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SYMBOLIC CAPITAL AND RELATIONSHIPS OF FLOW: CANADA, EUROPE, AND THE INTERNATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

The essay examines the political and creative relationships between curators and artists operating in the field of cultural production known as the international performance festival circuit. Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital, a metaphorical currency that confers prestige on an individual and is exchanged between agents vying for status and power in the field, is applied to both the overall dynamic of the festival network and to individuals who occupy positions in the network. The social Darwinist character of Bourdieu's theory is balanced by a group of theories that describe the gestalt of an aesthetic encounter as something sought-after, treasured, and undertaken for its own sake. Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow, Dewey's theory of qualitative thought, and Fischer-Lichte's "radical concept of presence" help make the case that aesthetic encounters have the potential to become what the essay calls "touchstone experiences": somatically felt events that are prized by curators and artists, and that become the basis for the drive to accumulate symbolic capital—capital which is then leveraged to create more touchstone experiences. Curators and artists on both sides of the Atlantic are interviewed, providing personal insight into the creative and practical concerns that drive them to develop work for the festival circuit. What emerges is a complex web of relationships among the various producers of performance in this particular field of cultural production: the festival network becomes, for the artist, either a potential market in which to promote work or a restrictive gate that blocks access to a larger audience; the curator becomes both a gate-keeper regulating access and a cultural agent providing a platform for cultural exchange and offering local artists exposure to diverse practices from elsewhere. The differences in real and symbolic wealth between the Canadian and European contexts is also considered in the essay, with an emphasis on how European cultural institutions provide opportunities and obstacles to Canadian artists seeking to promote their work overseas.

Dans cet article, Ferguson examine les rapports politiques et créatifs entre programmeurs et artistes qui participent à un milieu de la production culturelle, celui du circuit des festivals internationaux des arts de la scène. La théorie bourdieusienne du capital symbolique, une valeur métaphorique qui confère du prestige à l'individu qui en possède et qui s'échange entre agents qui rivalisent l'un avec l'autre pour améliorer leur statut et gagner du

pouvoir, s'applique ici à la fois au réseau des festivals dans son ensemble et aux individus qui jouent un rôle au sein du réseau. Un autre ensemble de théories agit comme contrepoids au caractère darwinien de la théorie de Bourdieu et montre que la rencontre esthétique serait une chose recherchée, prisée, entreprise pour le plaisir. Ferguson fait appel au concept d'expérience-flux de Csikszentmihalyi, à celui de la pensée qualitative de Dewey, et au « concept de présence radical » de Fischer-Lichte pour faire valoir que les rencontres esthétiques peuvent être des expériences « pierre de touche » : des événements somatiques auxquels tiennent beaucoup les programmeurs et les artistes et qui leur donnent envie d'accumuler du capital symbolique, lequel sert ensuite à créer de nouvelles expériences pierre de touche. Des entretiens menés avec des programmeurs et des artistes des deux côtés de l'Atlantique offrent un éclairage personnel sur les préoccupations créatives et pratiques qui poussent ces individus à mettre au point des spectacles pour le circuit des festivals. Il en ressort une toile complexe formée des rapports entre divers individus qui participent à ce milieu de la production culturelle : pour l'artiste, le circuit des festivals peut soit servir de marché potentiel lui permettant de promouvoir son travail, soit lui bloquer l'accès à un plus vaste public; le programmeur sert à la fois de portier, contrôlant l'accès au réseau, et d'agent culturel, fournissant une plate-forme pour les échanges culturels et offrant aux artistes de sa région l'occasion de découvrir des modes de fonctionnement employés ailleurs. Ferguson fait également ressortir l'écart entre la prospérité réelle et symbolique des contextes canadien et européen en s'intéressant surtout à la façon dont les institutions culturelles en Europe offrent des occasions aux artistes canadiens cherchant à promouvoir leur travail à l'étranger tout en leur créant néanmoins certaines difficultés.



Introduction

An expanding North American circuit of interdisciplinary performance festivals has become increasingly important for showcasing and developing new work by Canadian artists. This network is in part an extension of an older and much larger European network and is connected to similar festival networks around the globe. For artists creating certain types of hybrid performance, often categorized as “live-art” or interdisciplinary (e.g. hybrids of theatre, contemporary dance, and installation art), the local, national, and international festival circuits represent markets in which to sell product. Establishing a presence on the circuit by getting successive bookings at various festivals can help make a career as an interdisciplinary performing artist financially

possible. A Canadian artist's reputation is enhanced when she is presented at such festivals. This, in turn, gives her leverage when applying to state arts councils and private foundations for funding. A successful funding application provides money for the artist to develop and produce work, and strengthens the artist's position when trying to form partnerships with festival curators. The relationship is circular: presentations can lead to successful funding applications, which can lead to further presentations. The festival curator is a powerful figure in the loop: she writes letters of recommendation that are attached to the artist's funding applications, applies for funding in coordination with or independently of the artist, recommends the artist to other curators, and ultimately decides whether the artist will be presented at her festival. As the festival network expands, more presentations of the artist's work become possible, sometimes in the form of a coordinated tour. This allows the artist greater promotional opportunities and potentially increases the longevity of her performance product.

Three prominent nodes on the North American circuit are Vancouver's PuSh International Performing Arts Festival (PuSh), Montreal's Festival Transamériques (FTA), and New York City's Under the Radar. Certain works travel a circuit that also includes a major performance series such as Seattle's On the Boards and festivals such as Calgary's High Performance Rodeo and Portland's Time Based Arts Festival. Some performance platforms focus on a single discipline, such as Dance in Vancouver, which showcases local contemporary dance for national and foreign presenters. Others such as PuSh, FTA, and On the Boards have a broader mandate. Much of the work occurs in venues that seat fewer than three hundred people, though some festivals also present larger works. The North American festivals have also become destinations for international performance, much of it originating in Europe. European companies that are well known within the global live-art/theatre/contemporary-dance world, such as Societas Raffaello Sanzio (Italy) and Forced Entertainment (UK), are hot tickets on their North American stops.¹ Through showcasing and personal networking at the festivals some Canadian artists are able to export their work to Europe.

The following essay is an exploration of some of the factors that motivate individuals to contribute to the exchange of performance works between Canada and Europe within the structure of the "field of cultural production"—as the art world is called by Pierre Bourdieu. To this end, I have conducted interviews with a number of artists and curators on both sides of the Atlantic. Of

artists I ask, “Which works have inspired you? In what way has this inspiration influenced your practice?” and “In what ways have you benefitted from the presence of the festival network? In what ways has it impacted negatively on your opportunities for work?” Of curators I ask, “What is it about a performance that moves you to program and promote it? What are the practical considerations involved in selection and presentation?” And finally, “Is there a general distinction between Canadians and Europeans, in terms of what each gets from the exchange?” I have employed several analytical frameworks to better understand the political dynamics of the exchange and the inspirational motivations that drive it, including Bourdieu’s field of cultural production, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow, John Dewey’s theory of qualitative thought, and Erika Fischer-Lichte’s “radical concept of presence.”

