

Learning from Glasgow 1990 Interrogating the European Culture Capital title as impulse for cultural and creative development

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Setting the scene ... some disclaimers

- **Creativity...** the 'in' word for the new millennium
 - Culture and regeneration was the focus for discussion in the 1980s and 1990s
 - The notion of 'creative cities', 'creative clusters' emerged in the 1990s (Landry, Comedia...)
 - Richard Florida introduced the notion of the 'creative class' in 2002 and became a 'best-seller'
 - By 2009, culture is not enough... we need 'creative culture', 'creative arts', 'creative business'
- We are living a 'creative turn' in policy circles worldwide
 - Everyone wants a 'creative economy'. Creativity is perceived as the ultimate solution
- **European Capital of Culture** title being groomed as catalyst for the 'creative turn' in Europe
 - Glasgow 1990 offers an interesting case study : the city pioneered many of the narratives that are common place today. It told its story well (myth-making?)
 - Liverpool 2008 has re-appropriated the story in a more competitive context . The city has been forced to 'prove its case' through a stronger evidence-base
- **Challenge :** the **evidence base** is still weak.
 - Pressure to prove the 'impact' of cultural interventions through statistical indicators.
 - The Impacts 08 programme has been established to test the case, and combine quantitative indicator assessment with qualitative narrative assessment.

the experience of Glasgow 1990

Background | Glasgow 1990, European City of Culture

- Glasgow 1990 as a model for culture-led regeneration ...
- Claims of success |
 - ability to use a cultural event as a catalyst for image change
 - dramatic growth in leisure and business tourism
 - strengthened creative economy via a mixture of increased inward investment, talent retention and talent attraction
- Organisers emphasise the event's broad cultural and spatial remit |
 - not just the arts but religion, technology, sport, architecture, heritage ...
 - claims of inclusiveness, reaching out to marginal communities, celebrating everybody's Glasgow
- However, **inclusion** is rarely mentioned as a 1990 legacy or mark of success
 - Glasgow's community arts programme retained low profile among non-participants
 - limited promotional & PR budget, poor coverage beyond local papers
 - exemplifies trend to exclude grassroots stories from mainstream media

Why is Glasgow 1990 relevant today



- Eighteen years on | **Liverpool, 2008 European Capital of Culture**
 - Learning the lessons from Glasgow 1990
 - Can we establish replicable models for cultural regeneration?
- Expectations | **economic + physical + social + cultural regeneration**
- Buzzwords | **social inclusion and cohesion ...**
 - community participation, tolerance to diversity, renewed self-confidence, strengthened cultural identities, local citizenship
- Interrelated questions within debate on creative clustering | **how to...**
 - maximise a diverse and inclusive social environment
 - secure high levels of local creativity
 - maximise distinctiveness, competitiveness and long-term sustainability
- This paper revisits what was achieved by Glasgow's approach to community engagement in 1990 and assesses whether the experience has led to any sustainable legacy within the city's creative economy



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Key inclusive dimensions of Glasgow 1990



- The community programme | **highlights**
 - Keeping Glasgow in stitches
 - Call that singing!
 - Glasgow all lit up
 - Ruzachie, Ruzachie
 - The Cranhill project
 - Community plays | *Dampbusters*
 - ...



Call That Singing!
by Sue Hillman, Project Director



Key inclusive dimensions of Glasgow 1990

- The community programme | highlights
- Main programme | **community access initiatives**
 - The Big Day
 - Pavarotti screen event
 - Glasgow Mela + other new multicultural events
 - StreetBiz + other street activities



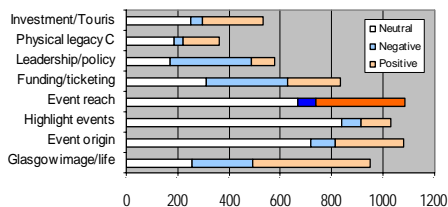
The 'PAVAROTTI' Screen Event



Cultural impact | short term | media debate



- 1986 – 1990 | **high levels of coverage**
 - the theme covered in the largest amount of articles
 - focused on locally based tabloids (59%) | positive, championed by *Evening Times*
 - low profile in national and international papers who instead touch on city quality of life issues – e.g. tale of two cities, what can culture do to solve poverty etc



Article numbers (86-91)

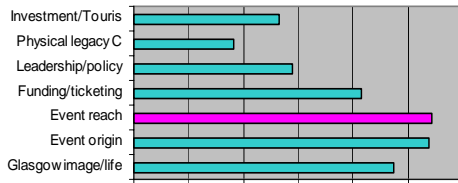
Tone of articles (86-91)

Cultural impact | short term | media debate

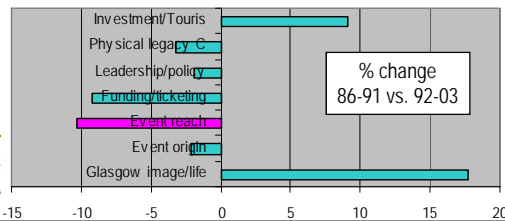
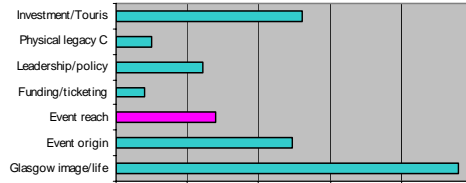


