

YOUNG AUDIENCES AND THE ARTS



Findings of the Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative

A Research Project Funded by The Heinz Endowments

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is possible only because of the diligence and commitment of the founders of PITT ARTS. It is an honor to have served such a groundbreaking program under leaders who recognized years ago the importance of understanding what young adults value in arts and cultural experiences, and the role that the arts play in quality of life for people of all ages.

Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher recognized the potential that the arts had for recruiting and retaining students at the University of Pittsburgh and founded PITT ARTS in 1997 as a way to offer students access to Pittsburgh's rich cultural life and to extend their university experience far beyond the campus. Dr. Robert Pack, Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Resources Management, has provided oversight to the program, helping to guide the program's expansion and encouraging research initiatives that encourage lifelong arts participation by young adults. Jen Saffron was the founding director of PITT ARTS, and, with Dr. Pack's guidance and support, conceived of the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative*, a research component to PITT ARTS, and obtained funding from the Howard Heinz Endowment in 2001. Annabelle Clippinger led the implementation of the *YAAPI* from 2001 until 2002, when she was named director of PITT ARTS, where she continues to forge outstanding arts education programming and provide leadership for PITT ARTS' exciting and enriching work in the greater Pittsburgh community.

Enormous gratitude is due to Dr. Maher for recognizing importance of this work, to Dr. Pack for his unflagging support and leadership, and to Jen Saffron and Annabelle Clippinger for their groundbreaking monograph, *A Study of Young Adult Arts Participation*, which set forth crucial findings from the initial 2-year phase of this grant and which is cited frequently in this paper. Their monograph and work in the field established the spirit of inquiry and seriousness with which this pioneering research has been approached; a spirit I aspired to uphold during the last two years of this grant.

Special thanks is sincerely offered to our partner arts organizations—namely The Andy Warhol Museum, City Theatre, Calliope Folk Music Society, the Mattress Factory, The Pittsburgh Symphony, the Pittsburgh Public Theater, Quantum Theatre, Renaissance & Baroque Society, Silver Eye Center for Photography, and Xpressions Contemporary Dance Company—for their willingness to set aside stereotypical notions about young audiences and recognize each student's potential to become a fully fledged, highly sophisticated consumer of the arts.

Last, we acknowledge our students at the University of Pittsburgh for the spirit of exploration, adventure, joy and intellectual engagement they bring to every one of our arts experiences. Their openness, candor and enthusiastic participation provided not just the raw data of this work, but also the soul of the program. By serving them, we hope that PITT ARTS has helped open doors to the arts that might otherwise have remained closed.

Kitty Julian

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SUSTAINING INNOVATION

PITT ARTS is a major, arts-based, experiential learning program of the University of Pittsburgh, providing undergraduate students with arts and cultural experiences that broaden their education far beyond the campus environment. Central to this work is engaging students in dialogue about the human experience as expressed through the arts. PITT ARTS is also the only program of its kind in the nation. Facilitating over 31,000 student arts visits per year, the program provides a laboratory environment in which to observe and understand what young adults value in arts experiences. Profiling students through surveys has allowed PITT ARTS to deeply understand the motivations and barriers to arts and cultural participation for young adults, thus innovating and reinvigorating our arts programming choices to address those needs and overcome those barriers. *The Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative (YAAPI)* discussed in the following essay is the culmination of four years of project-based funding received by PITT ARTS from the Heinz Endowments. PITT ARTS is well established and successful. Since 1997, we have connected more than 130,000 students to the vibrant cultural life of Pittsburgh. This research has brought us to a deeper, and often surprising, understanding of what specifically young adults value in their arts experiences.

For example, current 2003-2004 *YAAPI* surveys indicate that for college students the number one preferred leisure activity is reading, and number three is attending arts and cultural events, demonstrating that the realm of the college student is one of ideas. Students bring considerable intellectual capital from their classrooms, and they both try and apply those ideas against the arts encounters that they have with PITT ARTS. *The Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative* has addressed college students' unique abilities to engage in critical thinking about the arts. Being enlisted in their own learning through complex dialoguing with arts experts, students reflect and assert their ideas, and in so doing, hone their intellectual, aesthetic, and communications faculties. They are more likely to accept and embrace new and challenging art forms. They are willing to inquire into the value and meaning of art in society and in their own lives. They extend what and how they know. But students also like to relax. PITT ARTS sponsors and coordinates receptions that complement the many arts encounters we plan, where students can interact informally with one another. From appetizer or dessert receptions at theatres and halls, to dining in local eateries, students enjoy letting loose, chatting with each other, meeting new people, and sharing a meal. Again, PITT ARTS is the only program of its kind to pioneer this unique hybrid of socio-educational experiences at 120 arts events per year.

The PITT ARTS experiential learning model not only helps build arts audiences, but also gets at the very essence of University of Pittsburgh's academic core value of educating the whole student. Engaging students in two-way dialogue, creating context-building educational experiences, and allowing students processing time during their encounters with the arts, are pivotal approaches to the deep arts learning that PITT ARTS facilitates. These enriched experiences are exceptional in their capability to build intellectual curiosity, character, and talent in young adults, and this level of robust engagement can only mean exciting possibilities as students fully develop into adult citizens, and begin to make their mark on the world.

In the current economy, cultural organizations are increasingly more committed to bolstering their audiences. That is why so many PITT ARTS partners in the Pittsburgh arts community understand that young adults are not simply an investment in future audiences, but comprise a substantial paying audience right now. The Cheap Seat Program, through which PITT ARTS sells discounted student tickets to performances at nine local arts organizations, has broken all records in 2004 with more

than 6,600 tickets sold this year out of the PITT ARTS office, representing over \$82,000 funneled directly to those nine arts non-profits. All taken, a modest estimate suggests that this year, PITT ARTS has contributed approximately \$192,000 in direct spending to more than 45 arts non-profits in Pittsburgh. And with nearly 45,000 University of Pittsburgh alumni currently choosing to live in the city of Pittsburgh, the 30,000 student arts and cultural visits generated in 2004 through PITT ARTS could be a powerful driver to the retention of talent in our region.

The Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative has played a critical role in keeping arts organizations convinced of the value of the young adult audience. Through the careful maintenance of relationships, through the sustainability reports that stipulate active collaboration from arts partners, and through models that extend how partners conceive of arts programming, this grant project has forged new ground. Though PITT ARTS will persist in its work to leverage a positive shift in the arts community's attitude toward the young adult, *YAAPI* has clearly made that work less daunting, as greater numbers of arts organizations make a real place for college students in their outreach efforts.

One area that has truly benefited the University of Pittsburgh community is how *YAAPI* has catalyzed a greater reach of diversity programming for PITT ARTS students. In keeping with that endeavor, PITT ARTS has received a new grant from the Heinz Endowments for *The African American Arts Project*, designed to introduce more African American students at the University of Pittsburgh to the rich multiplicity of African American arts in Pittsburgh, and to understand what programming and outreach strategies motivate young African Americans to arts and cultural participation. This combination of programming and research takes its place in the grant-funded projects initiated and implemented through PITT ARTS, and promises not only to aid the university in its diversity goals, but to enrich the lives of students, and invigorate and build young, diverse and engaged audiences for small local arts organizations.

The Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative has, for the last four years, struck a balance between handholding and striving for independence for our arts partners. Having a consultant to manage a small number of relationships, this year only five, and hold the partners accountable for generating promotional materials and sustainability plans to target young adults, has offered PITT ARTS new strategies for active collaboration with the 45 plus arts partners with whom we do business each year. PITT ARTS is unlikely to have the capacity to maintain this type of concentration with all of our programs when total annual programs are approximately 10 times the amount of the *YAAPI* programs this year (12 *YAAPI*/119 PITT ARTS total); however, if even half of our programs and partners benefit from these distinct approaches, PITT ARTS will have achieved a great success. It is significant to note that throughout the duration of this project, PITT ARTS has folded in lessons learned directly into our overall programming. Much of what is taken away from this recent iteration of the project has already been put into place. Outstanding interactions between students and the arts are facilitated on an average of nine times per week during the academic year. Many arts administrators continue to come to the table as active partners, with fresh ideas and champions on their staff or boards, each contributing greatly to the process of educating University of Pittsburgh students about the arts. To the others, I extend a hand, with this research and these models, to inspire you to bring everything you can to an active partnership with PITT ARTS, one that is two-way, shared, and vital. The quality and depth of what PITT ARTS creates for students cannot be accomplished without you.

Annabelle Clippinger

Director
PITT ARTS

How best can arts organizations attract young audiences? For years, arts administrators nationwide have approached this question with great urgency, enthusiasm and often bewilderment. What do young adults value in an arts experience? What types of programming are most attractive? Are outreach efforts to young adults worthwhile and sustainable, and what should outreach look like? Can young adults really be the audiences of the future? In June 2004, PITT ARTS, a program of the University of Pittsburgh, concluded a four-year in-depth research project, known as the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative* and funded by The Heinz Endowments, that explored crucial audience development issues and strategies specific to young adults.

Young adults, defined by for the purposes of this research as male and female university students between the ages of 17 and 21, are a group distinct from and more intellectually and socially advanced than high school students, but also not yet fully-fledged adult consumers of the arts. While many arts organizations state that younger audiences are their “audiences of the future,” deeply ingrained stereotypes about young adults may preclude them from approaching this demographic with the same strategic and serious methods they might utilize to approach older, more established arts consumers. Young adults are often overlooked completely, or they are incorrectly grouped together with K-12 students, and as such provided with education and outreach unsuitable for young adults.

With approximately 17,400 undergraduates enrolled at its main Oakland campus, the University of Pittsburgh has provided a unique laboratory environment in which to observe young adults and their responses to arts and cultural events. For the past seven years, PITT ARTS has offered thousands of college students hundreds of arts and cultural experiences. These experiences are fully managed programs, with PITT ARTS providing tickets, transportation, dinner and a pre- or post-show educational session, all of which is designed to provide inexperienced arts consumers with a safe, low- to no-risk introduction to the arts.

Since 2000, PITT ARTS staff members have been conducting in-depth student surveys to explore barriers to participation, motivations for attendance and ways to improve arts experiences for young adults. The initial findings were published in the 2003 monograph *A Study of Young Adult Arts Participation*, co-authored by Jen Saffron, MFA, and Annabelle Clippinger, MFA, that is referenced frequently in this report. The findings outlined in that monograph, and built upon in this report, set forth replicable strategies that arts organizations can implement to increase participation and engagement by young audiences in their communities.

PHASE I OF THE RESEARCH INITIATIVE

How the project began: PITT ARTS was founded by the University of Pittsburgh in 1997 to connect students to Pittsburgh’s vibrant cultural life and to encourage student attendance at arts programming. Today it is a vital component of the University’s ongoing efforts to improve quality of life and extend the college experience beyond the campus. Since its inception, PITT ARTS staff has planned and implemented approximately 120 arts and cultural experiences for undergraduate students each year. These experiences include free tickets, transportation and food, and supplemental educational programming that provide students with content and context about art presented. Planned in conjunction with the staff at partner arts organizations, these experiences combine social activities, like receptions and mingling, with educational components such as pre-show talks, emailed articles and hands-on workshops. The arts education components of this work are especially crucial now as school district budget cuts nationwide contribute to the reduction, and in some cases elimination, of K-12 arts education programs.

Taken together, these components create a framework in which young adults relatively new to the arts may understand and appreciate arts and cultural events they may not have otherwise attended, due to barriers cited by students during PITT ARTS surveys. These barriers include a lack of event awareness, ticket costs, and transportation to and from venues that students might never have visited before. Once the arts experiences are planned, PITT ARTS promotes each event via its weekly student e-mail list. Students self-select to be on this email distribution list and, over time, this list has grown

to approximately 10,000 of the nearly 17,400 undergraduate students based at the University's Oakland campus. In 2004 alone, the program generated 31,000 student visits to performing arts productions, galleries and museum visits, workshops, panel discussions and literary arts events.

Evolution of our findings: When the program was in its infancy, students would share with PITT ARTS staff their perceived barriers to participation. These early conversations with students indicated that students were often unaware of arts events. When they were aware, there was often reluctance to attend for reasons ranging from feeling intimidated by unfamiliar art, uncomfortable about not knowing when to clap and what to wear, or fears that arts organizations eschewed young audiences in favor of older, wealthier patrons. Other barriers included reluctance to spend upwards of \$40 for a ticket if they weren't sure they would like the show, as well as a disinclination to take a bus downtown for student rush tickets if there was no guarantee of a ticket.

Both students and arts organizations had misunderstandings about one another to overcome. Arts organizations were worried that students would only come to events if they could dress in jeans and T-shirts, while students were highly interested in dressing up to go out, even asking if they should rent tuxedos to wear to the opera.

Surprising to many was that survey research from 1998 to 2000 indicated that *time* was the most significant barrier to young adult participation in the arts, followed by *studying*, *transportation*, and *knowledge that an event was happening*. The fact that time, not money, was the biggest barrier was highly significant in that this contradicted the stereotypical notion held by many arts organizations that students were not attending out of an unwillingness to buy tickets, but rather because their busy, hectic lives kept them from doing all of the things they wanted to do.

Methodology and Exploration from 2000 to 2002: In August of 2000, PITT ARTS embarked upon the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative*, a much more formalized four-year research project funded by The Heinz Endowments. As Saffron and Clippinger noted, "the Initiative...sought to examine existing strategies for reaching young audiences, surveying student responses to these strategies and to new ideas, and then to integrate this student feedback to invent new avenues for approaching and retaining young audiences."

Working with eight arts organizations in 2001, PITT ARTS created a feedback-generated methodology that included focus groups, video interviews, and a consistent and ongoing process of student survey evaluation about arts experiences designed especially for them. According to Saffron and Clippinger's monograph, "Numerous 'points of access' were employed to educate and socialize students about what they were seeing/hearing/experiencing... These included information sent via email, web links, meetings with artists, dinner or dessert receptions, pre/post-performance interactive discussions, demonstrations or workshops. Afterwards, students were asked to rank these different points of access and explain their ratings."

The findings of this qualitative and quantitative data were fed back to arts partners on an ongoing basis, and strategies were rapidly adjusted so that arts experiences could be more closely aligned with what students actually valued. Almost immediately, "direct experiences," defined by PITT ARTS as student interactions with artists or performers, or workshops that present students the opportunity to try an art form for themselves, emerged as most valuable for young adults. In fall of 2001, Saffron and Clippinger found that 86% of students rated direct experience as "most informative/entertain-

ing/helpful;” by spring of 2002, 88% of students surveyed gave direct experience the highest rating. Students also stated that social components, such as dinner or dessert receptions, and informational emails or web site links were important parts of their experiences.

Also crucial was student *motivation* for attending arts and cultural events: “something fun” emerged in the 2001-2002 PITT ARTS survey as the primary reason why students attend arts and cultural activities, followed closely by “date or somewhere to go with a friend,” then “interested in a particular program” and “wanted to try something new,” respectively. Clearly, then, one can argue that young adults value arts and cultural activities as entertainment.

