

Creativity & Culture

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Abstracts



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PLENARY SESSION

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Cultural Cooperation in Times of Turbulence

This presentation explores how the cultural and creative field is increasingly pressured to produce, compete, and export content under market-driven policies and the uncertainties of global economic and social turmoil. While cultural exchange and cooperation have always been crucial, recent intensified challenges are accelerating the need for new, more sustainable, and fair models of collaboration.

Keywords: Cultural cooperation, turbulence, challenges, uncertainty

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The Diverse Roles of Lithuanian Culture and the Arts Today. From the Nucleus of National Identity and the Education Tool to the Leisure and Therapy Destination

Presentation examines the most recent tendencies in the world of Lithuanian Culture and the Arts – from flourishing Arts festivals (Cinema, Contemporary Dance, Jazz, Classical Music, Theatre) to the opening of the new and fascinating museal institutions and their attempt to become the spaces for meaningful social exchange and even the adoption of the therapeutical functions – providing the possibility to relax after the stressful working days. Many concrete examples from the realm of the performative and visual arts of the last decade will be demonstrated.

Keywords: National identity, education tool, leisure, therapy destination

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It is in the Spaces Between Things that Things Happen

Textiles are among the oldest and most enduring forms of human expression, intimately tied to the cultural, creative, and social fabric of communities across time and space. From indigenous weaving traditions and ancestral dyeing techniques to contemporary fiber art and speculative textile design, threads carry knowledge, memory, and identity. They encode stories of migration, resistance, ritual, gendered labor, and aesthetic evolution.

As a weaver, artist, designer and educator living and working between two European countries, I find myself navigating what at times seem two separate worlds when seen from the textile perspective. Their very different histories have resulted in markedly different conditions of, and attitudes towards, education, making and value around textiles. I can find myself lost between these two worlds, feeling like I am speaking a third language that is not completely understood in either place. But maybe with this doubt and uncertainty come opportunities and possibilities to attempt to reimagine ways of learning, making and communicating.

Keywords: Textile, uncertainty, indigenous weaving, ancestral dyeing

SESSION A: CREATIVE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: CULTURAL HERITAGE, INNOVATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Beyond The Village: Rethinking Community-Based Tourism Through the Lens of Social Responsibility

Community-based tourism (CBT) has evolved from a participatory development tool into a governance model increasingly defined by social responsibility. The intersection of CBT and corporate social responsibility (CSR) offers a valuable framework for rethinking how tourism can advance local empowerment, equity, and environmental stewardship. Recent studies emphasize the alignment of CBT with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), positioning social responsibility as both a normative principle and an operational mechanism for community-led destinations (Krittayaruangroj, 2023; Abreu et al., 2024; Athirah & Kholmi, 2025).

This presentation analyses how communities integrate social responsibility into tourism practice by comparing four cases: Thailand, Kenya, Ecuador, and Lithuania. It draws on recent bibliometric and empirical research (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2025; Purnomo et al., 2025) and builds upon the theoretical

and empirical findings of Liorančaitė-Šukienė and Jurėnienė (2025), whose work on heritage management models provides the foundation for contextualising community-based tourism within the Lithuanian framework. The study applies six interlinked dimensions of socially responsible CBT: participatory governance, economic empowerment, equitable benefit sharing, sociocultural vitality, environmental care, and ethical partnerships. Findings suggest that community responsibility extends beyond income redistribution to encompass cultural continuity, transparent governance, and intergenerational learning.

Empirical insights reveal that social responsibility serves as both an ethical compass and a performance metric for CBT. Thai and Kenyan examples illustrate equitable rotation and conservation-based funding models, while Ecuadorian and Lithuanian cases highlight community-driven heritage revitalisation as a form of collective agency. In the Lithuanian context, heritage revitalisation processes resonate with the participatory governance principles outlined by Colomer (2023), illustrating how local heritage initiatives can reinforce socially responsible tourism governance. These models collectively demonstrate that sustainability depends on institutional recognition, local digital literacy, and codified ethical practices.

By situating CBT within a socially embedded governance framework, this study provides measurable indicators—participation intensity, local ownership ratio, reinvestment rate, and environmental performance—that link micro-level community dynamics to SDGs 5, 8, 11, 12, and 15. It concludes that community-based tourism, when guided by social responsibility, redefines the boundaries of local governance and positions communities as co-authors of sustainable development.

Keywords: community-based tourism; social responsibility; empowerment; governance; CSR; SDGs; Lithuania

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Creative Tourism as a Driver for Regional Resilience: a Systemic Perspective from the Kupiškis District Case Study

This paper presents the findings of an applied research project on the development of creative and sustainable tourism in the Kupiškis district, Lithuania. The study explores how creative tourism can function as a catalyst for regional resilience by fostering local identity, community participation, and sustainable innovation in peripheral rural contexts.

Adopting a systemic thinking framework, the research conceptualizes Kupiškis as a living system where tourism, culture, governance, and community initiatives are interlinked through feedback loops that either strengthen or weaken regional adaptability. Empirical data were collected through qualitative interviews with key stakeholders — local government representatives, tourism information centre managers, and cultural initiative leaders — and complemented by an analysis of strategic policy documents.

The findings reveal that creative tourism in Kupiškis is not yet fully institutionalized but emerges through bottom-up initiatives grounded in local identity, craftsmanship, and nature-based experiences. These initiatives contribute to social cohesion, intersectoral collaboration, and cultural continuity, yet are limited by fragmented governance and insufficient strategic coordination. The paper proposes a

systemic model of creative tourism governance that highlights the dynamic interplay between local creativity, policy structures, and sustainable regional development.

By positioning creative tourism as both an economic and socio-cultural transformation process, the study demonstrates how small-scale rural regions can enhance resilience through creativity, cooperation, and place-based meaning-making

Keywords: creative tourism, regional resilience, systemic thinking, Kupiškis district, sustainable regional development.

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Bohemia – a Modern Urban Phenomenon: the Case of Interwar Kaunas

The rapid growth of Kaunas between the wars (1919–1940) and its transformation from a former border town of the Russian Empire into the capital of the country is a phenomenal phenomenon that reflects the importance of this city for the history and culture of the whole of Lithuania. For bohemianism to emerge, there needs to be an urban culture and people who can live a bohemian lifestyle. Kaunas becoming the capital and cultural centre of Lithuania, the emergence of a network of universities, editorial offices and publishing houses, and the adoption and imitation of Western values were decisive factors in the formation of bohemianism. Thus, as in Paris, London, Warsaw and elsewhere, the bohemian community in Lithuania also gathered in the capital at that time. It is possible to draw a map of the entire city where the bohemian community existed, starting from the station district, i.e. the beginning of the city, and ending with Nemuno Street. The most important place was, of course, Laisvės Alėja, which had a particularly dense network of cafés and other institutions. In the 1940s, Paris, Krakow and Warsaw had a strong influence as models of modern culture. It is obvious that the attention paid to Western culture was conditioned both by the active representation of Paris and Poland as European cultural centres and by studies at universities in France and Poland.

The bohemian movement will be discussed in this paper as a phenomenon of modernising urban culture, and an attempt will be made to establish the connection between the bohemian milieu and the socio-cultural environment of the city. How did the city influence bohemian life, and vice versa – what did the existence of bohemia give to the city? Also, the presence and concentration of bohemians in a certain area creates an environment that attracts talented or highly skilled individuals. In order to investigate these factors, an attempt will be made to establish a bohemian index (as described by Richard Florida in his article 'Bohemia and Economic Geography').

