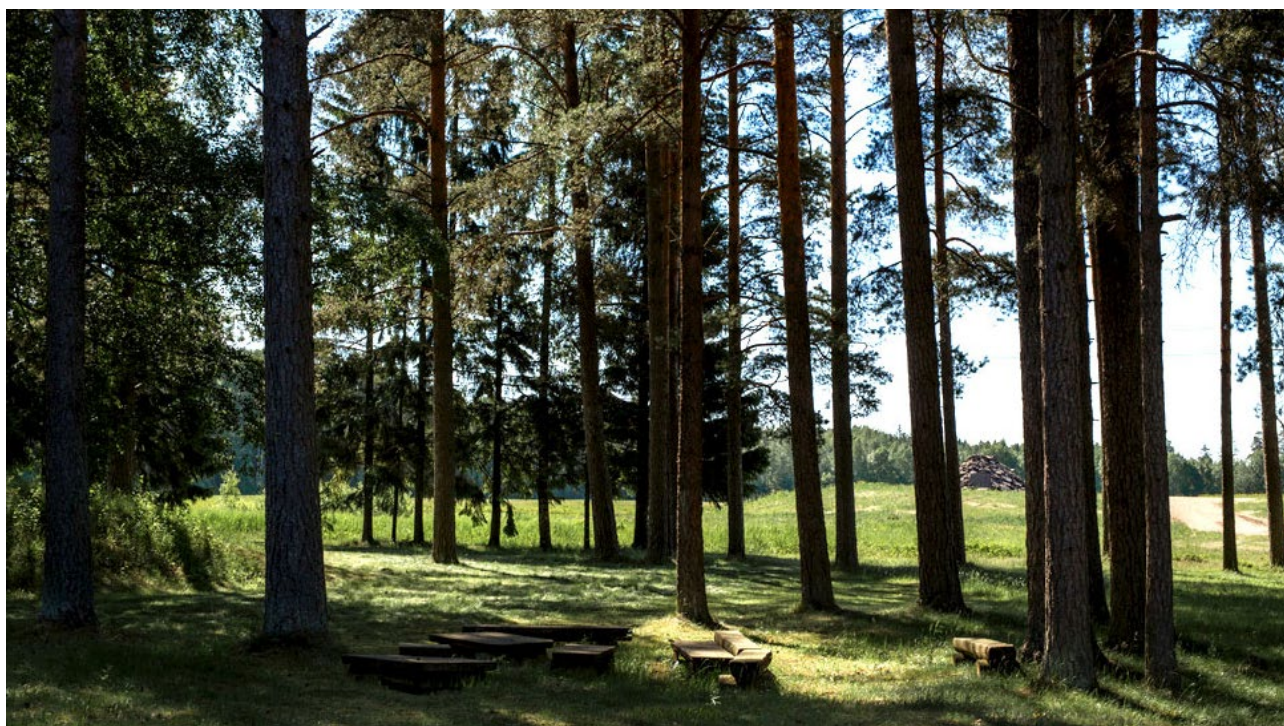


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ARTS

In Rural Areas



Garden, Massia Esti, Photo: Anna Siggelkow



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Arts in Rural Areas

IETM Publication

by Fernando García-Dory, Piotr Michałowski, Laura H Drane

Beyond the Urban – policy paper by IETM, ENCC, CAE and TEH

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Foreword

In times of the obsession with profit and growth, natural and social resources are exploited in all corners of the world. Yet, the urge to radically rethink the system sneaked into various levels. Many creative and forward-looking professionals are actively searching for new spaces of opportunity, to shape and test new modes of economic production and responsible social fabric. Rural areas have become relevant places for experimentation - smaller in size, providing more time and space, with less hierarchical governance structures.

Contemporary performing arts in a rural context are an integral part of that exercise of imagining a different future. Moreover, contemporary art in rural areas have been nurturing and shaping local narratives for ages. However, contemporary artistic practices have gone almost unnoticed in many funding schemes - both cultural programmes and rural development funds, which tend to focus on economic assets of only a few sectors.

In the past few years, IETM has organised a sequence of sessions and one entire meeting on the subject of art in rural areas. Some of the brightest art professionals engaging with rurality have created an AREA (art in rural areas) focus group within our network and continued their exchange during IETM events and beyond. Through the dialogue within that group and with other members experienced and interested in the topic, we have discovered a fascinating, vibrant and powerful world of contemporary arts in rural areas.

Today, more than ever, we want to turn the global attention to that hugely important world.

When creating this publication, we realised it is urgent to find unconventional approaches to the arts in rural areas. We need to identify innovative solutions to support the rural arts in their endeavour of working transversally with other sectors. We have to seize the momentum and potential of rural arts to help reinvent the system. Today, when our planet needs it the most.

We hope the present publication sets a strong and fertile ground for reflecting on those ambitions. Please get in touch with us (ietm@ietm.org) or write us on our forum (www.ietm.org/forums) if you wish to further the debate.

We are very grateful to the three authors of the core chapters for their insightful and sincere contributions. We also heartily thank our members and other art professionals who shared their practices, stories, views and experiences with us - through the ongoing exchange during IETM meetings and via the open call we announced in the summer of 2019. Some of the cases collected through the call are presented in the annexes.

This publication "Arts in Rural Areas" is part of a collaborative trajectory, with three other European cultural networks - Culture Action Europe, European Network of Cultural Centres, and Trans Europe Halles. Our joint policy paper "Beyond the urban", presented here, is **still in progress and subject to comments and suggestions for improvement**. You will find the final version of "Beyond the urban" in the next edition of the current publication, on www.ietm.org.

Beyond the Urban

CONTEMPORARY ARTS AND CULTURE IN NON- URBAN AREAS AS KEYS TO A SUSTAINABLE AND COHESIVE EUROPE

Policy Paper

Brussels, March 2020

This policy paper is written by IETM (International network for contemporary performing arts), European Network of Cultural Centres, Culture Action Europe and Trans Europe Halles, representing together more than 5,000 organisations and individual professionals.

IETM, International network for contemporary performing arts, is one of the oldest and largest cultural networks, which represents the voice of over 500 performing arts organisations and institutions, including theatres and arts centres, festivals, performing companies, curators and programmers, producers, art councils and associations from about 50 countries. IETM advocates for the value of the arts and culture in a changing world and empowers performing arts professionals through access to international connections, knowledge and a dynamic forum for exchange. www.ietm.org

The European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC) was founded in 1994 to promote dialogue and cooperation between social-oriented cultural centres in Europe. In the 2000s it became a “network of networks”, before gradually opening membership to individual cultural centres in direct interaction with communities and citizens. It also includes other cultural organisations and professionals as associate members. Today, the ENCC reaches about 5000 cultural organisations in over 20 countries, with quite diverse structures, practices and audiences, who align on values of cultural equality, intercultural diversity and sustainability. www.encc.eu

Culture Action Europe (CAE) is the major European network of cultural networks, organisations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers. CAE is the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the EU. As the only intersectoral network, it brings together all practices in culture, from the performing arts to literature, the visual arts, design and cross-arts initiatives, to community centres and activist groups. CAE believes in the value and values of culture and its contribution to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies. www.cultureactioneurope.org

Trans Europe Halles (TEH) is one of the oldest and most dynamic cultural networks in Europe. Based in Sweden, it has been at the forefront of repurposing abandoned buildings for arts, culture and activism since 1983 and currently counts 129 members in 37 different countries across Europe. www.teh.net

Authored by



RATIONALE

When it comes to culture in non-urban and peripheral areas¹ in policy discourse, the focus is often given to only a few cultural sectors while being limited mostly to their economic impacts and the preservation value of tangible heritage, landscapes and monuments. Such an approach risks overlooking a vast, vibrant and complex world of non-urban contemporary art and socio-cultural practices.

At this point, when populist and anti-European sentiments are rising across the EU (including non-urban areas), **it is a high time to support the sectors which inspire innovative and sustainable ways of organising communities and practicing democracy.** Moreover, given the degrading condition of natural resources and ecosystems, **we feel the urgency to acknowledge at all policy levels that we are operating in the new reality of Climate Emergency that is demanding change across all sectors.** Contemporary arts and culture have a unique potential to trigger a creative process of rethinking economic paradigms and testing new models, reconnect people to nature and foster new imagination for the system's change.

Therefore, this policy paper aims to put forward a comprehensive approach to:

1. integrating culture² in all policies dealing with non-urban and peripheral areas, including the EU regional and cohesion policies;
2. making the EU cultural action more suited for non-urban challenges and aspirations.

The objectives are to:

1. **ensure the recognition** at various policy levels (global, EU, national, regional, local) of the importance of culture and the arts in non-urban and peripheral areas;
2. shape the direction of action through **identifying the most timely issues** which need to be addressed and researched;
3. **put forward key solutions** on how to support culture and the arts in non-urban and peripheral areas, at different policy levels.

ARGUMENTS FOR RECOGNITION

We believe that **non-urban areas should be in focus today, more than ever**, because:

- a. The unity of the EU is unprecedentedly hindered by a wave of populism and euroscepticism. Those attitudes are prospering in various parts of Europe, but their scale and strength in non-urban contexts are not sufficiently acknowledged and addressed.
- b. At the same time, many innovative solidarity mechanisms are already taking place in rural areas, along with innovative social practices to increase civic engagement.
- c. Non-urban areas are at the frontline of a rapid transformation: climate effects of the current intensive production modes, migration, demographic changes, political turbulences, and more.
- d. The EU's overall focus on building a sustainable future³ can only be realised through a radical rethinking of the current models of economic production and prevailing ways of organising social life. Non-urban areas host a large number of sustainable practices of responsible use of natural and cultural resources⁴, plus the rural might become a laboratory for experimentation, due to smaller scales, more time and space, and less hierarchical governance structures.