A successful programming model emerged: Between September 2001 and April 2002, PITT ARTS staff facilitated 30 socio-educational experiences with eight partner arts organizations. These experiences and the related survey results captured and set forth a concrete model for creating successful arts experiences, beginning with a brief email of promotional information to students, which told students how to sign up for an event. These arts and cultural events, in addition to free tickets, included transportation and a dinner reception, and most importantly, an interaction that provided background and context for the art itself.

Evidence of the model’s success is that the strategies learned through *YAAPI* were utilized in the planning and promotion of more than 100 other PITT ARTS events each year. The fact that participation at PITT ARTS programs increased from 3,632 in 1997-1998 to 22,751 in 2002-2003 provides ample documentation of the efficacy of the socio-educational model for arts programming, and also resulted in increased financial support for the program from the University.

Challenges and Barriers: Even with these substantial attendance figures, the program faced significant barriers:

Stereotypes about young adults were among the chief barriers in the earliest years of the research. Some arts administrations were under the impression that all students wished to do with their leisure time was go to bars or parties, sleep in or attend sporting events, Saffron and Clippinger found. However, survey data indicated that students actually spent their leisure time quite differently.

In 1999, two years after PITT ARTS began its work, students, when asked what they did with the spare time, reported that they are more likely to attend arts and cultural events than to “party or go to a bar.” By 2001, arts and cultural events had moved further up the hierarchy, becoming the second most likely leisure activity, while parties remained in fifth place. Clearly, students place extremely high value on the enjoyment they get from the arts.

Leisure activities preferred by young adults, PITT ARTS surveys, 1999-2001:

| <i>2001</i> | <i>1999</i> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Go to Dinner | 1. Go to/rent a movie |
| 2. Cultural Event | 2. Reading |
| 3. Go to/rent a movie | 3. Go to Dinner |
| 4. Reading | 4. Cultural Event |
| 5. Party/Go to bar | 5. Party/Go to bar |

Instability and staff turnover at the arts organizations also proved to be a significant challenge. Early on, some arts organizations declined to work with PITT ARTS out of staffing capacity concerns. Enthusiastic staff at partner arts organizations would leave for other opportunities or be laid off due to economic conditions and suddenly PITT ARTS would be back to re-educating arts organization staff on the importance of making artists and performers available for direct experiences, and convincing them that young adults represent a vital and viable audience demographic. It quickly became clear that buy-in from the highest levels of the organization, whether from managing, creative or executive directors, was crucial to the sustainability of this work because it granted education and marketing staff permission to actually dedicate time and resources to including the young adult demographic in their programming, outreach efforts and long term strategic plans.

Another early barrier was age-appropriate education and outreach. In the program's early years, there was little appreciation for the fact that young adults, on average 19 years of age, are far too intellectually advanced for the K-12 educational programs already established by arts organizations. PITT ARTS worked to remind arts partners that college students, unlike K-12 students, had self-selected to be part of a community of learners, and as such were much more highly motivated in their intellectual pursuits.

Student survey responses included scathing reviews of speakers who they felt talked down to them, or railing against arts organizations that combined PITT ARTS groups with high school groups there at the same time for an educational program. PITT ARTS staff, using these survey results as evidence, advocated strongly for the development of higher-level educational programming designed for *adult beginners* in the arts. This advocacy included working with arts partners to established new paradigms for outreach programs that challenge adults in the 17- to 21-year-old age group, such as artist talk-backs and hands-on "direct experience" dance and music demonstrations.

Related to this barrier is that in some arts organizations there are deep divisions between marketing and education staff. When PITT ARTS would ask arts organizations to co-design a program or to provide appropriate language to reach and teach young adults, education staff would often send lengthy information packets and sometimes even entire bound K-12 curriculum, neither of which provided key approaches to programming, or language appropriate for a promotional email newsletter targeting young adults. PITT ARTS quickly learned to go directly to marketing staff, asking them to engage artists and artistic directors to co-develop the educational components of each student event. Perhaps future research could explore potential strategies for more closely aligning arts marketing and education staff to allow for streamlined program development, communications and greater coordination of programming, enrichment and outreach efforts.

Limited human and economic resources at arts organizations also presented barriers early on. However, staff perceptions about the time and effort needed to reach this group were often more powerful than the reality. The fact that PITT ARTS facilitates so much of the marketing and event planning, as well as the substantial attendance PITT ARTS delivers to arts events has, over time, helped to overcome these objections. One of the most important factors in establishing the validity of the young adult arts demographic has been the Cheap Seats program at PITT ARTS. Initially established in academic year 1998-1999 as a way to provide students with access to the arts when free programs filled up, the Cheap Seats self-service ticketing program has evolved into a truly significant economic engine for the arts. In its first year, 413 tickets were sold. By June 2004, Cheap Seats sales had increased to more than 6,600, representing more than \$82,000 in student ticket purchases with July and August ticket

sales still to be tallied. In fact, PITT ARTS ticket purchases and student Cheap Seats sales now represent approximately 20% of the Pittsburgh Opera's total Group Sales purchases. At the Pittsburgh Ballet, Nutcracker Cheap Seats alone represented 16% of the Ballet's overall group sales in 2002 and 21% in 2003. Cheap Seats also represent 6% of group revenue for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

These numbers represent real evidence of the sustainability and economic power of young adult audiences, and have been invaluable in illustrating the return on investment that arts organizations can realize by focusing on the young adult audience demographic. Further, they demonstrate that young adults are a substantial audience *right now*, not just the audience of the future.

PHASE II OF THE RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Methodology and Exploration in 2002-2004: PITT ARTS worked with eight partner organizations in 2002-2003 and five in 2003-2004 to plan and implement 36 arts experiences, including gallery and museum visits, plays, folk music, renaissance and baroque music, and contemporary dance. With the socio-educational model firmly in place since 1999, phase II of the grant focused heavily upon sustainability with the goal of ensuring that our arts partners, and arts organizations citywide, had the capacity and knowledge to sustain their outreach to and inclusion of young adults after the conclusion of YAAPI funding in June 2004. These efforts included further defining ideas about arts education into replicable models for use by our partner arts organizations and arts organizations city wide, as well as more detailed investigation of how demographics and leisure habits influenced young adult arts participation.

Shifting responsibility from PITT ARTS to arts partners: The YAAPI project was designed as a training period that would ultimately lead each partner arts organization to become “fully fledged” in its ability to program and market to the young adult demographic. As in previous years, the Heinz grant provided arts partners with access to a staff person at PITT ARTS for a 1-to 3-year period, during which the organization would be trained in the PITT ARTS outreach model. Students would be surveyed at each event, with findings contributing to ongoing course-direction and program improvement. At the end of each organization’s training period, responsibility for brainstorming and implementing engaging socio-educational experiences would shift from PITT ARTS over to the partner organization, at which time that organization would have achieved substantially improved capacity for effectively reaching out to young adults. These organizations, now fully fledged in the PITT ARTS model, would then join the pool of 40 to 50 arts organizations that propose programming and ticket purchases to PITT ARTS, leading to 120 arts events per year.

But how could PITT ARTS put infrastructures in place to minimize setbacks and disruptions caused by staff changes at our partner arts organizations? How could PITT ARTS quickly create buy-in amongst the arts organizations that did not participate as partners in YAAPI into the socio-educational model for arts education?