Keywords: Bohemia, interwar, urban, capital, bohemia index

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Opportunity To Develop Tourism Based on The Traditional Practice of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Airag

Tourism is an industry that offers a wide range of products and services and attracts tourists from all over the world. This industry is dependent on the culture, traditions, and use of natural resources of a country and generates significant economic income. For Mongolia, the development of tourism provides an opportunity to promote its national heritage and culture internationally. Traditional food and culture play an important role in the country's tourism products, but their development has not yet reached a sufficient level. Mongolian traditional food products, such as horse milk and saam, have their own characteristics and can be new tourism products for tourists. Mongolians have long used horse milk, which are also have health benefits. They are used in traditional Mongolian life and are believed to prolong life and maintain physical balance. However, these products have not yet been widely used in the tourism industry. It is believed that it is possible to develop tourism products using Mongolia's natural features and cultural heritage, and this study examined the possibility of developing tourism products based on horse milk airag.

Keywords: behavior, resources, market, demand, program

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Research On the Development Path of University Dragon Boat Sports Under the Perspective of Cultural Confidence

From the perspective of cultural confidence, universities must recognize the inherent value of dragon boat racing and promote its development from various angles. Government departments should actively collaborate with universities to leverage social capital in the development of dragon boat racing, using all available resources to ensure the sustainable development of traditional national sports culture. This article employs research methods such as literature review, first exploring the value of dragon boat racing in universities, and then addressing the practical challenges faced by university dragon boat racing. It proposes a development path for university dragon boat racing under the framework of cultural confidence, aiming to continuously enhance the inheritance and development of dragon boat racing and help students build a strong sense of cultural confidence through their participation in this sport.

Keywords: traditional sports culture; value system; analysis; exploration

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Promoting The Cultural Value of Ba Na Traditional Weaving Through Software Solutions and Contemporary Creative Design

The traditional brocade weaving of the Ba Na people in the Central Highlands is a cultural heritage of profound artistic and social value. However, it is currently at risk of decline due to changes in contemporary life, decreasing demand for its use, and difficulties in transmitting the craft to younger generations. This study proposes a software-based solution to digitize and recreate traditional Ba Na brocade patterns, enabling their preservation, analysis, and application in contemporary creative design. Through this heritage digital tool, the preservation and promotion of weaving go beyond merely safeguarding traditional motifs, offering opportunities for integration into cultural, artistic, and modern design products. The findings suggest that this solution can contribute to safeguarding folk aesthetic values while bridging tradition and innovation, thereby affirming the role of technology in enhancing intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: heritage digitization, traditional brocade weaving, Ba Na ethnic group, Tay Nguyen, Vietnam

SESSION B: MARKETING, MEDIA AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Algorithmic Symbolism: Advertising, Moral Negotiation, and Consumer Agency in a Technologically Mediated World

Since ancient times, advertising has been a semiotic system that uses cultural and symbolic codes to create meaning for products, identities, and desires. Although the basic semiotic processes of advertising still exist in today's digital space, they are increasingly dependent on algorithmic technologies that filter, adapt, and recombine symbolic content. Therefore, advertising signs are not merely human-made artifacts, but rather technologically transmitted signals that contribute to the formation of subjectivity and agency.

This research examines how algorithmically represented advertising symbols affect consumers' moral values, which compel them to negotiate, based on a grounded theory informed by the experiences of consumers of Christian religious views who encounter conflicting or value-activating advertisements. Now, the results show that consumers perceive and use advertising symbols as more than cultural elements, as for more, their experience here includes technology-curated semiotic phenomena that cause tension and contradictions between moral values, brand identity, and consumer autonomy, and

requires negotiation when the symbolic authority of a person or religious/ethical model encounters advertising algorithms that raise and promote a person's internal meanings.

In the context of cultural and creative industries, the study highlights the advertising as both mediation and representation, where meaning emerges through the interplay of culturally codified content, machine logic, and embodied consumer comprehensions. Advertising in this sense is not only a marketing tool but also a part of the broader challenges of managing digital cultural products, where symbolic manipulation, consumer subjectivity, and ethical responsibility are at stake. Finally, this research underscores the implications for new marketing solutions, digital art management, and the creative organisations of symbol content, raising questions about representation, consumer agency, and moral negotiation in an environment where meaning is increasingly constructed algorithmically.

Keywords: Algorithmic advertising; Symbolic imagery; Moral negotiation; Consumer agency; Technological mediation; Cultural and creative industries; Ethical advertising

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Film Export Strategies and Characteristics in Large and Small Nations

The presentation will examine film export strategies in large and small nations. Today, film production has become one of the most visible segments of the cultural economy, reflecting not only creative potential but also a country's capacity to participate in the global market. Major European nations such as France, the United Kingdom, and Germany maintain dominant positions due to economies of scale, developed infrastructure, and strong systems of national support (Fioroni, 2024). In contrast, smaller countries such as Lithuania, Estonia, and Ireland face limited domestic market capacity, making export strategies a prerequisite for their survival (Kostovska, Nielsen & Ofsti, 2025).

According to Barthel-Bouchier (2011), film exportability depends on the ability to balance national identity with globally recognizable genres. This means that small countries must navigate between authentic content and universal appeal. The case of South Korea, analyzed by Yecies et al. (2011) and Berg (2018), demonstrates that strategic glocalization—the adaptation of local narratives to global audiences—can transform a medium-sized market into a global cultural powerhouse.

The CresCine study (2025) emphasizes that the greatest disparities between large and small nations appear not in film production but in audience reach. While most European films achieve some form of international release, their audiences remain limited. This suggests that export success depends not merely on access to distribution channels but on the ability to generate visibility and sustained engagement.

Large countries rely on hybrid systems of public and private funding, promoting exports through industrial clustering, technological innovation, and the “star economy” effect (Weber, Marchand & Kunz, 2024). Smaller nations, by contrast, strengthen their global position through symbolic capital—festival success, international awards, and cultural diplomacy mechanisms (Blankenship & Nagl, 2015).

In the context of the UNESCO (2005) Convention, film functions not only as an economic export but also as a cultural one, reinforcing national identity. This dual nature of film—both artistic and economic—explains why small states often adopt hybrid strategies that combine public subsidies, international co-productions, and glocalized content creation.

In summary, the export models of large countries are grounded in economies of scale, while those of smaller nations depend on strategic adaptation. The success of small states lies in their ability to build international networks, diversify funding sources, and maintain a balance between cultural specificity and global market demand.

Keywords: film, export, strategies, large nations, small nations

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The Attractivity of Freemium Services of Professional News Outlets: Factors Influencing Consumer Engagement and Satisfaction

Nowadays, with the rapid growth of information and with the existing abundance of social media platforms, online communities and forums, video platforms, and AI chatbots, it is getting harder for traditional journalism and news outlets to keep up. It is especially complicated for professional news outlets covering business, economic, and financial news. In the realm of the economy and business, current issues are covered by analysts who provide digestible information, and a lot of material is available on the web, from a wide range of opinions to highly professional data-driven analyses. The demand for professional news outlets is getting lower. Moreover, most of the business, economic, and financial news outlets rely on subscription-based business models. Still, according to the most recent report on digital news, payment levels have almost doubled since 2014 from 10% to 17% across a basket of 20 richer countries; today, the growth rate has slowed down (Newman et al. 2024). With the given economic fluctuations and amid a cost-of-living crisis, it is proving difficult to attract most of the public to switch from freemium to premium subscriptions. This leads business information providers to two main challenges: how to make people interested and captivated, and how to create an offer that would convince people enough to make them switch to the premium subscription, thus leading to the generation of profit for professional news outlets. In this setting, we aimed to evaluate the factors that influence consumer engagement and satisfaction in using the freemium services of professional news outlets. We conducted a narrative scientific literature review and a questionnaire-based consumer survey and identified the four factors: ubiquity of a freemium service, content diversity, trustworthiness of news outlets, and social connection and sharing. This research offers practical guidance to news media targeted at specific professional audiences: businesspeople, investors, and policymakers, all with industry-relevant content.