Bourdieu describes the relationship between producers and procurers of cultural product as a status-driven exercise in which individuals compete with one another for symbolic capital—various types of recognition that solidify one’s position within a hierarchy of cultural production. Amassing symbolic capital can lead to financial gain and job security (i.e. a relatively secure position as a festival curator); but not necessarily: one can also accrue symbolic capital in the form of recognition without gaining material security (e.g. an artist who is respected but remains marginalized financially). Bourdieu’s analysis is shrewd but tends to overlook motivating factors that are not easily reduced to a model of capital exchange. Theories of flow and of qualitative thought, both of which support the idea that meaning is created through somatic engagement during an aesthetic encounter, help provide a fuller understanding of the multivalent desires that motivate artists and curators and that ultimately drive many of them to attain symbolic capital. Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of “flow” describes periods in which an individual’s absorption in an activity, aesthetic or otherwise, is total. Like flow, Dewey’s theory of “qualitative thought” describes a gestalt experience in which the individual is somatically permeated with the quality of that experience; before critical assessment takes over, one is uncritically and physically engaged. Fischer-Lichte argues that the special presence of certain performers awakens an emergent sense of co-presence in a spectator—performer and spectator feel themselves as undivided embodied-minds. She claims that spectators can become addicted to this experience.

Following Fischer-Lichte and the others, I argue that such

engagement can become a personal touchstone—an experience so important that the desire to revisit it becomes a major motivating factor for both curator and artist. Indeed, it becomes a core value that drives individual pursuit of symbolic capital. It is likely that some agents pursue symbolic capital purely for its own sake, or rather for the material gain, security, and power it affords them. It is probably more common that individuals are motivated by a combination of the desire to acquire symbolic capital in order to create further opportunities for flow experiences and the desire to acquire it for its own sake. What emerges from the personal testimony of subjects interviewed for this paper are multiple lines of competing and complementary interests among curators and artists who, according to their testimony and my personal reading of them as people, are driven by a love of the performing arts and who struggle to create art or the conditions for making art, sometimes in ways that are mutually beneficial and sometimes in ways that create interferences.

The Politics of Cultural Production and Relationships of Flow

In the essay “The Field of Cultural Production,” Bourdieu describes a web of relationships in which various “agents”—artists, curators, critics, scholars, and others—compete with one another for forms of symbolic capital such as “prestige” and “recognition” (Bourdieu, “Field” 37-39). A field of “restricted production” exists within the larger field (Bourdieu, “Market” 115). The festivals considered in this essay fall within this sub-field: they do not attract mass-market audiences, nor do the individuals who lead them or perform at them expect the size of monetary reward available to producers of mass-market products. Bourdieu argues that the field of restricted production—described by his English-language editor as “the vast social apparatus encompassing museums, galleries, libraries, the educational system, literary and art histories, centers for performing arts and so forth” (R. Johnson 15)—reverses normal economies “in a generalized game of ‘loser wins’ [. . .] a systematic inversion of the fundamental principles of all ordinary economies: that of business (it excludes the pursuit of profit and does not guarantee any sort of correspondence between investments and monetary gains), that of power (it condemns honours and temporal greatness), and even that of institutionalized cultural authority (the absence of any academic training or consecration may be considered a virtue)” (“Field” 39). Within the field there are positions to be gained, which can change as new entrants challenge established positions and are either rejected by

the existing order or accepted into a shifting dynamic (30-31). These positions have already been legitimized by the dominant cultural discourse. Possible positions have an “intellectual and affective ‘physiognomy’”—an implied “disposition,” so to speak, one that is matched by the agent, one agent being more disposed to a position than another (64). If an agent successfully takes an available position she becomes a consecrator/legitimizing. As noted above, the situation isn’t static; legitimizing discourse can change with the emergence of new artistic movements, new ideologies, or new structures for the promotion of art (32). Within the hierarchy of the field one amasses a wealth of symbolic capital or becomes a symbolic pauper as one competes “for the monopoly of the legitimate exercise of symbolic violence” (“Market” 121).²

The term “symbolic violence” can be applied accurately to political dogfights over legitimization, but fails to account for other impulses. While the curators I interviewed for this study take pride in managerial prowess, their primary focus appears to be on aesthetic inspiration, creative collaboration, and community building. This is consistent with the studies undertaken by Csikszentmihalyi and Eversmann (cited below) in which curators, artistic directors, and administrators have been interviewed: the desire to create anew something akin to a significant past aesthetic encounter appears to be at least as great as the desire to accumulate symbolic capital. Individuals studied by these critics describe periods of total focus during an aesthetic encounter—felt vividly and somatically (Csikszentmihalyi 29)—in which a sense of time, place, and ego boundary seems to be transcended or heightened, “a condition so rewarding as to be sought for its own sake” (19). Eversmann applies flow to the theatre context and finds the subjects he interviews (students, theatre goers, theatre administrators, and curators) tend to prize becoming physically engrossed in a performance: “For most respondents it seems that the emotional experience precedes the cognitive one and is, at least during the performance, more important than the intellectual dimension (‘once I feel it in my stomach, then it will also be all right in my mind’)” (155). A post-performance reflective state in which the spectator is able to express appreciation for what has taken place is also valuable. As one of Eversmann’s subjects says, “The feeling is, how beautiful, that I can witness this, that they are able to do that, that they bring it like that, that I have the fortune of being present here [. . .]” (155). But for this to happen the spectator must first experience “the feeling of being carried away by the performance, of losing oneself in the world of the stage, of forgetting everyday

reality” (155). Csikszentmihalyi calls his theory “flow” because it is the term many of his subjects use to describe the feeling they have during their most treasured aesthetic encounters (7).