How to Work with PITT ARTS: As awareness of PITT ARTS began to increase in the local arts community, communication about young adult audiences began to shift: rather than PITT ARTS having to initiate all the conversations with arts organizations about young adults attendance, arts organizations began contacting PITT ARTS to propose ticket purchases. However, it became clear that these arts organizations often related to PITT ARTS strictly as a group sales venture, as opposed to an

educational and audience development endeavor where ticket sales were just one of many important components. To help overcome this “group sales” barrier, a document called *How to Work With PITT ARTS*, included in the appendix of this report, was created and distributed to arts organizations. This document distilled to one page what was required of arts organizations seeking to work with PITT ARTS, and explained that PITT ARTS was first and foremost an educational program. Arts organizations were then asked to use the guidelines in *How to Work With PITT ARTS* to develop a short proposal to PITT ARTS for ticket purchases that would include educational components such as meetings with artists, talkbacks or panel discussions, hands-on workshops or tours. A key component of *How to Work with PITT ARTS* was transferring to the arts organizations responsibility for developing these ideas and proposing them to PITT ARTS, rather than the other way around, a crucial distinction particularly with YAAPI funding concluding in June 2004.

Sustainability Reports: At the conclusion of the 2002-2003 academic year, each YAAPI arts organization was asked to craft a sustainability report that set forth that organization’s specific intentions for reaching young adults in the final year of the grant and, more importantly, after the conclusion of the funding in 2004. To assist arts organizations in creating their sustainability reports, PITT ARTS created a short document, called *Sustainable Strategies for Reaching Young Adults*, included in the appendix. *Sustainable Strategies* set forth examples of concrete and replicable tactics that arts organizations could implement for every aspect of reaching young adults through PITT ARTS, including how to communicate with PITT ARTS, how to propose and implement direct-experience components at every arts event, and the importance of providing students with access to artists, documenting connections to the University of Pittsburgh, and making young adults feel welcome at their venues.

Each arts organization then crafted a 1- to 2-page sustainability report that was provided to The Heinz Endowments and utilized as a benchmark by PITT ARTS to track the progress of arts partners toward sustainability. Sustainability reports also provided a method for ensuring that the knowledge an organization gained regarding how to reach young adults through PITT ARTS would not be lost due to staffing changes. This document proved invaluable when there was a sudden staffing change at one of our arts partners. The new staff person was able to utilize the guidelines set forth in *Sustainable Strategies* as a roadmap for how to work with PITT ARTS, thus reducing the amount of retraining PITT ARTS staff was required to do and preventing significant lapses in communication and outreach by that particular organization.

Revisions to the survey instrument: Before each event, PITT ARTS worked with its arts partners to establish distinct and specific educational missions for each event, such as “providing students with an introduction to installation art” and “showing students that even absolute beginners can play the blues.” To evaluate success at meeting these educational missions, a revised survey instrument was developed, which asked students to rate on a 5-point Lickert scale their level of agreement with statements about the educational components of the event.

Students were, for example, asked to rate their level of agreement with statements like, “I know more about installation art than I did before today’s talk with the Mattress Factory’s co-founder,” or “Actually playing the harmonica deepened my understanding of the blues history presented today,” and their answers provided data about which strategies were most effective for providing arts education to young adults. Workshop-only events not tied to a concert, for example, were found to be just as effective as direct experiences tied to a specific arts event at increasing understanding about that particular art form. Students were also surveyed at each event about how many times they had been

to that venue before, allowing PITT ARTS to track the number of first-time users of both PITT ARTS and that particular arts and cultural venue.

Motivations for attending arts and cultural events: In 2002 to 2004, students were as in previous grant years, asked why they attended arts and cultural events. Overwhelmingly, the response was “something fun” followed by “something new” and then “date/something to do with a friend.” The fact that fun and new experiences are the primary motivations for participation tells us that young adults place a very high value on arts and cultural events as leisure and entertainment experiences *even when they are unfamiliar with the artist or art form*. Young adults may even be more motivated to attend something they know nothing about, out of a sense of adventure, exploration and curiosity.

Another key finding was that enrichment and enjoyment matter equally to young adults. To understand more fully what students value in arts experiences, and to gain insight on the best way to position promotional text about an event, students were asked to rank their primary reason for attending arts events on a scale that ranged from pure enrichment to pure enjoyment. Nearly unanimously students stated that they wanted a balance between enrichment and enjoyment. McCarthy et al, referencing Kelly and Freysinger’s book *21st Century Leisure Issues: Current Issues in The Performing Arts in a New Era*, stated that the more knowledgeable individuals are about an activity, the more likely they are to participate in that activity, and the more familiar and experienced an individual is with a leisure activity, the more the demand for that activity increases (114). The desire for arts experiences that offer equal opportunity for enrichment and enjoyment tell us that this group is highly interested in programming that entertains in part by challenging and stimulating audience members to think as well as to be entertained. Offering brief but meaningful educational direct experiences that enhance knowledge and familiarity, then, have great potential for significantly and positively influencing the immediate and long-term arts participation habits of young adults.

Related to the balance of enrichment and enjoyment are the social aspects of arts and cultural events. In their 2001 study, *The Performing Arts in a New Era*, McCarthy et al pointed out that the arts participation habits of friends and family and the prestige that friends and family accord to arts as a form of entertainment may be highly influential predictors of arts and culture participation (114). PITT ARTS by design provides young adults the opportunity to *go with their friends* to arts and cultural events that include receptions and other social activities, combined with educational components that encourage understanding. An issue for further exploration could be whether or not group arts experiences, such as the arts excursions PITT ARTS provides, are any more or less effective than other strategies, such as free pairs of tickets for example, at generating immediate and repeat arts participation later on among young adults.

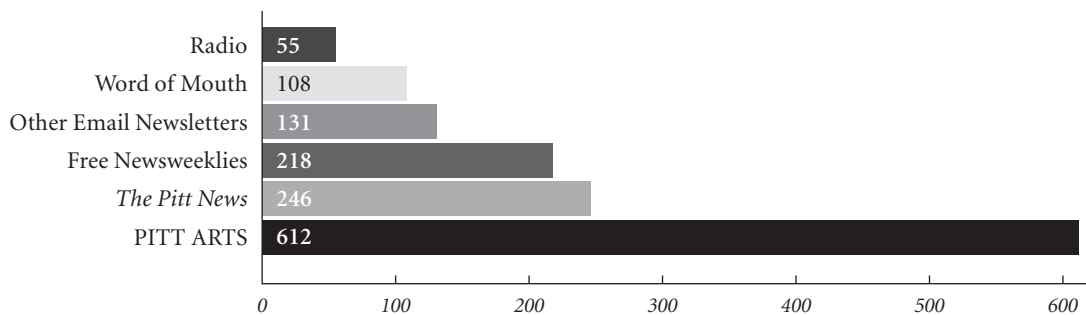
Continued exploration of what young adults value: Students were also surveyed regarding their age, majors, preferred leisure activities, and the types and frequency with which they attend arts and cultural events. Year after year, PITT ARTS surveys show that the majority of arts participants are *not* arts and humanities majors. In 2004, 43% of those surveyed stated that they were arts and humanities majors, with the remaining 57% identifying themselves as business, science, engineering, information science majors, or “other.” Clearly, non-arts majors are eager for arts and cultural engagement. These findings challenge the notion that arts organizations can fully reach the young adult demographic by promoting their performances and visual arts only to studio arts, English and music departments.

One issue worthy of exploration in years ahead is the importance of food to the socio-educational experience. For budgetary reasons, PITT ARTS has been moving away from full dinners toward less costly dessert receptions. While early PITT ARTS research indicated that free food was a key factor in attracting students to arts and cultural events, so many students now attend annually, with programs often filling completely within a few hours of announcement, that perhaps dinner receptions could be eliminated entirely in favor of dessert-only receptions or reserved only for a few very special events each year.