- 1989 – 1990 | high levels of coverage
- 1991 – 2003 | marginal coverage
 - acute decrease in references to community access / social inclusion in relation to 1990
 - instead, increase in references to city image an investment/tourism as key legacies

Article numbers (86-91)



Article numbers (92-03)



Cultural impact | long term | community forums



- The case of Connector
 - gateway for online discussion on culture and the arts at community level
 - 1990 discussion group | dedicated to debating Glasgow 1990 legacies 17 years on
 - levels of activity | three times more contributions than any other discussion forum
 - participants | led by people directly involved in the 1990 experience
 - tone | a balanced perspective – combining criticism and praise
 - themes |
 - the role of local authorities, particularly the Strathclyde Regional Council
 - community art productions that inspired people and changed their perceptions of the arts
 - long term legacies | linking the debate of what has survived beyond 1990 with the current cultural policy situation in Scotland



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Cultural impact | long term



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Birds of Paradise Theatre Company - Scotland's first theatre run by and for people with disabilities - would not exist without 1990's kick start funding. The same can be said for **Sounds of Progress**, which I believe is Europe's only music production company training disabled musicians for professional work, not therapy. There would be no **disability arts officer** in Renfrewshire, or **special needs music programme** in Inverclyde. **Project Ability** would not have been able to develop its most lasting projects, and there would be no **Indonesian Gamelan**, purchased by Social Work after a 1990 project brought the South Bank Gamelan to Glasgow, to do workshops with severely disabled people [...]. We would not have **changed Social Work practice** after A L Kennedy's writer in residence post gave learning disabled adults a voice to express their frustration about patronising outings [...]. I could go on and on - and will, if anyone wants to hear. Not many people did want to hear at the time - the media made their mind up and stuck to it - sells more papers if you junk things! //

(participant at online discussion group, 18 March 2004)



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Challenges for long-term social inclusion legacies in culture-led regeneration



- Event organisers | **treating community programmes as junior partners**
 - lack of media profile within mainstream national and international media | no buzz
 - lack of support to structural development beyond the event year | no posts or venues
 - lack of proper policy evaluation | momentum is lost, few lessons learnt
- Marginal communities | **treating major events as superficial make-overs**
 - emphasising political divides, class issues | viewing events as irrelevant to working classes
 - rejecting the notion of 'cultural regeneration' | viewed as instrumentalisation of culture
- Glasgow's experience in 1990
 - the community programme was not linked to 'economic objectives' | thus not marketed
 - this resulted in low visibility and low 'memory' | remembered by those directly implied, who tend to be within deprived / marginal communities
 - the failure to establish proper evaluation meant that subsequent major events did not share the know-how | ie. 1999, 'City of Architecture' community programme
- **Despite major challenges, 1990 accelerated cultural inclusion in the arts**



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Main findings



- Glasgow has a critical mass of creative communities that far precedes the city's efforts towards culture-led regeneration



- strong visual arts community | Glasgow School of Art, the Briggait, [Third Eye C]
- strong architectural / design / fashion community | Mackintosh, the Lighthouse ...
- strong music community | underground scenes in pre-gentrified Merchant City
- strong performing arts [theatre] community | the Citizens, Tron, the Arches, Tramway



Main findings



- Glasgow has a critical mass of creative communities that far precedes the city's efforts towards culture-led regeneration
- Key strengths lay within the city's arts and cultural offer, but these are often at odds with the demands of a market-oriented economy
 - Glasgow's Joint Economic Strategy (JES) establishes that the cultural and arts sector is the most distinctive aspect of the city's creative industries offering a strong competitive international image
 - The city's JES and emerging creative industries strategy (EKOS 2005) note other economic impacts of the arts such as talent attraction (Florida 2001) and 'urban regeneration' | ie. creating 'cultural milieus'
 - But the focus on economic and physical impacts alone tends to overlook embedded negative cultural and social effects | gentrification, theme-park culture

Main findings



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- Informal/personal networks ensure distinct and deeply-rooted cultural expressions but also resist being labelled within overarching urban cultural/creative strategies and policies.
 - the Merchant City | promising 'regeneration' story but contradictory cultural impacts
 - | wine bars and upmarket shops vs underground gig spaces and artist-led venues



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- 1990 offered momentum to the city's diverse cultural groups because the event was led by an artistic vision sensitive to their working practices and was rarely obstructed by the demands of funding bodies

// The difference today is that we have reverted back to the tiny Social Work budget and Social Work has given up its place at the big table. **The visionaries have retired.** In some ways that is good, we need to mainstream equality. But I find the old prejudices and attitudinal discrimination is creeping back, and there is no one at the table to fight it. //



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Main findings



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- 1990 offered momentum to the city's diverse cultural groups because the event was led by an artistic vision sensitive to their working practices and was rarely obstructed by the demands of funding bodies
- **But approach became unsustainable as it lacked overall policy framework**
 - it was an opportunistic, ad-hoc approach which allowed maximum flexibility, quick reactions, but lacked long term vision



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- **But approach became unsustainable as it lacked overall policy framework**
- Glasgow has needed over a decade to find the right balance between ad-hoc/ entrepreneurial and strategic/ managerial cultural regeneration.



