivational factors for Open Collaboration	Example	Explanation	Structure
Relevance in the Age of Online Participatory Culture	“As a field we are recognizing the challenges of our audiences wanting to get more and more involved. They feel empowered to question the lines of authority” (Theoret, 2013)	Audiences are pushing back on traditional expert-driven selection systems typically found in museums and advocating for non-traditional voices to be included, based on the peer-selection systems.	Co-creation, or product-based collaboration.
Shifting Model of Museum Value Propositions	“We are not about these objects, we are about the audiences whom we work with and whom we serve. We are going to start to look at how we will really focus on them” (Simon, 2013)	The previous dominant logic dictated an object-centric practice. Based on the influence of the external environment the dominant logic has shifted to one focused on visitor-centric experiences.	Involving ‘social objects’ as part of a visitor-centric experience.
Proactive Self-evaluation of Practices	“Artists were no longer being as definitive about their practices and we were finding that the artists we were interested in having as part of our residency program were causing us to pull together teams that weren’t natural to the way we were used to working” (Steinwald, 2013)	The open innovation model, calls for a process of self-evaluation, drawing on external influence and knowledge to inform the practices of the organization. A culture and identity conducive to self-evaluation must be present for the process to be successful.	Inter-disciplinary or cross-disciplinary work groups.
Creation of a Common Good	“This wasn’t about audience development, it wasn’t about participation to participate. It was about participating in making a public space together under the framework of the commons” (Schultz, 2013)	A commons is formed between stakeholders taking part in a network with the goal of producing a common good, strengthened through instances of collective creativity when diverse stakeholders come together.	Inclusion of external perspectives and process-based collaboration.
Need for Resources and Sustainability	“There is no question in my mind that there is going to be a streamlined approach and greater alignment between cross-disciplinary organizations, driven by the need to stay relevant and be a sustainable organization” (Theoret, 2013)	The need for resources can instigate a process of searching for new models, since instances of crisis often dislodge dominant logic within an organization.	Strategic partnerships.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Date	May 10, 2013
Name, Institution, Position	Nina Simon, Executive Director at Santa Cruz Museum
Duration	23 minutes
Type of Interview	Exploratory Interview

Olga: Have you observed the trend of ‘open’ collaboration in the arts generally? Can you name any examples at your institution or generally?

Nina: I think it really varies by organization and by organizational type. I think that at least in the museum field, children’s museums were really the first museums 50 years ago to say “you know what, we are not about these objects, we are about the audience within whom we work and who we serve and we are going to start to look how we will really focus there”. I would say that that has trickled into the rest museum world, it is much slower on the art museum side and my limited impression is that it is also much slower on the performing arts side. Anywhere that you have very strong creative producers who are in an environment that encourages the single vision of the artist approach, its problematic. That doesn’t necessarily have to be an artist, so in an arts museum for example just moving to team based exhibit development, where instead of the curator creating the whole show you might have curator, designer and educator on a team together. That happened in some museums 30 years ago and in others it’s still a big deal. So I think there is a huge range of whether that’s happening or not. I think that certainly there is an understanding that there is a desire for more open collaboration. I think particularly in big institutions, what I am seeing is that, they’re seeing it as a more of bureaucracy problem than anything else in terms of, you see these places that are going through organizational restructuring and they are really looking at how do we create more cross-functional teams and how do we create opportunities for ideas to bubble up. So I do see that happening. One of the things that I saw a lot when I was a consultant was working with a big institution, I would hear from the director: I want risk takers, I want us to really be experimental but I hear from the people from the lowest part of the organization that there are no opportunities for us to be creative here, there is no opportunity to take risk. So it was clear that there was some kind of structural barrier because the people at the top and the people at the bottom wanted the same thing but there was something going on in the middle that prevented those ideas from moving in either direction.

I would actually say that at our institution, while we do a ton of participatory stuff with the public we are also very interested in internal collaboration. With the public we are very low tech but behind the scenes we spend a lot of time using tools whether its something like Pinterest or an internal Facebook group for staff, just trying to find ways for us to be connected to each other and for us to really be open in terms of where ideas can come from and how things can bubble up.

Olga: How does participatory programming affect the quality of the overall programming at the museum? I get the sense that if you engage large groups vs. specific targets things can get simplified and boiled down to the lowest common denominator.

Nina: Ya, I’d say one of the best examples I’ve heard of that is a curator talking about what I had considered to be a really extraordinary participatory project, and that person basically said, and there was all this great data that came out about the dwell time in this exhibit space and how

people were engaging and how they were thoughtful about it. And the curator said: “well it’s a petting zoo, everyone loves a petting zoo”.

I really see institutions collaborating with community members or audiences in two different ways. Some organizations are doing it in a process-based way, where its really a behind the scenes thing. This tends to be a more focused collaboration, so for example a theater says we’re going to work with a group of 10 teenagers from a low-income group, and we are going to co-develop a play together. But then we are going to produce this play without professional actors; we are basically going to create a traditional product but are going to use a collaborative process to get there. So there is that side and then there is the more collaborative product side. So maybe its like I am deciding as a director that we are going to have an open comment board in the museum, but that is where anyone can engage. So I think there has to be a reasonable about how long you are expecting someone to participate with you, what kind of experience or investment are you expecting them to make, are you expecting to make in them and then designing based on that. I would say that to me the product quality doesn’t have to change, what I really look at is, for me the basic design question is not: how would people want to participate or what would be fun for them? It is how can these community members make our museum better? How can they help solve a problem we have?

For example when we had an exhibition about love and we had this space that was focused on love gone wrong, and artists representing love gone wrong in different ways. We painted a broken heart on the wall and we put up a sign that said: after the break up I... The stories that came out of that injected additional content to the exhibit that I would argue enhanced the overall experience. We didn’t have the money to do formal evaluation but what we observed was people spending more time with the art objects and connecting them to their own lives because of the components with the post-its. So I think for us is that we see that these participatory things are not a distraction, or kind of an arum, they are additive to our overall goal around education or engagement.

Also, we often look at how can we invite lots of collaborators to really create something beautiful together with an artist. From a visitor perspective, making my little crappy thing in a museum is not necessarily the most inspiring experience. But if there is an artist... For example we had an artist that came to us saying I want to do a massive metal sculpture in your museum of a school of fish. We said awesome can you figure out a way to do this with visitors? So he cut out 100s of aluminum fish so when people came in they pounded out the texture of scales of each fish. So then we mounted them all into a sculpture. So people did not get to be widely creative here but they did get to contribute to a real piece of art and they help solve this problem – how they hell will we put texture into all these fish and how will we get people to feel that this is a piece that is co-owned by them. Often I think it is just about flipping and thinking about where is this place that people can help me with this. I often use the analogy that participation is like cooking with children, nobody will argue that it is faster or easier to cook with children then without then but when you do it at the end you still get the cake. Yes it is slower and yes it involves more engagement, but there are real positives that come out of it in terms of their learning and in terms of their sense of pride. In terms of relationship and the bond your build and you make the product.

Olga: So content comes first, co-created or now the participatory aspect is an add-on or more enhanced experience of that content?

Nina: Yes and a support of it. So I look at these questions like: what voices are missing from this exhibit, how can we find those voice? It is about making a better overall product.

Olga: So do these sorts of collaborative project begin to change the other ways of relating and operating at the institution?

Nina: Yup.

Olga: So I can see that this has become engrained with everything occurring at the institution. Can you tell me how this came about and proliferated throughout the institution? I see in your philosophy you had mentioned it was in the last two years or so that this became a focus.

Nina: So I hit my two year anniversary last week. What happened was in 2010, this museum was really in trouble. They'd been in the red for years, and there had been this community assessment that blew the board away. Where they discovered basically that there is a small group of people that knew and loved the museum and then a hell of a lot of people that didn't even know they existed. So the board thankfully decided to act on this and they parted ways with the last director and wrote a new strategic plan and they wrote this new vision statement where they wanted to be thriving central gathering place. At the time I was living in Santa Cruz and working as a consultant. They called me and said they wanted to do this but I only agreed if they were sincere and these weren't just words on paper. So we had a multi month conversation that led them to hiring me. When I arrived there was only one week of cash in the bank, so this museum was screwed financially, they were about to close. So there was this strong sense among everybody, board and staff, that it was imperative that we change and because I came in with so much digital baggage with what I was about, so there was no question how we were going to change. What I basically said to them was: I can make this a thriving central gathering place that you were talking about happen, I am not going to make it my vision, I can enact your vision, it's a good vision, it fits with me but it will require a lot of changes. So I would say that I came in very much aggressively with a mandate for change and I was very explicit this was a turn around, we have to make these changes and we were very, very aggressive. So I think that urgency really set good conditions for us to make some of those changes happen. Probably the fact that I had never been a director meant that I chose to do some things that maybe I would not have done again but accelerated the change to happen in a good way. And then we had huge successful results very quickly. In our first year we more then doubled our attendance, we went from being in the red for years to being in the black in a serious way. There were for a lot of people that questioned the approach, a lot of measures to show that it was working.

Now there is resistance and it mostly comes from traditional supporters of the museum that feel that there is a loss. They feel like they had lost the museum that they had loved. That the museum had gotten junky. I hear crazy things like there are too many kids in this museum! Why do you need to spend all this time bringing young people into this museum! I would say that in my most generous moments I feel that these are people feeling a sense of loss for something that they have created. In my least generous moments I feel they are just elitist and comfortable expressing that. So that is where some of the resistance is, but I think mostly it is a sense of loss because they are seeing that all the success, all the publicity, all of the positive response we are getting, the money we are bringing in, that there model is not as successful as this model but it is the model they would still prefer. It is very interesting, I will have these conversations with an 85 year old saying that I understand what you are doing but it is just not for me. That's honestly ok, its not ok in some situations.

Olga: Great, can you give me a sense how important the participatory model was to the turn around? Was this something already written into the strategic plan of the board or is this something you brought with you?

Nina: Well they had this concept wanting this thriving central gathering place where local residents are really engaged. I said ok that's the vision that is the destination we are going to, how are we going to get there? We are going to get there by doing this in a participatory way. So that didn't come from them but it was an easy sell and it was an honest sell. I would say one of the surprises for me and this relates to the focus of your project, was that participation and openness to collaboration is one part, and the other part is important is transparency and openness. One of the first things that I did was throw open the books because I felt like people had been living with this stress and fear hanging over their heads. They knew the museum was in trouble but they didn't know really what was going on. So just opening up to both the community and internally with staff and being able to say: this is all of our museum, we have to make this work together, anything is on the table. Really changed the conversation and supported the participation.