How to reach young adults: PITT ARTS asked students to indicate the top three ways they learn about arts and cultural events, and to rank their answers from most to least used. Their responses, weighted accordingly, indicate definitively that traditional outreach and promotional methods, such as media relations and newspaper advertising, are highly ineffective in reaching the young adult demographic.

This group absolutely *does not* read the major local daily newspapers. They elect instead to get their information first from free, university-based sources, and then turn to free off-campus sources that they can find easily on the edges of the campus or online, such as free entertainment newsweekly papers like *Pittsburgh City Paper*.

How University of Pittsburgh students hear about arts and cultural events, according to 2003-2004 student surveys:



By far, the PITT ARTS email system is the most widely utilized avenue through which students learn about arts and cultural events. The University’s free student newspaper, *The Pitt News*, came in at a distant second, followed by the city’s free alternative newsweekly papers, *Pittsburgh City Paper* and *Pulp*. This data is particularly important as arts organizations determine how to allocate limited marketing and promotional dollars. If arts organizations cannot afford to advertise in the university newspaper, then it is crucial for them to make communicating to students through PITT ARTS or other electronic media a priority if they want access to young adults ages 17 to 21. Likewise, all arts organizations trying to reach young adults would benefit from listing student discounts and other special offers in their print ads in entertainment newsweeklies like *Pittsburgh City Paper*. Even though most major arts organizations advertise their events in the newsweeklies, not all have made a practice of including student discounts or prices in their ads and, as such, are missing a key opportunity to communicate to young adults *through advertising media that is already paid for*.

Arts events that attract young adults: In 2003-2004, young adults were asked how frequently they attended a variety of fine arts events in the previous year. Results indicate that students are most likely to attend films, followed by music performances, and then art galleries or museums. Perhaps cross

marketing and programming partnerships with film and concert houses, where, for example, museums could promote openings and events through flyers and program ads at film venues as well as through special events planned and co-presented with arts organizations that present films. Art galleries and museums might also benefit by presenting and promoting films and concerts in their spaces.

Also of interest is how PITT ARTS participation data compares to that compiled by The National Endowment for The Arts in its *2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, where adults were asked which performing arts activities they had attended at least once in the 12-month period ending August 2002 (11). When ranked from most to least attended, there are similarities between adults and young adults:

| Adult Participation in the Arts, NEA 2002 | % Who attended at least once in 2002 | YAAPI 2003-2004 PITT ARTS Surveys | Number of visits in previous year |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Music events | 46.0%* | Music event/concert/symphony | 7† |
| Visited art museums | 34.9% | Film | 6 |
| Musical plays | 35.1% | Art gallery/museum | 4 |
| Non-musical plays | 25.2% | Theatre (non-musical) | 2 |
| Other dance (such as modern, folk and tap) | 12.1% | Ballet/dance | 1 |
| Ballet | 8.0% | Musicals | 1 |
| Opera | 6.6% | Opera | 1 |

* Combines NEA participation figures for Classical Music (23.8%) and Jazz (22.2%)

† Combines PITT ARTS attendance figures for Music event/concert (5 visits) and Symphony (2 visits)

This data suggests that, aside from their love of film and the communications avenues they utilize most, young adults may not necessarily be all that different from adults in general in the terms of their arts participation. Arts organizations may benefit from additional research that explores applying the direct experience/socio-educational model to adult audience development initiatives.

How young adults spend their leisure time: PITT ARTS research strongly suggests that, despite the stereotypes, “partying/going to bars” has never been a top priority for college-age adults and that interest in arts and cultural participation has only increased over time as the number of students participating in PITT ARTS programs has increased:

Preferred leisure activities, 1999 v. 2004, according to PITT ARTS student surveys:

| Preferred Leisure Activities 1999 | Preferred Leisure Activities 2004 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Going to/Renting Movies | 1. Reading |
| 2. Reading | 2. Time with Significant Other |
| 3. Go to Dinner | 3. Arts and Cultural Events |
| 4. Arts and Cultural Events | 4. Going to/Renting Movies |
| 5. Party/Go to bar | 5. Sports/Exercise |

Further, when one considers how the leisure habits of young adults compare to the those of population in general, according to the NEA’s *2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, again it appears

that the interests of young adults may not be substantially different from those of adults in general: they value time to read, movies, time to exercise, and arts and cultural experiences (21).

Comparison of How Adults and Young Adults Spend their Leisure Time:

| Adult Arts Participation (NEA) | Young Adult Arts Participation (PITT ARTS 2003-2004) |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Arts/Cultural Event | 1. Read |
| 2. Exercise | 2. Time with Significant Other |
| 3. Movie | 3. Arts/Cultural Event |
| 4. Garden | 4. Go/Rent Movies |
| 5. Read | 5. Sports/Exercise |

Emphasizing programs for African American students: While PITT ARTS had long considered ways to increase arts participation by African American students, 2002-2003 presented excellent opportunities to more fully explore this issue. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, African Americans, at 12.4% of the Allegheny county population, are by far the largest minority group in the city of Pittsburgh. African American students will comprise approximately 11% of the 2004-2005 incoming freshman class. Minority attendance at PITT ARTS events falls just short of these figures, generally attracting three to four African American students out of 40 at a typical event.

In 2002-2003, eight out of the 22 Heinz Endowments-funded events had content of potentially high cultural relevance to African American students. These events included the *Another Africa*, a photography and poetry exhibition at Silver Eye Gallery, *Driving Miss Daisy* at the Pittsburgh Public Theater, and *Sorrows & Rejoicings* at the City Theatre. PITT ARTS also piloted a series of panel discussions, *Rejoicing*, *Crying*, *Creating*, that featured African American theater professionals including actors from City Theatre and the Kuntu Repertory Theatre. These discussions highlighted student actors and concluded with an extensive and provocative Q & A with the student audience.

With this programming in place, PITT ARTS then turned to the promotional language for each event. Emphasizing that a program focused on issues of race dramatically increased the turnout of African American students at that program. *Driving Miss Daisy* brought out nearly 20% African American attendance, while both sessions of *Rejoicing Crying* had nearly 50% African American attendance. Further research to investigate the crucial factors in African American young adult arts participation, such as strategies for outreach and the types of programming that are most highly valued, is needed to better understand what distinctions there are, if any, between African American and white students regarding arts participation, and how arts organizations can reach African American students. Another issue for exploration is how to help African American students overcome their stereotypical views about Euro-centric or mainstream arts and cultural venues: the seats are not all taken by “rich old white people” as one student stated in a PITT ARTS survey, when in fact those organizations would very much welcome diverse, young audiences to partake in their programs.

Lessons Learned from Phase II of the Grant: Taken together, the survey results and observations of events in the 2002-2004 years suggest some specific strategies that arts organizations may find useful when attempting to reach young adults:

Repetition is key to changing perceptions: In 2002-2003, PITT ARTS began asking students if they were aware that local museums offered free admission with a valid Pitt ID. This question proved highly valuable: even though students were reminded as often as four times per event that the museums offered free admission, they would often answer “disagree” or “strongly disagree” when asked if they were aware of the free admissions program. The lesson learned is that it is nearly impossible to over-emphasize the availability of special discounted admission programs, and that arts partners must be continually enlisted in the necessity of communicating this message.

The efficacy of emailing in-depth educational articles: Approximately 430 student surveys in 2002-2003 indicated that almost the same percentage of students did not read articles (44%) provided via email in advance of an event as the percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed (48%) that they found the articles helpful. Since nearly half highly value an emailed article as a way to increase their understanding about arts and culture, there is ample reason to continue sending articles.