We are convinced that **contemporary culture and art in non-urban environments must be appreciated and supported**, because:

- e. Culture and the arts foster social cohesion and inclusion as well as active citizen participation, and this is particularly relevant in socially and politically isolated areas.
- f. Access to culture and the arts is an essential element of well-being, health, empowerment, happiness, self-identification and ultimately of reinvigorating or conceiving new narratives for individuals and societies. Those are vitally needed in peripheral environments, struggling with feelings of isolation, neglectedness and exclusion.

¹ Non-urban areas are understood in this paper as rural, remote and mountainous areas (these constitute 80% of the EU territory, and are home to 57% of its population), including islands; small towns and villages; 'invisible cities' of less than 50 000 inhabitants (that no one hears about if they do not live in them, even though 20 to 40% (depending on the country) of the EU population live in them.); peripheral and suburban areas that lack infrastructure and access to culture and other necessities.

² in its inclusive definition which embraces intangible heritage and contemporary art

³ of which the European Green Deal is the most ambitious and comprehensive example

⁴ IETM publication on Art in Rural Areas

- g. Culture and the arts function in a transversal and equal way, and thus have the potential to catalyse collaboration and networking, and create links among various organisations and consolidation of scattered communities. This is vital for building and maintaining connections in remote and depopulating areas with scarce physical infrastructure, such as schools, transport, medical and social services, which are getting increasingly digitised or centralised, which causes a lack of informal live contacts between people.
- h. Contemporary artists and cultural professionals, in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams, can help realising the potential of rurality to be a laboratory for conceiving an innovative vision on how global societies, whether urban or rural, central or peripheral, can reinvent current modes of economic, social and political functioning and ensure a sustainable future for our planet.
- e. **Insufficient mobility opportunities:** EU and most of the national mobility funding schemes are not adjusted to the needs and challenges of rural and peripheral contexts;
- f. **Scattered networks and weak connectedness:** lack of hard and soft infrastructure: transport, digital services, possibilities for live networking and face-to-face meetings among peers living in different towns / villages;
- g. **Scarcity of access to quality arts and cultural education,** which results in limited or no exercise of cultural rights and access to high-level cultural professions by non-urban and peripheral population, especially its least advantaged parts;
- h. **Poor territorial and landscape planning:** lack of strategic vision, insufficient tools for local diagnosis and evaluation; use of non-urban areas for the purposes unwanted by cities (such as waste storages, prisons, energy production, among others), as well as creating mono-spaces (spaces devoted only to one type of production, solely commercial or residential zones, etc.)

ISSUES AT STAKE

We call on the EU institutions, member states and regional and local authorities to address **the following challenges** which prevent culture and the arts in non-urban areas from fully realising their potential:

- a. **Gaps in perception:** a narrow definition of “culture” (material heritage and tourism) prevailing in current policy discourses, which neglects contemporary arts, social innovation and “living” cultural practices; a distorted image of rurality and peripheries, either romanticised or associated with decline;
- b. **Over-instrumentalization of art and culture in non-urban contexts:** perceiving it solely as a potential solution to local challenges (thus expecting funded projects to be related to farming, tackle isolation, etc.). This vision is partial and detrimental as it disregards the real power of the arts and inevitably discourages both artists and audiences in the long run⁵;
- c. **Shortage of financial support and investment** within and towards non-urban areas and an overall lack of local resources (for example, low incomes preventing from accessing cultural services and a lack of infrastructure for rehearsals, and presenting art and culture);
- d. **Lack of acknowledgement** by funders, policy-makers and evaluators of the specifics of producing culture and art in non-urban areas: need of longer time for research, more efforts and dedication, in order to realise sustainable practices, build strong connections with audiences and achieve positive outcomes and impacts (which rarely mean high numbers of tickets sold);

- i. **Effects of global non-sustainable economic paradigms:** environmental and social impacts of tourism, intensive agriculture, massive and low-cost production, and other side-effects of favouring growth and profits over sustainability.

SOLUTIONS

We call on the EU, national, regional and local policy-makers to create and augment investment in culture and the arts in non-urban environments. This should be done through including culture and the arts in all funding instruments tackling non-urban and peripheral areas, as well as through integrating rurality and non-urban contexts in all cultural programmes and funds.

Those investments should be guided by the following principles:

- a. Expand focus from built heritage to intangible heritage and living, forward-thinking contemporary art and cultural practices;
- b. Respect the autonomy of local communities, foster motivation and self-empowerment through building awareness of existing values and active involvement of local communities in all stages; Stimulate participation, inclusion and equality as guiding values of cultural and artistic work.

⁵ | IETM Publication on Art in Rural Areas Publication date March 16th 2020

- c. Respect the autonomy of local communities, foster motivation and self-empowerment through building awareness of existing values and active involvement of local communities in all stages;
- d. Stimulate participation, inclusion and equality as guiding values of cultural and artistic work.

Moreover, particular attention should be paid to:

1. Mobility:

- b. Integrate non-urban needs and challenges in cultural mobility funding schemes (for example, more explicit support for slow travel, reimbursement of traveling time as working hours); implement effective ways of disseminating mobility funding calls among potential applicants beyond cities;
- c. Invest in low-carbon transport solutions and digitisation of non-urban and peripheral areas, taking into consideration the needs of cultural and artistic production.

2. Networks

- c. Encourage long-term connections, collaboration and networking among cultural operators in non-urban contexts, by organising exchanges and peer-to-peer learning and investing in permanent networks;
- d. Design networks of local policy-makers to exchange best practices of culture-led local development;

3. Capacity-building:

- d. Provide direct, small-scale and easily manageable grants for individual artists, collectives and companies;
- e. Expand and improve training for artists and cultural producers who want to engage with rural contexts to do so with an informed position, using methodologies and analytic tools from other disciplines⁶;
- f. Provide knowledge to policy-makers and rural development agencies on how culture can be integrated in local policies;
- g. Improve access to quality arts and culture education on school and university levels and in lifelong learning schemes.

4. Transversal work

- e. Support cross-sectoral alliances (arts, science, social sectors) that address transversal issues and challenges (agriculture, natural resources, relationship to the landscape, etc) and serve as “change laboratories”; give visibility to such multidisciplinary projects to inspire other sectors;
- f. Encourage dialogue among various policy fields to reflect on, complement and support the transversal work happening on the ground.

5. Framing further discourse and debate

- f. Frame new questions about culture, arts and cultural heritage in non-urban areas as a practice and to seek answers grounded in qualitative evidence rather than in reigning orthodoxies;
- g. Work with local actors and stakeholders to identify particular spaces and practices that are ripe and ready for reinterpretation; and
- h. Radically re-frame heritage in terms of people's actual practices and re-imagine it through the lens of contemporary arts and living culture.

We invite policy-makers, artists, cultural operators, and representatives of other sectors engaging with culture and the arts to collectively reflect on how those solutions can be translated into concrete measures and what should be the next steps. **In this framework, we call on the European Parliament to conduct a study on the situation and value of the contemporary arts and culture in non-urban areas.**

⁶ | IETM Publication on Art in Rural Areas

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF ARTS IN RURAL AREAS

Piotr Michałowski

The roots of the word 'culture' lie in Cicero's colere, the Latin for 'to tend or to cultivate'. This framing of culture connects us to an archetypal image of man's special relationship with the land, and probably it was observation of agricultural work, with its disciplined care and inspiring laws of nature, that led Cicero to make his comparison and to coin the phrase *cultura animi*, meaning 'cultivation of the soul'⁵. Indeed, cultivation requires some experience, some awareness, but also cooperation. Just as bread sometimes does not rise, one can have all the right ingredients and yet, in some circumstances, fall short of the desired outcome.

In this respect, rural areas have an amazing way of encouraging experimentation, whether agricultural or artistic. Similar to the 'trial' field, where one can try to establish various, sometimes foreign plant species, in the social sphere inspiration can come from many different places. Of course, it is seldom easy: though it may be

invisible on the surface, the ground keeps a memory of its decades of cultivation with certain plants, and may simply not accept new seedlings. This can happen in the sphere of social experiments as well, when we do not pay attention to the heritage of a place, its invisible divisions and traditions. With any social or artistic intervention in a local community (or a local 'ecosystem', a local culture), it is an important and difficult task to propose solutions for social self-organisation that will positively affect the development of social capital, strengthen interpersonal ties, and stimulate new forms of self-realisation. A careful and effective artist will, therefore, get to know the local context. Any new solution should be in symbiosis with it, bringing positive change and building upon existing structures, rather than acting as a cultural revolution or sudden break from tradition. So, any artistic intervention in a place should both build community awareness and grow the sensitivity of the artist for the local culture and context.

5 | "So all cultivated minds do not bear fruit. To continue the figure: as a field, though fertile, cannot yield a harvest without cultivation, no more can the mind without learning; thus each is feeble without the other. But philosophy is the culture of the soul. It draws out vices by the root, prepares the mind to receive seed, and commits to it, and, so to speak, sows in it what, when grown, may bear the most abundant fruit." Quote from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, translated by Andrew P. Peabody (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1886), p. 96. Available [here](#).