Olga: In one of your articles you had mentioned you wanted to move from a content authority to a platform provider. Can you tell me a bit more about this?

Nina: I think that we often conflate expertise with power so I think our expertise is not threatened if we give up some of our power. So to me the examples of this are politicians or newspaper reporters, people who are seen as authoritative voices but also operate in an environment that is really open to debate, really open to public discourse in the way that the arts are often not. I would say that politics are more participatory than the arts are usually and that there is a framework, it's a screwed up one, but there is a structure through which that participation can happen that is part of that whole system. I think we have to think about how we can de-correlate our expertise from our power, and be able to say what is the best environment in which that expertise can live and thrive and work with different levels of people at that level. It is interesting here one of the stresses that comes up frequently from some of the people who are uncomfortable with what is going on here, people will say: so how will people know that this is a museum and they are seeing important stuff if it is along side things made by school kids? I think part of that is research and being honest with ourselves that people are already asking the questions like: my kid can do that why is it here? And acknowledging that. I also really believe that having amateur voices does not diminish the expertise or the professional strength of a professional who is on display as well, it contextualizes it. I think frankly one of the problems that museums have, and I don't know as much about performing arts institutions, is that we create such narrow contexts of what quality means and then we don't explain it. How often do you see a label saying here is why this thing is important. I was fascinated by this curator at the Smithsonian who was telling me about when different curators come in, this is about American art, that a curator might have different opinion about how important an artist is. They might decide, no we shouldn't be displaying anymore this artist and put their work in the basement. And then another curator might say no this artist is important let's put their work on display. The whole fact that this argument is happening is something that is completely not visible to a visitor. I think that we completely reduce our ability to educate people and to engage with them if we don't provide that context. So I actually think it is very helpful to say, yes here is a Cindy Sherman worth 1 million dollars and then next to it is a photograph by a mother and daughter that volunteer at our museum who are inspired by Cindy Sherman and it's a totally different thing and this helps contextualize why Cindy Sherman is important. Again to me it is towards the big goals that these institutions put forward and already have around education, around engagement and it's just about indiscriminately figure out what tools will help us get there.

Olga: You had mentioned that you don't see this type of participatory behaviour as much from fine art museums. How do you think we can change that and how can those institutions strive to be more open?

Nina: I think it is hard, I just wrote a blog about how arts and science museums are interpreted differently and it's almost totally opposite. I started out at science museums, there is a perception that a scientist is a brilliant person whose work is completely unintelligible to the general public. So our job as a museum is to design exhibits that create that connection. Where as an art museums it is completely opposite. Our job as a museum is to reduce any barriers between you and that artist's vision or genius and if we create interpretative materials we get in the way. I just gave a talk at the AAMC, The American Association of Museum Curators and a woman curator stood up and said: you know I think it is really dangerous when we do these participatory things because there are artists doing this kind of work and we should be leaving that up to artists, and we shouldn't be doing this. I said that I absolutely disagree I think we need take on our power to be creative producers and to be partners with artists. I think it is very hard to talk to a art museum people about how children's museum or a science museum works because it is so different. Instead one of the analogies that I find really works is talking about a magazine or radio program, so you think about a magazine that has a theme, has a design style. They are soliciting content from lots of different kinds of people but then the magazine has the say how is this going to be packaged, how is it going to be contextualized, how is this going to go together. There is a real creative production, kind of personality of a magazine that differentiates a Vouge from an Elle. So to me the ideal arts organization not only has the courage to have a unique creative voice, to use that to make programming decisions, to use that to make partnership decisions, and then to use that to create better stuff with the partners instead of just being a venue for those artistic voices.

THE END

Date	May 14, 2013
Name, Institution, Position	Yves Theoret, Managing Director of the MOCCA
Duration	60 minutes
Type of Interview	Case study analysis

Olga: I briefly explained the concept of ‘open’ collaboration. Can you see any examples of this at your institution or within the arts field generally?

Yves: As a field yes, we are thinking that this is probably where it is going. The big topic we are discussing at the OME is the relevance of museums in society. We used to be this big institution of authority and power, we would make loud and definite statements and considered the institution of reference on whatever topic it may be. People would go to us and see “this is how we should understand or read one topic” for example the War of 1812, this is how the war is being told. I don’t know what brought this on but now there is a lot more need for opening up that conversation and there are many more stakeholders involved in the discussion. So now the position of authority seems to be challenged, not overly challenged but seems to be happening on its own. I can’t point to any specific reasons but my sense is that there is this questioning of authority. As a field we are recognizing the challenges that our audiences are wanting to get more and more involved. They feel empowered to question these lines of authority. I think we are slowly embracing that idea. I think it is a challenge for us a culture because I think we have been in that position of authority for a long time. Curators have been running museums for a long time, now these multidisciplinary environments within museums where the curator used to sit at the top of the pyramid and say this is how a particular artist should be shown, this is what he is trying to say. Now we have other voices around the table when we talk about planning exhibitions. So it is not exactly happening here at MOCCA because it is a smaller place. I used to work at the National Gallery of Canada, we had these large with multidisciplinary teams and would bring all the expertise around an artist or subject matter.

Olga: So in the case of the MOCCA you think that this is not happening because of the size of the institution?

Yves: No. Let’s not get into MOCCA yet, let’s get into it later. I guess the point that I was making was that certainly larger institutions organize their state of affairs in a way that might be more meaningful or more responsive because they have the depth and the means to be more engaged and involved. If you are going to bring multidisciplinary teams and expertise around a table, you need funds! If you just take an internal approach to opening up, you can certainly invite other voices, you can set up an advisory community that bring perspective on different subjects. So for example you can bring in history buffs around the War of 1812. So interdisciplinary teams can also bring in external voices. I know we have done that at the National Gallery and some of the larger museums because again, they have the reach and the means of resources. They are also the national institutions and it is their responsibility to take the lead in the national exhibition of the arts across Canada. So however you want to frame it, it will end up there that the smaller to mid-sized organizations have the issues of resources.

One of the great models and an institution that is doing a lot of great work that I have come across is the Brooklyn Museum. It is considered ground-zero for open collaboration and it is mostly done through their web and social media, new media channels.

Olga: Yes, another thing they did is actually dissolved their curatorial teams into multidisciplinary teams. Even internally they tried to dismantle that hierarchical model that you see so often in larger institutions and sort of said, good ideas can come from anywhere.

Yves: Yes, that is a game changer. I have seen it myself at the National Gallery, when you start taking the authority away from the curators, who have held this authority for 150 years, you kind of chip away at it and then introduce new voices there is a bit of resistance. So I think the Brooklyn has gone all the way to the other end of the pendulum of let's break down all the barriers and let's get all the voices on equal footing. So they are kind of the beacon from what I understand from the larger museums. I am sure you have also done a lot of reading and seen that there are also lots of criticisms. When a museum becomes too much of a free-for-all, when every voice is equal then what is the value of the museum? The museum can bring expertise around a topic, so curators do this for a living and are highly trained and skilled. You got to give these experts a weighted opinion, its great when you have lots of voices and opinions around a table but some are more valued then others.

Olga: So maybe they are in a way leading the opinion, not the end all be all, but leading the design of the project and shaping the point of view?

Yves: Well, the notion of the museums has been pretty much always been object driven. Now it is moving away from object driven to visitor driven. Its not "what can the object tell us but what does the audience want to know from this object". It's a complete shift of paradigm in a way that is going from object centric to visitor centric. I think we can't make the mistake of going all the way from one end to the other end. So I think that is what we are trying to figure out right now. The Brooklyn may have gone all the way there but now they might say lets go back in. Its been for 150 years at least all the way to object-base to curatorial-base, power, authority-base. This is how it is.

Olga: Basically you just described the status-quo of how it has been for the last 150 years but you are seeing the field feel some pressure to be more collaborative or participatory. So, what do you think is really causing this pressure? Is it a cultural change, one in society or maybe it is so early we don't have a sense yet?

Yves: That is a good question, I haven't really thought about this. I don't think it was one game changer in the last 5 years its all over the pages. If you read the specialized press or magazines, this is the new trend, this is where it is going. I would imagine it has a lot to do with new technologies. I think it is probably tied to emergence of new media and giving everyone a chance to be curators themselves in creating content. Typically content would be created by the institutions, now everyone can contribute to the content.

Olga: Perhaps this idea of co-creation? Where it may be as superficial as the Facebook like but can go as deep as someone starting a blog and being invited to museum events as an expert. They may not have that education but have a strong enough opinion that they were able to push that voice out.

Yves: Yes, this can make the relationship with the visitor so much more engaging and meaningful. So you show them that you are going to take their point of view into consideration and invite them into the conversation. The minute they are going to be there, what they are going to do is provide you with advice as to their views that will be reflected in the exhibition. The label itself is not enough "this is a work from 1962 and represents this and that", but post visit they can engage even more with access to curators, conservators, access to education and engagement

conversations. So the engagement piece has the potential to be so much more than the one-way discussion.

Olga: What I find interesting is you mentioning the word access, maybe providing the access to the curatorial process at different points in time. Maybe even being more transparent with data and information for people to actually be able to pull into different parts of museum operations.

Yves: Yes, there is a series from the BBC, 20 years back where they invited cameras for a behind the scenes at the Royal Opera in London. 6 part series, a reality show before its time where you invite reporters to spend time behind the scenes at the Royal Opera. While they were there they were discussing what operas to put on, labour negotiations, the building was leaking etc. What we heard from them is that it gave people a renewed sense of engagement with their national Royal Opera. They said that: "oh this is how things are happening". People are eager and keen to see how this works, but the moment you open up your doors people want to come in and provide their feedback. We are not right there as a field yet to be opening up our doors.

Olga: Maybe you are not set up to deal with that response yet?

Yves: Certainly as a field we are not. But there are also the issues of resources, there are some institutions better equipped to do it financially. Also better equipped just in terms of philosophy, I think there is still a generational aspect to this. For example I am 41 years old and I think there is a different approach to the museums that I have from my younger staff and the age of Facebook where everything is transparent and everything is opened up for everyone. A bit of resistance on my part! Someone who has done things in the traditional model. So the traditional model is in questions but is it being questioned because of a natural generational shift? Or is it much more bigger than that? My sense is that it is much more profound and deep than just a natural generational shift, it is a complete overhaul of the way we operate and talk about culture and engage.

In our practice, when narrowing it down to MOCCA, we have a culture and philosophy of partnership. We pride ourselves on being active when looking for partners in most of what we do. I think it is probably driven by our will and our great intent to collaborate and share ideas but also as equally driven by issue of resources. It is clear to me that it is driven by the sheer reality of 21st century non-profit organization with limited resources available. You have to think of new models. There are new models in the way you can fund the operation but there are also new ways you can operate and deliver on your programming. If you are following what is happening in the states, the orchestra world is a lot of restructuring. All of them are merging, dissolving, coming together.