Fischer-Lichte, attending to what she calls the performative turn of the 1960s, which was partly characterized by the foregrounding of the performer-body and accompanying notions of authenticity, focuses on the type of work that has been in vogue for years now on the performance festival circuit—a hybrid of theatre, dance, and performance art. She argues that certain performers are able to achieve a kind of presence in which they are foregrounded as “embodied mind[s] in a constant process of becoming” (99). The spectator perceives the performer as such and receives the “circulating energy as a transformative” experience (99). Fischer-Lichte calls her theory the “*radical concept of presence*” (99; original italics). What is brought forth for the spectator is her own inherent unity of self (embodied mind) in which “ordinary existence is experienced as extraordinary” (99). She is “transformed and even transfigured” (99), resulting in a personal “reenchantment” with the world (206-8). Fischer-Lichte goes on to say that “spectators might become addicted” to these experiences (99). Whether one feels the total absorption of Csikszentmihalyi’s flow, the pervasiveness of Dewey’s gestalt qualities, or the emergence of one’s embodied mind as in Fischer-Lichte—any one of these states qualify for what I call a “touchstone experience,” something inherently valuable to an individual—worth repeating and fighting for.

While the curators and artists interviewed for this essay can accurately be described as agents in the “field of competition” (“Market” 121), their passionate testimony challenges the inherent cynicism of Bourdieu’s model. Below, Norman Armour, Executive Director of PuSh describes *El Pasado es un Animal Grotesco* (*The Past is a Grotesque Animal*) by Argentinian director Mariano Pensotti, a show he chose for his 2012 program. He is able to isolate a number of features of the performance while assigning it the overall quality of “a wonderful calm unfoldingness”:

[The stage] *revolve* turns very very slowly—it’s cut into four parts, four quarters. As it turns, an actor that’s in the previous scene narrates the scene that is the current focus on stage. Beautifully written, *gorgeously* written. And work that combines, for me, the literary approach, the theatrical approach, and the filmic approach all at once... Not a lot of

kind of bravado, a lot of technical wizardry or extravagance. The *revolve* is just plain wood... There's a bareness to it, plainness to it. So there's a wonderful calm unfoldingness in which the work slowly creeps up on you [. . .]. Just very very slowly becomes more complex and intricate. (Armour)

Armour's attempt to abstract features such as "literary," "theatrical," and "filmic" from the gestalt of seeing *El Pasado* can only be made after the totality of the event has passed. Dewey argues that "all thought in every subject begins with [. . .] an unanalyzable whole" ("Qualitative" 100); "The total overwhelming impression comes first, perhaps in a seizure by a sudden glory of the landscape, or by the effect upon us of entrance into a cathedral when dim light, incense, stained glass and majestic proportions fuse in one indistinguishable whole" ("Natural" 145). This is akin to, if not identical with what Csikszentmihalyi calls the experience of flow—sometimes described as "a sense of personal integration and self-expansion" in which one feels "release from concerns about past and future" (8). Cognitive theorist Mark Johnson, following Dewey, suggests that it is absorption in the totality of an aesthetic experience—absorption in the "primary [. . .] pervasive qualities of situations"—that leads to personal growth and transformation (75). Such meaningful encounters become touchstones for curators and artists; they become the prize over which battles for symbolic capital are fought. For artists and curators the accumulation of symbolic capital—cashed in, so to speak, for real capital (funds for productions)—can lead to further opportunities to create touchstone experiences.

Mirna Zagar has been the Artistic Director of Dance Week Festival in Zagreb since 1982. Her curatorial work is informed by the fact that she is also a former dancer: "I can't get rid of my dance background. So when I curate a festival I think of unique experiences—what I observe in a community [. . .] as a dance professional coming from within the field, and out of the field, and very much still in touch with an evolving pool of artists and new generations, and through dance professionals that are outside of what one calls the core presenting world—and still in touch, and working daily with dramaturges and choreographers. I curate within that context [. . .]" (Zagar). Zagar finds herself drawn to "intelligent works" and "works [in which] the performers are sincere and present on stage, as opposed to mechanical." Of course the desire to pursue further opportunities for the creation or presentation of what I am calling touchstone experiences inevitably leads agents in

the field into the “position-taking” political game that Bourdieu describes. However, even this highly political activity can tend toward cooperation and mutual beneficence, while not altogether eliminating social Darwinist inclinations. A curator’s selection of a show is a complex process that depends on subjective response, cultivation of interpersonal relationships among curators and artists, budget limitations, and other practical and inspirational concerns.

For Thomas Kraus, director of the PAZZ Festival (Oldenburg, Germany), friendships must be cultivated, but not at the cost of high artistic standards:

It’s more about a similar philosophy. We all have objectives we have to meet, we all have our sales figures, we have our premieres, we all need *that* and *that* and *that* [. . .]. When we talk, we want to convince one another that, you know, “I have a good company here”—we can help one another in getting to our aims. So it’s a very open relationship. It’s not about trading [. . .]. I’m not interested in convincing another festival to take a show for reasons other than artistic ones. For me that’s a very important point. (Kraus)

One can read two motivations into Kraus’s insistence on high artistic standards. First, the credibility of the festival of which he is founder and director depends on symbolic capital in the form of “reputation.” Adhering to a high standard has paid off: in only its third iteration, the reputation of PAZZ is such that it was able to host the 2012 annual conference of the Society of Dramaturges, a gathering of about five hundred participants from across Germany (Kraus). In addition to this, the performance program was larger than the previous edition. Second, Kraus’ standards are based on his personal taste, and he has made it clear that he is willing to compromise with box office and with other tastemakers to a very limited degree (Kraus). He has rejected the notion of creating a “best of” festival, which showcases the latest popular shows (popular by the standards of the restricted field) in a bid to gain recognition from critics and the festival-going public, and thereby raise the profile of the festival (Kraus). Rather, Kraus’s programming decisions are driven by a desire to promote work that moves him. Connected to this last point is Kraus’s desire to break new ground by finding and giving exposure to Canadian companies that inspire him, or have the potential to inspire him. Kraus gets potential kudos (symbolic capital) for his discoveries, while the

companies discovered get the benefit of residencies and presentations at a European festival with a growing reputation.