THE RURAL SITUATION NOW: MIGRATION, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

“Seasonal workers from Eastern Europe work in the fields of Western Europe, Indian farmers go to Italy to work in the dairies. That is how new people get in the countryside and these people are usually very welcome because they are the workforce of modern agriculture. These people also bring their own cultures to the countryside.”⁶— Henk Keiser

Today, we seem to have made a significant departure from the kinds of ‘cultivation’ that Cicero experienced in his time, and rural areas have begun to lose their agricultural identity. These drastic changes started at the beginning of the 20th century, intensified significantly in the years after World War II, and escalated even further after the 2008 financial crisis and the huge migration waves in the 2010s. They brought numerous challenges to rural areas and to the way we think of the ‘rural’, and yet they also opened new possibilities for a better future.

Migration trends – whether driven by economic, social or political forces – constitute the largest strain posed on rural areas. On the one hand, technological progress facilitates cultivation and reduces the number of people required to handle agricultural processes – which means fewer and fewer working age people in rural areas. When a workforce is needed, more often than not it is sourced from outside, whether with seasonal workers or long-term moving migrants (as demonstrated in [a recent EU survey](#)). On the other hand, across Europe there is a symmetrical trend towards migration: younger generations going from rural areas towards cities; then in the other direction, adult urban residents in their sixties and beyond moving towards rural areas. The general motivations are completely different, yet quite predictable: cities give obvious opportunities for work and development, while the countryside grants peace from the urban bustle. While we have been long accustomed to the phenomenon of ‘global cities’, the recent 21st century trend of people moving towards rural areas is giving rise to a kind of ‘globalisation’ of the villages, as people from different regions, as well as people of different nationalities, move to a certain rural area they have never been connected to before – and bring their own cultures with them.

Despite the ‘repopulation’ experienced in recent years, the ‘drain’ of young people away from rural areas will have irreversible and unpredictable effects: continuity is broken when a generation of potential promoters for local development disappear.

The abandonment of our connection with the land disturbs an established paradigm for understanding rural areas. For this reason, a frequent mistake of a specific ‘city-centrism’ is to try to implement urban culture in rural areas – when of course culture is absolutely already present in rural areas, and there’s no particular need to import the urban kind.

All the above-mentioned processes are exacerbated by ageing populations, experiences of marginalisation, a sense of detachment / not belonging, the feeling of not being heard, the rise of populism and right wing propaganda, and so on. There are no easy answers to these challenges.

And yet there are many advantages to rural living, starting with the opportunity to (re)connect with nature and access open space – benefits difficult to find in crowded cities that struggle against serious air pollution. Social life in small settlements, with its spontaneous and close connections with friends, neighbours and fellow villagers, is also often perceived as higher quality than big city social life with all its opportunities for culture and entertainment. In addition, the prospects for local self-organisation around common values, communal projects, initiatives, and so on are sometimes better in small communities than in urban settlements where any citizen initiatives have to be formalised and regulated in order to comply with the complicated organisation of urban communal living.

The described trends are so common throughout Europe that we should look for instruments and solutions that will not only provide ad hoc support for a given locality but address challenges on the wider European level. A possible solution is to strengthen cooperation and exchange for effective actions between rural areas, engaging residents in creating ‘symbiotic’ initiatives that strive for social development, self-organisation and local entrepreneurship. Hence, we should look for answers within the existing EU support networks and tools in order to find improvements in the areas of culture and heritage, the social and creative economy, rural and business sector cooperation, and so on.

⁶ | Henk Keiser, Director of Rural Forum Denmark, speech at IETM Plenary meeting in Brussels, 2017.

POLICY MEASURES TARGETING THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES OF RURAL AREAS

Through insightful conversations with various stakeholders from non-urban areas – held at participatory working meetings on the topics of art, culture and cultural participation in rural areas – European networks like ENCC, IETM and CAE have identified several issues that call for action. Further on in this chapter there is detailed information on those reports, with recommendations. For now, some of the proposals include: a wider promotion, in terms of geographical distribution, of participatory processes through culture in Europe; promotion of more inclusive approaches among citizens and professionals of different sectors; and developing systemic programmes, solutions and tools to empower regional leaders and improve the competences of local policymakers.

There are several schemes and cooperation/support programmes currently active, and it's worth mentioning here their scope of work and priorities.

LEADER is an EU mechanism that provides effective professional support for rural communities. It aims to keep citizens in their place of residence, or at least to reduce overall migration. As a local development method, it has been used for 20 years to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, in decision-making, and in resource allocation for the development of their rural areas. It is implemented by around 2600 Local Action Groups (LAGs), covering over 54% of the rural population in the EU, and bringing together public, private and civil society stakeholders in a particular area.

The necessity of providing inspiration for creativity and entrepreneurship is often completely neglected by formal education. Actions to develop support programmes and EU committees, like the European Economic and Social Committee, try to fill this gap. Still, there is significant room for improvement in this area, especially with respect to Committee visibility in the EU Member States. The aim is to build consensus between these groups so that EESC opinions truly reflect the economic and social interests of EU citizens.

The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD), another potential actor in the field, was established in 2008 by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). The ENRD is governed by the formal structures of its Assembly and Steering Group, which bring together a range of rural development stakeholder groups to provide strategic direction, guidance and coordination.

Additionally, **National Rural Networks (NRNs)** operate in each EU Member State to support and enhance rural development objectives as defined in the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). NRNs enable and facilitate exchange and learning between all the partners involved in Rural Development policy implementation: public authorities, economic and social partners, and the relevant bodies representing civil society.

With the above mechanisms working on international and national levels, grassroots cooperation networks can be created, with a variety of stakeholders, to focus on the accumulation of knowledge, as well as on fostering competences and supporting participatory processes in order to create local development strategies.

One of the fundamental advantages of networking is that it counteracts isolation. The opportunity to join with other communities to face situations and share known solutions, or to co-create spaces of inspiration and synergy, is an indisputable benefit. However, the number of rural communities carrying out major networking activities or applying for funding for partnership development and local capacity building remains rather small. Among many possible barriers, we can point to a lack of faith in Cicero's *colere*: a disbelief that such 'cultivation' can be a success, and an unwillingness to invest the time and resources in preparing the ground for the potential growth of local and international cooperation. In addition, networking requires long-term investment and engagement, while many communities might be focused on achieving short-term benefits and solutions. But there are many more opportunities on the EU level for getting inspiration and encouragement, or for exchanging ideas.

One example is the European Week of Regions and Cities, an annual four-day event, created in 2003 by the European Committee of the Regions, during which cities and regions showcase their capacity to create growth and jobs, to implement European Union cohesion policies, and to prove the importance of the local and regional levels in good European governance. The event has become a European networking platform for experts in regional and local development, enabling the exchange of good practices in economic development and social inclusion, cross-border cooperation, public-private partnerships, regional innovation, and community-led local development.

INPUT FROM INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE NETWORKS

In recent years there has been increasing discussion within European arts and culture networks on the resilience, participation and empowerment of rural areas in the context of the arts. Several parallel processes of consultation and stakeholder interaction have been initiated. The [IETM network](#) began a series of working sessions at plenary and satellite meetings (such as [IETM Brussels 2017](#), [IETM Porto 2018](#), [Satellite Wales 2018](#), [IETM Munich 2018](#), and [IETM Hull 2019](#)), and produced several pivotal reports⁷ that have reflected upon some important aspects of the conversation. Among other things, they have worked to define the rural, to map performing arts in rural areas, and to share inspiring outcomes of performing arts projects and practices sited in rural areas.

This very publication is yet another IETM endeavour to promote performing arts in rural areas. Accompanied by a collection of examples and practices from all over the globe, it aims to outline the major challenges and solutions that will need to be considered on the way to renewing policy and fostering the production of a more impactful art in rural areas.

In 2019, the network [Culture Action Europe \(CAE\)](#) launched an advocacy campaign focused on arts and culture in rural and peripheral areas. Its main focal points are social cohesion, living culture, and sustainability. The advocacy itself aims to achieve recognition at the EU policy level for arts in rural areas, and to establish transversal solutions, across various policy fields, to support culture and the arts in rural and peripheral areas. The annual [Beyond the Obvious \(BtO\)](#) conference meetings are part of the development process for such policy change endeavours. In 2019, the [Culture Crops BtO](#) meeting was dedicated particularly to shaping policy recommendations for non-urban territories.

Meanwhile, the European Network of Cultural Centres ([ENCC](#)) has kept its focus on accessibility, innovation, inclusion, cooperation and education. For this purpose, the ENCC network devised a crowdsourced manifesto, [Culture for Shared, Smart, Innovative Territories](#). The preparation of the manifesto was initiated during [ECoC Wrocław 2016](#) in the region of Lower Silesia, Poland. By the end of 2019, around 200 stakeholders from 22 European countries had taken part in the process. ENCC also launched a [Working Group on Territorial Development](#), which operates as a working lab for professional stakeholders, actively supporting policy initiatives, sharing expertise and insights, and providing content to international conferences on non-urban territories.

IETM, CAE and ENCC have decided to collect all the knowledge and recommendations gathered by these various initiatives into a single manifesto for arts and territorial development. The launch of the common document has been scheduled for March 2020, with a working meeting with MEPs planned in the run-up to publication. In 2020, [Voices of Culture](#) are also initiating a [broad dialogue](#) on the role of culture in non-urban areas of the European Union, and on what the EU can do to promote culture in peri-urban spaces, the suburbs and the periphery.