Olga: That is the sense I have also gotten from others I have spoken to is that the tightening of budgets is forcing institutions to let go of traditional models in order to be able to continue operating. What are some ways that we can make this happen?

Yves: Well I think there are some parallel discussions and issues taking place. The issue around opening up to new voices is yet connected to the discussion around resources. But it seems that the way to resolve and address both the issues of resources and relevance, is by bringing them together and re-thinking the traditional models. This can mean partnerships and collaboration, this can also mean mergers and strategic alliances and ways to attempt things that would have never been done before. I think it is in the DNA of board members and senior staff to preserve what we have and carry on while finding a way to be sustainable in the long term. Not necessarily thinking about "well our organization might have ran its course and we should plan to dissolve or move to something else", I am paid staff here, it is not in my interest to dissolve or merge. I think this self-

preservation can provide a bit of resistance to changing the models. So I think we can probably resist the opening up of the museums because, you see this is not what we do at MOCCA, at MOCCA we provide a point of view and say this is what we do, so it wouldn't necessarily be an incentive, or a practical one to want to open up our ways. We are faced with the parallels and challenges so we have look forward because then you won't be able to deliver on your mission because financially you are not able to work. So I think we will bring these two issues together.

I stress the word partnership because we are very much partnership driven, a wonderful example is the NGC@MOCCA. Very innovative and won a lot of awards and this speaks to our will to engage in partnerships. I think partnerships are a way towards the future that we are seeing, but we are not there. This MOCCA's way to address the issue in the short term. I still don't think it is the final answer towards what is going on right now. Partnership means two institutions coming together around an idea, around a project. I think in partnering everyone still wants to preserve their own identity but comes together around a project so project-based. As opposed to strategic alliances or embedding the way in which you operate together. We need models that are a lot more progressive and aggressive than partnerships. We are highly successful at partnership at MOCCA, driven by our philosophy to be opened up and also our needs for financial resources. So partnership is a great way to deliver on mission and assist with resources but also brings about a lot of challenges. Due to not always being fully committed to the ways in which we operate since it is project-based and we are going to find solutions that are also project-based. Short-term solution and we are willing to accept a lot of issues and inconveniences and challenges because it is a finite project, with a finite goal. We know we can probably isolate this project within our structure, so it is easier for us to lose money or other things for the good of the project. But that is project-based with a finite goal and finite objectives and resources, it is therefore easier to manage.

Olga: Was there one of these types of projects that you saw some sort of result that seemed so beneficial that maybe you started adapting it into the actual everyday of the institution? Or do you sort of separate these project-based instances from the overall strategic goals of the institution?

Yves: The way we operate our museum is pretty much exhibitions. So most of our partnerships are in putting on exhibitions. The one time we went beyond exhibitions is to look at a series of programs with the National Gallery. I came from the National Gallery so I was well aware of their challenges which was that they have a great collection in storage. At the MOCCA we have a building here which we are programming everyday, but there is a lot of competition where we are with the AGO, the ROM and the Powerplant so to break through the clutter is becoming difficult. We are not on the top of the pyramid so to get visibility and access to resources, we are trying to find a way to distinguish ourselves from the lot. So we put two and two together and said, "well the National Gallery has a great interest and it is their mandate to get out their collection from Ottawa and into circling around Canada, and our collection is not as strong as it could be here". So we could benefit from each other so we talked to them and created the NGC@MOCCA partnership. We are the second partner, they run this program called NGC@. The first one they did was in Alberta, at the Art Gallery of Alberta. The model there is very simple where the National Gallery develops projects or exhibitions and they put it in their space, then they send it somewhere else. So a bit of a traveling exhibitions program but really focused on one venue with privileged access. David Liss the artistic director here at the MOCCA, has been at the National Gallery and a guest curator there so already knows the collection quite well. So he said: "here's what we would like to do, get our curators to join teams for the exhibitions, get them both to work together, bring both our curatorial teams together around ideas and looking at the collection". This was kind of the entry point for us to go beyond and get our teams together – curatorial teams, educational teams etc. The point of contact was exhibitions (curatorial) but then we were

trying to find ways to get out institutions to get closer and closer and benefit from each others expertise and perspectives. They are a national gallery with a huge collection, we are a small museum which is a bit more aggressive in new media so both parties are really interested in getting closer. We took that initial NGC@ model which is very typical traveling exhibition model and we wanted to take it one step further and really go beyond just your project-based initiative. It was a three year partnership, we are in the third year right now and its really getting our people to talk and learn from each other. We have their staff coming here all the time and we are going there all the time. It is one more step towards what I think will be a much more meaningful partnership. I am not sure if I should call it a partnership now, I think it is more then that. It is probably a next step to that, it is becoming much more meaningful and permeate through all our operations.

Olga: Yes, it sounds like great benefits for both sides to come together and actually swap these ideas.

Yves: That's right. We have a base in Toronto for people to access their collection, we are here all the time so its great for them. We have access to a collection, which is amazing.

Olga: So this partnership is still quite internal in nature – two institutions collaborating internally to put on exhibitions. Have you had any instances where you are bringing in, you know forget the audience, but maybe external guest curators?

Yves: Yes we do that! One of the earlier shows we did Luis Jacob who is a Toronto-based artist. We did a solo show of his and invited him to curate a show as well. The way it always works is that there is a main space as well as a side gallery. The main space is our programming and the project space is NGC@MOCCA, curated by our team and their team. But when Luis Jacob had a show at our gallery in our main space, we said how about you go into the National Gallery collection and build your own companion show. So that show was very successful and it allows us to involve an external voice over which we have absolutely no control, well we invited him to come in and he is choosing from the National Galleries collection but it is his curatorial perspective. He had very little input from our team besides consultants if the works can travel and all that but giving him free reign to a collection.

We also work every year with the CONTACT festival in Toronto and same deal. We invited the curator which was Buddy Robenstein, the artistic director from CONTACT to go into the collection of the National Gallery to select works that are of interest and help tell the story that he wants to tell. So the National Gallery would rarely allow such unstructured access to their collection and we are kind of the gateway to that. So now it is almost like 3 parties coming together around an idea. These are steps towards what will eventually be a much more comprehensive engagement between our institutions and we are not there. Even what I described and what was so easy to say has been quite a challenge to get there because we are trying to break down structures and philosophies and corporate culture at both places that doesn't necessarily encourage this type of thing.

This fall we are doing a big partnership where David Cronenberg is presenting a film at TIFF and they are doing an exhibition on the props from the film. We are doing a companion exhibition that is visual arts based where we are inviting artists who have responded to the work by David Cronenberg. We invited David Cronenberg himself to curate from the collection of the National Gallery in the project space of the MOCCA. Here is another instance of when you bring an external voice in who would never have access to such an artistic collection now gets access because we have been able to bring this all together.

Olga: It also looks like you are bridging more popular culture with the more high-brow culture of the visual arts by opening up the vault doors to collections that wouldn't be typically accessible. So when we refer to the idea of open it doesn't necessarily refer only engaging audience but could also...

Yves: But some do! Wasn't there this one exhibition on Indian art where they asked the public which pieces they wanted to see in the show and they designed the exhibition based on public response. So I mean, we are not ready for that! Culturally at MOCCA we are not ready for that. We are still clinging to the authority of the curatorial voice, we are not completely giving away the voice and going "you can do that". It is amazing these other institutions are doing it because we are going "holy moly" and it challenges our views on authority and asking ourselves, "then what are we good for?". There are places to do that! There are children's galleries and community spaces that are set up for exactly that and to get the visitors and to bring in the public to curate the whole experience. But there still remains a role for these institutions to have this voice of authority to make statements about what is good art and what is not good art and what warrants further research.

Olga: Yes, I have heard from others I have interviewed that history based museums might be more open to participatory ways of doing thing than art museums. So there does exist quite a range from what is open within a museum vs. what can be closed. So it is quite interesting what you are doing here to open up your own museum.

Yves: Yes and we have won awards for this, which doesn't usually happen because we are quite small. It was recognized and it was a way to engage the National Gallery with a smaller museum across Canada and going beyond just being a satellite space where they dump all these exhibitions. It was much more meaningful and much more integrated where we can bring new models. So we have been paying attention to the new models to see how we can get into the deal and how we can apply it to our own instances. First one was the AGO (Art Gallery of Alberta), then we signed three years ago, then they launched about two months ago in Winnipeg. From their perspective they are looking at finding partners that are across the country. To reach different areas and fulfill their national mandate. My sense, although it is something they believe in, but it is also from my understanding the directive from the government, which is "you are a national museum you have to go beyond Ottawa". We have had discussions with the ROM here in Toronto, they came in to talk to us and said "well how does this work, the ROM is the Royal Ontario Museum which has a responsibility towards to institutions across the province and the share the wealth that they have in Toronto". So the model is already getting people to talk about how they can apply this to their own situation.

Olga: You mentioned earlier that the Lois Jacob solo show was very successful. What do you mean by successful? Did you see increase in attendance, engagement or media attention? I am not sure how you measure success.

Yves: That is a good question, how do we measure success? Measuring success in the non-profit world is a topic in and of itself. How do you measure success – is it quantitative, is it qualitative? What we are kind of discussing as a field is: we have to resist, we have to find ways to make sure that is beyond just quantitative. Our funders, our supporters are looking for ways to quickly assess successive around quantitative means. How many people did go? How much money did we bring in? If you read back to our mission we are not driven by quantity, our mission and our vision statements talk about enlightening people for the public good and all that. There is nothing about quantitative in these ambitious mission statements. They are more about

meaningful engagement and furthering the enlightening your visitors and making better citizens. So how can you measure making better citizens? So obviously the quantitative parameters that we have to report on because our funders that provide our means, and I am sorry to always go back to resources but resources is what makes possible what we are doing, they looking for... so the ownis is on us, the non-profits, the recipients of grants and of funds, to change the conversation about what is meaningful.

So, I used the word success previously, it was a success because we had expended on a model that we had put in place where two institutions can, well about bringing in new voices. So I consider the success in the principal that we invited a new voice to come in and look at the collection. It was a success because we got a lot of alkaloids from the field, our colleagues took notice. Did that translate into more people? I honestly don't think so and it wasn't David Cronenberg. David Cronenberg will likely garner much more media attention then Lois Jacobs will. In our field, in our little niche environment it was well appreciated and our core visitors did let us know they appreciated the idea. But I am not sure we went beyond the inner circles with this idea. By success I mean, it was successful within the realm of what could be deemed successful only with such a small idea.