On-campus luncheons are highly successful introductions to arts organizations: Free on-campus lunch-time programs had been an element of PITT ARTS programming for many years. In 2002-2003, five arts organizations held free on-campus lunchtime programs and students were surveyed to increase understanding about the factors that drive attendance to the luncheons and keep students interested once they get there. Each of these programs was focused heavily on student/facilitator interaction designed to engage students in discussions on topics ranging from installation art, to race in photography, rhetoric in public discourse, and issues facing African American theatre artists.

PITT ARTS quickly realized the potential these luncheons—dubbed *populist* events, given that they were free, included food, were open to all students and did not require pre-registration—had not only for education, but also for introducing large numbers of students to arts and cultural organizations they may not otherwise have been exposed to before. Referring to an on campus talk by Andy Warhol Museum director Tom Sokolowski about Warhol’s work and rhetoric, one student commented in a survey, “I didn’t really know anything before so I felt better informed” as a result of the talk.

In 2002-2003, populist events attracted an average of 71 students per event. These populist events cost \$6.35 per student as compared to the average off campus event cost of \$27.35 per student and, as such, were a very cost-effective approach to reaching broad new audiences. Further, populist events in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 attracted 119 students who had never been to a PITT ARTS event before, and 154 who had never been to the partner venues’ locations before.

The return on investment for arts organizations is impressive: all that is required of the arts organization is assistance in developing the content of the presentation and time of a key staff person when he or she is presenting to the students. The outcomes included not only introducing new potential audiences to the organizations’ programs and mission, but also news coverage in mainstream and campus media. Our arts partners, recognizing the high returns offered by populist events, provided Pitt students with outstanding programming presented by individuals from the highest levels of their organizations, including artistic or creative directors.

Enlisting students in their own learning: Research from the first two years of the *YAAPI* grant indicated that students passionately disliked lectures as socio-educational experiences. Building upon this knowledge, increasingly stronger emphasis was placed in planning sessions with arts partners on the importance of two-way dialogue between artists and students at arts events. Initially, this interaction and dialogue format was a new paradigm for many arts organizations. Again and again presenters

were reminded that lecture style presentations that concluded with the facilitator asking, “if there are any questions” would be poorly received. In some cases, arts organizations were asked to develop a short list of questions that the facilitator should *ask of the audience* in order to ensure that dialogue would take place. Students were also more likely to participate in a dialogue if they were reminded the day of the event by PITT ARTS staff and by the artists themselves at the venue that two-way dialogue and interaction were welcomed and encouraged.

Over time, as students have become more sophisticated as arts consumers, these socio-educational experiences have evolved into forums for rich and provocative dialogue about complex issues such as the links between art and society, artist intent, historical and political context, racism and class issues. Enlisting students in their arts learning is further enriched when an expert in that particular art form is present to guide the discussion, and refine and extend students’ ideas. Referring to a gallery talk facilitated by two photographers at the Silver Eye Center for Photography, one student said, “The discussion brought up points and ideas that I wouldn’t have thought of on my own.” Another student, discussing the Warhol’s exhibition about the Kennedy assassination said, “It shook me to the core — I hate the way Warhol “popularized” [the assassination] more than it already was.”

Emerging Models for Successful Programming for Young Adults: In the course of this research, successful experiential learning models for young adult arts education emerged. Contrary to stereotypical views about young adult arts participation, students enthusiastically attend “high” art forms such as opera, ballet and symphony concerts, and these particular programs often fill entirely within hours of their announcement. Students will also attend less mainstream art events, such as jug band music workshops, folks music concerts and installation art museum visits when the promotional text and pre-show educational components make a point of explaining how the art has relevance for contemporary young adults and the issues affecting their lives, such as social and racial justice, and historical and political concerns. This in line with the Urban Institute’s 2002 report, *Reggae to Rachmaninoff: How and Why People Participate in Arts and Culture*, which found that people frequently identified social and civic motives for participating in arts and culture (Walker, Scott-Melnyk and Sherwood. 39). Socio-educational programming that establishes how a performance or exhibition is relevant to a young adult’s life helps demystify the art so that participants can relate to it regardless of whether or not they have experienced that particular art form before.

Survey responses have also led to the development of a 4-part method for experiential learning appropriate for young adult arts audiences:

- :: Prior to the event, *promote and establish relevance*, and include an educational article.
- :: On the assumption that students are absolutely new to that particular art form, *provide an introduction to the art* through pre-show talks with experts, museum educators or the artists themselves, to the history of or major issues explored by the art form.
- :: *Provided a structured experience* that guides students through an interaction with the art, and have facilitators articulate how this art has relevance for contemporary young adults.
- :: *Give students time alone* to experience the art on their own terms.

While the experiences must change with each unique arts event, four distinct direct experience models emerged.

FOUR MODELS FOR DIRECT EXPERIENCE ARTS EDUCATION

Visual arts, such as museum or gallery visits: Send students an article, such as a recent critical review, of the show they are about to see. On the day of the event, introduce students to the art form through, for example, a gallery talk by the gallery director about issues in contemporary American photography. Next, provide a structured interaction with the art, such as a gallery discussion guided by a local photographer about how digital photography challenges notions of artifice and reality. Finally, give students time to experience the art in an unstructured way so they can process it on their own, such as time alone to view the photos in the gallery. Additional discussion may be appropriate if students have questions about the work.

When asked if structured interactions with the art such as guided tours were important, a student who attended the Warhol's *American Supermarket* exhibit replied, "Guided tours give me more insight on subjects I don't know too much about to begin with." Students, like this one who attended the Warhol Museum's *American Supermarket* exhibition, also place a very high value on time alone in the museum, commenting, "That way, I can take my time or go back and revisit things I already saw and liked."

Performances, such as concerts or dance: Prior to the show, send students an educational article about the art form or performers, such as a biography of Woody Guthrie. Next, introduce students to the art form through activities such as a pre-show conversation with a local folk musician and Guthrie expert about who Guthrie was, including the socio-political issues facing the country when he was performing and audio clips of contemporary artists performing his work. Then students should attend the concert, in this case the Woody Guthrie Tribute Tour, experiencing the work while receiving no more or less structure than any other audience member so they can decide for themselves what they think of the performance.

Another alternative to the "introduction" phase is to provide pre-show educational activities that introduce the cultural foundation of an art form. For example, prior to the Sam Bush bluegrass show, a fiddler and a clog dance instructor taught students a few simple clog dancing steps, explaining that clogging is the dance that people traditionally would have done to Appalachian music and providing a chance for students to try the dance for themselves.

Another alternative, appropriate for theatre or concerts where artists prepare before a performance and are only available after the show to talk with students, is to tell students what to expect prior to the show, then go directly to the performance and conclude by spending time after the show talking with the actors, musicians or directors. These post-show interactions with artists offer incredibly rich opportunities for dialogue ranging from how performers got their start, to how they prepare, the factors they feel are most critical in the performance, or demonstrations of their instruments or dance steps.

Workshops and other direct experiences: Send students a pre-show article about the art form, such as brief history of African American contemporary dance. At the workshop, have the facilitator begin with a basic introduction to the art form being explored that day, such as a brief discussion of issues and major artists in contemporary African American dance. Then, guide students through a direct experience by providing them with a structured lesson, such as showing them specific dance steps. Last, allow students to try the art form themselves in an unstructured way, like attempting the steps together without instructor intervention so they can experience the dance on their own. A word of caution regarding workshops: a direct experience hands-on workshop AND a performance on the

same evening can make for too much activity in one evening. While PITT ARTS had great success with a stand alone “Basic Training in the Blues Harmonica Workshop,” students were overwhelmed by a harmonica workshop as the pre-show activity for the Scott Ainslie blues concert: trying to fit in the workshop before the concert left students feeling too rushed to really learn about the instrument.