All these activities are of great importance not only for the arts and culture sector. Giving local leaders the opportunity to share their experience and recommendations, which will be included in policy proposals at the EU and Member States level, is an example of good governance. It fosters active participation in bottom-up decision-making and counteracts the usual isolation that the periphery experiences from the process of policymaking. The kinds of inclusive and participatory models for shaping policy initiated by the above-mentioned networks should be supported as a priority.

⁷ | [List of IETM publications and reports here.](#)

ART IN RURAL AREAS - AN (UN)EXPECTED AGENT OF CHANGE

But how do the arts make a difference where it matters for local communities in rural areas anyway? Is art not about aesthetic pursuits, celebrating cultural heritage, providing entertainment and pleasurable leisure time, rather than empowering local communities and tackling issues like migration, depopulation or an ageing demographic?

“Imagination can be a very dangerous weapon.” I still recall these words of the artist and researcher Igor Stokfiszewski, spoken at a panel session on political systems and culture at the [Forum for the Future of Culture](#) meeting in Warsaw in 2017. He was referring to the practice of populist and far right governments [suppressing artists](#) for fear of their ability to influence communities and inspire them to action.

Art possesses a strong political power. Art can make a difference. And at times art becomes an act of bravery. It triggers genuine creativity, innovation, and sustainable development. And these are crucial qualities when trying to describe a ‘strategically well-governed’ local community. An absence of those qualities is among the causes of numerous damaging social trends and patterns, such as depopulation, disintegration, passiveness, frustration, or extremist political choices.

Contemporary artistic creation, and especially participatory art projects, can prove useful in one very practical respect. Despite some obvious similarities, each local community lives in a specific sociocultural, economic and ecological context. Therefore any issues within a community call for tailor-made solutions. Inclusive participatory art projects can bring up uncomfortable questions, but they can also gather a community in a safe space for experimentation, triggering creativity and dialogue. They can give people a voice, and thus empower them to find and uphold the solutions that best fit their local context.

Art and social empowerment in rural areas

Within Europe there are many insightful examples of local communities being positively affected by artistic projects. Yet to demonstrate the impact art has on social empowerment, we can take a step beyond the continent, and be inspired by projects implemented in regions with far harsher conditions for civil rights, or far greater levels of democratic infringement than we bear in Europe. There are numerous interesting examples in IETM’s collection of case studies, which looks at how art projects have a positive effect on communities. Taking a brief tour through these now, we will be traveling through continents – starting with Asia, and continuing through South America before arriving back on European ground.

The first example takes us to Nepal, and to an altitude of more than 4000 metres above sea level, to shed light on an artistic endeavour undertaken within these challenging physical conditions. It is a project that demonstrates how, thanks to modern technology, arts in isolated areas can make local voices heard worldwide.

Project: Sometimes Asmita Shrish , freelance artist and filmmaker, and the team behind the ‘[Film-making Workshops for Indigenous Film-makers in Nepal, 2019](#)’

Organisation: [Asmita Shrish, Freelance Artist/Film-maker](#)

Location: Nepal

had to trek for four days in order to reach their next destination, climbing from 6am to 5pm in quite harsh conditions and at altitudes of up to 4500 metres. Being an indigenous film-maker herself, Asmita’s main mission was to use audio/visual storytelling to encourage communication and self-expression, increasing awareness of local voices from Nepal’s remote rural areas. “When storytelling gets connected with indigenous cultural practices, it becomes personalised and meaningful. Community members feel validated and hence, more engaged to link with their own selves,” says Asmita. Traditions do not exist on their own: they have to be communicated, contested, challenged, processed, constructed and (re)invented. All the project’s storytelling workshops aimed at creating an inclusive environment for participants by encouraging them to discuss favourite films, important local stories, folk tales, and contemporary stories revolving around indigenous communities. Sharing their stories with each other gave the participants the opportunity to explore elements of their own identities. Asmita’s own film of the project is in post-production and will explore issues around gender minorities, endangered cultural heritage, the position and struggles of women in a patriarchal world, war, and sexual violence. **More details on the project: Annex A. IETM Art in rural areas case study database, ID 133.**

The next example, from Colombia, demonstrates that art in peripheral territories can be an act of bravery, challenging structures of power which for centuries have held a dominant position.

Project:

[Art of empowerment](#), part of the Bëngbe Benacheng research

Organisation:

[Jully Acuña Suárez & Marcelo Marques Miranda](#)

(Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University);

Location:

Sibundoy, Colombia

Marcelo Miranda and Jully Acuña Suárez, leaders of the Art of empowerment project in Sibundoy, a municipality in the Putumayo district of the Republic of Colombia, describe the region as neglected by the central government, strongly influenced by the Church, and suffering from censorship and brutal acts

of police violence towards the indigenous inhabitants. In the context of this precarious situation, Miranda and Suárez began an artistic project based on research into the cultural heritage of the indigenous Sibundoy Camëntsá people. The project, [the Art of empowerment](#), aimed to “represent the community in its contemporary context, challenge colonial precepts in art and mainstream archaeological and museum practices, and spark a missing and much needed intercultural dialogue”. In practice, the project’s artistic and research team collaborates with the local community to critically address cultural policy, the local government-managed museum, and this museum’s practice of displaying human remains. It co-curates new exhibitions based on the Camëntsá people’s own interpretation of history, material culture, archaeological and sacred sites, territory, and development. The project has been developed in collaboration with local NGOs and indigenous leaders. The overall research project on cultural heritage is funded by the British Museum and the Gerda Henkel Foundation. It is supported by the British Museum’s Santo Domingo Centre of Excellence for Latin American Research, where the results will be exhibited. Despite this broad institutional support, the project would never have succeeded without local collaboration and engagement. What drives it is the willingness of local people to participate in artistic activities, and to help raise awareness among governments about the issues tackled in the project. With their support, it can gradually raise awareness of the ways arts and culture can provide both a platform to speak and a foundation to search for better opportunities in life. **More details about the project: Annex A. Case study IDD 64**

Another inspiring example, this time a European one, on how contemporary art can empower, and give a voice to, socially and territorially peripheral communities.

Project:

[Who Killed Szomna Grancsa? theatre performance](#)

Organisation:

[Giuvlipen, Roma theatre](#)

Location:

Romania

Who Killed Szomna Grancsa? (2017-2019) is a theatre performance that tells the story of a young Roma girl from a remote village who believes in the importance of education and does everything she can to keep going to school.

Living in a patriarchal Roma community which denies girls the right to education, or even to choose for themselves, she encounters a lot of difficulties. The play was based on a true story from contemporary Romania, from a distant village where Roma and Hungarian people, both outsiders in Romanian society, share quite harsh living conditions.

So, what is so particular in this case? First of all, Giuvlipen, the group behind the project, is the first independent Roma feminist theatre company in Romania – a country that has one of the largest Romani communities in Europe. Furthermore, this community is notorious for depriving women and girls of their basic human rights. Putting on stage the issues of school drop-out, depression, suicide, rural poverty and isolation faced by Roma teenagers from the countryside, and then performing the piece for Roma audiences, has taken a big step towards giving Roma girls and women a voice in their everyday lives. Having a professional collaborative project with both Roma and non-Roma artists (actors, director, stage designer, musicians) and showing it on city stages and at theatre festivals is still an innovative practice in Romania. It sends a clear message that contemporary Roma arts are by no means inferior to the majority culture, and that Roma people should be acknowledged as an equal and integral part of society. **More on this project, with photos and links to videos – Annex A. Case Study IDD 141**

Art and bridging the generation gap in rural areas

As we have already touched on, the ageing of rural populations and the migration of the young to cities has placed a huge strain on policies or initiatives hoping to revive rural areas. The gap between the younger and older generations is even wider now, at a time of rapidly changing technology. Young and old simply speak in different languages. How can this be overcome? Should we teach older people the language of the young? Perhaps train younger people in the codes of previous generations? Or should we try to make a new common language, with common codes and shared memories? Not surprisingly, in considering these questions contemporary art projects have proved successful in opening up space for intergenerational meetings and shared experiences.

Project:

Moments, part of [Bridging Generations project](#): colourful bus stops

Organisation:

The community of Oleśnica

Location:

Poland

Here's an example from the remote rural areas of the community of Oleśnica (12 000 inhabitants) in the south-western part of Poland. In 2013, the small village of Boguszyce turned its assembly hall into a local storytelling museum, with collections of items and cooking recipes. To gather the stories that lay hidden in rural work tools, old radios and sewing machines, the community recorded autobiographical video portraits, involving young people as makers and producers.

With an understanding of the positive role of art in social inclusion, and responding to the needs of the community, the venue became a hub for diverse artistic projects, with local people becoming the creators of local and international initiatives. In 2016, the intergenerational theatrical group Moments was created under the international project [Bridging Generations](#) (funded by the EU programme Europe for Citizens). Non-professional actors from the ages of 7 to 77 were led by a professional director and choreographer in a mime performance, also called Moments, related to the painful history of WWII, and using several precious symbolic mementos gathered in the local museum's Chamber of Memories. This performing arts project was based on three aims: initiation of a collaborative project between professional artists and the local community; attribution of '[symbolic capital](#)' to the community's treasured tokens

of remembrance within the Chamber of Memories; and fostering capacity and social energy to give local people a voice and tell their story to the world.