Olga: I can imagine that there were some lessons learned that can now be put forward to future projects and I can even see it here with future projects with TIFF.

Yves: Yes that is right. Well certainly this suggested to us that this is possible, that there is an interest. Both at the National Galleries part, our part and whoever we invite to come in. It is a luxury that nobody else could have, it is only through us and our partnership. If you wake up one day and say, I want to curate a show from the National Gallery of Canada, well get in line! There are ways and one point of entry is us, and I think it speaks to the National Gallery's understanding of the potential that this idea may have. I think they demonstrated they are open and they also realizing the same thing we are realizing that we have to open up and change the ways we operate.

Olga: One last question: In the sense of Toronto in general, do you think that Toronto is in a unique position in any way? Do you think that there is enough support from the government for the arts? I heard you mention the pressure from the government to support a more national mandate, so is there any support to do this?

Yves: I think the imperative is for the field as a whole goes beyond the financial, it has to do with our relevance in society. What are we about? We are being challenged left, right and center on our position of authority, our authoritative voice is being challenged so we had stop and worry, we have to respond. We have these discussions all the time, with the democratization of channels of communication, everyone has access, everyone can create content. Online we are not just the, it used to be like if you want to see a work of art you have to go inside an art gallery or a museum, now you can go online, you can go on google. Our model is being challenged, but overtly it just happened, this is how it is. So we have to take notice of it. That is why I think two streams that are running parallel, we are being challenged and our resources are dwindling. There are financial concerns from the government looking to streamline their expenses. It is easier to look at culture because it doesn't make you lose votes. So is Toronto in a unique position? I wouldn't say Toronto is in a unique position. Well it is unique in the sense that it is Canada's metropolitan, this is the heart of Canada financially and I think culturally one of the key three cities: Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto. So the great advantage of Toronto is that there is a lot of diversity, a lot of resources and a lot of money, there is a lot of people. There is also the challenge of how you access those resources. There is a lot of us competing for those funds and

how to get attention because it is all very cluttered. So if you are the AGO or the ROM your incentives to transform yourself are less driven by financial concerns and more about making their position within society. For us it is much more critical and goes at the core of what we do, we need to survive and we need to transform the way we operate. So maybe you can take this idea of open collaboration in a more internal focus, we are looking at collaborating amongst ourselves to make sense of the future.

I will tell you about one initiative that was not successful. Four contemporary arts organizations came together about a year and a half ago. Visual arts, music, theater and dance, working on cutting edge contemporary culture. We said alright, we have this intuition that we are probably talking to the same people, so if you are into contemporary art you are likely into contemporary dance and so. So four very aggressive and progressive contemporary arts organizations came together and said what can we learn from each other, spending over a year and a special grant from the OAC looking at synergies. We didn't have a specific agenda we just said we are working within the same parameters. We kind of talked about the same issues about today and how artists are responding to the world around them. Obviously there have to be some synergies. Well after a year of looking we could not come to any meaningful, practical ways to get together and you know what, after all clinging to our own identity and what could have been the discussion is this sort of mega merge, strategic partnership where we all come together around making this multi-disciplinary organization that has several branches. We could not make it happen, we all acknowledged these issues and I can't point to why. If four successful and stable organizations, none of us were pressed to the wall, we are looking ahead at rocky waters ahead of us and we are dealing with the same issues, we could not come together. So we basically came up with this idea called the cultural omnivore project. Our assumption was that, if you like contemporary art you probably like contemporary music so there are these cultural omnivores out there that are willing to cross boundaries. Wouldn't that be where we need to start? Can we tailor our programming, to reach this target who we know will be interested in all these things. A lot of time and discussions, lots of input from the outside, we had a consultant come in and explore all these ideas and we could not come to any concrete projects. How about we do a brochure every month and cross promote each other, do joint programming, we said in 2015 we are going to work with a theme that is Japan and we can collaborate on projects around Japan but even that challenging to get our acts together and agree and align with timing. There are practical concerns got in the way of managing the museum. As much as I want to spend my time looking at the future, I have immediate needs that have to be addressed. So we all got bogged down by the pressures of the day to day. My sense from this I think is that maybe we are not there yet, the pressure is not intense enough or strong enough to force us to make these things work, so we can probably all cruise along for a few more years because none of us need to put their life on the line to do this. I think the day will come, sooner rather than later, where there won't be a choice and again look at what is happening in the orchestra world in the US where there is no other way they are faced with it. So I think we are either proactive with the solutions or we wait until the crisis happens and be forced. I like to think that we are one of the organizations that are as progressive as you can find they, we are really open to ideas and even that is scaring the hell out of us and what it would mean for our identity if we were to get much closer to others. But there is no question in my mind that this is where this is going, there is going to be a streamlined approach to greater alignment with cross-disciplinary organizations that is going to happen shortly driven both by the need to stay relevant and the need to be a sustainable organization. I am now fighting for every dollar, I need an accountant on my staff and everyone needs an accountant! So could we talk about getting one accountant for the few organizations. It is being done now where they are merging their artistic vision and they are merging their staff. I am not suggesting that the ultimate model should be one big monster institution because I think the field benefits from a diversity of voices. The reality is that it is getting more and more challenging to make it on a day to day basis.

Olga: I spoke with Nina Simon at the Santa Cruz museum and she told me that she was brought in when the museum couldn't make it another day, so there was an urgency for a total evolution of practice.

Yves: Totally! I can't believe some of the things she has done and gotten away with. It is a non-fine arts organization so she probably gets away with a lot more since it is a community-based model. So she demonstrates a scenario which I do not think would work within the fine-arts model, I don't think she could ever get there. I think the divide is between a fine arts and a non-fine arts organization, I wouldn't necessarily say it is a Canada and US distinction. I think my sense of why there are more examples in the states because there are just more people, more institutions so there is more happening. I think in Canada we are not lagging, we are not ahead of the curve, I think we are right along with everyone. I am seeing some nice things being done at the ROM and the larger institutions. Nina Simone is getting so much press so we are all looking at what she is doing but I wouldn't be surprised if some things in Canada get some residence in the states.

Olga: Great. Can you tell me a bit more about how the NGC@MOCCA project came to be and how it works?

Yves: The National Gallery of Canada has a collection of 40,000 works stored on-site and off-site. Amazing collection, the foremost collection in Canada. They have the largest acquisition budget in Canada, they are a serious player. There is the AGO and there is the ROM but National Gallery sets the tone. About 90% of these works are in storage, don't get to see the light of day for 5 or 10 years. So financial agreement that we have is that they bring the works to their loading dock, we pick up the work at the loading dock, we pay for the costs, we put them on display and bring them back here and bring it back to their loading dock. So financially we structured a deal like this. It is their work so they care for the work and conserve it, the frame it, they crate the works but they say the minute you pick it up, its your cost. So I think it is a very simple model that talks to exactly what this partnership is in a way. So they bring it to the loading dock and then they let us have the time in the sun with it. The model is more than just letting us borrow the work but it is about both the organizations coming together. If the model is that we are going to be satellite, well then we will pick up the costs, bring it back and we are just going to be a venue. That is how museums send exhibitions on the road, they put together the show and you offer a rental fee be it 5,000, 10,000 or 15,000 or 50,000 whatever it is. They just borrow the exhibition you pay a fee to the National Gallery, put it on display, bring it back and that is it. We are saying this is much more than that and again that is what our MOU is much more than just a satellite organization. We send staff there, they send staff here, so curating was kind of the troy horse, the way in and then the flood gates have opened where the rest of our staff started to collaborate. We were offering things like cross-membership benefits, so if they have a membership there, they have a membership here. We are resisting the idea of being a satellite but coming close to a model where we are really fully fledged partners. Knowing damn well that their budget is 50 times larger, we are more like a mouse here. But we are much more nimble and flexible in the ways we do things. For example their curators enjoy coming here because there is less structure, if you are the National Gallery of Canada there are obviously things you do and things you don't do. Here is much more open. When I was there we asked the staff to explore the boundaries of what they are usually involved in so it was sort of a playground. You can tell they are very energized when they come here and what it provides me is a chance to expose my staff to the professional standards of a national museum. So what we get is access to a professional, serious, grounded and well oiled machine. They have access to exactly the opposite which is a nimble, scrappier operation. Beyond the skills that each learn it also allows both cultures to adjust and

adapt and provides us with exposure to other ways of working. It helped us identify ways to be more professional, it has allowed them to accept a bit more flexibility in ways in which they operate. Again I think there is resistance on both ends, there is a piece of paper for everything they do and here there is no piece of paper for anything we do. But I think from higher up we are seeing that this is a great point of success.

Olga: So you said that this is a 3-year partnership and you are currently in year three. How do you think it has changed over the 3 years?

Yves: I think that the first year was very challenging from a practical perspective. Exactly what I have discussed which is coming together around new ideas where nobody has worked on before in the way we put it together. I think this is a very innovative and new model to work out. Basically it was four people, myself and David Liss and their director and curator coming together. We sketched it out, put it down on a piece of paper then our staff had to make it happen so it was a steep learning curve. Different cultures coming together, more than just interacting but intertwining. So in year three we have been able to really address some of the challenges and resolve some of the issues that come up along the way like practical reasons and more philosophical reasons and challenges. We explored the issue of “are we going to be showing more historical art at MOCCA?” because they have a great historical collection, we don’t normally do it but because we have access to this great historical collection. When Lois Jacob was invited to come in, her went historical on us. So that is something we had to be open to. He was responding to showing some influences he had on his work that are at the collection of the National Gallery. So he had a voice or point of view that we would not of necessarily considered because we curate more contemporary art so when Lois came in we had to think about it. The fact that we had to bring in an external voice to open up that stream was very insightful to us. Now I think we are much more open to the idea of looking beyond of what you would expect to find. So I think what is involved is that we have resolved some of the kinks and we have evolved the project. We are coming on year 3 and there is a very practical reason why it is 3 years because MOCCA is moving. So our lease expires in a year and a half and we are not quite sure yet where we are going to go. So I think we wanted to give ourselves a chance to look at re-extending for a year as well as re-extending NGC@MOCCA. Early discussions suggest that wherever we go, they want to come along.

Olga: So obviously they think it is successful.

Yves: Yes, I like to think so. I would like to get you in touch with someone that can explain the project to you from their perspective. This summer we are presenting a show by Louis Bourxious which is quite big for us. Don’t get me wrong are a fully accredited museum but we are not at the same standard of the National Gallery. It is not what we do, we don’t have 500 staff but a show like Louis Bourxious has a national acclaim and is worth a lot of money, they are getting not anxious, but they want to make sure that they are not jeopardizing their collection. So they asked us to raise our game in this and that and a few things they need to see. The ownis is on us that we need to respond and reassure them that we can deliver on their requirements, mostly around security and all that stuff. So even after 3 years of doing shows back and forth there are some issues that they want to see addressed and resolved because the projects are changing every time and the relationship is changing every time so we need to keep on evolving the relationship.