Panel discussions: Some events present outstanding opportunities for dialogue in the intellectually rich campus setting, and can lead to partnerships between presenting organizations. For example, two local theatre companies were presenting plays by, about and starring African Americans. PITT ARTS collaborated with university faculty and both companies to present a panel discussion, called *Rejoicing, Crying, Creating*, that dealt with issues facing African American theatre artists. Prior to the panel discussion, students were emailed biographies of each of the three panelists. The day of the discussion, a student actor introduced each panelist, including information about his or her current roles. Then, each panelist shared his or her experiences, providing both a structured context and content for students to consider. Last, students interacted directly with the panelists during the question and answer session.

This model has also been utilized successfully by PITT ARTS in collaboration with the Pittsburgh Opera to generate dialogue around the Pittsburgh premier of *Dead Man Walking*. The panel discussion, titled *Religious Belief and the Work for Social Justice*, featured Sister Helen Prejean, the Roman Catholic nun whose experience as spiritual adviser to inmates on death row became the basis for her book *Dead Man Walking*. Also on the panel was the Venerable Shih Ying-Fa, abbot of CloudWater Zendo, a spiritual leader at the Zen Center of Cleveland; and Jamal El-Amin, national chair for Millati Islami (The Path of Peace), an Islamic-based 12-step program in which participants study Islam and work on treatment for their narcotics addictions. Together, these panelists explored the role that faith may play to spur leaders in religious communities toward work for social justice, took questions from the audience, and discussed the opera itself. This discussion provided PITT ARTS with an opportunity to introduce students to the opera as well as to illustrate how the arts can serve as the springboard for serious contemplation of social, political and religious issues of major importance to contemporary American life.

CONSIDERING THE FUTURE

The findings of the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative* may have significant implications for arts and cultural institutions as they consider ways to attract younger audiences now and as ticket holders of the future. In the year 2000, 41% of all students who graduated from the University of Pittsburgh’s main Oakland campus remained in the city after graduation. Such high retention figures suggest that audience development initiatives that launch young adults from the University of Pittsburgh into the world of the arts have the potential to generate arts patronage in the region that extends far beyond graduation.

This should encourage other arts organizations and universities to explore partnerships like those established by PITT ARTS and its arts partners. The socio-educational model of arts education for college students may have significant long-term implications for arts participation later in life. As McCarthy et al note in *The Performing Arts in a New Era*, “Indeed Orend and Keegan find that arts appreciation classes taken during college have an even stronger effect on subsequent participation than those taken earlier (23).” When considering the future of the performing arts, McCarthy postu-

lates that the universities, subsidized by the public and private sector, may perform the initial research and demonstrate the initial concepts, which the private sector can then apply to arts and cultural participation efforts (113).

Student ticket sales provide ample evidence that young adults have substantial arts purchasing power *right now*. Students also fully intend to become the audiences of the future: 80% of PITT ARTS students surveyed in 2003-2004 stated that they will continue to patronize the arts on their own after graduation. Arts organizations that overlook this demographic lose not only immediate ticket sales but access to educated, highly curious and intellectually capable audiences who can add a great deal to the dialogue about visual and performing art in their communities. In the 2004 video documentation of this project, one arts partner noted how much she learned *from students* in the post-performance dialogue that she led with them.

Despite the four years of training this grant period provided, the fact is that staff turnover and staff overwhelm are still formidable problems. This may be unavoidable, given that arts organizations are by and large nonprofit organizations that face enormous funding challenges given the current economic climate. Budgetary constraints inevitably lead to staffing changes: people leave for other jobs, or they are laid off, and greater responsibility is placed on fewer people, creating a triage environment where only matters of the greatest urgency may be addressed. While PITT ARTS can provide training and materials to encourage sustainability, there is always the risk that the arts organizations themselves may lose momentum or become focused upon other issues, allowing young adult audiences to fall through the cracks.

Numerous National Endowment for the Arts participation studies have determined that the more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to participate in arts and cultural activities either by attending arts events, watching them on TV or through other media, or by making art themselves. However, only The University of Pittsburgh has taken a leadership position, acting as a crucible for new thinking about young adults and the arts and creating a campus climate in which arts and culture are considered a vital part of student life for all undergraduates. While communicating with students is far from easy, the campus environment does offer a manageable and highly organized structure through which to reach young adults, thanks in no small part to the campus email system. The fact that the University of Pittsburgh is highly respected in the larger community set the stage for arts organizations large and small to approach this work with greater seriousness than might be afforded another smaller or less prestigious convener.

Orend and Keenan, referenced by McCarthy et al, noted that early exposure to the arts leads to familiarity and knowledge, and also found that arts appreciation classes in college have an even stronger effect on subsequent participation (23). Over the years, and especially since 2000-2004 during the tenure of the *YAAPI* project, PITT ARTS has brought together deeper and more meaningful arts learning with the leisure experiences of college students. This model has been made public through articles like this, through PITT ARTS' previous monograph of 2003, and through the many public dialogues that PITT ARTS has participated in or initiated.

Certainly, email access, staffing, offices and equipment can be provided by any university, or even through collaborative relationships by arts organizations or communities, but the reality is that thus far only the University of Pittsburgh has provided the fiscal commitment, vision, and leadership to actualize this work. Other colleges, universities or even communities where there are organized

groups of young adults, could replicate the socio-educational arts model, particularly if they have access to funding from foundation and university communities. Certainly, more research is required to more fully understand young adult arts participation, particularly with regard to how the arts participation habits of PITT ARTS students evolve after graduation when they no longer have access to student discounts or may lack the financial wherewithal to purchase full-priced seats. Also of interest is how the participation habits of students introduced to the arts through PITT ARTS compare to those of the young adult population in general and those otherwise uninitiated into arts and cultural participation.

One thing is certain: young adults are deeply interested in attending arts and cultural events. Young adults can and do act on this interest by purchasing tickets and attending on their own if their universities and communities are willing to take the time to show them that they are a welcome and vital audience for the arts.

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APPENDIX

i. ROADMAP: Sustainable Strategies for Reaching Young Adults (© 2003)

Thank you for partnering with PITT ARTS on the Heinz Endowment-funded Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative. The grant asks us to work with you, our partners, to develop sustainable education and marketing strategies that can be implemented after our grant cycle is complete. To document this work, each partner organization should prepare a 1-2 page report outlining the sustainable strategies you're implementing, both now and in the future. *Please use the list below as a starting point for developing your own sustainable education and marketing strategies report, making sure that your organization has the capacity to implement these strategies, and that they support your organization's mission.*

Communicating with PITT ARTS:

- :: Sending PITT ARTS information about your events as early as possible so that we can plan our season.
- :: E-mailing us your press releases.
- :: Sending brochures and flyers so PITT ARTS can distribute them on campus.
- :: Including young adults as a distinct and significant demographic in your organization's overall marketing and educational plans.

Developing Socio-Educational programming:

- :: Brainstorming with your staff to propose interactive, socio-educational programs for PITT ARTS.
- :: Recommending to PITT ARTS specific events that have the potential for socio-educational programming.
- :: Crafting 200-word descriptions of your proposed events, including a description of the socio-educational component and the arts event itself.
- :: Researching and e-mailing us relevant, high-level educational articles that provide a history and a context for the art students are about to experience.