Presenters on both sides of the Atlantic feel that the Canadian scene, particularly outside of Quebec, can benefit from opportunities for exposure and networking that European platforms offer. Germany and Canada, for example, are not on equal footing when it comes to historical investment in arts and culture. “Germany,” says Kraus, “is [. . .] a small country with an enormous output of cultural work [. . .]. In the region where I come from you can be in fifteen major, really, really good theatres, theatres with work forces of five hundred people, with an ensemble, within an hour” (Kraus). The Canadian government’s investment in the arts began in earnest only half a century ago and is not of the same magnitude. It wasn’t until the 1950s that the federal government began to act on the recommendations of the Massey Commission, an appointed body that studied the cultural landscape of the country and encouraged fiscal investment from the state.³ Such investment was given a kick-start when two of the wealthiest men in Canada died within months of one another in 1955-1956 and left combined endowments for the arts and education totaling \$100 million (about \$800 million in today’s currency) to the federal government (Vance 365). Even so, government investment in Canadian culture pales historically when compared to that in Germany. This puts Germany in a position of relative symbolic power, and Canadian companies such as Theatre Replacement and Mammalian Diving Reflex (interviewed below) seek opportunities to perform in and learn from the German context. Kraus has welcomed both of these groups to his festival and given them considerable support in the form of creative residencies and presentations. He says, “We hope to help, in a way. Because when we invite the companies here we give them a lot of exposure to other companies; in return they influence these other companies” (Kraus).⁴

Mirna Zagar, who continues as AD of Dance Week Festival (DWF) in Zagreb, has also been a curator for several European performance platforms (festivals, series, or venues), and an Artistic Advisor of the international choreographic competition *Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis* in France, often referred to as *Bagnolet*. Simultaneously with DWF, she has been Executive Director of the Dance Centre in Vancouver since 1998. Over time she has accumulated considerable symbolic capital and, in recent years, has tried to leverage this capital on behalf of Vancouver contemporary dance artists. She



Samantha Madely as “Miss Mountain” in Theatre Replacement’s *Dress me up in your love*. Photo: Maiko Bae Yamam

was familiar with the Montreal scene due to her work with Bagnolet, and had presented Quebec companies at various European platforms. But she was interested in breaking new ground in Vancouver:

I kept realizing more and more the diversity that exists here, the very different feel for the dance that is being done here, as opposed to the dance that was being done in Montreal. And also I found that the dancers were beautiful [but] the productions were so *rough*. The productions all seemed to me as if they were works in progress, and I couldn’t understand how things got on stage [. . .]. My colleagues from [Bagnolet] came here. They sort of were, “Well Mirna, you’re sticking your head out, but we definitely see that it’s very different.” [. . .] And from a [Bagnolet] platform in Vancouver, [Lee] Su-Feh [and her company Battery Opera] was invited to present a work in Paris, and [. . .] she actually got an award.

Getting her “hands dirty” in the scene, Zagar tried to use her clout to take things a step further: “I thought, okay let’s use the fact that I do have the ability of a festival [in Zagreb], I do have a team that

works year round. I asked a colleague of mine to come here and to curate [a program of Vancouver companies for presentation at DWF in Zagreb]. I was willing to offer resources and convince my colleagues in Zagreb that it's a good thing to do." In 2003, Zagar brought nine Vancouver companies to DWF. The attempt highlighted the difference between contemporary dance cultures in Zagreb and Vancouver. Zagar feels that due to a relative lack of adequate government support on the Canadian side, and a local dance community lacking experience in negotiating the interpersonal demands of the European festival circuit, the endeavour was "interesting" but "premature." Among other things Vancouver companies were unable to engage in the higher level of theoretical discussion expected of artists on the European circuit. One could argue that the inability of Vancouver companies to articulate their work in terms of the legitimized discourse of Bourdieu's sub-field of restricted production revealed a failure on their part to acquire sufficient symbolic currency. As a result they did not establish themselves as position-takers in the field: further recognition capital was not forthcoming, reputations were not enhanced, and future presentations failed to materialize.

Bourdieu's theory describes the relationship web in which Zagar and the Vancouver artists found themselves. Zagar occupied a position of relative strength within the field. In Bourdieu's terms, she was either fortifying her position or taking a new position—that of groundbreaking promoter of Vancouver dance. As reconnaissance agent for continental European dance, she had gone to the very frontiers of the known contemporary dance world, discovered a new kind of artist, and challenged an established Old World institution with the aesthetic of the far-west, New World dance scene. If things had gone better she would have gained further recognition capital. Unfortunately, since the attempt was not deemed a success, Zagar's associates in Zagreb put a stop to Vancouver imports for the time being (Zagar).

Let me complicate the above narrative by retelling it in a manner that combines Bourdieu with the insights of flow, qualitative thought, cognitive theory, and Fischer-Lichte's radical concept of presence. In search of touchstone experiences that have the quality of what she calls "sincerity" and "intelligence," Zagar travels to the frontier of contemporary dance seeking new discoveries. If she finds the kind of performance she's looking for she will experience a "reenchantment" and renew her desire to promote such aesthetic experiences at the platforms she has access to. She will also discover a community of artists and administrators that she

can belong to (a goal that is discussed in the next section); personal relationships will be cultivated. She will have expanded the number of contacts she has in an international network of curators and artists. Her position-taking as a new promoter/presenter of dance in the Vancouver scene will give her power and make her a threat to the other established dance presenters in Vancouver, such as the curators of the Dancing on the Edge Festival or the Vancouver International Dance Festival, neither of which has the international stature or access to international platforms that Zagar has. She will become emotionally invested in local artists and their work, in their uniqueness and “rough” beauty, and will want to assist in their development. She will be rewarded with a combination of touchstone experiences, an expanded community, accumulation of symbolic capital and real power (as artistic director of an institution and a broker of dance in the Vancouver market), and recognition as an innovator for her discoveries of contemporary dance artists in a region that is little known in continental Europe.

From the above narrative it is possible to see that symbolic capital and touchstone experiences are two qualitatively different pursuits that become intertwined in the process of achieving the latter. One must leverage symbolic capital in order to create opportunities for touchstone experiences in the festival circuit.

Community Building and Peer-to-peer Pedagogy

In addition to touchstone experiences, I have raised the issue of acting on behalf of a community. Zagar’s attempt to do this is a cautionary tale that underlines the importance of managing exposure of new work in a way that is mindful of an artist’s development needs (or current state of symbolic wealth). In this regard, PuSh Festival director Norman Armour’s comments are instructive: “I’m not paid to promote Canadian work but it’s part of the role of the festival [. . .]. It’s also been our responsibility with the Vancouver scene—because it has been sometimes [geographically] isolated—[. . .] to do it properly. Not *over* hype. Be measured [. . .]. Bring people along—not to set them up to fail” (Armour). This means resisting the pressures of the art market for the good of the artist:

There are cases where the presenters don’t care about the individuals. They just saw the show and, you know they loved the show and boom—done. So that’s fine. But what about the other times, when they’re going, “Well I didn’t like *all* of the show; I

like parts of it, but not all of it. I wouldn't book it, but what are [the artists] like?" How do you encourage those situations, where you actually develop person-to-person relationships? Thomas [Kraus] actually has person-to-person relationships with a number of Canadian artists that go beyond the immediate question of "Do I want that piece or not?" He has an interest in artists in the long term. And I think it's really important that the festival play a role in that, and it's not simply a thumbs-up thumbs-down market relationship, and that we create friendships. (Armour)

Artist and arts community development also means encouraging peer-to-peer pedagogy, as in the example of Cathy Naden, a member of the prominent UK performance group, Forced Entertainment: "With Cathy Naden [. . .] it has nothing to do with a business relationship. It's just an interest in her practice, and bringing her over to teach workshops or help—dramaturgically lead workshops, or such—and be involved" (Armour).