Having a taste for making art together as a way of bringing life to their village, in 2013 the community of Oleśnica joined the Swiss Contribution grant programme – a scheme that allowed them to foster local grassroots projects in the visual arts. [One such project](#), created by artists and local leaders, involved local inhabitants in the artistic regeneration of a village's bus stop. Following a technical refurbishment, the local community came together to participate in designing a mural that featured motifs inspired by local culture and heritage. Then, with the support of a professional artist (also living in the village), locals of all ages were involved in the painting. The intergenerational aspect was very important for the success and recognition of the process, also instilling among participants a sense of taking responsibility for the public space and its aesthetics. The community succeeded in creating a snowball effect, and as of 2019 their initiative has inspired another 18 villages to create their own unique and colourful bus stops.

Jan Żarecki, mayor of the village of Ostrowina (in Oleśnica County) gave an interview on Polish TV in 2015: "Three generations helped us. We only gave a short notice and people came to support this project. It is much cleaner, much nicer now... People slowly start to behave differently, I mean better. Also this project gave us a good promotion – for our village lost somewhere in the woods." Today, the Colourful Bus Stops project has contributed to a sense of belonging and territorial integration across the area of Oleśnica.⁸

⁸ | *Colourful Bus Stops and the theatrical group Moments, as art projects forming part of the Bridging Generations initiative, were named as one of 12 best practices in 'Innovative Audience Development' in the report of Economia Creativa, published in March 2018, and recognised by the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Development.*

Folklore, tourism and heritage – a needed shift

Contemporary art projects in rural areas should go beyond obvious forms – such as simple presentations of folklore or handcrafts – and align themselves to trajectories of creativity and transformation. Such an approach allows traditions to stay ‘alive’ in the sense of being embedded in an ongoing, everyday ‘performance’ or practice. Hopefully, it can also help counteract the all too easy slide into the kinds of decorative entertainment typified by historical re-enactments, historic/folklore amusement parks, traditional craft festivals, and the like, because preserving a tradition doesn’t mean freezing it in time. Rather, it’s about a continuous process of redefinition, questioning and rephrasing. As Asmita Shrish, one of the respondents to IETM’s survey on arts in rural areas remarked: “...traditions do not exist by themselves, they have to be communicated, contested, challenged, processed, constructed, and (re)invented for our purpose(s)”.

We can also reference the cultural studies theory of Prof. Stanisław Pietraszko, who founded the cultural studies programme at the University of Wrocław, Poland in 1972. His theory derives from the Neo-Kantianism of the Baden School and places values at the centre of its definition of culture, stating that “culture is a way of life by values”⁹. This inclusive theory opens the door to a broader understanding of the processes at work in any community, and also guards against the simplistic justification that ‘culture’ equals ‘art’, which in the case of rural communities quite often leads to a reduction of ‘culture’ to ‘folkloric art’.

Let’s have a look at an example of ‘folklore’ meeting ‘contemporary art’ – and in a project that rethinks both, rather than just decoratively attaching a lovely patch of the past to the realities of the present day.

Project:

The Journey, a dance-music project connecting traditional and contemporary dance (2011-2020 and beyond)

Organisation:

Materias Diversos from Lisbon, Portugal

Location:

Portugal, and internationally

Initiated in 2011, The Journey is an ongoing dance-music project that connects local, traditional dance with contemporary dance practices. Bringing together amateur dancers from rural communities and professional contemporary dance practitioners, it involves a period of creative residency and culminates

in a public performance. Participants learn from one another as they draw connections between contemporary and traditional dance and music.

50 people, aged 4 to 80, embarked on this journey only having prior experience of traditional dance. Not one person among them had ever seen a contemporary dance performance. But once they overcame their fear of experimenting, and once they felt that their ‘culture’ was respected within the process, they plunged into the project with obvious pleasure. A participant in the project told Filipa Francisco, its lead choreographer: “... we are learning your steps and you are learning ours. But yours are connected to our imagination”. For her part, Filipa frames the major outcomes of the project in terms of empowerment: “Working with these groups is also giving voice and visibility to them, to the margins. To put these groups in nice theatres, on a professional stage, with microphones is a way of saying: yes you do, you deserve it! Creating together is a way of saying your voice is important. Opening a space for improvisation is a way of saying your imagination is important. Working with contemporary dance is a way of saying tradition can live in the present.” **More about this project in Annex A. Case study IDD 85.**

Folklore and tradition are the parts of culture typically used to attract tourism. The audiences are out there, ready to target, and so a whole industry and economy has developed around them. Unfortunately, quite often these forms have been simplified to fit a stylised and standardised image of ‘tradition’, one that can be conveniently marketed to mildly interested tourists who are ready to spend an hour or so ‘getting to know the local culture’.

⁹ | Reference from Stanisław Pietraszko, *Studia o kulturze* (Wrocław: 1992).

In terms of 'experiencing the local culture', the tourist industry regards the tourists or visitors as 'the customers' and the locals merely as a 'resource' to make the customers happy. This widespread and simplistic approach has already caused a series of problems for areas with very high levels of tourism. It poses even greater threats to the balance of rural communities, where the positive outcomes of tourism (most of them economic) must be an added value to an integrated, well organised community. Yet local authorities usually find it rather difficult to prioritise community and social development over tourism. Where tourism has a very visible impact through its economic contribution, investing in social development is a long-term process that can often exceed the political mandates of governing bodies.

Quite often this lack of a long-term vision, or this absence of boldness and creativity when it comes to developing the touristic offer of rural areas, leads to a uniform convergence on simple festivals and celebrations when there are multitudes of heritage sites, natural phenomena, local legends and stories that are worth sharing with visitors. Artists have proven themselves resourceful explorers of all these unique peculiarities of place.

For instance, Association Zona, an arts company from Croatia, organises aMORE – festival moru ('aMORE – festival for the Sea'), an interdisciplinary festival that mixes arts, culture, science and ecology in order to raise awareness of the threat to maritime ecosystems. The festival is oriented towards the need for promoting natural preservation in the region of the Istrian peninsula, which suffers from over-tourism. Although not aimed at 'visitors', it attracts a lot of interest from tourists, as well as the local citizens who care for the maritime life in their region. **More about this project in Annex A. Case study IDD 146.**

Between the Seas, a Mediterranean residency and festival in Monemvasia (Southern Greece), is another example from the region that prioritises locals over tourists – and thereby wins both. (See Appendix A. Case Study IDD 10 for further details.)

Art in rural areas as an ongoing resource for positive social change

Visiting artists can bring a fresh, outsider's eye to local communities in rural areas, and yet the strongest impacts come from artists who actually stay in a community. Building trust, instigating positive change, empowering communities, and achieving project sustainability all require that artists maintain their intervention for a longer period of time than the typical residency programme. Therefore rural residency schemes usually offer opportunities for extended stays so that the artists can get to know the life of the local community and establish connections there. Making numerous visits to a community over a longer period of time is another approach that many artists adopt, especially if transport links allow it. Still, it feels that some of the most convincing stories and most inspiring examples of positive change can be found in projects where artists actually live in a community...

Project:

Travelling Fairy Tales

Organisation:

Academy of Imagination
Association

Location:

Poland

In 2006, a group of young artists from Wrocław, Poland began spending their summer months running a travelling puppet theatre (initially across the region of Lower Silesia, later all around the country), inviting local

inhabitants of all ages to join workshops and to perform in an evening show given in the central square of each village. The group was called Academy of Imagination, and the project – Travelling Fairy Tales. Each day, the theatre would travel to another village, recalling the ancient tradition of the Commedia dell'arte. The artists (city-based) were impressed by the lack of 'snobbism' among their rural audiences – by their openness and curiosity. At the same time, the project left them feeling a lack of continuity: just after initiating the artistic and creative process, and just as a conversation was starting, everything was interrupted to move on to the next site. And that's why some of the artists from the group decided to establish themselves more permanently by moving into the rural communities they'd visited. Their idea was to provide sustainable solutions and art workshops on a daily basis, in cooperation with local culture centres or supported by project-based funding.

That is a serious commitment to make, with many positive effects both for the artists and the communities they live in. Such longitudinal projects provide sufficient space for experiments with various artistic approaches, as well as genuine community involvement and participation. Art projects of this kind can introduce non-urban citizens to new or previously unknown ways of bringing their communities together, which usually inspires them to continue organising gatherings or to plan new artistic activities. Art opens the door to emotional and aesthetic experiences that can awaken the social potential of local communities.

Here's another longitudinal project aimed at (re)building the sense of communality in rural areas.

Project:

[A Vila do Mañá \('The Town of Tomorrow'\), the region of Galicia, Spain](#)

Organisation:

PØStarquitectos and Sandra González Álvarez

Location:

Spain

Initiated in 2016, the project A Vila do Mañá has evolved to act as an educational and outreach project. Using art and play as tools, its goal is to make children aware of all the ways that the commons manifests in public life – from tangible and intangible heritage, to architecture, urbanism and landscapes. The objective, as Sandra González Álvarez explains, is to awaken a new, urban perspective on space. The children who participate discover and nurture a new way of looking at things – one that they can carry forward and that will eventually influence them as the citizens of tomorrow.

The project implements a series of workshops, held in, and financially supported by, the town halls of various settlements in the region of Galicia. Each workshop is different because the organisers believe that each place has its own identity. "The impact of the A Vila do Mañá project has gone beyond the young participants, inspiring all citizens. The realisation of interventions in different public places involves the whole society, provoking an intergenerational dialogue that enriches the experience," says Sandra González Álvarez. **More about this project in Annex B. IDD 81**

ART IN RURAL AREAS NEEDS OUR SUPPORT

Creative organisations situated in remote, sparsely populated areas are often isolated and economically fragile, yet it is well recorded that they can boost local economies, improve quality of life, and encourage more active civil communities through their cultural provision and through realising the potential of locally based cultural and artistic projects.