Keywords: service attractivity, professional news outlets, freemium services, consumer engagement, consumer satisfaction

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Audience Engagement with Cultural Experiences in the Metaverse: The Role Of Gender and Age

This research is exploring Spanish audience's engagement with virtual concerts (VC) and virtual assistance to museums or exhibitions (VME) in the metaverse, with a focus on gender and generational differences. While research on the metaverse in cultural and creative industries has addressed issues, such as, the emergence of cultural activities in metaverse and opportunities/challenges; audience values and drivers of engagement with cultural activities in the metaverse; online communication strategies and audience engagement with virtual cultural activities, etc., research evidence on the influence of demographics is still limited. Empirical analysis is based on a representative dataset from the Spanish Association for Media Research, collected in 2023. Descriptive statistics: 45.6% of the respondents stated awareness and clear understanding of the metaverse; 41.2% only awareness; of those who performed activities in the metaverse, 3.7% assisted to a VC and 8.6% to a VME; out of 14 metaverse platforms, top three most preferred by the VC and VME audience coincide: Fortnite (33% VC & 15.4% VME); Minecraft (26.7% & 13.4%); Roblox (18.9% & 9.7%). The influence of gender (male: 68%; female: 32%) and age cohorts (Gen Z: 14-28 years, 10.6%; Gen M: 29-44 years, 25.5%; Gen X: 45-60 years, 44.8%; 61+ years, 19.2%) was tested with a Chi-squared test (H0/H1: no significant/significant correlation exist among variables), and phi-value measured the strength of the correlation. Results for the VME audience show that only generational differences have a significant impact, with correlations moderate to strong, and very strong for Fortnite and Minecraft; for VC audience, results are less uniform; gender and age, each show weak/moderate correlation with few platforms; age has a moderate/strong correlation with the top 3 platforms. Results expand general evidence on the role of gender and age in technology adoption, and further research could include more demographics and metaverse platforms' specific features.

Keywords: metaverse; cultural audience; gender and generational differences; Spain; multivariate analysis

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The Use of Improvisational Music in Creating an Experimental Orchestra

Improvisational projects are mostly concentrated in large cities, whereas regional areas remain unfamiliar with this form of creativity. Therefore, it is truly important to highlight the potential of improvisational music in smaller, more remote communities. By engaging people in a collective creative process, such activities not only enrich the cultural landscape of the regions but also strengthen social ties. Although community spirit is frequently emphasized in public discourse, in today's world of technology it is easy to retreat into personal social bubbles. Thus, improvisation can become a powerful

tool to restore real connection and bring people together through shared experience. This research, based on both theoretical and practical perspectives, explores the application of improvisational music in an experimental orchestra and its impact on the local community. The aim of the study is to reveal how improvisation can become a tool for uniting people of diverse backgrounds in collaborative creativity. The research methodology includes theoretical analysis, open group interviews with orchestra participants, and expert interviews with creators of artistic interventions. The practical part involves the formation of an experimental orchestra composed of both, but mostly individuals without prior musical training. The principle (conduction) was based on the gesture- and sign-driven improvisation method developed by an American composer B. Morris.

This method implies that the conductor not only leads but also becomes an equal participant in the improvisation, responding to sound in real time. This system has been further developed by Lithuanian composer D. Naujokaitis, who has lived in New York for over 30 years and seeks to make improvisation even more accessible, especially to those without musical training. This approach suggests that improvisation is not only a musical but also a social experience, where engagement of participants and collective creativity are at the heart of the process.

Keywords: Improvisational music; experimental orchestra; community engagement; musical signs; non-professional performer

SESSION C: CREATIVITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURAL NARRATIVES

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Everyday Creativity Across Europe: Shifting Value Orientations and their Divides

Within the cultural environment shaped by the rise of the creative industries, everyday creativity has become an increasingly salient phenomenon. It encompasses the small-scale, non-professional practices through which individuals generate novel and meaningful ideas, solutions, and self-expression in their daily lives. In contrast to high-artistic or professional forms of creativity, everyday creativity is grounded in routine activities – ranging from problem-solving and household innovations to amateur artistic expression – that reflect and reproduce broader cultural orientations. As such, it may be conceived not only as an individual skill but also as a shared cultural value that underpins social participation, fosters capacities for innovation, and contributes to processes of identity formation. By situating everyday creativity within both the conceptual framework of the human value theory and the empirical realities of European value patterns, the paper contributes to understanding creativity not only as a personal trait but as a culturally embedded orientation. Drawing on data from the European Social Survey, it investigates how everyday creativity as a cultural value is perceived across European countries, traces the variation of these perceptions across contexts, and identifies the principal social divides, thereby highlighting how structural positions within society shape the valuation of everyday creativity. Preliminary results suggest that everyday creativity is unevenly distributed across social groups and national contexts, with younger, urban, and higher-educated individuals more likely to endorse it as an important value. At the same time, marked cross-country

differences indicate that broader cultural and institutional environments substantially condition the meaning and significance attached to creativity in everyday life. The findings shed light on the dynamics of how creativity is valued in contemporary Europe and on the social cleavages that underpin these differences.

Keywords: everyday creativity, cultural values, European Social Survey

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Evolution or Illusion? Gender and Power Narratives on "Time" Magazine Covers

Gender representations in the media and their relationship with signs of power in the media play a significant role in shaping and reinforcing social norms, values, and attitudes, making the covers of prominent international magazines effective ideological tools. The study aimed to semantically analyze visual and textual signs of power on the covers of "Time" magazine, revealing their connections with gender representations. Issues of the magazine from 2002, 2012, and 2022 were selected for analysis to identify ideological trends and potential changes in attitudes. A qualitative analysis of thematic, compositional and symbolic codes was conducted on the selected 122 covers featuring images of adults. It was found that the covers published in 2002 and 2012 are distinguished by dominant associations of masculinity and power. Meanwhile, representations of femininity and power on the covers of those years appear only in cases where women with significant symbolic capital are depicted. The 2022 covers stand out significantly, proportionally presenting images of both women and men, as well as one transgender person. However, a deeper analysis revealed that the representation of power is still more closely associated with masculinity, while women's images more often highlight sexuality, weakness, and vulnerability. It became clear that although the portrayal of the relationship between power and gender in "Time" magazine has changed over the past decades, traditional patriarchal ideological tendencies remain.

Keywords: Gender representations, power, media, TIME magazine covers

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The Family Photo Album as a Narrative of Cultural Memory

The presentation examines the family photo album as a narrative form of cultural memory and a medium for sustaining intergenerational connection. Drawing on Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory and Aleida and Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory, family photography is understood as a visual practice that not only records past events, but also continuously rearticulates experiences of belonging and identity continuity. Roland Barthes' analytical concepts (studium and punctum) are used to explore how emotional and semantic meanings emerge in the act of viewing family images.

The aim of the presentation is to assess how the family photo album operates as a narrative structure of memory and how it contributes to the coherence of individual and collective identity. The research employs visual analysis and iconographic interpretation, allowing for an examination of the interplay between image, emotional experience, and cultural context.

The case study focuses on the family photo album of Lithuanian Army officer Juozas Zaborskis, notable for its restrained aesthetic, attention to everyday domestic scenes, and the central role of women in the familial framework. The analysis demonstrates that this album functions as a living archive of emotional memory, in which family history is conveyed not through heroic events but through subtle gestures of care, bodily presence, and everyday rituals. It is argued that in the contemporary environment of visual oversaturation, classical forms of family albums acquire therapeutic significance: they help to structure temporal experience, stabilize identity, and maintain continuity of cultural memory across generations.

Keywords: Cultural memory, Photography, Family album, Identity, Archive.

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Communi(ty)cation: How Everyday Signs Reflect Society, Shape Behaviour... and a Bit of Bathroom Philosophy

The presentation covers a wide range of topics about everyday communication objects and messages found in usual public spaces like streets, courtyards, inside buildings and even in public restrooms, but mainly focuses on social aspects of communication. It explores how thoughtful communication in language, tone, form and shape can bridge the gap between indifference and understanding. Messages formed and designed naturally by people most of whom are not even designers often reflect the bare and undisguised state of our society and sometimes even show signs of ongoing cultural transformations that we all are inevitably involved in. Every sign, symbol, and message in public space is part of an ongoing cultural conversation. We rarely notice or analyse them to understand the true meaning behind: someone designs it, someone interprets it and someone ignores it. Each sign speaks in two directions: it doesn't only reveal how people think, understand and react, but also how and why it appeared there in the first place, who wrote it, designed it and the actual reasoning behind it. One of the specific visual communication elements covered in the presentation are graffiti tags, often interpreted as vandalism, but actually being a part of the same cultural conversation. All these visual statements together reflect both the communicator and the community, the artist and the spectator. Communication design becomes more than functional – it becomes a mirror of how culture speaks, listens and even behaves. The examples and philosophical insights suggest that the communicator and the audience are not so different from one another as they are both parts of the same context and dialogue.