The PuSh festival, as I've written elsewhere, has shifted the Vancouver scene from bystander to participant in the international flow of performance innovation (Ferguson). When Armour speaks of local artists taking part in a dialogue with colleagues from abroad, I believe he is also speaking to his initial reasons for starting the PuSh festival, a desire to stake a place at the table:

I've wanted local artists to not go away going, "Because my work has not been bought I'm not worth anything. I'm not worthy of having a conversation with somebody from New York or somebody from Berlin or whatever." No, you are. *If* you're worthy in terms of—you're curious, you're intelligent, you're open-minded, you are wrestling with important questions artistically, or content wise, you know? [. . .] So that's a delicate thing. (Armour)

Having "a conversation" with well-established peers can be understood in terms of accumulating enough symbolic capital to have influence within the field, but also speaks of a desire for the creative exchange that takes place between artists working at a very high level. This is an activity that can be undertaken for the sake of creative exchange alone. It may be that such activity requires a certain kind of participant: in *The Art of Seeing*, Csikszentmihalyi suggests that flow is more easily achieved by the "autotelic" personality, someone who takes part in an activity simply because

it is “intrinsically satisfying” (8).

In addition to motivations that build community or that are undertaken because of autotelic potential, there is the satisfaction derived from assisting in an artist’s development, as the examples of Zagar and Armour above have touched upon. Thomas Kraus calls PAZZ a “working festival,” by which he means the emphasis is on development, not on the final product (Kraus). To this end, he has offered residencies and dramaturgical support to a number of groups, such as Vancouver’s Theatre Replacement, a company that has had some touring success in North America and the UK with their shows *Box Theatre*, *Weetube*, and *Clark and I Somewhere in Connecticut*. In 2010 Kraus was the first continental European curator to present *Box Theatre*. He also gave the company a development residency for a new show *Dress me up in your love*, which was also presented as a work-in-progress. *Dress me up* was then featured in 2012 as part of the main program at PAZZ. Of the 2010 work-in-progress presentation Kraus says, “I never tried to sell [*Dress me up*] as a show, or premiere, or a preview, or world premiere in order to get spectacular reactions to it, or to demonstrate how ‘advanced’ we are or whatever. The people who came there to the performance, they knew they were seeing a work-in-progress” (Kraus). Kraus, as Armour suggested, is taking care to manage the development and exposure of the company in Germany.

Kraus, however, does accumulate symbolic capital in the course of such development. While the curator creates opportunities for the artist, the artist must be willing to include him in some level of creative collaboration. The partnership depends on curator consecration of the artist, through selection and invitation. The curator’s position is further legitimized if, in the process, his reputation is enhanced among other agents in the field. Toronto-based theatre artist Darren O’Donnell, Artistic Director of Mammalian Diving Reflex (MDR), offers an insightful example from the artist’s perspective. MDR has toured internationally with shows such as *Haircuts by Children*, *The Children’s Choice Awards*, *Night Walks with Teenagers*, and *All the Sex I’ve Ever Had* (formerly *The Best Sex I’ve Ever Had*). O’Donnell and Kraus dreamed up *All the Sex*, a show in which senior citizens recount past sexual encounters, when they connected at Canada’s Magnetic North Festival (O’Donnell). Their creative dialogue resulted in a residency and work-in-progress presentation for MDR at PAZZ in 2010, and a main program presentation in 2012. As O’Donnell’s comments below illustrate, it’s hard to separate the creative part of this part-

nership from the buy-and-sell power dynamics of the art marketplace. The survival of MDR depends on the consecration and purchase of performance product by the curator:

All I care about for me is the reception of my presenters. The presenters are my audience right? I don't care about anybody else. Frankly. The presenters are the ones that buy the shows and have to deal with the audiences. And they'll find the audience [. . .]. I don't really care about how people feel about the work one way or the other, because I'm more interested in questions that are happening among people that are in the project, and in and around the work, and I trust that interesting conversations will come of it because it's interesting and fun what we're doing. But in terms of the reception, the biggest concerns I have is getting it programmed, and the rest of it will handle itself. (O'Donnell)

Getting a booking is crucial: "That's where the money is, you can't stay here [. . .]. Like I can't stay in Toronto to work because there's not enough people paying you to do work here. But I can get paid if I go all over the place" (O'Donnell). It's also clear that O'Donnell must suffer the marketplace as a means of getting at what really interests him: the "conversations" that will be generated among participants—by which he means not only the creators of the performance, but also the spectators who take part in it.

Whether the curator's desire for greater involvement in the creative process springs from altruistic or creative impulses, or from a simple desire for power, the artist must deal with the curator as broker. Investment in the relationship can have creatively productive outcomes. It can lead to more opportunities for artists who are welcomed into the festival network, while limiting opportunities for those who are not. The support of a festival curator can give credibility to an artist's funding application. A lack of such support can have a negative impact on a funding application, as choreographer Delia Brett discusses below. In any case, the benefit of accumulation of symbolic capital for the curator, and the cost in terms of personal labour to the artist, who must play by the curator's rules to a certain extent, can't be ignored. Speaking at the Dance Centre in Vancouver in 2010, Belgian dance-dramaturge/curator Guy Cools said he expects an artist to spend at least two years investing in a relationship with him before he feels he can commit his services with integrity (Cools). Given that Cools can legitimize a project by attaching his credentials to it, as

an in-demand dramaturge and frequent guest-curator, he holds a position of greater power vis-à-vis the artist. The curator-dramaturge, well established as a “controlling power” in Europe (Lehmann 4), is also becoming a powerbroker in Canada, another gatekeeper in the exchange of art market performance goods.