Supporting the arts and including them in the strategies, developmental policies, and everyday proceedings of local authorities is a necessity, and is strongly recommended for achieving the goals of coherent territorial development. As a board member of ENCC network and a cultural practitioner of the public, private and NGO sector with 20 years of experience, I truly support bottom-up solutions. The extensive database of projects collected by IETM, which feeds this publication with its numerous examples and case studies, offers plenty of best practices to follow, challenges to tackle, and inspiring solutions to implement. See Appendix A and Appendix B for case studies and list of collected projects.

Emerging from this body of experiences, some commonly repeated points and recommendations include the importance of continuing art education, the transformative effects of empowerment programmes, the need to foster skills for self-organisation, and the central place of creative thinking, innovation, accessibility, inclusion and social cohesion.

The need for advocacy and recognition for art in rural areas

Efficient strategies for the endorsement, advocacy and recognition of arts and culture in rural areas have to be implemented on local, regional and international levels – possibly by emphasising their transversality, impact and importance on the European scale.

The personal need for culture and the arts is one that has to be instilled, regardless of whether we're speaking about the urban or the rural. In the non-urban areas there are fewer opportunities and the focus on them should therefore be stronger. Artistic interventions in rural areas can act as a trigger for change and personal development, with the arts providing a path to discover previously unknown values and aesthetics. Without systemic cultural education we will find ourselves lacking structural growth in participation, understanding, and dedication to culture and the arts in rural areas. There is a definite need for an art education beyond formal processes. Village halls or centres for culture are the perfect fit for this purpose, being intergenerational hubs – what Ray Oldenburg calls 'third places'.

National authorities and the general population have to become aware of the barriers that underrepresented (remote and rural/peri-urban) populations experience: depopulation and ageing, a lack of appropriate infrastructure for social development and economic growth, and a similar lack of transport infrastructure, civil services, and so on. Art and culture can be seen as another way of creating awareness of this inequality, and perhaps even of triggering measures to alleviate it.

The need for local community empowerment programmes

Turning rural inhabitants back into active citizens and building empowered communities is crucial to successfully and sustainably resolving local challenges and the problems of life in rural areas. This process can be initiated, if not by the community itself, then through the involvement of external ‘facilitators’ and the implementation of community development programmes, with all the risks that brings of having outsiders parachuted into the local community. Delicate as this relationship may be, artists have already proven themselves ingenious mediators and facilitators of positive change.

Starting this process is crucial. Once underway, local communities can enter into dialogue with local authorities and influence the political agenda in ways that are desired by and important for the whole community. Being united gives communities the (social) power to set the right priorities.

The need for developing new skills

A strong recommendation is to invest in the acquisition of new competences that will foster creative work and the involvement of rural communities. Artists, cultural workers, local government bodies, community leaders, social workers, ordinary citizens – everyone can benefit from developing such skills. This can be achieved through engaging in capacity building projects and initiatives, through projects that provide hands-on learning, and through meetings, the sharing of best practices, and networking.

Networking as the most versatile tool

Networking offers a multitude of opportunities to learn first-hand about diverse solutions and possible drawbacks. It offers opportunities to cooperate and collaborate. In the case of developing rural areas, bringing together stakeholders and experts from diverse fields such as the arts, sustainable agriculture, the academic sector, social welfare, local development, cultural heritage, ecology, and so on has fuelled numerous exciting collaborations that can be discovered in the IETM case study database. Joining forces and engaging in self-organisation proved to be the ultimate solution to most challenges that art projects in rural areas have to overcome. And what better way to find partners than through communication and networking!

Another pressing need is to empower local and international networks of stakeholders, from diverse fields, to organise in situ research projects that can supply quantitative and qualitative data. This in turn can grant better leverage when approaching public bodies or policymakers.

All these recommendations are shared by the Working Group on Territorial Development, coordinated since 2016 by the European Network of Cultural Centres – ENCC. Similar recommendations were formed by the IETM working group on rural development, the Rural Forum Denmark, and the CAE advocacy group, all of whom are experienced in fostering arts in rural areas.

Finally, one last example of how art brings positive change to rural life. This one comes from rural Central and West Jutland, Lemvig Municipality, Denmark.

Project:

MEETINGS

Organisation:

[ET4U \(a non-profit artist-run association\)](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)

Location:

Denmark, Lemvig Municipality

MEETINGS is a four-year video and performance project, with two festivals to showcase the artworks created within the project.

From 2016-19, ET4U, the non-profit artist-run association behind the project, invited international artists for

residences in Central and West Jutland, Denmark. They created new video and performance works dealing with, taking place in, and produced through meetings with the local community. In this way, the works provide new artistic reflections on the area as seen from the outside. The project reached new audiences in rural areas of Jutland, mostly due to the close connection between the makers and their audiences. Taking into account their 20 years of experience making and presenting art in rural areas, ET4U knew that organising meetings, and opening up a ‘safe ground’ for debate and conversation within the community’s own everyday, public spaces, was the key to encouraging participation on the way to interest and engagement. The hope was that this would lead to new creative ideas for a better life in the rural area. With this in mind, it was reassuring to hear the words of a local farmer: “I was brought up to think that art is something that hangs on the wall. But art is different, and when you see something like this it gets you thinking in different ways – and I think that’s fantastic!” **More about this project in: Appendix A, Case study IDD 61**



IETM PUBLICATION

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APPENDIX B

Projects List

Full collection of almost 150 projects, collected by IETM
in the summer of 2019.

IDD	ORGANISATION/FREELANCE PROFESSIONAL	WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE, ETC.	PROJECT TITLE	LOCATION
1	Take Art	www.takeart.org/rural-touring	Rural Touring of Professional Arts	UK
2	Random	www.random.net www.sinoallafindelmare.random.net	Investigation on the extreme lands, 2014 - ongoing Gagliano del Capo (LE), Italy	Italy, Gagliano del Capo (LE)
3	Sanna Rekola	www.koneensaatio.fi/en/saari-residence/saari-residence/	Kone Foundation/Saari residence in South Western Finland	Finland
4	Andrew Ormston, Drew Wylie Projects	Twitter Facebook	Sensing Place, 2016/17 Rural South West of Scotland and Scottish Borders	Edinburgh, Scotland
5	Moa M. Sahlin for Writing Movement via MOA kompani	Website	Wolf Lady, a two-part performance any (female) person can perform wherever they choose	Sverige
6	Nick Tobier	www.everydayplaces.com	Pivot, 2016, Marquette, Nebraska (USA) and Oasis, 2016	United States
7	Baladins du Miroir	www.lesbaladinsdumiroir.be	Travelling Theater in rural areas / 2018 / Momignies	Belgium
8	The Rabbit's Riot Theatre Company	www.therabbitsriotthea.wixsite.com/rabbitsriottc	Culture Night (September) Culture Night 2017 - Stolen Child at Glencar Waterfall, Leitrim	Ireland
9	Forest Art Park	www.podereconteracani.it/it/residenze-artistiche	Forest Art Park in Umbria, Italy	Italy - Umbria
10	Between the Seas/Aktina Stathaki	www.betweentheseas.org Twitter Facebook	Between the Seas: Mediterranean residency in Monemvasia (Southern Greece)	Greece
11	De Tuin der Lusten	www.detuinderlusten.eu/home Facebook	The Garden of Delights - Netherlands / France	Netherlands
12	International Center for Art and Sustainable Development "Art Point - Gumno" / Irena Andreevska, President	www.artpoint-gumno.org.mk	The International Center for Art and Sustainable Development "Art Point - Gumno	Republic of N. Macedonia, village of Sloeshtica, Demir Hisar
13	Discover Craft	Facebook	Discover Craft	Corby Northants, UK
14	Art attack	www.artattack7408.wixsite.com/artattackresidency	Art attack, art residency in Neskaupstaður, Iceland	Iceland, Neskaupstaður
15	Deep Forest Art Land - Skovsnogen	www.skovsnogen.dk Facebook	Deep Forest Art Land (Skovsnogen)	Denmark
16	Sarawut Chutiwongpeti	www.chutiwongpeti.info	The rural journey	Thailand
17	Cie sQueezz	www.cie-squeezz.com	PAESAGGIO.ART.LANDSCAPE (P.A.L.)	Brussels and Amsterdam
18	Gilbertsville Expressive Movement, Inc	www.g-e-m.org Facebook	Gilbertsville Expressive Movement, Inc. (GEM)	United States, NY
19	International Picturebook Festival / Förderverein Stadtpfarrkirche Müncheberg	www.stadtpfarrkirche-muencheberg.de	International Picturebook Festival Brandenburg	Germany, Müncheberg
20	ASBL Fête des Artistes de Chassepierre	www.chassepierre.be	Festival International des Arts de la Rue	Chassepierre (Belgique)
21	Transitorisches Museum zu Pfyn / Verein Kultur Pfyn	www.zeitgarten.ch www.museumpfyn.ch	The Transitory Museum at Pfyn and the Zeitgarten archives	Pfyn, Switzerland
22	Punctum	www.punctum.com.au	Punctum's Public Cooling House 2018 - ongoing	Australia
23	Spare Parts Puppet Theatre	www.sppt.asn.au	The Farmer's Daughter performance	Fremantle Western Australia