Trying to frame it around open collaboration, certainly not in our case it is not about bringing external voices from the public its within the filed. It is focused around issues of relevance and sustainability. Relevance to society, how do we stay relevant to what is happening in the world. If TMZ and Mozart are on the same page and are being viewed as sources for information, well we

need to respond and I need to be alert. I have to realize that TMZ has something to say about the world and we also have something to say about the world. While we are suggesting that we can provide a more critical view point and the ownis is not on TMZ the ownis is on us. TMZ is part of the equation and landscape now. So driven by relevance and sustainability the issue that institutions are, crossroads is too strong a word, are facing enormous difficulties financially. I think that by addressing these two issues simultaneously there is ways we can address both.

THE END

Date	May 22, 2013
Name, Institution, Position	Christine Sadler, Chief of Exhibitions Management at National Gallery of Canada
Duration	22 minutes
Type of Interview	Case study analysis

Olga: If you could please give me a brief overview of the NGC@MOCCA project. How it started, why it is a 3-year ongoing partnership and what the goals are for the National Gallery to undertake this partnership?

Christine: The gallery has had a long history of outreach in the sense that we have been touring exhibitions since 1924. So outreach obviously is part of the gallery's mandate. The benefit to any sort of outreach, when I say outreach I consider that to be applied to any of our satellite programs, applied to our traveling exhibitions, to our loan programs, which are sort of three distinct entities. What I would say is that with all of those, it helps to fulfill our mandate. The gallery has a national mandate and outreach is one of those. So that is the very benefit. Clearly the second benefit is a great amount of visibility, which of course also ties into our mandate, but it certainly increases our visibility and access to our collections coast to coast and internationally as well.

In terms of our satellite programs, MOCCA was second satellite that we took on. It was based on having some presence specifically in Toronto in the sense that it is Canada's largest urban center, it certainly has a great deal of art activities and commerce around Toronto, many artists are based in Toronto. It has a huge cultural environment. The idea is of course that rather than taking a pre-curated show, which is typically what many of the touring shows are, we thought of it would be interesting to allow the satellite staff to be able to make selections of our work and display them in a permanent space. When I say permanent we decided to do 3 years only because one year is a bit short and 3 years seems like a reasonable time. It wasn't arbitrary but it wasn't based on anything either. So that was basically the beginning. The way it functions also, is that we used to run, well we are still running but it is being assessed right now, we used to run a program of highly subsidized touring exhibitions. And again this is unique to us being a national institution, again based on the idea that we need to serve an international audience coast to coast. The satellite however has a different financial arrangement; nothing apart for the salary is subsidized. So the satellites provide the space and basically pay all the direct costs of these exhibitions, so shipping, crating etc. What we give them in turn is access to our collections and access to pieces that maybe would not normally be available for loan to all institutions if you will. And it gives them a chance to be presenting high quality, cutting edge fine art from the gallery's collection. It provides for them a space that can be programmed 12 months of the year. They have to do that level of work and for us it is great to have visibility 12 months of the year where other touring exhibitions may only be on view for 3 months at a time.

Olga: Great, thank you for the overview. When speaking with Yves he had mentioned that he views the MOCCA as something more than the traditional satellite institution that you had mentioned. Do you consider the same distinction?

Christine (not recorded): MOCCA is the third satellite partnership that the National Gallery has worked with. First was Alberta then MOCCA and in the future we will be working with Winnipeg. We treat all our satellite projects exactly the same. We use the same processes for work and treat every satellite institution the same, even though Yves may not agree with this. We view the process as a true collaboration between the staff of the National Gallery and the

MOCCA where we share the authorship of our projects. Although once a selection is made by the MOCCA, it has to be approved by our curatorial staff and still goes through the strict process of going across the conservation and logistical departments to be loaned out. Basically, we provide them access to our collection and they provide us with a space to exhibit the works.

Olga: I know that the NGC@MOCCA project is in its third year. Is there a sense that this collaborative relationship will be sustained beyond the 3 year or is this a project with a limited timeframe.

Christine: Well the project will be over in its third year because the MOCCA is changing buildings in the near future so there won't be a reason to renew the timeframe. Although we did renew the Alberta satellite project into its fourth year. For right now the project will end but we will see what will take place in the future.

Olga: When was the idea first presented within the gallery to launch the satellite project series?

Christine: 2009 was when the first satellite project was launched, to coincide with opening of new AGA building in Edmonton.

Olga: Beyond the mandate of visibility and outreach were there other factors that influenced the gallery to launch collaborative initiatives or was this always part of the strategic plan of the gallery? I am just trying to get a sense if the gallery is collaborating more now, or more receptive to collaborating, today than say 5 years ago?

Christine: The NGC has always had a strong outreach component through its extensive touring program + other outreach initiatives - you need only consult the Annual Reports on NGC's web site to explore what we do on a year to year basis.

Olga: Do you feel that there is resistance from your team to work with satellite institutions? I understand that there could be extra work involved from their day-to-day activities?

Christine: No resistance but we demand advance lead-time given NGC's resources for both internal staff + external partners. This should be a minimum of 6 months, given that our outgoing loan program demands a 1-year lead time.

THE END

Date	May 17, 2013
Name, Institution, Position	Michele Steinwald, Assistant Curator of Performing Arts at the Walker Arts Center
Duration	1:07 minutes
Type of Interview	Case study analysis

Olga: Could you please describe the Interdisciplinary Work Group project at The Walker Arts Center?

Michele: First, we always said we were interdisciplinary at the Walker but when we actually look at our practice we aren't very interdisciplinary. So it was a moment when we had a grant to look at our practices and deepening our practices and so interdisciplinary was one of the many parts of that grant proposal. When we were looking at interdisciplinary it seemed better suited to the younger curators to investigate. That is way we had that group of curators and programs together for the interdisciplinary work group. It's a balance of looking at our practices and trying to be interdisciplinary as we do the research instead of it being so pragmatic. How to embody the practice so that we are learning from it instead of just doing our research.

Olga: So could you give me an idea of how that evaluation took place when you realized, ok we are not as interdisciplinary as we'd like to think?

Michele: Under new leadership at the Walker, we have a new director, she was looking at more collaboration so she was driving this idea of coming together as thinkers outside of the programming that we do. Because it is a large institution it is very easy to get caught up in your own programs and put them out and that vehicle is very well established. Thinking of how do we get ahead of our own practice? Because that is part of the Walkers legacy and responsibility is to be able to test out new practices so part of that to get ahead of our own practice. And also because artists were no longer being as definitive about their practices and we were more and more finding that artists we were interested in having as part of our residency, pulling together teams that weren't natural to the way the Walker was working. So this stretched us to be able to adapt to artists' practices and more or less successfully. It really started to show the gaps in what we were doing, so we were a museum based institution that had multiple disciplines but our fundamental practice is based in museums. My background is in performance art so it wasn't as scrappy as what we were used to. Everyday felt like life and death and just trying to make it work where as there is much infrastructure at the Walker and with that... well it is still a fairly flat and open organization and it is very easy to move between the different disciplines but our practice was still very ingrained in the different disciplines. So it was a combination of trying to react to what artists needs were, how that was already pushing us and we didn't have the flexibility to add that layer of process and also to get ahead of our practice.

Olga: Those are very interesting motivations. It seems that it is really these things coming from the outside and the organization reflecting how they will deal with these new realities. You had mentioned that there was a grant in place assisting this process. So there is funding that can support this process of 'looking inwards' at your organization.

Michele: Exactly.

Olga: Can you give me an idea of how many partners are involved in the interdisciplinary work group and is it only internal or do you bring in outside experts to contribute?

Michele: Well as a group, so Bart Ryan was the visual arts curator in the group and he decided on a structure to get the ball rolling. That was: instead of looking at the organization and trying to solve where those gaps were, and do research and give recommendations. Let's bring in who we think are experts and mine them and have a process where we are all meeting those speakers. So I brought in Deborah Hay, she so embodies this process, there is not a thought like "how do I be interdisciplinary?", she just is. So that was right at the beginning and I think she really shook things up which was fantastic which was my goal of having her come. So we started within the group by saying who we are just to like what our agenda is and then we brought in each a speaker and that's where we are at right now. We had a retreat a couple of months ago and found that in some ways this practice of being open has very similar values, just different ways of getting at the same goal of being open, being in the moment, and using your senses and intuition and acknowledging that you have influences and its not about being academically perfect, it shows more the humanity when you are in that process. That's something Deborah Hay talks about, your body is your teacher, you don't always have to be in your head. That you are flawed and your body is susceptible to being influenced and pulled in different directions so you don't have to be perfect, smart, siloed person.

Olga: Yes, so not as systematic as we typically think we need to be in the academic field. So maybe more of a self-defined process, more organic, more receptive to outside influence. I am seeing this as a new way of thinking at museums, typically things are very hierarchical and process driven, there is this sense to being more receptive and open and how these collaborations are starting.

Great, so now I am getting a good sense of your motivation behind collaborating, but I am also thinking now that you are exploring this concept, and I see your still in the process, do you get the sense that this is the direction in which the overall philosophy of the institution will shift to? How influential do you think this exploratory period will be on the day-to-day practices at the Walker?

Michele: Also parallel, but not concurrent with the interdisciplinary work group, because right now we haven't even made recommendations yet. The thought is to look into the organization and make recommendations and that is going to take much longer. It is easy to have this separate group from within the organization, mess around and have this process, and to make recommendations is going to take a long time and that I don't know, we are a little disconnected from that part of the process.

So Open Field, the other thing I forwarded to you, which came out of the education an public program departments. And also the director wanted to find opportunities to link, the way the Walker is set up is that we have an outdoor space, which is our sculpture garden, and its across the road and then we have a huge campus of a building with everything else, and more people visit the sculpture garden outside and don't see that it is related to the building across the street. So we are trying to find ways to blur the what is happening outside with the what is happening inside and find a space in the middle. So we have this big grassy hill next to the Walker and that was part of the big expansion and this idea of expanding the sculpture garden but we have been using this hill as a platform to have events. So then how do we make the public more aware or more in charge of that space and blur some of the programming that is happening inside and bring it outside. So Open Field is answering that dilemma, so part of is what is happening naturally at the Walker, and if you see Minneapolis has this iconic image of the spoon, bridge and cherry, it's a fountain and that's at the sculpture garden and it is really the symbol of Minneapolis and its across the street and yet people take a picture with it and don't cross the street. So Open Field was a year and a half of planning.