Keywords: Communication design; everyday creativity; community; social behaviour; graffiti tags

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Applied Theatre as a Tool for Innovative Interdisciplinary Research

This paper explores the diverse ways in which applied theatre can be employed to support innovative interdisciplinary research. Applied theatre has increasingly gained recognition as a tool for engagement and expression across various professional fields. Scholars (O'Connor, 2020; Kershaw, 2021) have emphasized the capacity of drama-based techniques to foster dialogue, reflection, and collaboration within teams.

Applied theatre is conceptually linked to the arts and therefore, by its characteristics, is most closely aligned with arts-based research (Leavy, 2015; Leavy, 2018) or artistic research (Varto, 2022; Michelkevičius, 2015). The position of both arts-based research and artistic research within the methodologies of social research remains ambiguously classified, which makes it meaningful to further examine the potential of these approaches in the social sciences. Moreover, arts-based and artistic research create a certain ambiguity not only for art scholars but also for artists engaged in research (Frayling, 1993; Leavy, 2017). While both approaches share a significant artistic component and may sound similar, they differ considerably in their foundations and aims. This ambiguity in classification highlights the necessity of analyzing and debating these relatively new methodological frameworks, which undoubtedly contribute to advancing our understanding of human existence (Varto, 2022).

This paper also presents several examples of experimental arts-based and artistic research projects conducted using applied theatre, and invites discussion on how social science research can be further enriched through these approaches.

Keywords: Applied Theatre, Research, Complexity, Innovation

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Human Re-engagement with Nonhuman: New Forms of Creativity

This paper explores the more-than-human turn in the humanities, social sciences, and the arts, with a particular focus on art theory and artistic projects that examine the complex entanglements between humans and non-human entities. It investigates how non-human actors within the realm of post-anthropocentric thought and creative practice reshape the structures of our imagination, artistic creation, and modes of communication. How does a networked worldview emerge in which humans coexist, cooperate, and communicate with non-human beings—such as plants, animals, other organisms, environmental elements, and ecosystems? How do other living organisms experience, think, create, and communicate? Finally, the paper examines how attention to the more-than-human world

can transform our cultural landscape, fostering positive changes in our worldview, relationships with the environment, and creative practices.

Keywords: More-than-Human, Artistic projects, Communication, Non-Human agency

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Psychosocial Experiences and Creative Expression of Women Undergoing Menopause in Art Therapy Sessions

Menopause is not merely a biological change but a profound inner journey marked by anxiety, shifting moods, and challenges to self-worth. Too often this experience remains silent, shaped by cultural taboos that equate a woman's value with reproduction. This study focuses on art therapy, a method integrating psychology, medicine, and creative expression. The presentation explores how art therapy can provide a safe space for women to externalize and transform these inner struggles. Using a qualitative design with group art therapy sessions, both the formal and symbolic dimensions of participants' artworks were analyzed. Recurring images—spirals, butterflies, elements of nature—revealed a creative passage from anxiety and liminality to acceptance, integration, and inner peace. Artistic expression became a bridge between turmoil and renewal, allowing women to rediscover balance, resilience, and authenticity. Additionally, the sessions provided a sense of community, relaxation, creative enjoyment, and a break from daily routines. The findings suggest that art therapy is not only an effective therapeutic tool but also a meaningful journey through the cycles of life.

Keywords: Art therapy, menopause, psychosocial well-being

SESSION D: TECHNOLOGICAL MEDIATION OF ART AND CULTURE

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Factors Influencing Digital Transformation Maturity and Business Performance in Tunisia's Cultural and Creative Industries

Digital transformation in Tunisia's Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) remains uneven and insufficiently documented. Although the country's creative economy has expanded since the mid-2010s, many enterprises struggle to integrate digital tools owing to limited infrastructure, inconsistent policy support, and a shortage of skilled professionals. This study examines which technological, organisational, and environmental factors shape the maturity of digital transformation in Tunisian

small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) within the CCI, and how this maturity affects their business performance.

The research employed a mixed-methods design. A survey of 120 enterprises representing music, film, design, gaming, heritage, and crafts collected quantitative data on digital readiness, strategy, and outcomes. Ten follow-up interviews with senior managers provided qualitative context on leadership practices, organisational culture, and ecosystem constraints. The analytical framework combines the Technology–Organisation–Environment model, the Resource Based View, and Dynamic Capabilities Theory. Findings indicate marked differences between subsectors. Firms in gaming and audiovisual production report an integrated use of digital platforms and data analytics, whilst heritage and craft enterprises remain at early stages. Leadership engagement, employee skills, and digital culture are the strongest internal enablers of maturity, whereas external collaboration and targeted funding moderate their effect. Regression analyses confirm that higher maturity levels enhance process efficiency, innovation activity, and audience engagement, though financial benefits emerge more gradually.

This study provides the first systematic evidence of digital transformation within Tunisia's creative economy. It identifies priority areas for policy action—training, digital infrastructure, and ecosystem coordination—and proposes a framework for assessing progress towards sustainable competitiveness in the country's CCI.

Keywords: digital transformation maturity; cultural and creative industries; business performance; Tunisia

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From Gesture to Photorealism: Emerging Technologies for Freehand 3D Drawing and AI-Assisted Visual Generation

Architectural drawing, long a bridge between intuition and design, is undergoing a profound transformation. The emergence of increasingly sophisticated digital technologies now allows for direct freehand 3D modelling, overcoming the rigidity of traditional CAD interfaces. Devices such as digital pens, haptic controllers, or immersive environments in augmented and virtual reality enable the translation of spontaneous gestures into complex three-dimensional forms, restoring the most immediate and natural dimension of drawing—yet enhanced by digital tools. This shift represents a significant turning point for designers, who can now work in real time on form-making, maintaining creative control while benefiting from algorithmic assistance.

At the same time, artificial intelligence is revolutionizing the field of visual representation. The latest image-to-image translation and text-to-image generation technologies make it possible to transform perspective sketches, flat renders, or textual inputs into high-resolution, photorealistic images—often with surprising results. Within a few steps, an idea can take on a complete visual form, with automated choices of materials, lighting, framing, and atmosphere. Rather than implying a loss of control by the author, this process allows for new modes of creative dialogue between human input and artificial generation.

This contribution aims to critically explore these innovations, presenting experimental case studies and workflows that combine gestural drawing, direct modelling, and generative AI. Tools such as NVIDIA

Canvas, Adobe Firefly, Kaedim, and Midjourney will be examined, with particular attention to neural texturing, automated lighting, and the resulting methodological and aesthetic implications. The goal is to understand how these tools can complement—rather than replace—the skills of the designer, offering new scenarios for a more fluid, expressive, and accessible form of project representation, even starting from a simple sketch.

Keywords: digital drawing, hand-modelling, artificial intelligence

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Gamification Approach In Teaching Scrum For Culture Project Management

Gamification of culture (in particular, culture heritage, marketing of culture organizations and events, and etc.) has been actively debated in the literature and successfully applied by sector representativeness. Besides, gamification approach in teaching has been increasingly used by tutors in all areas of management education. Considering the lack of agile skills among culture project managers, the authors organized a gamified workshop Scrum Tale based on Scrum methodology.