Are there checks and balances to this convergence of power? In Canada, the jury-of-peers funding system may provide some opportunity for artists, when taking part in jury deliberations, to express dissatisfaction. Government funding agencies also periodically conduct consultations with stakeholders, and artists can make their views known through these. But artists do not design public policy questionnaires, nor do they select juries. Agency officers do. When it comes to reviews of festival operations, a jury will primarily be made up of directors of festivals and other arts organisations; with their managerial expertise, these individuals will be better able to assess the viability of the funding requests of such operations, but may not question the amount of funding apportioned to their sector from overall cultural funding allocations, or whether they are becoming too dominant within the sub-field of cultural production. Decisions related to the distribution of funding can have a direct impact on the viability of an artist’s project. For example, an artist’s inability to secure consecration from the festival circuit can lead to a negative reception from a funding agency, as choreographer Delia Brett describes. Brett is co-artistic director of MACHiNENOiSY Dance, a Vancouver company with touring ambitions that has had limited exposure to the touring circuit. To date the company has had its show *Vancouver vs. Vancouver* presented outside of the festival circuit in France (twice) and Greece (once), and other shows presented at local festivals in British Columbia and Toronto. Brett:

Our last trip to France came as a result of [choreographer] Fabrice [Ramalingom] being the guest curator at the Agora [Cité Internationale de la Danse] in Montpellier. It’s kind of a prestigious invitation [. . .]. But [the Canada Council] wouldn’t [. . .] give us a basic travel grant because we weren’t going to a festival. To them that’s the only way in which to promote your work, to be seen at a festival. And that’s where all the presenters are.

MACHiNENOiSY was able to get to France, but only by incurring a financial loss. A travel grant for flights to France for Brett and co-artistic director Daelik (his mononym) would have amounted to CAD \$3,000. Not getting the travel grant meant the two artists had

to subtract the \$3,000 from their combined artist fee of \$6,000 (the amount they were paid to choreograph and produce the work). Months of rehearsal, administration, and performance resulted in the two artists collecting a sum of \$1,500 each. Such are the margins for a small Canadian performance company.

Then there's the issue of "trendiness," another way of speaking of the discourse of consecration. "In Europe there's a certain group of choreographers and presenters who are dictating what is being presented," says Daelik. "There's a sort of, I would say, an elite group that decides, 'This is what we wanna see.' And so all the presenter's circuits will take it upon themselves to bring in those groups that fall within that category. It's happening more and more in the last six-to-eight years" (Daelik). Lee Su-Feh, co-Artistic Director of the Vancouver dance-theatre company Battery Opera, received the prestigious Prix du Jeune Auteur of the Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis (Bagnolet) in 1998 and a subsequent showing of her work in Paris. She echoes Daelik's thoughts regarding the potential homogeneity of performance on the festival circuit as dictated by an in-group:

I find the performing arts festival circuit to be one of the dullest things to have happened to the performing arts. The same work gets shown at festival main stages all over the world and they are mostly deadly dull. Big productions that have been bought and sold for reasons that have nothing to do with the actual work – e.g. Akram Khan + Sylvie Guillem = box office hit = (in my opinion) DEAD DANCE. Artists or companies that have status and, therefore, box office appeal get presented and supported all over. Big artists get together with other big artists because they are bored and they make boring art for bored presenters and bored audiences. (Lee)

The "field of competition," writes Bourdieu, "[...] confers properly cultural value on the producers by endowing them with marks of distinction (a specialty, a manner, a style) recognized as such within the historically available cultural taxonomies" ("Market" 117), "marks of distinction" being an erudite way of saying "you're what's in right now."

The convergence of power in the hands of a limited number of presenters, together with a perception among institutional funding bodies that touring programs should prioritize festivals, can restrict an artist's opportunities for presentation while expanding access for others. Aesthetic trends create further limitations.



Vancouver vs. Vancouver by MACHiNENOiSY DANCE and Fabrice Ramalingom. (man) Daelik, (woman) Delia Brett. Photo: Roland Rickus

Symbolic capital in the form of recognition, legitimization, and the ensuing power to consecrate becomes a means of exchange that flows through the hands of those who have successfully positioned themselves within the field. Such is the political landscape as seen through Bourdieu's framework. I do not contest this view insofar as it applies to the field in a general sense, and insofar as it applies, to a greater or lesser degree, to specific individuals and specific contexts; but I do contest the narrow focus of Bourdieu's script. To lose sight of an agent's desire for meaningful aesthetic experience is to reduce the field to one of economic exchange devoid of feeling. Individuals do not encounter one another as dots on the kind of matrix Bourdieu employs to illustrate his theory. Nor do agents encounter performance this way. We encounter performance body-to-body and body-to-place. Bourdieu's matrix is, for his purposes, a necessarily reductive representation of a hypothetical situation, one that is inspired by his understanding of a real-world situation. But the hypothesis is not to be mistaken for the situation.

Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* can be described as individual and societal *tendencies*, a field of regulations with no regulator, "principles which generate and organize practices and representations [. . .] without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to obtain them" (R. Johnson 5). Agents succeed to positions of power based on a personal "feel for the game" (5). The term "feel for the game" is useful because it foregrounds the *feeling* world of the agent who is

jockeying for position. Unfortunately, Bourdieu's use of the word "game" ignores positive aspects of play. Attraction to the cultural field cannot always be reduced to quasi-economic terms in which conceptual capital is exchanged between hoarders and spenders of symbolic art-money. One of the attractions of the cultural field must surely be what Victor Turner calls the "liminoid" state, often a type of performance which features an element of disorder and in which participation is more open to chance and playful interaction than in a carefully scripted performance (V. Turner 28; 52-55). The aesthetic framework of such an event often allows for a more concentrated sense of time and the opportunity to engage co-participants in a sense of play that is qualitatively different from other types of daily interaction. The quality of the liminoid event is felt bodily; as Fischer-Lichte argues, there is no other way to feel a thing but through the body—the mind can only be separated from the body conceptually, a tradition of Western philosophical thought that both she and Mark Johnson reject (Fischer-Lichte 99; M. Johnson 279). While there are likely agents in the field who have completely lost sight of the liminoid and have forgotten or never cared about what they were ostensibly struggling over, the curators I interviewed and have observed at work over the years remain deeply engaged with the work of artists who inspire them. That engagement is somatic in the sense that it is based on feeling and emotion as much as intellect. Johnson argues that conscious awareness and rational judgment are body-based processes that can't be meaningfully divorced from emotion (M. Johnson 11-13). As embodied organisms we assign significance to a situation, or some feature of a situation, based on a felt sense of the experience (70-71). As discussed earlier, Dewey argues that every experience has a pervasive, gestalt quality that makes it potentially meaningful to us: "The world in which we immediately live, that in which we strive, succeed, and are defeated is preeminently a qualitative world. What we act for, suffer, and enjoy are things in their qualitative determinations. This world forms the field of characteristic modes of thinking, characteristic in that thought is definitely regulated by qualitative considerations" ("Qualitative" 93).