IDD	ORGANISATION/FREELANCE PROFESSIONAL	WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE, ETC.	PROJECT TITLE	LOCATION
24	Katja Tannert	www.katjatannert.net	<u>WoodWide (original title: Waldweit) -an OpenAir Performance in the forest</u>	Berlin
25	Live & Local	www.liveandlocal.org.uk www.ruraltouring.org	Live & Local	UK, Warwick
26	Artsreach	www.artsreach.co.uk Facebook	<u>Artsreach, Dorset's rural touring arts charity</u>	Dorset, United Kingdom
27	Massia/ Sébastien Hendrickx	www.massia.ee	<u>THE COUNTRYSIDE OF THE FUTURE -- Massia (EST)</u>	Estonia / Belgium
28	TIMILIN	www.timilin.bzh	<u>Anais Belchun</u>	France
29	David Lane	www.davidjohnlane.com	<u>Hefted' (2018 - 2019), North Devon, UK</u>	UK, Bristol
30	WildWorks	www.wildworks.biz	<u>100: UnEarth, this was the sister project for 100: The Day Our World Changed</u>	UK
31	LAMIS	www.art-drome.com Facebook	<u>SILLON 2019 France (Drôme)</u>	France
32	Thomas Schaupp		Greenland research project	Berlin, Germany
33	Catherine Sarah Young	www.apocalypse.cc Facebook Instagram Twitter	<u>Future Resilient Communities 2017-2019, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia</u>	Philippines
34	University of Derby	www.theartistryofconversation.com www.indialogue2014.wordpress.com www.derby.ac.uk/staff/rhiannon-jones	<u>S.H.E.D. Social Higher Education Depot, 2019 - 22</u>	UK
35	Syndikat Gefährliche Liebschaften	www.gefaehrliche-liebschaften.de/	<u>Winterball. (2018). a participatory, socio-cultural project</u>	Quakenbrück (Germany)
36	Arts & Health Gippsland	Facebook	<u>Placenta, 2019, Warragul (southeastern Australia). Textile art, Women's Health</u>	Australia
37	Culture Mill	www.culturemill.org Facebook Twitter	<u>Culture Mill, a performing arts laboratory based in rural Saxapahaw, North Carolina (USA)</u>	United States
38	La Coyotera Taller Estudio	Facebook	<u>Umecuario, landart residency in Michoacan state Mexico</u>	Mexico.
39	Narrative Movements	www.narrativemovements.com	<u>Bangla Biennale, 2019, Komdhara, West Bengal, India</u>	India
40	Limerick City and County Council	www.limerick.ie	<u>European Outdoor Arts Academy: School of Spectacle</u>	Ireland
41	Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlín?	www.fmk.utb.cz	<u>Zlín Design Week</u>	czech republic
42	TTB Teatro Tascabile di Bergamo-Accademia delle Forme Sceniche soc.coop.	www.teatrotascabile.org	<u>RIOTE2 (September 2016 to August 2017)</u>	Bergamo (Italy)
43	The Touring Network	www.thetouringnetwork.com	<u>BRAW</u>	Highland, Scotland
44	Gottfried Binder c/o ANA	www.ana.caohom.com www.gottfriedbinder.com Intagram	<u>A visual inventory of Banat</u>	Germany, Romania
45	Vítězslav Větrovec		<u>Velká Lhota Wedding performance</u>	Czech Republic
46	Not Quite ekonomisk förening	www.notquite.se Facebook	<u>The New Mill Town - Art center Not Quite and the Mill of Fengersfors</u> <u>Conceptual report about priorities and framework</u> <u>Process report on Global Grand Central</u>	Sweden

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47	Le Tas de Sable - Ches Panses Vertes	www.letasdesable-cpv.org	<u>Lafleur et Sandrine on the road, 2019</u>	France
48	The 4tables Project/ Frank Schlichtmann	www.the4tablesproject.com Instagram Facebook	<u>ShopArt ArtShop-3 (SAAS)</u>	India
49	Kreativni pogon	www.kreativnipogon.com	<u>On the market, performance</u>	Serbia
50	Associazione Culturale Geronimo Carbonò	Facebook	<u>Castagneto Acustico' (Acoustic Forest) Festival</u>	Viola (CN), Italy
51	ENTREARTE AL-BADULAQUE S.L	www.crac-espaciounico.org www.albadulake.com	<u>CREATION IN RURAL AREA. 2018 Cuacos de Yuste, (Cáceres) Spain</u>	España
52	Budhaditya Chattopadhyay	www.budhaditya.org	<u>Artistic research project Decomposing Landscape (2009-2020)</u>	India
53	Forest Keegel	www.forestkeegel.com	<u>Makarata Garden Tarrangower Maldon, Victoria, Australia. Community engaged art project</u>	Australia
54	Institute for Environmental Solutions	www.videsinstituts.lv	<u>Reuse of Waste through Arts and Crafts (WasteArt)</u>	Latvia
55	Institute for Environmental Solutions	www.videsinstituts.lv	<u>Young European Creation Biennale (JCE. Jeune Création Européenne)</u>	Latvia
56	Kaman Kala Sansthan (kaman Art Foundation)	www.sowingseed.wordpress.com	<u>Sowing Seeds, 2009</u>	Jodhpur - Rajasthan, India
57	Christine Thomas	www.sorrelandsilk.wordpress.com	<u>Sorrel and Silk: Where Oaks Were Common artistic walk</u>	Derbyshire, UK.
58	University of Bamenda		Eagle, monument	Cameroun
59	Tanja Râman (TaikaBox)	www.ohokeho.home.blog www.sudenpolku.wordpress.com www.taikabox.com/fi	<u>!OHO – KEHO! ('Wow – body!')</u>	Finland, Oulu
60	Public Delivery	www.publicdelivery.org	<u>Silence Was Golden, an on-going global performance series</u>	Seoul, South Korea
61	ET4U (a non-profit artist-run association)	www.et4u.dk Facebook Instagram	MEETINGS	Denmark, Lemvig Municipality
62	Arts Society Now	www.sirkusfestivaalipusu.com Facebook	<u>Sirkusfestivaali Pusu contemporary circus festival</u>	Finland
63	Louise Ann Wilson Company	www.louiseannwilson.com	<u>Women's Walks to Remember: 'With Memory I was there' (2018-19), a 'surrogate' walking-art project</u>	(Leeds and Lancaster) England, UK.
64	Jully Acuña Suárez & Marcelo Marques Miranda (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University)	www.es-c.net Linkedin Marcelo Linkedin Jully	Art for Empowerment	Sibundoy, Colombia; Berlin, Germany; Leiden, The Netherlands
65	Maynard Abercych / Simon Whitehead	www.may-nard.org Facebook	<u>Maynard Abercych, a resource for Dance and Movement Arts in Rural West Wales</u>	Wales/ UK/ Europe
66	Sophie Lindsey	www.sophielindsey.co.uk	<u>Jam-scape (2018-19), a body of research on the contemporary image and role of the rural</u>	UK, Abergavenny
67	Deb Brown of SaveYour.Town	www.saveyour.town www.buildingpossibility.com	<u>Art in the Rural 2017 to now</u>	Webster City, Iowa USA
68	Konstnärscentrum väst (Artist Center West)	www.landart.se www.kc-vast.se	<u>(X)sites site-specific project</u>	Sweden
69	NGO Art-Vorota	www.artvorota.ru	<u>Art Vorota</u>	Russia

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70	Site Sit	Facebook	Village Halls, Llansteffan	UK, Wales, Abergavenny
71	Association Le Boucan des Arts	www.leboucandesarts.com ettrucs.com Facebook Youtube	Festival Le Boucan des Arts 2019 édition 5 LAVARÉ/SARTHE (France)	France
72	Gamelan Spréacha Geala	Facebook	Gamelan Spréacha Geala (Bright Sparks Gamelan)	Ireland
73	Alexander Gallery/Liudmila Belova	Facebook	Alexander Gallery	Montenegro/ Russia
74	We Are From Dust	www.werefromdust.org Twitter Instagram	We Are From Dust (2015)	Global (USA, UK, Czech Republic)
75	MANI DOO	www.cultureininstria.wordpress.com www.schormani.com	ALARM!	CROATIA, ISTRIA
76	TICKON	Facebook	TICKON - Tranekær Internationale Center for Kunst Og Natur (Tranekær International Art and Nature Centre)	Danmark
77	Marc van Vliet	Website	Nieuw Antropoceens Peil (New Anthropocene Level - NAP* 2018), a land-art installation	The Netherlands
78	Latitude 50 (Pôle des arts du cirque et de la rue)	www.latitude50.be	Latitude 50	Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgium
79	Rural Arts	www.ruralarts.org Facebook Twitter	CREATE Tour	North Yorkshire, United Kingdom
80	Culturapedia	www.culturapedia.co.uk www.spotonlancashire.co.uk Facebook Twitter	Culturapedia	Blackburn, England
81	PØStarquitectos (Sandra González Álvarez)	Facebook	A Vila do mañá	España
82	Melting Pro	www.meltingpro.org	Contemporary invasions. Enhancement and promotion of places through innovative narratives	Italy, Rome
83	Market Place (led by Babylon ARTS)	Facebook Twitter	Market Place	United Kingdom
84	Studentina theatre studio, bright eye dance performance with fire and my name is Petya Bojnova		Bulgarayya artistic center	Sofia Bulgaria
85	Filipa Francisco	www.materiasdiversos.com	The Journey, a dance-music piece	Portugal
86	Dance North Scotland	www.dancenorth.scot	Dance North Scotland tours and performances	Findhorn, Scotland
87	ZMUC Zemunski Mali Umetnički Centar	www.zmuc.org Facebook	YEAR 2013 Movable Art Colonies	Serbia, Belgrade - Zemun
88	COUNTY LIMERICK YOUTH THEATRE	www.countylimerickyouththeatre.com Facebook	The Big Four	Limerick, Ireland
89	Sumaira Malik	Instagram	Fakira	Pakistan
90	Haarlem Artspace	Facebook Twitter Instagram	Haarlem Artspace Collectivism Residency	UK