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Key legacies of the 1990 community programme



- Raising confidence and entrepreneurship in community groups
 - a 'can do' feeling | community art leaders claim that the most important legacy of 1990 is the confidence boost it gave to marginal arts groups
 - entrepreneurial skills | leading to higher levels of entrepreneurship that, ultimately, allowed community artists to find new funding sources at a time of cuts in public spending and thus become self-sustainable

“ We never returned to the baseline that we had before 1990... partly because we'd learned a lot about funding, and putting together packages.... We had been very dependent on one or two sources before that....1990 forced us to start looking wider,...looking at the private sector, ... trust funds.... We learned a lot... We were forced to. It was a very painful process, but probably a good process in the end. ”

(Community arts focus group, 16 Sep 2003)



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- Changing perceptions about the value of the arts for deprived communities
 - the 1990 community programme strengthened the view that the arts can make a difference within deprived and marginal communities



Key legacies of the 1990 community programme



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- Changing perceptions about the value of the arts for deprived communities
 - the 1990 community programme strengthened the view that the arts can make a difference within deprived and marginal communities
 - it acted as a catalyst for the disability arts movement and as a point of reference for pioneering work in multicultural and multi-faith experiences resulting in the opening of the Hidden Gardens in 2003



Successful components of the 1990 programme



- Avoiding paternalism and instrumentalism |
 - organisers followed an artistic vision rather than social or economic targets
 - participants were encouraged to engage with a creative experience rather than treat it as 'therapy' or a purely skill-development exercise
- A flexible and organic process |
 - broad time frames allowed a wide range of groups to present proposals;
 - funding was subdivided into small grants so that everyone could get support;
 - there were no strict thematic or format restrictions
- 'Mainstream arts' budgets |
 - generous funding which also supported research and development
 - the community programme thus became more aspirational

Selected policy lessons



- Cities must invest in longitudinal research in order to identify the cultural legacies of regeneration
- Identifying and understanding cultural legacies is important because they tend to become embedded in the fabric of a city and thus can be more meaningful and sustainable than economic and physical legacies
- Securing strong cultural legacies is particularly relevant to marginal communities as they require a strong confidence basis and a tolerant environment to develop their own distinct approach to creativity and eventually contribute to the wider city economy
- Cultural legacies flourish better in flexible environments by following organic rather than excessively strategic processes. This is particularly the case within deprived communities which rely on informal cultural networks



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The Liverpool 2008 approach...



Project List

The 2005/06 Creative Communities programme 'Around the City in 80 Days' gave grants to artist and community-led projects exploring people's journeys, helping us to understand and identify the neighbourhoods we live in.

The programme contributes to renewal and is helping to strengthen and empower communities, promoting ownership and involvement. Click to download the full list of [Around the City in 80 Days project list](#) (PDF [1010.5Kb]). Download time 3 minutes 55 seconds based on a 56k modem. Will open a new browser window.) or the [Cultural Partners project list](#) (PDF [881.3Kb]). Download time 3 minutes 48 seconds based on a 56k modem. Will open a new browser window.)

Culture organisations have also been given a major boost in 2006/07 when more than £650,000 was given out to more than 100 projects.

The grant recommendations, which were approved by the city council's Executive Board, have been made after a rigorous evaluation process by the Community Foundation for Merseyside on behalf of the Liverpool Culture Company. There are two strands of funding. The first is an Innovation and Development Programme worth £400,000 of which 42 groups have received up to £15,000 each. The second is worth £250,000 and covers community, diversity and for the first time, sport. A total of 65 groups will receive up to £5,000 each.

Click to download the [Innovation and Development project list](#) (Excel sheet [32.5Kb]). Download time 7 seconds based on a 56k modem. Will open a new browser window.) or the [In The City project list](#) (Excel sheet [31.5Kb]). Download time 7 seconds based on a 56k modem. Will open a new browser window.)

Another round of grants for April 2007 to March 2008 has opened, click for more details.

To have your details added to the Creative Communities database call Phil Taylor, Creative Infrastructure Development Manager, on 0151 233 5604, fax 0151 233 6333 or e-mail phil.taylor@liverpool08.com.

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Four Corners
3/1/2007 to 31/3/2007

Free Borough on the Sea - 600th Anniversary Exhibition of Liverpool's Charters
7/2/2007 to 30/6/2007

Capital of Culture Update Meeting
20/2/2007 to 20/2/2007

Liverpool Debates 2007 presented by Bluecoat Arts Centre
18/4/2007 to 30/9/2007

Calla opening of St George's Hall
23/4/2007 to 23/4/2007

BBC Radio Merseyside's 40th Birthday
2/5/2007 to 2/5/2007

Capital of Culture Update Meeting
10/6/2007 to 10/6/2007

Thank you
Beatriz Garcia

www.beatrizgarcia.net