The goal of the research was to identify the impact of an educational game on the acquisition of knowledge about the Scrum framework for cultural project managers. Fifteen culture sector representatives participated in the game. The research applied pre- and post-testing to assess the change in participants' understanding and engagement. We used Scrum knowledge test, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale – Student Version (UWE-S) test. The analysis of the results yielded knowledge and engagement scores before and after the workshop. Both quantitative results and participants' feedback indicated the increase of awareness of Scrum framework, principles and application techniques. The findings confirmed the fact that gamification enhances both the comprehension of agile principles and creative engagement in learning cultural project management. The study contributes to the development of innovative educational approaches in cultural management and creative industries.

Keywords: game-based learning, Agile, Scrum, culture management.

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Beyond the Visitor Survey: Neuromarketing Approaches to Cultural Experience Design and Heritage Tourism Engagement

Traditional marketing research methods in cultural and creative industries rely heavily on self-reported data, which often fails to capture the unconscious emotional and cognitive processes that drive visitor engagement, memory formation, and behavioural intentions. This presentation explores the

transformative potential of biometric and neuromarketing methodologies in designing and optimizing cultural tourism experiences, offering museums, heritage sites, and creative organizations empirically grounded insights that transcend conventional visitor feedback mechanisms. Drawing on emerging interdisciplinary research, this study examines how eye-tracking, facial emotion recognition, electrodermal activity (EDA), and electroencephalography (EEG) can reveal implicit visitor responses to exhibition design, storytelling techniques, spatial navigation, and multisensory installations. Unlike traditional post-visit surveys prone to recall bias and social desirability effects, biometric measurements capture real-time physiological reactions, identifying precise moments of cognitive engagement, emotional arousal, attention allocation, and aesthetic appreciation.

The presentation showcases practical applications across diverse cultural contexts: optimizing museum exhibition layouts based on attention heatmaps, refining cultural heritage narrative structures through emotional response mapping, personalizing augmented reality experiences using real-time visitor state recognition, and testing creative installations with neurophysiological precision. Particular emphasis is placed on ethical implementation frameworks, data privacy considerations, and cost-effective solutions accessible to small and medium-sized cultural organizations. By integrating neuroscience-informed design principles with traditional cultural management practices, organisations can enhance visitor satisfaction, increase dwell time, strengthen emotional connections with cultural narratives, and ultimately create more memorable and transformative experiences. This approach represents a paradigm shift from assumption-based to evidence-based experience design in cultural tourism, bridging the gap between creative vision and visitor cognition.

The presentation concludes with actionable recommendations for cultural managers, marketers, and experience designers seeking to implement neuromarketing methodologies while maintaining the authentic, mission-driven essence of cultural and creative products.

Keywords: neuromarketing, cultural tourism, visitor experience design, biometric research methods, museum innovation

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The Impact of an Artificial Intelligence-Based Product on the Visitor Experience of a Cultural Heritage Site

The 2024 survey among members of the Association of Lithuanian Castles and Manors revealed that only a few heritage sites use artificial intelligence (AI). AI tools are mainly applied to internal everyday tasks rather than for developing products enhancing visitor experience. Raudondvaris Manor stands out as one of the first cultural heritage sites in Lithuania to introduce an AI-based product for visitors and was therefore chosen for case analysis. The study examines an AI-based product – an audio guide functioning as an app on a smartphone or computer, accessible via a link or QR code. The Raudondvaris dramatour is a unique AI-generated audio journey – an educational tour enriched with a dramatic storyline. This study aimed to assess the impact of an AI-based product on visitor experience at Raudondvaris Manor using quantitative (survey) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) methods. In the survey, 114 visitors out of 550 who used the AI audio guide during its first four months shared their experience. Interview insights on AI product development, its application in heritage sites, and user impact were provided by specialists of Raudondvaris Manor and Gediminas

Tower Museum, as well as AI product developers. The quantitative survey results suggest that the AI audio guide enhances visitor experience at Raudondvaris Manor, as indicated by 93% of respondents. Their experience was described as interesting, engaging, informative, and novel, and using the AI audio guide was easy and convenient. The qualitative interview results indicate that cultural heritage specialists' and AI developers' views on AI audio guide experience were largely aligned with respondents' evaluations. The AI audio guide is valuable for both visitors and heritage sites: it provides access to extensive information presented engagingly, serves as both education and entertainment, enhances the site's appeal and stimulates interest, attracts new visitor groups, and contributes to cultural products consumption.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; cultural heritage; visitor experience; user impact; audio guide

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Emotional Design and Upcycled fashion is the missing link in sustainable fashion?

The fashion industry is widely recognized as one of the most polluting sectors in the World. The environmental impact of fashion includes significant water and air pollution, high energy and chemical consumption. And creates the generation of large amounts of waste, such as microplastics and unsold textiles. In Europe, textile consumption has the fourth largest impact on the environment and climate change and the third largest source of water degradation. Producing cheap clothes requires a lot of water, energy and raw materials. This leads to deforestation, water pollution and carbon emissions, (The impact of textile production and waste on the environment (infographics), 2024). Moreover, there is already enough clothing in the world to clothe the next six generations.

Fast fashion operates on a high-turnover model, producing low-cost, low-quality garments that are frequently discarded. This practice results in approximately 92 million tonnes of textile waste annually, with 85% of textiles ending up in landfills or incinerated. Fast fashion is one of the reasons that has led to the increase in textile consumption over the past few decades, (Davda, K., (2024). Top 10 Most Polluting Industries in the World, 2025).

We live in a time of overconsumption, particularly evident in the fashion industry. Sustainable fashion is now ushering in a new era of awareness. To examine fashion as an economic and cultural phenomenon at the heart of contemporary culture, it combines livelihoods, creative expression, social processes, and satisfies basic human needs. Emotional design and upcycled fashion is a creative and sustainable approaches that transform old or unwanted garments and materials into a new interesting pieces. It is the creation of products that evoke feelings of attachment, satisfaction, and long-term relationships with the clothes.

Keywords: Emotional design; Consumer behavior; Sustainable fashion; Fast fashion; Fashion industry

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Audience Engagement Tools, Knowledge, and Gratification: Unpacking Audience Engagement Drivers

Audience engagement (AE) has become one of the central challenges faced by contemporary cultural organisations. This paper explores how the tools used by these organisations, together with audiences' prior knowledge and the gratifications they seek, influence engagement behaviour. Drawing on the Uses and Gratifications Theory, the study develops and applies an original mixed-methods research design integrating qualitative content analysis, Q methodology, and a quantitative online experiment. The results reveal that the intensity of using AE tools and the audience's expertise both positively influence engagement. Functional and social gratifications, as well as familiarity with the art form, affect how intensively these tools are used. Moreover, while the type of tool matters—contextexpanding tools exerting a greater impact—the format (online or offline) does not. The findings confirm the suitability of the Uses and Gratifications Theory for analysing audience engagement in cultural contexts and identify five key factors shaping how and why people participate in theatre activities. Audiences tend to pursue both functional and hedonic gratifications, which differ according to their familiarity and level of expertise.

Keywords: Audience engagement; Uses and Gratifications Theory; Theatre; Engagement Tools; Prior Knowledge

SESSION E: ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES, LEARNING AND CULTURAL GOVERNANCE

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Generation Z In the Cultural Sector: Exploring Wellbeing and Workplace Expectations in Latvia

This study aims to investigate the specific well-being needs and workplace expectations of Generation Z (Gen Z) employees entering the labor market, particularly within the challenging cultural sector in Latvia. Gen Z's work attitudes and requirements differ significantly from previous generations, heightened by the prevalence of issues like emotional burnout and unstable working conditions in the cultural sector, with Latvian data showing high rates of work related depression and burnout. The ultimate goal is to explore effective well-being promotion strategies and develop practical recommendations for cultural organizations to attract and retain Gen Z employees.

A comprehensive mixed-methods approach was utilized for data collection. Quantitative data was gathered through a large-scale survey of Gen Z employees to assess their attitudes towards the work environment and wellbeing (n=175). This was complemented by seven qualitative interviews with professionals from Latvian cultural organizations, HR, and psychology experts. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, graphical analysis, and transcription.