Thus, struggles between agents vying for recognition in the cultural field will be experienced qualitatively—possibly as "hard," "vicious," "brutal," or some other sensory-somatic description. In fact, the desire to attain a position will originate with a felt need to succeed to the position. Mark Johnson's following description of scientific thought is paradigmatically relevant to the cultural field: "Even our best scientific thinking stems from the grasp of quali-

ties. It arises from the feeling that a situation is problematic or that it calls out for interpretation and explanation” (78). That which presumably inspired the struggle in the first place—the encounter with art—and that for at least some people makes the struggle worth the effort, will also be felt bodily as a quality, perhaps a treasured quality, one that becomes a touchstone for the individual—what Norman Armour previously called a “wonderful calm unfoldingness,” or the sincerity of performance that Mirna Zagar seeks.

Artists and Inspirational Capital

For artists, felt qualities are usually at the core of what is sought in the work of other artists and what they hope to achieve in their own work. James Long, one of the artistic directors of Theatre Replacement, talks about the “audacity” of Italian director Romeo Castellucci’s *Hey Girl!* (at PuSh in 2008), “and some of the other works that he’s done; his *Giulio Cesare* piece, where it starts with the camera going down through the larynx of the person talking—just the audacity of it, essentially the balls, the balls of his work” (Long). Maiko Bae Yamamoto, Long’s co-Artistic Director, was also struck by the visual spectacle of *Hey Girl!* and by the high level of concentration it demanded of her:

I think it was just the spectacle of it, and the way that a known narrative (*Romeo & Juliet*) existed inside of this spectacle. [It] didn’t feel lazy. I had to come to it [. . .] leaning in and physically searching while engaging with a work. It is so rare that this happens [. . .]. Also, I love the sheer boldness of the visuals and I feel like that has influenced me to remember the power of image, in thinking of performance as a transmitter for our own experiences and histories. And to not be afraid to think of using image alone as a really powerful story telling device. (Yamamoto)

For Delia Brett of MACHiNENOiSY, *Hey Girl!* was “life-altering”: “It kind of just brought home to me my feeling that images, and the potency of the visual, is really what I have been interested in. It was [. . .] a recognition of what I already have been kind of trying to achieve [. . .] just realizing how *visceral* the visual can be, and wanting to take that further” (Brett).

For the curator an inspiring aesthetic encounter motivates a desire to create the conditions for future encounters, for example by programming a festival. For artists like Brett, it triggers the

desire to make more art, to “take that further,” meaning to push her practice to a higher level. The festival circuit offers exposure to diverse artistic practices that have a direct influence on the work of attending artists. Yamamoto describes seeing *Once and for all we’re gonna tell you who we are so shut up and listen* by Ontroerend Goed (Belgium) at Under the Radar in NYC and how it influenced the way she structures work. The piece is created with and performed by a group of teenagers between the ages of fourteen and nineteen:

There was a central movement that got repeated [. . .] the way in which the group of young people entered the stage [. . .], although you could definitely see that it had been shaped. They sat in a line of chairs on stage. Then they got up—sometimes alone, sometimes not—and spoke [. . .] another layer would be added, such as a piece of music, or they moved in slow-motion, or they had paint guns, or they made a mess on stage, etc. [. . .] and it was really powerful. It allowed us to recognize the physicality as a kind of vocabulary they were using to express EVERYTHING. My mind was racing during this show, and my emotions too. I would cry, laugh, agonize about the future, lament the past [. . .]. I’ve often used this in our work—the idea of creating a vocab through a repeated central movement—and then layered things on top to attempt to do what I saw in this show. (Yamamoto)

MACHiNENoiSY was instrumental in bringing French choreographer Fabrice Ramalingom to the Vancouver International Dance Festival (not to be confused with Zagar’s Dance in Vancouver festival). In addition to performing at that festival, the company commissioned him to collaborate on a new work. For Brett, Ramalingom’s working method was instructive:

He would make an experiment, or maybe make an improv for us, set up some parameters [. . .]. And by the end of every day he would go, “Oh no, no. That doesn’t work.” And then he would come in and make a whole other set of things. Which is quite different from the way other choreographers I’ve experienced work [. . .]. That was a huge paradigm shift [. . .]. Sometimes it was really frustrating [. . .] it was like, “Oh my god, this guy, he’s from Europe, he thinks he’s got a year to make this piece!” You know, like we have no time. So I had a very limited notion of how you make a piece [. . .]. We have only this much money, and

we have this much studio time, we have only three hours and now—go! There's not luxury to experiment with the parameters—as much as he gave himself. (Brett)

In some cases it's the fusion of art and practicality that is revelatory. *Say Nothing* by Ridiculusmus (UK) is performed by two actors standing in a suitcase on a piece of fake grass that represents Northern Ireland. Long discusses this show both for its creative inspiration and as a model for touring:

I remember seeing [*Say Nothing*] and thinking, well this is it. They've figured it out. The text was fantastic, the performances were stunning, and they had a really easily tourable, workable show [. . .]. Marcus [Youssef, a creative collaborator] and I are working on something right now, *Winners and Losers* [. . .]. Whenever I reflect back on something I say, "Marcus, this is what we've gotta be aiming for." It's sharp text, it's tight, it's like an hour long [. . .]. It's immediate, and you can move it. You can pack it in a frickin' suitcase. That's what we aim for. And in terms of the economics of theatre now—'cause I have no faith in what's gonna happen in the next five years or so—we have to be building shows, small scale like that. It's the only way for us to actually do it. It's content and practicality.

Forced Entertainment (UK) has had a big impact on work in Vancouver through several appearances at PuSh. Long talks about the direct influence on his company's work of Forced Entertainment's *Quizoola*:

I would never have considered durational performance until I ran into *Quizoola*. *Weetube* [an installation-style piece in which Long and Yamamoto recite YouTube postings] is our durational [. . .]. We just do things for three hours straight. Also we drink, we just get drunker and drunker [In *Quizoola* the performers drank beer while they improvised answers to poetically phrased questions]. So that's the narrative, you're watching these two people get drunker and drunker and collapse. (Long)

Returning to the issue of a felt sense of aesthetic inspiration—the touchstone experience—it's clear that Canadian artists benefit from exposure to a diversity of European performance practice presented at festivals in North America, but do European artists and presenters similarly benefit from exposure to Canadian work?

What do they get out of the exchange? Ramalingom talks of seeing and working with veteran Quebec dance artist Benoît Lachambre and coming to understand “a new way to enter into dance movement [. . .]. It’s a question of state. Pushing the state and [inhabiting] it on stage” (Ramalingom). Speaking of Antonja Livingstone, a Canadian who has been successful in Europe for many years and whose hybridized contemporary dance is hard to categorize, he assigns her “performance art” the quality of generosity: “between [theatre] and choreography. And the way she implicates herself helped me to build the solo [*Comment se ment*] that I presented at the festival in Vancouver. The strength of play on stage. It’s very generous [. . .]. She let me see a way to consider movement as vehicle of narration, and not to use the movement for its beauty only” (Ramalingom).