Olga: How accessible was this for the public and how was participation encouraged?

Michele: We have done 3 years of open field; every year was a bigger and bigger learning curve. You can build a platform but that doesn't mean they will come. We had a coordinator come in that was very connected with outside arts communities and we had him seed a lot of the programs to build the relationships. You can do an open call and just expect people to understand the opportunities. So that is something that stuck with me in Nina's work when she came in to do the lecture, was that the invitation has to suit the experience and it has to be also that the follow through can't be an extra step, it has to be part of the process to be successful. The invitation from us to the community saying that this is your space, use it. Didn't mean that they knew how to use it. So we have a website that we are in partnership with Minnesota artists, they became the one of the programming arms because they represented a community of artists and could host events. Then you started to get people involved because we had this drawing club, we had these international artists coming in and we made sure they had a moment to sit down at a picnic table and draw with everybody else. So you have kids, artists, and passerby's that are coming through MM artists. It was definitely a lot of work just to make sure that there were these hooks, so the institution may not be in charge of the content but that there were enough players that they were involved was critical.

Olga: So you are not only collaborating with audiences but creating strategic partnerships with these groups and reaching out to their infrastructure to support this project.

How do you think you have changed over the 3 years, how has this evolved?

Michele: So one of the things that is happening is that we had to stop Open Field because we are removing the bricks from the building and so we have the anniversary for the sculpture garden so we are doing many of those activities inside the sculpture garden where as before we wanted to have them outside so we can have them come inside the building. Some of the learning is who does naturally come to these events so it was a lot of the families. You know you'd think it would be more of the, like Nina Simon would talk about these knitting groups, why are they going to the cafe they should be going to the library or the museum. It was a lot of the families because they could be outside it was a safe space and we had a tool shed which was just a lot of hoola hoops and tents for kids to use and then we added food vendors with a liquor license. So parents could have a beer and be social with other parents and yet within an artistic context so the kids were also playing and had some freedom and had more of a permeability with what the programming was inside the building. It wasn't always art programming but it had that environment so it stretched a little bit and bridged the two.

Olga: Do you have any sort of sense if this was successful? If people were actually coming inside of the building after participating in Open Field?

Michele: That I don't know but can direct your to the director of that program. You know it also creating the social, its not just the platform but a little more framework was added every time. There was seeding those platforms having amenities, being the food and alcohol so that all your needs were being taken care of in some ways. And also the family that would come every week with their kids and they would all have these fake swords and they got to be these fantastical characters running around. You end up realizing that when you say everyone is welcome, everyone is welcome, so this sword fighting kids is part of it. So you end up having this eclectic group participating in different activates at this same time. So you have to let go of this curatorial what is art and what is participation, is this right is this wrong, it just is. We are just opening up to whatever happens. A big lesson is that you can't invite a public to participate in a

program and not participate yourself. So that I think is the next lesson into figuring out how to, and this overlaps with the IWG, that you have to make time as an administrator to be a participant. What is your comfort level as a curator to be vulnerable as a participant? So I think that's where the next steps will be. Because there has been in the visual arts such an education around being an expert. And when you are a participant or when you are being interdisciplinary you have skills that you are offering but you never have to be an expert.

Olga: That is something I keep hearing that visual arts institutions still hold on to this need to provide expertise and therefore are weary of participatory initiatives. What is your sense here? Can this change? Is there an appetite from the curators to be more participatory?

Michele: I think it will happen, but I don't know that we know how it will happen at this point. Like I was talking about the following the artists lead and adapting to what they need. At least at this point there is a conversation about that gap, I don't know if we are going to be able to with our head solve it. I think it will happen over time and evolve and happen more in a natural way and the process based way. But I don't know if it feels natural now when you are so used to being able to make a decision and move forward, I think its going to be much more felt progression.

One thing that is also happening that is part of that influence of Open Field at the Walker is our new website. It is just over a year old. Part of the research we were doing for Open Field was actually looking at models around... I guess the Smithsonian is looking for a way for all their buildings and all their different archives can become one. This was over 4 years ago so I am not sure where this has gone. So this idea that knowledge should be shared and to make it accessible online. So again this idea of open source, so creating a standardized way of distributing all our archival materials on artworks and artist practices and having that be searchable. Was a big part of building the website, we have the visual arts collection online but we also commissioned films, and performances and adding that so that we can not only catalogue the artworks but also the performances to better represent the art works that we will acquire in the future that aren't so easily catalog-able. You can find the article cataloguing performance on our blog. We had a think-tank about cataloguing performance and I really thought, we had all these experts coming from archives at Jacobs Pillow and the Performing arts library at the Lincoln Center, and they looked to us and said we are excited to see what you have to say to lead the field and we were like no we brought you in because we want answers! It is again adapting to future artistic practices, so how do we write up summaries when it is not a painting that is 8 by 10 and uses these materials and if it is a performance that we no longer own.

Olga: So I am seeing that this whole idea of open and collaboration are very embedded in what you do at the Walker. It seems to be more then one off projects and actually embedded strategically in the organization. So obviously at one point this idea got sparked, do you have any idea of what it was and what type of external pressures actually got the organization thinking this way?

Michele: I remember as an Internet user us being very careful about passwords and whether it was safe for us to put in our passwords and that is kind of gone. You know the sense of I need this privacy. We don't have the same sense of privacy anymore. So I think there is a collective change with this visibility and Facebook and being so searchable. Now there are organizations that will clean up your reputation online, so it is just incredible that we have gone so far that now we have to clean up this mess because we have played around too much and what that looks like. That whole sense of self and being open has changed our audience, has changed our artists, and we have these practices ourselves as individuals and now its bringing all these

things together institutionally. So I could say its part of the architecture and part of the audience's behaviour but ahead of that is really this comfort that is more global.

Also, one thing with the website was also how do we better represent what we actually do inside the museum because we create a lot of content when we do publications, interviews with artists, so being a content provider and not just an event website. And then being comfortable with bringing content in from elsewhere and being comfortable with showing artist's work from other artists from our community. So in some ways being that community center online that we aren't quite in the building. Its almost the first step to being completely open. It all came from the same place but in some ways that online architecture was more malleable more quickly then change an internal practice that is inside the institution. And I don't think one is wrong but it is interesting how quickly we can adapt online practices rather then changing our day to day.

Olga: So I get the sense that this idea of open is really taking shape outside of the building with Open Field and the website, but can you give me an example of a project where outside voices were called on inside the building?

Michele: We have an exhibition up right now with Merca Butler called the non-participatory museum. In some sense they were perfectly positioned to be this new model of being process based and pulling from the community they did this 4 day workshop that they put together this play. The values pushed the content forward. Of course we had a snowstorm when the play was to take place but there was this sense that nobody was coming and all the participants that were community members saying they cant make it. There were around 60 or 70 people that still came because within the fabric of the piece there was this collaborative and honouring each of the participants. The audience was supposed to become part of it and they DID become part of it. It did have that invitation because it had that invitation and was embedded in the process in the first place and just kept opening up to bigger circles of people. The exhibition is going to change overtime, now that the artists are gone that's the part I'm not sure if we have the capacity as an institution to honour that practice and keep that going. That's the part that there are still gaps. I am not part of that so I am not sure what strategies are being placed in the gallery that are on our end instead of the artists side.

Olga: Is there a sense that these projects need to be sustainable? Are there any strategies to keep up partnerships and build them overtime?

Michele: I think it goes back to being a participant in these projects and not just behind the scenes administrators. The projects I've been involved where it is process based and there is a community, those are relationships that you have to be in relationship for them to move forward. If you are saying here is a platform, go for it, you are in some ways keeping the hierarchy of the institution saying I give you permission to use this as you like. Instead of taking off that role and being in the space and being vulnerable. Because if you are really saying here is an open space then you have to be okay with nothing happening or something you really don't want happening. We are still in some ways curating those boundaries.

Olga: Do you have a sense if there is shared authorship of collaborative projects at the Walker or is there still a need to hold on to the expert position and inviting other to participate?

Michele: I think this is where we are still at. Because even the project that Sarah is working on now with Fartag, it is within the artists' point of view that is guiding then the parameters around how to participate, and what you can bring as part of the participation. It would be interesting to place the curator as artist as we now push the artist forward and support

their vision in a participatory context, that maybe open and there is an invitation to participate in these parameters that is guided by the artists' practice. It would be interesting to see if at some point that there are curators apart from a specific artistic practice that create a platform. I don't know if there are, I haven't look. More like the impresario of Diagolev in brining in the artists that he's interested in and they collaborate together but he is the dramateur or the curator that created the situation. At what point do we as curators create the situation and then invite others separate from a specific artistic vision. I wonder about bigger performing arts producer that have more an entrepreneurial practice maybe would feel more comfortable, but probably more in a commercial setting. Less participatory but more of a driver then just a context maker.

Oh and another thing about the website, I think also being part of being able to feel comfortable putting so much content on the online is that less and less we are making publications and making program notes because we want to conserve paper. So there is another practice of not being comfortable of just making more paper products. So I think all of that comes into the decision making, not only having the comfort but also feeling like this should be online so we aren't just handing out more flyers. Also the Walker has a channel, like many institutions that are putting mostly interviews. In the last year, when we first started putting interviews up online they wanted to edit them, wanted to make sure they sound smart and the ability remove sections of those interviews. Now they don't care at all. It goes up immediately, we cut out that editing process and for the first time this last year we have artists wanting us to put up their entire performance online! Where that has never happened, nobody wanted us to put anything online because this is the intellectual property, you want people to come and see the performance. With touring this has changed so much that your ability to be online and show the work and not just the reasons for it, is becoming a value to an artist where as a year ago they would never put their artistic piece online fully and for free! The two projects that we have up are visual arts components but are really music based, maybe the music community feels less needing to hold on to intellectual property where as theater and dance might trail along.

Olga: Can you tell me more about the Eika & Koma Retrospective project and how the visual arts curators collaborated with the performing arts curators to bring it to life?