Findings confirmed that Gen Z highly values well-being and a human-centric work environment, evaluating health and safety as the most important aspects of well-being, while only 25,7% respondents believe that their workplace cares about their well-being. Interview results showed that current well-being provision in Latvian cultural organizations is often fragmentary and insufficient, contributing to high rates of burnout. The research underscored the necessity for strategies focused on psychological safety, emotional support, and flexibility to improve Gen Z's loyalty and performance. Concrete recommendations for employers and a specialized wellbeing promotion project were developed based on these findings.

The study limitations are a relatively short research timeframe (March to June 2025) and the non-exclusive nature of the survey sample (respondents were not confined strictly to the cultural sector). The scope was also constrained by the number of expert interviews and the examples of external wellbeing initiatives reviewed.

Keywords: well-being, Gen Z, cultural sector

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Cultural Organisations' Views on Brand Image Assessment Criteria Through Q-Sort Methodology

The article investigates the evaluation criteria of brand image within cultural organisations, focusing on the perspectives of marketing executives in this sector. While the significance of brand image is widely acknowledged, discussions on the criteria used for its evaluation in the cultural organisation context remain limited in existing literature. By employing the Q-Sort methodology, the study investigates two central research questions: 1) Which criteria for evaluating brand image in cultural organisations do marketing executives prioritise? 2) Among the criteria within the same category, which ones hold greater significance when compared to each other? Through a literature review, brand image criteria were categorised into four groups, providing a structured framework for understanding the multifaceted factors shaping brand perception in cultural contexts. Analysis revealed patterns in the prioritisation of brand image criteria. Brand recognizability, consumer satisfaction, and sensory alignment emerged as significant influencers of brand perception. Brand recognition was deemed more impactful than brand awareness, while consumer satisfaction outweighed considerations such as price and accessibility.

Keywords: Brand image assessment, Cultural Organisations, Q-Sort Methodology

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Masculinity Representations in Japanese Role-Playing Games (JRPGs): Between Tradition and Modernity

This study examines the construction of masculinity representations in Japanese Role-Playing Games (JRPGs), highlighting their connections to Japanese cultural and social concepts of manhood. The JRPG genre stands out for its ability to combine traditional narratives with advanced technologies, maintaining creativity and innovation in the rapidly evolving global gaming industry.

The aim of the research is to reveal how masculinity in JRPGs reflects, transforms, or challenges traditional Japanese models of manhood. Drawing on theories of hegemonic and subordinated masculinity, the study analyzes three games—Chrono Trigger, NieR Replicant ver.1.22474487139..., and Persona 5 Royal—focusing on character design, narrative structures, and interpersonal relationship dimensions.

The research methods: is based on a descriptive-interpretative approach and visual analysis of JRPGs, utilizing theoretical works by R. Hutchinson, J. Palletier-Gagnon, J. Roberson, N. Suzuki, and Y. Sugimoto.

The findings contribute to a better understanding of how Japanese cultural values and gender norms are conveyed through popular culture and how the JRPG genre shapes cross-cultural perceptions of masculinity in a contemporary global context.

Analysis of all three games shows a predominant subordinated shōnen/bishōnen masculinity model, indicating the expectations Japanese society has for itself. The games reflect real tensions and transformations in Japanese conceptions of masculinity within society.

Keywords: JRPG, masculinity, shōnen/bishōnen, character design, gender norms, narrative, Japanese culture

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Communication Model for Provocative Art

Provocative art often challenges established cultural, moral, or political norms, creating tensions between artistic intention and public interpretation. The communication process in such cases becomes a dynamic negotiation of meaning rather than a linear message transmission. This paper presents a communication model for provocative art, developed as part of an ongoing master's research project. The model explains how the artist's intention, artistic message, communication channels, audience response, and reflection interact in a cyclical process that shapes new artistic intentions and strategies. Grounded in classical communication theories (Shannon & Weaver,

Jakobson) and interpretive frameworks (Hall, Fiske, Eco), the model integrates contemporary views of strategic and emergent communication (Gulbrandsen & Just, LaBelle & Waldeck). In addition to theoretical synthesis, the research offers managerial guidelines for artists and cultural organizations on how to manage public controversy — from neutral reactions to crisis situations — through reflective, dialogic, risk, and crisis strategies. The study contributes to understanding how communication strategy in art can transform provocation into constructive dialogue and creative development, emphasizing the managerial dimension of artistic communication in contemporary culture.

Keywords: provocative art, communication strategy, audience engagement, cultural controversy, art communication model

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The Impact of Management Practices on the Governance Outcomes of General Education Schools and on Pupils' Abilities and Achievements

Purpose – In today's society, general education schools (GESs) serve as incubators of cultural capital. They function as small-scale societies that foster civic maturity and cultural awareness. GESs model autonomous learning environments that promote creativity and moral consciousness. Despite growing research on GESs' self-governance and management, a research gap remains in understanding how management practices related to administrative and academic processes jointly influence governance outcomes and pupils' achievements. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the impact of applied management practices on GESs' governance outcomes and on their pupils' abilities and academic achievements in Lithuania.

Methodology – A survey-based cross-sectional quantitative approach was applied. Data were collected in April–May 2024. A total of 216 respondents (GES staff) completed the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, regression, and mediation analysis.

Findings – Results revealed a positive relationship between management practices related to administrative processes (parental involvement, staff training, incentives) and governance outcomes. Rewarding teachers for good performance emerged as the strongest predictor of governance success. Management practices related to academic processes (continuous assessment) also demonstrated a positive, though weaker, impact on governance outcomes. Monitoring teachers' lesson-time efficiency was the strongest predictor within this category. Furthermore, the level of implementation of managerial practices directly and positively influenced pupils' academic achievements. Finally, managerial practices did not have a statistically significant direct effect on pupils' abilities. However, mediation analysis demonstrated that these management practices indirectly influenced pupils' abilities: governance outcomes fully mediated the relationship between management and pupils' abilities.

Conclusion – Research findings suggest that efficient leadership and recognition mechanisms cultivate cultural capacities within society. Administrative managerial practices exert a particularly strong influence on governance quality and pupils' achievements. Strengthening these practices may

therefore enhance the operational and educational quality of GESs, supporting the development of a learning-oriented and culturally aware society.

Keywords: general education schools, managerial practices, school governance outcomes, pupils' abilities, pupils' achievements.

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Employee Training for the Application of Improvisation in a Cultural Organization

Globalization, technological innovation, market unpredictability, changing consumer needs, and crises caused by pandemics require organizations to respond quickly, creatively, and flexibly to change. In this dynamic environment, cultural organizations stand out, as they face uncertainty and the success of their products or services is often difficult to predict than others. Although the goals of these organizations may differ from those of traditional businesses, they are still united by the desire to create value and meet consumer needs, both through for-profit organizations, whose goal is to earn more money, and through non-profit organizations, which focus on creating social benefits.

Organisations in the cultural sector operate between creativity and management, so the ability of employees to respond quickly to emerging problems and solve them creatively is extremely important. Improvisation within an organization helps employees to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, generate new ideas, solve problems flexibly, and respond more effectively not only to an unpredictable environment but also to the changing needs of the audience. Employee training becomes a very important factor in this regard—it helps to develop spontaneity, creativity, teamwork skills, and self-confidence. Such training creates an environment where improvisation becomes a natural part of work and mistakes become a source of learning.

Organizations that invest in improvisation training are characterized by greater innovation, employee satisfaction, and productivity. However, the effectiveness of training depends on management support, a clear strategic context, and the ability to adapt training methodologies to a specific cultural sector. By integrating improvisation principles into employee training, cultural organizations can strengthen their competitive advantage, maintain their creative potential, and operate successfully in the face of global change.

This presentation will explore the need for employee training for the application of improvisation in a cultural organization. The study is based on a comparative method of scientific analysis and synthesis.