Kostas Gerardos, Artistic Director of Vis Motrix Dance in Thessaloniki, Greece, was introduced to the practice of contact-improvisation in 1997 by Daelik, who was touring Greece with the Canadian company Kinesis Dance (Gerardos; Daelik). Contact-improvisation is a form of dance partnering that was initiated by American Steve Paxton and the dance company Grand Union at Oberlin College, Ohio, in 1972 (R. Turner 123). It is a central training practice and performance aesthetic for MACHiNENOiSY and many other Vancouver dance artists, with training offered by the company Experimental Dance and Music (EDAM). Gerardos describes the exposure to contact-improvisation as an “inspiration” that “influenced not only the way I dance,” but the way he creates work (Gerardos). Since then, his style of contact-improvisation, influenced by his work with Daelik, has been central to his teaching and to his performance aesthetic. Contact-improv is just one influence North American dance artists have brought with them to Europe. Zagar describes Canada’s impact on contemporary dance in Europe as a “particular energy,” “a very physical choreography”: “Not many European companies at the time [late 1980s into the early 90s] were doing that much physical, high speed, high energy [performance] [. . .]. So when Holy Body Tattoo [a Vancouver company whose two artistic directors also trained at EDAM] appeared, this was something very different, yet something that the audiences could relate to. Now it’s Rubberband Dance [of Montreal]”; Europeans get “more product, just more choice, just more different experiences, beautiful dancers, engaging works. And it just fuels the scene” (Zagar).

Conclusion

“Live art,” says Zagar, “has elements of the product, if we want to market or sell it” (Zagar). To become a consecrator of art is, at least in part, to become a dealer in art. Not so much for the critic, although the degree to which the critic’s opinion is respected or feared will have an impact on the salability of the art: as Bourdieu puts it, critics “take part in a struggle for the monopoly of legitimate discourse about the work of art, and consequently in the production of the value of the work of art” (“Field” 36); but certainly for the presenter who programs (buys) work from the artist (producer-seller) and facilitates further sales by presenting and recommending work to other presenters (programmer-buyers). As noted above, Darren O’Donnell suggests that artists working the festival circuit know they must develop a relationship with a curator (buyer) if they want their work to be picked up (bought) and moved around (bought again). As well, the artist may need to have that relationship in place before she can access public and private funding, as O’Donnell’s and Delia Brett’s stories demonstrate. In a “market based economy,” says Zagar, it’s “logical” to talk about “art as artistic product” (Zagar). Norman Armour, for example, has box office targets he must meet if the PuSh Festival is to have a future (Armour). Zagar notes that even in France where the commitment to building a large public infrastructure for the arts has resulted in decades of robust and stable funding “governments are cutting back”; “Europe,” she says, “is in huge crisis, so the cuts are between forty and seventy-five percent, and they’re happening in education and in the arts” (Zagar).

Bourdieu reminds us, however, that the economy of the “field of restricted production” is not the market economy of mass production. Its cherished values overturn the economic norms of the “free market.” As well, there is no simple way to measure the exchange between symbolic and financial capital. Economists Antoci, Sacco, and Vanin argue, “[I]t is now common, especially in affluent societies, to find market substitutes (in general, imperfect substitutes) for given relational services (like friendship, socially enjoyed leisure, and several forms of social participation),” but caution that “socially provided and market provided relational services are imperfect substitutes” (129). The touchstone value that individuals in the field place on performance works can’t easily be quantified, nor does the performance produce material “goods”—usually there is no object to be purchased and possessed by the spectator, not even a DVD of the performance. A performance event produces “relational goods”: relational goods are primarily

non-material exchanges between people participating in social activities that are time-intensive, take place outside of work-time, and are undertaken in groups (Antoci 133). Liminoid activity falls within this mode of exchange—it is more of an encounter than an exchange, in which even the buyers and sellers and all those attaining available positions of relative power within the cultural field hope to temporarily lose and renew themselves in flow, in a “quality” of experience, or in the emergent feeling of oneself as embodied-mind. Zagar points out the pressures a sagging capitalist economy puts on the performing art economy, and reminds us not to “lose perspective” or forget that it is the art that matters in the end (Zagar). She argues that even if government funded cultural structures collapse in Europe, an enduring informal cultural network will remain in place. Through this, work will continue to be made; artists, scholars, curators, and critics will continue to network; symbolic capital will continue to change hands. Bourdieu’s theory of a field of restricted production will remain relevant, but may require a complementary theory that includes a “habitus” of generosity, a feel for the game that factors in co-operation with competition.

Balances of power in the circuit of performance exchange between Canada and Europe should be regularly reviewed (in Canada they are reviewed, to an extent, through the arts jury system). Bottlenecks of power convergence should be challenged. The importance of festivals to funding bodies should be weighed against the importance of work produced outside of festivals. There should be checks and balances to make sure curators do not become gatekeepers restricting an artist’s access to audiences. At the same time the work such cultural agents do in fostering creative exchange should not be overlooked; we shouldn’t undervalue the festival platform as a nexus of diverse arts practices. For me, a theatre artist who has worked in Vancouver for over two decades, the appearance of the PuSh Festival has provided direct exposure to arts practices from elsewhere, exposure that was otherwise costly to get given the city’s distance from major centers of cultural production. The performing arts community in the city has matured, partly as a result of the festival, to the point where it can embrace PuSh while questioning the festival’s curatorial vision and political power. It is my opinion, based on years of observing the local performing arts culture, that the battles for symbolic capital Bourdieu delineates are inevitable. Happily, it is also my opinion that there are presenters operating within the field who act with the wellbeing of the entire community in mind. ❁

Notes

- 1 These two companies have been written about extensively by theatre and performance scholars during the past ten-to-fifteen years. For a very brief sketch of examples of their shows, with accompanying photographs, see RoseLee Goldberg's *Performance: live art since the 60s*. The book offers a sample of the kind of work that is performed at festivals discussed in this essay.
- 2 The apparatus of the field is more complex than the pitting of one agent against another; agents and institutions of consecration rely on academies and an education system that can produce consumers of symbolic goods. But acquisition of symbolic capital also must become manifest through personal struggle. See Bourdieu for a fuller account ("Market" 120-25).
- 3 For a full account of the development and recommendations of the Massey Commission see the chapters, "Government Patronage," and "The Cultural Flowering" in Vance.
- 4 The influence artists have upon one another in this cross-cultural arena will be discussed under the heading "Artists and inspirational capital."

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