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91	Landsbylaboratoriet	www.landsbylaboratoriet.dk Facebook	<u>The Village Laaboratory and villages DNA</u>	Denmark
92	Lisitsyn Daria, art curator		KONA.COW project Symposium on sculpture and art	Russia
93	UNCCD		<u>Photo competition and global youth short video competition on forest, land and soil protection themes.</u>	Germany
94	Tryater / Jojanneke Braam	www.tryater.nl	<u>Raze om protters show</u>	The Netherlands, Leeuwarden
95	Conexiones improbables	Website Facebook Twitter	<u>URRATSERA</u>	Spain, Vitoria-Gasteiz
96	Eleni Kyrioti		<u>9th Summer Art School at the old Mining Complex's warehouses</u>	Limnaria, Thassos, Greece
97	EiMa cultural association	www.eimacreacio.com Facebook	<u>EiMa Creation Centre for body-based arts</u>	Spain
98	Teater Fluks	www.teaterfluks.dk Facebook	<u>Betonkadaver (2019), a site-specific walking performance</u>	Denmark, Aarhus
99	Double Edge Theatre	www.doubleedgetheatre.org	<u>Leonora's World, a Living Art Spectacle</u>	United States
100	Dekabristen e.V.	www.dekabristen.org	<u>CONTEXT artist residency and festival</u>	Berlin
101	Barbara De Micheli (producer)	Linkedin	<u>The Fourth Landscape is an installation</u>	Italy
102	Pro Progressione	www.pro-cult.com Facebook	<u>Play! MOBILE</u>	Hungary, Budapest
103	Slabko ten		<u>the Village</u>	Russia
104	Derriere Le Hublot	www.derriere-le-hublot.fr	<u>Fenêtres sur le paysage, an artistic and cultural itinerary on the Way of Saint-James</u>	France
105	Secret Hotel / Christine Fentz	www.secrethotel.dk	<u>EARTHWISE Residency Center</u>	Denmark
106	António M. Cartaxo		Listening Through Surfaces, 2019 (Sound Installation); Amsterdam, Netherlands/Praia da Salema, Portugal	Netherlands
107	Gediminas Kubilius	Facebook	<u>P.A.R.A.K.A.S. cultural venue</u>	Kaunas, Lithuania
108	York st John Univeristy, Joanna Sperryn-Jones	www.joannasperrynjones.carbonmade.com	<u>SelfScapes 2018</u> <u>Dalby Forest, Yorkshire UK</u>	UK, Yorkshire
109	Daniel Nicolae Djamo	www.djamo.weebly.com	<u>16 sounds of paper - in Moriya, Japan</u>	Bucharest, Romania
110	LLUIS CAPDEVILA	www.lluiscapdevila.com	<u>Rural compositions</u>	SPAIN
111	Ifö Center / Teresa Holmberg	www.ifocenter.com Facebook	<u>Ifö Center</u>	Sweden
112	Foad Alijani	www.foadalijani.com/en.php	<u>Coextensive Points</u>	Iran
113	Norbert Busschers, festival Brucca/ festival Oeverloos	www.festival-oeverloos.nl www.kuenstlerstadt-kalbe.nl www.hetkoelhuis.nl	<u>Bruccamulti-discipline festival</u>	The Netherlands
114	Art Farm x Grace Wong	Website	Marionette Project, 2020-2026, Marquette, Nebraska Architecture, Public Art, Conceptual	United States: Marquette, Nebraska
115	Effetto Larsen	www.effettoarsen.it Facebook Twitter Instagram	<u>Traces - a matter of identity</u>	Italy

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116	Medea Electronique	www.medeaelectronique.com	<u>Koumaria Improvised New Media Art Residency</u>	Athens, Greece
117	Scottish Sculpture Workshop	www.ssw.org.uk	<u>Into The Mountain, site responsive installation by Simone Kenyon</u>	Aberdeenshire, Scotland
118	Carolien Adriaansche	www.carolienadriaansche.nl	<u>Floating Cities' 2015, Zaltbommel NL, Water-art</u>	Netherlands
119	Kunstloc Brabant	www.kunstlocbrabant.nl	Land art projects in Brabant, the Netherlands	Netherlands
120	Two Destination Language	www.twodestinationlanguage.com	FLINT, 2014, Ashley Wood Farm (Wiltshire, England) - live art festival (one day of multi-day festival event)	UK
121	Elisabeth Schilling	www.elisabethschilling.com Facebook Twitter Instagram	<u>FELT 2019, an interdisciplinary production between dance and design, exploring the relationship between textiles, movement, body and space and visual culture.</u>	Luxembourg / Germany
122	Sarah Ellen Lundy	www.grevliquidgums.com Facebook	<u>Project: 'Umble [bumbel]'</u>	Ireland
123	Annette Carmichael Projects	www.annettecarmichael.com.au Facebook Instagram	<u>The Beauty Index</u>	Denmark (small town NOT the country), Australia
124	Qui e Ora	www.quieoraresidenzateatrale.it/online/en/ Facebook	<u>Cultivating Culture (2012-2019)</u>	Italia–Milano–Qui e Ora works between Milano and Bergamo, in a wide geographical area linking with many local municipalities
125	Association Dominio Vale do Mondego	www.dominiovaledomondego.com www.estival.info	<u>Mondego Art Valley - Rural Creative Hub - Rural Art Weeks</u>	Portugal, Village of Faia, Guarda. Serra da Estrela Mountains
126	Opera Bianco	www.operabianco.org Facebook Instagram	<u>Grand Mother by Opera Bianco (2017 - 2019)</u>	Italy
127	C.I.A. - Cultura Innovazione Ambiente	Facebook	<u>E50035 - Expect the Unexpected (Aspettati l'inaspettato), a mini-contemporary art gallery in the ex-kiosk of the village</u>	Italy - Palazuolo sul Senio
128	Laika	www.laika.be	<u>Bravo! Mister Bruegel and the Square of the Senses</u>	Belgium, Antwerp
129	Johannes Christopher Gerard	www.johannesgerard.com	<u>Reflection, 2019, Pico Island, Azores, Portugal</u>	The Neterlands, The Hague & Germany, Berlin
130	Daniel Nicolae Djamo	www.djamo.weebly.com	<u>16 sounds of Moriya, 2017, Moriya (Japan), workshop-based-installation</u>	Bucharest, Romania
131	Klub Girko / Josef Stiller / Julian Vogel	www.klubgirko.com Facebook	<u>Human Time Tree Time performance / installation</u>	Netherlands
132	Somalgors74 / Curdin Tones	www.somalgors74.ch Instagram	<u>Somalgors74, for ex: The Public Fountain</u>	organisation: Switzerland, Tschlin / me: Amsterdam NL and Tschlin CH
133	Asmita Shrish Freelance Artist/ Filmmaker	Instagram	<u>The Filmmaking Workshop for Indigenous Filmmakers in Nepal, 2019, Nepal</u>	UK/Nepal
134	Kaimera Productions	www.kaimera productions.com	<u>The Cherry Orchard, an interdisciplinary approach that blends theater, movement, music, installation, and particularly, audience immersion</u>	USA/France

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135	SLOW DANSE	www.slowdanse.org	<u>SLOW DANSE</u>	FRANCE, NANTES
136	Migrations	www.migrations.uk Facebook	<u>The Bell by Bouke Groen (The Netherlands), 2019, Llanelli Wetlands Centre, Wales</u>	Wales, UK
137	Studio Ayelen Peressini / Inês Teles	www.ayelenperessini.com www.inesteles.pt	<u>Linkage, a co-authored artistic project</u>	España / Portugal
138	MIHR Creative Union Cultural NGO / MIHR theatre	www.mihrtheatre.com Facebook	Armenian Fairy tales	Yerevan, Armenia
139	artscenico eV	www.artscenico.de Facebook	<u>Deer in the clearing (Rehe auf der Lichtung), 2018, community cemetery of Dortmund</u>	Deutschland
140	DANIG PERFORMING ARTS SERVICE	www.danig.dk	<u>Bækkelund International Residency Center for Artists/ BIRCA</u>	DENMARK
141	Mihai Lukacs	www.giuvlipen.com	<u>Who Killed Szomna Grancsa? Performance</u>	Romania
142	Light Ladd & Emberton	www.lightladdemberton.com Facebook Twitter Instagram	<u>Disgo Distaw Owain Glyndwr Silent Disco</u>	Wales, UK
143	Manuela Sarkissyan - freelancer	Facebook	<u>Pocket enchantments</u>	Sofia, Bulgaria
144	Dimitra Tsiaouskoglou, freelance art historian & curator	www.dimitratsiaouskoglou.com	<u>"ELECTRIS how to think like a mountain", a contemporary art exhibition</u>	Greece
145	The Freezer	www.thefreezerhostel.com	<u>The Freezer art centre and residency</u>	Iceland
146	Association Zona	www.amorefestivalporec.net	<u>aMORE festival moru (aMORE festival for the Sea)</u>	Croatia
147	UM UM o.z. / Mária Smreková	Facebook Twitter Instagram	<u>UM UM</u> <u>Community festival of contemporary theatre and arts</u>	Slovakia