Keywords: employee, training, improvisation, cultural organization

SESSION F: CULTURE, SUSTAINABILITY AND GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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The Role of Cultural and Creative Sectors in Shaping Sustainable Well-being

This study examines the role of Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) as multidimensional drivers of sustainable wellbeing, advancing empirical understanding of how culture contributes to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development. Drawing on the OECD Well-being Framework, which conceptualizes well-being through both current outcomes and the resources that sustain them over time, the analysis operationalizes well-being through three interrelated dimensions: economic capital, social capital, and natural capital. The analysis covers 25 EU countries from 2010 to 2024, combining cross-national indicators of cultural participation, intellectual property, creative industries, and environmental performance. A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) identifies two latent cultural dimensions: PCA1, linked to traditional cultural assets and participation, and PCA2, representing innovation and knowledge-based creativity. To assess their influence on well-being, the study applies two-way fixed-effects panel regressions with Driscoll–Kraay robust standard errors, which control for unobserved heterogeneity, serial correlation, and cross-sectional dependence. Results indicate that the innovation-oriented CCS component (PCA2) has a consistently positive relationship with economic, social, and environmental well-being and the traditional cultural component (PCA1) shows stronger connections to social dimension but more variable associations with economic and environmental outcomes. Predicted CCS contributions were aggregated by country and visualized through spatial mapping, revealing a diverse geography of cultural influence. Western and Northern European countries demonstrate higher CCS-related well-being, whereas Southern and Eastern regions display comparatively weaker effects. Conceptually, the findings support the view of culture as both an economic catalyst and an innovation system, yet they also reveal that cultural vitality and creative outcomes depend on national institutional capacities and policy contexts. Overall, the study demonstrates that culture is not merely a reflection of societal progress but a strategic driver of inclusive, innovative, and sustainable well-being, emphasizing the need for its systematic integration into sustainability policy and evaluation frameworks.

Keywords: cultural and creative sectors; well-being; sustainability; EU countries

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Intellectual Investments in the Cultural Sphere: The Role Of Creativity in Social And Economic Development

Intellectual investments are an important component of the development strategy of enterprises and national economies. Creativity, as a key element of intellectual investment, is a driver for the creation

of new ideas and innovations that contribute to economic growth. Identifying and analyzing the impact of intellectual investment in the cultural sector on socio-economic development is an important area for contemporary research. Based on the research conducted, methods of comparative analysis of economic data were used. The effectiveness of intellectual investments was assessed. The results of the study showed that intellectual investment in any field through creativity has a significant impact on economic development. Creativity, expressed through innovative ideas and know-how, can stimulate the development of new products and services, which allows for the creation of new markets.

Investments contribute to increased competitiveness and the development of new technologies in various sectors of the economy. The important principles of intellectual capital formation are:

- the creation of new innovative technologies;
- the application of individual approaches to the development of investment projects;
- the development of effective communication;
- the use of digital technologies to optimize investments.

Thus, creativity is an important factor in socio-economic development, as it stimulates the creation of new ideas, innovations, and technologies that contribute to economic growth.

Keywords: Intellectual investments, economic development, innovative technologies, creativity

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Embodied Performance of Qualitative Research on Peacebuilding

Since the war in Ukraine started, Lithuanian civil society organized several crowdfunding campaigns to fund weapons for Ukrainian defense, and collected millions of euros. As a peacebuilding professional, I recognized a dissonance between the ideals of a peaceful society and the reality of forced war. To investigate the question deeper, I turned to hear the voices of Ukrainian peacebuilders: what were their perspectives on the peaceful ideals and Lithuanian crowdfunding for Ukrainian weapons?

My research was guided by the tenet that important knowledge resides in the local, direct experiences of people: “in the midst of all violent conflict there are people who carry experiential conflict knowledge as a result of their lived experience of violence” (Julian, Bliesemann de Guevarra and Redhead 2019). As I coded and analyzed the interview data, I wondered how such complex issues and experiences can be adequately communicated to the audience/readership. Recognizing that there are many ways of knowing beyond the cerebral-verbal, and interested in the unique meaning-making possible in the arts (Leavy 2020), I ventured into a creative experiment of developing an embodied performance of the qualitative research findings. To honor the lived experience, I invited Ukrainian performers to co-construct an embodied performance of the interview scripts.

A two-month artistic project entailed analyzing the interviews and collaborative development of artistic forms of presentation – music/sound, dance/movement, material symbols, and other elements of scenography. The „Embodied Performance of Research“ event attracted a Ukrainian, Kartvelian, and Lithuanian audience. It facilitated a brave space (Arao and Clemens 2013) to process the experiences of war/conflict, and an engaged exploration of the artistic format, which was unexpected and novel to many. The event augmented collective meaning-making and resilience-building both for the audience

and the creative team. The paper will discuss how the artistic expressions can extend the knowledge construction of qualitative research.

Keywords: applied theatre; artistic research; peacebuilding; knowledge production; lived experience

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'The Japan Times' Analysis Examining Japan's Position in the Context of the Taiwan Strait Crises: Cultural Industries Shape in Long-Term Perception

In today's rapidly evolving cultural and creative industries, the media is not only a channel of information but also a powerful creative force that constructs, negotiates, and legitimizes geopolitical narratives. This paper examines how The Japan Times, Japan's most influential English-language newspaper, shaped public discourse during the Taiwan Strait crises (1954–2022), revealing the interplay between political contexts and creative industry practices.

By applying conflict theories, the study uncovers how ideology, power imbalances, and collective identities were strategically embedded in journalistic discourse. Through a combination of historical contextualization and discourse analysis, the research demonstrates that Japan's role was persistently framed in relation to its Western allies, pacifist identity, and complex relationship with China. These findings expose how journalism, as a cultural and creative industry, both reflects and transforms international power relations by producing narratives that reach beyond politics into the cultural imagination.

The contribution of this research lies in bridging international relations with cultural and creative industries studies. It highlights the media's dual role as both a mirror and an active agent of change within shifting political, economic, and legal environments. In doing so, it offers new insights into how cultural industries shape long-term perceptions of global conflicts and raises critical questions about neutrality, creative responsibility, and the future of cultural discourse in times of geopolitical uncertainty.

Keywords: Japan, Taiwan Strait crises, The Japan Times, conflict theories, discourse analysis, culture and creative industry

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On The Issue of Modern Education

One of the important issues of higher education is its internationalization. Globalization and new technologies have significantly influenced the education system. The main goal of internationalization

is related to improving the quality of higher education, which is better preparation and adaptation of students to life and work in modern conditions. Higher education institutions are motivated to develop transnational strategies in order to increase their competence and competitiveness. The internationalization strategy should also include support for international educational and educational processes, offer opportunities for international support and education for those students who want to study in their home country. Scientific exchange and exchange in the field of higher education institutions is the basis of foreign culture and educational policy. Ukraine is one of the largest countries in Europe in terms of the number of students. In the era of the knowledge economy, the development of the country's scientific and educational space has a significant impact on its overall social and economic development. Based on the fact that it is important for Ukraine to ensure student mobility, not their immigration (with subsequent employment abroad), special attention should be paid to the development of joint creative educational programs that will promote mobility, exchange of knowledge and experience, cooperation, but not the outflow of highly qualified specialists. Lithuania's successful experience in integrating into the EU and implementing relevant transformations in the scientific and educational space is very valuable for Ukraine.

Keywords: education, internationalization, processes, students

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The Use of Heritage as a Tourist Product in Rural Communities

Most rural communities have seen the proliferation of community-based tourism projects as a way of benefitting from tourism. As most of these communities have limited modern facilities and attractions, they have resorted to using their heritage (both tangible and intangible) as tourist products or attractions. Tangible or material heritage include landscapes, mountains, biodiversity, the built environment, monuments, shrines, rock art, traditional arts and crafts. Intangible or non-material heritage include oral history and traditions, values and norms, indigenous knowledge systems and practices relating to nature and the universe, societal cultural practices such as rituals, ceremonies, and dance. Through a qualitative content analysis, this paper aims to determine how heritage is used as a tourist product in the community-based tourism projects of Botswana and Zimbabwe in order to benefit the rural communities. The paper will benefit scholars and researchers of heritage and cultural tourism as well as practitioners, and stakeholders of heritage management by providing insights of how heritage is being used to support the livelihoods of rural communities. The limitations of the study and the future research will be highlighted.