Providing access to artists:

- :: Including clauses in your artists' contracts that stipulate that they will be available for outreach events, free of charge or for a nominal fee.
- :: Taking an active role in encouraging artists to meet with students right before or after performances for talk-backs.
- :: Providing a place in your theater, hall or gallery where students can meet with and talk to the artists.

Documenting "Pitt" connections to your organization:

- :: Alerting PITT ARTS about Pitt faculty and staff serving on your board and committees.
- :: Informing PITT ARTS when Pitt faculty lead or participate in faculty driven symposia for your organization.
- :: Counting & reporting student admissions on a monthly or quarterly basis to PITT ARTS.
- :: Recruiting/tracking student intern and volunteer participation.

Making our students feel welcome:

- :: Providing a staff person to welcome students and brief them on what they're about to see.
- :: Hosting receptions before or after the event at your location.
- :: Offering discounted tickets for PITT ARTS programs and through our Cheap Seats program.
- :: Giving students access to the best available seating, not "nosebleed" seats.

:: Developing age-appropriate educational materials for young adults. They want high-level educational activities that stimulate them and give them an exciting point of entry for appreciating what they're about to encounter.

Examples of Socio-Educational Programming include:

- :: Meeting the artists before or after the performance for Q&As or talk-backs.
- :: Gallery talks by a curator or pre-show talks by directors that create a context for the work and help students better understand the art.
- :: Backstage tours and other behind-the-scenes activities.
- :: Interactive workshops with artists so students can try the art form for themselves before attending the event.
- :: Receptions where students try other elements from the culture where the art originated, such as that culture's food, music or dance, thereby deepening students' context for the art.
- :: Facilitating on-campus performances, demonstrations, panel discussions and dialogues that explore artistic content and context.

ii. How to Work With PITT ARTS (© 2002)

Last year, PITT ARTS provided more than 22,000 students with free admission and transportation to arts and cultural events. Not a group sales office, PITT ARTS is an educational program at the University of Pittsburgh that provides Pitt students with in-depth social and educational experiences that deepen their understanding of the arts and cultural events they are attending. By providing these experiences for our students, your organization can help students develop a lifelong appreciation of arts and cultural events like those that your organization provides.

Each week, PITT ARTS e-mails more than 10,000 students about free and inexpensive arts and cultural activities available to them throughout the city. Our goal is to take our students' educational experiences beyond the campus. The program is the only one of its kind in the country, and seeks to attract and retain young talent in our community by showing them just how much the region offers those who choose to remain here after graduation.

Please propose an educational program to us: Because we are *not* a group sales office, in order for us to purchase tickets to your event, your organization must offer our students an engaging educational experience the day of the event. Our students are young adults, so existing K-12 educational programs are not appropriate. Straight lectures don't work well. Successful and well-received experiences have included, but are not limited to:

- :: **Face-to-face meetings**, Q&A sessions, receptions or informal talkbacks with the artists or performers right before or immediately after the show. Mariss Jansons of the Pittsburgh Symphony, for example, regularly meets with our students after symphony concerts.
- :: **On-campus educational forums or gallery talks at your space**, where your creative director leads a discussion about art and the issues presented by the art. Silver Eye Center for Photography led an on-campus dialogue about stereotypical images of Africa. Thought provoking gallery talks have taken place at Wood Street Galleries.
- :: **Hands-on workshops** that allow students to experience for themselves how art is created, such as the *Basic Training in the Blues Harmonica Workshop* done on campus by the Calliope Folk Music Society of Pittsburgh.

- :: **Cultural evenings** that deepen our students' understanding of the culture from which an art form has originated, such as the *Brazil Without Frontiers* evening combining Brazilian food, music, dance and photography.
- :: **Guided tours** of visual art exhibits or backstage tours guided by directors, curator, high-level artistic or education staff. The Andy Warhol Museum, City Theatre and Public Theater have provided us with tours like this.

To get started, please fax or e-mail us the following information:

1. **A one-paragraph description of the play, performance or exhibition.** Our events season fills quickly, so please contact us as early as possible so we can book an event.
2. **One paragraph detailing the supplemental educational experience** that your arts organization will provide. Activities must accommodate at least 35 students, preferably 45, but may be broken into smaller groups to facilitate hands-on interaction.
3. **Where the educational experience will happen**, such as your rehearsal hall, a private room or a gallery space. If you don't have room for the educational experience at your location, PITT ARTS may be able to reserve a room here on campus for you. Please call us at 412-624-4462 to discuss your room needs and availability.
4. **The per-student ticket price.** Please note that arts organizations offer PITT ARTS substantial group sales discounts for the blocks of tickets we purchase because of the young, vigorous audience we provide, and our ability to promote arts and cultural events via e-mail to more than 10,000 students each week.
5. **If there is space for a pre-event dinner for our students at your facility.** PITT ARTS customarily provides a modest, catered buffet dinner for our students prior to most events. The location of the dinner depends upon the educational experience that you suggest, if space is available at your facility or at the William Pitt Union. We will work with you on all logistical details associated with food at events.

Please fax your proposal to 412-624-1662 or e-mail to pittarts@pitt.edu. Call us at 412-624-4462 with questions.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kitty Julian served as Arts Education Coordinator for PITT ARTS at the University of Pittsburgh from 2002 to 2004 implementing the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative* grant from The Heinz Endowments. She has an extensive background in communications and market research in the nonprofit arts and education environments. Prior to PITT ARTS, she served as Communications Director for The Pittsburgh Foundation, a community foundation that makes grants of more than \$25 million each year. Prior to that, she led the media relations department at a local branding agency, worked for the Pittsburgh Zoo, and served as a community organizer. Kitty is now the Public Relations Officer for the Wilkinsburg School District, a challenged school public district just outside of Pittsburgh serving primarily African American students, and focusing on improving student achievement, academic reform and aligning curricula to state standards.

Annabelle Clippinger, Director of PITT ARTS, is a poet and educator. She has had two books of poetry published, *Sky Frame* (2000), and *Cloud Banner* (2002), both by publisher of avant-garde literature, Potes & Poets Press. She is a member of the Board of Directors of The Guitar Society of Fine Art, and of the Advisory Board for the International Poetry Forum. She serves as co-editor of *Poethia*, a journal of experimental poetry. Since 1990, Annabelle has expressed her commitment to the education of young adults by teaching university students English and Creative Writing, and establishing a Visiting Writers Series during her time teaching at Penn State University. She is currently Adjunct Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh, and received her M.F.A. from Syracuse University in Creative Writing-Poetry. She has directed PITT ARTS since 2002, and was the first consultant to spearhead the *Young Adult Arts Participation Initiative* for PITT ARTS from 2000-2002.

To request a copy of the monograph *A Study of Young Adult Arts Participation* by Jen Saffron, M.F.A. and Annabelle Clippinger, M.F.A., published in 2003 by the University of Pittsburgh, please call Annabelle Clippinger at 412-624-4662, email abelle@pitt.edu or write to:

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photo credits (left to right)

Owen Smith: Young adults watching performance art by Paper Rad/Beige at the Mattress Factory.

Owen Smith: Young adults in James Turrell's *Big Red* at the Mattress Factory.

Suellen Fitzsimmons: Young theater patrons outside the O'Reilly Theater, home of Pittsburgh Public Theater.

Kaoru Tohara: Students at Doug DuBois's *East/West Encounter* at the Silver Eye Center for Photography.

Maggie Macher: *Women and Memory Workshop* with Lynne Yamamoto at the Mattress Factory.