Michele: They are a collaborative performance Buto-based, but post Buto artists. Producers/artistic director Sam Miller has a long history with them and was seeing them work in university settings and students were discovering them for the first time and not realizing how much history they had and not having access to that history. So he decided that to bring in a bunch of partners together to make a retrospective for a performance group who had highly visual aspects to what they did and to bring it to museums and performing arts centers. In some ways I think it is responding to an artists' body of work and taking the resources around that are based in the visual arts primarily that have performing arts department so both of those being able to honour their body of work and to share it with a younger generation or anybody but that was Sam's impetus. We put together a catalog with the artists, we had two months where they were performing 6 hours a day, 6 days a week. Part of the learning is what do you need to provide so they can sustain themselves as artists for performing that long. The comfort that they needed to expose them that way. The exhibition at the Walker had the installation part but when it went to MCA Chicago it had a performance but they didn't keep the artist there so they created a video/holographic image of them within the installation. So you couldn't see the screen it was projected on but they also added a fan so the screen would move a bit, because they basically still for 6 hours, slowly moving. If you watch the whole thing, yes they shifted but if you were there for 30 minutes you might not see it. So having that little bit of movement with the fan on the screen just gave it more of a live element. So that is where I think blurring the performative within a visual arts installation because it was basically a visual arts piece at that point without

the bodies, but it gave it that performative quality. That was really smart. They added more archival posters and had video stations at MCA where as we didn't do that, we had the installation and the publication so they were separate.

Olga: So were the institutions collaborating together to create the project as a whole or was each institution responsible for their own elements?

Michele: I think each institution was responsible for their own aspects. That's the thing with the performance arts is that we are basically producers. So there isn't a lot of time put for research and collaboration and partnerships, it's all very practical. There is a blog post in Culturebotts that explains the difference between performance arts curators and visual arts curators. Trying to make performance arts curators more like visual arts curators would mean having to remove some of the duties we have on our plates, because there is no more room. In some ways there is intention and I'm sure you can talk about partnership and collaboration for Eiko and Koma across the different institutions and different cities. But I think the depth of that is how much each of these institutions had that flexibility and capacity.

Olga: I am wondering what kind of resistance you had experienced at the organization to collaboration? Be it audience based projects or internal processes?

Michele: Looking at what we learned with Eiko and Koma is that, and that was part of our initial conversation with the interdisciplinary work group, is that it was interdisciplinary project that was not an interdisciplinary process. Because the visual arts curator was there just to oversee the visual arts aspects the performing arts curator was there to oversee the performing arts aspects. And they overlapped but it was never really collaborative in problem solving, it was more about expertise and applying expertise to the situation. I think the resistance is just time because I think we are open, and the Walker is defiantly probably ahead of the bigger field but at the same time the artists we are talking to are ahead of us and audiences are also more willing. So I think in some ways that the resistance is old behaviors, language has to change, more transparency with our language not just our platform. What it means to participate for the institution, not just he platforms but the vulnerability that goes with that. I think we have tested the vulnerability and put ourselves out there but within these parameters and fed that situation so it meets our criteria but then where do you really let go. A lot of people talk about failure now as a seed to creativity, how do you let yourself publically fail, especially as an institution with a tradition of excellence. The idea of failure makes sense in the business world, that there is lots of trial and error and we see that in artistic practice but as an institution we use our best practices and our expertise to create the best scenarios but where does that limit us.

THE END

Date	June 4, 2013
Name, Institution, Position	Sarah Schultz, Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice at Walker Art Center
Duration	45 minutes
Type of Interview	Case study analysis

Olga: I had a great conversation with Michele about Open Field and sort of said, this is what I am looking for. I am wondering before the project even launched, what was the main motivation behind the project and what were the goals that the Walker had to try and engage audiences out on the field itself?

Sarah: Now I think there was a problem we were trying to solve and an opportunity that was raised when trying to solve the problem. The problem we were trying to solve was a kind of open, available, empty adjacent green space to the Walker that had originally been planned to be developed as part of the expansion that had been postponed by financial reasons. So there was this adjacent space, how to animate it, how to program it and I think the original thought, there was a lot of thought around the institution about programming and treating the space very much like an outside version of the inside of the museum. I think that we had also realized that it was an opportunity to experiment with not only different ways of engaging the community but different ways of producing content and bringing people together. And it is outside of the institution, both literal and metaphorical which probably gave us a kind of permission and a sense of possibility of failure or of experimenting and being more speculative than perhaps the inside of the institution would have been. We also had very prescribed and set codes of behaviours and expectations and rules for everybody, not just the institution but the way visitors come and what they expect during a visit from the institution. So it really was in a way an open field and an open platform with the ability to do something from literally the ground up. I think there is also a long history at the Walker of thinking about the way in which artists and audiences come together and the ways in which. I mean one of the core or key goals of my tenure at the Walker really has been about bridging artists and audiences so again this was another opportunity. So I think Michele may have spoken with you about a really long history of having a very active artist's residency program at the Walker. You know there were a lot of things about that that were very successful, I think that there were a lot of things about it that were challenging whenever you bring in an artist and commission new work and then also add on a caveat that part of that work needs to be working with the community.

One of the things that I was very interested was actually working on, I had done a sabbatical at the Getty Research Center and spent 3 month in LA doing a lot of research and reading but meeting a lot of artists. LA is kind of this hot bed of social practice work and I realized that there was a possibility of working with a different kind of artist at The Walker through this project. I was very keen that the education department had actually have curatorial oversight about who was chosen and how we worked with them. Then simultaneously there were a lot of things going on, that was happening, we were looking at the impact of participatory culture and the internet and crowd-sourcing and all that was having a culture at large and having to figure out, what would be the best ways for us to kind of bring that into the institution. I also think that the Walker quite simply has had this history of being this kind of town square or community-center. We had just come off an expansion where literally the metaphor of the building was a town square. I had down with two of my colleagues had done a pretty substantial research project and information map that sort of mapped the role of art and artists play. You think engagement and what that possibility might look like at the Walker and we had done that actually as part of our work around the expansion of the programming for the expansion. It was basically supposed to be a kind of

framework for the curators at the institution and it never really got any traction. But we had done all this work and all this thinking, and in a way sort of in hindsight jokingly say that Open Field was really the manifestation of that project without really understanding that that was fully what we were doing. So I think the time was right, a lot of things fell into place and the money was there, the space was there, the desire was there, the energy was there. A team of us were largely left to our own devices, there was a small team inside the institution that was within the education and community programs. We had an outside advisor, Steve Deets, who ran an organization call Northern Lights.mn and is a very experienced and well-known curator, particularly around new media in art and public spheres. So Steve was an outside advisor, he lives in the twin cities and then we had another pair of collaborators and a lot of informal advisors. We had a lot of lunches, we met with a lot of people and then we decided that we needed to figure out what the physical space of the outside would be. We needed to do some work on the outside, it was not a very convivial space so we called a caret of about 30 local architects and designers and artists and cultural producers to spend a day with us and think about how would we think of the space as a Commons. So we did that and in the course of, as we like to say, the myth making of Open Field we were ready to launch our program strategy. Which was something we called the Public Classroom where we would invite people to give ideas of what things they wanted to teach and share with other people, then they would curate it. It was loosely based on the public school in LA and in the course of the meeting one of the artists basically said, all your doing is really re-inscribing all of the kind of curatorial authority of an institution. We said yes, in fact you are painfully correct and we pulled the project and we decided to do a completely open platform. So that was the turning point. Basically, I would love to say let's have an engagement strategy of *tools, rules, meeting and seeding* but that actually just happened by throwing a lot of things out on the field, a lot of different strategies out. Trying everything we could think of to see what would stick.

Olga: You had mentioned that there was a platform you put out there and the idea of the myth “if you build it they will come” but how do you actually get people to engage. So what were some of the strategies that you put into place? Were there some hardcore strategies out there or was it much more organic over the 3 years?

Sarah: Well I think it was much more organic and I think every year we learned something new. I think that Scotts Duwlen had the very good intuitive sense or the experience to say that we actually needed to have a consistent program. He created Drawing Club and with the idea... I think it is also very important to note that the ideology of Commons was a really guiding framework. This wasn't about audience development, it wasn't about participation to participate. It was about participating in making a public space together and under the kind of framework of a Commons. So a different kind of ideological space under the institution. I only reinforce that because that was hard to figure out what we meant by that and it was very difficult to message inside the institution and it was very difficult to message outside of the institution as well. Some of the most complicated and difficult conversations we had was were with our Marketing department of whether or not we could use the word “Cultural Commons” in any of the language and if people would understand that. I think the difficulty with doing this working inside institution is that the institution has deeply entrenched old habits. Institutions are not really set up to publically experiment or designed to ‘epically fail’, so I think in that regard everyone brought to the table some sort of strategy of how they thought this could work. The only I kept hammering home was the idea of seeding or modeling, like if people see others doing things then that will give them ideas of what they could do. Again, I think the other really key factor in this whole space was that it wasn't just the public doing things, it was the public and professional artists.

Olga: How much did the staff actually participate as well, along with the artists?

Sarah: Oh we tried to encourage some of the staff to do this, we had a few people who did things. Our editor whose daughter plays the violin and she brought her class to play in the field. There was not as much, we really tried to encourage the staff to do things. Some of the guards got involved but it took a long time. I think people were confused. One of the artist projects we did was with one of the design teams that helped conceive Open Field they did a project called Common Censuses. This project took place during the US Census, they actually talked a lot to the staff about the project and what came out is that the staff were very confused about what we were doing.

Olga: So it almost seems like the outside of the museum walls was a separate entity then inside.

Sarah: Absolutely, and I think the public read it that way. The public had to also get used to what we were doing. People would show up and say: so I can just take this hoola hoop and just play and then bring it back? There was a lot of concerns that people would just come to Open Field and they wouldn't go inside. Which in fact may have been the case and I would also say that the photos in the book and the narratives we tell make it seem like it animated and busy. But you know the first year it was very spotty, I mean there would be Thursday nights where there would be 25 people and it was not really busy. One of the things we learned was that despite our best intentions we thought that the public was clambering to come to the Walker to be programmers, in fact a lot of the public was not clambering to be programmers. They were clambering to come to a lot of interesting programs. So I think that it is that, Nina Simone writes a lot about this but we have found a lot of it to be true is that people join in but they don't necessarily want to be creating something. We have been much more conscious and I think the artists that we chose and that our intention of choosing artists in residence for the Field every year was that the artists themselves were creating a platform to participate. So everyone needs to contribute to that ability to be open and have other people join in. Even the public who brings their programs. So Open Field is what we make together and I think this idea of working collectively is actually becoming a guiding principal of the work that we are doing in this department right now. And thinking about what does that mean vis-à-vis a tour program, a team program, what does that mean with other types of community programs that we do.

Olga: So this notion of open within the context of the field and the ideas of the commons actually permeated inside the museum walls.