Keywords: Botswana; community-based tourism projects; heritage; rural communities; Zimbabwe

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Wandering Being: Designing for the Vagus Nerve

This artistic research explores the intersection of design, the human body, and non-human agency through the lens of the vagus nerve—a vital, bi-directional communicator between brain and gut, often referred to as the “wandering nerve” (Latin: vagus). I approach the vagus nerve as a creature within—an autonomous, beast-like presence shaping actions, emotions, and desires. This nerve becomes the central figure in a speculative design practice that moves away from anthropocentric paradigms and instead creates for the vagus nerve itself. Through movement and wandering—physical, mental, and philosophical—I seek to stimulate this nerve and discover new perceptual and material frameworks. Gut bacteria, emotion, and vagus nerve signals form a complex ecosystem that challenges traditional definitions of the “self.” If emotions are shaped by bacterial colonies and vice versa, then our being is already co-constructed with non-human life. What happens to design when we acknowledge this? What new forms emerge when we no longer design for humans, but for the inner, unrecognizable beings that co-compose us? This project involves creating movement-based design objects and forms that serve not the human body as we know it, but the vagus nerve as an inner guide. I search for new design languages and rules that generate objects beyond human-centeredness—objects that speak to otherness, sensation, and the unknown within. By following the vagus nerve, I wander on the margins of humanity—seeking not to define, but to dissolve boundaries between the human and the non-human through design.

Keywords: inner beings, more than human design, vagus nerve

SESSION G: STUDENTS' SESSION

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Creativity in Ukrainian Education

Creativity of the educational system is linked to critical thinking, creativity, emotional resilience, and mutual support. Especially under martial law, education must adapt to new realities while maintaining its main goal the quality of learning. Today, in Kharkiv, where shelling continues, “metro schools” have been established kindergartens and schools located in underground passages and subway stations, where children can study offline in safe conditions. Such an environment not only ensures physical safety but also helps children feel unity and support. Students have become more attentive to one another, learning empathy and cooperation this fosters a kind of corporate culture. The atmosphere of mutual understanding between children and teachers reduces anxiety and fear. In Kyiv – the capital of Ukraine during air raid alerts, schoolchildren and students move to shelters and the subway, where they continue their lessons underground. In such conditions, endurance and care for one another are

developed: older students help younger ones, while teachers support the emotional well-being of their pupils through shared games, reading, or short activities. Despite the state of war, Ukrainian education preserves not only the learning process but also humanistic values mutual support, creativity, psychological resilience, and the pursuit of quality.

Keywords: educational system, creativity, "metro schools", students

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The Trend of Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is an important trend that helps develop creativity, the ability to think creatively, continuously update knowledge, adapt to changes, and improve critical thinking. It is a continuous process of self-improvement in the field of culture that lasts throughout life. The basis of this trend is the development of creativity, which means innovative thinking. Lifelong learning is connected with different forms of education, such as attending courses, training, or projects, which help develop thinking and creativity, important for personal growth. It reveals human potential and new skills. It allows people to stay active, respond confidently to changes in the world, and independently find ways for self-realization.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, innovative thinking, development, courses

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Educational Limitations In Distance Learning

Distance education plays an important role in modern life, as the learning process increasingly takes place in a remote format. However, under martial law, the deep shortcomings of this form of education have become particularly evident. The primary issue is the lack of live communication between students and teachers, since it is impossible to fully convey knowledge, emotions, and interpersonal connection through a screen. The absence of direct contact among participants in the educational process reduces the level of creative activity, critical thinking, and collective interaction. Psychological isolation leads to the loss of emotional depth in the educational experience. Another significant factor is technical difficulties: unstable internet connections in certain regions often make effective work in the distance format impossible. Despite its flexibility, distance education lowers the level of educational, cultural, and creative development within the learning process.

Keywords: Distance education , creative, cultural, development

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The Influence of Creativity on The Lithuanian Education System

It is very interesting to analyze how creativity is developing in Lithuania, which contributes to the development of creative thinking, self-expression and the preservation of cultural identity. Lithuanian artists spread the spirit of experimentation and freedom in the education system through theater, art and writing. Like in the Vilnius Academy of Arts, which teaches artists who create projects that inspire students to experiment with space and form. I am interested in the work of the artist Jurate Stauskaite, who founded a private art school for children and youth in Vilnius and an art gallery for children and youth, and her educational initiatives combine art with ecology and cultural interaction. Thus, art becomes a means not only of self-expression, but also of social change, while helping to solve environmental issues. And the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre actively collaborates with contemporary artists, developing curricula that combine creativity, entrepreneurship and digital technologies. Education at the academy is aimed at making student ideas part of the market, cultural engineering projects, and innovations. All this allows students to not only create creative products, but also apply knowledge about art in other industries, while forming their critical thinking about life in society, which is quite important for the development of education.

Keywords: creativity, Lithuanian artists, cultural interaction, projects

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Creativity in German Education

The creativity of Germany's education system is closely linked to responsibility, independence, and the pursuit of excellence. It is reflected in unconventional approaches to addressing issues related to economic and societal development. The German education system combines academic training with practical skills and an innovative mindset. A particularly interesting feature is the dual education system, where students combine theoretical studies at vocational schools with practical work in companies, allowing them to gain knowledge, experience, and a salary. University education is closely connected with research and laboratory work; students participate in numerous projects and startups, and universities actively collaborate with companies such as Siemens, BMW, and BASF. Creativity within the education system enables the German economy to maintain a leading position and attract specialists in fields like engineering, IT, and more. An educational culture that fosters critical thinking and creativity becomes a strategic resource for Germany's national development and serves as a driving force behind its economic success.

Keywords: education system, economic, creativity, students, educational culture

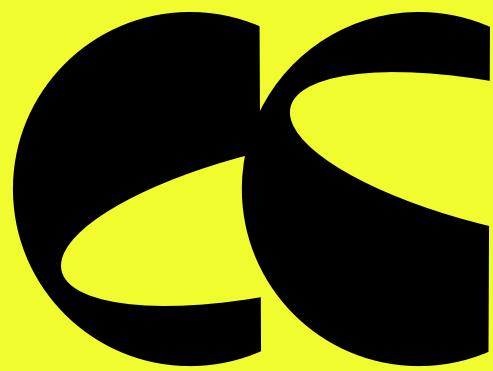
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Sustainability Dimensions in Collaboration Models of Creative Hubs

The integration of sustainability principles into cultural and creative practices has gained increasing relevance over the past decade, both in academic discourse and within cultural policy agendas. Creative hubs, defined as interdisciplinary spaces connecting the arts, technology, business, and civil society, are assuming an expanded role – not only as drivers of creative and social innovation, but also as laboratories of social and environmental responsibility. They increasingly function as transformative platforms capable of facilitating cross-sector collaboration and contributing to the achievement of sustainability goals. This paper explores how sustainability is embedded within the collaboration models applied by creative hubs. Drawing on academic literature, strategic frameworks, and selected European case studies, the analysis identifies three key collaboration models: cross-sector partnerships, co-creation, and networkbased approaches. Their relationship to social, economic, and environmental impact indicators is examined, alongside the main enabling and limiting factors shaping their effectiveness in advancing sustainability outcomes.

The findings offer a more systematic understanding of how creative hubs can act as catalysts for sustainable transformations, and which collaboration models hold the strongest potential for generating long-term social and ecological value. The insights are relevant for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers seeking to enhance the contribution of creative hubs to contemporary sustainability challenges.

Keywords: Creative Hubs; Sustainability; Collaboration Models; Co-creation; Cross-sector Partnerships



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