Sarah: Yes, I think the idea of participation is obviously very important for everyone inside the institution because one ignores these things if they are in parallel. I think for me it is a little more specific, it is not just the participatory, it's the collective and this also comes out of building the expansion. A lot of what we talked about was not just a town square but the notion of the architecture creating a kind of city. In a city one sees people that one doesn't see on a regular basis, maybe on their street or one runs into things unexpectedly or staggers interact and ideas merge, there is a kind of convergence as well as from that an emergence of something new. I think that that notion has really permeated our thinking and our approach in a lot of what we do. We talk a lot of the idea of the mash up. I think that mash up actually became very important for Open Field. Sometimes there were a few big events and we realized there was a place for spectacle in the public imagination and in our civic lives. Spectacles and rituals are very important functions but we also realized that some of the best night, and we would call them the quintessential defining Open Field night, would be when there were probably 6 or 7 or 8 things happening and everyone of them was relatively small and people would just sort of fluidly moved between them and its really kind of casual and informal way. Actually this was in Drawing Club

we particularly saw this because people would just be there and draw and have a beer and someone else would also sit down and would talk to each other. People were having very intense political conversations and what we realized is that strangers were actually meeting each other. From that we saw, strangers were meeting each other or artists who came and met there, were all of a sudden developing projects from being there. It actually really became a third space in a really in the true definition of that idea. This was a place where people could come and authentically be themselves.

Olga: So it was beyond the simple action of the Drawing Club it was really about the interactions that formed there.

Sarah: Again, we run around and say these things but they are true, we say that Open Field is people. If you ever saw it, it is just a field. You would say "I don't even understand what you are taking about it is a field". It was really what people brought and what people did and the fact that people showed up, we have to be present for one another. If we participate in a democracy, if we participate in culture and if we participate in life we have to show up.

Olga: This is also brings me to the question, you said that people were actually interacting and creating a commons together, you that you would deem this a success as an organizer but was there a success in bridging the outside of the museum vs. the inside? Did people actually go inside or begin to understand what happens and what it means to participate inside as well?

Sarah: I think it is a good question. I think we had a lot of people come from the inside to the outside. I think the first year I would say no, those spheres were very separate and the projects that we did with the artists really took place here in the city or out on the field. I think the second year we were more conscious of that and worked to do projects that bridged the inside and the outside so the two artist residency projects basically came and took over the whole campus. The other project that we did was with Mark Joseph who was a choreographer from our performing arts department who the mission was working with. It was a way to connect the audience to the inside but also the curators to the project. So we were more strategic in that regard. But I also think that we had to prove something in the first year with the artist residency project, that the institution in essence or the curators in essence and our director could be confident that the work we were doing was, while experimental was also serious work and respectful in that we were not going to do anything that would damage the institution. Damage, whatever that means, be it the reputation or the building etc. I think the real institutional change, we have a vastly different relationship with our security staff then we have ever had before and our maintenance staff. I think the things that we are allowed to do now we would have never been able to before. I think incrementally it has opened the institution up. I think it is a matter of testing what your limits are, understanding what they are and then pushing against them. So testing and pushing, testing and pushing, testing and pushing. So I think the third year we did another project with the design firm Rolu, which they actually wanted to build a re-creation of the Walker galleries with the public out on the field. That again, tested the curators and the artist also wanted to do projects inside the institution. We have done things that merged the inside and the outside and in a way its really allowed us to experiment inside in ways that would have been difficult to do without Open Field.

I will really reinforce that this project could have not been possible without our security staff and our maintenance staff. I like to say that the high point of my career at the Walker was that we were working with, we had gone on to do a project with the Minneapolis College of Art and Design class called Class in Residence. Where these MFA students and the MDes students used the Walker as a studio for 6 months and the idea that the studio was working in the public sphere. That they didn't have a set space and they were doing projects and one of them actually did

gondola rides in the pond and under the Spoon, Bridge and Cherry which isn't even, the land is owned by the park board. I heard this call over the radio, one of the security radios and someone said "there is someone out having gondola rides under the Spoon, Bridge and Cherry, I think it might be those kids". Then the head of the security came out and said is everything ok, Im sorry, I didn't know they were going to do it, and he said "oh ya its fine, look at the pictures I got on my iphone". I thought that 3 years ago they would have been hauled away in a cop car.

Olga: It is interesting how you can slowly chip away at those types of boundaries and the sort of prescribed rules of how you have to participate in the context of the institution. Something that came up during my conversation with Nina Simone that could be a good question here as well is the criticism that this programming, is that what is the value I guess of an institution hosting these types of events like the Drawing Club and maybe the criticism of the actual quality of that programming. Is that something you have heard on your end as well?

Sarah: Well, I think initially there was that criticism and concern and I am sure that there is still that bias' are still held. I think a good example is how entrenched they are, and understandably so, is that after we did the Cat Video Festival the next Olga Viso, our director, if there had been an uptake in gallery admission that weekend, if people came back to actually go into the museum. This pointed again into a deeply entrenched bias that these projects are really audience development tools. That somehow you will come to the Cat Video Festival and you will be moved, that somehow the ultimate goal is to get you to go inside the gallery and that the real experience of the institution is standing in front of a piece of art on the wall. Until you have done that you haven't actually had an engagement with the institution. I think what is actually happening is that institution are changing, is that what constitutes cultural engagement and how institutions foster that is changing. So I would say that the fact that most of the 10K people who came to the Cat Video Festival actually did have an engagement with the Walker Arts Center. It is the same online, the million people that go online and interact with the Walker Channel have an engagement with the Walker, they count, everything counts. We may have goals and ambitions about what we are trying to foster and do as cultural institutions, I think we need to tread carefully into judging into which of those things are better, but it happens all the time. What we are trying to do with Open Field and what we are trying to do with the work at the department around participation is actually expand and cross pollinate different forms of creative practice. Very very very important that we working with professional artists. The way Drawing Club work is that we actually seeded so that if you came you could be sitting next to a professional artist. You wouldn't know who would be there, there were people who went to art school but weren't currently making work and there were a lot people who just showed up and did it. Thinking about the spectrum from popular to professional or armature to professional is actually is very central to what we are doing. I think if it was just trying to get the public to just do stuff, it didn't embrace social practice work and new forms of artistic practice, then I don't know that the Walker would be or should be doing it.

Olga: That is quite important to understand that spectrum is what I keep hearing when speaking with professionals. You keep touching on this idea of the way traditional things are done inside the walls that are keeping professionals from embracing this. Can you just tell me a bit about the resistance that you might experience to this type of programming.

Sarah: Well I think that there, and I am going to try to figure out how to frame this because I actually think that this is important. You know, Mark Allat really rightly identified something about Open Field and he said in essence it is interesting that you are kind of creating a shadow institution. That there is this outside institution and there is this inside institution and that those two institutions are kind of in dialogue with one another. The tension between them actually

allows people to think about culture in different ways. I am not sure that I would want Open Field to be inside the institution, it was outside the institution. I think that there are different kinds of experiences that the museum can offer. People still like to go to exhibitions and look at work on the walls, people come to the Walker to do that. I don't think that we should discount that, I think that the idea of what openness is, or this initiation or permission or sense of possibility that these participatory practices afford us, can find their ways into the gallery experience in sometimes much more subtle and important ways. I don't think its necessarily like comment on something or do something, ask a question or something. We spend a lot of time talking about the labels on the walls and the language that we use and the didactic materials that we use. Thinking about how the language can be an initiation and it doesn't necessarily need to mean that I am going to ask the visitor a question or something, it could also be a softening language and of imagining of a much more empathetic way of engaging a visitor in a set of ideas, or in the way one structures a space or in a way one greets them at the front desk. Or thinking about the whole visitor experience, I think we have been talking a lot about that in our work. I am not particularly that interested in crowd-sourcing exhibitions. I have been at the Walker a long time, 20 years and we have done community voice projects, the community chooses projects, we have been doing this in the 90s before there was internet, and visitor labels and you know and I think it depends. I think just because it is an alternative voice it is not necessarily an interesting voice. I think there are a lot of interesting voices to be heard from, from all over the spectrum. I think it is our job to mine and find those interesting voices. I think that requires institutions to listen a lot so when you hear them, you can invite them in the institution. I think that is a very different way then saying we will be participatory. It is saying "we will always be open and when an opportunity arises, we will be nimble enough to take advantage of it. I see possibility here and invite you in, let's explore this possibility". That's actually what Open Field did, I think that it created a field of possibility and then the ability for us to be responsive when these things arose. Or to understand when to foster something that may come to fruition or not and fizzle out. Failure had to be an option for everybody. That was also something that was difficult to message with participants, its like "we want you to come and try something that scares you a little and that you have never done before and if its great, yay and if its not, okay". We are all cool, failure is success because you tried.

Olga: It is interesting for an institution based on excellence is accepting failure as a very real variable to your programming, for both the participants and the administrators as well.

Sarah: But I would say the important aspect of that is that the scale on which we were doing this relatively small. It was small failure, it wasn't epic. Small mistakes not epic, public failures. Then we needed to understand how to scale up and how to keep supporting something, Knowing when the right time is to make something larger or to keep it small and test it. There were actually a lot of things that were small that I kick myself and think Oh God we need to go back and figure out how to do that on a much bigger scale. The Cat Video thing was an example of where it all went right. That idea started out with a young associate at my department that said I have this idea, I like cat videos, I think we should have a cat video festival, we will get a projector, we will project it on a wall, a couple 100 people will come and it will be awesome. We were like fine, this is what Open Field is about, have a cat video festival. And the thing went freakily viral but what we were is an institution, and this is where I give 100% of the credit to my colleagues in marketing, events, technical support, videographer and design department, and our staff and our PR person. Everyone banded together and realized with had an opportunity here and took that thing from couple 100 to 10,000 people in 4 weeks. That to me is an amazing institution that is able to do that. Everything about that project sort of personified not only Open Field but the Walker at its very best.

Olga: Great. I know that the project is in a hiatus, so let me ask you, is there going to be a next year?

Sarah: There will be in 2014. We are going to do it one more time and I think what we are looking at is again how we can do it differently and what we can learn from past iterations for this one. We will probably do the residency a little different. The one thing that we haven't really done with the artist community is any kind of call for projects. So we will probably try a call for this year to see how it goes with the residency projects. We also have a lot of local artists, it took a while for local artists to catch onto the project and see it as a possibility to make work. There was a lot of skepticism in the artists community when we first started doing this that there isn't now. So we are sort of interested in that approach and then we are also thinking of looking at a much more wholesale application of these ideas of the bridging the amateur and the professional in projects inside the building. I think at the end of the day Open Field would be what we do, as a team of people and thinking about how these ideas can be applied to doing work in the city and in partnership with other people. I think we are also looking at how we might do different projects, I think we have an appetite to do projects around social change like we did Kitchen Lab and this Fartay project this summer. We are looking at a range of new ideas.

THE END

